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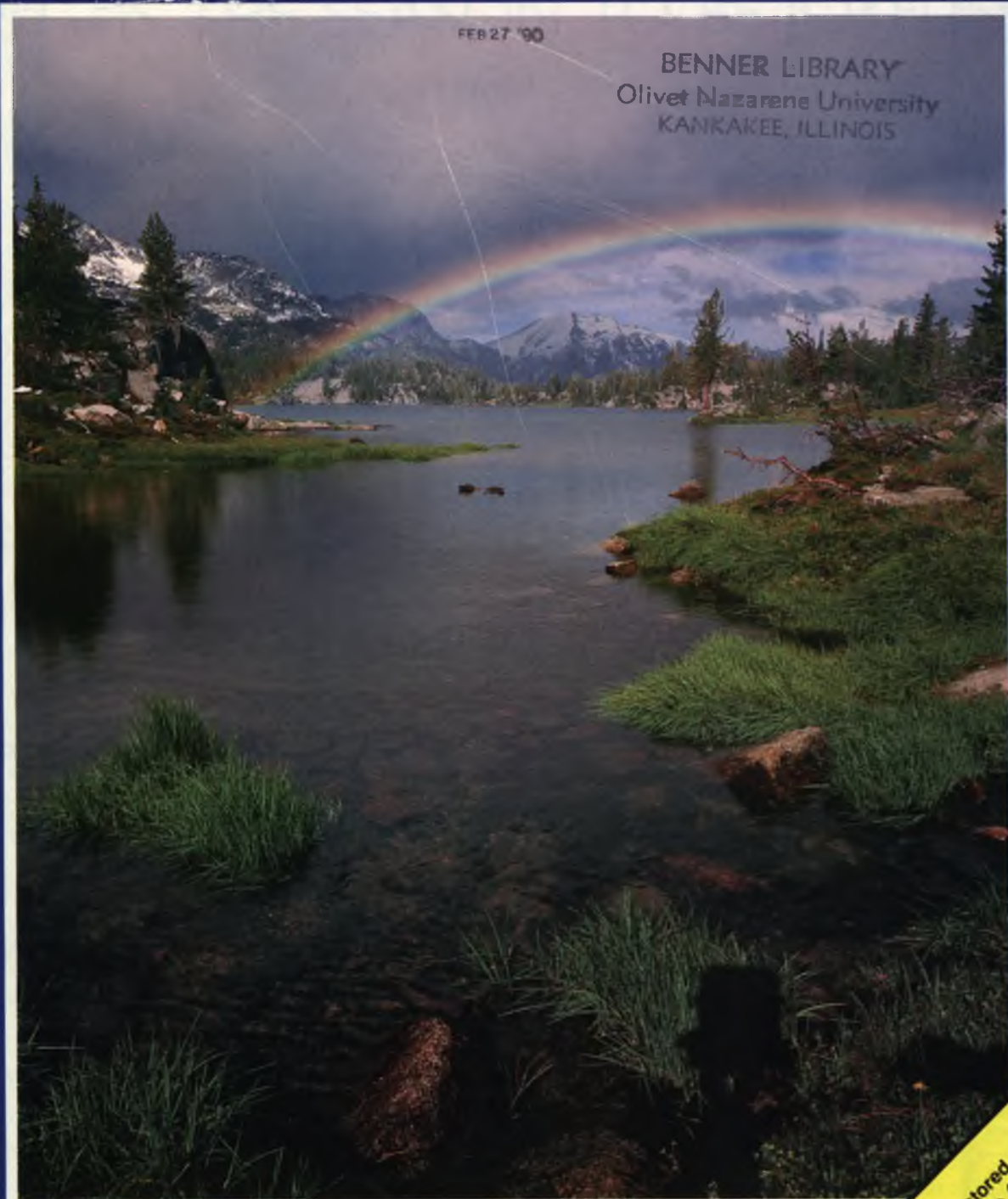
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March, April, May 1990

THE **IP** REACHER'S **IMC** MAGAZINE



“He Has Risen”

Restored
page 4
Prophet Unawares
page 7
Peter Remembers—Thirty
Years Later
page 9
AIDS: The Challenge for
Compassion
page 11

SUITABLE FOR FRAMING



I Can Do Nothing
to Make
God Love Me
More;
I Can Do Nothing
to Make
God Love Me
Less.

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOYFUL

by Randal E. Denny
Editor

Seasons to be jolly may come and go, but Easter ushers in the season to be joyful. If I could only keep one page of my Bible for personal devotion, it would be Luke 24. The meaning of the resurrection of Jesus is embodied for me in Luke's description of the encounter with Jesus on the Emmaus Road. That intimate, personal glimpse of our living Lord walking the dusty, common road with His disheartened disciples makes Jesus our contemporary. He cares. He touches people. He walks and talks with them.

The longer I live the more I have come to view the Christian faith as a journey, a pilgrimage in which Jesus increasingly reveals himself—and we're really headed toward a more complete fellowship with Him. Someone declared, "The darkest road with Christ is better than the brightest road without Him."

Our Risen Lord draws near (vv. 13-16). Jesus' encounter with the two discouraged travelers ranks as one of the immortal short stories of the world. Their conversation had locked in on the tragedy of the Cross. They traced over the circumstances and events in a morbid circle of self-pity. Despair fed despair. While they returned to their village, "Jesus himself drew near" (v. 15, KJV). Even in our desperation and confusion, Jesus draws near—whether or not we recognize Him.

Our Risen Lord opens the Scriptures. Luke wrote, "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself" (v. 27). Jesus began an exposition of Scripture from each individual prophetic book, giving the first correct lesson on Messianic teachings of the Old Testament. He

showed them the golden thread of grace running through the whole fabric of Scripture. It could not be separated from the scarlet thread of atonement.

What a sermon that must have been! Jesus opened the Scriptures—developed, illustrated, and applied in himself. How I wish that lesson from the lips of Jesus had been preserved. Someday, in heaven, I hope Jesus will preach that sermon once again!

Our Risen Lord enters into fellowship (vv. 28-30). Arriving at Emmaus at dusk, Jesus courteously "acted as if he were going farther" (v. 28). He does not force himself on us. He awaits an invitation to fellowship. St. Augustine prayed, "Narrow is the mansion of my soul; enlarge Thou it, that Thou mayest enter in."

With the compulsion of courtesy and kind words of hospitality, the travelers compelled Jesus to remain with them: "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over" (v. 29).

In 1827, Henry Francis Lyte preached his farewell sermon to his congregation of 50 years. His fond flock sent him to the French Riviera for rest and recuperation. Henry Lyte did not come to breakfast after the first night at sea. His body was found on his bunk, his Bible open to Luke 24. He had underlined the words: "Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent" (v. 29, KJV). His hand clutched a poem in his writing:

*Abide with me! Fast falls the even-
tide;
The darkness deepens: Lord, with
me abide!
When other helpers fail, and com-
forts flee,*

*Help of the helpless, O abide with
me!*

Jesus seeks unhurried, intimate fellowship with you and me.

Our Risen Lord reveals himself (vv. 30-35). Perhaps the way He broke bread or His intimate way of saying grace triggered their memories of Jesus. Suddenly "their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight" (v. 31). Jesus dramatized that communion with Him now must be by faith, not by sight. In the breaking of bread at an ordinary meal in an ordinary home Jesus revealed himself. With Jesus, life's most common moments become sacred and special.

The enlightened travelers exclaimed, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (v. 32). Those burning hearts now rejoiced, "The Lord has risen" (v. 34).

On the slow bus ride to Emmaus, I soaked in the quiet sights. For me it was a holy moment to retrace their steps and to remember their experience. But the Emmaus Road is more than a geographical location. It's your road—and my road. Though we don't always recognize Him, Jesus is here—walking and talking with us along the way.

Hanging on the wall of my office is a gift from my wife—a painting of three figures walking along a pastoral lane. It reminds me to look for Jesus today. He is always there. C. Austin Miles exclaimed:

*And He walks with me, and He
talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry
there,
None other has ever known.*

THE **PREACHER'S** **IMC MAGAZINE** Proclaiming Christian Holiness

SUITABLE FOR FRAMING

Unknown

1fc

EDITORIAL

'Tis the Season to Be Joyful

Randal E. Denny

1

FEATURES

Restored

James E. Copple with Eileen L. Copple

4

Prophet Unawares

Elizabeth A. Cutting

7

Glimpses

David W. Waltner

8

Peter Remembers—Thirty Years Later

James W. Thompson

9

SOCIAL CONCERN

Back to the Beginning

Carol Wight-Gritton

10

AIDS: The Challenge for Compassion

Carol Wight-Gritton

11

Called for This Time

Richard F. Schubert

12

The Answer to AIDS: Obedience

Tom Nees

14

CHAPLAINCY

A Reserve Chaplain—Right Place at the Right Time

David A. Tish

17

The Ministry of Presence

Jack Nix

17

PASTOR'S PERSONAL GROWTH

The Dynamics of Ministerial Morality

Lyndon K. McDowell

18

MINISTER'S MATE

Listening to God—and Your Husband

Jill Briscoe

21

THEOLOGY

Freedom and Its Meaning in Ministry

J. Kenneth Grider

22

John Wesley's Defense of the Doctrine of Original Sin

Herbert McGonigle

26

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Remembering the Elderly

J. Grant Swank, Jr.

29

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IDEA MART	
Picture This	30
<i>Kenneth Vogt</i>	
How to Fold Church Bulletins the Easy "Smyres Way"	30
<i>Ron S. Smyres</i>	
PASTOR'S PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	
Thin Skinned or Shock Resistant?	31
<i>Raymond C. Kratzer</i>	
HOLINESS	
A Tale of Two Dogmas	33
<i>Doug Samples</i>	
EVANGELISM	
Do We Believe People Are Lost?	34
<i>Robert E. Coleman</i>	
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION	
Servant Leadership for a Servant Community	38
<i>LeBron Fairbanks</i>	
FINANCE	
Church Employees or Independent Contractors?	42
How John Wesley Handled Money	43
<i>Charles Edward White</i>	
WORSHIP	
Kerygmatic Worship	44
<i>Barry E. Bryant</i>	
PREACHING	
Send the Good Tidings On	46
<i>Philip Bence</i>	
We Can't Hear You, Pastor	47
<i>Rolland R. Reece</i>	
Why Holiness Ministers Should Read Fosdick	48
<i>Ron Adams</i>	
WESLEYANA	
The Influence of Dutch Arminianism on the Theology of John Wesley	49
<i>David Eaton</i>	
CHURCH MUSIC	
Music, Martin Luther, and Today's Church	51
<i>Anna Marie Lockard</i>	
ARK ROCKER	
With the Vanguard	53
<i>A Sharp Pencil</i>	
HELPFUL REGULARS	
Preacher's Exchange	37
Book Reviews	52
WORSHIP AND PREACHING HELPS	
Sermon and Worship Service Outlines	54
<i>Curtis Lewis, Jr.</i>	

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He Is Risen

RESTORED

by James E. Copple
with Eileen L. Copple
Wichita, Kans.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord FOR EVER (KJV).

The 23rd psalm portrays the reality, hope, and promise of man's relationship to God. One can search the literature of the world and find no clearer expression of the human predicament. Perhaps its familiarity has numbed our senses to the startling, and yet simple, truth to be found in these few verses. Who among us cannot quote the whole psalm or at least recite major portions? This psalm is a familiar friend whose benefits are taken for granted and whose presence is greatly appreciated in the turmoil of life.

Like all of Scripture this psalm is not *free* of context, culture, and personal meaning for its author. David, shepherd boy, king, and adulterer, has expressed both the limitation and confidence of his life. The fear of the enemy, the shadow of death, the peace of still waters, the hope of goodness and mercy all serve to remind the reader of the narrow line between life and death, hope and despair. Time has mythologized David and made his sin quaint with sweet sentimentality. Yet, as sure as

he was king, he was a murderer; as sure as he slew Goliath, he seduced and was seduced by Bathsheba. This King David knew both his sin and his salvation. Because David was aware of his own predicament, the Psalms are alive with the hope and salvation of God. David experienced the restoring work of the Shepherd. He knew what it was to be both lost and found. While all of us have been marked by the despair and hopelessness of sin, there are those of us whose sins have been so conspicuous or hideous that they stand as an assault on the whole of the Christian community. This sin is not simply measured by minor acts of transgression; rather this is sin that seems to weaken the fellowship of believers. It taints the witness of God's people. It is sin that demands not only personal and private penance but also a public confession that will permit the community of believers to restore fully this broken humanity to God's fellowship. David knew these struggles and endured their pain. When abandoned and sinking in the swamp of his own despair, he knew only one hope for his deliverance and restoration. That hope was to be found in the Shepherd, the Restorer of his soul.

At a period in our lives when restoration was a faint hope and sin had twisted the fabric of our soul, David and this affirmation of faith found in the 23rd psalm emerged as a symbol of God's faithful promise, that goodness and mercy would once again fill our days. The paths that lead children of God into sin and destruction are not easily identified. That reality compels us to confess, at the outset, that what follows is a woefully inadequate attempt to summarize and articulate events that have no clear cause nor adequate

justification. Those who witnessed our suffering and observed the repeated journey into folly will ridicule the simplicity of our account. The majority of you who know nothing of our past, but are dependent upon what we tell you now, will be frustrated by our failure to see (what is to you) the obvious stupidity of our choices. Further, there are those of you who, when confronted by similar choices, found different paths to follow in resolving your conflict. We do not judge your solution, but we declare that the Shepherd who guided us out of the quagmire of adultery, deception, and rejection has given us a promise that what He has joined together no man can put asunder.

The preservation of the marriage commitment must be given greater priority in our society. It is only under the most extreme circumstances that divorce or dissolution of a marriage commitment should be tolerated. We chose, with the help of several dear brothers and sisters, to fight to maintain what we committed before God and His people. Against incredible odds and facing what appeared to be insurmountable obstacles, God worked to restore a broken relationship. From the rubble of our lives, He fashioned a witness to His enduring grace and everlasting love.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" is a bold and liberating statement. It is true only as we declare our dependence upon God and our independence from the power of sin. The cohesive force of the Christian marriage is the willingness of a couple to submit their independence to the sovereign Lordship of Jesus Christ. This is no simple achievement. It requires the maintenance of spiritual disciplines

that continually remind us of who we are in relationship to this Shepherd. The contemporary marriage is confronted with numerous distractions that threaten the stability of even the best of relationships. In the liberal democratic society, where individualism has been elevated to the level of a divine truth, the Christian marriage faces its greatest threat. Mutual submission and shared mission are terms foreign to our ears, and even more to our theology. Couples have been encouraged to develop interests and life-styles independent of one another. Believing that these diverse interests will strengthen the lives of the participants, we have pursued separate lives caring little about mutual concerns or mission. "The Lord is [our] shepherd" has been replaced by the materialism of our culture. Our wants are insatiable. We are consistently being confronted with options that stimulate our appetites and titillate our senses. The status quo is never adequate.

It was in the face of these realities that we confronted the greatest struggle of our lives. We sought to build a Christian marriage founded on ministry and full-time service. The busier we were in the church, the greater our personal and professional success. The church and its related institutions became our shepherd. We responded to its challenges and problems and worked diligently to secure our position within its hierarchy. Throughout our marriage we witnessed one success after another and believed that we were destined to positions of importance—and even greatness—with in and without our denomination. The still waters of God's peace and the path of righteousness promised by the Psalmist were laced with the glory and benefits of this world. The "merit badges" of worldly and institutional success became symbols of God's faithfulness. These assumptions were exactly what Satan intended for our lives.

Distance

We often mistake the voices of the world and even of the church for the voice of God. The more praise we received for our efforts, the more convinced we were that we were living and working in the center of God's will. It was in that context that we were to be most vulnerable. All

these accomplishments and the attendant praise distanced us from the center of true and holy living. We found ourselves living apart. I pursued my graduate studies and public ministry within the church; Eileen pursued the role of teacher and faithful housewife. Our marriage appeared to be indestructible. Students from the college where I was teaching came to our home for weekly Bible studies and discussion regarding the nature of Christian mission. Often we would hear positive comments regarding the stability and strength of our marriage. As our ministry evolved, I removed myself from the activities of the home. There were never expectations placed on me, and when there were, I usually resisted them. The more I sought for institutional approval and gratification, the more I noticed a growing distaste for Eileen's view and vision of the world. From my perspective, Eileen was not keeping up with my goals. From her perspective, I was simply losing touch with the realities of family life. We seldom if ever discussed this emerging separation. Our marriage was never characterized by fighting or overt hostility. The disease impacting our marriage was like a hidden cancer; destroying that which was essential from the inside, leaving the outside to communicate a grotesque and brutal lie.

Complicating our situation was the fact that we were living with Eileen's parents in a home we jointly owned. While they never interfered directly with our lives, it was easy for me to assume that they would be her security while I was out saving the world. We never worried about Eileen's need for companionship as long as her parents were present. Furthermore, her parents helped to eliminate any guilt I might feel because I was away from our daughter, Jamie. She was extremely important to them.

Regardless of how good and helpful Eileen's parents were in those difficult days, it was clearly a mistake to have entered into that kind of relationship. It was unfair to all involved. Communication decreased noticeably, and the ability to share and speak spontaneously was thwarted. Discussions and times of communication had to be

scheduled, which meant that the urgency of the moment was lost. This served only to reinforce my notion that Eileen did not understand or desire to share in either my scholarly or ministerial goals. Our lives were far, far apart. The affection and sentimentality were still there; but those are a weak foundation for a thriving marriage.

We cannot detail the specifics of my unfaithfulness or subsequent adultery. Nor do we want to; there are too many people whose lives such an account would affect. It serves no purpose to remind the world of the details. However, it is essential to point out that Satan, when seeking to destroy the spiritual goals and ambitions of man, always appeals to the sensual. He confronts humanity with power, sex, and money. The early church fathers realized that these were great temptations for man. For this reason they encouraged the early ascetics to embrace poverty, chastity, and obedience. These things sound extreme, but we have come to understand their significance in developing holiness. We Christians have succeeded in flirting with these three elements and, for the most part, have found ourselves being overwhelmed by one or all three. I perceived that I wanted more of these three than God or the world was providing. I found myself becoming attracted to a young woman, eight years my junior. I believed the relationship would nurture my spiritual growth and satisfy my emerging ego. The choices I made over the next year and a half would destroy the foundation of our spiritual lives. The choices would undermine Eileen's physical and spiritual confidence and threaten the survival of everyone involved.

Deception

To hide the truth from Eileen, I became a master of deception; and when she confronted me with the truth, I would threaten her with divorce and exposure. I lost all sense of right and wrong. The greatest deception of this period of my life was that I believed I could have it both ways. I assumed I could maintain my marriage, develop an extramarital affair, and of course maintain my rise to position and success within the church. In retrospect, the naïveté

and absurdity of such an assumption is almost overwhelming.

The choice of this relationship led to the birth of a child out of wedlock, a separation of nearly a year and a half from Eileen, and a sojourn of 10 months in Seattle, the home of my parents. In that year, I threatened suicide and came very close to a complete nervous breakdown. Through the help of a counselor Eileen was preparing herself for a divorce, believing it was inevitable. For reasons I cannot explain, I never accepted that inevitability. In the year we were separated we talked almost daily. The excuse was concern for our daughter. Eileen never called me; I always called her.

It was during these works that I came to grips with the spiritual claim God still exercised in my life. Through the assistance of a crisis counselor, I began writing and reflecting on the meaning of my life in this predicament. The picture was not pretty, nor was it hopeful. I came to realize that Satan had deceived me, convincing me that he did not exist, and that therefore the consequences of immoral choices were not to be feared. Satan proved to be an adversary far greater than I imagined. Several friends, specifically Ron Sider and Ray and Vera Hance, sought to reestablish communication with me. The Hances had introduced me to Jesus Christ when I was a teenager of 15. Sider had become a close friend through Evangelicals for Social Action. Ron persuaded me of the importance of the marriage relationship, and of how Satan was the master of intrigue and destruction when it came to undermining the family. The Hances prayed, encouraged me to read the Psalms, and in one inspired moment sent me a copy of the Wesley hymn "Arise, My Soul, Arise." Verses 1 and 5 declared what I needed and was the essence of what I had been seeking. "Arise, my soul, arise. / Shake off thy guilty fears. / The bleeding Sacrifice / In my behalf appears. / Before the throne my Surety stands, / My name is written on His hands. . . . My God is reconciled; / His pard'ning voice I hear. / He owns me for His child; / I can no longer fear. / With confidence I now draw nigh, / And, 'Father, Abba, Father,' cry."

Decisions

For the first time in months, I began to sense the faithful love of the Father. He was not going to abandon me to Satan or the power of sin and death. I discovered God was pursuing me like the Hound of Heaven. Yet I also realized that to be obedient to His will would require difficult and painful decisions. These decisions would have devastating consequences for several individuals. I was now living with this young woman in Seattle and providing important care for the child that was born out of that relationship. I cared for them greatly and despaired over what I had done to them and what I was about to do to them. In August 1981 I informed her that I was going to return to Boston and Eileen. God had prepared her for the news; she seemed to understand my decision. The next three months were the most difficult months of my life. In the period before I left Seattle, Satan placed before me one obstacle after another. Each decision seemed to have painful consequences for someone. The longer I delayed my departure, the more torment Eileen experienced; and furthermore, I fostered a false hope for my Seattle family. I covenanted with God that I would leave by November 14, and that I would not share my timetable with anyone. I was tired of disappointing everyone at my failure to leave.

These were days when I sensed I was walking through the Valley of Death. Yet, with each passing day, the restoring and healing grace of God was reshaping and molding my life. I felt a sense of direction and purpose.

The words of the Psalmist, "I shall fear no evil," became a reality. Jesus was Victor; death and the power of sin no longer ruled my life. With that assurance, on November 14, I packed my car, bid farewell to all in Seattle, and headed to Garden City, Kans., the home of the Hances. For the next three weeks, they nurtured me spiritually, never advising, only listening and pointing me toward Christ. In December, I left for Boston and my reconciliation with my family. It was not easy, and the path was very difficult. There were to be strong verbal confrontations between us and Eileen's family. Yet it

was Eileen's father who the following May confronted me with the need to make a final decision as to whether or not Eileen and I would continue to make attempts at reconciliation.

We cannot say enough about the grace and love demonstrated by our parents during this difficult period of our lives. Neither set of parents gave up on us. They never shut the door on us. We knew throughout the ordeal that their love was unconditional and supportive. We decided to move to Garden City, Kans., where we would attempt to rebuild our family. Our daughter Jamie was now five years old, and Eileen's teaching position in Boston was tenuous due to cutbacks in public funding. It was a bold and adventurous scheme we planned, but God was faithful and led us at every point.

We arrived in Garden City in August 1981, both preparing to teach public school. For the next five years, He reconciled, restored, and anointed us with the oil of His presence. We grew in the presence of the Lord. The Church of the Nazarene in Garden City accepted us with full knowledge of our past and eventually asked me if I would serve as part-time associate. They never doubted the completeness of God's work in our lives. As one wheat farmer shared with me, "Son, there has been hail in your life; it is time you replant and prepare for the next harvest." Those words would serve to strengthen us on more than one occasion. God has given us one opportunity after another to minister to other couples wounded and broken by the pain of this world.

Restoration

The Shepherd leads beside still waters and He restores my soul. We discovered afresh the power of restoration. Out of our predicament, God built two individuals more determined and committed to be serving Him and His kingdom. Through this ordeal, I discovered the grace of God. His forgiveness is unlimited, and His cleansing is complete. Eileen had demonstrated those realities in her love, patience, and forgiveness. She never quit, and her love proved to be enduring and everlasting. Her actions pointed me to a God of never-ending love. Eileen's

love is perhaps the greatest miracle of the whole experience.

The enemy still confronts and would occasionally seek to undermine our relationship by causing guilt and remorse to dominate our mood. We cannot undo our choices, or refashion the consequences of our choices. There is no perfect solution to the outcome of our decisions. Hurt and pain were caused, and there is no undoing that hurt or pain. I cannot whitewash the devastation I caused my family, the family of this young woman, or those who had placed trust and confidence in me. We are children of grace; we rest in the promise that He has restored our souls and He leads us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. We do not deserve the goodness and mercy He promises in the 23rd psalm. We do not deserve the right to dwell in the house of the Lord forever; but we are His children, and He does not abandon us in our stupidity and sin.

His restoration is accomplished by an everlasting love and faithfulness unmatched by this world. Modern marriages, faced with similar difficulties or challenges, dispose of that which is uncomfortable or damaged. Restoration takes that which was original with God and places it once again into His service. The love that brings two individuals together is a love that God can mold, shape, and destine for happiness and joy. We give up too quickly. The joy of our relationship with God is that by His very nature He refuses to give up. The 23rd psalm declares that in the shadows of death, the futility of life, He takes us to still waters and causes us to lie down in green pastures. Our choices devastated our lives and the lives of others, but from the rubble of the devastation He has lifted us up to soar with wings of grace. We are restored! 

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PROPHET UNAWARES

by Elizabeth A. Cutting

Tucson, Ariz.

So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council, and said, "What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on thus, every one will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation." But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all; you do not understand that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish." He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad (*John 11:47-52, RSV*).

Caiaphas a prophet? Despicable, detestable, selfish, tunnel-visioned, narrow-minded Caiaphas? How could he possibly be a prophet of God? From our vantage point in history he seems a most unlikely candidate. Because he hated Jesus so much, we see him as enemy of God. The words he spoke were poisonous, clearly meant to convince his colleagues that Jesus must be put to death. However, Caiaphas was, in reality, *the* one to be God's messenger of good news for all people in that time.

How could this be?

The primary job of the high priest, according to the laws set down in Leviticus, was to determine the will of God for the people, and then to tell them God's message. This was done by "inquiring of God" and using the "Urim and Thummim" to determine the answer, to learn God's will concerning the matter in question.

The high priests, beginning with Aaron, were faithful to this law, as

we see, for example, in Num. 27:21. We read the words, "by the judgment of Urim" (RSV). The context tells us that Joshua is to be commissioned by Moses, in the presence of Eleazar the priest, "who shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim." There is some question as to what the Urim and Thummim are exactly, but there is no question that this was a method for receiving an answer from God. Only the high priest had the right and the ability to use this method of divination after "inquiring of God." Therefore, to the Jewish people, the high priest was God's spokesman; he prophesied for God.

During the years A.D. 18-36 Caiaphas held the office of high priest. So he was the high priest in the year of Jesus' death. He was God's prophet for that particular time. John says that Caiaphas did not speak "of his own accord, but being high priest that year" (*John 11:51, RSV*). John makes the point very clear that Caiaphas was high priest *that year*, the year of Jesus' death. As such he was God's prophetic voice, telling of His plan of salvation for the world.

If Caiaphas was the prophet of God's good news, why then did he not know it? What was it that led Caiaphas to such hatred for Jesus that only His death would suffice?

The hierarchy of Judaism at the time of Jesus was very conscious of the need to maintain the current political atmosphere in Judea in order to keep the Roman occupiers happy. If anything happened to destroy this delicate balance; if the Romans had any reason to believe that the Jews were going to become difficult and, perhaps, even rebellious, the iron hand would be closed around them and they would lose all privileges. For the hierarchy, these privileges were considerable, including wealth and a degree of power. For

the rest of the population, their greatest loss would be religious freedom.

For a long time the Council of the Jews had been standing by helplessly as Jesus won the people to himself with His strange ways and teachings. They could not understand a man who believed love and forgiveness were more important than laws. They could not comprehend His ways. He dined with sinners; He associated with outcasts; He healed illnesses and mended broken and deformed bodies; He even raised the dead. It was this last, the raising of a man who had been dead four days and already in his tomb, that was the breaking point for these keepers of the delicate balance of uneasy concord between Rome and Judea. This is the event that precedes Caiaphas' perfidious words in our scripture passage. If a man could raise the dead to life, the people would want him for their king. The status quo would be destroyed if Jesus were allowed to continue. It was inevitable. The nation's peril was clear; its downfall imminent. This must, by all and any means, be avoided.

Caiaphas' concern, then, was selfish—his comfortable life, made possible by complicity with the Romans, his religion, his nation. He was angry and desperate. He hated Jesus because He was upsetting the equilibrium of uneasy peaceful coexistence. Out of this framework he made a statement that, in reality, was a death sentence. For him, this was an absolute necessity. He believed firmly that it was possible for a whole nation to be saved by the death of the man posing the danger. So Caiaphas spoke his infamous words condemning Jesus to death: "Don't you realize that it is better for you to have one man die for the people, instead of having the whole nation destroyed?" (John 11:50, TEV).

Caiaphas didn't know the role he was playing in the matter of this prophecy because he was speaking out of expediency. However, because he was God's prophet, by law and tradition, God gave his words greater significance. In a much deeper sense, this man *must* be sacrificed for the nation. God meant to save the nation, yes, but not only that one Jewish nation. He meant to

save all the peoples of the world from eventual damnation. Jesus' death was necessary if God's children were to live. Whole nations should live because one man died. "You meant [it for] evil . . . ; but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20, RSV), comes to mind, from the well-known story of Joseph and his brothers during their reunion in Egypt. God's plan of universal salvation was prophesied by a man interested only in self-preservation.

John says, "He was prophesying that Jesus was going to die for the Jewish people, and not only for them, but also to bring together into one body all the scattered people of God" (John 11:51-52, TEV). John emphasized the fact of that year because he "thinks it is remarkable that the high priest, whose duty it was to enter the holy of holies and offer atonement for *that* year, should unconsciously utter a prophecy of the Atonement which was presently to be offered on the Cross."^{*}

God sent His Son to the world to redeem it—all of it. By the death of this one man, Jesus, the world would know salvation. Paul says, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8, KJV).

It is interesting to note that Jesus' death did not save the Jewish nation. In the end, in A.D. 70, destruction came with the fall of Jerusalem. This was the death of the nation in spite of the death of the man. But Jesus' death and resurrection has brought life to millions of Jews and Greeks, publicans and sinners, around the world and through the ages. All who have said, "Yes, You died for me," have received the promise of life eternal.

One final thought. It is sad to think that a vessel of God had allowed himself to become so tainted by the evils of narrow-mindedness, self-centeredness, and traditional religion that he could not be open to the new revelation of God through Jesus. God's most important message to His children had to come through a blemished mouthpiece uttered in vile contempt. However, though the vessel was impure, the message was pure and clearly a message of love. We can be thankful that while we were yet sinners Jesus was willing to die for us. 🙏

NOTE

^{*} *The International Critical Commentary* 2:404.

GLIMPSES

The other day our paths crossed.
It wasn't intentional;
we hadn't planned it
or even talked about it.

But while I was putting gas in my car
I saw her drive by
(exceeding the speed limit, I'm sure).
We caught each other's glance,
then a brief wave,
and it was over.

The routine of going here and
there—
running an errand,
going to see someone,
mailing a letter—
had driven us in different directions.

Now as twilight etches its colors
on the clouds, I'm remembering
that smile and brief wave.
And I'm glad that in all the
business of pastoring,
she's the pastor's wife.

—David W. Waltner

PETER REMEMBERS—*Thirty Years Later*

John 13:31-38; 18:15-27

by James W. Thompson
Portland, Mich.

THE SETTING FOR THIS EVENT IS 30 YEARS AFTER THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS. IT IS ONCE AGAIN GOOD FRIDAY. PETER REMEMBERS THAT FATEFUL DAY WHEN HE DENIED KNOWING JESUS. HIS POWERFUL EMOTIONS OSCILLATE FROM DEEP REGRET TO INCREDIBLE DISBELIEF AT HIS FORGIVENESS TO DEEP LOVE FOR HIS RISEN LORD. THESE MAY HAVE BEEN PETER'S REMEMBRANCES:

Here it is 30 years later. I cannot believe to this day that I denied Jesus. I know what you are thinking. But you don't understand. I really did love Jesus. I really would have died for Him—I thought.

You would have to be there to understand what I felt. We were celebrating the Passover meal. Jesus had said some strange things—things about being crucified and that one of us would betray Him. We did not understand. We thought our Messiah was going to restore Israel. How could His death bring about restoration? What a difficult predicament!

The betrayal idea bothered us most. How could any one of us who had followed Jesus and had seen His miracles possibly betray Him? Little did we know that our beloved friend, Judas, had already been making plans—all for a few pieces of silver! It is still beyond comprehension!

Naturally, I thought that Jesus needed assurance that nothing could possibly happen to Him. We would protect Him, even if it meant our own deaths. After all, He was the Messiah, and He was worth it. You might understand my shock when Jesus announced that I would deny Him three times before the night had ended. Think of it! Jesus thought that I, *Peter*, would deny Him!

Ridiculous! I am Peter, the Rock! I bravely cut off an ear of one of the men that tried to arrest Jesus. Actually, I aimed for his neck, but he ducked. Jesus picked up the ear, put it back on the wounded man, and healed him. You would have thought His act of love would have changed their minds. But, no, they were determined to arrest Jesus. Perhaps Jesus should have let me keep swinging my sword!

Then arrested, Jesus was taken away to the courtyard of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest. During this trying time circumstances exposed me as the person I was—a coward. Young John knew the high priest, so he was allowed to go in with Jesus. I stood outside in the courtyard. It was cold. Guards and servants waited around a fire, trying to stay warm. I joined them. Knowing that I was outside, John asked if I could come in too. As he came out to get me, he passed a girl attending the gateway. She asked, "Surely you are not another of this Man's disciples?" But you had to hear the sound in her voice. She was vindictive.

Before I knew it, the words were out of my mouth: "I am not."

Jesus was taken to Caiaphas for more questioning. I stepped outside. Once again I stood next to the fire. Then one of the men accused me of being one of Jesus' disciples. Like a flash, I denied it. One of the men in the mob that had arrested Jesus was a relative of the servant who almost lost his head. The fellow recognized me. Again, I denied the whole thing—eager for them to believe me! At that moment the rooster crowed. Suddenly, I remembered Jesus' words—and I was crushed. I had done the very thing I had af-

firmed I would never do! Then Jesus looked at me—that struck me hard. He did not have a look of anger but rather a look of pain. I think His pain was not only feeling the personal betrayal but also feeling pain in my behalf. You cannot imagine how bad I felt!

I wonder what would have happened if I had been courageous enough to stand up for Jesus? Maybe it all would have been different. The fact is—I denied Jesus.

There is a bright note, however. Jesus was crucified and buried. On the third day, He arose from the dead. Can you imagine our shock? Jesus had told us of His resurrection, but it all sounded so strange to us. My excitement was affected by the guilt of denying Jesus. I felt no better than Judas! Would Jesus have anything to do with me again?

After Jesus had arisen from the dead we saw Him again. But I had difficulty feeling comfortable in Jesus' presence. I returned to fishing; after all, what good could this old fisherman be to Jesus now? As my luck would go, I caught nothing. We fished all night and were beginning to bring in our nets to call it quits. A man standing on shore told us to throw out our nets on the right side of our boat. We had fished all night with no success. But there's no harm trying again. We caught 153 fish—big ones too! Honest! I jumped into the water and swam to shore, leaving my partners to tend the fish. There stood Jesus—and He even had a hot breakfast waiting!

While we ate breakfast, I didn't say a word. It was one of the few times that words failed me. What could I say? How could Jesus ever believe in me again? Finally, in a

(Continued on page 32)

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Reflections on the AIDS Conference

by Carol Wight-Gritton

Circled around the walls of the meeting room at Camp Taconic in New York, the birthplace state of Phineas F. Bresee, founder of the Church of the Nazarene, I stood as part of a small but intense band of people. The reason for the circle of people was a weekend conference titled "AIDS: The Challenge for Compassion." Though we stood as representatives of the voice of the Church today, the united circle formed a reflection of past days when a similar group of people called the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene stood together in its organizational beginning.

Their Especial Work

They went . . . the Nazarenes . . . as a feeble band to a new and untried field of labor, taking as their especial work the neglected quarters of our city. . . . They feel that the call is to go wherever lives are burdened with sin, and hearts crying out. . . . From the first day in that hall upon Main Street, a revival fire has kept burning that has spread and broadened.¹

Going out into new and untried fields of labor is nothing new for those of us called Nazarenes. However some as of late have expressed concern, wondering if the revival fire that had burned for the neglected quarters was about to go out. But while standing among the people of this circled Nazarene conference I found that the fire, though beginning to look dim from a distance, had in fact "spread and broadened."

Invitation with a Purpose

Dear Friends . . . you are invited to carry on Christian work, especially evangelistic and city mis-

sion work . . . and the spreading of the doctrine and experience of Christian Holiness . . . with the purpose of preaching holiness, and carrying the gospel to the [downcast].²

The informal introductions began at one point in the circle, and the microphone was passed from one conference participant to another. All had come to the conference in response to a published invitation to compassion. Clearly this representative group, though differentiated by varied positions and states of origin, was united, as was the Early Church, by one purpose. This group had a purpose: to focus on the current "neglected quarter" issue of AIDS. The goal: to determine how we as the Body of Christ could best minister to the needs of AIDS victims and families.

One Mind—One Heart

It was the fire that burned within that gilded its boards with glory, and made them shimmer and shine with the glistening light of heaven. When the multitude is gathered together and there are hundreds of one mind and heart, and the Holy Ghost descends in His plenitude and power, that place is garnished with a beauty and glory in comparison with which all the adornings of Solomon's temple would be barrenness.³

There was Brother Howland, a New York paper manufacturer, who had suffered from internal cancer. Dr. Whistler, a physician from El Monte. C. E. McKee, the leader of the Young People's Society. Sister Ely, a matron of young

ladies at the Nazarene University. Mrs. Baldwin from Kentucky, the founder and teacher of the Bible College and also a writer. Mrs. Knott, pastor of the Mateo Street Mission. And, of course, Colonel Duncan, a prominent business man with influence in political circles.⁴

The "multitude" gathered at the AIDS Conference was as varied as the earliest Nazarene uniting, and its points of reference represented almost as many states. Sounding like a political convention's roll call, the responses to the invitation to come, came from all over—Virginia, Missouri, Indiana, Illinois, Oklahoma, Montana, Kansas, Georgia, New Hampshire. A registered nurse from Ohio. A senator from Oklahoma. There were health-care professionals, social workers, sociologists and educators, college administrators, along with students from Nazarene campuses.

The list continued—Massachusetts; Washington, D.C.; New Jersey, Kentucky, Texas, Idaho, Tennessee, Michigan, California, Florida, Canada, North Carolina, Maryland, Colorado, Oregon, New York. There were those from the seminary as well as interested laypersons. Some who attended were concerned relatives and friends of AIDS victims. One was a victim himself.

One's Words

It was this one, whose words echoed as one rapidly dying, who might have reflected old Brother Howland's spirit, dying from cancer himself. A practical challenge was issued that we must accept on behalf of "the least of these" as the least that we can do:

AIDS:

The Challenge for Compassion

by Carol Wight-Gritton

Flint, Mich.

We are messengers of Jesus Christ. And representatives of the Kingdom must reach out and say, "We love you." It may mean hospice care, visiting someone, or holding their hand in a cold, empty hospital. But we *must* reach out. Because Jesus has been there, we have to go there too.⁵

Going Out

... a peculiar yet unmistakable call of God, the Nazarenes, putting the old things behind them, went out to follow in the footsteps of Him whose name they bear—to bring comfort to the sorrowing, help to the downcast, a message of help to the brokenhearted, and to carry the gospel of peace to lives unburdened with sin.⁶

The introductions ended. I was in awe for this moment in time when I could stand as one, circled together with the others, wondering if this brief reflection of the past could be our hope for days to come. Maybe AIDS, this issue that we have silently feared and held at arm's distance, is more than a challenge to an act of compassion. Maybe its brokenheartedness could become a catalyst—sending us on a journey back home.

A representative group of the Church of the Nazarene gathered at Camp Taconic in New York, July 1-4, 1988, for a conference on AIDS. They came together for the sake of others—to learn, to help, and to help others help.

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. ... you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light" (Eph. 4:32—5:2, 8).

Children of Light

"The light illuminates, helping us and others to see," stated Dr. Terrell Sanders, president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, at the opening of the conference.

Kindness, compassion, and forgiveness are needed; and these do not flow out of the natural heart. To be effective, we must accept people with AIDS where they are, for who they are, and as a valuable creation of God.

But how do we accept, love, and care without condoning unacceptable life-styles? The answer is love. Love always hopes. Love keeps the door open and arms unconditionally extended. It is the love of Christ.

Take a look into the face of somebody's son or daughter whose life has been devastated by sin. They

are lying on the grounds and in the streets of our cities. If we are really light, we've got to reach out, and it will cost us something—a sacrifice of self. This reaching out includes all of us, not just those committed to urban ministries.

The needs are greater than us individually and collectively. We need God's help and wisdom to know what to do. We need self-understanding in order to know how to respond in a compassionate, Christ-like way.

This is our great opportunity to become the leading edge. This conference is part of the church's response. Among the churches, we are among the first to hold a conference to decide what to do. But this is just a beginning.

We must learn to submit to one another—to help, to educate, to give our sisters and brothers the right to hold opinions different from our own, and in *everything* to love each other as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

AIDS victims today are the throwaway people of our society. Elizabeth Cole, pioneer missionary nurse to Swaziland, gave up her horse to answer a call to the lepers—the throwaway people of Swaziland. When she returned from her assignment to the United States for retirement, it was declared that leprosy was no longer a major threat in Swaziland. That happened because she gave her life for their sake. We must do nothing less.

Carol Wight-Gritton is a free-lance writer living in Flint, Mich., representing the Association of Nazarenes in Social Work.

1. Rev. E. A. Girvin, *Phineas F. Bresee: A Prince in Israel* (Kansas City: Pentecostal Nazarene Publishing House, 1916), 125.

2. *Ibid.*, 109.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. Keith Smith, Nazarene AIDS victim, spoken at AIDS Conference, July 1988.

6. Girvin, *Prince in Israel*.

CALLED FOR THIS TIME

Presented by

Richard F. Schubert

at the AIDS Conference in New York, July 1988

Adapted, from speech presentation, by Carol Wight-Gritton

Five and a half years ago I first heard the word A.I.D.S., Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. What started then as a trickle of information the size of a man's hand in the sky has become a torrent of concern, apprehension, fear, panic, and pain.

What still is necessary—what we all need desperately—is some kind of Christian perspective.

In Jesus' Perspective

This may be the most traumatic, pervasive problem for civilization, short of nuclear weapons, since World War II. AIDS will change the nature of every aspect of the way we live, as much as, if not more than, the oil crisis in the mid-70s.

The essential question is how will we manage the crisis?

On one hand we must reduce the spread of the disease through change in behavior.

On the other hand, we must not yield to fear-mongers and antisocial, even anti-Christian, behavior.

We cannot manage by imprisoning, isolating, persecuting, or even excluding. The problem is simply too large and overpowering. Even if we could manage by isolating and excluding, we *could not* do so as Christians.

As Christ reached out to the leper, so must we.

What AIDS Is and Is Not

AIDS IS NOT spread through casual contact. For example, working, swimming, hugging, sneezing, coughing in the air.

AIDS IS a deadly illness caused by a virus, a blood-born sexually transmitted disease. The AIDS virus interferes with the body's ability to fight off infection, including life-threatening infections. There is no known cure and no vaccine. It is a

smart virus with the ability to mutate and to avoid lethal disease-fighting agents. It is like a smart mouse in a maze who recognizes barriers and moves away from them en route to its goal.

AIDS IS—

1. The AIDS virus is spread by sexual contact with an infected person, involving the exchange of one or all of three body fluids: semen, blood, and vaginal secretions.
2. The AIDS virus is spread by needles and syringes used to shoot intravenous drugs.
3. The AIDS virus can be transmitted from an infected mother to her infant during pregnancy. This is happening currently at a rate of 1 in 68 infants born with AIDS in New York City.
4. The AIDS virus can be transmitted through a contaminated blood transfusion and blood products, although rarely.

Who Is Vulnerable?

Anyone who is exposed to the exchange of one of the three bodily fluids—semen, blood, vaginal secretions—is vulnerable. The focus has been among the homosexual and I.V. drug user communities.

Though a low percentage, it is unfortunate that some innocent people have been exposed. These persons were simply recipients of blood in response to a life-threatening difficulty.

When AIDS Comes Home

The life of an AIDS victim is not pleasant. Ultimately hundreds of thousands of people will be floating in and out of intensive care institutions, work sites, schools, and homes, going back to their family for some kind of refuge in which to die.

The perception still exists by

some small-town Americans that they are exempt from the impact of the disease. That thought is now ludicrous. For home, where a majority of the infected people ultimately go, could be the smallest town in the Midwest.

Every segment of every organization of any size, every family or extended family will be affected in some fashion or another by this disease by 1993.

The bottom line is this: every institution, including the church, must determine how it will manage the problem when it arrives on the doorstep—for it *will* arrive.

What Can We Do?

What can we do as a society and as individuals to protect ourselves, our loved ones, our community, and the fabric that holds society together? Education!

Education must extend, not only to the intellect but also to the emotions, the psyche, and the very soul. The need for this protective education goes to several targets—self, community crisis management, compassionate care, and national policy.

There will be splits, chasms between men and women of goodwill, many times even by those with similar value systems.

We, the responsible evangelical community, have an opportunity as well as a unique responsibility to step forward and be counted. We should be clearly on the decisive and prudent management of this issue, yet compassionate.

The temptation is to do things that are *opposite* of prudent, compassionate management:

1. The Ostrich Syndrome: "If I stick my head in the sand, the problem will go away." But, it simply is not going to go away

in the near or intermediate term. We have only seen the tip of the iceberg in numbers or qualitative impact.

2. "They Made Their Own Bed; Let Them Lie in It." This thought has mostly been directed toward the homosexual and I.V. drug user communities. But, it is not only these two communities becoming infected. The nature and extent of bisexual activity in this country insures that others, innocent under any definition, will be increasingly impacted.
3. "It Is Somebody Else's Problem." Dr. Miler, director of the General World Health Organization, says, "We stand nakedly in front of a pandemic as mortal as any pandemic there has ever been." It is everybody's problem.
4. "Let's Not Be Leaders, but Followers" Syndrome. Let someone else call the shots. But if the church is overshadowed by other leadership, the debate will be conducted in the language of condoms, not abstinence. We will have no one to blame but ourselves.

The Christian community will not have an easy time with this problem. It has never been easy to separate the sin from the sinner, particularly in the areas of drugs and sex. There are tendencies to treat the areas of homosexuality and I.V. drug users as we do other "out of culture" activities. We shy away, to draw a cocoon of protection around each of us and our families. But realistically that simply is not Christian. Jesus Christ did not exclude the prostitute and the leper; He embraced them—figuratively and literally.

Called One Step Higher

Matthew 5 and 13 suggest that we are salt and light, leaven or yeast.

Concerning *light*, we can be the information conduits that bring the light of facts to the broadest possible audience in order to dispel the darkness of ignorance. We can, at the least, help the world at the end of our fingertips to sort out facts and myths about what is really happening.

We can enlighten ourselves and others that AIDS, indeed, is not eas-

ily caught. It is not communicated by casual contact. Victims can be hugged. Kids can go to school. Workers can work in offices and factories. We can't catch AIDS by donating blood. And you *do* get AIDS from sexual imprudence and I.V. drug use.

We can educate that a cure and vaccine for AIDS are both a long way off.

We can show films (like those produced by the Red Cross) with our own prelude and postlude, and preempt these communication vehicles by clearly and unequivocally stating, "Yes, condoms are mentioned, but not for you because you are different."

The world desperately needs our light in respect to this phenomenon.

Concerning *salt*, we can be the salt preservative to help keep the lid on, to help keep the fabric of society from tearing apart, to keep the "worst case scenario" suggested by the new Hudson Institute from happening.

We cannot manage the AIDS crisis by imprisoning, isolating, persecuting, or even excluding.

We, the church, can help people manage the crisis wherever and however it emerges in every community. Someone has to lead the way. No one is in a better position to do it than the church.

The church *can* separate the sin from the sinner. And as Christ did, we can reach out in a redemptive, caring way. That's what we are to be.

Concerning *leaven or yeast*, we are special stewards of this unique substance called yeast. It is indeed a magic powder, a catalyst that changes things and makes them better. We can do this by reaching out and embracing hurting people, taking the miniscule risk that is involved.

There simply is no evidence of disease spreading through casual contact, but there is also no sci-

entific absolute guarantee of no possible risk. However, this same risk factor is no different from going to and from church through some of our urban traffic patterns. But it is often viewed differently.

There will be cases that arise that don't fit neatly and squarely into established guidelines. So, we must call each other to be Christlike in our reaching out and our caring. By the compassion of our love, we *can* make things different—even better—and the world will know us, that we are Christians, by our love.

Called for a Time Such as This

People with AIDS, along with their family members and friends, have a claim on the church simply by virtue of their plight. Jesus did not merely greet sinners—the afflicted and the poor—but also included them. He engaged them in actions that dramatized His personal concern for them. Jesus searched for them and welcomed both table fellowship and physical touch.

To remain open to the stranger with AIDS, and to love him, requires a special message of courage and hope, which when left to our own resources we will have difficulty achieving.

In the face of societal prejudice and hysteria, the willingness to reach out and touch the life of a man, woman, or child with AIDS is possible only by grace-endowed people, empowered by the Holy Spirit who promises to counsel and strengthen.

For such a grace-endowed people, there must be no disparity between words and deeds. The church is confronted with an opportunity to make credible the New Testament image of God's people as a reconciling and redeeming community. If we fail in this endeavor, it will be a failure, not only of nerve but also of love. This may, indeed, be the singular opportunity of our lives to show the positive nature of Jesus Christ.

History is in the making. We can help make it the right way. Queen Esther went back and forth for a moment when she learned of the tragedy about to befall her people. It was Uncle Mordecai who finally got to her and said, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14, KJV). 

Red Cross Involvement with AIDS

The American Red Cross first became involved with AIDS in December 1982 when three senior blood services personnel discovered that AIDS could be transmitted through blood.

The first primary goal of the Red Cross is to preserve safety and adequacy of the blood supply.

The first simple screening test for AIDS in blood was developed in March 1985 by the American Red Cross.

A Public Education Program was started by the Red Cross to dispel the rumor that "you can get AIDS by donating blood."

The American Red Cross's present involvement:

- 80 million brochures distributed
- 1,200 chapters with full-time AIDS coordinators
- Four films produced and available:
  - a. *Beyond Fear*
  - b. *A Letter from Brian*
  - c. *Don't Forget Sherry*
  - d. *Working Beyond Fear (AIDS in the Workplace)*
- Public service announcements

The Red Cross is an organization committed to candid, straightforward public education in respect to safety and health, for 107 years.

Richard F. Schubert, president of the American Red Cross for six years, is a graduate of Eastern Nazarene College where he is currently vice chairman of the board of trustees.

THE ANSWER TO AIDS:

Presented by
Tom Nees

at the AIDS Conference in New York, July 1988

Adapted, from speech presentation, by Carol Wight-Gritton

Some days I try to walk by him. If his head is down I can walk by without saying, "Good morning, George." Most days he's there. He is a reminder to me of my powerlessness—the total lack of any insight and ability on my part—to bring about any change at all with anyone, apart from the presence of the Spirit of God.

A Parable of the City

This parable of the brokenness and desperation of the city is embodied in a man who sits on the steps of Belmont Street Community of Hope Church. George is a man with whom we failed miserably. Years ago we tried to help him get his act together; then he disappeared. Once in a while he comes back. Now, he lives on the streets.

But, in the midst of all this need, we come to the Word in Philippians—the Word about our Savior who became obedient even unto death. At the Community of Hope, we ask ourselves the question that I hope our entire church will ask: "How do we experience that obedience—obedience even unto death—so we can understand the power of the resurrection?"

A Parable of the Future

In my community, which is a high-risk neighborhood, AIDS does not create quite the consternation as elsewhere. There, life has *always* been at risk. Life without AIDS in our neighborhood is already threatening. Some of the people I deal with don't even think they'll live long enough to die of AIDS anyway.

So, why are we here at a conference on AIDS? Would we be here for a conference on cancer or heart disease? And yet many more people will die with these illnesses in the year ahead than with AIDS.

We are here because there's a

general acceptance that underlying the physical problem is a moral and spiritual issue. In some way, as in no other issue we can identify, the practice of medicine and religious belief converge. At this moment in our history, the medical practitioners as well as theologians are struggling for direction.

What is the meaning of this convergence, and what are we going to say to medical practitioners and people of faith?

"If you want a prophetic parable about the future," Dr. Reed Tuckson said, "you must read Albert Camus's *The Plague*. It is the most accurate description of what life will be like for us by the end of this century."

**How do we
experience
that obedience
even unto death?**

As in that novel, so in this country and around the world, AIDS will eventually become the dominant reference point for every conversation and every activity, dominating all of our plans.

The Plague—Then and Now

The story of *The Plague* takes place in the Algerian port city of Oran where a ravaging epidemic of bubonic plague has thrown the city into harrowing agony. The city becomes a prison of death and disease to which every character reacts in his own way. The focus is on Dr. Bernard Ruu and those who join with him to alleviate suffering in the city.

OBEDIENCE

Dr. Ruu and the citizens of Iran find it difficult to admit, at first, that a tragedy is even taking place among them. Everybody knows that pestilence has a way of recurring in the world, yet somehow we find it hard to believe in the ones that crash down on our heads from a blue sky.

"There have been as many plagues as wars in history," states Camus, "yet always plagues and wars take people equally by surprise. In this respect," he writes, "our townsfolk were like everyone else—wrapped up in themselves. In other words, they were humanists. They disbelieved in pestilences."*

A pestilence isn't a thing made to man's measure; therefore, we tell ourselves pestilence is a mere bogey of the mind—a dream that will pass away. But it doesn't pass away, and from one bad dream to another it is men who pass away. The humanists pass away first because they haven't taken their precautions.

"Our townsfolk were not more to blame than others," says Camus, "they forgot to be modest that was all. And they thought that everything still was possible for them which presupposed that pestilences were impossible. They went on doing business, arranged for journeys and formed views. How should they have given a thought to anything like The Plague which rules out any future, cancels journeys, and silences the exchange of views. They fancied themselves free. And no one will ever be free so long as there are pestilences."

Taking Action

When they could no longer deny the plague, the people of Iran began to take a series of actions that were increasingly difficult, if not unheard of, and yet all necessary. The actions were in a progressive series of re-

strictions on the freedom of travel and exchange.

First, the city is quarantined. All who enter must stay. No one may leave.

Second, those who develop symptoms are separated from the general population and eventually even those who have lived with them.

Then there are frantic attempts to find cures—false hopes that the plague will soon disappear.

Eventually, even public funerals are forbidden. The dead are quickly buried and burned in mass graves.

In one way or another, everyone is affected and threatened by the plague.

"The ecclesiastical authorities in our town," declares Camus, "resolved to do battle against the Plague with the weapons appropriate to them. They organized a week of prayer."

Father Panalo delivers a sermon during this week of prayer. The temple is full of people anxious for some divine intervention, and the sermon is judgmental, authoritarian, and moralistic.

"For a long while," preaches the well-meaning Father, "God gazed

**Some of the people
don't think they'll
live long enough to
die of AIDS.**

down on this town with eyes of compassion but He grew weary of waiting. His eternal hope was too long deferred and He now has turned his face away from us. And so, with God's light withdrawn, we walk in darkness; in the thick darkness of the Plague."

The sermon triggers a series of discussions that the medical doctor cannot accept. So, he considers himself to be a nonbeliever. The church had no theology for the doctor. It had nothing to say to those who were on the frontlines of medical practice to help them understand, let alone sustain them through, the crisis.

The doctor sums it up for himself and for us. "For the moment," he says, "I know this; there are sick people and they need curing." At that moment, with no help from the church, the doctor went back to his own basic, innate spirituality of a compassion that needs no explanation.

A Theology of Compassion?

Even if our theology is not always good there is something essentially good about who we are and what needs to be done. There is something redeeming within us even when we don't have the right answers.

In returning to *The Plague*, we find the disease worsens. More and more children are stricken and the priest has to modify his theodicy—his attempt to rationally explain what God is doing. As he delivers his second sermon, the plague is in the advanced stages. There are not so many at the church anymore; they have given up that God is going to intervene. Many have given up on faith altogether.

The priest suggests that some deeper meaning other than suffering is the reason for this deadly plague. Perhaps somehow God is involved in the suffering. He sees the suffering in the light of the Cross alongside those afflicted. The priest suggests that this mystery must be loved and accepted even when it cannot be understood.

The doctor disagrees that this theodicy will not work because there is no way to explain what is going on. And how can he be expected to love what he cannot understand?

The priest develops symptoms of the plague. When he realizes it, at first he keeps it a secret. Then an elderly, devout woman recognizes the symptoms and offers him a place to stay. He does not want to call the doctor. And, because in his moment of suffering his theodicy cannot offer either answers or comfort, he chooses to die alone in silence.

Us and Them?

So much of what we have been saying in recent days has this us/them mentality. We are trying to develop a theology for "them." "We don't have AIDS," we say; "they do."

We have fixed a great gulf. Sometimes, by the things we try to say and do, we even widen the gulf.

If I understand incarnational theology, it was intended that there be no gulf. "Though He had equality with God, He did not grasp after that but gave up those prerogatives and took on the shape of human life—even to the point of being obedient unto death—that He might totally identify with us" (Phil. 2:8, paraphrase).

"I know this: there are sick people and they need curing."

That is the heart of our faith. There is no longer a gulf between "us" and "them." Somehow in Christ we are all brought together.

I grew up with the gospel of affluence, through the eyes of a very privileged community—the new WASPs (White, Affluent, Separated, and Protected). Now I have come into a community of people who have read the gospel very differently. If I am to communicate the gospel in my neighborhood, I have to see it through the eyes of poor people.

How does the gospel read if you are poor—or black with a history of racial injustice—or if you have AIDS? We can't see it from their perspective unless we quit talking about "us and them" as if we have something to take to "them."

Giving up Utopia

As a result of reading *The Plague*, I see that my theology is as inadequate as the priest's until I put myself in that place in advance.

If it does nothing else for us, the AIDS crisis will force us to a more reflective, mature, biblical theology. The shallow theology of our times, the popular gospel of health, wealth, and happiness, will soon be discarded as we search for a faith that can sustain us when faced by our powerlessness over the plague.

In our age of scientific rationalism, we have all but eliminated the mys-

terious from our frame of reference. But with AIDS we no longer are all-powerful. We no longer have all the answers. We are finally driven back to an ultimate mystery at the center of life, into corners where there are no exits and no ways out.

Those of us who work among high-risk populations have had to give up our utopian visions. Much of our motivation, the thing that has driven us in the past, is that we can come into a neighborhood with actions that will bring about change. So, self-help, empowerment, helping people to stand and make it on their own, arranging housing, finding jobs—all of this with the utopian notion of changes that we are going to bring about. Then we are hit with the plague.

What will we do when we are forced to give up our notion to be healers and saviors as we are left powerless to AIDS? What is there to sustain us in our powerlessness when even for doctors it becomes more a task of diagnosing rather than to cure.

Only One Answer

In *The Plague*, the devastation disappears as mysteriously as it came. Cries of joy rise from the town as they resume their lives as they were before.

But the plague never really disappears.

At the end of World War II, Camus could hardly have imagined that his prophetic parable would have come to pass to the degree that it has before the end of this century.

In search for a theology that is adequate for this hour, we have to go back to Philipians. What do we have to say to each other and what does the Lord have to say to us about the power of the resurrection amidst our powerlessness?

The theology of the New Testament is the theology of the crucified Christ who identified with us to the point of being "obedient unto death."

When I think about the possibility of the AIDS plague spreading, I often ask myself: "What's the worst thing that could happen?"

The worst that could happen is that I might die. And what does that mean? I would in fact be following the lead of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who "became obedient unto death."

That is our theology—and it is not threatened by death.

We have grown up in a culture that denies death and aging. We are terrified by something that might intervene to cut short our lives. But, scriptures offer us a way to respond even to that ultimate threat. So, let our language not be condescending. Let our language be adequate to sustain those on the front line, those who are dying, and all of us who have no answers except The Answer found in the person of Jesus.

Love in Action

As I have had to face this, people who are suffering, and some who have died, it has taken something of the sharp edge off my vision and made it a little less definable—some days even a little less exciting. It is a struggle to decide what it means to be prosperous in the midst of poverty—prosperous with my whiteness.

I am aware of the gaps and, because of them, I have to work against them. But, I am also aware of a tendency to want to keep the gap there as when it comes to AIDS. There are times I'm not sure that I want to go out on the street knowing what I know.

**The new WASPs—
White, Affluent,
Separated,
and Protected.**

If we are going to share the gospel, we cannot shout it from a distance. In some way it must be shared, one on one, by people who are neither afraid nor condescending, but who are willing to go to the streets and neighborhoods and hospitals, to go to the high-risk areas in the obedient example of Jesus even if it means obedience unto death, so that with Him we may be exalted and know the power of His resurrection through us.

Dr. Tom Nees is the founder and director of the Community of Hope Church of the Nazarene in Washington, D.C.

*Albert Camus, *The Plague* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966). Translated from the French by Stuart Gilbert.

A Reserve Chaplain —Right Place at the Right Time

by David A. Tish
U. S. Army Chaplain

What does a pastor do as a reserve chaplain? Many people have asked that question more than once. He performs an invaluable service to his church, country, and God.

Prior to coming on active duty as an army chaplain, I served two years in the Army Reserve in Salem, Oreg. During these two wonderful years, I met people I would not have otherwise known and received training that benefited other areas of my life. But one special benefit was the ministry I was able to perform because I was a chaplain. Let me tell you about one such "ministry."

2Lt. Robert Sapp was a student at a local university and an ROTC cadet. He attended services regularly, and we talked together often. In his visits he began to share with me his spiritual journey. He had entered college to "make money" but now was sensing God's call to a life of full-time Christian service.

At first, college was only a place to get a law degree in order to become a Christian lawyer. As he grew in Christ, he soon came to realize that God had a special "call" for him. God was leading him to other areas. As we shared, I pointed out the joys, benefits, requirements of service to God in a full-time capacity.

Now, he is about to complete his college training. He plans to enroll in seminary to prepare for full-time Christian ministry. Talking to him the other day, he reaffirmed his call—a call to be a minister of the gospel, a servant of God.

Granted, God was already at work in Lt. Sapp's life. Many people had sown the good seed in his life. God was stimulating growth. But one such seed planter was a chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserve. One week-end a month, the minister of a local church put on a second hat as an army chaplain. In so doing he became a tool for God to use in calling one soldier.

THE MINISTRY OF PRESENCE

by Chaplain Jack Nix
Fort Riley, Kans.

While attending the Chaplain Officer Basic Course, the concept of the "ministry of presence" was drilled into our class of new chaplains. My understanding of this concept was beginning to develop during my first six months on active duty. Serving as battalion chaplain, conducting two memorial services, and providing chaplain coverage for ROTC Summer Camp brought my attention to the importance of the "ministry of presence." But an experience as post duty chaplain crystallized the concept.

As duty chaplain, I was responsible for all emergencies for one week on a 24-hour basis. I dealt with an attempted suicide, a homicidal teenager, depressed wives, families needing financial assistance, a young lady suffering a mental breakdown, two AWOLs, and the discovery of a major cocaine ring, just to name a few of the incidents. (This is *not* a typical week in the army!) As duty chaplain, it was my responsibility to handle these situations and refer them to the appropriate resources.

On Monday morning, I was assisting two reserve chaplains in process for their annual training. As I waited for them to complete paperwork, SFC Jones* asked if he could talk with me. We went to a nearby room for privacy where, fighting back the tears, SFC Jones began to unfold his story. His wife of 23 years was

finalizing a divorce within hours. She was apparently unable to cope with mid-life physical changes and had turned on her family. SFC Jones expressed a deep love for her, even though she was involved in extramarital affairs. He realized that she was hurting herself as well as the family, and he expressed a willingness to accept her anyway. He was concerned about their 16-year-old daughter who was watching her mother do the very things that she had been taught were wrong. Their 8-year-old son was torn between the two homes. He had been counseling with one of the family life chaplains, but his wife had refused to go.

SFC Jones was crying out for help. As a chaplain, I represented a source of help. Unable to solve his problems, I could only offer to listen and to encourage him. I was able to direct him to a source of help that reaches beyond all the resources of the army—our Savior, Jesus Christ.

It was my first, and possibly my last, visit to that particular building. I thank God for placing me in the right place at the right time. The "ministry of presence" is an essential part of the chaplain's real-life ministry. It is also a vital part of each and every Christian's ministry—the "ministry of presence"—God reaching others through us!

*The name has been changed to protect confidentiality.

THE DYNAMICS OF MINISTERIAL MORALITY

by Lyndon K. McDowell

My first experience of the moral frailty of men in the ministry came early. I had opted to spend a year interning before graduation. The year was a profitable one. The evangelist, an indefatigable worker with a profound knowledge of Scripture, became both my mentor and model. He also had a daughter with a pretty face and figure. One day the minister left the two of us alone to work on some evangelistic advertising. We talked and teased and flirted, and presently I surrendered to an impulsive urge to kiss the young lady firmly and full on the lips.

In retrospect I realize that I must have been ignorant about women and their sexuality. My lessons began that day. Readers must understand, however, as I am sure they do, that there is a big difference between reality and the impression of reality. The passage of years also distorts the picture. I write about images and impressions as they remain with me after the passing of nearly 40 years. I have stated this, for I mean no discourtesy to the lady involved, whose husband will probably read this article and remind her of the incident. She will no doubt protest that *her* set of memories is quite different from mine.

As I remember, therefore, the young lady responded with excited eyes and quickened breath and in turn came to kiss me. Two biologically stirred youth alone in a shed is a situation hardly compatible with evangelism. Vaguely I knew I was in trouble, and as she drew near I

raised the marking pen I had in my hand and marked her face.

That was mean, and as my son said when he first read these lines, "Dad, there are other ways of doing it!" But the situation was such that possibly the pen saved me for the ministry! I felt terribly guilty afterward. The flush of excitement that had surged through me must have been lust. How could I ever go into the ministry if I was that sort of guy? I asked myself. Then, what I call the Adam and Eve syndrome came to my rescue. It was, I told myself, the evangelist's fault for leaving us alone. Strange how persistent a syndrome is. It remains a strong strain in homosapiens even after some 6,000 years, especially in the area of morals.

I have since learned that a better way to explain my behavior would have been to simply recognize that when any two people of opposite sex work closely together, sexual feelings will almost inevitably be aroused.

When two people work very closely together . . . as a minister does with his parishioner, or a doctor with his patient, feelings of comradery and warmth almost inevitably arise between them. . . .

When the two people are of opposite sex and not too disparate in background, these warm feelings will almost always assume a sexual cast.¹

The very nature of the ministry is such that men find themselves work-

ing closely with women. The pastor should, therefore, be prepared to deal with sexual attraction. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

The problem of dealing with ministerial morals is an age-old one. Pope Gregory ordained that if a priest committed a sin against purity he should do penance for 10 years. For the first three months he should sleep on the ground, remain in solitude, have no intercourse with any person, and should be deprived of Communion. He should then fast every day for a year and a half on bread and water, and for the remainder of the 10 years he should continue to fast on bread and water only on three days a week.²

If I read history correctly, there must have been heavy demand for bread and water in some centuries of the church's history, but at least the miscreants had a chance to redeem their ministry. Many denominations today make no provision whatever for reinstating a minister who has committed such a sin. While this rule is probably wise, one's heart bleeds for some.

There is a popular fallacy that every moral fall must be preceded by a long flirtation with evil, or secret lust, or that acute marital unhappiness is the predisposing cause. These may be possible causes, but I have come to believe they are the exception rather than the rule.

No one is immune to the sins of the flesh. We all share in the common frailties that lie at the root of transgression. It is how we handle

these frailties that makes the difference. "When our inborn sexual responses, and the interpersonal stimuli evoking them, are consciously and guiltlessly recognized, the total responses can much more easily be kept within socially appropriate bounds."³ To be aware of them is to enable us to handle them.

Causes of Immorality

Mid-life crisis is an important element whose role in setting up a minister to be receptive to temptation needs to be understood. Most men change as they approach middle age. These changes are part and parcel of normal development. Edmund Hallberg calls this time of life the "metapause" and states that it is "so subtle and private that the victim, his family, fellow golfers, and occasional girlfriends sometimes don't even recognize it. Loneliness is often with us."⁴

Hallberg goes on to list a number of signals that give evidence of the metapause: There is growing dissatisfaction with our work. We no longer come up with new ideas. We fall asleep in the easy chair. "We have longer hair, which no longer covers the bald spot . . . the weight continues to increase. This is all part of 'the gray itch.'"⁵

With personality growth and change, restlessness and discontent sometimes become more and more intense. A process of self-questioning that affects a man's view, not only of himself but also of those about him, takes place, and an increased sense of loneliness often sparks sexual fantasies. A man's marriage and family are brought into question, and life begins to take on a different meaning. If a minister is aware of what this period of life can do to men, it will not only enable him to minister more adequately to others but also alert him to possible pitfalls in his own life and ministry.

Even a close spiritual relationship can present dangers. Roman Catholic father Sertorius Caputa observed: "The devil endeavors first to infuse a love for the virtue of the individual, and thus inspire a security that there is no danger; he then excites sentiments of affection for the person, and afterward tempts to sin; and thus he causes great havoc."⁶ St. Thomas says much the same:

Although carnal affection is dangerous to all, it is yet more so for those that associate with persons that seem to be spiritual; for, even though the beginning is pure, yet frequently familiarity is very dangerous; and the more the familiarity increases, the more the first motive is weakened and thus purity is defiled. The devil knows well how to conceal danger. In the beginning he sends, not poisoned darts, but only those that inflict slight wounds, and kindle an affection but in a short time the persons begin to act toward each other not like angels, as in the beginning, but like beings clothed with flesh. The looks are not immodest, but they are frequent and reciprocal; their words appear to be spiritual but are too affectionate. Each begins frequently to desire the company of the other.⁷

The pastor should be prepared to deal with sexual attraction.

Pastoral visitation and spiritual counseling frequently evoke deep feelings. Pastors become emotionally tied to those to whom they minister. Deep friendships are formed, and it is not always easy to discern when spiritual boundaries end and sexual attraction begins. There is often a broad "no-man's-land" that separates the two. One pastor told me of his experience.

John ministered to two churches some miles apart. On the highway between the churches was country road 34, which led to a summer resort area. Jim, a busy executive, and his wife, Joan, slim and pretty and mother of two, spent the summer there with their children.⁸ Pastor John had a close tie with the family. Bible studies had led to baptism and a warm friendship. John was single and lonely at the time, and it was a pleasure when traveling between his two churches to turn down country road 34 and visit. At first he didn't realize that Jim's long working hours were getting to Joan. But soon the

visits began to satisfy mutual desire. Slowly the innocent farewell embraces became a little more lingering.

One day when John arrived, Joan was alone in the house and dressed more for swimming and sunning than visiting. As John greeted her, for perhaps two long seconds their eyes met and there was a "Joseph and Potiphar's wife" situation, except that John was not quite ready to leave his cloak and run. When Joan excused herself to "put on something more modest" John was conscious of the fact that his mind followed her to the bedroom.

The incident alerted John to his danger, and he did two things. He deliberately planned a visit to the home when Jim was present, and during the visit he paid special attention to Jim. He also told a relative about the physical attraction that was obviously mutual and that he was going to have to be careful. Verbalizing the situation spotlighted the potential sinfulness of it and made it easier to deal with. Fortunately Joan realized the problem as well, and without having to deal with it openly the two of them brought their relationship under control.

It was not always easy for John to drive past country road 34. But friendships were retained and ministerial standards were upheld. "It could easily have been different," John told me. "It showed me that, given the right occasion and chemistry, it would be very easy indeed to transgress."

Whenever a pastor becomes aware that pastoral visits are dictated more by his own emotional drives than pastoral duty, he must recognize that he is on a dangerous road. Long, intimate telephone conversations, mutual looks, and desire for each other's company are danger signals. If there is added to this the real or imagined impression that the parishioner is sexually available, the danger is heightened and food is provided for fantasies that can intrude themselves into the mind even in sacred moments. Fantasies readily become more intrusive when women are allowed to discuss their sexual problems with the pastor. It is a safe rule that a minister should never permit this. Such intimacies have a bewitching power.

"The heart is corrupted through the imagination. The mind takes pleasure in contemplating scenes which awaken the lower and baser passions."⁹ I can still recall Kodacolor images from a conversation with a woman who in speaking of her marital problems gave a graphic description of her sexual difficulties. "The spiritual eyesight becomes blurred, and persons of hitherto untainted morals become confused."¹⁰ Too easily the silken cords of sin multiply until they are almost impossible to break.

Charles Rassieur recounts the confession of one pastor who had allowed those silken cords to bind him:

When I would decide to be a faithful pastor and cut this thing off, I would go for a week or 10 days and not see her. I would feel very bad. Either I would call her up and say, I want to talk to you, or she would stop in the office and say something that would tell me—or I would be telling her—that we needed to relate. And this kept going on.¹¹

The Pastor's Moral Defenses

What are the pastor's moral defenses? First of all, marital happiness and openness are a tremendous source of strength. Fortunate is the pastor who has a supportive and understanding wife. On the other hand, a critical and demanding wife can drive a man to sin. I visited one home and listened as the injured wife bewailed the fact that not only had her husband been unfaithful, but she could not understand why he had fallen for such a "dumb, low-class woman." To me the answer was obvious. His wife was a perfectionist. In subtle ways she had made her minister husband constantly feel inadequate and unable to measure up to her demands. When he found someone who accepted him as he was and treated him like a king, he naturally chose to be treated like a king.

Second, the minister must be absolutely honest with himself. Candidly face up to the very beginning of an attraction. This is not always easy. Self-deception is a common failing. We seldom like to call sin by its right name. We must also be aware of the subconscious spirit of pride and self-righteousness that

says, "Does this woman really think she could tempt me? I'm going to try her out a bit." This is an open invitation to temptation, and pride goes before a fall. If the pastor is absolutely honest with himself, he will recognize the first appearance of physical attraction and deal with it promptly. Such honesty takes the grace of God and a recognition of one's frailty. St. Bernard wrote: "To be familiar with a woman and to preserve chastity require greater virtue than to raise a dead man to life."¹² Paul's warning that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood" (Eph. 6:12, NASB) is also very pertinent here. We have an enemy to deal with.

**We all share in
common frailties. It is
how we handle these
frailties that makes
the difference.**

Third, recognize the danger signals. Mutual looks. The desire to be in her company. Making excuses for unnecessary pastoral visits. The exchange of intimate details of one's life. All should be red flag signals. Persistent fantasies about a parishioner should call clamorously at the conscience. If they begin to occupy the mind, the best way to deal with them is to talk about them with your wife or someone else whom you can trust. Verbalizing them brings them out of the realm of illusion into reality where they can be dealt with. Fantasies, like pornographic pictures, are painted in psychedelic colors that have no substance. In the glare of reality they are revealed in all their shabbiness and sin.

Fourth, maintain a high standard of the ministry. At one time I worked in a very British country and took to wearing a clerical collar. The dress was an open sesame for hospital visitation where visitation hours were more strictly regulated than in North America. Occasionally, when trains were uncrowded, the kindly conductor would say, "Come with me, Reverend, I think I can find you a more comfortable compartment."

Sometimes the more comfortable compartment was first-class, even though I had a second-class ticket. In other words, the clergy, as "men of the cloth," were respected. But the collar did something more. Whenever I saw myself reflected in a mirror or window I was reminded of the fact that I was a "man of the cloth" and as such I had a standard of deportment to uphold. Whatever I did would reflect on the ministry.

Whether or not we wear a clerical collar, this is still true. Each one of us holds a measure of the reputation of our fellow ministers in our hands. A high regard for our calling is a barrier against sin.

Related to this is the necessity of strong moral and theological convictions. We are bombarded with sensuality and permissiveness today. To counteract the tide, we need to reaffirm our standards constantly. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (KJV) needs to be an ever-present admonition not only to our congregations but also to our own souls.

Finally, the very best defense is flight. Run away. Francis of Assisi wrote: "I know what I ought to do, but I know not what I would do were I to remain in the occasion of sin."¹³ Solomon spoke from experience when he wrote: "Remove your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house, lest you give your honor to others, and your years to the cruel one" (Prov. 5:8, NKJV). ♀

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NOTES

1. Nathaniel S. Lehrman, M.D., "The Normality of Sexual Feelings in Pastoral Counseling," *Pastoral Psychology* (June 1960), 49.
2. Quoted by Alphonsus de Liguori in Rev. E. Grimm, ed., *Dignity and Duties of the Priest or, Selva* (a collection of material for ecclesiastical retreats).
3. Lehrman, *Normality of Sexual Feelings*, 51.
4. Edmund D. Hallberg, *The Gray Itch: The Male Metapause Syndrome* (New York: Stein and Day, 1978), 12.
5. *Ibid.*, 5.
6. de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties*, 255.
7. *Ibid.*
8. The names have been changed.
9. Elen White, *The Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1980), 408.
10. *Ibid.*, 330. I have taken some liberties with the context of these two quotations, but both the wording and warning are pertinent.
11. Charles L. Rassieur, *The Problem Clergymen Don't Talk About* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 28.
12. de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties*, 253.
13. *Ibid.*, 250.

The Minister's Mate

LISTENING TO GOD— AND YOUR HUSBAND

by Jill Briscoe

*Pastor's wife and free-lance writer
Waukesha, Wis.*

It's Sunday morning. There you are sitting in the pew doing nobody any harm when suddenly you are aware that every eye in the church is upon you. Your husband has just used you as an illustration. If the illustration isn't particularly flattering, you think, I wish he wouldn't do that. If it's flattering, you wish your face wasn't turning the same hue as the poinsettias.

It's not that I mind providing a bit of color to the sermon, but I find it's difficult personally to get the point. It's all part of my struggle to listen without feeling I've been listening to my husband rather than to God.

It's always great to stand near my husband at the end of the service and hear someone thanking him for the help they've received from his talk, but how do I get blessed?

Some pastors' wives retreat to the back pew. Sitting at the front can mean people watch you. Another reason it's easier to sit in an inconspicuous pew is the familiarity factor. I find I bring our relationship (Stuart's and mine) along with me to church. If things are great between us, it's easier to listen attentively and receptively to his sermon. If we've had words about my bad driving or some other trivial thing on the way, then it usually takes me till the third point of his message to tune in.

No one in the pastor's family is perfect. We wives need to remember we mustn't expect our husbands to forbear speaking out when they don't have it all together at

home. Who *does* have it all together? As long as we are conscious that we are not models of goodness but only models of those who are striving after it, we will be able to listen to our men preaching Christian maturity and forgive them if they are not perfect.

All of us want our husbands to preach well, but we need to ask ourselves, "Does my constructive criticism help or hinder?" We should try to internalize the truth of a sermon before we analyze.

Let me share some practical things I have learned after listening to my husband preach for 30 years.

Relax. Don't be so intense you pull faces if he gets his words mixed up or makes an obvious mistake. I did this once and Stuart caught sight of my face and wondered what on earth he had said. It put everything right out of his head.

Listen for God's voice. Remember the man in the pulpit is your husband but he is also God's gift to his church. He's there to teach the saints to do the work of the ministry (see Eph. 4:12). That includes you as well as the church people. So expect to hear a word from the Lord, not just a word from your husband *about* the Lord.

Take notes. Take a small notebook to church along with a pencil and a Bible. This models respect and interest. If the church sees you think what your husband says is worth writing down, they may listen a little more carefully themselves.

Laugh at his jokes. A man sitting next to me one Sunday said to me after the service, "I love to watch you laughing at your husband's jokes. You obviously enjoy him very much." Let the congregation see you appreciating his message. Be attentive.

Pray with your husband before he sets off to minister. Let him know how much you are with him. You are a team. Assure him you'll be praying through his talk. Then do it. Prayer opens the inner ear like nothing else I know. We have a long drive to our church, and we always pray for a period of that journey. It sets our minds and hearts in the Lord.

Thank him for being the means of blessing in your life. I try to go to my husband at the end of a service with one thing from his talk to thank him for. This way if there is anything constructively critical I would like to share later, I have not discouraged him too much to think about it.

Realize how privileged you are to be married to a preacher. Don't let the pleasure of that privilege tarnish. God loves that man of yours so much He chose him to be His spokesman. And He loved him so much He chose just the right partner for him—one who could so learn to listen to the Word preached that others would be constrained to do the same.

Happy listening!



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FREEDOM AND ITS MEANING IN MINISTRY

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We Arminian-Wesleyans believe in human freedom, but our teaching has in it, or ought to have in it, certain refinements of understanding.

In this article, I should like to suggest something of the history of the doctrine of human freedom, including that ours is not a Pelagian teaching; that we can incorporate into our view Søren Kierkegaard's understanding that freedom is possibility; that, along with our freedom, we are necessitated in numerous ways; and several things that the Arminian view of freedom should mean, as we go about ministry.

Human Freedom Before Arminius

When James Arminius and John Wesley, in their times, emphasized their non-Pelagian view of human freedom, they both understood that they were teaching what was customarily taught by the Greek and Latin Fathers prior to the early-fifth-century Augustine. H. Orton Wiley felt the same way: that the pre-Augustinians in general were "Arminians."

Much evidence justifies this understanding, that the pre-Augustinians were freedomists, if the general situation in those early centuries is being spoken of. Even Augustine himself wrote on human freedom much as Arminius did later, before what Daniel Steele (1824-1914) called his "collision" with Pelagius.

There were exceptions to this "Arminianism" in the earliest centuries. Some Fathers did not teach the doctrine of original sin in us due to Adam's fall. Justin Martyr seems not to have taught original sin as he emphasized human freedom. He

taught that we are so free that we are able to refuse to sin, but that every person does sin because of influences thereto from the vividly conceived demons.

The greatest theologian of all before Augustine, Origen, must also be thought of as an exception of sort. Origen seemed even to emphasize human freedom. But he did not believe in it as Arminius did and Wesley later taught it. He did believe that we are so free that we can choose which road back to God we will take, and the length of time it will take to get back to God, but that we are not free to choose never to be redeemed. He believed, indeed, that even Satan will finally be redeemed.

Yet most pre-Augustinian fathers were freedomists of some sort. They did not, however, give apologies for such a view, since it was not a controverted issue. Tertullian and Cyprian and others, including Chrysostom, of the West, pretty much assume human freedom. Arnobius certainly suggests it, as the only annihilationist of the pre-Augustinian period. He taught that the annihilation to be received by the wicked, after they are resurrected and punished according to the seriousness of their sins, will be justly deserved due to each wicked person's free decision to lift puny fists against God.

Human freedom was not an issue to such influential Eastern fathers as Irenaeus and Athanasius; but they seem to assume it. It is well known that Pelagius and Coelestius and others denied original sin resulting from Adam's "fall," so the human freedom they believed in was of a humanistic type.

The Second Council of Orange (A.D. 529) made an official decision for the Catholic church of the ensuing centuries, and it took a mediating position between Augustine and Pelagius. It taught that we lost our freedom through the Fall, but that it is restored to us when we are baptized.

Antecedents of Arminianism, which were often closer to his position than the early Fathers were, obtained just a little before Arminius' time. The erudite Erasmus was, of course, a freedomist, and wrote supporting free will only to be opposed by Luther in Luther's *The Bondage of the Will*. Yet Erasmus was a humanist, a freedomist Pelagian, and, thus, was not the kind of freedomist that Arminius was. Melancthon, so closely associated with Luther, might have gravitated toward human and conditional predestination in his last years;¹ but if he did, his views would not at all have resembled those of Arminius.

Yet other pre-Arminians located close to what became the Arminian view.

Anabaptists, better known later as Mennonites, taught the universal provision for redemption in Christ's atonement and that we humans cast the deciding vote on whether we will be damned or redeemed.

At Zurich, also just before Arminius' time, Bullinger at least questioned for a time the denial of human freedom implied in Calvin's unconditional predestination teaching; and Jerome Bolsec and Charles Perrot, of Geneva, both opposed Calvin's view that precluded human freedom.

In Holland, after the alteration

(from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism) and a few decades before the Synod of Dort (1618-19), most ministers tended to be freedomists. At the newly founded university at Leiden in Holland, most of the teachers were "Arminian" during the six years when Arminius studied there (1575-81).

In England, William Barrett was denied his B.D. degree at Cambridge in 1595 because he rejected the freedom-opposed views of Cambridge's distinguished supralapsarian, Williams Perkins. At about the same time, Peter Baro was deposed from his position at Cambridge for his "Arminian" views.² John Playfere, Baro's successor, lectured and published on free will without special trouble, because by then it was becoming increasingly acceptable in England. This, importantly because the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1563 (and 1571) of the Church of England had not declared a view on the matter of human freedom—allowing, in the future, either Calvinism or Arminianism in its adherents.³

Arminius' View of Human Freedom

James Arminius taught and even emphasized human freedom. He taught it in various treatises he wrote during his 15-year pastorate at Amsterdam (1588-1603), and in his writing during the time when he was a professor at the University of Leiden (1603-9). He was a pastor and a professor of the Reformed Church, and he felt, somewhat incorrectly, that his views on free will were not discordant with the two official confessions of faith for the Reformed Church of the time: the Belgic Confession (1561) and the Heidelberg Catechism (1563).

He was probably correct, as relates to the Heidelberg Catechism. This question-and-answer confession asks, "Did God create man thus wicked and perverse?" and it answers "No,"⁴ implying the view that Adam was free in his sin. Then, after asking, "Whence, then, comes this depraved nature?" it again implies an "Arminian" free-will view in answering, "From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve (strange, to include Eve), in Paradise, whereby our nature became

so corrupt that we are all conceived and born in sin." It implies that the disobedience of our first parents and of ourselves is freely chosen because it states that disobedience deserves punishment after asking, "Will God suffer such disobedience and apostasy (implies falling from grace) to go unpunished," it answers, "By no means; but he is terribly displeased with our inborn as well as actual sins, and will punish them. . . ."⁵

The Belgic Confession is different, on the matter of free will. It does indeed teach against it, although Arminius did not interpret it in this way. In Article XVI, on "Eternal Election," it states: "We believe that" to "all the posterity of Adam . . . God did then manifest himself . . . as merciful and just: merciful, since he delivers and preserves from this perdition all whom he in his eternal and unchangeable council, of mere goodness hath elected in Christ Jesus our Lord . . . ; just, in leaving others in the fall and perdition wherein they have involved themselves." This is quite evidently the view of modified supralapsarianism, that each person of Adam's posterity is from God's "eternal . . . council" unconditionally predestinated one way or the other, although there is no positive decision of reprobation in the case of those who are not "elected in Jesus Christ."

On Arminius' own teaching, human freedom is a distinctive emphasis of this "quiet Dutchman" who permitted accusations of his Pelagianism to circulate two years at one time before responding to them in his "Apology Against Thirty-One Defamatory Articles."⁶ He was not Pelagian, for he believed profoundly in original sin. He believed, therefore, that we are fallen and that we thus cannot exercise our capacity of free will in choosing righteousness unaided by prevenient grace. He said, "In this state (of original sin), the free-will of man towards the true good is not only wounded, maimed . . . but it is also imprisoned, destroyed, and lost."⁷ He also writes, "The mind, in this state, is dark, destitute of the saving knowledge of God, and, according to the Apostle, incapable of those things which belong to the Spirit of God. For 'the animal man has no perception of the

things of the spirit of God' (1 Corinthians 2:14)."⁸ Further, he writes: "Exactly correspondent to this darkness of the mind, and perverseness of the heart, is the utter weakness of all the powers to perform that which is truly good, and to omit the perpetration of that which is evil."⁹ In support, he gives Christ's "Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matt. 7:18, KJV) and "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" (12:34, KJV). Among other supports, he also mentions John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father . . . draw him" (KJV). After quoting John 8:36, that only those are free whom the Son hath made free, he says, "It follows that our will is not free from the first fall; that is, it is not free to good, unless it be made free by the Son through his Spirit."¹⁰

John Wesley's Teaching on Free Will

Between the time of Arminius and that of Wesley, Arminianism gained much ground. The Quakers, although mystical and not doctrinal in their main interests, taught basically what Arminius had taught on free will. John Goodwin taught Arminianism in England in the middle of the 17th century, and directly influenced John Wesley in that direction.¹¹ Many English divines prior to the time of John Wesley taught what might be called an aberrant Arminianism: Pelagian, Socinian, Arian, universalist, and latitudinarian impurities were introduced into their views. This is why John Wesley wrote, "To say, 'This man is an Arminian,' has the same effect on many hearers as to say, 'This is a mad dog.' It puts them into a fright at once. . . ."¹² Yet when Wesley started a periodical in 1778, perhaps the first religious magazine, he was brave enough to call it *The Arminian Magazine*.¹³

On free will John Wesley wrote, "Indeed, if man were not free he could not be accountable either for his thoughts, words, or actions. If he were not free, he would not be capable of either reward or punishment; he would be incapable either of virtue or vice, of being either morally good or bad."¹⁴ Wesley also wrote, "Natural free-will, in the present state of mankind [in original sin], I

do not understand: I only assert, that there is a measure of free-will supernaturally restored to every man. . . ."¹⁵ There follows a 10-page discussion of man's freedom in relation to God's decrees and God's glory. Wesley states essentially that even though we must freely receive God's forgiving grace, this does not detract from God's glory, and we still properly understand that we are justified by faith alone. In another treatise Wesley says, "I believe that Adam, before his fall, had such freedom of will, that he might choose either good or evil; but that, since the fall, no child of man has a natural power to choose anything that is truly good."¹⁶

Wesley always denied the natural free will to do good since the Fall, but he always taught that prevenient grace is given to everyone, so that choices of the good are possible even before regeneration. Speaking of himself and John Fletcher, he says that they "absolutely deny natural free will. . . . We both steadily assert that the will of fallen man is by nature free only to evil."¹⁷ Wesley was saying that without prevenient grace we are free only to do one evil thing or another, but not a good or religious act. Yet, for Wesley, there is probably no purely natural or animal man: prevenient grace works in at least all who have not committed the so-called unpardonable sin. And as it does work in us, we can choose righteously; yet, while it works in us, we can also reject Christ and be finally lost.

Even the semi-Pelagians, just after Pelagius' time, denied the need of prevenient grace. They taught, as the Pelagians did, that we have the power to initiate our salvation. Arminius and Wesley and Wiley later all correctly denied this. They all taught that we do not possess natural free will to do the good but must be helped thereto by prevenient grace.

Yet it is proper to say that the Arminian-Wesleyan tradition teaches human freedom. This is because, in this tradition, it is taught that, even in the context of prevenient grace, we ourselves can either accept Christ or reject Him—and that our eternal destiny depends upon our free response to or rejection of God's offer of salvation.

The Arminian-Wesleyan View

So the Arminian-Wesleyan view of human freedom has a few distinctives in it. It is the view that we fallen humans have no natural capacity to choose to do anything good or genuinely religious; we only have a natural freedom to do one or another evil act, but not a good act. This is because of a fall through Adam, who had been selected by God to represent the whole human race that was to follow him. Adam was himself actually free to obey or to disobey God's command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

"Freedom is possibility."

—Søren Kierkegaard

Arminius has an important insight in suggesting that God gave to Adam at this point a symbolic, in distinction from a natural, law. Arminius said that a natural law is one that we can see with our natural reason, that theft violates property rights, that a theft takes from another person what presumably is owned, having been earned. He said that a symbolic law proscribes something that we could not see to be wrong, using simply our reasoning capacity. Then, if we would obey it, it would be from sheer obedience, and not because we could see that it was a valid law. The law given to Adam and Eve was a symbolic one. When they disobeyed it, therefore, it was sheer disobedience and utterly reprehensible. Eve did so first, but she had not been chosen as our representative. When Adam did, we suffered a racial fall.

This fall was in all aspects of our nature, so we refer to the effects as total depravity. As depraved in our moral nature, we are inclined to evil and that continually. We are by nature—a fallen nature—free only to choose between evil things. Prevenient grace is given to all of us, however, so we are not purely natural and fallen. This prevenient grace accounts for any altruistic act whatever that we might do prior to our regeneration. It is also an enable-

ment given us to help us make the decision to repent of our sins and turn to God for forgiveness through Christ.

Freedom as Possibility

An important aspect of freedom for Arminianism (as well as for some other orientations) is that it is possibility. This is freedom in the sense of what Christ meant in a discussion of freedom in John 8:31-36. To Jews "who had believed him" He portrayed the freedom He offers as the opposite of slavery, and as knowing and living by His truth. He told them that after "you hold to my teaching," "Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (v. 32). This is a freedom that comes after slavery to sin is passed. Saying that "everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (v. 34), He went on to say: "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (v. 36). This is what Paul calls, "the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21). It is what Paul also calls "the freedom we have in Christ" (Gal. 2:4), when false brothers had crept into the Christian "ranks" and tried to rob the believers of their freedom from the Pharisaic interpretation of God's law. Paul soon exclaims, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free" (5:1).

These teachings of Christ and Paul show that freedom is freedom from slavery to sin (see also Rom. 8:1-17), and freedom from legalism. They are part of a wider conception of freedom as simply possibility, which Søren Kierkegaard elucidated to such extent.

For Kierkegaard, reacting as he did against Friedrich Hegel (for whom freedom is simply the liberty we have to follow what our reason dictates), freedom is possibility. In Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, built around the Abraham-Isaac story, freedom is the capacity we have to throw reason to the winds and obey the sure voice of God—as Abraham did in proceeding to sacrifice his son of promise. In Kierkegaard's *Stages on Life's Way*, freedom is the capacity we have to make transitions in life from one stage to another—from seeking simply pleasure as a bachelor might; to willingness to be ethical in such pursuit as typified by marriage; to

religious decisions, when God is figured in, especially the God who is wholly different from us qualitatively. In Kierkegaard's *Concept of Dread*, freedom is the transition we make from the sin-fall to the God-relation—through the dizziness of dread and despair, to the willingness to suffer as God's obedient children.¹⁸

While in idealism (as in Hegel) freedom is the power to follow reason wheresoever, and in positivism it is the capacity to relate ourselves agreeably to the thingly world that we can posit—freedom, for Kierkegaard, as an existential theologian, is basically possibility. This is what freedom importantly is for Christ and Paul, as shown above. And the understanding can be roped into and incorporated into the Arminian understanding of freedom. Then freedom is more than the power given us fallen persons to turn to Christ. It is the freedom to flower in servanthood to Christ. It is the freedom under grace to become a Karl Barth or a Billy Graham—or, for that matter, their opposites. A cow only has a small range of capacity (e.g., of giving from only a little milk a day to several gallons). We humans are limitlessly free.

Freedom and Necessity

It needs to be kept in mind that we humans have our freedom not only in conjunction with prevenient grace but also in the context of many factors of necessity—which we do not choose. We do not begin our lives at zero; already, long before our birth, many necessity factors have been at work to make us what we are. Matthew Arnold was right, that everyone strikes his roots in a "far foretime." Limits we do not set, and often would not set, condition all that we do. The genes we have no control over determine whether we will be a basketball center, an opera singer, a select musician. We must be born with the correct Dixieland seeds in us if we are to be able to select a key and fall in with notes that express religious or other feelings as in jazz. We play the game of life, but we do not choose whether to be a part of the game. We play it as females or males, gender being already decided for us. We play it as persons being born without our free choice into a certain kind of family economically and educationally and

religiously, in a certain nation, at a certain time in history.

The fact of our destiny is from a necessitated heritage; the form of it, only, is from our choice, in the context of grace. As Loyd Morgan said, we are consequents (necessitated), but also emergents, with freedom. The present moment, as Alfred North Whitehead suggested, is charged with the promise of all moments yet to be. We are determined in many ways; but in that given context, we are determinants.

We are both the summation of many necessity factors and also the locus of novelty. Out of the three given factors, as Robert Browning said, there can come a star, for man, the "grand perhaps." With us, the 2-plus-2 of necessity can equal 202, through freedom. It is determined that we think with a human mind. It is not determined what we think.

As Pascal said, we are often a frail reed (as he was), but we are a thinking reed. And as Henri Bergson elucidated the matter, the being in whom the greatest risk is involved, man, is the being in whom the greatest gain is possible.

God risked much, in creating us humans with the freedom, now, to unleash horrendous nuclear disaster, or to love our fellowman across all boundaries: gender, age, ideology, whatever.

Another way to think of necessity and freedom is to understand that necessity decides for us numerous factors of history (our "far foretime") and externality (the environment we are born into); but that we are characterized by an inwardness, in which we possess under grace the capacity to judge, to venture, to choose, to soar.

What the Arminian View Means

This view means that we Arminian-Wesleyans are not Pelagians, since we believe in original sin and since we believe even in the necessity of prevenient grace to enable us to use our freedom for taking savory directions in our lives.

This view means that we will use evangelistic methods, such as prayer, before and perhaps even during a personal evangelism attempt, so as to secure an intensifying of the prevenient grace given the person we are seeking to win to Christ.

This view means that we will not say to a congregation, in an evangelistic service, "You do your part and God will do His part." This has often been said in Arminian-Wesleyan auspices, and yet is not theologically correct. It suggests that they first do their part in their salvation, and begin to respond to God, and then God will do His part. In fact, unregenerate persons cannot do anything that is their part to do until God first does His part of extending prevenient grace to them.

This view also means that in public evangelism the Arminian-Wesleyan will not say (as is often said), "God will meet you half way." That presumes the Pelagian and the semi-Pelagian view that we can initiate our own salvation. It suggests that after we begin to do what it is our part to do in our salvation, God will then begin to help us. Being fallen creatures, inclined to evil and that continually, God must come all the way to where we are and initiate in us our first faint desires to turn to Christ.



1. Caspar Brandt, *The Life of James Arminius*, trans. John Guthrie (London: Ward and Co., 1854), 32.

2. See Carl Bangs, "Arminius and the Reformation," *Church History* (June 1961), 7.

3. See Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977 reprint), 486-516.

4. *Ibid.*, 307 ff.

5. *Ibid.*

6. See James Arminius, *The Writing of James Arminius* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956 reprint), 1:276-380. He permitted 14 of these misrepresentations to be circulated for some two years, and only opposed them when 17 others became attached to them.

7. *Ibid.*, 1:526.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, 527.

10. *Ibid.*, 528.

11. See William Strickland's Ph.D. dissertation submitted to Vanderbilt University in 1967.

12. John Wesley, "The Question, 'What Is an Arminian?' Answered," *The Works of John Wesley*, 10:358.

13. See Volume One of it in the Rare Book Room of the Nazarene Theological Seminary library in Kansas City.

14. John Wesley, "On Predestination," Sermon LVIII, *The Works of John Wesley* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979 reprint), 6:227.

15. *Ibid.*, "Predestination Calmly Considered," 10:229-30.

16. *Ibid.*, "Remarks on a Defence of Aspasio Vindicated," 350.

17. Robert W. Burtner and Robert E. Chiles, eds., *A Compend of Wesley's Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954), 132-33.

18. Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1941); *Either/Or: A Fragment of Life*, trans. David F. Swenson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, and London H. Milford: Oxford University Press, 1944); and *The Concept of Dread*, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1944).

John Wesley's Defense of the Doctrine of Original Sin

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*An abridgment of a paper read at the Tyndale Fellowship Conference on Historical Theology,
which met at Cambridge University, July 1985.*

John Wesley vigorously and systematically proclaimed and defended the orthodox doctrine of original sin as a vital part of the Christian revelation. As early as 1727 he wrote to his father from Oxford about how he was wrestling with the problem of the origin of evil.¹ Sixty-four years later, just two months before his death he gave his views on this subject in a letter to one of his preachers.² Throughout his long ministry this doctrine held a very prominent place in his thinking.

At the first conference he convened in London, June 25-30, 1744, the question was asked: "In what sense is Adam's sin imputed to all mankind?" The answer agreed on was: "In Adam all die, that is, 1. Our bodies then become mortal. 2. Our souls died, that is, were disunited from God. And hence, 3. We are all born with a sinful, devilish nature. By reason whereof, 4. We are children of wrath, liable to death eternal; (Romans 5:18; Ephesians 2:3)."³ In 1761 he wrote of how regrettable it was that there should be misunderstanding among "the few clergymen in England who preach the three grand, scriptural doctrines—Original Sin, Justification by faith and Holiness consequent thereon."⁴ In 1764 he was proposing "an open avowed union between all who preach those fundamental truths, Original Sin, . . ."⁵ In 1772 he argued that universal wickedness could only be accounted for by the biblical doctrine of original sin.⁶

Earlier, in 1759, Wesley had published his seminal sermon on this subject. Titled *Original Sin* and based on Gen. 6:5, it declared this doctrine "the first, grand, distinguishing point between heathenism and Christianity."⁷ Wesley added that all who deny this truth, "call it 'original sin' or by any other title, are but heathens still in the fundamental point which difference heathenism from Christianity."⁸ Later in the sermon he reasoned: "Is man by nature filled with all manner of evil? Is he void of all good? Is he wholly fallen? Is his soul totally corrupted? . . . Allow this and you are so far a Christian. Deny it and you are but a heathen still."⁹

Two years earlier, in 1757, Wesley had published his important work, *The Doctrine of Original Sin, according to Scripture, Reason and Experience*. He had taken more than two months out of his usual busy itinerancy, devoting the time to writing this treatise. The result was the longest single piece he ever published. Why did Wesley devote his time and energy to this publication? His *Journal* and his *Letters* show how deeply disturbed

and alarmed he was at the spread of unitarianism in England and its corollary denial of the doctrine of original sin. Wesley's concern was both doctrinal and practical. Theologically, he viewed unitarianism as destructive of the very foundations of the Christian doctrines of Incarnation and redemption. Evangelistically, he saw it as a very real threat to the proclamation of the gospel and the work of bringing men to Christ.

The unitarianism in question was being propagated by Dr. John Taylor of Norwich. Wesley had been aware of Taylor's teachings for some years. In his *Journal* for Sunday, August 28, 1748, he recorded a preaching visit to Shackerley in northwest England. "Abundance of people were gathered before six, many of whom were disciples of Dr. Taylor's, laughing at original sin and, consequently, at the whole frame of scriptural Christianity." Three years later he wrote of his visit to the same area: "Being now in the midst of Mr. Taylor's disciples, I enlarged much more than I am accustomed to do on the doctrine of original sin, and determined, if God should give me a few years of life, publicly to answer his new gospel."¹⁰ Later, in a letter to the young Augustus Toplady, Wesley averred: "I verily believe no single person since Mahomet had given such a wound to Christianity as Dr. Taylor . . . His books have poisoned so many of the clergy and indeed the fountains themselves—the Universities in England, Scotland, Holland and Germany."¹¹

John Taylor (1694-1761) was a nonconformist minister. He built his celebrated Octagon Chapel in Norwich in 1756. An ardent disciple of Samuel Clarke (1675-1729), he steadily moved to a unitarian position. In 1749 he published *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin Proposed to Free and Candid Examination*. In 1757 he was appointed to teach theology at Warrington Academy, a stronghold of unitarianism not far from Shackerley, where Wesley confronted his disciples.¹² Taylor's book had been hugely influential, and in 1758 Jonathan Edwards lamented the harm it had done in New England.¹³ It was to this work that Wesley set himself in the task of answering in December 1756.

Taylor's book was marked by much erudition for, among other qualifications, he was an acknowledged Hebraist. His lively, restrained, and readable style had made the book very popular. Taylor presented his treatise in three parts. The first dealt with, "All the passages

of scripture concerning the consequences of the first transgression," and Taylor asserted there were only five of these: viz. Gen. 2:17; 3:7-24; Rom. 5:12-20; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; and 1 Tim. 2:14. The second part of the work was his examination of passages of Scripture other than the five already dealt with, that have been used by orthodox theologians to defend the doctrine of original sin. This was, in fact, Taylor's reply to the relevant passages in the *Westminster Larger Catechism*. The third part of Taylor's book was titled "In consequence of Adam's Sin, he and his posterity were adjudged to Labour, Sorrow and Death." He published a second edition in 1741, a third edition in 1746, and a fourth edition, to which reference will be made later, appeared posthumously in 1767.

It was Taylor's third edition that Wesley had before him. He characterized it as "open Deism," indeed it is "old Deism in a new dress," sapping the foundation of "all revealed religion, whether Jewish or Christian."¹⁴ Wesley begins with an overall view of human history from Genesis 3 to the present, and paints a stark and realistic picture of fallen man through the ages. Everywhere and in every age there is evidence of pride, malice, envy, hatred, fear, lying, treachery, and murder. In the second part of his reply, which runs to some 76 pages, Wesley deals with how Scripture accounts for universal human wickedness: "In Adam all die" and by the first man came both natural and spiritual death; by "this one man sin entered into the world."

Now, for the first time, Wesley refers directly to Taylor's text where he had written: "No evil but temporal death came upon men in consequence of Adam's sin."¹⁵ That one sentence is almost a summary of Taylor's whole thesis. He denies that Adam was in any sense the representative of mankind, and he denies, with repeated arguments, that the human race is sinful as a consequence of Adam's sin. We become sinners by our own choice. The one and only consequence of Adam's sin that affects the whole race is the sentence of death—temporal, not spiritual death. Taylor interprets Gen. 2:17 to mean that "the death here threatened can be opposed only to that life God gave Adam when he created him." Nothing is said here about Adam's posterity; the warning extends solely to Adam himself. Wesley replies with a sample of logic-chopping. Not one word of Adam's posterity perishing temporally is found in the text, though such a deduction on Taylor's own admission is true. Therefore, there may be other consequences of his sin equally implied though not expressly stated.

Wesley is on firmer ground when he replies to Taylor's assertion that as the actions of Adam and Eve were theirs alone, "no other could in justice be punishable for that transgression. If others were not justly punishable for Adam's transgression, Wesley argues, then no other was punished. But Scripture teaches, and Taylor has made this his main point, that all Adam's posterity were punished with physical death. Therefore, Wesley concludes, all men were justly punishable. But Wesley does not press the point to advantage, and nowhere in his reply does he make any reference to what is certainly the most apparent inconsistency in Taylor's treatise. While Taylor denies that Adam was the representative of

the race, he strongly and repeatedly asserts that all men are subject to mortality as a result of Adam's sin. If this is so, then Adam was a representative of the whole race because the sentence of death passed on him because of his sin. It was also passed through him to all his descendants.

Dealing with 1 Cor. 15:22, "As in Adam all die," Taylor argues that this is no more than that physical death "from which mankind shall be delivered at the resurrection."¹⁶ Wesley is unimpressed with this conclusion. First he believes that the "all" who will be made alive by Christ (v. 22) is conditioned by verse 23, "they that are Christ's at his coming" (KJV). Having established this point, Wesley then makes the theological punchline: "We may firmly conclude that more than the mere death of the body came even upon these by Adam's sin, seeing the resurrection which comes to them by Christ is far more than the mere removal of that death. Therefore their dying in Adam implies far more than the bare loss of the bodily life we now enjoy, seeing that their being made alive in Christ implies far more than a bare recovery of that life."¹⁷

Taylor devoted many pages to a close examination of Rom. 5:12-19, but his conclusion is no surprise. "It seems then confirmed that 'by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners,' means only, 'By Adam's sin . . . the many were made subject to death.'" Wesley's response here is somewhat disappointing. As with all his writings, he seems concerned to make his replies as concise as possible, and this does not allow for the kind of detailed textual exegesis and sustained theological application that is required. Wesley's conclusion is: "In and through their first parent, all [Adam's] posterity died in a spiritual sense; and they remain wholly 'dead in trespasses and sins,' till the second Adam makes them alive. . . . And through the infection which they derive from him [Adam], all men are and ever were, by nature, entirely 'alienated from the life of God; without hope, without God in the world.'"¹⁸

Wesley's reply is the reply of orthodox Christianity. But has he *proved* his point? He probably has—for those already committed to the one, true, Catholic faith but whether an unbiased enquirer would be persuaded is less certain. The problem here lies with Wesley's methodology. To refute Taylor adequately, Wesley needed to develop his arguments much more fully. This would have resulted in his treatise being twice as long as it was. Wesley clearly saw the fatal consequences of Taylor's teaching, and he was profoundly convinced of the doctrine of original sin. To derive value from Wesley's work the reader needs to have Taylor's text before him as well and only then will Wesley's tantalisingly succinct arguments have real force.

Wesley employs the same approach when he replies to Taylor's attack on the *Westminster Larger Catechism's* delineation of human sinfulness. Following on from that he answers the third section of Taylor's book where Taylor defends his reconstruction of the Bible doctrine of man against an imaginary opponent. In this area of his treatise, Wesley's replies are fuller than his previous arguments and, on the whole, more convincing. He can easily demonstrate that Taylor's exegesis of the relevant biblical texts is generally superficial

and often disingenuous. Believing that Taylor was both fundamentally and dangerously wrong in his denial of original sin, Wesley is equally provoked into attacking Taylor's doctrines of grace, particularly his understanding of redemption and regeneration. Here John Wesley the evangelist and John Wesley the theologian are equally prominent, especially when he exposes Taylor's misunderstanding of regeneration. Taylor had defined this as "the gaining those habits of virtue which make us children of God."¹⁹ Wesley expostulates that if that is what regeneration is, then Paul should not have written: "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26), but: "You are all the children of God by gaining habits of virtue." Wesley stresses that regeneration is a work of God, a thorough transformation of the human spirit wrought by grace. "According to the whole tenor of Scripture, the being born again does really signify the being inwardly changed by the almighty operation of the Spirit of God; changed from sin to holiness; renewed in the image of Him that created us."²⁰

In the *Supplement* to his book, Taylor, in his second and third editions, had set out his replies to David Jennings' *A Vindication of the Scripture and Doctrine of Original Sin*²¹ and Isaac Watts' *The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind*.²² Wesley takes almost 120 pages to carefully reinforce the arguments of Jennings and Watts and also demonstrates how inadequate Taylor's replies to them are. Wesley published his complete work in August 1757, and two years later he wrote a most candid personal letter to Dr. Taylor. "I esteem you, as a person of uncommon sense and learning; but your doctrine I cannot esteem: . . . It is a controversy . . . concerning . . . those things that concern our eternal peace. It is Christianity, or Heathenism . . . Either my scheme or yours is as contrary to the scriptural, as the Koran is. . . . Yours has gone through all England, and made numerous converts. I attack it from end to end: Let all England judge whether it can be defended or not!"²³

In examining this major work by John Wesley, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, Wesley saw clearly that Taylor's book was important and dangerous enough to require an answer. In this judgment he has found support since from those orthodox theologians and historians of Christian doctrine who have shown how popularly successful Taylor was in attacking this Christian tenet. Second, this answer to Taylor from the founder of Wesleyan Methodism should be sufficient evidence in reply to those who have alleged that in his hamartiology Wesley was a kind of Pelagian. Any fair appraisal of this work would convince that John Wesley had a very profound and scriptural apprehension of human sinfulness. Third, Wesley believed that Taylor's book required to be answered line upon line and precept upon precept. In this he was probably correct, but there are areas of his methodical reply where it could be wished that his well-known economy with words had not been quite so stringent. Fourth, and most important of all, did John Wesley succeed in establishing the doctrine of original sin to be a truly scriptural doctrine? Within the limitations imposed by his succinct style, the answer to this question is yes. He was endeavoring to answer one of the most erudite and popular unitarian publications of the 18th century. It was no small under-

taking for an itinerant evangelist. Wesley's knowledge of Scripture and his ability with the biblical languages is well demonstrated in these pages, nor is there less evidence of his close acquaintance with the classics, the Church Fathers, and the English Puritans. Yet when all due credit is given to Wesley's work, it has to be concluded that Taylor's formidable book demanded a more full and more thorough answer than John Wesley offered.

There is one brief postscript to this whole episode. In a letter written in 1780, Wesley spoke of the late Dr. Taylor, who ran "not only into Arianism but into the very dregs of Socinianism. I have reason indeed to believe," Wesley continued, "he was convinced of his mistakes some years before he died. But to acknowledge this publicly was too hard a task for one who had lived above eighty years."²⁴ But John Wesley's hope that John Taylor had finally embraced orthodox theology seems to have little foundation. Six years after his death, a fourth edition of his book published with an addition that the former editions did not have. This was titled "Observations by Way of Reply to the Rev. John Wesley." According to the editor of this fourth edition, Taylor had completed his reply to Wesley just before he died. But this "Reply" is very disappointing; Taylor merely picks up some of Wesley's arguments and dismisses them with one-line observations. Although this final edition appeared in 1767, surprisingly John Wesley does not seem to have known about it. This last edition of John Taylor's *Original Sin* leaves little room for doubt that he lived, and almost certainly died, still convinced of his Socinian theology.



NOTES

1. *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. John Telford, 8 vols. (London, 1931), 1:44-46.
2. In a letter to Thomas Taylor; *Letters*, 8:254.
3. *The Works of John Wesley*, 14 vols. (Kansas City, n.d.), 8:277.
4. *Letters*, 4:146.
5. *Ibid.*, 235-39.
6. *Ibid.*, 5:326-28.
7. *Works*, 6:63.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *The Journal of John Wesley*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, 8 vols. (London, 1909), 3:520.
11. *Letters*, 4:48.
12. Another teacher at this Academy was Joseph Priestly (1733-1804), a popular unitarian writer whose attacks on orthodox Christology occasioned a reply from John Fletcher.
13. Edwards wrote: "No one book has done so much towards . . . alienating the minds of many from . . . the main doctrines of the gospel . . ." See *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (Yale University Press, 1970), 3:102.
14. Wesley, *Works*, 9:194.
15. Taylor, *Original Sin*, 7. All the quotations from Taylor used in this paper are from the third edition of the book.
16. *Ibid.*, 25.
17. Wesley, *Works*, 9:246.
18. *Ibid.*, 258.
19. Taylor, *Original Sin*, 246.
20. Wesley, *Works*, 9:308.
21. Jennings' work, published 1740-41 was meant as a reply to Taylor, and it consisted of an exposition of the passages used in the *Westminster Larger Catechism* in its teaching on original sin.
22. See *The Works of Isaac Watts* (London, reprinted 1810, 6 vols.), selected from his MSS by D. Jennings and P. Doddridge, in 1753; "The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind," 6:49-185. Earlier in his treatise Wesley had made use of *Theron and Aspasia*, a theological work published in 1755 by a former member of the Oxford Holy Club, James Hervey (1714-58). He had also used what he described as "several tracts," which were three short theological works written partly in answer to Taylor by Samuel Hebden (1702-57), Independent minister at Wrentham in Suffolk.
23. Wesley, *Letters*, 4:67-68.
24. *Ibid.*, 7:27-28. Wesley was in error when he wrote that Taylor lived "above eighty years." Taylor died at age 67.

Remembering the Elderly

by J. Grant Swank, Jr.
*Pastor, Church of the Nazarene
Walpole, Mass.*

She was blind. I looked down on her head as she sat in the chair next to where I stood leading the singing. Her hair was but a whisp, and what was there was not all that attractive. I tried to picture what it was once—black and wavy, filled with vibrant color when young and healthy.

She would take her arm, stretch it out as far as she could in the air, and then make an arch with her hand. She was trying to detect whether or not an object was near her. She could hear my voice, so she knew I was not far away.

She wore a dress with light pink flowers, and a white sweater. On her feet were green footies, a thin necklace encircled her neck. She wore a plain wedding band on her hand. Where was her husband? Dead, no doubt.

All around her were others in similar circumstances. They sat on hard chairs around tables in the lounge. On the walls, shelves held books and records. The floor was hard tile—white with speckles in it. Fluorescent lights brightened the room. Artificial plants stood in the corners of the room and nearby hall.

But she could not see any of this. I don't know how long she had been blind. Someone had helped her find her chair before we had even entered that room. And there she sat until someone helped her back to her room at another part of the large building.

As we sang, she listened attentively. She did not know many of the hymns. Consequently, I assumed that she was of another church background. Nevertheless, she was a good listener.

However, when it came time to read the Shepherd's Psalm together, she leaned her head in my direction as she kept her hands folded on the table in front of her. And as I led the group, she recited every word plainly, deliberately, as if not wanting the Scripture to end. She was working her way through every word, soaking in the meaning of every phrase.

So it was too when we ended the worship service. We always close by reciting the Lord's Prayer in unison. Once more, she leaned toward me, slowly and carefully stating every word, not missing a beat. And when it was

over, she rested back in her chair, hands still folded, making a boney steeple heavenward.

As is our custom, we shook hands with every resident present for the half-hour service. We gave them a Christian greeting and wished them well till we would see them again three weeks later. They smiled and greeted us back, binding their hearts to ours on the common pilgrimage.

Those from our congregation in the convalescent home ministry have been seeing these people for six years now. More accurately, we have been holding Sunday services at that location for that long. The truth is, many have slipped from us. That makes us sad. However, there are always others to fill their chairs. So the fellowship of those of like faith continues.

In other pastorates, I have maintained similar ministries. Some of those services have been held on weekday afternoons rather than on Sunday, but the format is usually the same.

We have found that "the simpler the better." Therefore, we have no sermon. Instead, devotional remarks are interwoven with the gospel songs sung together. (However, in visiting other pastors' nursing home services, I have discovered that where residents are more adept to listening to a message, it has been quite appropriate. But the nursing homes where I have held services have had persons who simply were not up to concentrating on a sermon as such.)

We begin by singing several songs that are familiar to most churchgoers, regardless of their denominational backgrounds. There are also a few choruses that have become favorites with the people. So the service is made up largely of singing praises to God. Instead of heavy hymnals, we use song sheets. These are held easily. Only the pianist has the printed music.

Children attend with us. This is a special treat for the elderly, for otherwise, many of them go for weeks without seeing a boy or girl. So when the children stand by the piano and sing their choruses, the old folks' faces light up. Also, the boys and girls circulate with the rest of us at the close of the service to shake hands with the

residents. Sometimes it is difficult to get the youngsters away, for the oldsters want to keep them for short visits.

What an opportunity to teach the children the way of Christian witness by taking them to the nursing home. It is also true that many of these boys and girls do not see old people from week to week.

What happens when we have no pianist? That happens sometimes. We sing without accompaniment, and it's not all that bad. We don't let anything stop us from having a service. I have gone to convalescent homes by myself at times. As long as I can carry a tune and a Bible, the service will get underway.

Sometimes I have used props to tell short illustrations. Holding a candle, I may remind the people that we can let our lights shine for the Master even in a nursing home by being kind to the nurses, attendants, and other residents. I have used flowers in summer to remind them to blossom where they are planted, showing the beauty of God in their lives. Serving Communion affords the chance to speak of the meaning of the elements. At Christmas, a wreath can bring home the point that our eternal hope is endless, just as a wreath circles and circles without end.

Keeping good communication with the nursing home staff is crucial. It is necessary to phone ahead to make arrangements. When we cannot be present, that is also phoned in. When there is sickness throughout the home, we are likewise alerted by the facility's staff.

When we don't go to the nursing home, we still remember the elderly during our own worship. That reminds us of their needs and our obligation to them.

At special seasons of the year, the children from the congregation may make individual favors for the residents. At Easter, they present personal Easter baskets to the older people. At Christmas, the residents receive greeting cards made in Sunday School classes. Advent is also a good time to pass out large oranges, relished by the old folks.

Over the years, we have found the ministry ministering to us. At times I have detected that some who usually go to the nursing homes become weary. I know they are wondering whether or not it's really worth it. After all, sometimes it seems that most of the residents' minds are wandering, their attention spans short. At other times one of them may disrupt most of the service by calling nonsense syllables out loud. Other times may find us trying to sing over a radio blaring down the hall.

But I remind us all that one of these days we may be in like situations. Some of our own loved ones may be in such homes. If and when that happens, wouldn't we want some believers to take time to call on us, to sing hymns, and to remind us of how it was in our younger days?

Jesus said that His followers visit Him in prison. Leaving convalescent homes, I have often felt that many of those people are in prisons of loneliness and boredom. Others are hemmed in by confusion and discouragement. Is Jesus not there—in those very homes—waiting for us to call, to sing, to pray?

It is then that I am glad I have taken time to remember. They tell me they are blessed by the services. But I know better. I am the one who is blessed.

IDEA MART

PICTURE THIS

As I began a 10-month stint of interim preaching, I noticed a lack of interest and attention among the children and early youth. To involve them, I challenged them to bring pictures of Jesus from newspaper and magazine clippings, or anywhere they could find them.

Before long, pictures of Jesus began flooding in. I wrote the contributors' names on the backs of them and posted all those that were unique and one of each that were duplicated on the wall. The rest went into files labeled with each child's name, to be returned to them.

Several hundred pictures were brought. Pictures of Jesus in all sizes covered the church wall. One boy brought in 39. I brought in copies of some of the great masters' portraits of Christ, and used them for illustrative material. On Palm Sunday, I awarded prizes to the one who brought the most pictures, and to the one who brought the best.

The result of this project was that it brought me closer to the children, and it gave them a sense of being made special helpers.

—Kenneth Vogt
Abbotsford, B.C.

HOW TO FOLD CHURCH BULLETINS THE EASY "SMYRES WAY"

I have often observed that church bulletins have been carelessly folded, the edges not meeting precisely. There is a simply made gadget that will enable you to fold them precisely, in half the time otherwise necessary.

Cut a piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood size 9" x 12", making sure that the sides are at exactly 90 degrees from each other. Nail or glue a cleat, $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood x 2" wide (measurements not crucial) along two adjacent sides, one about 10" long, the other 8". If you are left-handed, put the longer cleat on the right side. Sand the edges to make sure no splinters exist. If you want a nice job, stain the whole thing and glue a 9" x 12" piece of felt to the underside. Any handyman in your church can make it.

When your 8½" x 11" bulletins are ready to fold, place them in a pile with cover side down; take one and put one end of it snug against the corner formed by the cleats, and bend it over so that the other end also fits into the corner. Holding the two ends there make the crease. After five minutes' practice you can fold several at a time. You'll be surprised how easy it is!

—Ron S. Smyres

THIN-SKINNED OR SHOCK RESISTANT?

by Raymond C. Kratzer
Yakima, Wash.

I met with a church board on one occasion to help them find a new pastor, since their former leader had accepted another church. One of the board members suggested that before any names were presented, a profile of the pastor they needed should be worked out. I acquiesced, feeling this was not a bad idea at all.

Many suggestions were made. One said the pastor should be a good administrator, another said he must be a godly leader, and still another felt he should be diplomatic. One member mentioned that a pastor should be "thick-skinned." He said that a preacher must not get his feelings hurt too easily. I wrote down in my notebook, "RHINOCEROS HIDE."

Above all persons, pastors need to be sensitive to the feelings of others. But it is redundant to say that he is also amenable to having his feelings hurt.

In any normal congregation you will find someone who feels he has the "talent of criticism," and considers himself God's emissary to keep the preacher humble. So in his unique and blunt way, he proceeds to take the pastor apart to show him all his faults.

On occasions like this, with one's ego on the line, the first human reaction is to "tell him off!" The second impulse, if the first seems inadequate, is to prepare a sermon with some hot shots aimed at settling the score with the recalcitrant member.

Sermonic guns are readied and loaded with fresh ammunition—usually not from God's arsenal. No

one is helped by this barrage, and the offending party only binds his bullet-proof vest more tightly about him. And a ricochet may hurt an innocent bystander.

There is a better way. Perhaps you have heard the parable of the sun and the wind and their challenge to each other to see how quickly they could get a certain man's coat off his back.

The wind elected to try first. It began to puff and blow at the man. His coat flapped in the breeze, and it looked as if the wind would tear it off. Suddenly, however, the man began to fasten all the buttons. Then as the wind blew harder, he bound the coat even more securely. Finally, the wind was out of breath, and still it had been unable to remove the coat.

With his face glowing, the sun proceeded to see if he could accomplish what the wind had failed to do. He began to shine upon the subject. The radiance from his face was pleasant and disarming.

Soon the man unbuttoned his coat. Before long he wiped some perspiration from his forehead. The sun kept on shining. Presently, the man took off his coat and seemed delighted to be relieved of the undue discomfort he had been experiencing.

Life in the Christian dimension is much like that. With a godly pastor there is a better way to deal with those persons who seem enamored with unkindness and unloveliness. Usually beneath their rough exterior, there lies a hidden beauty. This was

certainly the case in the early life of Paul. We salute Ananias for his judicious and kind way of bringing out the best in this giant of a man.

If a pastor is administered the shock treatment by some person, and he attempts to remove their armament by blasting away at him, he will undoubtedly fail. Not only will he lack success in his efforts, but he will cause the person to bind his attitude more securely about him. The tool the pastor used to cause him to "see the error of his way" only exposed the lack of skill by one who should be loved and respected.

Like the sun, a wise pastor demonstrates his greatest effectiveness by shining. His life and testimony should be characterized by warmth and blessing. His response to unlovely treatment should be to react as Jesus did. The record says: "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pet. 2:23, KJV).

Jesus practiced what He preached. When He said "love your enemies," He demonstrated it! When cruel people nailed His hands, that had only blessed, on a cross, He could do one last thing for them—He could die for them. And in the process He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34, KJV).

The experience of holiness—perfect love shed abroad in the heart—should make one shock resistant. Care in attitudes and responses is vital to a more effective

ministry. To keep on shining in the midst of callous treatment will win out in the long run. To practice what one preaches is the most effective sermon.

A lawyer whose adversary was especially unkind in his remarks, refused to let it get to him. The vicious prosecutor appeared to want to build his own case by demeaning him.

After the trial, someone told the lawyer of their admiration of his aplomb and apparent tranquility during the trial. He asked: "How could you remain so calm when the prosecutor said so many mean things about you?"

The attorney responded: "In times like this I always remember seeing a coyote howling at the moon one night. In spite of all his ferocious antics, the moon just kept on shining. No fuss, no retaliation, no yapping. Just a radiant, serene, disarming ignoring of it all." It refused to be side-tracked from its main purpose of shedding light in the night.

The Word says: "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. . . . Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses" (2 Cor. 6:1, 3-4, KJV).

Let us always be aware of the help of the Holy Spirit in times of distress, and may we refuse to be side-tracked into untoward reactions. Rather, let us ask God to toughen our hide until the barrages of thoughtless people will merely be deflected without damage.

PETER REMEMBERS *(Continued from page 9)*

quiet, soft voice, Jesus asked, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" (John 21:15).

"Yes, Lord, . . . you know that I love you," I replied. Deep down I wondered! How could He have known? The one time I should have demonstrated my love, I walked away from Him.

Then Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." What a strange response!

A few moments passed. Again Jesus asked, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" (v. 16). I had already answered that question. Maybe He didn't believe me the first time, so I answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Your English Bibles use the word *love*. At that time, we had different Greek words for love. Jesus was asking me if I loved Him with an unqualified love. I responded each time that I loved Him as a friend. How could I now say honestly that I loved Him even to the point of death?

Jesus responded, "Take care of my sheep."

Suddenly Jesus looked at me, with compassion written on His face, and asked, "Do you love me?" (v. 17). This third time He asked if I even loved Him as a friend. His question stung! If only I had some way to prove my love!

Through my tears I blurted out: "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Then He added, "Feed my sheep."

Jesus was telling me that I was not through, that He had work for me to do. I, Peter, was the first person on record to experience His post-Resurrection forgiveness.

In remembering and reflecting on that experience, I wonder if since I denied Him three times it was nec-

essary for me to state that I loved Him three times? It didn't matter—I just wanted Jesus to know that I really do love Him.

By then the false pride and self-confidence were gone.

Jesus explained that I would live up to my word. I would die for His cause. I wasn't ready to hear that! Jesus is never easy on us. He gives us something to reach for. Not wanting to face this alone, my eyes fell on young John. I asked Jesus, "What about him?"

Jesus declared that what He had called me to do did not depend on John's fate. If I would follow Jesus, I would face death.

It didn't all make sense then. But, now as an old man, facing execution, I have begun to understand His words. I have seen how Jesus has taken this old broken fisherman, filled him with the Holy Spirit, and has forgiven and cleansed him from all sin. I have seen Him take a coward and transform him into one who has withstood Jesus' accusers and told them of God's way of salvation. In fact, the first sermon I ever preached netted over 3,000 converts! It was not my doing, but the Holy Spirit spoke through me. Now it all makes sense. Jesus had come to take the broken pieces of our failures and put them back together into a masterpiece in His kingdom.

It is time for me to depart. My mission is over. I shall soon see Him face-to-face. If Jesus can transform this broken fisherman, He can transform anyone who lets Him work within. Don't feel sorry for me—everything has been forgiven. The message of Easter is Jesus' message of God's grace.

Pontius' Puddle



A TALE OF TWO DOGMAS

by Doug Samples

Pastor, Trinity Church of the Nazarene
Fresno, Calif.

Once upon a time there were two groups of people. They both lived together in the holiness camp, but they lived on opposite sides of the one road that went through town.

One group would stand on one side of the road and yell over to the other group, "Don't you guys know that sanctification is a gradual process? Everybody knows that you can't get sanctified all at one time in an instant! The important thing is not to *be* perfect but to be traveling on the road *toward* perfection."

The second group would yell back, "It's *you* guys who are all wrong. You can't *grow into* sanctification. Being sanctified is a definite decision of the heart that happens at a definite moment in time!"

To the first group, it seemed ridiculous to talk about one specific moment in time when you can be sanctified wholly. To the other group, it was impossible to live a life of holiness without having a crisis experience, a second definite work of grace. And so back and forth they went, year after year, generation after generation—one group emphasizing the *process* of sanctification and the other emphasizing the *crisis*.

As they battled this theological ball back and forth across the road, it seemed that after awhile each group reacted against each other more vehemently, defending their own positions as best and most important. As one group placed greater emphasis on the process, someone from the other group would beat the drum and proclaim the critical importance of the crisis. This all would have been well and good, except for the fact that this new voice would usually overemphasize the crisis to the neglect of any ongoing process.

One effect of this theological tennis match was that all of the young theologues born into this holiness camp were forced to choose sides! Unless one said the right things in the right ways, he was suspected to be "out of harmony" and "one of *'them.'*" And so, clear shibboleths had to be distinguishable in their theological accents to prove that they fit in with the "right" group.

One day, a little girl from the crisis group was out picking raspberries, when she stumbled across a boy from the process group taking a nap in the tall grass. At first they just stared at each other, not knowing whether to scream or run away. Each had been taught how corruptive the "other side" could be. So she cocked an eye at him, he cocked an eye at her, and they stood there looking cockeyed at one another trying to decide what to do! After a few minutes, the boy began to notice something interesting about the girl. She wasn't all that

ugly. In fact, she had some of the same "family markings" as the boy's mother. He thought to himself, "We really are from the same camp. That should make us almost family. Maybe I won't get in too much trouble if I just talk with her for a little bit."

As he moved toward her, she took a cautious step backward. "I won't hurt you," he said, as he came a little closer. "I just want to talk. Maybe we can be friends."

"Us? Friends?" the little girl asked with surprise. "How can we be friends? Our folks don't get along with each other. All they ever do is make accusations against one another and dig in their heels singing, 'I shall not be moved!'"

"Why do we fuss so much?" the boy wondered. "What is it about our families that causes so much irritation and concern? What is it about my people that your folks don't like?"

After thinking for a minute or two, the girl responded. "I'm not sure about all the reasons, but one thing I've heard my folks say about you process people is that you see sanctification as some always-illusive, never-ending dream. It seems to always be just beyond your reach. It's like you put so much emphasis on the human part of becoming sanctified that you forget that the actual act of sanctifying is a divine work that can be completed in a moment's time.

"Another thing that bothers them," she continued, "is concern as to whether you process people really are sanctified at all or just trying to grow a little better every day without dealing with the heart of the issue."

The boy stopped her. "What do you mean? I don't understand."

"Well, my mom says that your way of thinking is as ridiculous as trying to give a mudman a bath every day to keep him clean. You wash away one level of dirt today, another layer of dirt tomorrow, and on and on it goes indefinitely. But even if you give a mudman a bath every day he is still going to have a mud heart until it is dealt with in a crisis cleansing."

"OK, I can see your point," the boy said. "If that really is what we are doing, then we are wrong. But I don't think that is what we mean. I think our problem is that we are so astounded by the ever-deepening life of growing with Christ that we can never find a time or place to stop and plant a flag and say, 'OK, now I'm sanctified!' Just when we think maybe we're ready to do that, God shakes us to the core with a new decision point that demands an even deeper surrender."

(Continued on page 37)

DO WE BELIEVE PEOPLE ARE LOST?

by Robert E. Coleman

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A Passing Conviction

Nothing quite so contradicts evangelism as indifference to the lostness of mankind. An atheist expressed it well when he wrote, "Did I firmly believe as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of religion in this life influences destiny in another . . . I would esteem one soul gained for heaven worth a life of suffering. Earthly consequences should never stay my hand, nor seal my lips . . . I would strive to look upon eternity alone and on the immortal souls around me, soon to be everlastingly happy or everlastingly miserable. I would go forth to the world and preach it in season and out of season, and my text would be 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the world and lose his soul?'"¹

The question should provoke an answer; that is, if we believe that people are lost. I am afraid, however, that the sense of impending doom and "desire to flee from the wrath to come,"² so characteristic of our forefathers, does not seem of great concern today.³ Martin E. Marty, eminent church historian at the University of Chicago, has keenly observed that "the passing of hell from modern consciousness is one of the major, if still undocumented major trends" of our time.⁴ After all, a generation preoccupied with immediate sensual gratification is not likely to think much about the eternal consequences of sin.

The New Thinking

The popular sentiment, whether consciously espoused or not, is the notion that finally all people will be saved. Proponents of this universalism believe that God is too good to send anyone to hell, or conversely, that folk are too good to be doomed. In either case, the teachings of Christ regarding retribution for sin are naively circumvented, while the atoning purpose of His cross is effectively denied. Jesus' death becomes little more than the martyrdom of a great moral teacher. Neo-orthodox divines, like Karl Barth, may have a higher appreciation of our Lord's sacrifice, but they come to the same conclusion. Their contention is that God's power is so great that nothing can prevail against His love, even if it requires a period of purgation and another opportunity for salvation after death.

One has to ask, however, If everyone will be saved regardless of their rebellion against God, why call sinners to repentance? Does not preaching the gospel become superfluous?

The Teaching of Christ

The issue, of course, comes back to the authority of

Scripture. Devastating as it may be to human pride, the Bible says that when the Son of Man shall return to judge the living and the dead, He "will separate them from one another, as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats. . . . Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.' . . . And these will go away into eternal punishment" (Matthew 25:32, 41, 46, NASB).⁵

Clearly our Lord taught that those who turn to their own way shall be sentenced to a place of conscious separation from God and the loss of all that is good, including heaven. It is this "banishment from the presence of the Lord," Wesley noted, that is "the very essence of destruction." What makes the loss so terrifying to the soul is the knowledge then "that God alone is the centre of all created spirits; and, consequently, that a spirit made for God can have no rest out of him."⁶ This is called the "Gehenna" (see Matt. 18:9);⁷ a habitation of "outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (8:12, KJV); a night where the cries of the damned never die and "the fire is not quenched" (Mark 10:48).⁸ These and many other words of Christ, though in part figurative, unequivocally warn us of the awful fact of hell. Furthermore, He said that most people are following a broad way that leads to this "destruction" (Matt. 7:13).

Facing Reality

Jesus is not trying to scare anyone. He simply wants us to face the fact that human existence does not end at the grave, and that unless the course of our life is reversed, the penal consequences of sin continue on forever. It is "a never-ending death,"⁹ a state in which the immortal soul can never die to its misery, never know relief. Well put is the warning: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28, KJV).

The question is, do we believe the Bible? In his letter to Mr. Law, John Wesley put it very pointedly:

Now, thus much cannot be denied, that these texts speak as if there were really such a place as hell . . . I would then ask but one plain question: If the case is not so, why did God speak as if it was? Say you, "To affright men from sin?" What, by guile, by dissimulation, by hanging out false colours? Can you possibly ascribe this to the God of truth? . . . Can you conceive the Most High dressing up a scarecrow, as we

do to fright children? Far be it from him! If there be then any such fraud in the Bible, the Bible is not of God. And indeed this must be the result of all: If there be "no unquenchable fire, no everlasting burnings," there is no dependence on these writings wherein they are so expressly asserted, nor of the eternity of heaven, any more than of hell. So that if we give up the one, we must give up the other. No hell, no heaven, no revelation!¹⁰

The Love of God

Admittedly, the prospect of everlasting torment is not a pleasant thought. I think that most of us would like to believe that God is too loving to consign a person to unremitting remorse. What we may fail to realize, however, is that God will not violate His own integrity. Though infinite in love, He is also holy—of purer eyes than to behold evil—and He cannot ignore that sin which would destroy His beloved. "It is not because God's love is limited," as Donald Bloesch notes, "but because it is unlimited, that hell as well as heaven is made necessary."¹¹ The wrath of God is only the other side of His love, a love that will never let us go, even when decreeing justice.

Love like this is painful, to be sure, and no one has suffered more in contemplating its cost than our Lord. Calvary is His witness. Seeing our utter lostness, God took upon himself in the Person of His Son the judgment due us all. Such love is too wonderful for us to fathom, but we can bear witness to its ever-present reality, that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8, KJV).

This is the gospel that must be proclaimed, the amazing truth that the Creator and Lord of the universe has intervened in human history and, through the mighty conquest of His Son, has made a way whereby "who-soever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16, NKJV). But in heralding this good news, its corollary must also be told, that "he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36, NKJV; cf. 3:18; 1 John 5:12). Hell is reserved for those who scorn God's love by trampling under their feet the blood of Christ.

Those Who Have Not Heard

But what about those multitudes who have never heard an intelligent presentation of the Way of Life? Two-thirds of the world's population live in darkness, usually in the bondage of false religions or idolatrous materialism. More tragically, at the present time, most of these unreached people have no one of their culture and language near enough to them to make clear what the gospel means. Does their ignorance excuse them from the judgment of hell?

Those who reject the basic tenets of Scripture, of course, are not bothered with this, for they can dismiss the elusive claim of Christ that He alone is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6, KJV; cf. Acts 4:12). To them all roads lead to God, and while Christianity may

have superior insights, still they believe that all religions have redeeming worth to their devotees. What matters, then, is not God's revelation in His Son but sincerity of conviction, whatever it might be. It might be allowed, for example, that whether persons follow Christ or Buddha is inconsequential, so long as they live up to their faith.

The problem with this view is that sincerity does not change error. A man may mistakenly board a plane for New York thinking that he is going to Los Angeles, but that does not change his destination. When sincerity becomes the criterion for salvation, there is no way a confused, self-centered people can determine right from wrong, and finally everyone becomes a law unto himself (Rom. 2:14-15).

Nor does it help by saying that persons who do not believe on Christ can follow the light they have in general revelation. For who has ever perfectly responded to all the opportunities to know God through the natural world? That is why everyone is "without excuse," and given over "to a depraved mind" (Rom. 1:20, 28). The Scripture has concluded that all have sinned and come short of the glory of our Creator (3:23).

Let it be understood, though, that God is found of those who truly seek Him, and to those who walk in the light they have, He is pleased to give more light (Mark 4:25; Matt. 7:7; 13:12). We can affirm that by the prevenience of God's grace everyone has been given sufficient light to come to the truth. So responsibility for salvation finally rests with each person.

Is There Another Way?

Does this mean that one can be saved without a knowledge of God's redeeming work in Christ? To

this I can only answer that if such an alternative exists, it has not been disclosed to us. Therefore, for me to offer hope of salvation through any other name would be morally wrong. God, within His own nature, can do whatever He pleases, but for me, I can only act on the basis of His Word.

An analogy of Dr. Robert McQuilkein may be helpful at this point.¹² He compares a Christian to a security guard charged with the protection of residents on the 10th floor of a nursing home. Among other things, it is his responsibility to get the patients to safety should an emergency arise. Accordingly, he is given a floor plan to the building, which delineates clearly where the fire exits are located. Should a fire break out, what would you feel toward the guard if, rather than following instructions, he discussed with the residents the possibility of there being other escape routes than those indicated on the map? Or suppose that he suggested that it may not be necessary to go down the steps at all, for he had heard a report of someone who had jumped from a 10-story building and survived? Would you not think the man terribly foolish, if not criminally negligent?

Yet I am afraid that is how many of us have acted toward our Lord's command to take the gospel to every

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creature. Oh yes, in our minds we still declare our loyalty to the creeds, but by our casual attitude to the lost multitudes one may wonder how deeply the meaning of the Cross has penetrated our hearts.

When Charles Peace, the infamous criminal, was offered by the prison chaplain "the consolations of religion" on his way to the scaffold, the wretched man turned upon him and exclaimed, "Do you believe it? Do you believe it?" Then, with obvious bitterness, he cried, "If I believed it, I would crawl across England on broken glass on my hands and knees to tell men it was true."¹³

A Burden to Recover

Would that we could recover the burden for a perishing world felt so deeply by our Methodist progenitors! Not that we would become morbid in its contemplation, least of all insensitive to the feelings of persons who do not believe. No one can think of hell and be judgmental, for we know that except for the grace of God we would be as those without hope.

Yet the sense of this overwhelming grace, and all its attendant joy, cannot wash away the tears that flow at the thought of multitudes unsaved. Knowing the terror of their impending doom, we must reach out to them with the Word of Life, "warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom" (Col. 1:28, NKJV). Reflecting upon this admonition of the apostle Paul, Bishop Francis Asbury, not long before he died, expressed his apprehension that many who had been taught the gospel were now "negligent" in sounding its warning. Then, as if exhorting himself, he wrote in his *Journal*:

hension that many who had been taught the gospel were now "negligent" in sounding its warning. Then, as if exhorting himself, he wrote in his *Journal*:

Tell this rebellious generation they are already condemned, and will be shortly damned; preach to them like Moses from Mount Sinai and Ebal, like David—"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" like Isaiah—"Who amongst you shall dwell with devouring fire? Who amongst you can dwell with everlasting burnings?"; like Ezekiel—"O, wicked men! thou shalt surely die!" Pronounce the eight woes uttered by the Son of God near the close of his ministry, and ask with Him—"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Preach as if you had seen heaven and its celestial inhabitants and had hovered over the bottomless pit and beheld the tortures and heard the groans of the damned.¹⁴

When have you last heard preaching like this? It may run counter to the prevailing universalism of our culture, but it is our Wesleyan heritage. And if we want to see the fruits of evangelism in our day as did the early disciples of Wesley, we would do well to emulate their example. One thing is sure: if we believe there is a hell, we must tell the world that Jesus saves all who will come to God through Him, and there is no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.



"Banishment from the presence of the Lord" is "the very essence of destruction."

—John Wesley

"Preach as if you had seen heaven . . . and had hovered over the bottomless pit."

—Francis Asbury

NOTES

1. Quoted in Norman Grubb, *C. T. Studd* (Atlantic City: World Wide Prayer Movement, 1935), 40. Reading this tract influenced the decision of C. T. Studd to give up his fortune and become a missionary.

2. Noted in the original General Rules of the Methodist Church, a statement still included in the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, 67-68.

3. A good example of this thinking is the new doctrinal statement of the United Methodist Church, "Our Theological Task," which makes no reference at all to the judgment of God nor to the separation of the wicked in hell. Not even in describing the plight of "the world community" is there a reference to the spiritual lostness of mankind. The historic *Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church* and *The Confession of Faith of the Evangelical United Brethren Church* do allude to Christ returning to "judge all men on the last day" and "endless condemnation of the wicked," but, regrettably, these statements have been relegated merely to "landmark" documents and have no binding place upon present belief. *Ibid.*, 86-104.

4. *Evangelical Beacon* (June 23, 1986), 15.

5. Commenting on the reference to the "fire prepared from the devil and his angels," Wesley mused, "And who can doubt but that these infernal spirits will immediately execute the sentence; will instantly drag those forsaken by God into their own place of torment," in *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley* "The Important Question" (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1878), 6:457.

6. *Ibid.*, "Of Hell," 384. Elaborating on this "punishment gloss," he says, "There is no grandeur in the infernal regions; there is nothing beautiful in those dark abodes; no light but that of livid flames. And nothing new, but one unvaried scene of horror upon horror! . . . Nor is there anything to gratify the sense of honour: No; they are the heirs of shame and everlasting contempt" (383). He goes on to say that to this anguish is added "the punishment of sense," which implies "unspeakable misery . . . a guilty conscience . . . self-condemnation . . . unholiness; envy, jealousy, malice, and revenge; all of which will incessantly gnaw the soul" (384-85). Cf. a similar statement in "An Extract of a Letter to the Rever-

end Mr. Law," 9:506. Developing this idea of estrangement, speaking on "Human Life a Dream," Wesley depicts hell as a prison, whose inhabitants are seen as "emblems of the rage against God and man . . . causing them to gnash their teeth at Him they so long despised" (7:323).

7. This term is recorded 11 times on the lips of Jesus, and it always refers to a place of destruction. A different term, "hades," refers to the place of departed spirits, or, as Wesley notes, "literally the invisible world." From his sermon on "Dives and Lazarus" (*Ibid.*, 247); cf. the same observation in "On Faith" (12:327); and "The Discovery of Faith" (7:234).

8. The horror of this fire, Wesley says, is that the soul is not consumed, "There is no end! What a thought!" He ponders, "Every suffering is softened, if there is any hope, though distant, of deliverance from it. But here, hope never comes . . . When they are cast into the fire . . . 'Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched'" ("On Hell," 6:390).

9. Wesley's description of "the second death" in "The Way to the Kingdom" (5:83). In his sermon "On Eternity," he contemplates this endless state: "Why, if we were only to be chained down one day, yea, one hour, in a lake of fire, how amazingly long would one day or one hour appear! I know not if it would not seem as a thousand years. But (astonishing thought!) after thousands of thousands, he has just tasted of his bitter cup! After millions, it will be no nearer the end than it was the moment it began!" (6:194).

10. A letter of John Wesley to Mr. Law, dated January 6, 1756, 9:508.

11. Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology II* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 224-25.

12. Robert McQuiken, *The Great Omission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 51.

13. Quoted by G. Ray Jordan, *The Supreme Possession* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1945), 45.

14. A notation of Francis Asbury under the Sabbath, July 9, 1815, *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury II* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1958), 784-85. Asbury died less than a year later, on March 31, 1816.

A TALE OF TWO DOGMAS

(Continued from page 33)

"Our problem with you crisis people is that you put so much emphasis on the crisis moment, you ignore the fact that there is this ongoing shaping and molding of the human nature that needs to take place in order for us to become more Christlike!"

"Oh, we don't do that, do we?" the girl said. "I sure hope not, because I agree with you about going on to deeper levels of commitment to Christ."

"And I sure agree with you," the boy said, "about the need to have a definite starting point in our journey with Christ where we can say that we made an explicit decision to go God's way. If we are still mudmen at heart feverishly trying to clean ourselves every day without letting Christ cleanse that heart of mud, then that point of cleansing needs to be our first order of business!"

"And then after the *crisis* comes the *process*," replied the girl.

"That's exactly right!" said the boy. "Hey! Wait a minute. If we agree, then why are our folks always fighting so much? If you and I could get our folks to realize that the other side has some necessary truths to contribute to the life of holiness, then maybe we could put an end to this silly feud!"

And so they hurried home and came into camp walking right down the middle of the road! After everyone got over the shock of seeing the two together, both groups of people warily came out into the road to see what was going on. The boy and girl happily began to explain all

they had learned about each other during the afternoon. And sure enough, to everyone's surprise, a gentleman's agreement was reached that very day that brought harmony and understanding to the holiness camp for the first time in many years.

And, of course, the boy and girl got married and lived happily ever after—except for the day the girl found out she was going to have a baby. "Oh, Honey," she said, "I'm sure the Lord is going to give us a *perfect* baby!"

"But remember, Sweet-cakes," the boy replied, "the important thing is not to *be* perfect but to be on the road *toward* perfection!"

"But, Darling," she answered, "there's nothing wrong with *being* perfect if you just understood what I am saying."

"But, Cutie Pie . . ."

Like we said—they lived happily ever after.

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Pontius' Puddle



Servant Leadership for a Servant Community

by LeBron Fairbanks

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I want to speak to Christian educators regarding the most decisive issue you will confront in your leadership assignment. What constitutes success in your leadership ministry?

This question is crucial because the way you define success will determine your leadership style.

My thesis is that there must be a vision within the Christian community you serve regarding ministry that is shared by both the leader and the led. Without this shared vision of ministry, the community of faith will experience disillusionment, disintegration, and despair. Conversely, mobilizing a Christian community for ministry hinges on a radical commitment to our identity as:

brothers and sisters in Christ
fellow travelers on a spiritual journey
members together of Christ's body
a fellowship of God's people
a microcosm of the kingdom of God on earth
a community of faith
a sacramental community in and through which the grace of God flows

Fundamentally, I believe, effective leadership for ministry expression is grounded in biblical perspective and not in organizational skills. Skills, of course, are needed. However, sharp skills without Christian motives easily lead to manipulation. The primary orientation and motivation of our actions as Christian leaders must be deeply theological.

How convictionally we affirm these affirmations as we lead will determine the degree to which our leadership will be judged "successful" in biblical perspective.

Let us explore more deeply this thesis.

First, WHAT IS "MINISTRY"?

In its briefest and most general understanding, ministry is *diakonia* or service. Ministry is service to others in Jesus' name. Certain words help us understand the various dimensions of Christian ministry. Words like *caring*, *sharing*, *growing*, *relating*, *teaching*, and *confronting*.

Ministry in New Testament perspective takes the form of holding the hand of a person engulfed in fear, listening intently to a person in trouble, crying with a person who is hurt, or embracing the individual who is grieving. It may include taking students or parishioners to the store for groceries, or confronting in love the lack of discipline or careless habits.

Ministry encompasses the sharing of the Christian faith or a verse of Scripture with another in time of need.

Christian ministry is the extension of Jesus in our world, incarnating the healing, guiding, sustaining, reconciling work of Jesus in the lives of those with whom we work and live. If you are a Christian, you are called to Christian ministry.

Ministry understood in this broadest sense is the context for our specific ministry. We may be specifically called and gifted for pastoral ministry, teaching ministry, evangelism ministry, music ministry, or leadership ministry. But it is futile and self-defeating to seek to function within our specific calling *while ignoring the broader calling to serve others in Jesus' name*.

Jesus defined success in Christian ministry in terms of service or self-giving to others in the name and place of God (Matt. 25:30-34). Our responsibility as leaders is caring for God's people as a shepherd does his sheep, leading and teaching them in the ways of God. Our leadership mandate is to motivate, equip, and enable the people of God to develop their gifts and give their lives in meaningful service to others in Jesus' name.

Our ministry is helping others prepare for their ministries.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in *Life Together*, lists seven expressions of ministry by which a Christian community must be judged and characterized.

**Effective leadership
for ministry is
grounded in biblical
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organizational skills.**

1. The Ministry of Holding One's Tongue

James tells us that one who holds his tongue in check controls both mind and body (3:2). "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths" is an admonishment from the Ephesian Epistle (4:29). When this passage characterizes us we will be able to cease from constantly criticizing the other person, judging him and condemning him, putting him in his particular place. We can allow the other to exist as a completely free person.

2. The Ministry of Meekness

This is caring more for others than for self. "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought," Paul tells us in Rom. 12:3. John tells us to make no effort to obtain the praise that comes only from God. He who serves must learn to think first of others.

3. The Ministry of Listening

The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists of listening to them. Listening can be a greater service to people than speaking.

4. The Ministry of Active Helpfulness

Simply assist others within the Christian community in trifling, external matter.

5. The Ministry of Bearing (Supporting)

"Carry each other's burdens" is the challenge of Gal. 6:2. To "bear" (KJV) means to forbear and sustain one another in love. Eph. 4:2 commands us to be humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

6. The Ministry of Proclaiming

This is the ministry of the Word of God. Bonhoeffer does not mean the message of Scripture in a formal setting such as in the worship service. He is referring to the free communication of the Word of God from person to person. He is referring to that unique situation in which one person becomes a witness in human words to another, with Christian consolation.

7. The Ministry of Authority (Leadership)

Jesus states in Mark 10:43, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all." This is the paradox of ministry. Jesus made authority in the fellowship dependent upon brotherly service. A servant is one who gets excited about helping someone else succeed.

For Bonhoeffer, these practical expressions of Christian ministry provide the *context* within which our specific ministries must function. This is particularly true as it relates to the specific ministry of leadership.

Robert Greenleaf, in his outstanding book *Servant Leadership*, suggests a thesis that those who are leaders must serve those whom they lead. Only those who serve, he believes, are fit for leadership. Though written for the secular audience, the book contains many thoughts on servant leadership similar to the words of Jesus.

Christian leadership is, I believe, humble service to others in the community of faith whose head is Christ for the purpose of enabling them, through modeling and teaching, to fulfill their ministry to each other and their mission in the world.

The question is, How can our ministry of Christian leadership enable *others* to fulfill *their* ministry to each other and *their* mission in the world? Leadership, for

ministers of Christ, is known by the personalities it enriches, not by those it dominates or captivates. Are the people being served growing as Christians? Are they themselves becoming servants? These are crucial concerns for leadership in the community of God's people.

Dr. Harold Reed, president of the Reed Institute for the Advanced Study of Leadership, is author of the book *The Dynamics of Leadership*, which reminds us that the quality of our leadership is largely based on our philosophy of life. If our philosophy of life is based on a biblical theology of church and ministry, then our style of leadership will convictionally focus on the qualitative growth of the led as ministers of Jesus Christ, called to serve others in His name.

Understood this way, the Christian ministry is a *shared ministry* with every believer serving and supporting one another, using Holy Spirit given gifts to stimulate personal and corporate growth and reconciliation in both the church and the world. Ministry, like missions, is a function and expression of the whole church. It is not something that only a few persons are called, trained, and ordained to do, but a function of the people of God.

Perhaps the outline of my model of ministry will summarize this discussion on ministry and will conceptualize the relationship of the leadership ministry of the pastor-teacher to the ministry of the church he serves (see Appendix "A").

Again, our ministry of leadership is to prepare others for their ministries.

Second, WHAT IS MEANT BY THE PHRASE "SHARED VISION" OF MINISTRY?

Vision has to do with seeing things clearly and at a great distance. It is seeing what others do not see. A vision is a consuming, passionate, compelling inner picture. All leaders are supposed to have "vision." Fundamental for the Christian leader is not so much organizational "vision" but theological "vision."

What do we "see" in the people with whom we work! Do we see problems or possibilities? the present situation or the future potential? Some leaders focus only on the past. Some see only the present and say, "Why?" Others dream of things that never were, and say, "Why not?"

Our challenge is to see beyond the past, or even the present with its problems, to "dream" or "see" redeemed individuals—all of whom are called to live as an extension of Jesus in their world, incarnating the healing, sustaining, reconciling work of Jesus in the lives of those with whom they work and live.

As leaders, we need—we must have—a consuming, passionate, compelling inner picture of:

1. *Who* we are as the people of God
2. *How* we live together as the family of God, and
3. *What* we are called to do with our lives in the work of God

And leadership is the *transference* of this vision!

Our desperate need is to transfer our vision of minis-

Christian ministry is the extension of Jesus in our world.

try to those for whom we have Christian care and responsibility, who will in turn transfer their vision to others! To believe that all Christians—yes, even those with whom we work who sometimes make life so difficult—are *called* and gifted for the ministry of Christ. More and more, we need to see ourselves as *equippers* of ministers. Unfortunately, most of us have been educated to be ministers, not to be enablers of ministers.

Shared ministry demands deep “seeing” and deep “visioning.” Only the person who can see the invisible can do the impossible. Questions such as “what if . . .” and “why not . . .” ought to permeate our mind-set regarding the Christians with whom we work. What if . . . they were all called to the Christian ministry? Why not . . . assume it is true and proceed accordingly!

Elton Trueblood states it most clearly,

Unless the layman is given solid teaching, his ministry, after an initial burst of freshness, will tend to degenerate into little more than a string of trite phrases linked to commonplace ideas and buttressed by a few sloppily quoted biblical passages. We must take the education of the laity with utter seriousness. Lay persons are not assistants to the pastor, to help him do his work. Rather, the pastor is to be their assistant; he is to help equip them for the ministry to which God has called them. The difference is as revolutionary as it is total. Half measures are worse than nothing. Our hope lies in making big plans, in undertaking to produce a radical change, in aiming high. Adult education is the big thing in the church. It is not a decoration, it is the centerpiece.*

Only from this perspective will ministry be mutually understood and shared. Without this shared vision, ministry

in and through the local church or theological institution is as impossible as a triangle with two sides. Ministry happens

when the leader

and the congregation, administrator and students, have a vision of Christian ministry and pursue it together. The more consuming the vision, the greater commitment to ministry.

We must be captured by this vision that transcends ministry *to* the people, and ministry *for* the people, to ministry *with* the people and ministry *by* the people.

The shared vision of ministry of which I speak demands a *passionate conviction* regarding ministry that sets out to do something about the insight. Our leadership ministry is helping others understand and develop their ministry. When those with similar vision are drawn together, something extraordinary occurs.

Third, HOW, THEN, CAN WE COMMUNICATE A VISION OF MINISTRY THAT WILL BECOME A SHARED VISION?

Jesus challenges us in Luke 6:40, “Everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.” (Or his school president!) Ministry is always incarnated and enfleshed. Ministry must be lived out!

But what is it about ourselves that we want our stu-

dents, staff, or parishioners to catch from us? We want our people to catch from us a servant spirit, committed to *motivating, equipping, and enabling them to serve others in Jesus’ name*. This is success for the Christian leader! This is what it means to be a servant leader!

What we are confronted with is a need to communicate a life-style that is distinctly Christian—and self-giving at the core. But how do you communicate a life-style? How do you teach commitments, priorities, values, and spiritual disciplines? How do you teach a life-style?

Whatever else it means, it demands taking seriously the principle of imitation. Herbert Mayer, in his book *Pastoral Care, Its Roots and Renewal*, reminds us that this principle was a key in Christian leadership for 18 centuries. We must recapture this principle if we are to take seriously the biblical mandate to be an example to believers. “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). “You ought to follow our example” (2 Thess. 3:7). “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice” (Phil. 4:9). “We did this, . . . in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow” (2 Thess. 3:9). Paul gave these words to the Christians under his care with humility, we must do the same for those for whom we are responsible.

Read the writings of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, John Chrysostom, Martin Luther, Richard Baxter, and John Wesley, to name only a few, who were not hesitant to claim their responsibility to be an example to other believers. Chrysostom, identified the following as qualities for leaders:

1. love for God and the people
2. know the people
3. be a person of the Spirit
4. maintain rigorous self-discipline
5. patience

With these qualities, the leader can strive, according to Chrysostom, toward the following goals and objectives:

1. to bring the people of God safely to their heavenly home
2. to keep them away from the sin of the world
3. to win as many souls to Christ as possible
4. to make people aware of the poor and needy

Interestingly, one of the key ways for Chrysostom to reach these goals was through personal example!

More specifically, what leadership qualities must others see in us as institutional leaders, teachers, or pastors, if we are to effectively transfer our vision of ministry to them? Eph. 4:25-32 provides for us a servant leadership life-style (see Appendix “B”).

Ephesians 4 begins with the challenge to walk worthy of our calling as Christians. The characteristics of the person “walking worthy” follows the challenge. We are instructed to be gentle, humble, patient, and supportive of each other. In so living, we will “keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (v. 3).

But, as Christian *leaders*, how do we express gentleness, humbleness, patience, and supportiveness? The key principle is found in Eph. 4:15—“speaking the truth in love.” This key concept is fleshed out in the following verses (25-32). We speak the truth in love:

1. Because as Christians *we are God's family*. Therefore, we should speak truthfully and not lie to one another (v. 25).
2. Because, when we do not, *Satan gets a foothold in our lives*. Therefore, we should not postpone dealing with our anger and should deal with our differences in a Christian way (vv. 26-27).
3. Because of the *power of words to heal and affirm*. Therefore, be supportive and uplifting, and avoid negative talking (v. 29).
4. Because *we have been forgiven in Christ*. Therefore, be forgiving, and do not hold grudges and become resentful (vv. 31-32).

Paul is not so much talking about administrative techniques but Christian attitudes underlying our actions and activities. We are co-laborers together in the Body of Christ (v. 25). We function with others out of an "I-Thou" frame of reference. The people with whom we work are God's own creation.

When we ignore our "family" relationship in Christ and treat those with whom we work as "means to an end," persons to be manipulated for our purposes, Satan gets a "foothold" into the Christian community. The enemy of our souls laughs at unresolved conflict within the fellowship of the faithful.

Our words are to be channels of God's grace to others (v. 30). Dialogue, for Paul, is a sacrament. And God's forgiveness frees us to take the initiative in forgiving those who hurt us.

When we do not live together by these guidelines as a Christian community, the Spirit of God is grieved (v. 30a).

We can now see more clearly how we, as leaders, can "keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace," and, in so doing, walk (lead) worthy of our calling as leaders.

Again, because of these fundamental Christian attitudes, we can *be honest* . . . with the believers; *immediate* . . . in dealing with conflict among us; *upbuilding* . . . in our words, frequently expressing thoughts that,

I love you,
I accept you,
I respect you,
I need you,
I trust you,
I serve you; and

I *forgive* you . . . so that words and deeds done by others to us will not create bitterness within us.

Can Christian leaders really "lead" out of the leadership life-style paradigm outlined above? I believe so, even in conflict situations. Because relationships are so important to us, we "care enough to confront" our brother or sister in Christ when words or deeds are perceived by us to be detrimental to their growth or to the growth of the fellowship. We care too much about the relationship to ignore destructive behavior. We care enough to confront.

The fundamental question, always before the Christian leader, is, How can we live together as Christians so that our relationships are redemptive and a witness to unbelievers of the reconciling word of God in Christ?

These principles and concepts are not psychological

in nature; they are deeply theological. The Spirit of God is deeply concerned with the speech of His people (v. 30a).

These convictional principles and concepts may not be found in the latest secular textbook on leadership; but they are foundational for the leaders who want their people to catch from them a servant spirit, committed to motivating, equipping, and enabling them to serve others in Jesus' name.

Our assignment, then, as church leaders is greater and more demanding than communicating facts, dates, persons, places, and events. Our responsibility will increasingly adopt it as their vision of ministry. They will not see in us a finished product. Rather, they will discover in us an ongoing process of transformation into Christlikeness.

It is not easy. I must continually ask, What does it mean to be a servant to my students and staff where I must function in my role as seminary president? What does it mean to be a servant in the midst of *all* the expectations and roles and functions?

And what about the risks? Misunderstandings? Abuses? Betrayals? Pain? Hurts? Is it worth the risks? Is it really worth the risk of being a servant leader?

I am growing in my understanding of the profoundness of my questions and their answers. Slowly, but with inner confidence, I am developing a deep conviction—theologically grounded—that I must accept the risks and serve my people with integrity if I am to be a Christian leader.

And you, too, will be challenged to find such responses in the situations you face.

But my challenge to you is to lead . . . with a *vision* to *serve* and a commitment to equip servant leaders! If you are captured by this vision of ministry formation and are characterized by a servant leadership life-style, then your group—regardless of its size—will be life-giving, growth-producing, and *distinctly Christian*.

What mark will you leave behind when you depart your present leadership assignment? How will anyone ever know that you have been there? What sign will tell the future traveler that you have existed?

I believe the deepest impressions will be made in those moments when you say I love you, I care for you, I am your brother or sister. I will serve you in Jesus' name regardless of the costs, ignoring the risks, and acknowledging the conflicting roles, functions, expectations, and misunderstandings.

Find a way to serve your people. And this spirit, attitude, and conviction will empower them to reach out and serve others in Jesus' name!

This is servant leadership! To *this* ministry we are called. Measure your success in ministry by *this* standard!

*Source unknown.

Unfortunately, most of us have been educated to be ministers, not enablers of ministers.



CHURCH EMPLOYEES OR INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS?

(Submitted by the Board of Pensions and Benefits USA of the Church of the Nazarene)

"Dear Sirs:

The only employee we have besides our pastor is a part-time custodian (or secretary). Do you know of any way we could pay them by contract and save the trouble of withholding income taxes and Social Security (FICA) taxes?"

In one form or another, this question has been asked literally hundreds of times in financial seminars, correspondence, and telephone conversations. This is in response to the increasing responsibilities of churches and other employers for reporting employee compensation to the IRS. Fortunately, the answer is fairly straightforward. However, it is frequently not the answer desired by the questioner.

WHO ARE EMPLOYEES?

There are basically two types of employees defined by the Tax Code: statutory employees and common-law employees. Statutory employees have specifically defined jobs that on the surface might appear to be self-employed positions were it not for the statutes that define the work as that of an employee. The common-law employee is the category that affects local churches most often.

The Tax Code defines a common-law employee generally as anyone who performs services that can be controlled by the employer. That is, the employer has *the legal right of control* (even if the right is not exercised) over the means, methods, and results of the services provided. If the employer/employee relationship is deemed to exist *based on the facts in each case*, it does not matter what it is called, nor how the payments are measured or paid, nor if the services are performed full-time or part-time. The employer must determine any taxable amounts paid, withhold appropriate taxes for lay employees, and pay and report those taxes to the IRS. Virtually all church custodians, church secretaries, paid choir directors, paid nursery workers, etc., are viewed by the IRS as common-law employees.

WHO ARE INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS?

Some local churches do hire independent contractors who offer specific services to the general public. Generally, in a year's time an independent contractor will have more than one organization to whom he offers services. Examples would be services provided by a janitorial service, snow removal service, roofing contractor, etc., that are advertised city-wide. No employer/employee rela-

tionship exists between the church and persons performing such services as an independent contractor; therefore, no withholding is required. However, the local church may still be required to report to the IRS those payments made to an unincorporated, independent contractor.

The Tax Code provides that payments for services to an unincorporated, independent contractor in excess of \$600 per year must be reported to the IRS on Form 1099 MISC.

NOTE:

An unincorporated evangelist would be considered an independent contractor. Any payments to him or her of \$600 or more, not properly designated in advance as housing allowance by the board, would require the issuing of a Form 1099 MISC.

WHAT IF WE DON'T WITHHOLD AND REPORT?

There are criminal and civil penalties for willful failure to comply with requirements for withholding and reporting! In addition, the amount of certain taxes not withheld at the time of payment from an employee's salary (that must later be paid) becomes the responsibility of the employer! The employee has no obligation to later reimburse the employer for such amount. Further, in some cases, an officer or responsible employee may become personally liable for the taxes and penalties involved.

WHAT IF WE ARE NOT SURE IF WE HAVE AN EMPLOYEE OR AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR?

The local church should carefully consult IRS Publication 15 "Circular E—Employer's Tax Guide" and the free Publication 539 for examples that might be similar to the church's situation. (Both are available from the IRS: 1-800-424-FORM.) Consultation should be made with a local legal and/or tax counselor for advice. If questions still arise, a special form is available from the IRS to request that they determine if such person has an employment relationship with the local church. In no case should the questions be ignored, nor should there be willful failure to abide by local requirements for withholding and reporting either wages paid to employees or payments in excess of \$600 to unincorporated, independent contractors.

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





How John Wesley Handled Money

by Charles Edward White

Spring Arbor College
Spring Arbor, Mich.

John Wesley preached a lot about money. He had many ideas about right and wrong uses of wealth. And, as the man with one of the highest earned incomes in England, he had opportunities to put his ideas into practice. Many people could ignore what Wesley said about money, but none could dismiss the way he used it. What he preached with his deeds spoke louder than what he preached with his words.

John Wesley knew grinding poverty as a child. His father, Samuel Wesley, served as the Anglican priest in one of England's lowest-paying parishes, and he had nine children to support. Samuel was rarely out of debt. Once John saw his father being marched off to debtor's prison. Thus, when John followed his father into the ministry he had no illusions about financial rewards.

It probably came as a surprise to John Wesley that, while God had called him to follow his father's vocation, he had not also called him to share his father's life of poverty. Instead of being a parish priest like his father, John felt God's direction to teach at Oxford University. There he was elected a fellow of Lincoln College, and his financial status changed dramatically. His position usually paid him at least £30 a year, more than enough money for a single man to live on. John seems to have enjoyed his relative prosperity, spending money on playing cards, tobacco, and brandy.¹

While at Oxford an incident occurred that changed John Wesley's perspective on money. He had just finished paying for some pictures for his room when one of the chambermaids came to his door. It was a cold

winter's day, and he noticed that she had nothing to protect her except a thin linen gown. He reached into his pocket to give her some money to buy a coat, but found he had very little left. Immediately the thought struck him that the Lord was not pleased with the way he spent his money. He asked himself:

"Will thy Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful steward?' Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O justice! O mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?"²

Perhaps as a result of this incident, in 1731 Wesley began to limit his expenses so that he would have money to give to the poor. He records that one year his income was £30, and his living expenses £28, so he had £2 to give away. The next year his income doubled, but he still managed to live on £28, so he had £32 to give to the poor. In the third year his income jumped to £90. Instead of letting his expenses rise with his income, he kept them down to £28 and gave £62 away. In the fourth year he received £120. As before, his expenses were £28, so his giving rose to £92.³

Wesley had preached that the Christian should not merely tithe but also give away all extra income once the family and creditors were taken care of. He believed that with increasing income, the Christian's standard of giving should rise, not the standard of living. As we have seen, he began this practice at Oxford. He continued it throughout his life. Even when his income rose into the thousands of pounds of sterling, he lived simply, and quickly gave his

surplus money away. One year his income was a little over £1400. He lived on £30. He gave £1400 away.⁴ Because he had no family to care for, he had no need for savings. He was afraid of laying up treasures on earth, so the money went out as quickly as it came in as income. He reports that he never had £100 at any one time.⁵

Wesley limited his expenditures by not purchasing the kinds of things that were thought essential for a man in his station of life. In 1776 the English tax commissioners inspected his return and wrote him the following: "[WE] cannot doubt but you have *plate* for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry." They were saying that a man of his prominence certainly must have some silver plate in his house, and accusing him of failing to pay the excise tax on it. Wesley wrote back: "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate I have at present, and I shall not buy any more *while so many round me want bread*."⁶

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

town. Wesley rejoiced to eat the same food at the same table, looking forward to the heavenly banquet that all Christians would share.⁷

Wesley not only identified with the poor by sharing their food and lodging, and by forgoing the luxuries that so many considered necessities but also sometimes went without necessities in order to have more money to give away. For almost four years, Wesley's diet consisted mainly of potatoes. He lived on potatoes to improve his health, but also to save money. He said: "What I save from my own meat, will feed another that else would have none."⁸

By these means the man who made more than £1000 a year found he could live on £30 and give the rest away. In 1744 Wesley had written, "[When I die] if I leave behind me ten pounds . . . you and all mankind [may] bear witness against me, that I have lived and died a thief and a robber."⁹ When he died in 1791 the only money mentioned in his will was the miscellaneous coins to be found in his pockets and dresser drawers.¹⁰ What had happened to the rest of his money, to the estimated £30,000 he had earned over his lifetime? He had given it away. As Wesley said, "I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but, in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors."¹¹

In those days when a person of note died the newspapers noted the death and, in great detail, the estate left by the deceased. When John Wesley died the newspapers comment on his estate was: "He left nothing." 

NOTES

1. Vivian H. H. Green, *The Young Mr. Wesley* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), 102.
2. John Wesley, "On Dress," in *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 7:21.
3. "The More Excellent Way," *Works* 7:36.
4. John Wesley Bready, *England: Before and After Wesley* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1938), 238.
5. Letter of John Wesley cited in Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., Founder of the Methodists*, 3 vols. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890), 3:614.
6. Cited in Bready, *England*, 238.
7. "A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists," *Works* 8:265.
8. "On the Danger of Increasing Riches," *Ibid.*, 7:356.
9. "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," *Ibid.*, 8:40.
10. Tyerman, *Life and Times* 3:617.
11. "The Danger of Riches," *Works* 7:9.

Worship

KERYGMATIC WORSHIP

The topic of worship has been a much-discussed item recently, as many congregations have been thinking about how to make their worship a more joyous and meaningful occasion. Admittedly, the charismatic movement has caused some of this introspection, as their lively brand of worship often stands in stark contrast to the lifeless, anemic worship of some local churches. This contrast has left many wondering, "What makes worship Christian?"

A close look at the New Testament reveals that genuine Christian worship must always proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ. The Greek word used for what is proclaimed is *kerygma*.¹ Kerygma and worship must be bound together in the church. What would our worship be without the truth of the death and resurrection of Christ? This truth makes our worship distinctively Christian and transforms a small gathering of two or more into a gathering in Jesus' name. Only then may we expect the presence of the resurrected and exalted Savior in our midst. Through His presence people are connected with God's resurrection power. This is kerygmatic worship. Now let's look at the characteristics of kerygmatic worship.

I. Kerygmatic Worship Must Feature Kerygmatic Preaching. Naturally, this is biblical preaching, but kerygmatic preaching becomes more specific in what it demands from a preacher. It tells the preacher what to preach (Christ crucified and resurrected, 1 Cor. 1:23; 15:12), how to preach it (in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 2:4), and the ef-

fect of preaching (calling people to repentance, for "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt. 3:2, KJV).

Kerygmatic preaching is relevant to people in modern life. F. Dean Lueking describes preaching as, "the art of connecting God and people."² Kerygmatic preaching struggles to connect God with people by making the gospel relevant. It is alarming the number of worship services that are moving away from the centrality of proclaiming the Word of God, that is, kerygmatic worship. Too many sermons are being replaced by light, albeit Christian, entertainment. However, we preachers have only ourselves to blame. Perhaps this has happened because our preaching is no longer relevant to the needs of the people.

Kerygmatic preaching is done in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Too many sermons become a showcase for the pastor's diploma and academic skills rather than proclaiming the Word of God under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This is not an argument against an educated clergy or against a preacher properly preparing before entering the pulpit. Calvin said he would rather go into the pulpit naked than unprepared. It is an argument that educated clergy must realize that preparation involves more than exegesis, it also involves prayer. It is primarily through prayer that the minister preaches in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Kerygmatic preaching clearly calls people to repentance. Much preaching has primarily become a second-rate pop psychology aimed at making people feel better about themselves instead of calling sin-

by Barry E. Bryant
London, England

ners to repentance. In the words of William Booth, the Christian preacher should preach as a "dying man to dying men." Our preaching is no longer kerygmatic when it loses its sense of desperate urgency for the sinner's need of full salvation—now!

II. Kerygmatic Worship Must Feature an Evangelical Understanding of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is kerygma illustrated. Too often Communion is overlooked as an invaluable means of proclaiming and celebrating the gospel. Each time we celebrate the Lord's Supper we remember and celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and look forward to His coming again. As a sacrament, it is the outward sign of inward grace and serves as a means of conveying God's preventing, justifying, and sanctifying grace to the believer's heart. This is cause for a celebration.

So often the Lord's Supper comes across as a "funeral for Jesus" when it should be a celebration of the resurrection power of God manifest in the life of Christ with a sense of His "real presence" through the Holy Spirit. Perhaps our commemoration of the Lord's Supper is too often shared from a Maundy Thursday instead of an Easter Sunday point of view. The empty tomb and Resurrection give kerygma its power and the Lord's Supper its joy.

III. Kerygmatic Worship Must Feature Active Lay Involvement During Worship and in Ministry. Kerygmatic worship is not just a showcase for preaching, with the spotlight on the pulpit and the Communion table while the remainder of

the congregation sits in the shadows. It sees every Christian worshiper as an ambassador for Christ, through whom God appeals to the world beyond the sanctuary to be reconciled to himself (2 Cor. 5:20). Every Christian worshiper is an ambassador proclaiming the kerygma, imploring the world to be reconciled to Christ, simultaneously celebrating the love of God that makes reconciliation possible. Kerygmatic worship is, by its very nature, evangelical and rooted in the reformation biblical doctrine of the priesthood of believers. This means each believer has access to God as a priest. But it also means that the priests of God are able to lead others into the Lord's presence.

IV. Kerygmatic Worship Must Be Worship in the Spirit. Jesus told the woman at the well in Samaria "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24, RSV).

Those who worship God in spirit are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. We must remember the "prepositions of worship." We worship God, *through* Christ, *in* the Holy Spirit. Tom Smail has rightly pointed out that the primary function of the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with "charismatic manifestations but with our initiation into the two central relationships that are summed up in the two confessions, 'Abba, Father' [Gal. 4:6], and 'Jesus is Kurios, Lord' [1 Cor. 12:3]." It is the Holy Spirit's job to relate us to God the Father and God the Son in worship and in acknowledgment of who they are for us.³ It is possible to be overly interested in the Holy Spirit, and confuse worship "in" the Spirit with worship "of" the Holy Spirit. Such confusion must surely grieve the Holy Spirit rather than honor Him. "If the Spirit is in effect saying, 'Look at them, not at me,' then to persist nevertheless in concentrating on Him is to frustrate rather than promote what He wants to do in us."⁴

Dr. James Packer offers this wonderful illustration:

When floodlighting is well done, the floodlights are so placed that you do not see them; you are not in fact supposed to see where the light is coming from; what you are meant to see is just the building on which the floodlights are trained . . . This perfectly illustrates the Spirit's new covenant role. He is, so to speak, the hidden floodlight shining on the Saviour.⁵

Paul rounds off this understanding of worship in the Spirit with his understanding of "spiritual worship."

I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your SPIRITUAL [emphasis mine] worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Rom. 12:1-2, RSV).

Spiritual worship must be placed in a life context, a life lived as a sacrifice to God. This means even worship in the Spirit cannot be kerygmatic unless it is given to God within the context of a holiness life-style. A holiness life-style of love, justice, and mercy is kerygmatic worship at its best.

This is where the Corinthians ran into trouble. Their worship appeared to be adequately "charismatic" but failed miserably in being "kerygmatic." Not only had many failed to worship God from and with a holiness life-style, but they had forgotten the "foolishness of the cross" as well. They had forgotten the reality of the Resurrection and its implications for believers and had succeeded in reducing the Lord's Supper to an occasion for unjust and hedonistic gluttony. Ironically, the Corinthian's worship is often looked on as an example of spiritual worship.

V. Kerygmatic Worship Is Worship in Truth. Jesus says, "Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth" (John 17:17, RSV). Whatever meanings one assigns to *truth* and *word*, they must in some sense mean

kerygma. Kerygma—that is, the death and resurrection of Christ—is both the “word” and the “truth” of what we proclaim. The death and resurrection of Christ verifies the truth of the word. When we worship, we do so in reality of this truth. Anyone who has experienced forgiveness of sin knows that only the truth of kerygma can truly set us free (John 8:31-32). This truth of God’s Word is discovered through and proclaimed in kerygma.

The truth of the gospel also demands obedience. When Jesus gave His disciples the Great Commission in Matt. 28:18-20, He told them not simply to teach others about Christ but also to teach obedience to Christ’s teachings. Many people teach about Christ. Teaching obedience is something different from simply “teaching Christianity” in the same way one might teach history or geography. Obedience to the words and commandments taught us by Jesus is the truth in which we are sanctified.

Kerygmatic worship occurs when the Body of Christ, the ambassadors for Christ, gather together in holiness and obedience to hear kerygmatic preaching, to celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and to worship God in spirit and truth. When the truth of the gospel is proclaimed in the power of the Spirit, chains of sin fall off and prisoners are set free, hearts are filled with a longing “for a thousand tongues to sing our great Redeemer’s praise.” When the Lord’s Supper is celebrated with a sense of His presence, joy and doxology express our love for the Father and what He has done for us in and through Christ. When Jesus’ ambassadors worship in spirit and in truth, they rejoice in the power of the Resurrection. The church today needs kerygmatic worship—worship built on the solid foundation of Jesus’ death and resurrection. 

NOTES

1. G. Friedrich, “Kerygma,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 715-17.

2. F. Dean Lueking, *Preaching, the Art of Connecting God and People* (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1985). The art of preaching is learning how to apply this message to the lives of its hearers, an art that many are convinced is learned only through preaching itself and pastoral experience.

3. Tom Smail, *The Giving Gift* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988), 13.

4. *Ibid.*, 31.

5. J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press), 1984, 66.

Preaching

SEND THE GOOD

by Philip Bence

“This is a day of good tidings. One thing is needful. The world cries for it. Honour claims it. Christ commands it. Send the good tidings on.”¹ James S. Stewart preached and lived those words. His awareness of the gospel, his desire to proclaim it, and his gift of communicating it set Stewart apart as one of the great apostles of this century.

James S. Stewart, born in Dundee, Scotland, 90 years ago, lives in Edinburgh, his home for the past 50 years. Following pastorates in Auchtermarder and Aberdeen, Stewart took the pulpit of the North Morningside Church in Edinburgh. From there he was called to be the professor of New Testament at New College, University of Edinburgh. Whatever his official title, Stewart remained a preacher. Students, forgetting the setting, often placed pen and paper aside and listened in awe as their mentor proclaimed God’s Word.

Stewart offers much wisdom to American holiness preachers. I urge you to find and study Stewart’s books (two on preaching, two on two key New Testament figures, and several volumes of printed sermons). To whet your appetite, I offer a few choice bites, summaries of Stewart’s thoughts on the preacher, the themes of preaching, and his view on the deeper Christian life.

In Stewart’s mind, the pastor must remain a student throughout his career. He is emphatic on this point. But here, his actions quite positively speak louder than his words. While still in the pastorate, Stewart made time to research and write books about Jesus and Paul—volumes of such merit that they are still in

print in America. You may feel that you have time only for weekly sermon preparation. Other study gets squeezed out of the schedule. Stewart would disagree. Often his work on the books did not fit the next Sunday’s message. But as you read his published sermons, you will see that same material sprinkled throughout. His study paid off in his sermon preparation for years to come.

Stewart’s disciplined study is one of many factors that make him a model preacher. He was a born preacher. But the gift people heard on Sundays required hours of work through the week. According to him, the preacher too busy to give large blocks of time to sermon preparation is not only too busy but also neglecting the call of God.

There will be subtle temptation to scamp the work of preparation. You will be tempted to rationalize your other crowding duties into a justification for relaxing the inexorable discipline of your study-desk. . . . You are called to speak to men in the name of God. Dare you think lightly of such an undertaking, or of the stern discipline of heart and mind which it involves? . . . Do it vigorously and with all your might and make it your great and serious business.²

The pastor must be a student and a diligent preacher, but his own spiritual walk is of greatest importance. Stewart quotes Bishop Quayle, “Preaching is more than preparing a sermon and delivering it; preaching is preparing a preacher and delivering him.”³ It may not take much effort at the desk or on knees in prayer to receive compliments after a ser-

TIDINGS ON

WE CAN'T HEAR YOU, PASTOR

by Rolland R. Reece
Akron, Ohio

mon, but to preach messages that will drive your people to their knees, you need to have been there first.

To realize, face to face with the task, that it is hopeless trying to go on unless higher hands take hold of you . . . to cry to God out of that depth of humiliation every day you live—this is to learn the secret of the apostles, whose very weakness was turned through the alchemy of prayer into their strongest asset, whose human inadequacy itself became the vehicle of the conquering might of Christ.⁴

In his second book on preaching (*A Faith to Proclaim*), Stewart uses five chapters to describe the five themes that must pervade our preaching.

First is the *fact of the Incarnation*. This is not a fairy tale we have conceived for our comfort. God *did* become man.

Second is the *glorious truth of forgiveness*. According to Stewart, forgiveness, in contrast to what our world says today, is necessary, possible, and right.

The Incarnation was not sufficient to make possible our forgiveness; *all theology, all high thoughts of man, must center on the Cross*, where the stronger Jesus forever defeated the strong forces of evil.

But "without the *Resurrection*, the Passion itself would be robbed of meaning. Without this, the whole Christian structure falls to pieces, and all talk of atonement is empty words."⁵

The reality of the Resurrection opens the door to the fifth great truth. *Christ is alive today*. We can live our lives in the fullness of His

On some Sundays our pastor is on a wavelength we can't—or is it won't—tune in. His head wags from side to side, his mouth opens and closes, his lips move, but we can't make out what he says.

It's too bad, for he appears to be in earnest. Sweat runs down his cheeks. His arms flail the air. He points. He pleads. He coos. He shouts. But none of it gets past our eyes and ears into our heads.

Across the years we have gained some insight into this puzzling phenomenon. For example, we can expect to not understand our pastor if he has attended a clergy conference the week before. His vocabulary will be sprinkled with new words and phrases that deftly get to the heart of our ancient faith. In all candor, we prefer the old words; we have learned how to defend ourselves against them. Therefore, we stop listening to the new words and begin thinking of the groceries we need to pick up on the way home. Anyway, getting emotional in church is tacky.

We've also come to expect one of the "can't hear" sermons if he has had to put in an 80- to 90-hour week. What he offers is a parade of thoughts that have pain and struggle as their common denominator. His sermon last week ruined a number of luncheons. Some of us don't take indigestion lightly.

The third instance when we can't hear our pastor is when he speaks on giving. As soon as he pronounces the words *money, tithing, sacrifice*, or any of their synonyms, you can almost hear 300 minds clamp shut. Nothing is going to get into our heads until he pronounces "Amen."

The problem, as you can see, clearly lies with our pastor. He must learn to make complex matters simple, to prepare sermons weeks ahead, and to stop meddling with our money. By now you would think he would know how sensitive we are, but he doesn't. Who must he persist with these "can't hear" sermons?

What's a church member to do?



power. Stewart believes the church today struggles for survival, trying to depend on its members and pastors instead of living in constant fellowship with the Risen Christ.

Though James Stewart never found himself on the holiness branch of the Christian tree, he refused to allow believers to wallow in their sinful habits. A sermon titled "The Triumphant Adequacy of Christ" typifies his preaching. He surveys Paul's tower of words "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 15:29, KJV), finishing the thought with this charge:

Away with reservations! Be done with the misery of a divided soul. Offer the whole sacrifice upon

the altar of God. So shall we have, no longer an impoverished religion and a deficient moral dynamic, but the living and limitless blessing in the God-created splendour of its fullness.⁶

I encourage you to read James Stewart. Hear his words of encouragement and challenge. Then "send the good tidings on!"



NOTES

1. *The Strong Name* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons).
2. *Heralds of God* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons).
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *A Faith to Proclaim* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons).
6. *The Strong Name*.

WHY HOLINESS MINISTERS SHOULD READ FOSDICK

by Ron Adams
Associate Pastor
First Church of the Nazarene
Owosso, Mich.

I recently finished reading a collection of all the books written by Harry Emerson Fosdick. In addition, I have copies of many of his radio sermons and articles. I have come to the conclusion that many holiness ministers have been missing out on rich resources by not reading the writings of Fosdick.

Robert Moats Miller, professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, writes in the preface to his monumental biography of Fosdick, "In this century, which rapidly draws to a close, no American Protestant minister has exceeded the prominence of Harry Emerson Fosdick."¹ Miller also quotes Martin Luther King, Jr., as saying that Fosdick was "the greatest preacher and foremost prophet of the century." That level of respect compels us to read Fosdick. It is difficult for us to approach ministry in the modern world adequately without being conversant on those who have helped shape the 20th-century understanding of the faith. Even when we find issues with which we disagree, we are better equipped mentally because of the exercise. Fosdick was indeed a giant among American clergy.

Fosdick was recognized as being a true artist in communicating via the sermon. The effective use of illustrations and quotes was a hallmark of his preaching. His sermons were so relevant to the questions people were asking that crowds used to line up around the block to

get into his services. Some of Fosdick's quotes and illustrations need to be brought up to date with the 1980s, but the effort will be rewarding. There are few today who approach the art of sermonizing better than Fosdick.

The criticism has been raised that he wasn't evangelical. Perhaps we need to take a more careful look. William Hordern, a recognized evangelical scholar, writes in *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology*:

The third type of liberalism is much closer to orthodoxy. It has been called Evangelical Liberalism in the sense that it retained the essential "evangel" or gospel of Christianity. It is found in men like Harry Emerson Fosdick, W. A. Brown, Rufus Jones, and H. S. Coffin. (Even) if they could not go all the way with orthodox creeds, they could stand with the orthodox in accepting Jesus as Lord of their lives.²

Fosdick died on October 5, 1969, at the age of 91. The *New York Times* carried a front page obituary in tribute. In that extensive article the *Times* said that Fosdick called himself an evangelical liberal because he could not divorce himself from basic evangelical doctrines like "the divinity of Christ, the doctrine of immortality and the concept of God's indwelling presence in the world and in man."³

A further example of Fosdick's evangelical flavor is his devotion to spiritual disciplines like prayer. He

spoke as a man who had been personally tested. He said in regard to Psalm 51:

The Psalmist is praying here for a cleansed and empowered personality. The secret place where he first offered these entreaties must have been to him a battlefield. There took place those inner struggles on whose issue moral purity and power depend. Prayer is the innermost form of the fight for character. . . . The real poverty is poverty of character, and that is due in large measure to the lack of those spiritual disciplines and fellowships which are included in genuine prayer.⁴

Yes, for those who will read Fosdick with an eye geared for discovery, they will be richly rewarded.⁵ 🙏

NOTES

1. Robert Moats Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick: Preacher, Pastor, Prophet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), preface.

2. William Hordern, *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1955), 90-91.

3. Edward B. Fiske, "Harry Emerson Fosdick Dies," *New York Times* (October 6, 1969), 1 and 47.

4. Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Meaning of Being a Christian* (New York: Association Press, 1964), 275.

5. Of Dr. Fosdick's books, a few would be highly recommended:

The Living of These Days (Autobiography)
Riverside Sermons (or his other seven sermon books)

Dear Mr. Brown: Letter to a Young Person Perplexed About Religion

Great Voices of the Reformation (Contains a nice chapter on John Wesley)

Rufus Jones Speaks to Our Times

A Book of Public Prayers

The Meaning of Prayer

THE INFLUENCE OF DUTCH ARMINIANISM ON THE THEOLOGY OF JOHN WESLEY

by David Eaton
Bartlesville, Okla.

It is well known that John Wesley was the chief instrument in the Methodist revival and extension of the doctrines of an evangelical Arminianism as opposed in many points to a rigid Calvinism," wrote John Kirk,¹ and subsequent judgment would broadly ratify his viewpoint. Yet, the statement raises questions calling for closer study. What sources, for instance, served as a "taproot" for Wesley's "evangelical Arminianism"? Further, to what degree was Wesley directly indebted to James Arminius and Dutch Arminianism? Or, to what extent was his Arminianism derived from sources that nurtured such views long before the term served as an indicator for the convictions of James Arminius?

It will be recalled that the term *Arminian* refers to the doctrines of the Dutch theologian, Jacobus Arminius (d. 1609), whose modification of Calvinism provoked a profound crisis of reformed doctrine in the Dutch and English church of the early 17th century. In brief, Arminius' doctrines can be summarized as follows: that Christ died for all persons (universal atonement), that all persons have the power to believe in the atonement by God's grace, and that God pledged salvation to all who so believe. His views rejected the high Calvinist doctrine that God predestined all humankind to either salvation or reprobation prior to the fall of Adam and Eve.

Two factors have prevailed that

account for the common assumption that John Wesley derived his Arminianism directly from James Arminius and other formulators of Dutch Arminianism known as Remonstrants. First, Wesley himself contributed to this tendency in 1770 when he published a tract the title of which poses the poignant question, "What Is an Arminian?"² Defending his own Arminian teachings Wesley wrote, "To say, 'This man is an Arminian, has the same effect on

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"To say, 'This is an Arminian,' has the same effect on many hearers as to say, 'This is a mad dog.'"

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many hearers as to say, 'This is a mad dog.' " Wesley knew that during the years in which the Calvinist-Arminian controversy was active in Britain, one group or another had chosen to identify Arminianism with the aberrant doctrines of Socinianism, Deism, Arianism, as well as Pelagianism. Wesley goes on in the tract to name James Arminius, briefly outline his life history, and summarize state and compare his views with Calvinism. This tract by itself leads easily to the assumption that

Wesley derived his Arminianism primarily from Arminius.

The debut in 1778 of the first part of the *Arminian Magazine* accounts for the second reason why many assume that Wesley's evangelical Arminianism was directly extracted from the Dutch Arminian corpus.³ In the address to the reader, Wesley says that the aim of the magazine is to maintain that "God willeth all men to be saved." The first number opens with "A Sketch of the Life of Arminius," which Wesley introduced with the comment: "We know of nothing more proper to introduce a work of this kind, than a sketch of the life and death of Arminius, with whom those who mention his name with the utmost indignity, are commonly quite unacquainted; of whom they know no more than of Hermes Tresmegistus." It is curious, however, that the future contents of the *Arminian Magazine*, up to the time of Wesley's death, reveal no other work from either Arminius himself or from the Remonstrants. The conclusion is, therefore, that while we must believe that Wesley was conversant with some of Arminius' works, he nowhere says that he has read any of them, never cites them, and finds no need to use them in propagating his own Arminianism. He is content to put Arminian doctrine in his own way or to call upon the aid of his theological English predecessors.

Wesley's rare references to James Arminius accompanied by the absence of Dutch Arminian ma-

terials in his publications have sent mixed signals to those who are concerned with the roots of Wesley's Arminianism. For example, in the light of Wesley's two publications cited above, it is not surprising that George Croft Cell, a relatively recent Wesley scholar, claims that Wesley developed his evangelical Arminianism from Arminius himself.⁴ Yet, in contrast to Cell, Albert Outler, also a noted Wesley authority, cites the lack of Dutch Arminian materials utilized by Wesley as proof that Arminius himself was never one of Wesley's "really decisive sources."⁵

That Wesley was an Arminian is well known. But, how he became Arminian is not so well known. Richard Watson sheds some light on this problem when he writes that "in doctrine Mr. Wesley was not the implicit follower of any school. The Divines of his earliest acquaintance were those of the English Arminian class." Watson continues, "With the writings of this eminent man [Arminius] he was, we believe, only very partially acquainted, till he had been for many years settled in generally similar views of evangelical doctrine."⁶ Outler agrees with Watson when he says that Wesley derived his evangelical Arminianism from "the rich stratum of the English Reformation" in which he found the "taproot" of his theology. Probably as old as the English Reformation itself, English "Arminianism" actually predated Arminius, but it had no equivalent title. Commenting on the same subject, Arminian scholar A. W. Harrison agrees that what came to be known as Arminianism in the Netherlands was *sui generis* in England.⁷ Did Wesley understand this to be the case? Yes, he did. Wesley equated Arminianism in its later English development with earlier English divines to the extent that he declared it to be "the same which the chief of the English Reformers, namely, bishop Ridley, Hooper, Latimer, with archbishop Cranmer, held from the beginning."⁸ In other words, Wesley believed that Dutch Arminianism was simply an expression of what was already existent in the theological formulations of the English Reformers.

The question still remains as to just how Wesley came to such a conclusion. Some hints as to how he

developed his Arminianism are uncovered by studying his lifelong theological development—an undertaking the magnitude of which is too great for this article. We will be content here to offer a few suggestive ideas.

To begin, Wesley was born and grew up in Lincolnshire, a stronghold of Arminianism in England. Interestingly, the first English Baptist, John Smith, who also became the first Arminian Baptist, was from Lincolnshire.

Next, Wesley's parents, Samuel and Susanna Wesley, as good Anglicans, were Arminians. When Wesley was troubled by the doctrine of predestination and wrote to his mother for help at an early stage in his life (1725), she answered: "The doctrine of Predestination, as maintained by rigid Calvinists, is very shocking, and ought utterly to be abhorred; because it charges the most holy God with being the Author of Sin."⁹ Wesley later published his mother's letter in the first number of the *Arminian Magazine*. In 1725 Samuel Wesley, Sr., wrote to his son at Oxford to recommend Grotius' commentaries on the Scripture.¹⁰ Grotius (d. 1645) was a well-known Dutch Arminian who had visited England in the year 1613. Also in the first number of the *Arminian Magazine* Wesley printed a "Hymn to the Creator" by his father, which includes the lines:

*No Evil can from Thee proceed;
'Tis only suffer'd, not decreed.*

Another hint stems from Wesley's study of Peter Heylin's *Historia Quinquarticularis*, which favorably outlined the entire Dutch Arminian controversy in relationship to Arminianism in England. Heylin was an Anglican controversialist and historian. It was here that Wesley read the names of English defenders of Arminianism the writings of whom he later published in the *Arminian Magazine*. Heylin maintained that "Old English Protestants" were in agreement with Dutch Arminian theology.¹¹

While at Oxford, Wesley studied the primitive Fathers whom he believed to be at one with Arminius.¹² Wesley also studied William Cave's *Primitive Christianity*, which emulated the the kind of English "Arminian" theology that contributed to

the literary expression of Established Anglican Arminian pattern. Incidentally, both Wesley and Arminius were avid students of patristic literature.

On July 6, 1741, Wesley encountered a work by the Arminian Simon Episcopius. A journal entry reads, "Looking for a book in the College Library, I took down by mistake the works of Episcopius, which opening upon an account of the Synod of Dort, I believed it might be useful to read it through."¹³ This incident marks one of the rare references of Wesley to a Dutch Arminian source.

John Wesley, then, derived his Arminianism mainly from English sources. This assertion finds support in Frank Baker's conclusion that the "evidence of Wesley's reading the works of the founder of the Arminian school of thought to which Wesley himself adhered is scanty, and it must be admitted, not absolutely conclusive."¹⁴ Aside from his exposure to Grotius and Episcopius, a search through the books mentioned by Wesley reveals no single title connected directly with any of the Dutch Remonstrants.¹⁵ Through the years Wesley's Arminianism as it found expression in his practical theology was forged under the pressures and heat of the revival. His theology was self-consciously Anglican. He was the heir of high church Arminianism, but for a considerable time he avoided the use of the term *Arminian* with its invidious associations for the sake of the revival. He sought conciliation—not conflict—with his Calvinistic friends. However, Wesley more and more described himself as an Arminian as it became more necessary for the Wesleyan Methodists to protect their interests against the Calvinistic Methodists.

No outright identification with Dutch Arminianism occurred until the decade of the 1770s in his later years at which time he demonstrated a shift toward a more militant Arminianism. As previously noted, it was at this time that he published his little tract, "What Is an Arminian?" It was in this decade that Wesley seems to have concluded that no conciliation between Calvinistic and Wesleyan methods was possible. In 1778 Wesley fired his editorial missile, the *Arminian Magazine*, at his

(Continued on page 56)

Church Music

Music, Martin Luther, and Today's Church

by Anna Marie Lockard

church music lecturer at Africa Nazarene Theological College
Port Elizabeth, South Africa

Next to theology I give the highest honor to music," wrote Luther. Few people have read his sermons, yet since the 16th century Martin Luther's hymns continue to be sung throughout the world. The great Reformer's outstanding musicianship continues to touch serious church musicians today.

Consider what would happen in today's churches if the music director would insist on congregational rehearsals during the week to learn new hymns? What if churches would dispense of the choir altogether and assign all singing to the congregation? Martin Luther did. Although Luther used a variety of musical styles, he believed in the efficacy of congregational hymn singing.

Today when churches share in congregational singing, they partake in Luther's great contribution: returning the gift of song to the people. It had been more than 1,000 years since the Roman churches almost eliminated congregational singing. This was due to the fourth century Laodicean Council's decree: "If laymen are forbidden to preach and interpret the Scriptures, much more are they forbidden to sing publicly in church."

However, Luther felt differently and said, "Let God speak to people through the Scriptures and let the people respond with the singing of their hymns. I intend to make German psalms for the people, spiritual songs so that the Word of God by means of song may live among the people." His driving desire was to impart scriptural truths to the hearts of the people through sacred song.

Beginning in 1523, he fulfilled this longing. At the age of 40, Luther launched his hymn writing career and wrote 23 of his 37 hymns. He felt compelled to compose vernacular songs that would aid the be-

liever "to praise God and give thanks for the revealed truth of His words."

Although Luther is credited with having composed only four of his hymn tunes, he set high standards for composition of the tunes. Because he believed his hymns were a vehicle of truth, Luther insisted that every word should be distinctly heard and understood.

The Reformer's greatest hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," was written following the death of a personal friend. Leonhard Kaiser had been burned at the stake in the Netherlands for refusing to recant. After a deep depression, Luther penned the words and composed the music to this glorious hymn. As a hymn writer, he was driven "so that the holy gospel which now by the grace of God has risen anew may be noised and spread abroad."¹

Luther's enthusiasm for music was great. He once said, "I have always loved music. Experience proves that next to the Word of God only music deserves to be extolled as the mistress and governess of the feelings of the human heart." He had little patience with those who showed no interest in music. He scoffed, "If any man despises music . . . for him I have no liking; for music is a gift and grace of God." Luther would not allow a man to preach or teach without a proper knowledge of the use and power of sacred song.²

Along with Luther, holiness churches believe that music must be an essential part of a pastor's training. Holiness colleges worldwide recognize the importance of ministerial candidates being grounded in a thorough knowledge of church music. Some seminaries in the United States require candidates to complete a study of hymnology before graduation. In this way, future ministers will gain genuine appre-

ciation for the hymnal. A study of hymnody will also further encourage them to place greater importance on hymn singing as an integral part of worship. Such appreciation will help them become worthy leaders in the important ministry of music.

Today's church musicians can learn much from Luther's musical practices. To attract, witness, and communicate, Luther used music to which people could readily relate.

Churches today would benefit by evaluating their music ministries and asking themselves:

Does the music we sing communicate doctrinal truths?

Do we balance music for worship and music for witness?

Are we generating an entertainment cult; of giving attention to the singer rather than the song; to the style rather than the message?

Today's minister of music must endeavor to balance the objective of inspiration and order with that of meaningful witness music. Christian believers need both hymns of doctrine and songs of witness for effective worship. Attaining these goals in church music will successfully identify the place and function of music in the services of worship.

Finally, consider the place and respect Martin Luther gave church music. Then, when you participate in congregational singing next Sunday, thank Luther for his outstanding contribution to the world of sacred song. 

NOTES

1. K. W. Osbeck, *Singing with Understanding* (Grand Rapids: Krege Publications, 1979), 11.
2. R. H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (New York: New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1956).
3. D. P. Ellsworth, *Christian Music in Contemporary Witness* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 196.



TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

Making Sense of the Ministry, by Warren W. Wiersbe and David W. Wiersbe. Baker Book House, 155 pages, paper (PA080-109-6952; \$6.95)

The father-and-son team clearly address their work to the theology student who is wanting to make the best use of his academic opportunities, one who is seeking to integrate his training with his ministry. The book focuses on the ministerial student as he prepares for his life's work.

George Santayana is quoted: "The great difficulty in education is to get experience out of ideas." The authors devalue neither education nor experience but rather give principle and instruction to the reader in coupling the two for a more effective life of service. Appropriating the fruit of disciplines other than theology is marked as a ministry-building tool, even a necessity. The book urges an integration of ideas and experience under the divine call for a lifetime of Christian service.

Though targeted at the person facing his early professional life, this work has definite value in two respects for those engaged in ministry across the years. First, there is significant benefit to be gained by grappling with the principles of ministry as outlined by the Wiersbes. As one wrestles between the sometimes opposing forces of institutional need and human need, it is good to analyze the philosophical foundations

and will bring oneself to account. Second, the call to incorporate life, ideas, and an inquiring mind into a strong personal base for ministry is a challenge that should provoke us all our days. Wiersbe says, "... the right kind of education raises questions as well as answers them." We are instructed to build our lives on the certainties and "exercise [our] spiritual muscles on the questions."

This monograph is useful for its content and for its call. The book fills a need in the study as well as in the college or seminary.

—David L. Cox

Sanctified Through the Truth, by Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, a Division of Good News Publishers, 1989 (PA089-107-5151; \$10.95)

Martyn Lloyd-Jones focused on Jesus' High Priestly Prayer, John 17, to emphasize that Jesus' death was not only for our salvation but also for our sanctification. Though Dr. Lloyd-Jones is not of the Wesleyan persuasion, he has a powerful concept of holiness. He emphasizes Jesus' second petition: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17, KJV). He says,

His great desire is that his people should be kept by God, yes, but not by being taken out of the difficulties and problems. How then are they to be kept? ... They are to be kept by being *sanctified*; not by being taken out of the

world, not by the false solution of monasticism—by a desire to quit life somehow or other—that is not God's way of keeping his people (p. 8).

Though Lloyd-Jones does not believe in sanctification as a second work of grace, he writes:

God does a work within us, a work of purifying, of cleansing, and of purging, and this work is designed to fit us for the title which has been put upon us. We have been adopted, taken out of the world and set apart, and we are now being conformed increasingly to the image, the pattern, of the Lord Jesus Christ; so that we may in truth be the people of God: in reality as well as in name (p. 10).

Dr. Lloyd-Jones explains why and how we can learn to live godly lives in this fallen, sinful world. It is not a question of trying to conquer particular sins in our own strength but of focusing our attention toward God. He adds, "Our very task and calling demands that we must be a holy people since we cannot represent a holy God unless we ourselves are holy" (p. 11).

In spite of the fact that Dr. Lloyd-Jones believes in the eternal security of what we would call "former believers," his strong emphasis on the holiness of believers is well worth one's study in an era in which the concept of holiness is increasingly fuzzy.

—Janet Adelle
Los Angeles, Calif.



THE ARK ROCKER

WITH THE VANGUARD

Smerdley's got two enthusiasms going these days: computers and worship. And he has managed to put the two together. The gist of it all came out in a conversation among the six of us who rode back to the city from preachers' meeting in "Shrimp" Ragout's van. Said Smerdley, "Hey, man, I've tried everything else that seemed good and legal. Maybe this worship thing will work! I think I'll go home and program it. Boot it and see how it prints out."

Well, "the worship thing" is what we'd talked about in the preachers' meeting—we did a lot of "sharing"—so we five eagerly rose to the opportunity that Smerdley afforded. We philosophized a bit and then began to plan worship services.

"One thing I really liked," said Czar, whose morning worship crowd numbers about 300, "was the idea that I'm not just the preacher. I'm the worship leader. That's a good concept. Dim the spotlight on my job as preacher—people won't expect as much of the sermon. And it puts me in control of the service. We can match the timing better. I tell you, my music man runs away with the thing—we sing all of the verses and the organist plays the whole tune through for an introduction. It'll give us more time to make the announcements and do 'em with a punch. Man, if I can sell this 'worship leader' bit to the board, then I'll have a club to hit the music folks with. And I can really run the ship."

De Nouveau, who preaches to a congregation of about 75, expressed his frustration over the cost of the technology needed to "pro-

duce" a good worship service now—overhead projectors, theater lighting, the salary demanded by a music man who can do more than your basic choir directing and congregational song leading, "not to mention the price of an adequate sound system." And he told us a very funny story about a color-blind member of a quartet who kept grabbing for the red mike instead of the green one. Turned him into instant alto with an echo effect. "He was the life of the service that night, except of course for the Holy Spirit!" De Nouveau said. De Nouveau recovers well, don't you agree?

My problem, I said with some diffidence, was the pastoral prayer. The diffidence arose from not wanting to be misunderstood, and yet I felt I had to talk to somebody about it all. I had run out of things to say in prayer, especially pastoral prayer. My wife insisted that I listen to some tape recordings of my pastoral prayers. "Full of pious twaddle," she unkindly said. But she was right. If I didn't know such phrases as "in our midst," "the shekinah of Your presence," "our beloved Zion," and "we just wanna . . ." I'd have little to say. And I don't know what I'd do without the word *bless* or the weekly list of ailments. Talk about an organ recital! We had one kid two years ago who passed a college physiology exam simply by remembering the various body parts that got prayed for the previous Sunday. And another youngster passed a U.S. geography test three weeks later on the same basis. Really, all of this is why I went to what some are calling "directed prayer," where all I have to do is think

of some topics and announce them at an even pace as the people pray for themselves. Let 'em learn physiology and geography on their own!

Well, my five ecclesiastical pals let me down on that one. Two of them had the same problem that I had, one always used "directed prayer," another always called on someone else to pray ("People hear my voice enough; they need a change," this shepherd said), and another simply grunted incoherently. We did agree, all of us, that it would help if one of the offices in Mecca would call a brainstorming session, bring in some of the "guys" who are known for their great pastoral prayer techniques and maybe create something like "One Hundred Effective Outlines for Pastoral Prayers." "Think of the boon these would be for the pastor so busy working with his people that he doesn't know how to pray for them," said Waphle.

Then Waphle went on to talk about "the worship thing" as it had to do with his case. "I inherited a stodgy old organist who just can't get with it and create an atmosphere for worship," he said. "I asked her for more vibrato and some kind of booming bass, but she just went glassy-eyed. I tried to tell her that I wanted people to come into the sanctuary happy and peaceful, excited about what would follow. 'These are friendly folk,' I told her. 'They should chat a bit and get better acquainted, and make the visitors feel welcome. For that, we need light music, lively music. Stuff that folks feel in their bones but don't have to sit up and listen to. You

(Continued on page 56)



WORSHIP

& PREACHING

HELPS

March/April/May 1990

Prepared by Curtis Lewis, Jr.

INTRODUCTION

It has been my intention to give you handles with which you can try narrative preaching. Narrative preaching, in its truest form, is simply a retelling of the biblical story. This type of preaching takes us back to our Jewish roots.

Narrative preaching is the Christian Haggadah. The Haggadah was the use of storytelling to communicate God's revelation to man. Christian Haggadah is the retelling of the redemption story, which centers in Christ.

I have focused on personalities of the Passion, moving through Lent. I have included traditional Palm Sunday and Easter sermons, then the focus returns to narrative preaching with an emphasis on life situations.

Hopefully, you will find something beneficial on which to hang your preaching hat. Remember, Jesus Christ is the Center and Circumference of the biblical story. God's best to you as you retell that story.

—Curtis Lewis, Jr.

HEROD ANTIPAS

Luke 23:6-12; Matt. 14:1-12
March 4, 1990

INTRO:

Some people behave like animals. If you compare someone with a lion, you are referring to that person as a person of strength. When you call a child a little monkey, you are stating that the child is mischievous. Calling someone a dog, a snake, or a pig is not complimentary at all. Call a person a fox, and you speak of someone who is cunning and deceitful, clever and cowardly.

Jesus even referred to Herod Antipas as "that fox" (Luke 13:31-32). In comparing Herod to a fox, Jesus was telling us much about this man and his character.

Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great and seems to have inherited his father's paranoia. Herod Antipas was a weak, cruel, sensuous man whose foolish exploits have been recorded in history.

I. Herod Was a Murderer (Matt. 14:5-10)

A. John the Baptist came from the wilderness preaching the message of repentance.

1. Herod may have been fascinated with this strange person who thundered about judgment. He soon learned that John was no sideshow freak, but a preacher of Truth. Herod did not like John's preaching. Having some nut come out of the wilderness into his court and challenge him did not please Herod.

ILLUS. R. Earl Allen tells of a French preacher who was appointed the king's chaplain. Shortly after the chaplain's appointment, the king was taken by death. His son succeeded him. After a chapel service, some men of the court came to the chaplain. "Your preaching is offensive to the new king," they said. "If you do not change, you may be replaced."

"He is my king when I am in my home," the chaplain replied. "When I stand in the pulpit, Jesus Christ, my King of kings, is the only one to whom I must be obedient."

2. John preached against Herod's life-style. It was preaching that displeased. (See Matt. 14:4.) This rugged preacher called sin sin, and Herod had him thrown into prison.

B. At a drunken feast sometime later, Herod was lured into a public promise that led to the murder of John the Baptist.

1. Herod promised a dancing girl anything she wanted, and she asked for John the Baptist's head.

2. With John beheaded, Herod thought he was through hearing the condemning message of God.

C. Rumors began reaching Herod about Jesus, and his guilty conscience wondered if this was John the Baptist raised from the dead.

1. Some of the leaders of the Jews came to Jesus and warned Him that Herod would kill Him. (See Luke 13:31-33.)

2. Jesus called Herod a fox, a predator who would rather strike in the dark than in the light.

II. Herod Trifled with God (Luke 23:8)

A. Herod comes across as one of the most despicable characters in the Passion drama.

1. Herod did not commit a major crime. He did not condemn Jesus or sentence Him to die.

2. He refused to take Jesus seriously. Herod came face-to-face with truth. This was the most crucial encounter of his life, for he stood face-to-face with the Incarnate Son of God and trifled with Him.

3. Even today people commit the same sin Herod committed—trifling with God. Much of the popular religion of our time is trifling with God. The Jesus of rock operas and bumper stickers is not the Son of God. Christ will not be trifled with.

ILLUS. The stoic philosopher Epictetus complained that the curious flocked from all over the world to stare at him as a famous person, even though they had no intention of adopting his ethical precepts. Herod entertained the same position with Jesus. He thought Him a phenomenon to be observed. There was no earnestness about his approach. Indeed, Herod came in a trifling, superficial, jesting fashion.

III. Herod Antipas Experienced the Silence of Jesus (Luke 23:9b)

A. Jesus Christ will not be trifled with. He will be worshiped, loved, adored, hated, cursed, or feared, but He will not be trifled with.

1. When men refuse to take Christ seriously He withdraws. He keeps silent just as He did before Herod Antipas, who thought he could order up a miracle for his own amusement.

2. When people use the name of God irreverently, without honor, He may create a silence about himself and withdraw from them.

B. When Jesus stood silently before Herod, the past suddenly became present.

1. As he questioned Jesus, Herod's own conscience accused him and found him guilty. Jesus had nothing for Herod, not even a word.

2. Herod had silenced the voice of God.

C. Herod's demise after his encounter with Christ is significant.

1. The divorce of his first wife had provoked a war that destroyed Herod's army.

2. When Herod went to Rome to plead for the kingship of the Jews, he was charged with misrule and was exiled to Gaul.

CONCLUSION:

Herod Antipas suffered the fate of every man who attempts to trifle with the Son of God. God does not answer him—there is nothing like the silence of God.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

... IN PREPARATION

The priests of Old Testament times made preparation before they stood with the people in God's presence. We, the believers of Jesus Christ, are priests in that we may come directly to God in worship to the King of Glory. Now would be an excellent time to jot down your expectations for this service . . . and how you will offer yourself in worship. In this service:

I expect _____
I will _____

... PRAISING IN SONG AND SCRIPTURE

Call to Worship
Hymn "Come, Thou Fount"
Hymn "How Firm a Foundation"
Scripture Reading

... PRAISING WITH THANKSGIVING AND FAITH

Pastoral Prayer

... PRESENTING TO HIM TITHES AND OFFERINGS

... PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S WORD

Through Music—The Choir "And Can It Be?"
Through the Preached Word "Herod Antipas"
Through Commitment
Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Build bridges of love.
Build bridges of healing.
Build bridges of help.

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Have some of your church board members carry a rough cross down the aisle, to be placed at the front of the sanctuary to remind the congregation that Lent has begun.

Call to Worship

Holy, holy, holy great God of hosts! The whole earth is full of your glory. Glory be to you!

Amen! (Adapted)

Offering Sentence

May our offering be an act of gratitude given from a thankful heart.

Benediction*

(Heb. 13:20, RSV, adapted) "Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead Jesus the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting covenant, equip you with everything good, that you may do what is pleasing in God's sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

*I am indebted to Ruth G. Duck, *Flames of the Spirit* (The Pilgrim Press, 1985), for the use of the adapted benedictions in this series.

The Influence of Dutch Arminianism

(Continued from page 50)

opponents. It was at this time that Wesley decided to be identified with James Arminius clearly and militantly. Yet, the extent to which Wesley really knew Arminius is not clear.

What kind of Arminianism was Wesley's? Perhaps it is best to give Wesley's Arminianism the title English Arminianism. This Arminianism he infused with a new spiritual dynamic—Wesley's practical application of the doctrine in a crusade for the truth.

NOTES

1. John Kirk, *The Mother of the Wesleys*, 284.
2. John Wesley, *Works* (Zondervan), 10:360.
3. *Arminian Magazine*, Vol. 1.
4. George Croft Cell, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley*, 10.
5. Albert Outler, *John Wesley*, 23.
6. Richard Watson, *Works*, 7:419.
7. A. W. Harrison, *Arminianism*, 122.
8. Wesley, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4:105.
9. *Arminian Magazine*, 1:37.
10. Wesley, *Letters*, Oxford Ed., 25:58.
11. Eaton, unpublished dissertation, "Arminianism in the Theology of John Wesley."
12. Wesley, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6:104.
13. *Journal*, 2:473.
14. Baker, *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, Privately Published, 22:119.
15. My search on this point utilized the work of Onva K. Boshears' Ph.D. dissertation, "John Wesley, the Bookman," and Richard P. Heitzenrater's Ph.D. dissertation, "John Wesley and the Oxford Methodists, 1725-1735." Heitzenrater lists the books that Wesley is known to have owned and read.

The Ark Rocker

(Continued from page 53)

see what I'm saying?' Well, of course, she don't see what I'm saying. And so I guess all of the atmosphere stuff is up to me."

By now we were on the outskirts of our city and our discussion died. But it wasn't arrival in the city that killed it. It was murdered, cruelly murdered, when Begonia, who hadn't said a word through most of the trip, yawned and quoted probably the only poetry he knew (are the lines by Leonard Bacon?):

*Interpreting the simplest symbol wrong,
Missing the gold and treasuring the tin,
Dwelling upon the trivial so long. . . .*

That's what killed our discussion. We couldn't figure out to whom Begonia was referring!

The Ark Rocker

PILATE

Mark 15:1-15
March 11, 1990

INTRO:

Early in the morning the chief priests brought Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor. Most of the night the Sanhedrin, Judaism's supreme court, had met illegally, and now here they are awakening Pilate so that he could try Jesus.

Pilate recognized that what was transpiring was irregular, but he was a politician and bowed to the wishes of the crowd.

It didn't take Pilate long to realize that the only reason they brought Jesus to him was to ask for the death sentence.

Jesus and Pilate now stand face-to-face. Christ was in control of the situation, while Pilate was unsure of himself. Pilate was a pathetic figure, a man on the spot because of the position in which he found himself.

I. The Accusation Against Jews (vv. 3-4)

A. *Because it is Passover, and for fear of being made ritually unclean, the priests will not enter the house of Pilate.* They demand that he come out on the balcony overlooking the courtyard. Pilate sees the Man whom they have brought and asks, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

1. According to Luke 23:2, there are three specific charges:

- a. subversion
- b. opposing paying taxes to Caesar
- c. claiming to be the Messiah

2. Pilate counters their charges and states that if this man is so bad, *they* should try Him. Although it hurts their pride, the priests and the mob must respond that they cannot render a death verdict.

B. *Pilate studies Jesus for a moment and then asks Him point-blank, almost with amusement, "Are you the king of the Jews?"*

1. Christ's answer was hardly what Pilate expected. Christ answers with a question, "Is this your own idea, or did someone else suggest it to you?" Pilate finds himself on the hot seat now. He responds angrily, "Your own countrymen and your chief priest have brought you to me. What have you done?"

2. Pilate seeks an answer to his question, "You are a king then?" Christ responds that "king" is the word Pilate has chosen to use; Christ has come only to witness to the truth. Pilate asks the classic question, "What is truth?" He stands in the presence of the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

C. *What will Pilate do in the face of the accusation against Christ?*

1. Pilate declares to the priest-led mob that he has no cause to condemn this man. They shout back, charging that His teaching is causing subversion among the people of Judea, starting in Galilee and now reaching Jerusalem.

2. Pilate finds his answer. This Jesus is from Galilee—let Herod handle this mess. Christ is sent to Herod.

3. Herod sends Christ back to Pilate and the ball is in Pilate's court once again.

4. The people are calling for the Passover gift of clemency for a condemned Jewish prisoner. Pilate now has another out. He'll offer them a choice—Barabbas or Jesus. Surely they will let Jesus go free now. Instead, they choose Barabbas.

ILLUS. In October 1974, a civil court in France was asked to fix the blame for the crucifixion of Jesus on Pontius Pilate, therefore absolving the Jewish people of their collective guilt. The plaintiff was a lawyer named Jacques Isorni. In 1967, Isorni had published a book, *The True Trial of Jesus*. In it, he maintained that Jesus was condemned and crucified under Roman law as a guerilla leader resisting the Roman occupation, not because He claimed to be the Son of God.

II. Pilate's Question

A. *Pilate's question was pathetic.*

1. The mob screams for Christ's crucifixion. Pilate is just about to give in when another idea crosses his mind. He'll have this man flogged with a flagellum, a multithonged whip knotted with metal to tear the flesh. If Jesus survives, no one could want His death after that.

2. Christ is stripped and beaten, and Pilate brings Him out. The mob, now in a frenzy, cries all the more intensely, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

B. *The Jews would not let Pilate set Jesus free.* (See John 19:12.)

1. Pilate now had to do something. When the pressure is on and men are faced with a choice, they react differently. Pilate was in a dilemma, and he wasn't having an easy time of it. If he set Christ free, he would be ruined politically. The Jews had already protested to Rome about Pilate, and now they were threatening him—he either went along with them or else.

2. For the Pharisees and Sadducees, this was a marriage of expediency. They wanted something from Pilate. This pressure caused Pilate to cave in.

ILLUS. Someone wrote, "Pilate, you were the judge who handled the trial of Jesus; the last legal link between Christ and crucifixion. We picture you as a cold, cynical agnostic who only cared to save his own skin and reputation in Rome. You know what really bugs us, Pilate? It's that you showed Christ respect that day. You declared Jesus innocent, but in the same breath you gave Him up to die. Now history tries you!"

III. Pilate's Decision (v. 15b)

A. *Pilate let others force his decision.*

1. Pilate's choice was cowardly. He washed his hands and declared his innocence. (See Matt. 27:24.)

2. Pilate willfully sent Jesus to death to save himself.

B. Pilate's decision cost him dearly.

1. It cost Pilate a great friendship. He could have had a friendship with Christ that would have lasted for eternity.

2. It cost Pilate a great development. Had Pilate released Christ, he would have become a different person. Christ would have released him completely.

3. His decision cost him a great purpose. Pilate could have become part of a band of people committed to penetrating the pagan world with God's love.

C. The same decision that confronted Pilate confronts us today. What will we do with Jesus?

ILLUS. R. Earl Allen tells of the painting *Christ Before Pilate*, on display in Hamilton, Ont. A rough sailor came to the door and asked, "Is Christ here? How much to see Christ? I suppose I'll have to pay it!" He sat down in front of the painting. Eventually, he took off his hat. He studied the picture for an hour.

"I came here to see Christ because my mother asked me to," he said, finally. "I never believed in such things, but the man who painted that picture, he must have believed it."

History still tries Jesus, and they, as Pilate, have to say, "I find no fault in Him."

CONCLUSION:

What happened to Pilate? Legend has it that he committed suicide in the Alps. Some believe his ghost remains restless and can still be seen walking in the snow.

History still tries Jesus, and they say, as Pilate said, "I don't find any fault with Him."

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

... AS WE GATHER

Call to Worship

The Organ Helps Us Meditate ...

We Pray Silently ...

Hymn

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

Invocation

**HOLY SPIRIT, THOU ART
WELCOME IN THIS PLACE**

Choir

"Be Still, My Soul"

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

A Moment for Friendship

His Tithes and Our Offerings

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Special Music

Message

"Pilate"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Confession

Compassion (His and ours)

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Have a group of children bring a whip to the cross—
drape the whip around the cross beam.

Call to Worship

We lift our hearts in praise to our God this day and
forever more! Amen!

Offering Sentence

Let us give to help bring light to those in darkness.

Benediction

"May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant us to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Jesus Christ, that together we may glorify God now and forever. Amen" (Rom. 15:5-6, RSV, adapted).

 Pontius' Puddle



© Joel Kaufmann

BARABBAS

Mark 15:1-15
March 18, 1990

INTRO:

Barabbas holds a peculiar fascination for writers. Christopher Marlowe and Marie Corelli have used him as the basis for novels.

ILLUS. Par Lagerkvist, in his novel *Barabbas*, describes Barabbas as about 30 years old, powerfully built with sallow complexion, a reddish beard and black hair. His eyebrows also black, eyes deep-set, as though wanting to hide. Under his eye, a deep scar. Lagerkvist pictures Barabbas at the scene of the Crucifixion and at the garden tomb. He interviews those who knew Jesus personally and portrays his struggle with doubt. Because of his brutal nature, he never fully comes to an understanding of Christ. He eventually dies by crucifixion in Rome, a victim of Nero.

It is quite evident that this man, Barabbas, had a history of sedition, robbery, and murder. Both the Jews and the Romans knew him and understood why he was condemned as an enemy of society.

John McNeill feels that Barabbas gives us the best idea of the atonement of Jesus Christ—Christ the substitute, dying in Barabbas' place and in our place.

This man, Barabbas, has teased the minds and imaginations of mankind through the ages. Whoever and whatever he was, his role in the Passion was important because Christ died for him.

I. Barabbas Was a Convict (v. 7)

A. As one begins to piece together from the four Gospels the story of Christ's trial, a picture of Barabbas emerges.

1. I wish we knew more about Barabbas. Solid facts are few, but enough to furnish a loom upon which to weave a reasonable facsimile of his story. The name Barabbas means "son of father" or "son of a teacher." He possibly came from a background of respectability, steeped in the tradition of his people.

2. Somewhere something happened to change Barabbas' life. It may have been that he suffered because he was a Jew living under Roman domination.

ILLUS. If Barabbas had lived in the village of Sephoris, four miles north of Nazareth, about A.D. 6, he would have known a Jewish patriot by the name of Judas of Gamala who organized a revolt and started it off with a march on the Roman arsenal in the town. The plan was to capture the arsenal and drive the Romans out of Galilee and Judea. The Roman commander moved on the city, and every inhabitant was either massacred or enslaved. Something like this episode could have been the thing that sent Barabbas down the wrong road.

3. What led Barabbas into a life of crime? We do not know, but he threw off the restraint and became a robber and an outlaw.

B. Barabbas was no petty criminal, no sneak thief or pilferer.

1. He was a kind of Robin Hood. His type of activity would have a kind of romance and glamor that would make him a popular hero of the people.

2. One day Barabbas' luck ran out, and he became the prisoner of the Romans.

II. The Contrast Between Christ and Barabbas (vv. 1-15)

A. One wonders if Barabbas had ever heard of Jesus before that day when Christ accounted for his release.

1. Perhaps he had. Legend holds that Joseph and Barabbas were friends, and that Barabbas aided the holy family in their escape to Egypt.

2. Although it is only legend, maybe Barabbas had heard talk of Jesus as the promised Messiah. (Use the Sermon on the Mount to contrast the difference between Christ and Barabbas.)

B. On a certain Friday of a springtime in Jerusalem the jailer opened the cell where Barabbas was held and released him.

1. At first Barabbas must have thought it a joke—this word that Pilate had signed his release. Finally, it began to dawn on him that he was a free man. Christ was dying in his place. Barabbas was released, and Christ was reviled.

2. What happened to Barabbas? No one knows. The only thing that we do know is that Barabbas was one of the sinners Christ died to save.

ILLUS. John Osenham has an imaginary picture of Barabbas. At first Barabbas could think of nothing but his freedom; but then, he began to look at the man who died for him. Something about Jesus fascinated him, and he followed Christ to see the end. As he saw Jesus bearing His cross, one thought burned in his mind: "I should have been carrying that cross, not Him. He saved me!"

III. The Choice Between Barabbas and Christ (v. 15)

A. "Barabbas or Jesus?" Pilate asked of that first Good Friday crowd.

1. The mob chose Barabbas while Christ died in his place—indeed, in *their* place—and in the end Christ whispered, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

2. Barabbas is no stranger to most of us. The only thing is that we have answered the knock of another guest.

B. "Barabbas or Jesus?" comes the question across the ages.

1. It should be simple for us to make the choice; for we see that Christ is invincible, His cross honored, His Church universal. We glimpse far clearer than Barabbas ever could that Christ died for us.

2. "Barabbas or Christ?" Barabbas is not a first name—certain of the ancient Greek manuscripts give

Barabbas' first name as Jesus. If so, the choice of the mob would even be more dramatic for the mob would shout: "Not Jesus the Nazarene, but Jesus Barabbas."

3. The choice of the mob has been the eternal choice. It is the tragic fact of history that all through the

ages men have chosen the way of Barabbas and refused the way of Christ.

CONCLUSION:

The choice is before us. If we reject Christ we come under the judgment of God.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Rom. 15:13 (paraphrased)

Please . . . your reverence as you enter the sanctuary is very much appreciated. A greeting, a smile, perhaps a handshake, and then prayer and quiet expectation.

Call to Worship

Choral Call to Worship

Hymn

"To God Be the Glory"

We Kneel for Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

A Moment for Friendship

Sanctuary Choir

"At the Cross"

Hymn

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

We Worship

with His Tithes and Our Offerings

Special Music

Message

"Barabbas"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Government

Hunger

Hurting

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

A group of teens should carry two large spikes to the cross, to be pounded into predrilled holes in the cross beam.

Call to Worship

Bring your songs and your praises, and let the Spirit of God be heard in this place.

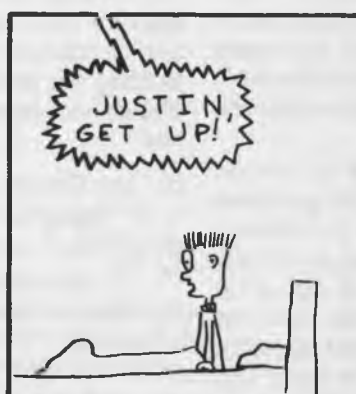
Offering Sentence

When we give to our God, we share His love with the world.

Benediction

"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of God who called you out of darkness into marvelous light. Go into the world; live as God's people, through the grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen" (1 Pet. 3:9, RSV, adapted, with additional material).

JUSTIN TIME



PETER

John 21:15-19
March 25, 1990

INTRO:

How would you feel if you failed your best friend at the time when he needed you most? What if, when the pressure was on, you swore up and down that you didn't even know him? What if all of this happened right after you pledged your loyalty to him?

What if, on the day of his trial, he looked at you as you left the courtroom? It would probably be more than you could take. You'd get out of there fast. Maybe you've seen him since. You know he's forgiven you, but you still have a hard time living with yourself.

Simon Peter must have battled with those feelings. The resurrection had come and gone. Nothing had happened for several days, and time was heavy on his hands. Peter decided to go fishing, taking several of the other disciples with him. They fished all night but caught nothing.

Just as dawn began to frame the hills, the fishermen heard a voice from the beach, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. The person on the beach told them to throw their nets on the other side. They did, and the net was soon filled. John understood. Looking at Peter, he exclaimed, "It is the Lord!" At that, Peter took off for shore!

Christ had made a fire, and they ate. After a while, Peter and Christ went to one side for an intimate conversation.

What are some of the things that came out of this conversation?

I. The Challenge of Christ to Peter (v. 15)

A. The setting of this challenge is most fascinating.

1. A charcoal fire was burning. Charcoal was not the ordinary fuel used in Eastern lands. Only one other time in the New Testament do we read of charcoal being used for fire, on Good Friday morning when Peter warmed himself by the charcoal fire in the courtyard of the high priest.

2. Burning charcoal has a peculiar aroma to it. Christ deliberately chose charcoal to remind Peter of that incident. No wonder Peter is quiet.

B. In the mood of that memory, Jesus took Peter aside to challenge him.

1. Jesus asked Simon Peter a simple question (v. 15). This question was asked not once, but three times. Why? Because Peter had denied Christ three times, and Christ wants Peter to express his love three times in order to help rid Peter of the guilt he feels over his failure.

2. This simple question was a searching question. It probed the depths of Peter's being.

ILLUS. A Russian artist painted a picture of the Last Supper. When it was finished, being rather pleased with it, he took it to Tolstoy and said, "I want your opinion of my picture: What do you think of my Christ?" And Tolstoy, having looked carefully at the picture, turned

around with blazing eyes on the artist, and in a voice trembling with emotion exclaimed, "You don't love Him! For if you did, you would have painted Him better. And if you don't love Him, what right have you to touch Him at all?"

3. This question of Jesus' was a saving question. Christ is offering Peter the chance to start over again.

II. There Is the Confession of Peter to Christ (vv. 15b-17)

A. It is significant that the Greek word Peter uses for love is different from that which Christ uses.

1. Peter's response was that he was Christ's friend.

2. When Christ asks the question the third time, he uses the same word that Peter used. In doing this, Christ is saying to Peter, "I am coming down to your level to help you come up to My level."

B. Peter saw the loving heart of Christ and responds, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you" (v. 17c).

1. Christ knew the whole story, and He knew that Peter still loved Him.

2. Peter is simply saying, "You know that I failed you. I blew it, but I still love you."

ILLUS. Charles Spurgeon tells of visiting a woman whose faith, once bright, had "gone under a cloud and suffered total eclipse." She said to Spurgeon one day as he visited her, "My faith is gone—I don't have any true love for Christ."

Spurgeon was wise. He did not argue, but took a piece of paper and walked to the window, writing the words, "I do not love the Lord Jesus Christ." Bringing it back, he handed her the pencil and said, "Sign this."

She read it and cried, "It's not true—I'd tear it to pieces before I'd sign it."

Spurgeon said, "You said you didn't love Him."

"Yes, but I could not sign that."

"Well then," countered Spurgeon, "I suspect you do love Him after all."

"Yes, yes," she cried, "I see it now! I do love Him—Christ knows I love Him!"

III. There Is the Commission That Christ Gave (vv. 15c; 16c; 17d)

A. Jesus Christ, in giving this commission to Peter, is letting him know that He still loves and trusts him.

1. Three different groups are referred to in this commission:

a. Beginners in the Christian faith—"Feed my lambs."

b. Adult followers of Christ—"Take care of my sheep!"

c. Mature members of Christ's flock—"Feed my sheep."

2. Peter was still trusted by Christ, and Christ wanted this story to help others who had also failed Him.

B. Peter did not fail, for the fourth Gospel leads on to the Book of Acts, and Peter stands like a rock all because of the trust Christ had in him.

CONCLUSION:

ILLUS. A young woman who had been a missionary in Korea for several years returned to her home in the U.S. on furlough. Her family was well-to-do and lived in lux-

ury. She had been living on a meager income. It was the Christmas season, and all the other members of the family were purchasing expensive gifts for each other. Her resources had been exhausted on the trip home. When Christmas morning came, she had but one tiny present to give. When it was opened it contained only a piece of red flannel in the shape of a heart. Attached to the heart was a note: "To my parents, I give all that I have—my heart."

Jesus was asking for just such a gift from Peter. He asks for the same gift from you and me.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

God, I am grateful for this moment of quietness. Teach me the real meaning of WORSHIP. May I not be a spectator, but help me to participate in this celebration of the Lord's Day. AMEN!

LET US WORSHIP!

THE CHOIR REMINDS US

PASTOR PRAYS

WE LIFT OUR VOICES IN PRAISE AND SING

Hymn "The Peace That Jesus Gives"

WE WORSHIP THROUGH THE GIVING OF
TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Sanctuary Choir "Blessed Assurance Medley" (Marsh)

Hymn "Joy Unspeakable"

IT IS FAMILY ALTAR TIME

Solo

Message by the Pastor

"Peter"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

God as Light

God as Love

God as Life

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

A group of your singles should bring a sign with the name of Jesus written in Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.

Call to Worship

We will be shouters of joy and seekers of God's light wherever we go. Let us praise God for this day.

Offering Sentence

This opportunity to give our tithes and offerings is to share the blessings of God with others.

Benediction

"The love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be and abide with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. 13:14, KJV paraphrased).

JUDAS

John 13:18-30

April 1, 1990

INTRO:

In the 1960s, a TV program called *A Face for Judas* aired. The producer searched everywhere for the right person with the right characteristics and appearances to give him an idea of who Judas would be today. After a futile search, the program ends with a dramatic shot of the producer looking into the mirror, saying, "You'll do."

This man, Judas, has had many theories and guesses proposed about him. He is the epitome of treachery. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary says his name has come to mean: "Traitor, especially one who betrays under the guise of friendship."

The daily vocabulary reflects the infamy of this tragic man. *Judas-colored* refers to red hair, which tradition says Judas had. A *Judas tree* is a purple-blossomed tree believed to be the kind on which he hung himself. A *Judas goat* is an animal used to lead other animals to slaughter. A *Judas hole* is a peephole in a prison door that allows a person to see into the cell without being seen by the prisoner inside.

In every list of apostles, Judas was undisputed as holder of the last position (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16). Over and over again he is identified as the betrayer of Christ (Matt. 10:4; 26:25; 27:3; Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16; John 6:71; 12:4; 18:2, 5).

He was one of the 12 disciples. Imagine—the betrayer came from among our Lord's closest friends.

I. The Truth About Judas

A. *In order to find out the truth about Judas*, we need to go to a small village south of Jerusalem in the area where the prophet Amos was born.

1. The name of the small village was Kerieth, which gives meaning to the name "Iscaiot." Iscaiot simply means "son of Kerieth" or "citizen of Kerieth."

2. My parents rejoiced when I was born, especially my father, who felt that God had smiled upon him and blessed him abundantly by giving him a son.

3. At his naming ceremony he was given the name "Judas," meaning "praise of God." He may also have been named after one of the most famous military leaders in Jewish history, Judas Maccabaeus.

B. *Judas had a good start in life.* He was brought up in a religious home where he was taught to honor and love his people, his country, and God.

1. Judas was the only non-Galilean disciple. He hailed from Judea. He may have had a formal education, and may have been a bit more sophisticated than the other disciples. Judas may have felt somewhat like an outsider among the tight group from Galilee.

2. De Quincey theorizes that Judas was not a bad man, just a mistaken disciple. His purpose was not to betray his master but to force Him to action. The mind of Judas was supposedly so enmeshed in the Messianic thought of the day that he never dreamed Jesus would be crucified. According to De Quincey, his act of

betrayal was not so much the act of an enemy as that of a friend whose purpose was to provide his master with an opportunity to get on with His work.

3. The theory is fascinating, but the Bible seems to know nothing about it. Scripture describes him as "Judas who betrayed him." The truth about Judas is that Christ saw great potential for his use in the extension of the Kingdom. His story is that of a good man who went wrong, and it is a warning against the power of evil in human experience.

II. The Trouble with Judas

A. *Luke speaks of Judas as the one "who became a traitor."* That implies that he was not a traitor at the start but that he became one, going from good to bad to worst.

1. He was made treasurer of the group. Some feel that Jesus and His disciples were supported by contributions from a committee in Jerusalem that disbursed money donated by wealthy widows for the use of traveling rabbis. This would necessitate the appointing of a treasurer.

2. Judas had a disease called "palm itch"—because of that, he couldn't resist the temptation to dip into the funds. John's Gospel calls him "a thief." (See John 12:6a.)

3. When Mary anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume, Judas raised a howl about waste, suggesting that the price of the perfume could be given to the poor fund. Judas actually wanted the money for himself.

B. *Judas was living the Legend of the Silk Thread.*

ILLUS. One hot day a young man walked along a dusty road, looking for a shady spot in which to rest. Eventually, he came upon a towering rock. At its base was the mouth of a cave. He was just about to enter when he noticed a beautiful woman sitting at a spinning wheel just inside. "Madam," he said, "I am weary and worn. May I rest in this cool shade?"

"Surely you may," said the woman, "if you will but let me wind about you some strands of this silken thread. 'Tis all I ask—just a whim of mine."

"Indeed, Madam," said the man. "Wind your thread about me as I lie, and when I am rested I will snap it asunder and go my way." The young man lay down in the cool shade. As he watched, her quick fingers bound the thread about him. Listening to the song she sang, he went to sleep. At length he awoke and tried to rise. But to his amazement, he found he could move neither hand nor foot. The thread that wound around him was no longer bright like silk, but dull and drab, each coil the size of a rope. His companion was no longer a beautiful woman but a hideous witch who laughed at his vain endeavors to free himself.

1. It is amazing what sin can do. Sin is like stepping out of an upstairs window—once you step, you find yourself dealing with a power over which you have no control.

2. Judas discovered that his sin was greater than he. Sin took him, an honored apostle, and made him a traitor.

III. The Tragedy of Judas

A. *The tragedy of Judas can be seen in its fullest at the setting of the Last Supper.* In this setting we see love's appeal to Judas.

1. Love's appeal can be seen in the seating arrangement. The Jews did not sit at a table; they reclined. The table was a low solid block shaped like a horse-shoe. The host sat in the center on a single side. They reclined on the left side, resting on the left elbow, leaving the right hand free to eat with. Jesus was the host, and He and Judas carried on a private conversation. In order for this to happen Judas would have to be sitting on the left side of Christ, the place of honor reserved for the most intimate friend. Jesus must have invited Judas to sit by Him; that invitation was an appeal.

2. There is another appeal. For a host to offer the guest a special tidbit from the dish was also a sign of special friendship. When Jesus gave the sop to Judas, it was indicative of special affection.

3. Love appealed again and again, yet Judas remains unmoved. No person moves away from God but what love has appealed again and again to that person.

B. *Finally, Christ simply says to Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly" (John 13:27b).*

1. John informs us that it was night when Judas went out (v. 30). It was a physical night, for the hour was late. There is, however, another night here. It is always night when a man leaves Christ to follow his own desires.

2. Judas leaves the supper in the Upper Room and goes to the rulers to make his deal.

3. The sign Judas would use to point Jesus out was a kiss. The usual word for kiss is *philien*, the term used when Judas promises to kiss Christ. However, when Judas comes to the garden, the word used is *kataphilien*, which means to kiss again and again with affection. What mockery!

C. *Judas, like Peter, could have been forgiven.* Peter repented, but Judas did not. Judas had remorse but no godly sorrow that leads to repentance. When he learned Jesus was condemned he was sorry and tried to give the betrayal money back, but the chief priest refused it. Judas flung the money down and hung himself.

CONCLUSION:

Sin may lurk privately long before it goes public.

ILLUS. The longest night in the history of the world is drawing to a close. Night is passing, but day has not yet come. Far to the east, over the mountains of Moab, there is just the faintest intimation of the coming day. The huge walls of Jerusalem and the towers and pinnacles of the Temple are emerging from the shadows of the night. In the half darkness and half light I can make out a solitary figure coming down the winding road from the wall of Jerusalem toward the gorge of the Kedron.

On the bridge over the brook he pauses for a moment and, turning, looks back toward the holy city. Then he goes forward for a few paces and, again turning, halts and looks up toward the massive walls. Again he turns, and this time he does not stop. Now I can see that in his hand he carries a rope. Up the slope of Olivet he comes and, entering in at the gate of Gethsemane, walks under the trees of the Garden. Seizing one of the low-branching limbs, he draws himself up into a gnarled olive tree. Perhaps he is the proprietor of this part of the Garden and has come to gather the olives. But why bring a rope? For a little while he is lost to my view in the tree's springtime foliage. Then, suddenly, I see his body plummet like a rock from the top of the tree. Yet it does not reach the ground but is suspended in midair. And there it swings slowly to and fro at the end of the rope (from Clarence Edward Macartney, *Great Nights of the Bible*, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 86-87).

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

Make the most of this joyful hour! Greet those about you and let Christian fellowship reign.

Call to Worship

Hymn

"Blessed Redeemer"

Prayer of Praise

Hymn

"Hallelujah for the Cross"

HOLY SPIRIT, THOU ART
WELCOME IN THIS PLACE
The Choir Invites Us to Pray

Pastoral Prayer

JESUS, BRING US
THE WORD OF LIFE

Sanctuary Choir

"Stand Still and See His Glory"

His Tithes and Our Offerings

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Solo

Message

"Judas"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

Doxology

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Focus on God's:

wisdom

power

guidance

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

A group of young marrieds should bring a crown of thorns to be placed on the cross.

Call to Worship

Come, people of God, rejoice!

Come, let us worship together!

Offering Sentence

In our giving we identify with the cause of Christ. By our giving we extend Christ's kingdom to the whole world.

Benediction

"Now to the One who is able to strengthen you according to the gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ . . . to the only wise God, be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ. Amen" (Rom. 16:25, 27, RSV, adapted).

THE DAY GOD CRIED

Luke 19:37-43
PALM SUNDAY
April 8, 1990

INTRO:

Have you ever thought about how many weeks have passed since the death of our Lord Jesus Christ? There have been more than 100,000. One hundred thousand is a lot of anything. Even more astounding is the number of days that 100,000 weeks represents. That's 700,000 days!

If one had to pick one week out of all history as the most important, both historically and eternally, which one would be chosen? There is one week—or eight days, to be more specific, which would merit that citation.

It began on a Sunday—a normal working day for the Jews. We call this day “Palm Sunday,” and the events that transpired then have changed the world.

Luke gives us background of this momentous occasion. In the 19th chapter of his Gospel, we read that Jesus moved resolutely toward Jerusalem, on what scholars call Christ's Southern Campaign. From this moment on, the shadow of this week hangs over His ministry. In the context of this 19th chapter, Jesus is in Jericho. From Jericho, Christ moves some 20 miles to Jerusalem, where news of His coming has preceded Him. Near the top of the Mount of Olivet, He is met by His disciples, and the procession that was a fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy begins.

There are certain things of utmost importance that beg for attention on this Palm Sunday.

I. The Cry of the Crowd (v. 38)

A. Somewhere around the top of Mount Olivet, some people put their outer garments on the colt that had just been borrowed. (See vv. 29-31.)

1. The procession started down the western slope of Olivet with the disciples cheering wildly (v. 37).

2. The people spread their cloaks on the road (v. 36). This was often done when some famous person was coming to make a visit.

3. Palm branches were also used (see John 12:12). The palms were symbolic of victory in conflict, with a distinct flavor of war. In this context they are used with shouts of pure Messianism, indicative that the people had missed the purpose of Christ's entry into Jerusalem.

4. As the procession nears Jerusalem, the crowd swells in number. John informs us (John 12:9) that word had gone ahead—the Jesus who had raised Lazarus from the dead was coming.

5. Before Christ ever came in sight of the city streets, lined with pilgrims, the shout of “Hosanna” (see John 12:13), which means “save now,” could be heard.

B. The cry with which the people greeted Jesus is illuminating.

1. It is a quotation from Ps. 118:25-26. This is a

psalm of praise. It is part of a larger group known as Hallel (Psalms 113—118). This psalm was an integral part of Jewish life.

2. This psalm is the conqueror's psalm. It was written when Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and was sung when Simon Maccabees defeated the Syrians and also when Asa broke foreign dominion. Jesus was coming as God's “anointed one,” and the people greeted Jesus with the cry, “Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!”

II. The Complaint of the Critic (v. 39)

A. In the crowd were the scribes and Pharisees who were disturbed at the emotionalism of the moment.

1. They were horrified that the pilgrims would acclaim Jesus as king.

2. The scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus to rebuke His disciples, to silence them.

3. In a moment of great exultation Jesus informs the Jewish leaders that if the disciples are quieted, the stones would cry out.

B. One cannot leave this point without noting Christ's courage.

1. Jesus was aware that He was entering hostile territory—the authorities hated Him. He challenges the authorities to do their worst.

2. In His courage, Jesus claimed Kingship of the heart. He came lowly and riding upon an ass.

ILLUS. In Western culture, the ass is the brunt of jokes. But in Eastern culture, specifically in the time of Christ, the ass was considered a noble animal. When a king came riding upon an ass, it was a sign that he came in peace. The horse was the mount of war; the ass was the mount of peace. Jesus was showing to all that He came, not to destroy but to love; not to condemn but to help; not in the might of arms but in the strength of love.

III. The Crying Christ (vv. 41-43)

A. As the procession sweeps around the brow of the Mount Olivet, Jerusalem burst into view.

1. Reflect on the emotion of the Son of David as He beholds the city.

2. The beat on which Jesus was riding stopped. The Christ is weeping. The word Luke uses for weep means loud lamentation and deep wailing. It is the weeping of deep anguish.

B. The procession has stopped, and Christ issues forth with great gasping sobs.

1. Jesus weeps because the door of religious opportunity is shut.

2. The very ground over which Christ now travels would rumble with the sounds of the 10th Roman Legion 30 years hence. This army would literally destroy Jerusalem.

3. Jesus still weeps over the future of those who reject and refuse Him and His redeeming love.

CONCLUSION:

Today the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is passing your way. Your King is here.

ILLUS. More than half a century ago, two sportsmen were sailing along the coast of Scotland. They anchored their yacht in the harbor at Iverness and went ashore to roam the beautiful countryside. They became lost and could not find their way back to the harbor. At nightfall, they knocked on the door of a peasant's cottage, asking for a meal and lodging for the night. The farmer viewed

them with suspicion and sent them away. Knocking at the door of a neighboring farm, the farmer opened the door wide and welcomed the strangers into his home. He sat them at a table laden with food. He gave them bed and breakfast. Only in the morning did the farmer discover that one of the two yachtsmen was the Prince of Wales, later Edward V, the beloved king of England.

Imagine the shame and disappointment of the first man who closed his door against his king! Imagine the joy and delight of the second man who opened his door to a stranger and discovered that he had received his king into his house!

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord . . ."

THE KING IS COMING

Call to Worship

The Sanctuary Choir Calls Us

to Worship

"The Palms"

Procession of the Palms

Hymn

"Crown Him with Many Crowns"

Praise Chorus

CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS

Scripture Lesson (Old and New Testament)

Hymn

"Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

Children's Choir

Family Altar Time

Special Music

"The Holy City"

CROWN HIM THE LORD OF LOVE

Worship with His Tithes and Our Offerings

Sanctuary Choir

"Let Heaven Ring, Hosanna"

Today's Good News

"The Day God Cried"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Focus on God:

His mercy

His love

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Drape the large wooden cross in black, signifying the beginning of Holy Week and the Passion of our Lord.

Call to Worship

Blessed is the one who comes in God's name. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest! Amen.

Have the children come down the aisle waving palm branches while the choir sings "The Palms."

Offering Sentence

In the act of giving we share in God's creative and redemptive act among men.

Benediction

"Now may our God . . . make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all [people and] . . . establish your hearts unblamable in holiness" (1 Thess. 3:11-13, RSV).

"IF I SHOULD WAKE BEFORE I DIE"

1 Pet. 1:3-4
April 15, 1990

INTRO:

A father knelt down beside his little boy's bed. It was time for prayers, hugs and kisses, and tucking in. The little boy began the childhood prayer he had repeated so many times before:

Now I lay me down to sleep;
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord, my soul to take.

This time the words got mixed up. Unwittingly, the child spoke words of the greatest wisdom. He prayed, "If I should wake before I die." Embarrassed, he stopped. "Oh Daddy, I got all mixed up." Wisely, his dad responded tenderly, "Not at all, Son, that's the first time the prayer was properly prayed. My deepest longing for you is that you may wake up before you die."

The child drifted to sleep, but the father turned the prophetic words about in his mind. "If I should wake before I die. That's it!" he exclaimed. "That's the promise and hope of Easter. This is the time to come alive and live forever!

Peter sounds the triumphant truth with a trumpet blast to wake up the dead in and among us. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew [awakened] to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading" (1 Pet. 1:3-4, RSV).

I. Peter Offers Praise to God for His Powerful Act (v. 3)

A. *The Greek word for "blessed" is where we get our English word "eulogize."* It is made up of two words, meaning "well" and "to speak." To *eulogize* a person means to speak well of him. Peter is saying in this verse, "Eulogize, or say something nice about, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Heavenly Father of all believers."

ILLUS. A little boy came home from Sunday School, thrilled about his lesson. He said to his mother, "I learned something today I didn't know before. I learned what God's last name is, and it's not what Daddy said when he hit his thumb with a hammer." He then quoted, "God is love," in doing so he was eulogizing the Almighty.

B. *The fact of the Resurrection made everything new in Peter's own life.* For him, tragedy had been turned into triumph.

1. Easter had taken all of Christ's friends by surprise. Christ had told them that He would rise from the dead, but they had missed the meaning of His promise. And who wouldn't? We just don't expect the dead to rise. Nothing seems so permanent as death. Peter, caught up in the glory of the Resurrection, offers this great doxology of praise to God. Christ arose! Christ had escaped death and opened new life to all men.

2. To Peter, the resurrection of Jesus was especially life-shaking. You can catch something of this

excitement when you hear the opening words of his first letter. (Read text.) We can see that praise and adoration poured forth from Peter as he dictated these first lines of his letter.

II. Peter Informs Us That There Is Hope in the Midst of Hopelessness (v. 3b)

A. *Peter wrote at a time when there seemed to be little, if any, hope in the world.*

1. This living hope of which Peter speaks can only be appreciated by those who know the bondage of fear that held the people of that day captive. Life was meaningless for the people—Sophocles felt that it was better not to have been born.

2. The Christians to whom Peter wrote had been driven out of their homes by persecution and had given in to hopelessness. It is significant that Peter writes about "a living hope." There is a difference between a dead hope and a living one. The hope of the Christian is a living hope awakened within us by the all-powerful God of the universe.

ILLUS. In 1938, after a visit to the Holy Land, a minister dreamed a great dream. He wanted to erect a garden, a place of prayer, a chapel, in his home town of Covington, Ky. His hope was to bring the Holy Land to those who would never see it in person. And so land was purchased, and flowers and trees were imported from 24 countries. Many individuals contributed funds to the project. There was a carpenter's shop with tools from Nazareth. A replica of the open tomb was built. Overlooking the entire project was a gigantic statue of Christ, which could be seen for miles. In 1959 he opened his beautiful dream park to the public, sort of a "religious Disneyland." Almost immediately, however, the "Garden of Hope" ran into difficulties. Most of the plants and trees died, for they could not endure Kentucky's climate. The garden did not attract the visitors they expected. Soon, it went bankrupt. For 21 years the minister had planned and dreamed about his "Garden of Hope," but his dream failed. The last time I saw the park, it was a sad, tragic sight. Weeds had grown up everywhere. The chapel was padlocked, and the lovely statue of Christ had fallen into a state of disrepair. The "Garden of Hope" was a failure.

B. *It is a parable for us.* The world seems to be running out of hope these days. There just doesn't seem to be any hope left. The missing ingredient in our time of history is HOPE!

C. *The words of Peter come galloping down the centuries to our darkened, fearful, hopeless hearts.* We can have "hope" because of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

ILLUS. During the Russian revolution of the early 20th century, a famed Communist orator moved from village to village expounding the good of Communism and downgrading Christianity. After his speech, he would

then invite "Christians" to debate, then proceed to tear their arguments to shreds.

Visiting one village just a few days before Easter, he offered to debate anyone who would accept the challenge. An old farmer in the crowd lifted his hand and asked for permission to speak. Standing tall and erect he spoke loudly and clearly the first phrase of the ancient Easter greeting, "Christ is risen!" Immediately, the crowd gave the response, "He is risen indeed!" The resurrection of Christ brings you and me hope in the midst of hopelessness on this Easter morn.

III. Peter Also Tells Us That There Is Life in the Midst of Death (v. 4)

A. For Peter, the Resurrection was symbolic of life, spelled with a capital L.

1. Peter writes about the Christian's final inheritance. The inheritance that God guarantees is incorruptible, "free from corruption of any type."

2. The big fisherman points out the Christian's inheritance is "undefiled." Peter uses a Greek word describing a mineral that was made into a fire-resistant cloth. Whenever this material got dirty, the ancients cleansed it by putting it into a fire, which would turn it pure white without destroying it. It is the same with the believer's inheritance—it is undefiled, pure—there is no dirt on it.

3. Peter goes on to say that the Christian's inheritance is unfading—its beauty and loveliness is not affected by the passing of time. It is reserved, protected, and guarded for us.

B. The dynamic truth of the Christian life is that we, too, experience Resurrection.

1. Resurrection prepares men to live and to die.

ILLUS. Martin Luther was born in a little German town in 1483. Sixty-three years later, after a life of serving God and bringing faith to people, he returned to the little village on a preaching mission. One night he was stricken with an illness. In great pain he cried, "O God, how I suffer!" Then he lapsed into semiconsciousness.

A friend came to him and whispered in his ear, "Reverend Father, do you still hold to Christ and the doctrine you have preached?"

Came back the whispered reply, "Yes!" Then the great eyes closed, and Martin Luther, a sinner saved by grace, went home to be with God.

CONCLUSION:

ILLUS. When I received word that my brother had been killed in Vietnam, I immediately flew home to be with my family and await the return of his remains for interment. During two weeks of anxious, emotional strain as we awaited the arrival of his body, a strange, yet lovely thing happened. Mrs. Lewis and I were leaving for church. My mother was in a state of shock, and my father was staying at her side. As we started out the door he handed me two tithing envelopes and said, "Be sure and place these in the offering plate. And tell the pastor I plan to give to the Easter Offering" (which was three weeks away).

I didn't think much of it then, but as I prepared this message, it hit me—my dad really believed in the Resurrection—he was awake, alive, and alert to God's power. By his giving in the face of death, he was affirming the joy of being awake before he died! My dad, in essence, was answering the question, "Can anybody tell us how to die?" Dad was saying, "Yes, Christ can tell us how to die and also how to live."

May all of us "wake" before we die!

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

A CELEBRATION OF RESURRECTION

"You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

Mark 16:6-7

HE'S ALIVE!

THERE'S LIFE IN JESUS

Our Pastor Reminds of Why We Are Here

The Choir Calls Us to Worship "Great Is Jehovah"

An Easter Prayer of Praise

We Celebrate His Presence by Singing

Hymn "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"

THERE'S POWER IN JESUS' NAME

It Is Open Altar Time

The Choir Calls Us to Prayer

The Sanctuary Choir Sings "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" (Clydesdale)

We Worship as We Give His Tithes and Our Offerings

JESUS THE RESURRECTION

Scripture Lesson

Special Music

"Jesus the Resurrection"

"He's Alive"

The Good News of Easter

"If I Should Wake Before I Die"

Closing Hymn

"He Lives"

Benediction

Choral Benediction

"The Hallelujah Chorus"

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Focus on God as Creator and Sovereign.

Offer praise to God for His goodness.

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

The cross can be draped in purple with Easter lilies placed around the base. This signifies that Christ is our victorious King.

Call to Worship

Let us praise God.

Let us praise our God who has filled the earth with blessings.

Offering Sentence

Our offerings must be given as acts of love because of the love our Lord has poured out upon us.

Benediction

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. . . . If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-23, 25, RSV).

MARY MAGDALENE

Matt. 27:61; Luke 8:1-3; John 20:16-17
April 22, 1990

INTRO:

As Jesus made His way to Golgotha bearing His cross, He encountered a group of weeping women—the women of Jerusalem. Jesus cautioned them not to weep for Him but to weep for the coming destruction of Jerusalem. At the Cross, another group of women gathered—these were the women who mourned the Lord Jesus Christ. Mary Magdalene was in this group of women.

Seven Marys are mentioned in the New Testament. There is Mary of Jerusalem, John Mark's mother; Mary, Cleophas' wife; Mary, Jesus' mother; Mary of Rome, mentioned by Paul in Rom. 16:6; Mary, Alphaeus' wife; Mary, Lazarus' sister; and Mary of Magdala. The name Mary is a variation of the Old Testament name, Miriam.

Mary Magdalene is one of the most fascinating, mysterious, elusive women in the New Testament. She appears in all four Gospels. She was a real flesh-and-blood person.

We know six things for certain about Mary Magdalene. (1) She came from Magdala. (2) She was delivered from demon possession by Jesus. (3) She was one of a group of women disciples of Jesus Christ. (4) She was at the Cross on Good Friday. (5) She helped bury Christ's body. (6) She was the first to see Christ alive after the Resurrection.

Who was this Mary? What brought her to the Cross? When did she meet Christ?

I. Who She Was

A. *We all know Mary Magdalene.*

1. She is the girl next door who decides that her family's ideas and ideals are old-fashioned.

ILLUS. Mary Magdalene is the person who chooses to have a fling at life and ends up without anyone's respect. "Mary Magdalene" is the boy who gets in with the wrong crowd and winds up with broken dreams. She's the woman who is an alcoholic living her life in a stupor to avoid facing reality. The Magdalene is the man who, in a moment of weakness, embezzles the company funds, bringing disgrace upon himself and his family.

2. Yes, we all know Mary Magdalene; and if she shows up at church on Sunday, most of us would raise our eyebrows and mumble under our breath, "What is she doing here?"

B. *Mary Magdalene—carrying that name was like wearing an ugly facial tattoo.*

1. Mary Magdalene came from Magdala on the west shore of the Lake of Galilee. Magdala was the hub for trade routes converging from the hills and lake; it bustled with commerce and industry. Magdala was a center of wealth in Galilee because of its boatyards, fish-curing racks, and warehouses. It was predominantly a Gentile area and offered the unsavory pleasures of the Roman world. Magdala was a place you never admitted being from in front of proper Jews.

2. The name Magdala could refer to one who "plaits her hair" (the term used for a woman of questionable morals). Magdala could also refer to a tower or a fort. Magdala had its own hippodrome for entertainment, which disgusted the Jewish population. The city had an evil reputation and the rabbis claimed the city fell because of its wickedness.

3. Who was Mary Magdalene? She was a woman of Magdala whose life got off track, and only Jesus Christ could help her put it right again.

II. When Did She Discover Christ?

A. *Mary of Magdala was demon possessed.*

1. We might smile at the mention of demons; but to those living in Christ's time, demonic possession was very real.

2. In Jesus' time, all superhuman terrors and powers thwarting God's will were labeled "unclean spirits," or demons.

ILLUS. Studies in psychosomatic medicine indicate that, although the terminology of the first-century world may sound strange, there are nonorganic, nonphysical causes for many illnesses today. We speak of a "spirit of defeat" or a "bad emotional climate" as if these were malign forces at work. Whatever the diagnosis we want to give some of the illnesses of our age, we must admit that some people seem to be possessed by someone or something that controls and dominates them.

3. We can be sure that as a demon-possessed woman, Mary of Magdala was in terrible shape.

4. So grave was Mary of Magdala's condition that she is described as being under the control of seven demons. Seven demons meant that her condition was *desperate!*

B. *As Jesus passed through Magdala on His way to Capernaum, Jesus encountered Mary.*

1. Christ answered her appeal to help her hopeless case.

2. She was liberated from the pernicious grip of the demons that had manacled her.

3. Set free from the evil spirits, Mary committed herself to serving Jesus wholeheartedly. She was completely free from the powers of destruction and death.

III. What Brought Her to the Cross?

A. *Mary's love for Christ brought her to the Cross during the Crucifixion.*

1. She had journeyed to Jerusalem with Christ's other followers. Luke indicates in chapter 8 that Mary supported Christ—she was possibly well-to-do. Christ was seized in Jerusalem, and hours later He hung dying on a cross.

2. Out of love, she followed the Man who had changed her life. Have you ever wondered how we have a record of what was said on Calvary? If all the disciples

fled, with the exception of John, who was left to record what transpired? The most probable answer is that the pictures and sounds of that Good Friday were preserved by the faithful women who stayed by the Cross. Mary of Magdala was one of them.

B. Her love also led her to be first at the tomb.

1. Here she encountered the risen Lord.
2. She rushed to tell others that she had "seen the Lord."
3. In a sense the first Christian sermon was preached, not by a man but by a woman.
4. "I have seen the Lord!" still stands as the most compelling piece of personal testimony, whether from a liberated woman from Magdala or from a famous pulpit-
eer.

CONCLUSION:

"Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" Yes, you were there; I was there in one whom people had dismissed as worthless. I believe she represented all humanity that day with their shattered dreams, broken homes, wasted lives, gnawing loneliness. She also represented all humanity not long after this when she heard a voice asking, "Why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?"

ILLUS. With utter sincerity, Mary Magdalene could sing John Newton's old hymn: "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! / That saved a wretch like me! / I once was lost, but now am found; / Was blind, but now I see."

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

As the organ begins, let quietness come. Read Matt. 5:1-12. Meditate on Hymn 13. Pray silently.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Pastor calls us to worship.

We lift our voices and sing.

Hymn "Savior, like a Shepherd, Lead Us"

Pastor directs us in prayer.

We praise Him in song again and sing.

Hymn "All the Way My Savior Leads"

PRACTICING HIS PRESENCE

We present to our Living Lord, ourselves preparing for prayer—our thanksgiving and desires in prayer.

The choir ministers to us. "How Majestic Is Your Name"

PUTTING OUR FAITH TO WORK

We present to Him His tithes and our offerings.

A moment for friendship.

PATTERNS FOR LIVING

Scripture Lesson

Special Music

TODAY FROM THE WORD

Sermon

Closing Hymn

Benediction

"Mary Magdalene"

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Emphasize a God who will see us through.

Thank Him for the strength He gives.

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

People of God, come, let us worship together.

Offering Sentence

In our giving of tithes and offerings, we give ourselves to His will and purpose.

Benediction

"Now may . . . God . . . who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word" (2 Thess. 2:16-17, RSV).

THE FUNERAL THAT BECAME A FESTIVAL

John 11:1-44
April 29, 1990

INTRO:

The place where Jesus stayed the last week of His public ministry was Bethany. The town is still there, but it is no longer called Bethany. Today it is known as Eizariya (Lazarus' town). The name recalls the most important event that ever happened in that little town's history—Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Even the Moslem inhabitants remember Lazarus as a local saint. It is at Bethany that a funeral became a festival.

In this last, most dramatic sign, the One who is Life confronts death and overcomes it. This event is the doorway by which we enter the Passion of Jesus. It is a foretaste of the greater glory that breaks forth when Jesus steps forth in radiance and power on Resurrection morning.

There are interesting comparisons between Jesus' first miracle at Cana and His last at Bethany. The one was so quiet, the other so awesome. Each took place within the intimacy of a family circle—one a wedding, the other a funeral. The central purpose in both miracles was that the glory of God might be manifested. The power of the Father was made visible through the action of the Son as He turned water into wine. The tragedy of death was transformed into the joy of life. And in each case, faith was born or renewed. At Cana, Jesus' disciples believed in Him, and at Bethany they were strengthened in their faith.

I. A Response That Wasn't Expected (vv. 1-16)

A. *There was an emergency in Bethany at the home of Jesus' friends, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.*

1. Lazarus was very ill. The sisters sent for Jesus, who was in the wilderness with His disciples. They were certain Christ would come right away to heal their brother. (See v. 3.)

2. When Jesus receives the news about Lazarus, He stops where He is (v. 4). This delay was a delay of love.

B. *For two days Jesus goes about His work, far from the anguish and grief of Mary and Martha.*

1. By this time, the sisters were no doubt in a frenzy. Christ finished His work and announced to the disciples that they were going to Judea. The disciples were aghast; the last time Christ was in Judea, the Jews tried to stone Him. They asked Him if He really planned to go to Judea.

2. Jesus informed His disciples that they were going because Lazarus, His friend, was asleep. Finally, Christ informed the disciples, "Lazarus is dead."

3. The Lord's response was confusing to Mary and Martha. They couldn't understand why He hadn't come. It is also confusing to the disciples, who can't understand why Christ is going. In verses 4 and 15 we are given the twofold reason or Christ's response—that the disciples might believe and for the glory of God. This will turn a funeral into a festival.

II. Some Reactions at the Funeral That Became a Festival (vv. 13-37)

A. *Three reactions are expressed in this passage—first, there is the reaction of Martha.*

1. In Bethany, after Lazarus had died, a cry went up from the house to the streets around. Lazarus would be prepared for burial, dressed in a white linen gown called a traveling dress. His body would be wrapped with bandages and spices.

2. Four days later, Jesus was on His way to Bethany. By then, the body was decaying, and there was no hope. The sisters heard that Jesus was nearby, and Martha went out to meet Him. (See v. 21.) In verse 22 Martha's words are almost a reproof. Have you ever felt as Martha did? "Lord, where are you? Lord, you are too late."

3. Jesus did not reprove Martha for her words. It is not sinful to tell God how you feel.

B. *Where was Mary while all of this was taking place?* She was back at the house, where the furniture had been turned around. A group of mourners would have been with her. Verse 32 gives us Mary's response when she came to the place where Jesus was. The song of grief was on her lips also.

C. *Notice how Christ reacted to all of this (v. 33). He feels the sorrow.*

1. The word for "deeply moved" comes from a word that describes a horse snorting. In this context, it implies that our Lord let out an involuntary gasp. The breath went out of Him. Verse 35, though only two words, tells us worlds. "Jesus wept." Tears ran down His face.

2. Here we see a picture of a God who loves us, who allows us to go through the ultimate extremity, and then comes and enters our sorrow in such a way that He gasps. If you are hurting, He wants you to know He weeps with you.

III. The Release That Turned This Funeral into a Festival (vv. 38-44)

A. *Jesus takes over! What a difference that makes.*

1. He commanded that the stone be removed from the tomb. Martha protested that the body would stink. What can anyone, even Jesus, do with a decomposing body?

2. Jesus told her that she would see the glory of God if she would believe. The command to remove the stone was obeyed. Christ called to Lazarus, "Lazarus, come forth" (v. 43, KJV). This shout is the shout of life, and the one who died came out.

B. *Lazarus comes forth, still bound in the old grave-clothes.*

1. Jesus gives those in the crowd an opportunity to participate (v. 44).

ILLUS. It will be 21 years this June that I, as a pastor, have watched Jesus call men and women out of spiritual death into new life. I have never lost the wonder and excitement of that kind of resurrection. But then I have seen loving, caring people reach out and welcome these people, helping them meet new friends and develop new habits, calling forth the gifts in them, encouraging them in discovering their ministries. They are taking off the graveclothes. This is part of the miracle. These are the Gary and Ginas, Harry and Sandys, etc., that represent an amazing procession of people called out of the tomb to discover a new family of hope, eager to help set them free. But is this not the calling of a living, Spirit-filled congregation? "Loose him, and let him go." We need to turn the funeral we are having here into a festival.

CONCLUSION:

ILLUS. Alvin Rogness wrote a book titled *Appointment with Death*. In it, he speaks of his son Paul's tragic death and offers counsel to others. I have used that book on several occasions. This week I picked up some insight from the pen of Roger Fredrickson, whom I have enjoyed listening to and reading often.

Fredrickson tells of being in a hospital and being stopped in the corridor by a doctor friend. The doctor

was eager to tell Fredrickson that if he hadn't believed in life everlasting before, he did now. He had just returned from a small Minnesota town where he had attended a funeral service for Paul Rogness, who had been struck down by a truck 10 minutes from his home, on his return from two years of study at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar. In a moment of time, this gifted life had been tragically snuffed out.

The funeral service, however, was a great, triumphant affair. It was at the cemetery that this doctor had experienced the power of the Resurrection anew. Paul's father, Alvin, conducted the committal service for his own son—scripture, prayer, and finally leading the family in a favorite song, "Abide with me! fast falls the eventide. / The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide! / When other helpers fail and comforts flee, / Help of the helpless, Oh, abide with me!" As the people began to sing these strong and hopeful words, they were overwhelmed by the occasion and the presence of the Lord and could no longer sing. Finally it was the clear voice of Alvin Rogness at the head of the grave that stood out, "Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee! / In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!"

Our funerals will become festivals when we trust the One who is Life.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

God, I am grateful for this moment of quietness. Teach me the real meaning of WORSHIP. May I not be a spectator, but help me to participate in this celebration of the Lord's Day. AMEN.

LET US WORSHIP

THE CHOIR REMINDS US

PASTOR PRAYS

WE LIFT OUR VOICES IN PRAISE AND SING

Hymn "Lead On, O King Eternal"

A MOMENT FOR FRIENDSHIP

Sanctuary Choir "I Will Praise Him" (Stringfield/Keene)

WORSHIP WITH TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Hymn "Where He Leads I'll Follow"

SPECIAL MUSIC

Message "The Funeral That Became a Festival"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Forgiveness

Fellowship

Faith

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

Sing for joy to God.

Worship with songs and shouts of joy.

Offering Sentence

As we give, we offer ourselves, confident that God has a purpose for us. We do this in the Spirit of Christ who gave His all.

Benediction

"And now to [the God] who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21, RSV).

WHEN LIFE FALLS APART

Matt. 14:22-32
May 6, 1990

INTRO:

Some years ago, our family discovered a children's book titled *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. This book afforded us a lot of laughs. During the time we were enjoying this book, one of the young men in our congregation received a football scholarship to MANC. On a visit home, he was telling me about this neat book that the football team was enjoying. It was *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*.

This little boy named Alexander, who is probably about seven or eight years old, has "one of those days." I mean nothing goes right. He has back-to-back disappointments and tragedies like you can't imagine. It's one continuous "downer." This little guy can't win for losing. He went to sleep with gum in his mouth and woke up with it in his hair. When he got out of bed, he tripped over his skateboard, and he dropped his sweater in the sink while the water was running. He could tell it was going to be a "terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day."

After a terrible day at school, a horrible visit with the dentist, and a no-good stop at the shoe store, Alexander slumped in his chair at the supper table where his trouble continued. There were lima beans for dinner, and he hated limas. There was kissing on TV, and he hated kissing. His bath was too hot; he got soap in his eyes; his marble went down the drain, and he had to wear his railroad-train pajamas. He hated his railroad-train pajamas. When he went to bed, one brother took back the pillow he said Alexander could keep. The Mickey Mouse night light burned out; the cat went to sleep with another brother and not with Alexander. It had been a "terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day."

At the end of the day, our little friend sighs and says, "I think I'll move to Australia." Days like that tend to get us down. In our scripture lesson this morning, the disciples had had one of those days. It had been a tiring day of ministry and miracles. Tired, they had set out for the other side of the lake. Suddenly, a storm comes up, and their lives began falling apart.

What do we do when life falls apart? Our scripture lesson contains five assurances to help us when everything around us goes wild.

I. Christ Brought Me Here (v. 22)

A. The storm came because the disciples were in God's will. Jesus knew that the storm was raging, and He deliberately directed His disciples into the storm. (They were safer in the storm in the will of God than on dry land with the crowd out of it.)

B. A careful study of God's Word reveals that there are two kinds of storms:

1. There are storms of correction, when God disciplines us.
2. There are storms of perfection, when Christ permits the storm to help conform us to His image.

C. So you're going through the storm. It's tough sailing, but consider that the storm may just be in God's will for you. Remember, He is Sovereign, and the One who sent you into the storm can care for you.

II. Christ Is Praying for Me (v. 23)

A. When life falls apart, we sometimes feel as if Jesus has deserted us. Where is Jesus when we're rowing against the wind? He is praying for you. He has never lost touch of your position. (See John 17:20.)

B. What does His prayer for you include?

1. That your faith won't fail.
2. That you will not follow the mood of the mob, which chased after Jesus because of His miracles.
3. He is praying that you won't give up and go under in the storm.

ILLUS. If you knew that Jesus Christ was in the next room praying for you, would it give you new courage to endure the storm and do His will? Of course it would. At this very moment Christ is interceding for you in heaven. He knows your need.

III. Christ Will Come to Me (vv. 24-26)

A. One has to admire these disciples. They could have turned around and headed back to shore, which would have been the long way.

1. These disciples had been on the Lake of Galilee for nine hours, and they were still trying to get across the lake.
2. What do you think the disciples were doing?
3. Do you think they were singing choruses for nine hours? No, they were tired, wet, and cold. They were trying to just hang on.

B. It is midnight, and Jesus hasn't shown. Have you ever been there? Yet in the darkest hour, He came to them walking on the lake.

1. Jesus came to them walking on the lake.
2. The disciples did not recognize Him. Why? There were three reasons:
  - a. They were too busy complaining.
  - b. They were too busy fighting the storm in the flesh.
  - c. They were not looking for Him.

IV. Christ Will Help Me Grow (vv. 29-30)

A. We now have a picture of divine love meeting human need. Our attention shifts to Peter. Anyone can sit in a boat and watch, but it takes a person of real faith to leave the boat and walk on water. But Peter became afraid and began to sink.

B. Let me give you four quick rules if you're going to walk on water and grow spiritually.

1. Don't listen to the people in the boat.
2. Don't look at the waves.

3. *Don't look at your feet.*
4. *Do keep your eyes on Jesus.*

V. Christ Will See Me Through Eventually (vv. 32-34)

What God starts, He finishes. Christ and Peter walked together back to the boat in the storm.

CONCLUSION:

There are five assurances in this passage that we can count on when life falls apart.

- A. *Christ brought me here.*
- B. *Christ is praying for me.*
- C. *Christ will come to me.*
- D. *Christ will help me grow.*
- E. *Christ will see me through eventually.*

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

As we enter, we come believing—expecting and worshipping—all talking ceases as we bow in prayer. Thank You, Lord!

THE CHOIR DIRECTS OUR ATTENTION

Pastor Prays

PASTOR REMINDS US . . .

Hymn "Praise Him, Praise Him"

Scripture Reading

A Moment for Friendship

WE WORSHIP AS WE BRING IN GOD'S TITHES

AND OUR OFFERINGS

Doxology of Praise

Sanctuary Choir

"It Is Well with My Soul"

FAMILY ALTAR TIME

Hymn

"Our Great Saviour"

Special Music

Message

"When Life Falls Apart"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Thanksgiving

Reconciliation

Blessing

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

With glad hearts let us join together in singing praise!

Offering Sentence

As we bring our gifts today, it will reflect the importance of God in our lives. We return to Him a portion of all He has entrusted to us.

Babies presented in the service.

Wedding vows could be repeated.

Benediction

"Rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ always. Again, I say, rejoice. Do not be anxious about anything, but in all things by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4-7, RSV, adapted).

HOW ARE THINGS IN YOUR FAMILY?

2 Kings 4:8-26
May 13, 1990

INTRO:

I remember as a boy growing up, one of the unique things that we did Mother's Day was wear flowers. I especially noticed this about my own grandmother. While her mother lived, she wore a red carnation every Mother's Day; after her mother died, she wore a white flower. Many other members of the congregation followed the same ritual as they celebrated Mother's Day. Our mothers should be honored every day of the year, yet it is appropriate that we set aside a special Lord's Day every May to give them the honor and recognition they deserve.

In order to properly focus on Mother's Day this year, let us look at an incident in the life of one of the towering figures of Old Testament history—the prophet Elisha.

As Elisha moved throughout the land of Israel proclaiming the Word of God, it was his custom to visit Shunem, where a wealthy woman and her husband lived. This couple developed a relationship with the prophet and built an additional room on to their home that was reserved for the prophet's use when he was in the area.

Elisha was so impressed with the friendship and hospitality of this couple that he asked his servant what he could do to repay them for their kindness. They had no children, and Elisha called the woman to him and announced that the child she had hoped for so long would be given to her by the mercy of God. A son was born a year later.

The boy grew. One day, he went bareheaded to the fields where his father and his helpers were involved in the harvest. He evidently had a sun stroke and was carried to his mother. He died in her arms.

Grief stricken, she went to Mount Carmel, to Elisha's headquarters. The prophet saw her coming and sent Gehazi to meet her with the following question, "Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?"

I. Are You All Right?

A. How are things today with you, moms?

1. There is no greater honor and responsibility than that of being a wife and mother.

2. Because of the wife and mother's abiding influence in the home, it is important that she be a dedicated, consistent Christian.

3. Mother's Day is a good time for a spiritual inventory. How is everything with you spiritually, moms?

B. A mother's spirit pervades the home.

1. She makes time to pray for her children; to teach them obedience, courtesy, good manners, and to give others consideration.

ILLUS. Susannah Wesley, who bore 17 children, made time each week to take each of those boys and girls aside and counsel with them, speaking to them about the love of Jesus. Is it any wonder that one boy in that family became the greatest preacher of his generation, and another son became the greatest hymn writer in the English-speaking world? With a mother like that,

we can understand why Charles Wesley wrote these lines, ardent with devotion to Christ:

O for a thousand tongues to sing

My great Redeemer's praise,

The glories of my God and King,

The triumphs of His grace!

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,

That bids our sorrows cease;

'Tis music in the sinner's ears;

'Tis life, and health, and peace.

2. A mother must be faithful to the sacred trust committed to her. She can only do this by yielding completely to the Holy Spirit.

ILLUS. The founder of Kraft Foods was an outstanding Christian.

Mr. Kraft spent the last few winters of his life in Miami. He had an invitation to address a convention in San Francisco, and the newspapers of Miami made note of it. The night before he left for San Francisco, the telephone rang. A woman's voice, filled with sadness, said, "Mr. Kraft, I see by the paper that you are going to San Francisco tomorrow. I want to ask a favor. My son is in Alcatraz for life. I write him and send him gifts, but he has never responded. Would you please go see him, and ask him just to write me a note?"

Kraft agreed to the lady's request. He went to the prison and was granted permission to visit the young man. He started down the corridor to where it turned right, to the visiting room. Just as he made the turn, a big hand shot out in front and clamped him by the chest, and a voice said, "Stand perfectly still, Mr. Kraft, don't move for a moment." Kraft said he heard a buzzing sound—then a voice said, "OK, Mr. Kraft, you're clean."

Offended, he asked, "What do you mean, 'I'm clean?' Of course I am!"

"I mean," said the guard, "that you don't have anything that you should not take to the visitor's room." The guard told Kraft what he had in his pocket.

He went on down the hall thinking to himself, "Suppose Christ would stop me around the next corner and say, 'Stand still, Kraft, let me see if your heart is clean inside.'" Said James Kraft, "I stopped where I was and asked God to examine me."

II. Is Your Husband All Right?

A. *Is your husband a Christian?* Is he accepting responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the home?

1. Have you noticed what the father did in our scripture today? He sent the stricken child to his mother (v. 19b). "Carry him to his mother."

2. Many fathers do precisely the same thing. They are too busy to fulfill the promise they made when their child was dedicated. They carry him to his mother, the pastor, the Sunday School teacher, etc.

B. *The father's place is with his wife and children as much as possible.*

1. It is tragic for a man to give so much time and energy to his job that his family never sees him.

2. Our families deserve "prime time." They should never have to compete with the TV or newspaper.

3. The father is responsible before God for the welfare of his family. A father is a priest in his own home.

C. Christian fathers and mothers have been given the divine responsibility of leading their families to God.

1. Parents must be role models of Christian living.

2. They must demonstrate to children that God is the most important reality in anyone's life.

ILLUS. J. Wilbur Chapman, perhaps the finest evangelist the Presbyterian church has known, once used the following illustration in a sermon. He said that he had just heard of a father who came into the bedroom where his young son lay dying. The boy had been ill for so long that his body was badly wasted. It was painful for him even to lie on the bed. As the father entered, the lad said, "Daddy, lift me up for a moment."

The father put his hands under the emaciated body and raised his son just a little off the bed. "Lift me higher," he said, "Daddy, lift me higher." The father lifted him up until he held him above his head. When he took him down, the boy was dead. It would seem as if that father had actually lifted his son into the very arms of Christ. When Dr. Chapman concluded the service, a man came up to him with tears in his eyes and said, "Dr. Chapman, it happened just as you said. I went into his room. My minister was with me. I lifted him up, and his weak voice came back to me in whispers saying, 'Higher, Daddy, higher.' When I took him down, he had gone. But, sir, I had lifted him into the arms of Christ long before, for when he was a very small boy I taught him of a Savior's love, and told him what it means to be a Christian."

III. Are Your Children All Right?

A. Elisha is asking, "Are your children all right?"

1. Is everything all right with those who are near and dear to you?

2. How is everything in your home? Is there continual warfare going on?

3. Is discipline with love a practice at your house? Do you ever tell your children no?

B. What kind of a relationship do your children have with Jesus Christ?

1. Do you pray for and with your children? Are you doing all you can to lead them along a path that leads to life eternal?

ILLUS. One of the most fascinating stories written in recent years is titled *Question 7*. It is the story of an East German minister's son and a choice he is forced to make. The young man is an accomplished pianist. The Communist government wants to use him for propaganda. He is invited to perform at a gathering. The father does not want the son to participate and advises him of it. The Communist government sends him a Social Questionnaire, which he begins filling out. The young man went to perform. Before he went on stage to play the piano, he heard the announcer's pitch: "We are friendly toward the church. Our next participant proves that." The young man remembered a plaque hanging on the wall of his home, which says, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." He couldn't go on. He broke a glass and cut his hand so he couldn't play, then he leaves and slips across the border into West Germany. His father hears of his escape and goes to the son's room. On his desk is the social question-

naire. Question 7 asked "What person has been the greatest influence in your life?" In big bold block letters were written these two words, "My father." Parents, if that question were asked your son or daughter, would they answer "My dad" or "My mom"?

CONCLUSION:

You have been confronted this Mother's Day with three very important questions:

A. Are you all right?

B. Is your husband all right?

C. Are your children all right?

I trust that everything is all right.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

SEEKING HIM FIRST

OBEDIENCE / FAITH / PRAYER / COMMITMENT

GOD'S FOREVER FAMILY GATHERS

The organ helps us to meditate . . .

Pastor shares . . .

We wait quietly in His presence . . .

LET US WORSHIP

The choir leads us in celebration. We lift our voices and sing.

Hymn "A Christian Home"

Pastor offers a prayer of praise.

Hymn "Faith of Our Fathers"

WE ARE ONE IN THE BOND OF LOVE

It is family altar time.

The choir calls us to prayer.

We worship through the giving of His tithes and our offerings.

The choir ministers to us. "Lead On, O King Eternal"

We greet one another in fellowship and extend the hand of friendship.

THE WORD OF GOD ALIVE AND OPEN

Ministry of Music

Message "How Are Things in Your Family?"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Joy / Hope / Life / Peace

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Have your ladies lead the service.

1. A ladies' choir

2. Lady ushers

3. A lady speaker

Call to Worship

With all that is within us, let us give praise and thanks to God!

Music (Hymn 413: "Faith of Our Fathers")

Change the wording from fathers to mothers and have the congregation sing the hymn in memory of the influence of mothers.

Offering Sentence

We promise that our gifts today will not be the end of our giving—we will also give our time and our talent.

Benediction

"May your love abound more and more, with knowledge and all understanding, so that you may approve what is excellent, and pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:9-11, RSV, adapted).

GOD'S RX FOR DEPRESSION

1 Kings 19:1-18
May 20, 1990

INTRO:

Legend has it that an old man carrying a heavy bundle of sticks sank down by the roadside with a groan and wished he were dead. To his surprise, death appeared and asked him what he wanted. "My bundle on my back and my feet once more on the road," said the old man quickly. Life's roadway has many obstacles and dangers. One of the greatest of these is the ditch of depression that runs alongside. It's easy for burdens to trip us into this ditch, and having fallen in, we often wander around, helplessly trying to get out.

Webster defines *depression* as "being pressed down; gloomy, dejected, sad; to have low spirits." He also says, "psychological depression is an emotional condition characterized by discouragement and the feeling of inadequacy." In the U.S. alone, it is conservatively estimated that about 200,000 people attempt suicide every year. Of these, 25,000 are successful. This means that on the average, somebody tries to kill himself every 3 minutes. And once every 21 minutes somebody succeeds. Most of these people are depressed and deeply unhappy. In addition, millions of people who have never contemplated or tried suicide periodically become depressed. The problem is so common we could say the person who never becomes depressed is highly unusual.

Because depression is demoralizing, it's essential that we know how to deal with it. Home remedies are not effective. It's useless to whistle in the dark, smile, or ignore depression in the hope that it will go away. These attempts do not work. Nor does it do any good to engage in "operation bootstrap." There may be times when we are so emotionally low we can't reach our bootstraps!

Becoming a Christian will not automatically solve all our problems. Christians suffer depression. The greatest example of depression in the Bible is the story of Elijah. He had been God's spokesman for over three years, faithfully calling the nation back to God. In a dramatic battle with the 850 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, Elijah proved conclusively he was God's servant. God also affirmed Elijah by answering his prayer to send rain to break the drought.

As Elijah returned to Jezreel, running before Ahab's chariot, Jezebel sent a sharp message to Elijah: "By tomorrow at this time you will be dead. I personally guarantee it." Frightened, forgetting everything God had done for him, Elijah ran 120 miles into the wilderness. Chapter 19 of 1 Kings describes Elijah's dejection as he sat under a juniper bush in the wilderness. "It is enough! Now, O Lord, take my life; for I am not better than my father." Elijah is at the depths of depression. As we examine Elijah's situation, we discover four things to help us defeat depression.

I. God Knew That Elijah Needed to Eat Properly and Get Some Rest (vv. 5-8)

A. Elijah had done a mighty work for God—he had defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. He had also run approximately 120 miles. He was physically and emotionally exhausted.

1. The man of God had been so busy caring for the spiritual needs of the nation that he neglected his own physical and emotional needs. When word came to him that Jezebel was out to get him, he was so drained that the situation seemed hopeless. What did he do? The great prophet of God went and sat under a tree, wishing to die. He was in the depths of depression!

Elijah is so exhausted that he goes to sleep. He is so physically spent that the angel of the Lord has to awaken him twice and tell him to eat. He was strengthened by the food and then travels to Horeb.

B. Things haven't changed much since Elijah's day, have they?

1. Many still grow weary from well doing. What began as a fun or joyful ministry becomes a grind. When this happens, we need to examine our eating habits and get away for some rest.

2. It is amazing at how spongy our view of the body, the temple of the Holy Spirit, is. We show wisdom in respect to smoking and the drinking of alcoholic beverages. Yet, we put ourselves in a premature grave by burning the candle at both ends. It is amazing how unspiritual you feel when you are weary.

3. Step one in God's cure for Elijah's depression was for the prophet to eat properly and get some rest.

II. God Knew That Elijah Needed to Get His Frustration Off of His Chest (vv. 9-10)

A. After Elijah arrived at the cave in Horeb, God came to him and said, "Elijah, tell me, what's bothering you?"

1. That was a penetrating question. Elijah responds as a typical counselee by telling his life story. He spreads all of his mixed-up feelings out before the Lord (v. 10).

2. Elijah poured out the venom that was poisoning his soul. He gave to us a workable pattern: get your frustration out in the open, and tell God and a close friend what's eating you.

3. In Psalm 102, David gives us a classical description of depression: (1) poor health; (2) shortness of life; (3) unable to cope; (4) loss of appetite; (5) loneliness; (6) loss of poise; (7) need for recognition; (8) thoughts of death. David gets it all off of his chest and a change is recorded in Psalm 103.

B. God is interested in the things that bother you. We must put God between us and our problem.

III. God Knew That Elijah Needed a Fresh Awareness of His Presence (vv. 11-12)

A. *Elijah felt that God had forsaken him.*

1. Let me warn you: When you are depressed, you cannot sense God's presence. You'll feel as though He has forsaken you. God told Elijah to go climb the mountain, for God's presence was about to pass by (v. 11).

2. First there was the wind, then an earthquake, then a fire—no God. Finally, Elijah could hear a gentle whisper, a still small voice asking the same question, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (See vv. 11b-13.)

B. When we are depressed, we, too, need a fresh awareness of the personal presence and power of God in our lives.

IV. God Knew That Elijah Needed to Get Back to Work (vv. 13-16)

A. *Elijah is still complaining.* God now tells Elijah two important things. First,

1. "Go to Damascus and anoint Hazael, king of Syria. Then anoint Jehu as king of Israel and finally, select Elisha as your successor" (vv. 15-16, paraphrased).

2. Second, God informs Elijah that he is not alone (v. 18).

B. Like Elijah, once we have rested, verbalized our frustrations, and have a fresh awareness of the presence of God, we must get up from our self-pity and get back to work. We can learn from the experience of Elijah.

CONCLUSION:

The situation for Elijah was not hopeless, nor is it for you.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

The Lord does not delight in our solemnity; this is no time for morbid reflections or sad, boring faces. Our God has set us free! Praise Him and let others know you serve the God of creation—the God who brings water to the desert, flowers to the meadow, fresh fallen snow to the mountain. He does all this and more: He takes time to love you like you have never been loved before! Hallelujah!!

Ps. 146:8b   "The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down."

THE CHURCH IS PRAISING IN SONG

Pastor Greets Us

Hymn

"Come, Thou Fount"

THE CHURCH GETTING ACQUAINTED

"Family of God"

We Praise God by Singing

Hymn

"Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty"

THE CHURCH PRAYING TOGETHER

The Choir Invites Us to Pray

Sanctuary Choir

"When Answers Aren't Enough"
(Perkins)

THE CHURCH INTERESTING

Tithes and Offerings

THE CHURCH IN THE WORD

Special Music

Morning Message

"God's RX for Depression"

Song of Joy

Benediction

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Praise to God for the . . .

1. gift of loving one another
2. ability to serve one another

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

Our God is doing a new thing! Here. Now. In the midst of gathering together. Let us praise Him!

Offering Sentence

We bring our gifts today to help share the story of God's love that brings eternal life and conquers death.

Benediction

"If any one is in Christ, that person is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. Walk in the newness of life. God is with you. Amen" (2 Cor. 5:17, RSV, adapted, with additional material).

DORCAS

Acts 9:36-43
May 27, 1990

INTRO:

Modern Joppa is located on the seacoast, 10 miles beyond Lydda. The city is strategic in Bible history as the place from which the prophet Johah embarked when he ran from God (Jonah 1:1-3).

It was in Joppa that Peter received his call to go to the Gentiles. As Peter is traveling, he goes to visit the saints in Lydda (v. 32). There was a disciple in Lydda whose name was Dorcas—a lovely lady whose name meant gazelle, an animal characterized by grace and charm.

Very unexpectedly, Dorcas died and Peter was sent for (vv. 39-43). A marvelous miracle occurred—a restoration from the dead. This woman who gave herself to a ministry of love and servanthood is restored by the hand of God to her ministry of good works.

On this Sunday when we issue a challenge to our youth, our focus will not concern itself with the miracle of restoring Dorcas to life. Instead, let us focus on Dorcas and those qualities that the youth of our church can develop so that they can have an effective ministry.

I. There Is Something You Must Be (v. 36a)

A. Dorcas was a prominent woman at Joppa, and yet this is the only time her name appears in Scripture.

1. She never speaks a word, but the testimony of her life is very clear (v. 36).

2. This woman was a humble, devout, committed follower of Jesus Christ. The Bible states she was a "disciple."

B. In the eyes of the world she would not be considered a success. She would not be chosen "Woman of the Year."

1. Success for Dorcas was not fame.

2. Success for Dorcas was not pleasure.

3. Success for Dorcas was not power.

C. Dorcas built her life on discipleship. By doing this she took the first giant step in making the most of her life.

II. There Is Something You Must Do (v. 36c)

A. We are told that Dorcas did good and helped the poor.

1. She followed Jesus' example by living for others.

2. Our Lord commended this kind of good works (see Mark 14:6-8a).

B. You may think that what you can do is small and unimportant. What you can do is very important.

ILLUS. English became the national language of the United States by only one vote. Thomas Jefferson became president of the United States, winning over Aaron Burr, by only one vote. Only four electoral votes brought Abraham Lincoln to the presidency. One electoral vote put Rutherford B. Hayes in the presidency. And that one vote cast for Hayes was cast by a senator who, himself, had been elected on the strength of only one vote. Only one vote saved President Andrew Johnson

from being impeached. And only one vote brought Texas, California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington into the Union.

1. All of us can do something to bless others and improve their lives. You can't wait until you are older or wiser to begin. (Use the examples of Daniel and Joseph as teenagers and their influence.)

2. Now is the time to get started! Do something!

III. There Is Something You Must Learn (v. 39c)

A. Dorcas left something by which she would be remembered.

1. There is no indication that she left behind an estate.

2. She left something very worthwhile—she spent her life living for others. What she left behind gave a testimony to the love that motivated her.

ILLUS. The story is told of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, who decided to send Christmas greetings to his Salvation Army band around the world. He had to keep his message brief because of a shortage of funds. Booth cut his greeting to one simple word: "Others!"

B. That was Dorcas' priority. She lived to serve others.

1. This must also be your priority if you are going to make the most of life.

2. Live for others and leave behind a fragrance that shall long bless others.

3. There is a part of you that will never die—your influence will live on forever.

4. Dorcas is an example of one who made the most of life. She leaves behind for every young person a pattern and a challenge that needs no improvement.

CONCLUSION:

ILLUS. According to Jack Gullege in *Ideas and Illustrations for Inspirational Talks*, A. J. Cronin walked down a country road and saw a farmer plowing his field. Cronin told the man that he was so discouraged and that he had decided to quit writing. Giving Cronin a hard look, the farmer pointed at the land and told Cronin that both he and his father had worked it with little to show for their labors. But, he said, he kept on plowing and planting, believing, as his father had believed before him, that if he plowed and sowed long enough, someday the farm would produce a rich harvest.

Cronin got the farmer's drift and went back home, took a manuscript out of the trash can, and dried it in the oven. Although he was ill, he finished the manuscript, his first novel, *Hatter's Castle*, that established him as a writer. In 1937 he produced *The Citadel*; in 1941, *The Keys of the Kingdom*; in 1950, *The Spanish Gardner*; in 1956, *A Thing of Beauty*; in 1958, *The Northern Lights*; and in 1961, *The Judas Tree*.

Nothing in life comes easily. By faith and grace, work to make the most of life. It's the only one you will have on this earth.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

"Surely the Lord is in this place; therefore, receive with meekness the Word, which is able to save."

Gen. 28:16; James 1:21

Share a Time of Friendship with Pastor

"PRAISE BE TO YOU, O LORD"

Choral Call to Worship

Invocation

Hymn

"I Would Be True"

"WE PRAY IN ONE SPIRIT"

(The altar is open during this time for those wishing to pray)

"JOYFUL, JOYFUL WE ADORE THEE"

We Worship Through the Giving of His Tithes and Our Offerings

Doxology of Praise

Choir Selection

"My Faith Still Holds" (Marsh)

Hymn

"Take My Life, and Let It Be"

"JESUS, BRING US THE WORD OF LIFE"

Special Music

The Good News

"Dorcas"

Closing Hymn

Benediction

Rom. 15:13, RSV

PASTORAL PRAYER:

New birth

Redemption

New life

The Holy Spirit

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

It would be good for a college student who has been called into full-time Christian service to share his call.

If you have a youth choir, feature them.

Let the youth of your church lead the service.

Call to Worship

He is our joy and peace.

He is our salvation and hope.

Come, let us worship our God.

Benediction

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" (Rom. 15:13, RSV).

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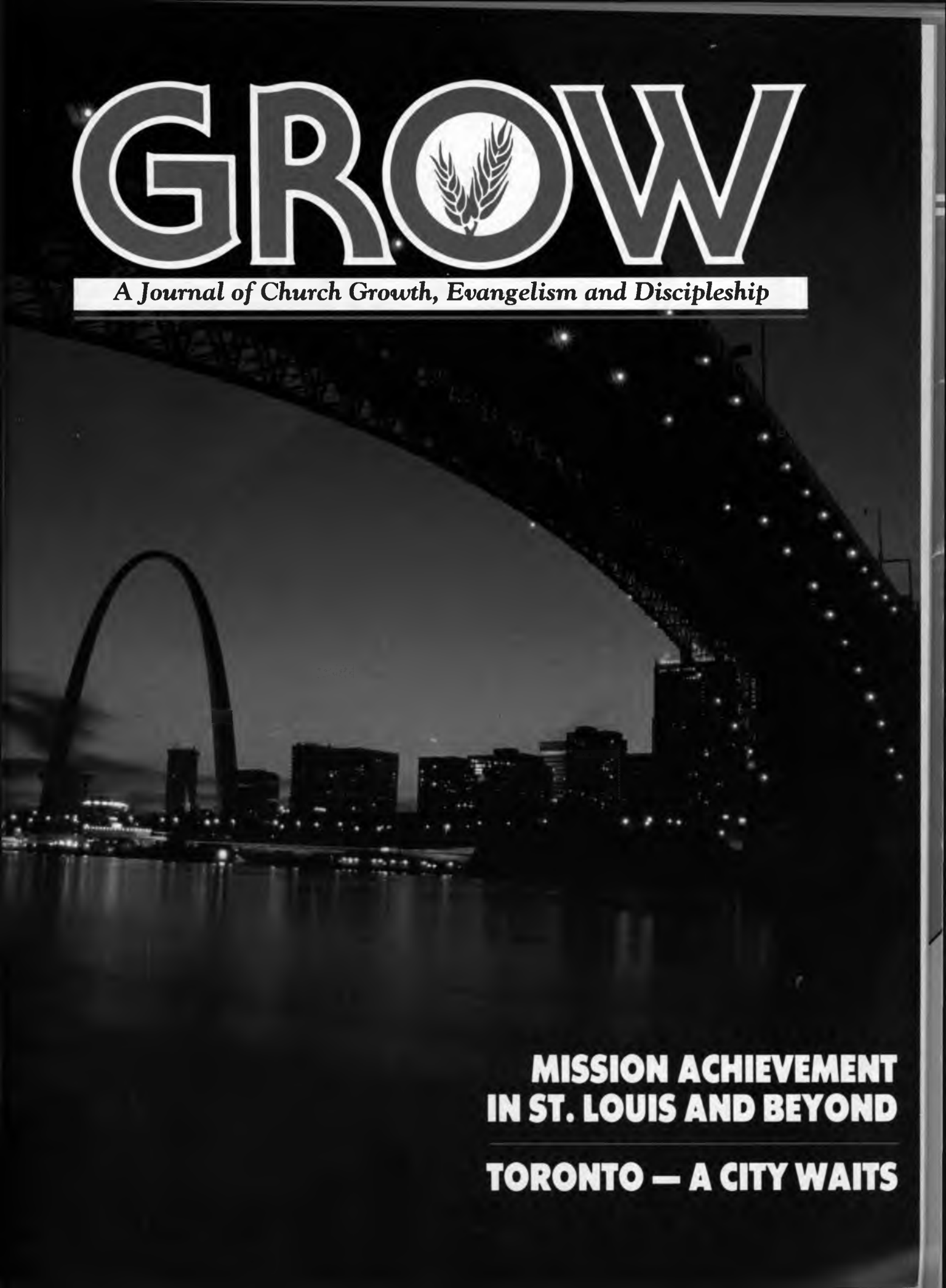
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GROW



A Journal of Church Growth, Evangelism and Discipleship

**MISSION ACHIEVEMENT
IN ST. LOUIS AND BEYOND**

TORONTO — A CITY WAITS



GROW IS FOR YOU

Trees grow. Children grow. Churches grow. Love grows. Knowledge grows. Anticipation grows . . . GROW is a useful word because it describes a wide range of experiences.

We think it is a good name for a magazine — easy to pronounce, spell, and understand. It will call us to grow spiritually, intellectually, conceptually, and, where appropriate . . . numerically.

Grow is a biblical word. We like the way Paul uses it in Ephesians 4:15: “. . . speaking the truth in love, we will in all things *grow* up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, *grows* and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

This is both individual and group growth — personal growth in Christ and the collective growth of the church in love.

This March, June, September, and December publication will bring exciting stories about people who are growing in the Lord and about churches that are growing in love.

We believe GROW is a new dimension in evangelism resources — inspiring, fresh, concise, attractive, descriptive, helpful.

It is our effort to grow in supporting the local church — both clergy and laity. GROW is for you — to grow in the Lord, and for your church — to grow in love.

Bill M. Sullivan

Mission of Church Growth Division

To contribute to the advancement of God's kingdom by fostering growth in the Church of the Nazarene.

To promote aggressive evangelism in all its many forms throughout the denomination.

To create an awareness throughout the church regarding the necessity for planting new churches, including the mission potential among cultural minorities.

To increase participation and effectiveness in a reproductive ministry that is engaged in Christian mission.

Vision for Church Plant Starts With a Business Couple and Veteran Missionaries

**SHOPPING CENTER CHURCH
SERVES UNIVERSITY TOWN**



Columbia Community Church of the Nazarene meets at the Forum Shopping Center. Alan Lyke is founding pastor.

COLUMBIA COMMUNITY CHURCH STARTS WITH NON-TRADITIONAL APPROACHES

Though Columbia Community Church of the Nazarene started with several nontraditional components, it continues with a healthy, thriving ministry. To borrow from Bresee, the church is in the beautiful morning of its existence.

This new church is amazingly unique. The vision for this gospel work started in the hearts of a Columbia business couple, Gerald and Brenda Jones, and retired missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. O. K. Perkinson—not ordinary home mission strategists. The first meeting, held at the Campus Inn, near the Uni-

versity of Missouri, is hardly a typical setting for a first service. The pastor, Alan Lyke, though a 1987 graduate of Nazarene Theological Seminary, started out to be a public music educator with a degree from Olivet Nazarene University—not a conventional background for a church planter.

The typical age of people who make up the new congregation is well below forty-five. The present ministry is built around five small groups — hardly a customary beginning kind of ministry. And the church meets in upscale commercial space in the Forum Shopping

Center, something like a doctor's office suite.

Columbia Community Church of the Nazarene first met at the Campus Inn on December 6, 1986, with Dr. Hiram E. Sanders, district superintendent of the Missouri District, to seek the mind of God concerning the possibility of beginning a second church in Columbia, Missouri. Rev. O. K. Perkinson served as convenor — a sort of interim pastor for the first few months. After seminary graduation in 1987, Alan and Marilyn Lyke, along with their three children, David, Ariana,



Bible Study and Singing: Pastor Lyke, Rev. and Mrs. Perkinson, Marlyn Lyke, Gerald and Brenda Jones, and Lisa Clare.





Gerald and Brenda Jones: Columbia business couple who helped start the church.



Bible and Study Outline: Study guides are based on Pastor's sermons.

and Jonathan, moved to Columbia to lead the baby church. About that time, the Perkinsons accepted a supply pastoral assignment near St. Louis for six months, making it easy for the new congregation and their beginning pastor to build an immediate bond.

Organization of the new church took place on April 2, 1989, with 39 charter members, and the church has an average worship attendance of 72 at time of publication of this issue of GROW. Happy relationships between Pastor Lyke, age 35, and his congregation are obvious and beautiful. Warmth and spiritual development flourish at Columbia Community Church through five small groups; three meet in homes. Most groups discuss the scriptural foundation of the sermon from the previous Sunday; the pastor prepares weekly study guides for the groups. Insightful discussions of Scripture are enhanced by the minister's near-professional use of his 12-string guitar. This new congregation knows that songs of praise, life-connected guidance from the Word of God, and real friendship

are what spiritually hungry people seek, and they appreciate it when they find it.

Pastor Lyke's personal pilgrimage of faith, filled with experiences preparing him for this church-plant assignment, includes a message by Dr. Carl Clendenen, now professor at Nazarene Bible College and former superintendent of the Oregon Pacific District, during a tour of the Wisconsin District. There, during autumn of 1981 in Appleton, God used Clendenen to speak to Alan Lyke, then a layman, about the Father's desire for His children to pray for laborers to work in the harvest for souls. That evening, Alan's call to ministry was confirmed through a preacher he never met; the rippling effect continues through this new congregation at Columbia.

God is already using this new church to prepare Christian university students for His harvest in both far and near places. And who can measure this new, growing church's impact on its community from now until the coming of the King?



Steve Lautenschlager leads campus Bible study: University student — junior from Liberty, MO.

**God is already using
this new church to prepare
Christian university
students for His harvest.**



GROW

Content

GROW Is for You by Bill M. Sullivan	inside front cover
<i>Vision for Church Plant in Shopping Center — Pastor Alan Lyke</i>	1
Growth Markings and Main Points	5
<i>What Is GROW? — Interview, Sullivan and Wiseman</i>	7
<i>Sister Moore Starts a Holiness Church — Pastor Rosie Moore</i>	9
<i>Along the Evangelist's Trail — Evangelists Gary and Beth Bond</i>	12
<i>Changed Lives — Personal Evangelism Testimonies</i>	14
<i>New Works — Victory Report — New Church Plants</i>	16
<i>Prayer Retreats by Wilbur W. Brannon</i>	19
<i>Harvest Reports — Church Growth Research Center</i>	23
<i>12-Year Harvest at Harvester — Pastor Gene Grate</i>	24
<i>Rooted in Christ — Personal Growth Helps by C. S. Cowles</i>	29
<i>17 Years of Ministry in St. Louis — Pastor Nelson Hurn</i>	32
<i>Evangelists Directory</i>	35
<i>The Church Meeting Human Need — Compassionate Ministries Conference</i>	38
<i>The Shepherd's Life</i>	42
<i>A City Waits . . . Toronto — Interview, Osborne and Estep</i>	45
<i>Native Son Plants Church in Fulton — Pastor Gary Garrett</i>	51
<i>Heartline Helps the Helper by Donald R. Harvey</i>	56
<i>Research and Trends by Dale E. Jones</i>	61
Revival Reports	63
<i>Driving Force for Revival by Neil B. Wiseman</i>	inside back cover



What Is GROW?

An interview between Bill M. Sullivan, director of the Division of Church Growth, and Neil B. Wiseman, GROW editor

Q. Bill, why are we launching a new magazine in the Church Growth Division?

A. GROW isn't a new magazine. It is a revision of *UPDATE* that has been a part of the *Preacher's Magazine* for a dozen years.

Q. But it is no longer the same publication, is it?

A. It will continue to carry the beautiful full-color ads that highlight denominational programmatic emphases.

Q. Then what do you mean by revision?

A. I mean an expanded publication: Sixty-four pages of photo essays, exciting stories, "cutting edge" resources, and beautiful full-color ads.

Q. Photo essays is a new idea, isn't it?

A. Yes. We used it in the "THRUST TO THE CITIES WITH LOVE" issue of the *Herald of Holiness* two years ago, and then again in our General Assembly brochure at Indianapolis.

Q. What kind of stories will GROW contain?

A. There is an unbelievable amount of mission going on in Canada and the USA. Some of the most inspiring stories I have heard are happening in New York, California, Canada, New England, and St. Louis. The list keeps getting longer and more exciting.

Q. You mentioned "cutting edge" resources.

A. Yes; here in the Church Growth Division we not only keep up with what is happening in the Christian church at large, but we also research and develop strategies that are used by other denominations and agencies. Our Church Size Strategies are being used by other denominations, and Thrust to the Cities is a highly successful pioneering project of the Church Growth Division.



Q. Why haven't we heard more about this?

A. Because the Church Growth Division has no delivery systems like the Sunday School, NYI, or NWMS. We have no publication like *World Mission* magazine, or extensive range of Sunday School Ministry literature. Our people just don't know about the exciting projects that are being spawned in the Church Growth Division.

Q. Do some people think that church growth was a fad that has now passed?

A. Yes, but that is a mistake.

Q. In what way?

A. The principles and practices of the American church growth movement are well along in the process of becoming basic growth strategy assumptions, especially among evangelicals.

Q. Give me an example.

A. The priority of evangelism. The importance of small groups for internal organization. The necessity of church planting. Far from fading away, it is surprising how quickly church growth principles are spreading and how pervasive they are becoming. I rejoice in the amazing acceptance of church growth emphases. You know, there are entire denominations that are restoring a commitment to evangelism as a result of the church growth movement.



Q. If church growth principles are becoming so widespread, why do you need a new magazine to promote them to Nazarenes?

A. The Church of the Nazarene was one of the first denominations to promulgate church growth principles. But the coincidence of the charismatic movement frightened us away from remaining a full player in the church growth movement. Now we need to recover the dynamics we lost a decade ago. Our new publication, GROW, is essential to that effort.





**"I had a casual
relationship to a
certain church,
but I didn't have
nothing — just
only the name of
Christianity."
—Rosie Moore**

Sister Moore Starts a Holiness Church at 53

HEART PURITY FORMS FOUNDATION FOR CHURCH PLANT



Founding Pastor Sister Rosie Moore started St. Louis New Hope Church as a Bible study in her home in 1982. Located in a quiet, changing, residential neighborhood, the Moore home is filled with love and dozens of pictures of their ten children and their families. Organized in 1985 with 38 members, including 27 new Nazarenes, the congregation has more than doubled to 87 members. Over the church's five-year history, 75 new Nazarenes have been received into church membership.

Pastor Moore, now 58 years of age, along with her faithful husband, Andrew, works hard to build a congregation on a foundation of perfect love. When asked about his wife's call to preach, Andrew Moore, retired from the United States Postal Service, said, "God can do whatever He wants to do." Though not called to preach, he says he is called to bring the people in so they can hear the Word of God. And he does.

Pastor Moore tells about the beginning days of New Hope: "We had Bible studies on Thursday nights, and then the people began to ask for Sunday morning services. Because of strict zoning regulations, I was afraid to have all those people packed in this little house on Sunday. But I talked to my neighbor, and she told me the people could use her driveway and the back of her house for parking. The other neighbors were agreeable, too. We stepped out on faith — even took our furniture out into the garage before each service. The people kept coming until they were sitting in the kitchen, living room, dining room, halls, and even the bedrooms."

With a note of thanksgiving and lingering amazement, Mrs. Moore continues the account of New Hope's beginning: "Then the people wanted to tithe and said, 'Your house is getting too small and we need a building.' We opened a bank account in the name of Neighborhood Bible Study. The first Sunday, the tithe totaled \$207, and when we left out of here to move to a building, we had \$6,000 plus. The Lord blessed us so we were able to get our own place and our own chairs."

Her conversion experience profoundly impacts her preaching and pastoral leadership. Virginia Moss, a white co-worker from Arkansas, introduced Rosie Moore to vital faith in Christ. In those days, the Moore family lived in a St. Louis housing project. Sister Moore, describing that wonderful event, said, "I don't speak color, but it was so unusual for a white woman to be as close to me as she was. Virginia Moss began talking to me about the Lord — she had recently been saved. I had a casual relationship to a certain church, but I didn't have nothing — just only the name of Christianity."

In a few weeks, Virginia Moss introduced Rosie to Pastor Udell Moss (no family relation). Rev. Moss, then pastor of the Ferguson Church, explained the way of salvation as Mrs. Moore remembers it, "Brother Moss opened the Bible up before me and he began to show me the way to Christ. It was what I needed in my life. I didn't understand all of it, but the Lord really forgave me. It seemed like my whole life ran before me like a newspaper print. That was 29 years ago and it is still good."

Soon Rosie Moore was introduced to holiness teaching, but she thought sanctification meant plain dress and a list

of rules. She said, "I didn't know sanctification was the cleansing of the heart, but a incident came into my life that the Lord used to show me how much I needed a clean heart. I heard it preached, but it never sunk in until the need really came."

Here's her witness to a pure heart: "I was home alone and I had a family on my mind who was going through a difficult time. I had been praying for them and was getting ready to call them to try to lead them to Christ on the phone. But the Holy Spirit said to me, 'How can you help when you haven't gone all the way?' I got on my knees and asked God to fill me with the Holy Spirit, and He did. Though I was alone in the house, I got up and shouted all over the place. I was just happy in my soul."

She continues, "Afterwards, when I got myself quieted down, I called those people and asked them to get on the extension phone and I led them to Christ. Just a few minutes after I received the fullness, I led them to Christ — the first people I ever led to Christ. That was 27 years ago, and those folks are in our church today. And I still thank God for a clean heart."

The foundation for Sister Moore's ministry to this day is the Scripture's promise of a pure heart. When asked the importance of this emphasis, she replied, "A clean heart takes away the need to hate and lots of our people hate. God has called me to teach and preach the doctrine of a pure heart because it makes such a difference. To me, it is something that everybody has to have. It is a great power so you can love people even when you cannot love what they do. Real holiness is not an abstinence from doing things — it is a heart condition."

Pastor Moore expects to complete the ministry course of study so she can be ordained soon, hopefully this year. Two

pastors, Rev. James Heckathorn and Rev. Gerald Vaught, have especially mentored both Brother and Sister Moore in working their way through the course of study together. With appreciation, Rosie Moore said, "I haven't had the schooling, but my whole life has been my teacher. And now, caring pastors are helping me learn a lot of things I really need — the Lord knows I need them." She hopes District Superintendent Hiram Sanders and Pastors Heckathorn and Vaught will take a vital part in her ordination service.

Today, a church grows in St. Louis because a co-worker witnessed to Rosie Moore, a faithful pastor showed her the way to salvation, and she hungered and sought for the fullness.

Sister Moore closed the interview with two powerful sentences: "I have a special love for the church because it taught me what real holiness does. That is what God has called me to preach."

"The people kept coming until they were sitting in the kitchen, living room, dining room, halls, and even in the bedrooms."

Lead Your Church Through a Pre-Easter Spiritual Inventory

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Along the Evangelist's Trail

Four weeks of ministry in the lives of Gary and Beth Bond

From the beginning of the Church of the Nazarene, evangelists have moved from church to church and place to place to challenge the church to revival, evangelism, and serious discipleship. Many of our people trace the significant spiritual happenings in their lives to revivals, campmeetings and holiness crusades. The work continues through people like Gary and Beth Bond. Here's their story, as told by Evangelist Gary Bond.



Beth Bond, commissioned song evangelist, and Gary C. Bond, commissioned evangelist and song evangelist. Children: Joy, 7, and Julie, 11.

KOKOMO, INDIANA

Multicolored, bright autumn leaves swirled about us as we stepped out of our motorhome into the warmth of a typical Indiana "Indian Summer." Adding warmth of another kind was the enthusiastic welcome from newlyweds Rev. Verdean and Marjorie (Jantz) Owens, married just one month. Beth and I knew them well, having previously conducted several revival meetings for Pastor Owens, and as co-laborers with Marjorie, who traveled the evangelism road for 33 years.

Evangelists can immediately sense it when a church has prepared for revival. Kokomo First Church of the Nazarene

had laid a solid foundation of prayer, paving the way of God's Spirit. What freedom we enjoyed in message and song! What obedience to the Lord, evident in the response of the people! Praying had been for specific people and for specific needs in the lives of those people.

I preached one evening about four pitfalls common to people today which the nation of Israel experienced. While Beth played a gospel song for the altar call, a teenage girl slipped a torn piece of paper into her hand. Later that night, we read the scrap of paper together. "He was speaking about me tonight," it

said. "Please pray for me!"

The next evening, Beth counseled with this young woman. Her great potential and talent were obvious, yet she was consumed with guilt over the sins she'd committed at such a young age. Beth shared the blessed promises of God's forgiveness and the blotting out of all her sins. Then she shared one of her favorite verses: "But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14, NIV). That weekend, the young woman knelt at the altar and prayed her way to victory. On Sunday evening, she gave us her written testimony in the hope that others would be helped. She asked to remain anonymous. Here is what she wrote:

"I've grown up in and around the church. I have great parents who taught me wrong from right. They taught me all about Jesus Christ and how He could be my Savior. But for some reason I didn't want all that 'salvation nonsense.' So I went my own way, getting involved in drinking and premarital sex, all the time keeping it secret from my wonderful parents.

"But I couldn't keep my secrets from God. He made me realize that my older boyfriend was only after one thing. Meantime, I turned my life over to Jesus Christ and accepted Him as my personal Savior. Still, I felt something was wrong. I have felt guilty, angry, and confused for almost a year now.

"One evening I was on my way to a party where I would find myself in the same predicament; instead, I came to the revival meeting. I learned that God has forgiven and forgotten my awful sins. But I needed to forgive myself and my ex-boyfriend."

Another teenager, Tina, was on probation and was required to be in the company of her parents at all times. Her life had been ruined by drugs, dishonesty, and immorality. The

church prayed fervently for her, and Tina received the Lord Jesus Christ at that weekend revival.

We left Kokomo rejoicing! If our week there was Indian Summer, we were now in the midst of premature winter, the snow swirling around our motorhome windows. Beth moaned that she'd left everyone's boots and gloves at home, but our girls, Julie and Joy, hopped up and down and clapped their hands. Sometimes E.K.s (evangelists' kids) think they "have it pretty good." Not every child gets to attend school in his or her pajamas! At Terre Haute, our next stop, they also would have a church gym in which to skate and play ball after home-schooling was completed each day.

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

In this western Indiana city on the Wabash River, Pastor Larry Mathias had appointed lay persons to organize prayer for revival. Edie Beaman set up a 24-hour prayer chain and a series of women's prayer groups. Eugene Railsback organized men's prayer breakfasts. Once again we experienced the outpouring of conviction and blessing of the Holy Spirit in our services.

On the first night of the week of meetings, Tracey came in response to the invitation of Mrs. Mathias, one of her customers at the beauty parlor. Now she had the joy of meeting Mrs. Mathias' best friend, Jesus, and she received Him as her own Lord and Savior. By Thursday, this new Christian was sharing her joy by singing in the choir. What a blessing to those who prayed for her before we came.

We heard glorious testimonies from others in Terre Haute First church who recommitted their lives to Christ, having "taken some things off the altar."

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

It was school days for Julie and Joy as the ribbons of highway unraveled before us again. Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was our destination.

Eighty people in Pastor Phillips' congregation had kept round-the-clock prayer vigil, praying at designated 15-minute intervals for several weeks before we arrived. This was in addition to

their regular prayer time. Terry Phares, attendance and enlistment chairman, encouraged the lay people to pray for 50 prospective families, building friendships and making contact with them weekly. Karen Phillips, the pastor's daughter, is staff youth minister. She and the teens distributed 500 revival flyers. Milton Freed taught a class for altar workers and was ready to disciple new converts with Bible studies. Victories followed in the wake of their thorough preparations.

As soon as I gave the altar invitation Tuesday evening, Rick Stratton stepped forward. The evangelism team had visited him in his home the week before the revival and shared the gospel with his wife, Cathy, who prayed and received assurance of salvation. By Tuesday evening, Rick was ready to receive Christ.

One of the 50 families targeted in prayer by the Cedar Rapids Oakland First Church was in the throes of divorce. The husband, Lance Beck, yielded his life to Christ and the family was salvaged.

Robert Baer, a 13-year-old from an unchurched home, came to the meeting in the church van. Karen Phillips prayed with him at the altar and he was saved.

The evangelism team from Oakland Church had also visited Izzetta Walker in her home just two weeks before the revival, and she had prayed the sinner's prayer as her son had done just three months previously. Remarkably, Izzetta responded to the Holy Spirit in one of the meetings concerning unforgiveness she was harboring. At the altar, this new Christian forgave people who had wronged her and testified that God had lifted a load from her heart and she would be writing them to make things right.

In her two-week acquaintance with her new friend, Jesus, Izzetta's love was evident in deed as well as in word. Like Andrew, His disciple, she brought a friend to the services to meet Him.

We saw other outstanding answers to prayer in Cedar Rapids. Even attendance reached a high, with 273 on Sunday morning.

OSKALOOSA, IOWA

We moved on to Oskaloosa First Church of the Nazarene where our

good friends, the Rev. and Mrs. E. L. Wisheart, are pastoring. This church had prepared for revival through weeks of home prayer meetings and prayer breakfasts.

Some of the outstanding results included Jim, a truck driver who, concerned about areas of his life he knew were not under God's leadership, had been counseling with Pastor Wisheart. He was sanctified the very first night of the revival meeting.

Julie, the daughter of agnostic parents, was another trophy of God's grace. Now the mother of four children of her own, she felt the importance of knowing the truth and, with all her doubts and questions, came seeking. God met the needs of her heart and the troubling issues and questions were resolved.

Layman Willy Watt was working with other electricians, installing cables in a trench when, to their horror, it caved in on a young man named Marty. Willy and other workers dug him out, almost suffocated. At an appropriate time, Willie asked, "Marty, if you had died, would you have gone to heaven?" "No," Marty answered, "I don't deserve to." Willy seized the opportunity to invite Marty to the service that night, where he gave his heart to the Lord.

Beth and I are encouraged as we sip our morning coffee during a rare time of "R and R" and review our revival diary of the past four weeks. Our spirits are refreshed as we feast on the joys of revival. We recall the precious young lady on her way to another beer party who changed her mind, drove to the revival meeting instead, and experienced God's forgiveness. We think of families about to be torn asunder who came and allowed the Lord to speak to them, reuniting them in love. We think of the board member drawn back to a fresh love for the Lord, and of young, tender Christians, thirsty for more of God, who walked obediently in the new light He shed on their paths.

Sometimes the viability of revival meetings in today's churches is called into question. Our contention is strengthened: Yes! Revival meetings are still an effective means of evangelism!

God does not slumber nor sleep. He still works in the hearts of people. I thank Him every day for a church that still believes in revival!



CHANGED LIVES

New Converts Share the Joy of Salvation

Personal evangelism call. "Because something was missing in my life, I recommitted my life to Christ when the personal evangelism team called in my home. I still struggle, but I know Jesus will help me through. I appreciate the fact that the personal evangelism team came to my house to witness because I really needed that push to start over. I know there are a lot of other hungry people out there who need the same push." **Teri Travelute, preschool teacher.**

Pie at Waid's Restaurant. "I've been a chemistry teacher for 23 years and have always believed in God. I attended church off and on during my life, but if I ever heard the plan of salvation, I don't recall or didn't comprehend it. Dr. Shaver changed all of that when he offered to meet me for pie at Waid's Restaurant. At that time he showed me the meaning of the scripture, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' Until then, there had been only one set of footprints in my life — my own. Now I know there are two and I thank God for Jesus Christ and for my salvation. I am thankful for the witness of those who helped me. Without them I would still be floundering in my search for Jesus." **Dale Endicott, teacher.**

Church impacted. "Our church has five board members who were saved through personal evangelism. Two of our staff members were saved through personal evangelism. Approximately one-third of our people were saved through personal evangelism." **Larry Lott, pastor.**

Long letter to priest. "I had a burden on my heart that I wanted to unload, so I wrote a four-page letter to my priest — I tried to confess all the big sins I could remember. I hadn't been to confession for a long time. I was disappointed and confused because I never received a reply either by mail or phone from the priest. About that time I was working with a chronically mentally ill client who told me about her pastor, who was available to help at any time of day or night. So I went to church with her. The next week, a personal evangelism team came to my home. I surrendered my life to Christ and that made a great difference. My life has turned around. I have made many changes. I feel like I have literally gone from death to life." **Robin Parcell, social worker.**

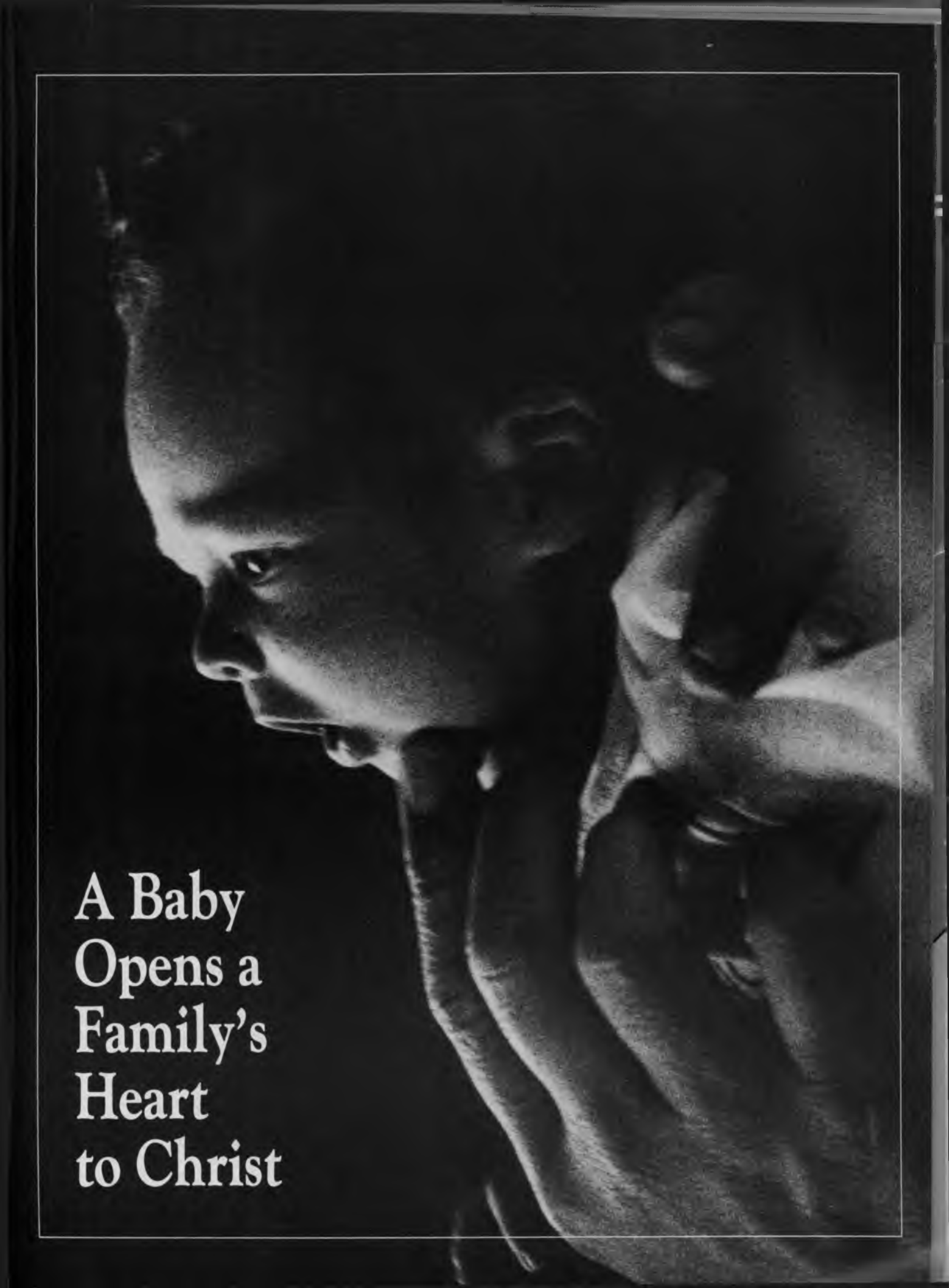
**"My heart rejoices
in your salvation"
Psalm 13:5 NIV**

Pulled me into their hearts. "A seminary student invited us to church and the pastor closed the sermon with Pontius Pilate's question and he said, 'One of these days it will be your turn to answer that question.' I did answer in my heart in that service and gave my life to the Lord. The key for me is that people of this church reached out to me by taking time out of their lives to pull a non-Christian like me into their hearts. And they have taken my hand and helped me grow. There is a joy that I feel in my heart that makes me feel like I will explode if I do not tell everybody about it." **Bill Shaw, service representative for Cablevision.**

Void filled. "This is Teri, my wife. We are Christians, but we didn't used to be. A three-person evangelism team called on us after we visited the church for the first time. On June 1, 1987, we prayed in our living room and opened our hearts to the Lord. Teri felt an immediate release, but I still wasn't totally sure. But never fear — the Lord was at work. One night, while working the graveyard shift, I was called to arrest a very belligerent female citizen. After the arrest, my fellow officer said, 'You have changed. I can't believe you didn't knock that woman out. You are more gentle and kind.' After I reflected on his comment for a few moments, I realized he was right. I was different; the void had been filled with Jesus. He has changed me." **Bruce Anderson, policeman.**

I was hesitant. "Though I was hesitant to say 'Come on over' to the personal evangelism team, it was a good thing. Because of them, I recommitted my life to Christ. They introduced me to Basic Bible Studies, which helped me get acquainted with God's Word and helped me memorize Scripture. We went through the membership class and joined the church. Coming to Christ strengthened my marriage and made me able to cope with everyday life." **Rod Travelute, carpenter.**

Let us hear your story. If you wish to share your conversion story, the GROW staff would be happy to hear from you. Your testimony should be typewritten, less than 100 words, giving specific details, influential persons, dates, human interest details, and your occupation. Please include your name, address, phone number, and date of submission of testimony. Material should be sent to Editor, GROW, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Missouri 64131. Because of the press of publishing deadlines, testimonies cannot be acknowledged or returned. Neil B. Wiseman, editor.



A Baby
Opens a
Family's
Heart
to Christ

God Helps Nazarenes Plant New Works Everywhere

NEW WORKS VICTORY REPORT



PONDER GILLILAND SERVES AS EVANGELIST:

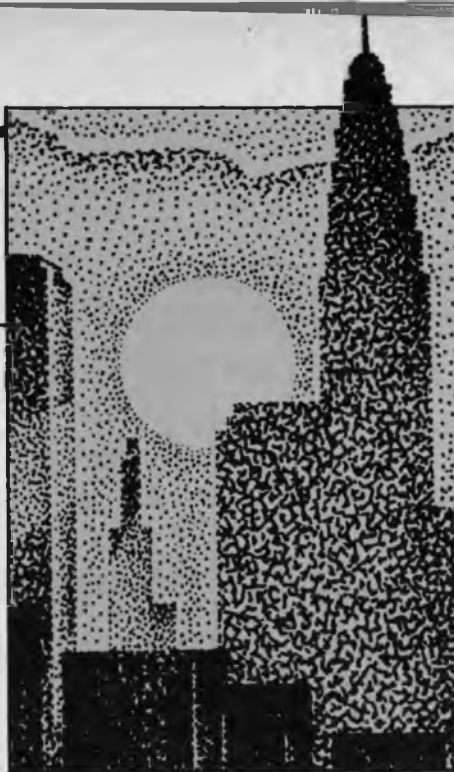
Community Church in Round Rock at Austin (San Antonio District) had 80 in attendance on the second Sunday in October. **Pastor Benny Knight**, 44, an independent businessman, felt a call to preach and a call to plant this church. He rejoices in the fact that they have a 14,000-square-foot rented space in an office building with a meeting area for 150 people and 20 classrooms. Starting with 29 charter members, they used the "Phones for You" program this fall through which they found 45 needy families in one week. Dr. Ponder Gilliland served as the evangelist for a revival starting on November 5 — the celebration day for their telemarketing campaign. The minister said, "God has given us a vision to reach our community."

CHURCH STARTS IN OLD BAR:

Locust Grove Church of the Nazarene (Northeast Oklahoma District) started in March 1987 in an old bar-room and renovated liquor store as an outreach mission from Pryor Church. **Rev. Paul D. Baker** founded this work, which was officially organized on April 9, 1989. The congregation now rents a vacant Methodist church; their present attendance of 38 has only two original Nazarene families. Pastor Baker reports: "Being bi-vocational, there are plenty of struggles, but God never puts us anywhere without a purpose. This work is certainly not by a man's ability. God has given us a great task and a great opportunity — to be accomplished by His strength."

FOUR SINGLES PIONEER NEW CHURCH:

Fort Worth Riverside Church (West Texas District) was founded by four singles — a unique first in Nazarene church planting. **Pastor Doug Forsberg** reports that the church began meeting in February 1988, was organized on July 17, 1988, and now averages 85 in worship. The West Texas District helped them purchase property which provides adequate space for the growing congregation. Since its beginning, the church has distributed 14,000 pounds of food to the needy of northeast Fort Worth, has given away 3,000 articles of clothing, and served 7,000 hot meals. GROW readers will be interested to know that the first wedding at Riverside Church united Pastor Forsberg and Worship Director DeVonna Breedlove in marriage on October 28, 1989.



\$14,495 PLEDGED FOR NEW WORK AT FIRST PRAYER MEETING:

Batesville Church of the Nazarene (Mississippi District) started at a home prayer meeting to explore the possibilities of beginning a church where two men pledged \$14,495 for this new work. The first services were held in the Civitan Club, but the people soon located a church building for \$26,800. On the day of closing on the property, this enthusiastic group and the district had gathered enough funds so that the building was paid in full. Chartered at the General Assembly in 1989, attendance has now increased to 34. In the fall, portable Sunday school space was secured for \$8,000 — debt free. **Pastor Don Daniels** writes, "I can hardly wait to get to church to see what God will do for us. He still answers prayer. Maybe we need to pray more and talk less about new works."

PRAYERS ANSWERED FOR NEW FAMILY EACH MONTH:

Lebanon Valley Church of the Nazarene (Philadelphia District) was organized on April 16, 1989. **Pastor James Cox** says, "When we began holding services, we averaged in the mid- to upper-20s, and we prayed God would give us one family each month. God provided a family at least for every month through today and we are running in the 50s." He continues, "After a recent revival, I preached on spiritual leadership in the family. At the close of the service, four couples came forward to say, 'Yes, I want to be a better spiritual leader in my home.'"

THREE-YEAR-OLD LEADS MOTHER TO FAITH—MOTHER STARTS TWO NEW WORKS:

Toronto Gordonridge I and Gordonridge II (Canada Central District). Allison Garrett, of Toronto Main Street Church, invited Michelle, then three, to ride the church bus to Sunday school. The girl attended Sunday school and went home to tell her mother that her sick father would get well if the mother would go to church and pray. After a short period of time, Lisa, the mother, did just that and was soon converted. Now, several years later, Lisa started two new works which may grow into churches. Gordonridge I is an Extension Bible Class of 12 teens that began in September 1988 and meets every Wednesday evening at a friend's apartment. Gordonridge II is an Extension Sunday School Class of 30 that started in March 1989 and meets every Sunday afternoon. Lisa's testimony about what a child's understanding can do to help people come to Christ encouraged Rosewood Church to house the first Toronto Christian day care ministry.

719 FAMILIES ON MAILING LIST:

Folsom Lake Church of the Nazarene (Sacramento District) was organized on April 6, 1989, with **Guy Cooksey** as pastor. The church started with its first service on October 27, 1988, with 77 in attendance, using the "Phones for You" telemarketing system, which produced a mailing list of 719 families. Now the church's membership stands at 35. Pastor Cooksey says, "The church is here to stay. Although we meet in a day care center with limited visibility, we reach new people with our newsletter, newspaper advertising, and door-to-door calling in new neighborhoods. After doing all we know to do, we trust God to bring people through the doors."

JEFFERSON FUNERAL CHAPEL SITE OF NEW CHURCH:

Trussville New Life Church of the Nazarene (Alabama North District) held its first service on March 5, 1989, with 51 persons attending. The church was officially organized on July 16, 1989, with 24 charter members, 12 by profession of faith. For the first four months, the church met in the Jefferson Funeral Home Chapel until it was able to secure space in a business complex. Centerpoint Church of the Nazarene sponsored this infant church, and Nazarenes from the Birmingham Zone phoned thousands of homes, resulting in many prospects for the Trussville Church. At the time *GROW* went to press, **Pastor Joe McNulty** reported an average of 50 in morning worship, 32 members, and full self-support.

FOR THE MID-SIZE CHURCH PASTOR 100-250

Space is provided to keep important notes

INSTRUCTIONS & DIRECTIONS

Pastor/Leader faith and detail are called for now. Have you come to claim a faith scripture as your own? Do you believe God wants His church to grow? Do you believe He wants the church you lead to grow? Are you willing to pay the price for growth? Do you have the courage to face the challenges of growth?

PLANS

- [ ] We have scheduled this month a major planning and pre-paration session to make certain that we will be ready for growth period number 3.
- [ ] In order to achieve our attendance goal for this year we are making plans to try to start ----- new groups.
- [ ] Our prayer support is in place and stronger now than a year ago.
- [ ] I am willing to pay the price for my church to grow

MONTH		YEAR	
SUNDAY	MONDAY		
4 1st Sunday of Lent	5		
11 2nd Sunday of Lent Youth Service Teen Altar Service	12		
18 3rd Sunday of Lent	19		
25 4th Sunday of Lent Teen Altar Service	26		

NOTES

* The planning Committee consist of the following:
Jerry Pao, Emma Hall, Brad Brubaker, Paul Cable,
Sharon White and Duane Theodore

** Home Prayer Cells: Contact All Prayer Cell Leaders and set up a date to meet and discuss how the prayer groups are going.

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3
6 Bible Study NYI Counsel Mtg	7 Mid-Week Services and Other Activities	8	9	10
13 Bible Study Church Board Mtg	14	15		
20 Bible Study * Committee Mtg Planning & Pre-paration	21	22		
27 Bible Study Christian Life Board Meeting	28 Mid-Week Services and Activities	29 Home-Prayer Cells Reading Faith Building Book		

A
THREE-YEAR
CALENDAR
FOR
BREAKING

THE 200
BARRI
TEN STEPS TO
BREAKING
THE 200
BARRIER

Bill M. Sullivan

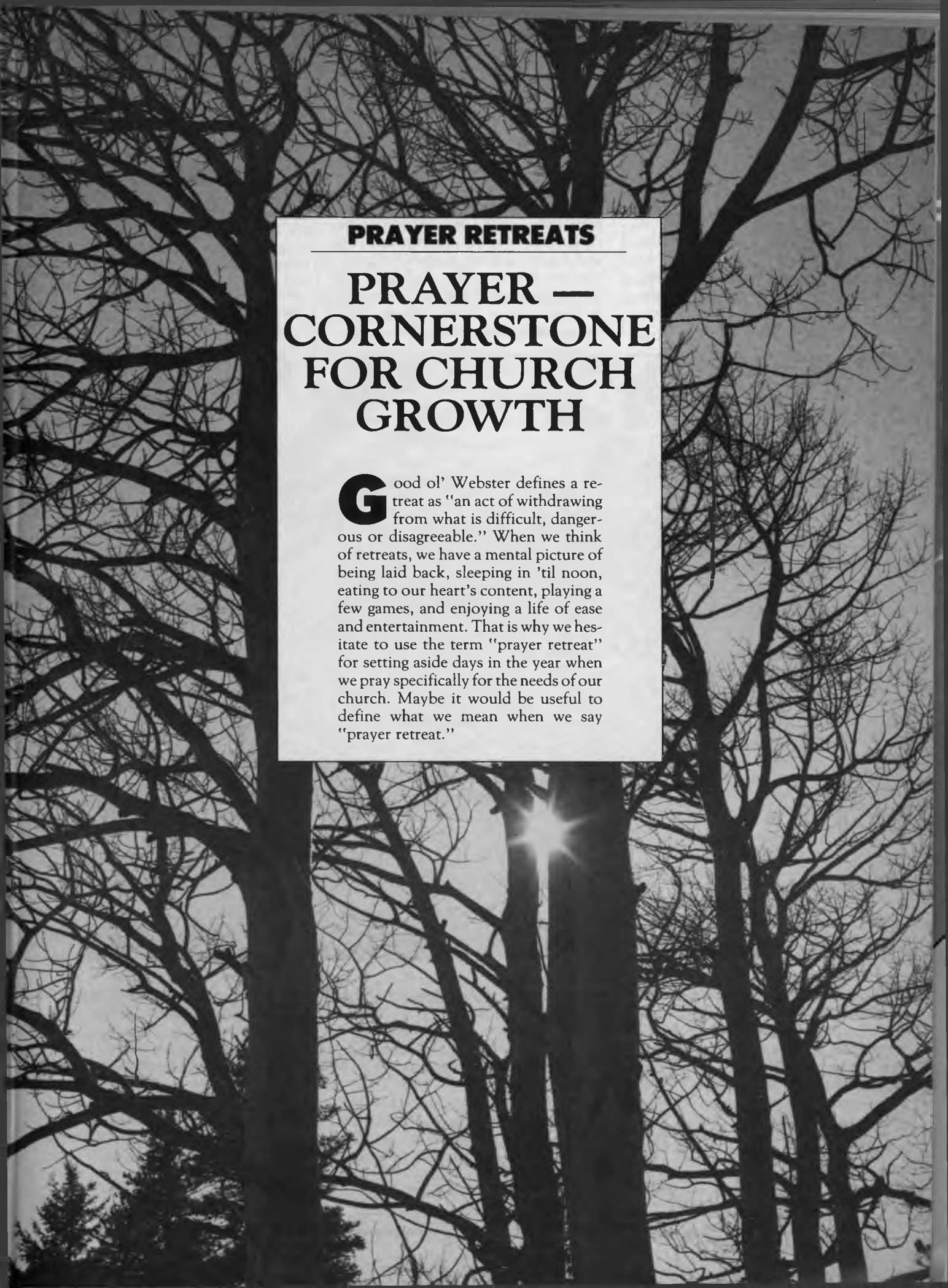
A THREE-YEAR CALENDAR

FOR

BREAKING THE 200 BARRIER

Ten steps to breaking the barrier

General and local church plans

A black and white photograph of bare trees with a bright sunburst effect in the center.

PRAYER RETREATS

PRAYER — CORNERSTONE FOR CHURCH GROWTH

Good ol' Webster defines a retreat as "an act of withdrawing from what is difficult, dangerous or disagreeable." When we think of retreats, we have a mental picture of being laid back, sleeping in 'til noon, eating to our heart's content, playing a few games, and enjoying a life of ease and entertainment. That is why we hesitate to use the term "prayer retreat" for setting aside days in the year when we pray specifically for the needs of our church. Maybe it would be useful to define what we mean when we say "prayer retreat."

PRAYER RETREATS

When we study the ministry of Jesus, we find that after He had spent much time with the people preaching, teaching, and doing the miraculous works of God, He would leave the crowds and go to a solitary place to pray. For Jesus, a prayer retreat meant withdrawing from the works of ministry to be renewed from His weariness and resourced for the next task.

Jesus considered it essential for His ministry. That causes me to believe it should be essential for our ministry.

When Moses was the "senior pastor" of the Israelites, his people could always tell when he had been "in the mountains" with God. Whenever he came back from his prayer retreat, he was glowing with the glory of the Lord. The people knew. They could also tell when it had been a long while since he had been on a prayer retreat. The longer Moses stayed out of the moun-

Why Have a Prayer Retreat?

"So the twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and we will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.' " (Acts 6:2-4)

Whether we realize it or not, the people in our churches would rather



The Garden of Gethsemane is no picture of rest and relaxation; rather, it is the picture of spiritual work. You will also notice that the disciples who were there with Jesus, although they loved doing the works of ministry, did not even make it one hour with Jesus in prayer.

What Is a Prayer Retreat?

A true prayer retreat is God-saturated time that is totally uninterrupted.

tains, the more he lost the glory of the Lord on his ministry.

The same principle is true today. Our leadership in the church is only made weaker when we have not had those times of prayer set aside to intercede on behalf of the people for forgiveness of sin, for power, for sanctification, and for the growth of the church. A prayer retreat is following Jesus' example of ministry in carrying out what we have been called to do.

we spend time in prayer for them than much of the "waiting on tables" that fills our schedules.

One of the ways we can fulfill this call to prayer is by scheduling "days of prayer" or prayer retreats where we follow the example of Jesus and get away to pray. The entire time should be spent in prayer away from the world. It should be a time of fasting from "the world" as well as from food. It is not a time for entertainment or even recrea-

PRAYER RETREATS

tion. This is our "mountain" time with God where there is no one but Him.

A prayer retreat is important because it serves three purposes:

1. **It changes the leader.** It renews his love for God. It gives him time to hear from God. It realigns his priorities and gives him new vision and direction. It improves his ministry and increases his love for people. He will know his people better, love them more, and serve them with more compassion.
2. **A prayer retreat changes lives.** Prayer does make a difference. People will be saved, marriages restored, and the sick made well. It gives opportunity to see direct answers to prayer.
3. **A prayer retreat honors God.** That is reason enough in itself! He looks forward to those times with us when He won't be interrupted by "stuff," even if it is good stuff.

Retreats are not the only time to pray. They are not substitutes for a life of prayer. However, the desire to retreat for extended special prayer times is created in our regular times of devotion and meditation.

Numerous passages of Scripture urge us to meditate on the Word. The Psalmist made it a practice. Elijah needed to hear the still, small voice in the quietness of waiting before God to find renewal. Our Lord urged His disciples to "come apart and rest awhile."

Church history gives impressive examples of believers who have devoted a great deal of time to meditation and contemplation for spiritual renewal. Many of us are latecomers in discovering the beauty and the benefits of such disciplines.

John Wesley meditated while riding his circuits. Dietrich Bonhoeffer required his seminarians at Finkenwalde to meditate a half-hour daily, saying, "I know the Holy Spirit in no other way than by hearing or reading the Word and by prayerful meditation. Every day in which I do not penetrate more deeply into the knowledge of God's Word is a lost day for me." (James C. Fenehagen, *More the Wanderers: Spirit-*

ual Disciplines for Christian Ministry, New York: The Seabury Press, 1981, page 42.)

Prayer life is a highly personal and private matter. There are secrets and treasures in prayer that must be discovered by each Christian alone. Books and papers on prayer may be helpful to a point, but there is no way to learn to pray effectively except to pray. Without exception, that learning process is a lonely business.

However, God intends for prayer to be both private and social. There are things that one can say to God alone—things one almost whispers even in private because they are between the Heavenly Father and one's own heart. And yet communion and togetherness show vividly in the pattern that Jesus gave for prayer. Even private prayers cannot escape the responsibility of relationships.



"Accountability" is a popular word in the current language of those who teach personal spiritual growth. Accountability means a deliberate choice to pray in community. This is to say we are to some extent answerable to other believers.

Accountability in one form or another has always had a large place in the mainstream of the church. John Wesley's many talents and accomplishments come to full flower in his commitment that sought to fold people into fellowship. All his converts were required to attend "class meetings." They were also welcome to join a "cell" group of five people. In these cells there was no leader, no lesson, but serious and loving concern and prayer. It is interesting that two-thirds of Wesley's converts opted not to participate in the cells.

It is not comfortable or easy for many of us to accept the concept of "accountability" in the matter of prayer. Pastors and leaders are used to holding other people accountable. An imposed or arbitrary accountability could only inhibit or restrict freedom and growth, love and joy, instead of fostering it.

But the fact remains, people need

fellowship in prayer. This matter of accountability is often the missing ingredient that could lower the "infant mortality rate" among new converts or be the life-saving source of strength to the most seasoned Christians. Pastors, too, need this accountability in prayer. Tragic episodes of "burnout" and even sadder moral lapses might well be avoided through the grace of accountability.

Some practical suggestions for moving toward a healthy accountability in prayer include:

HONESTY. It takes strength to look into the mirror and admit imperfections and weakness. Honesty is more than just telling the truth about facts and figures. Honesty is being willing to admit the possibility of finding help in praying for others. And the blessings of accountability come only to those who are willing to admit that they might need such help.

HUMILITY. Lack of humility is the biggest single impediment to spiritual growth. To accept the fact that others, even in different levels of understanding or from different "families" in the fellowship of faith, can have a genuine and vital relationship with Jesus Christ, and can be channels of God's blessing, can be the open door to new vistas of joy and growth.

OPENNESS. Openness is simply honesty carried into the world of relationships. There aren't many deliberate hypocrites in the ministry. But it is easy to fall into spiritual posturing, to almost unconsciously seek to appear more spiritually effective than one really is.

Openness needs a proper sense of the appropriate, of course. It is not simply "telling all," or washing one's linen in public, but it is the attitude in which accountability can begin to take place.

ADAPTABILITY. There are many ways in which spiritual accountability can be used and adapted in the relationships of the local church. Accountability can be shared with staff or board members in scheduled prayer meetings.

—by Wilbur W. Brannon

Additional information about prayer retreats and the Flame (Fashioning Leadership Authority for Mission Engagement) leadership material can be obtained from Pastoral Ministries in the Church Growth Division at Nazarene Headquarters, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

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—Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary

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*Bioethics and
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HARVEST REPORTS



THIRTY-FIVE CHURCHES GAIN 50 OR MORE MEMBERS

During the 1989 church year, the following churches gained 50 or more members:

<u>CHURCH</u>	<u>GAIN</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>DISTRICT</u>
Olathe College	114	Paul Cunningham	Kansas City
Lake Worth New Life	112	Dorsanvil Gracius	Southern Florida
Fremont Central	110	Robert Denham	Northern California
Orlando Metro West	86	David Vaughn	Central Florida
Columbus Northwest	81	Clyde Barnhart	Central Ohio
Fort Worth Metroplex	80	James Garlow	West Texas
Bethany First	80	Melvin McCullough	Northwest Oklahoma
Long Beach First	80	John Calhoun	Anaheim
Glendale	73	Hylyard Irvin	Arizona
Kansas City First	72	Keith Wright	Kansas City
Seattle Aurora	71	Tharon Daniels	Washington Pacific
Wichita First	69	Eugene Williams	Kansas
Oklahoma City First	69	Stanley Toler	Northwest Oklahoma
Mission Valley	69	Daniel Copp	Southern California
New Life Community	68	Larry Pitcher	Los Angeles
Tucson Oro Valley	67	Michael Page	Arizona
Pasadena First	67	H. B. London, Jr.	Los Angeles
Dobson Ranch	66	Mark Fuller	Arizona
Carroll Gloryland	66	Charles Williams	Central Ohio
St. Petersburg Kennet	64	Paul Tyler	Central Florida
Melbourne First	64	Talbott Denny	Florida Space Coast
Portland First	61	Gary Henecke	Oregon Pacific
Tucson Mountain View	60	Robert Shephard	Arizona
Quitman	59	Donald Boyd, Sr.	Mississippi
Dumont Living Word	59	Frank Bolella	New York
Valley Stream Korean	59	Jong Kim	New York
Marion First	53	David Wilson	North Central Ohio
Spring Hill Calvary	52	Michael Quimby	Central Florida
Warren Woods	51	James Mellish	Eastern Michigan
Nashville First	51	Millard Reed	Tennessee
Sparks First	51	Herbert Ireland	Sacramento
Glendale Korean Community	50	Young Lee	Los Angeles
Virginia Beach First	50	Gene Tanner	Virginia
Hialeah	50	Mel Santiesteban	Southern Florida
Palm Bay	50	Stuart Rowan	Florida Space Coast

12-Year Harvest of Growth at Harvester Church



**KINGDOM DREAMS
REALLY DO
COME TRUE —**

**through
the eyes of
Pastor Gene Grate**

Rev. Gene Grate, 39, first pastor of the growing Harvester Church of the Nazarene near St. Louis, started his ministry as founding pastor of this developing congregation on May 7, 1978 — the same year he was ordained. Earlier, he served the Lodi, Missouri, church for two years following his 1976 graduation from Nazarene Theological Seminary.

Twelve years ago, Grate, along with his wife, Ronoyce, and baby daughter, Gena, met with a group of Nazarenes who had moved to the Harvester area, west of St. Louis. This band of believers, though still driving twenty to thirty miles to St. Louis to attend area churches, felt a burden for a new church closer to home so they could more effectively minister to neighbors, nearby friends of the community, plus their own children and teens. They also dreamed of a church where they could be more involved without a long commute for every service.

Soon the church plant with 32 charter members began in a Kinder-Care Center with no piano, no hymnals, no Sunday school literature, but with a dream and a desire to establish an effective holiness witness in their community.

Those who helped plant Harvester Church — some second- and third-generation Nazarenes — were prepared to pay any price to establish a vital church. In addition to hard work, obedient stewardship and steadfast faith, the Harvester Church enjoyed the rippling effect of solid Nazarene ministry from the greater St. Louis area. Pastor Gene Grate recounts the inspiring record . . .



“Church Planting dreams really do come true! Though May 7, 1978, was an overcast morning, the weather went mostly unnoticed for those who gathered to start a new church in a day-care center in an unincorporated community called Harvester. On that Sunday, our new congregation met for the first time with the conviction that God brought us together. Anticipation charged the atmosphere as worshipers arrived, parked in a crowded lot, and greeted one another in a strange facility that would be our worship meeting place for the next twelve months.

By being a part of this new group, each person left the security of comfortable sanctuaries, established fellowships and vibrant ministries. Yet into the uncertainties of such a pioneer adventure, everyone brought a dream of what God could do through combined commitments. Rev. Arthur Mottram, then Missouri district superintendent, led the opening service, preached the first message, and officially organized the church. Ronoyce, Gena and I were introduced as the newly appointed parsonage family.

The service was unforgettable as we experienced God’s assuring presence. Something wonderful took place; some said it felt like electricity as worshipers experienced a sense of mission. Each one knew this was the beginning of a special work for the Kingdom of God. Since that historic Sunday twelve years ago, we have experienced a journey of unspeakable joy, challenging faith, and fulfilled dreams. We have joined hearts and hands to build a community of caring people who make a difference in our world.

First Birthday: Victories continued from the first Sunday. We moved into a rented Seventh Day Adventist Church building on our first birthday. It was a celebration milestone of all God had helped us accomplish in one year.

The next month, June 1979, only thirteen months after the first service, the congregation purchased 16 acres of land in a densely populated area — the dream for a great church was taking shape. A building committee was organized and started meeting with a local architect and builder, both Nazarenes, to flesh out ideas for an adequate, affordable building to enable the church to minister to their own and the growing community.



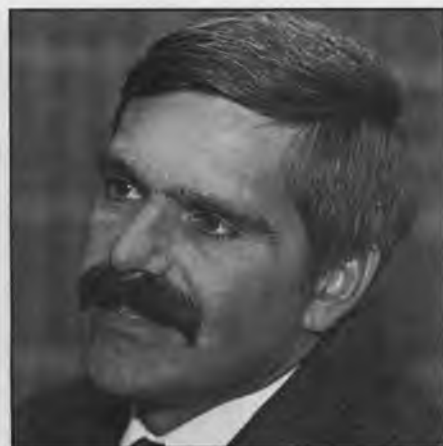
"I found spiritual help on a Work and Witness trip. I love this church because everyone takes an interest in you — makes you feel special."

—JIM VANCE
CARPENTER



"Our church grows because we have a pastor with vision for the work and the ability to lead."

—LILLY DAVIS
RETIRED SCHOOL TEACHER



"This area is really growing. I can see us overflowing this building and going out with other satellite churches."

—DENNIS TALLEY
PLUMBER

During this time, a study was conducted to determine who this new congregation was, who they wanted to become, and who they were trying to reach. This research showed that our developing congregation was an accurate reflection of the community — active families with younger children and teens at home. Therefore, the committee designed and constructed a 13,300-square-foot, multipurpose building which housed a 250-seat sanctuary, a half gym, 7,200 square feet of education space, two offices, an adequate kitchen, and a paved parking lot. The congregation shared in another victory celebration when we moved in on August 16, 1981. Two weeks later, the building was dedicated by General Superintendent Jerald Johnson. Faith became sight as our dream took the shape of blocks, mortar, boards, and nails.

Unity and constructive change:

The congregation continued to grow in unity and numbers. Ministries were designed and refined to meet the needs of the congregation and to be attractive to the unchurched. As the church grew, the dynamics of congregational life-

style changed as needed. As a people, we learned that church growth inevitably means constructive change.

All of us worked to embrace new ideas, to begin new ministries, to risk failures, and to make structural or organizational adjustments. Maintaining the message of holiness, while being willing to change methods, is an important ingredient in our positive growth pattern.

In the summer of 1985, seven years after organization, the church again experienced the 80% principle in sanctuary seating, just as we did in 1981. People felt crowded, and the church board reactivated the building committee to begin planning for additional expansion. By January 1986, the tracks were in place for this expansion to run on. The next stage expanded the sanctuary into the half-gym area, creating an additional 90 seats. This step was viewed as a temporary measure to allow for growth in attendance until an adequate sanctuary could be constructed.

Stewardship: Simultaneous with this expansion, the congregation employed a capital stewardship company

to train our people for a full-scale stewardship campaign. This effort started in March and ended on June 1 of 1986; commitments totaling \$750,000 were to be paid over a three-year period. This great achievement for the church also produced spiritual victories for individuals as many trusted God in bold faith for resources for unusual giving. New lay leadership emerged and the financial resources were available to construct the new sanctuary.

Later that summer, the congregation turned again to the same architect and contractor to put our dreams into plans for the next phase of congregational development. By the spring of 1987, the plans were complete and local construction financing secured. So the new project began in July 1987.

Tenth anniversary: Again faith took visible form as foundations were laid and walls were erected during the fall and early winter. The dreams, begun in a small day-care center in 1978, unfolded before our eyes. On April 10, 1988, we held our first service in the new 600-seat sanctuary — what a day of rejoicing!

Just two weeks later, the church



"I have been the pastor's neighbor for eight years. I came here because of the care and love everybody gives each other."

—LARRY TAYLOE
CHECK PRINTER



"This church is a perfect example of a modern miracle. I was here from the beginning and plan to stay until I die."

—LES WARD
RETIRED SCHOOL TEACHER



"We have an excellent pastor who places people in the proper assignments at the right time."

—BEN BLANTON
GENERAL CONTRACTOR

celebrated her 10th anniversary with a weekend revival with General Superintendent William Greathouse. On Sunday, nearly 500 church, community, and Missouri Nazarene friends joined us in praise to God as we dedicated the new building.

The 19,000-square-foot sanctuary/education/office facility was constructed \$100,000 below bid. The total acreage and facilities recently appraised for a value-in-use of \$2,000,000.

Dreams in the morning: Now the dream continues as we create addi-

tional ministries for a growing, changing congregation and expand lay ministries. To reach one dream is to see another dream, and to fulfill a vision is to see another challenge. God, far from being finished with the Harvester Church, calls us to "press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13-14)."

For twelve years, the Harvester Church has enjoyed continuous growth. The dream of expanded ministry is

alive. Our people intentionally assimilate newcomers and incorporate them into active ministries. Our congregation keeps dreaming the dream again with new people who become part of our fellowship.

The romance of ministry still lives, and our original vision remains clear. Consequently, our mission challenges us more than ever. Harmony prevails among our people, and holiness continues as our central message. And yes, under God, dreams keep coming true at Harvester Church."



THE RECORD SPEAKS

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Increases</u>
Members	103	226	+123
Sunday School	134	232	+ 98
Worship Attendance	154	247	+ 93
New Nazarenes			+ 89
Giving—all purposes	\$138,013	\$428,877	+\$290,864

NOTHING ISN'T IN GRAY, IT'S IN BLACK AND WHITE

2 Corinthians 8:7





ROOTED IN CHRIST

— Personal Growth Helps for Leaders —

LOVE is The Greatest

WEEK ONE

THE LOVE CONNECTION WITH LOST PEOPLE

"For God so loved the world that He gave His . . . Son" (John 3:16)

Proudly he told me about his latest evangelistic mission to Mexico. He and a friend distributed a ton and a half of gospel tracts. In one weekend. By air. Over isolated mountain villages. I wondered how those poor villagers felt about that effort, which could aptly be described as the "Gospel Littering Crusade."

If spreading the gospel by radio, television, tracts, books, and tapes were effective, then it seems to me that our nation should have been won to Christ at least thirteen times over by now! Unfortunately, it is not that easy.

Even as God came to us in Christ, so we too must take the risk of building relationships with lost people. Few are won to Jesus until they get close enough to a real live Christian to sense the warmth of accepting love, to see the tear of concern in the eye, and to feel the supporting arm embracing them. The bottom line is: *there is no evangelism apart from relationships!*

WEEK TWO

THE CRY OF THE LOST — PLEASE LOVE ME

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you" (John 13:34)

While curled up on the couch one winter's evening, my four-year-old daughter took a flying leap and landed in my lap. My book fell to the floor. My glasses were knocked askew. Before I could react with an appropriate fatherly rebuke, she threw her little arms around my neck, kissed me on the cheek and said, "Daddy, will you please love me?"

Every man and woman born of Adam's race are asking but one question: "Is there anybody who will love me?" And every child, teen, and adult within the reach of our church are asking but one question: "Is there anybody who will love me?" Psychiatrist Thomas Morton observes, "There just isn't enough love in the world to go around. If there were, I would be out of a job!"

Ask this question: "Why do you go to this church?" Rarely will the answer have to do with doctrine, program, or preaching. Invariably the response will be, "They care about me here." The secret of evangelism and church growth is to be found, in large measure, in how well we fulfill Christ's one new commandment to "love one another."

WEEK THREE

LOVE: EVANGELISM'S INDISPENSABLE FORCE

Dr. Richard Selzer, neurosurgeon, tells about his friendship with Gerald in *Letters To A Young Doctor*. Selzer cannot remember just when or how he began to have lunch with Gerald, a cafeteria worker, every Tuesday. Yet he was drawn to this mildly retarded elf-like little man of 31, only 4'6" tall, weighing 78 pounds, with pointed little elf-like ears, and who suffered a severe speech impediment.

Gerald had an infectious laugh and a spontaneous joy which often lifted the doctor's spirits. Gerald loved stories, especially those about people rescued from the abyss of death by the heroic efforts of doctors and nurses. Sometimes Dr. Selzer would bring a medical book to lunch with him, and Gerald would become enthralled with the pictures as the doctor explained to him what was going on. Occasionally he would take Gerald to a top-drawer restaurant for lunch.

"I did not see Gerald for a month," writes Selzer, "because I had undertaken to teach a noon-hour class. Nor did I see him the next month because I went on vacation. When I came back, it was to find that Gerald had been admitted to the hospital with pneumonia the week before. Within three days, he was dead. I went to visit his mother."

"'Gerald missed you,' she said. 'He just pined away.'" Selzer concludes, "You must never run out on an elf, or hurt an elf's feelings. To an elf, such a wound is invariably fatal."

WEEK FOUR

TOUCHABLE LOVE

"And moved with compassion, He stretched out His hand and touched him" (Mark 1:41)

What was shocking to those original witnesses was that Jesus touched a leper! Hideous, repulsive, contagious, and terminally ill. Dr. Paul Brand, who has spent a lifetime doing reconstructive surgery for lepers, stated that what lepers crave, more than anything else, is the human touch. They feel so isolated. So cut off from intimate human contact.

And so do the lepers that lurk in the shadows of our communities and churches: the homeless, the destitute, the divorced, the bankrupt, the fired, the alcoholics, the homosexuals, the handicapped, the mentally retarded . . . all those who make us feel so awkward when we are around them.

Dr. Dennis Kinlaw tells about a friend who was led to visit an AIDS victim to share Christ. The doctors insisted that he put on a mask, gloves, and full gown to protect himself. As he donned his gear, he sensed the separation that the safety equipment signified. Off went the suit. Instead, he laid his bare hand on the bare flesh of the victim and quietly said, "I have come to tell you that God loves you and I do too."

"It is little wonder," observed Kinlaw, "that the patient opened himself both to my friend and to Christ."

WEEK FIVE

LOVE AS BIG AS THE WORLD

"Come unto me, all who are weary and heavy-laden . . ." (Matthew 11:28)

Jesus said, "Come." And we do too, as a matter of course. Or do we really? Does an alcoholic feel welcomed? Now that the smoker, surprisingly, has become the new leper in most public sectors of society, does he feel the doors of our churches shut even tighter than ever?

How about the physically handicapped? Do our church steps, hall-

ways, and restrooms make them feel welcome? And how about the mentally retarded? Are we embarrassed by their presence? Do we encourage their "main-lining" into the fellowship of our church? Just these four groups alone number well over 130 million people in our country. Half of our population! All of whom are "weary and heavy-laden" indeed!

How about single adults who comprise 46% of our adult population? Where do they fit into a "family-oriented" church? How do they feel when they see references, in almost every church newsletter, to "family potlucks," "couples' retreats," and "bring your spouse"?

In the light of Jesus' invitation, these questions haunt me. Do they trouble you?

WEEK SIX

LOVE WITHOUT ANY STRINGS

"But Barnabas took hold of Paul and brought him to the apostles . . ." (Acts 9:27)

. . . and it scared the apostles to death! Then and now, it is difficult for "insiders" to accept certain "outsiders," especially if they have an unsavory reputation or have yet to adopt Christian lifestyle standards.

Such was Steve when I first met him. Alcoholic. Disheveled. Wouldn't look me in the eye. But a believer, nevertheless. Serious enough to drive 55 miles each way to church — that is, when he was not on a binge.

I heard that Steve could sing like a bird. I asked him to sing in church. On a Sunday morning. He did. Could he ever sing! And did I ever hear about it! Nevertheless, a tight group of men joined me in simply loving and accepting Steve just as he was. We rejoiced with him when he prayed for deliverance, and wept with him when he relapsed.

I will always treasure a letter I received from him just before I moved from the church: "Thank you, pastor, for believing in me, accepting me, and supporting me even when I had alcohol on my breath. I am proud to tell you that I haven't had one drop to drink in over a year now. God has delivered me. To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

Are you "Barnabas" to anyone?

WEEK SEVEN

LOVE FORGIVES EVERYTHING

"But Jesus was saying, Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34)

He pulled off to the side of the road at a curve. He told me about that fateful Sunday morning when he and his family were on their way to Sunday school. A drunk came around the corner and slammed into his car at the door post. His oldest son was killed instantly. One daughter died soon after and the other sustained severe injuries that required multiple operations. He, his wife and youngest son were unhurt.

It is what happened after this all-too-common tragedy that is "uncommon." Rather than retaliating against the man who had just wiped out nearly half his family, he forgave him. He visited him in prison and eventually led him to Christ. He took care of his wife and children when the man was incarcerated, and got them started in church. Upon his release, he helped him find a job. The net result was that the whole family was redeemed for Christ and restored to a productive alcohol-free life.

Now that is God's kind of love! And that is the kind of love which makes an indelible impact upon all those touched by it. That layman's surviving son is a Nazarene missionary today.

WEEK EIGHT

LOVE'S DEPTH VISION

"He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him" (Isaiah 53:2)

Her name was Marian. the first Sunday School teacher I can remember. I was eight or nine. She was a teenager. I thought she was the most beautiful woman in the world—especially her large dark eyes. I thought they were the eyes of Jesus.

Thirty years later I visited my home town for the first time since moving away as a child. I looked her up. She greeted me warmly. I was not prepared for the shock. Her appearance had changed drastically. Her eyes: what had happened to them?

Later I told my father about seeing Marian again. I said, "Dad, something terrible has happened to her eyes since I was a kid. She has become severely

crosseyed!" My father looked at me over his glasses and said, "She always was!"

When somebody loves you, you never notice such superficial matters as physical deformities. It is not that love is blind, but that love sees deep! Love overcomes the world!

WEEK NINE

LOVE NEVER RETALIATES

"Never pay back evil for evil to anyone . . . do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:17-21)

A Seattle school teacher bought a Kit Kat candy bar and a newspaper on a Seattle ferry. She laid the candy bar next to her on the bench and began to read the paper. Later she reached down for her candy bar. It was not there. The man sitting next to her had opened it and had taken a bite out of it.

Incensed, she grabbed it out of his hand, picked up her paper, and marched off to the other side of the ferry. The longer she thought about it, the angrier she got. Just as she walked around the corner, she ran into the same man who was holding a freshly purchased hamburger. She grabbed it out of his hand, took a bite out of it, gave it back to him, and then stomped off. While waiting for the line of cars to begin moving off the ferry, she opened her purse to get her compact out. And there it was. Her Kit Kat candy bar!

Retaliation often misfires. And it always damages relationships. Jesus' way is the way of forgiveness, of agape love. Jesus would rather die than retaliate. And He did! Forgiveness liberates the offender and heals the offended. It is the most emotionally, mentally, and spiritually therapeutic power in the world.

WEEK TEN

DISCRIMINATION HURTS EVERYONE

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11)

Born a Hindu, raised in India, graduated from law school in England, he began his practice among the large Indian community in South Africa. Having come into contact with some Christians who gave him a New Testament, he fell in love with the Jesus he read about in the Gospels.

Having heard so much about a popular Christian evangelist by the name of

C. F. Andrews, he went to hear him. He was met at the door of the Dutch Reformed Church who refused him admittance. His skin was the wrong color.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones, missionary statesman to India and longtime friend of Gandhi, concludes: "Racialism has many sins to bear, but perhaps the worst sin was the obscuring of Christ in an hour when one of the greatest souls born of woman was making his decision."

WEEK ELEVEN

LOVE TAKES EVERYONE IN

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28)

It all started with a simple act of human graciousness. Newly appointed as an Anglican priest to South Africa, Trevor Huddleston respectfully tipped his hat to a black woman in a black shanty-town near Johannesburg. The woman's son had never seen a white man do that. He sought out the priest. They became friends.

Hospitalized for tuberculosis in 1953, Huddleston visited his black friend every day. For twenty months! Greatly impressed, the young man became a confessing Christian, was baptized, went to Seminary, and followed his friend into the Anglican ministry.

Most of us have never heard of Trevor Huddleston, now an Anglican Bishop in South Africa. But all of us have heard of his convert: Nobel Peace Prize winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Oh, the incomprehensible power of nondiscriminatory love!

WEEK TWELVE

LOVE'S POWERFUL EFFECT

"'And they shall call His name Immanuel,' which translated means, 'God with us'" (Matthew 1:23)

A college student fell madly in love with a beautiful girl. Unfortunately it was right at the end of the academic year. He had time for only one big date. He proposed. She demurred. Undaunted, he resolved to pursue her all summer, even though they would be at opposite ends of the country. He wrote her a letter every day. Without fail.

And it worked! At summer's end, she married . . . the postman.

If we would draw people to Christ, we cannot love them in absentia. Even as God did not redeem us by long distance but came among us in Christ, so we too must pay the price of building intimate, personal, and long-term relationships with those who need Christ. We read, "and many tax-gatherers and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples" (Mark 2:15). We too must take the risk of extending warm, non-judgmental, and accepting love to those outside the Kingdom if they are to be drawn to the Master. The Gospel is not so much taught as it is caught.

WEEK THIRTEEN

LOVE: THE BASIC INGREDIENT OF EVANGELISM

"... the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13)

The essence of the Gospel is love. The motivation for evangelism must be love. The secret to winning people to Christ is love. The key to discipling them and incorporating them into the body of Christ is love. We can do no better, as we conclude this series of devotional studies, than quote one of history's greatest evangelists and most effective church builders, John Wesley, who affirmed:

It is well you should be thoroughly sensible of this, "The heaven of heavens is love." There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything more than love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way, and when you are asking others, "Have you received this or that blessing?" if you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth chapter of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom. (*Works*, XI, "Plain Account," p. 430)

by C. S. Cowles



Mission Achievement i

Pastor C 17 Years o in Metro St. L

**BIBLE WAY
HOUSED IN REMOD**



Syncopated soul music by congregation and choir expresses heartfelt gratitude to God for the church's spiritual leader. Hands are lifted in praise. A bass guitar, an electronic keyboard, tambourines, and a high-watt sound system enhance each musical note as three choirs — children, youth, and adults — contribute their talents to help bless the service.

Greetings from neighboring clergy, march love offerings and testimonials by church friends all add to the festivities. The congregation receives the Word of God joyfully from a visiting preacher. Enthusiasm runs very high as the family of God celebrates their pastor's long, faithful service to Bible Way Church.

For 17 years, since 1972, Pastor and Mrs. Nelson Hurn have led the Bible Way Church of the Nazarene in metropolitan St. Louis. The church meets in a supermarket converted into an attractive, useful sanctuary for 350 people.



St. Louis and Beyond

celebrates Ministry opolitan ouis

CHURCH ED SUPERMARKET

The building also contains classrooms, pastor's study, and a comfortable apartment for the Hurns. Contrary to many inner-city churches, Bible Way has ample parking left over from the earlier commercial use of their building.

The neighborhood is made up of a combination of older apartment buildings and single-family residences; some have had extensive urban renewal. Both the blessings and blight of city living can be observed near the church.

Under Pastor Hurn's leadership, Bible Way Church has grown to 287 members, having received more than 100 members during the last three years. The Sunday school now averages 145 annually, and the morning worship attendance is 177. The church is involved in a variety of urban ministry efforts and has an active youth department. Through his camera lenses, photographer Michael Lewis shows us the 17th Anniversary Celebration honoring the Hurns.



Classic Volumes

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CONFERENCE THEME: The Church Meeting Human Need

TOM NEES IS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Tom Nees, introduced by Church Growth Division Director Bill M. Sullivan as the symbolic Nazarene compassionate ministries leader in the United States and Canada, served as the keynote speaker for the Compassionate Ministries Conference in Kansas City on November 3-5, 1989. Sullivan explained that responsibility for compassionate ministries in the United States and Canada has been assigned to the Church Growth Division by the denomination. The Division administers 20% of the funds Nazarenes give for this purpose.

In response to the call of God, Nees resigned the pastorate of the Washing-

ton, D.C., First Church of the Nazarene to establish the Community of Hope in

**"The growing passion
for compassionate
ministries is a
movement led by
the Holy Spirit."**

—Tom Nees

1975. In his presentation, Nees said justification and rationale are no longer



Dr. Tom Nees, founder, director and pastor of Community of Hope, Washington, D.C.: keynote speaker and symbolic leader of compassionate ministry among Nazarenes.



Conference Planners Dr. Bill M. Sullivan, Dr. Al Truesdale, and Dr. Steve Weber: confer on details before opening session.



General Superintendent Raymond Hurn calls conference to prayer: Church Growth Division Director Bill M. Sullivan and Dr. Tom Nees join conference participants in prayer.



Michael J. Christensen leads a workshop: and explains the ministry of Golden Gate Community in San Francisco.



David Wheeler, Operation Care, Portland, Oregon: discusses shelter for the homeless in transition homes.



Bryon Stone shares his vision: for Liberation Community at Fort Worth, Texas.

"The Church Growth Division has been given responsibility for compassionate ministries in the United States and Canada and administers 20% of all church funds given for this purpose."

—Bill M. Sullivan



Dean Cowles shares his dream: for Shepherd Community in Indianapolis.

needed for compassionate ministry among Nazarenes. He called the growing passion for compassionate ministries a movement being led by the Holy Spirit and springing up in usual places. Nees expressed a conviction that generosity for one part of the church's mission never robs money from another part. He explained there is enough money and energy to support the global Nazarene vision for both overseas missions and compassionate needs in North America.

"The first service of a Holy Ghost-baptized church is to the poor."

—Phineas F. Bresee

Approximately 350 persons participated in this Second Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Conference in Overland Park, Kansas. The conference, planned especially for students, focused on the theme "The Church Meeting Human Need." Other persons attending the conference included pastors, lay leaders, district superintendents, educators, headquarters personnel, and compassionate ministry prac-

tioners. It was interesting to observe how many persons now leading various compassionate ministries participated as students at the first conference held four years earlier.

Plenary speakers included Ron Benefiel, senior pastor of Los Angeles First Church; Timothy Smith, professor of history at Johns Hopkins University; and Cheryll Sanders, professor at Howard School of Divinity. Larry Lott, senior pastor of the Kansas City Blue Hills Community Church of the Nazarene, was the preacher for the worship service.

"The plenary speakers were prophetic," observed Al Truesdale, academic dean at Nazarene Theological Seminary and one of the organizers of the conference. Truesdale also praised the workshop leaders for the quality and professionalism of their presentations. There were 16 workshops dealing with topics ranging from AIDS and health care to addictive and abusive behavior. Other workshops discussed job training, housing the homeless, networking with other churches, and the relationship between social compassion and personal salvation.



Pastor Larry Lott, pastor of Kansas City Blue Hills Community Church of the Nazarene, preaching during the Sunday service.

Compassionate Ministries Conference 1989 sounds like a fulfillment of Bresee's insightful words: "The first service of a Holy Ghost-baptized church is to the poor; its ministry is to those who are lowest down; its gifts are for those who need them the most. As the Spirit was upon Jesus to preach the gospel to the poor, so His Spirit is upon His servants for the same purpose." In many places, the work of compassion moves forward at an amazing speed in Jesus' name as Nazarenes respond in increasing numbers with love, trust, time, and treasure.



Lois Smith, director of health services at Community of Hope, Washington, D.C., leads a workshop.



Blue Hills Community Church choir leads in worship.



Professor Cheryll Sanders, Howard Divinity School, Washington, D.C., and physician Gary Morsch of Olathe, Kansas, share insights. Dr. Sanders was plenary speaker on Saturday night.

HAS YOUR CHURCH *STRUCK* *OUT?*

According to pastors' reports, more than 700 **LOCAL CHURCHES** have shared more than 13,000,000 spendable dollars that came into their coffers through bequests in wills over the last four years.

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THE SHEPHERD'S

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

CALLING GROWING PASTORS

A New Approach in Developing Pastor/ Church Relationships

Getting a call from a church can be exciting. We think of the new possibilities! It could be timely in escaping from old problems. There would be different people, fresh beginnings, stimulating challenges, another cultural setting. It might mean better schools for our children, welcome climate for our health, or an increase in family income.

Whatever may be said about receiving a call from another church we have to admit it feels good to be

wanted. We may be wondering how much we are appreciated where we are and how much we are accomplishing in our ministry. We may be tempted to make the change for very weak if not wrong reasons.

The 1989 General Assembly took a major step in helping pastors and churches get off to a good start in establishing the kind of relationships that could make for stability and growth. At the time of the initial call there will be understandings reached based on information exchanged by the church board and prospective pastor prior to and during an interview process.

These understandings are written down on a form or in a letter and provide the basis of the church's mission statement. The relationship of the new pastor and the church is strengthened when they commit themselves to a shared understanding of God's will uniquely suited for them in their ministry setting.

If the pastor accepts the call of the church, a "Bonding Service" (a service of installation) is to take place as early as possible. Ideally, it should be the pastor's first service with the people.

The district superintendent or someone he designates will be in charge and may bring the message. To bring a sense of bonding between the pastor and congregation the pastor might recount the way God confirmed this move as His will. In response a highly respected layperson may give a brief historical statement on the church and their vision for the future at this juncture.

This bonding service is designed to engage the pastor and people in a covenant with God and with each other. The covenant expresses the responsibilities each has to the other and all have to God for accomplishing the mission of the church. A prayer of consecration with pastor and people around the altar would be an appropriate way to climax the service.

The new *Manual* requires a "Self-study" at the end of a two-year period. However, it is to the benefit of the pastor as well as to the church to review and revise the written understandings and the covenant or mission statement between 90 to 180 days after the new pastor is installed. The pastor will have insights not possible when he first

came. The church board will look at the pastor in a way different from when they first gave the initial call.

The relationship between the pastor and church will again be benefited if they look at their covenant objectives and mission statement around the one-year anniversary date. Actually, this should be good preparation for the two-year self-study required by *Manual* to which the district superintendent is invited and may participate.

Another significant part of this process of building enduring and positive relationships is the time of "The Regular Pastoral Review." It takes place in a 121-day window, which is 60 days on either side of the second anniversary date of the pastor's initial call. The review is not to be only on the pastor. Rather it is a review of the relationship between the pastor and church and their progress toward their goals and objectives agreed on.

Our former procedures have been quite casual at the front end of the pastor/church relationships. But in the process of taking many things for granted in the beginning of our tenure it was easy to build our ministry on untenable assumptions. The lack of understanding at the time of the initial call too often erupted in severe disappointment.

In this new approach the call to take seriously our responsibility in establishing and developing strong relationships is a call to grow. We don't work through problems and resolve differences without growing spiritually and emotionally. Too often pastors have run from their problems either by not having a vote or by denying any responsibility for a bad vote.

The new procedures offer the pastor and church the opportunity to work together in solving problems and resolving differences for their mutual growth and effectiveness to the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom. As pastors we are brought into accountability in an environment that can be creative and redemptive, mutually upbuilding.

St. Paul states, "Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him, who is the Head, that is, Christ" (Eph. 4:15). The call of God is a call to grow. So the call of the church is to a growing pastor!



Wilbur W. Brannon
Pastoral Ministries Director

Course of Study Update . . .

1989 HANDBOOK ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES NOW AVAILABLE

The *Handbook on Ministerial Studies* has been updated to reflect the legislative action of the 1989 General Assembly. Pay special attention to the new supervised field education requirements. **HMS 442.6** states:

"Supervised Field Education. In addition to the educational requirements for each method of preparation a student will fulfill a minimum supervised field education requirement. This requirement may be met by using one of the following methods:

1. Supervised field education experience noted on a college/seminary transcript.
2. A one year's experience on a staff in a local church under the supervision of an approved minister.
3. Completing the Ministry Internship program provided by Pastoral Ministries.
4. Certified supervisory ministry practice components in a variety of courses.

"Evidence of satisfactory work completed in the supervised field education experience will be submitted to the Ministerial Studies Board for evaluation . . . The student may use the syllabi of the instructor and/or supervisor

or completed assignments, covenants, projects, and reflection papers kept for evaluation."

You may secure a copy of the Handbook by writing: Nazarene Publishing House, P.O. Box 419527, Kansas City, MO 64141.

NEW INTERACTIVE COURSE OF STUDY VIDEOS PLANNED

In addition to those courses already completed, plans are being made to begin production on *Exploring Christian Holiness*, Vol II, *Exploring the Old Testament*, and *Exploring Christian Holiness*, Vol. III.

The video presentation is divided into sixteen 15-minute segments. The on-screen instructor guides the students through the material that accompanies the tape. After viewing all sixteen segments and completing the specified reading and study exercises the students are ready to take an exam especially prepared for the video course.

Courses already available are: *Exploring the New Testament*, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, *Exploring Our Christian Faith*, *Alive in Christ*, *Church History in Plain Language*, and *Introduction to Homiletics*.

Contact Pastoral Ministries for costs and order information.

BOOK CHANGES

The following reading book has been deleted:

Steps to the Sermon, by H. C. Brown, Elder, Level II, No. 124d.

The following reading books have been added:

Ministerial Leadership in a Managerial World, by Bruce Jones, all tracks, Level I, Nos. 115d, 215d, 315d, 415d.

Introduction to Christian Theology, by H. Orton Wiley and Paul T. Culbertson, all tracks, Level III, Nos. 132e, 232e, 332e, 432e.

A Breath of Fresh Air, by Richard Spindle, Deacon-Christian Education, Level IV, No. 245d.

The following reading books are out-of-print:

Proclaiming the Truth, by Donald Demaray, Elder, Level IV, No. 144d.

Youth Education in the Church, by Roy Zuck and Warren Benson, Deacon-Christian Education, Level IV, No. 244a.

In the Land of the Living, by Karin Granberg Michaelson, Deacon-Compassionate Ministries, Level IV, No. 345d.

Contact Pastoral Ministries for their replacements.



RESOURCES NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH NPH

The *Ministry Internship* and the **F-L-A-M-E** material is now available through Nazarene Publishing House.

If you are a new pastor interested in building a stronger ministry through the wisdom and experience of a mentor, the *Ministry Internship* program is for you.

The **F-L-A-M-E** material is designed to help the pastor establish his spiritual leadership among his congregation. Exciting things are happening in churches who have used this material.

Contact Nazarene Publishing House and order your copies today!



“Education in the Church of the Nazarene, rooted in the biblical and theological commitments of the Wesleyan and Holiness movements and accountable to the stated mission of the denomination, aims to guide those who look to it in accepting, in nurturing, and in expressing in service to the Church and World consistent and coherent Christian understandings of social and individual life.”

*Educational Mission Statement
adopted by the Twenty-second General Assembly of the
Church of the Nazarene*

General Assembly action, based on the work of the Education Commission, provides for:

- An International Board of Education to be a general church advocate for educational institutions in the Church of the Nazarene *worldwide*.
- An Education Commissioner to administer the work of the International Board of Education and serve as consultant, advocate, and adviser to undergraduate and graduate level Nazarene institutions *worldwide*.
- An International Higher Education Council, together with regional councils, to coordinate Nazarene Higher Educational interests *worldwide*.

The International Higher Education Council will consist of the President, Principal, or Rector of these Nazarene institutions:

Africa Nazarene University, Dr. Mark R. Moore, Provost
 Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Dr. John M. Nielson, President
 Australasian Nazarene Bible College, Dr. Robert Dunn, Principal
 British Isles Nazarene College, Rev. Herbert McGonigle, President
 Canadian Nazarene College, Dr. Neil Hightower, President
 Caribbean Nazarene Theological College, Dr. Joseph Murugan, President
 Eastern Nazarene College, Dr. Cecil Paul, President
 European Nazarene Bible College, Dr. Robert Woodruff, Interim President
 Indonesia Nazarene Bible College, Rev. Kuncara Candra, Director
 Instituto Biblico Nazareno, Rev. Rogelio Fernandez, Director
 Japan Christian Junior College, Rev. Shin Kitagawa, President
 Japan Nazarene Theological Seminary, Rev. Shin Kitagawa, President
 Korean Nazarene Theological College, Dr. William Patch, President
 Luzon Nazarene Bible College, Rev. Ernesto Rulloda, President
 MidAmerica Nazarene College, Dr. Richard Spindle, President
 Mount Vernon Nazarene College, Dr. LeBron Fairbanks, President
 Nazarene Bible College, Dr. Jerry Lambert, President
 Nazarene Theological College, Dr. Bruce Taylor, Rector
 Nazarene Theological Seminary, Dr. Terrell C. Sanders, Jr., President
 Northwest Nazarene College, Dr. Gordon Wetmore, President
 Olivet Nazarene University, Dr. Leslie Parrott, President
 Point Loma Nazarene College, Dr. Jim Bond, President
 Seminario e Instituto Biblico da Igreja do Nazareno, Rev. J. Elton Wood, Director
 Seminario Nazareno de las Americas, Dr. Enrique Guang, Director
 Seminario Nazareno Mexicano, A.C., Dr. Alberto Guang, Rector
 Seminario Teologico Nazareno Sudamericano, Rev. Wilfredo Canales, Director
 Siteki Nazarene Bible College, Mr. P. Ken Walker, Principal
 Southern Nazarene University, Dr. Loren Gresham, President
 Taiwan Nazarene Theological College, Rev. Robert McMurdock, Director
 Trevecca Nazarene College, Dr. Homer Adams, President
 Visayan Nazarene Bible College, Miss Julie Macainan, President



*Dr. Donald D. Owens,
Responsible General
Superintendent for Education
Services, confers with
Dr. Stephen W. Nease,
Education Commissioner*

A City Waits . . . Toronto

CANADA'S LARGEST CITY IS 1990 THRUST CITY PROJECT

Toronto, Canada is Thrust City for 1990. Marjorie Osborne is the Target Toronto Coordinator. Marjorie is a native Torontonion and continues to live there with her husband Ed and sons Andrew and Michael. Marjorie has been a layperson in the Church of the Nazarene for thirty-three years, serving in many capacities both at the local and district levels. She is a member of the Canadian Executive Board. Rev. Michael Estep, Director of Thrust to the Cities International, interviews Marjorie on the plans, preparation, and progress of the Toronto Thrust.

Michael Estep: The Canadian Executive Board for the Church of the Nazarene agreed that Toronto should be proposed for the Thrust to the Cities program. Why was Toronto their choice?

Marjorie Osborne: Although Canada stretches 5,000 miles from the Atlantic to the Pacific, sixty percent of all Canadians live within five hundred miles of Toronto. This population concentration, plus the fact that Toronto is the financial and cultural hub of the country, makes it a strategic city in the development of the Church of the Nazarene in Canada. Toronto is also a very multi-cultural city. Only forty-seven percent of the population is Anglo. The other fifty-three percent represents eighty different languages. You can see that Toronto is an ideal city to plant the Church of the Nazarene among the many people that make up our nation.

Estep: What were some of the challenges that immediately came to mind as you began to prepare for the Thrust?

Osborne: The spiritual challenges seemed most important. We needed a much larger vision of what God wanted us to be. We needed initiative to grow and to plant churches. Would there be inspired laypeople who would



Toronto skyline: The Population Hub of Canada.

become involved in outreach ministries? Would we be willing to accept new people groups into our existing congregations and offer our buildings for new churches? We needed to plan for our activities and our budgets to include outreach. We needed to try new things in new ways.

Estep: How well-known is the Church of the Nazarene in Canada and Toronto in particular?

Osborne: As a matter of fact, we have an image problem. The Church of the Nazarene in Canada is still considered a cult by many. There are only 150 Naza-

rene Churches in all of Canada. The eleven in Toronto at the start of the Thrust had an average attendance of 1,185. Most of the 4½-million people in Toronto haven't heard of us yet, so the need for a greater vision and a stronger base was immediately apparent.

Estep: What are some of the other challenges that confront you?

Osborne: The cost of land and buildings makes ownership impossible at this time. Land in downtown Toronto, if any becomes available through demolition, is twenty million an acre. Forty miles out of the city centre, an acre sells for three hundred thousand. Modest three-bedroom bungalows sell for four hundred thousand and rent for around

Another very real challenge is the lack of Nazarene pastors in Canada. There are not enough to fill existing pulpits, let alone staff new church plants. With the help of Canadian Nazarene College we have launched the Toronto Institute of Lay Training (TILT) in order to prepare laypeople to fill the gap as bivocational pastors, interim pastors, and church planters. We also are laying the groundwork for an Extension Bible Institute under the auspices of Nazarene Bible College and Canadian Nazarene College to train pastors in their own cultural context.

Estep: What have you been doing in preparation for your Thrust year?

Osborne: One advantage we have had

vision by making a presentation in all our Canadian District Assemblies, in most churches on Canada Central District, and in several churches across Canada. As a result, prayer support has been pledged and start-up funds have been raised. The *Target Toronto* newsletter has been published every two months for two years and will continue.

Estep: What about the Vision for Greatness Rallies? I know I was a part of one. What do you feel they achieved?

Osborne: We've actually had four Vision for Greatness Rallies in preparation for the Thrust. They have provided a forum for church planting and evangelism. Each rally has seen an increasing excitement and eagerness to get involved in outreach ministries. We hear testimonies from new converts, extension Bible study leaders, new church planters, and enjoy an inspiring message and some great music. The Vision for Greatness Rallies have now been replaced by Target Toronto Celebration Services that bring the metro churches together to baptize new believers and praise the Lord for all He's doing. Celebration for every victory is so worthwhile and joyful. God is indeed using these services to keep our vision clear and strong!

Estep: You've also had some workshops in preparation for 1990.

Osborne: Yes, two Church Planting Workshops co-hosted with Church Extension, two on Church Growth and Evangelism, and one dealing with Compassionate Ministries. We have been privileged to have some wonderful teachers, such as Dr. Charles Chaney, Dr. Carl Clendenen, Dr. Charles Shaver, and Dr. Tom Nees, come and help us prepare.

Estep: You mentioned ten goals for Target Toronto. What are those goals?

Osborne: Well, in abbreviated form, they are: to strengthen the Church of the Nazarene in Canada; to plant twenty-seven new churches, ten among new language groups; to organize and operate four Christian counseling centers in needy neighborhoods; to promote and



Toronto's street people: They need to hear the gospel now.

fifteen hundred a month. Urban renewal is bringing wealth to the downtown core and pushing the poverty to the suburbs. Rent for one service each Sunday in a school gym costs between six and nine hundred a month. Other space is scarce and even more expensive, so sharing owned and rented buildings to the maximum is a must.

is three good years to get ready. We had time for the Target Toronto Committee to do the research resulting in the twenty-four-page proposal which outlines our ten objectives and how we plan to accomplish them. It is literally our faith on paper and keeps us on track. We've been able to some extent to involve the whole country in our

coordinate the ministry of Christian day-care in Nazarene churches; to establish a government-sponsored, church-operated seniors' residence and seniors' day-care assistance programs; to equip and train people for Target Toronto ministries; to appoint appropriate Target Toronto committees to carry out the proposal; to gain support for Target Toronto — 2,000 people to pray daily and \$1,000,000 raised in finances; to make full and appreciative use of all denominational resources; and to participate in Vision 2000 — a plan put together by Canadian evangelicals. Thank God! He is helping us to make progress in each one of them!

Estep: How are you doing with the new church starts?

Osborne: To date we have one fully organized church — Spanish; six church-type missions — 2 Anglo, 1 Cantonese, 1 Portuguese, 1 Filipino, and 1 Egyptian. We also have extension Bible classes and Sunday schools that will very soon provide the nucleus for six more church-type missions.

Estep: And the compassionate ministry goals? How about them?

Osborne: Our first Christian day-care has been operating for two years, and a second for one month. The first one, "Some Place Special," is now training early childhood workers and is considered by metro social services to be an excellent model. Day-care is a great need in our city, where 90,000 spaces are required and only 23,000 licensed spaces exist. Two counseling centers are operating on a part-time basis, Covenant Counseling and Live and Learn. It is not unusual to wait four months to see a Christian psychologist in this city. The sharing center in the rejuvenated Grace Church of the Nazarene provides food, clothing, ESL, and Christian counseling. There are 90,000 people who visit food banks each month in Toronto. Many must pay sixty-five percent of their wages to keep a roof over their heads, and so grocery money runs out. We have not yet launched specialized seniors' ministry programs, but they are next on the agenda.

Estep: Have you had much response from work and witness teams?

Osborne: Wonderful response, I'd say! It's a beautiful thing to be on the receiving end of work and witness for a change. Last summer (1988), we had six teams — five from the USA and one from Canada. One team from Oklahoma put fifty-three gallons of paint on an old downtown church, built a new pastor's study, and renovated nursery and toddler rooms. Our people have been thrilled and encouraged with the help. Twelve teams have offered to come in 1990, so far — nine from the USA and three from Canada. There are some manual-labor needs, but endless ministry opportunities as we try to get into new communities. We are so appreciative of this kind of help.

shine Clubs in an area where we were soon to start a new church, a Moslem man whose children had enjoyed the Clubs gave them a real dressing-down from his apartment balcony for propagating Christianity. His wife and three children were present at the first service of the new church and have come ever since. I wanted them to know how God had used them.

Estep: I know you are aware of the vision + people + resources formula. You've mentioned how God has brought an increased vision. What about the people and resources? Is the formula working?



Toronto church buildings are shared by several congregations: This helps solve high building costs.

Estep: What about Youth In Mission? You've had teams come?

Osborne: Yes! And again, we are so thankful for their work. We had two teams in the summer of '88 and two in '89. I had to write a letter to the members of one team a month after they left. While they were conducting Sun-

Osborne: I remember when I started in as Thrust Coordinator you told me to keep a list of miracles because there would be so many, I would forget them. Some of the best miracles so far have been people. At every step, God brings just the right person along. Marjorie Serio, the lady who now administers "Some Place Special" and is called

on to help set up other centers, not just in metro but across Canada, is one of these. She came to me one day and said, "I believe God woke me up last night to talk to me about Christian day-care." She had been an insurance underwriter. What a gem! Ian Fitzpatrick, a pastor, spoke to me one night after a Target Toronto meeting, "Marj," he said, "the Lord just keeps on saying to me 'Target Toronto, Ian, Target Toronto.' If there's a particular place you need me, I'm ready." We prayed about it for a couple of months and now Ian is the Church Extension Director for Target Toronto. He is exactly the right person and God knew he would be. We hoped ten people would enroll in the Toronto Institute for Lay Training. Thirty-five have, so far. We didn't

Estep: And resources?

Osborne: We are very much in a trusting position for resources, but He hasn't failed us yet. It was certainly the moving of the Lord that raised \$19,000 in twenty minutes at our last District Assembly for the starting of a compassionate ministry center. We hadn't even planned to do that, but He took over. A major automotive company donated \$22,000 of new winter clothes. I don't know how they knew about us. A lady in a town an hour away from Toronto called to say she had twenty-five new quilts ready. A work and witness leader says, "We have \$5,000. What would you like us to do? A property is sold and the advisory board

Estep: Have you experienced a good deal of cooperation for the Target Toronto effort?

Osborne: The Toronto pastors are a great team. I believe that God has brought each of them to metro for this time. They have supported Target Toronto from the beginning. Our original committee was formed by the pastor for each church coming and bringing some interested laypeople with him. I find the pastors supportive, willing to keep Target Toronto before the people, participate, and ready to welcome both Ian and myself to their pulpits. This is not just true of Toronto, but the District, the nation, and our neighbors to the south.

Estep: One more thing. You are a layperson. How did you come to be involved as coordinator for the Toronto Thrust?

Osborne: In September of 1984, I was doing the dishes and looking at the brown shingles of the roof next door when I distinctly felt the Lord say to me, "There's going to be a change in your life." Looking back, I can see why He wanted to warn me. A few months later, I was a delegate to the General Assembly in Anaheim. Whatever happened, it seemed that the Lord was saying to me over and over, "Ten thousand Canadian Nazarenes are not enough!" During the Sunday morning stadium service I knew I had to make a response, and I promised the Lord I would give the rest of my life to changing that number if He would show me how. I came home from Anaheim and accepted an invitation to be "Church Planting Director" for the Rosewood Church. A year later, I was asked to head a committee to formulate the Toronto proposal. When we were designated Thrust City for 1990, I was appointed to see the proposal through to completion as the coordinator. At the same time, I was elected to the Advisory Board and to the Canadian Executive Board. I believe the Lord has taken seriously my commitment to the Church of the Nazarene in Canada. I know He has definitely called me, and I'm more than a little amazed at how He is working out that call.



Toronto's children: *They need the gospel, too.*

know where to get pastors for the new language congregations, but He brought us an Egyptian, a Portuguese, a Filipino, a Hispanic, and a Chinese. The Lord adds people to vision for sure — people to lead, and now as the new works have started, people to be saved and become part of the church!

invests the money and offers to give Target Toronto the interest for three years. I think I have, as usual, underestimated the goodness of our God. No! Lack of dollars doesn't keep us from ministry — lack of desire does. When the dream is there, the dollars will come.

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Medical Plan helps to provide payment of the medical expenses for active and retired missionaries and their families.

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The total amount of Medical Plan funds go toward **health care** expenses of our missionaries and count as **10% credit** for your church.

May Is Medical Plan Month in NWMS



Most states are building many new prisons to alleviate overcrowding. What a golden opportunity for Nazarene elders to share the gospel and become involved as correctional chaplains in this specialized ministry. The states are anxious to fill vacancies in their new prisons with God-called men and women who are qualified with a wide range of pastoral skills.

The objective of correctional chaplaincy is to provide ministry that is committed to spiritual regeneration and social restoration.

It is a demanding ministry but as one international prison ministry stated, "those with the greatest need, need the greatest help."

Each state has different requirements, therefore call your state correctional chaplain services administrator or the state personnel office to check on openings and requirements. Most do not have an age restriction and will sometimes substitute seminary for pastoral experience.

The federal government is also building new prisons and looking for chaplains. However, one must be under 35 years of age and have a seminary degree to qualify.

If you are looking for a personally enriching, challenging, and different ministry and believe God can use you as a chaplain in a prison setting to the incarcerated, check with your state personnel system or state chaplain for placement and the Chaplaincy Ministries for endorsement.

Romans 10:14-15, NIV

CAREER CHANGE IN MINISTRY?

Native Son Plants Church in Fulton

CHURCH STARTS IN WILLIAM WOODS COLLEGE CHAPEL

Gary Garrett, former Fulton High School and University of Missouri football star, returned to his hometown in August 1986 to plant Heartland Church of the Nazarene. Though critics in Jesus' day refused to welcome His return to His hometown of Nazareth, the people of Fulton seem pleased to have one of their own ministering among them. The new church, organized on November 13, 1988, has 73 members, and now more than 100 people often gather on Sunday mornings to worship God.

**As you walk down
the street with Gary,
you know he
really belongs.
Old neighbors,
lifelong friends,
and the meter maid
recognize him as a
well-respected native.**

Fulton, the home of two colleges — Westminster College and William Woods College — is located 100 miles west of St. Louis and has a nonstudent population of 11,046. Sir Winston Churchill made Westminster College famous with his historic Iron Curtain speech there on March 5, 1946. But forty years later, in less dramatic though spiritually significant ways, the Nazarenes brought new spiritual opportunities to this beautiful small town USA when a new church started in William Woods College Chapel on September 21, 1986.

Gary and Naomi Garrett left an established pastorate in Clinton, Missouri, on the Joplin District to begin this church plant. As you walk down the street with Gary, you know he really belongs. Old neighbors, lifelong friends, and the meter maid recognize him as a well-respected native. People even waved greetings to him from a passing funeral procession led by a fellow pastor from another denomination.

Pastor Garrett discussed God's call to this assignment, which he began recognizing as early as 1980: "When asked to start a church in Fulton, I just didn't feel like I could minister in my hometown, yet I had a burden for people in this town, especially my family. This is a strong, conservative holiness area and I didn't want to offend anyone. I couldn't come to grips with the fact that I was the person to start the work, but God changed all that. I love the conservative people — that's my nature. And they need God, too." His



Thurmond Chapel at William Woods College — first meeting place for new Heartland Church: Location secured by Bonnie Shiver Decker, college registrar and charter member of church.



Superintendent Hiram Sanders and Pastor Gary Garrett at Churchill Memorial: They share spiritual responsibility for Callaway County.

"The district brought Gary Garrett to the Assembly in 1986.

That was about the time he began a two-month gathering stage before starting the first service with 70 people."

—Hiram E. Sanders, district superintendent.

quiet passion for souls is evident in his conversation and style of ministry.

The church's spiritual vigor and growth show that God was in the timing of this new work and in the call of the Garretts. In addition to exciting miracles of new converts finding Christ, there are property miracles too. The courts sold the Church of the Nazarene a ten-year-old, ready-made sanctuary and parsonage on a two-acre parcel of land, which is valued at \$400,000, for \$72,000. This substantial property includes a church building and educational unit to serve 250 people, hardly used and earlier abandoned by another religious group, and a comfortable three-bedroom parsonage. In still another miraculous transition, this beginning church purchased 26 acres of commercial land for future development on a growing edge of town for \$65,000; the land owner donated \$25,000, so the church secured clear title for \$40,000.

With justifiable pride, Fulton's civic leaders call their special town "Missouri's Crown Jewel." But to know the church-planting story at Heartland Church is to believe God is building something even more beautiful and lasting for a caring family of believers where persons are won, nurtured, and cherished.

Another worthy town has a new church pointing its citizens to the Lord.



26-acre site of future church building: Gary fished on this property as a boy.



Pastor Garrett on Main Street: *His vision is to reach the unchurched of his community.*

"I just didn't feel that I could minister in my home town, yet I had a burden for my home town, especially my family."



Pastor tells exciting story of finding a ready-made facility for growing a church: *His vision is to fill present church twice each Sunday and then build at new site.*

The Nazarene Minister's Four-Fold Retirement Income Plan

Since its beginning, it has not been the purpose of the "Basic" Pension Plan to be the *full* retirement income for ministers of the Church of the Nazarene. Rather, it was established in 1971 as a base or "floor" on which to build an adequate retirement income. The Nazarene Retirement Program is composed of four elements, each of which is essential to an adequately funded retirement.

1. Social Security

The first source of retirement income for ministers in the United States lies in their lifelong contribution to Social Security. (Most local Nazarene churches provide a taxable Social Security allowance to their ministers for payment of the Social Security tax.) Social Security is the area shared with all other citizens who have also contributed from the salaries they have earned over a lifetime. In 1989, the average couple in the U.S., both retiring at age 65, received approximately \$921 per month from this source.

2. "Basic" Pension

The second source for ministers is the Nazarene "Basic" Pension Plan which is provided by the denomination from dollars contributed to the Pensions and Benefits Fund. The responsibility for these first two areas is assumed by the government and by the denomination. *However, it is the minister who should accept responsibility for initiating* retirement planning in the remaining areas in order to assume adequate retirement income.

3. TSA

The third source is the **Tax-Sheltered Annuity**. Like most other denominations, the Church of the

The Nazarene Minister's Retirement Income Plan



"Are All the pieces in your plan?"

Nazarene offers opportunities for its ministers to participate in a TSA program. Earnings deferred to the Nazarene TSA Plan are not taxed as immediate income but are allowed to accumulate at favorable interest rates until retirement when they can be withdrawn according to the wishes of the minister and even designated as "housing allowance." It is not unusual for a couple to have accumulated \$100,000 in such an account. This investment cannot be lost since any remaining portion goes to the minister's designated beneficiaries after the death of the minister and spouse. Generally, up to 20 percent of one's salary can be placed in a TSA account, with greater amounts possible in some circumstances.

4. Personal Savings

The fourth source of an adequate retirement income lies in **personal savings**. This is uniquely a function

of good stewardship on the part of the minister. An excellent vehicle for such a personal savings program is the **Nazarene IRA Plan** for ministers and spouses, a plan sponsored by your Board of Pensions and Benefits USA.

The Question

There is one question that is always timely in a minister's life; Have you made adequate financial provision for your retirement? The sooner this question can be answered "yes," the better it will be for the minister and his family. Though some have thought they could not afford to participate, they found by *consistently* contributing as little as \$10 a month (less than \$2.50 a week) a nice balance has grown over the years to effectively assist their retirement finances. Every day sooner is a day better.

Additional information is available from the Pensions office on each of the four elements of an adequate retirement income. There is no charge for this information—just ask.

Nazarene TSA and IRA Plans (Illustrations only, not guarantees)

	#1	#2
Starting Age	24	36
Ending Age	28	65
Rate of Return	9%	
Amount Per Year	\$300	
Total Contributions	\$1,500	\$9,000
Value at Age 65	\$43,546	\$40,892

Start As Soon As Possible

Security And Flexibility Will It Work For My Church?

The Nazarene Minister's four-fold retirement program is a unique combination of distinct elements. The Social Security and "Basic" Pension Plan elements contain base-line or "safety net" benefits which provide certain minimum benefits for every participant, regardless of church size or lifetime earnings. Yet the area of "pension" is only one part of the minister's total compensation package. Therefore, the variable elements of the four-fold retirement program allow for compensation discretion on the part of the church employer and the individual minister. Together the four parts are structured to allow every minister and church employer both security and flexibility in providing for deferred compensation.

Base-Line Elements Provide Certain Securities

It is important to understand that both Social Security and the "Basic" Pension Plan were put into place at particular times in history. Each began in order to meet an immediate need of caring for retirees at that specific time. They also were introduced to allow younger workers time to begin building savings to be used in addition to the base-line programs for their future retirement income needs.

Due in part to personal choices, it is possible that some in the church and some in society-at-large will not make provision for much retirement income beyond the "safety net," base-line programs. For this reason, funding of these programs is "socially progressive." In other words, contributions to the Pensions and Benefits Fund by larger churches help to offset smaller

contributions from smaller churches. This assures every minister a benefit of the same level under the "Basic" Pension Plan. Likewise, since lower wage earners receive a higher percentage of salary replacement from Social Security than wage earners at higher levels, it is the latter whose contributions help subsidize the plan for the former. Both these systems transfer wealth from the relatively well-off to those at lower income levels.

Although these programs are charitable, they are not charity. They recognize that there is a certain minimum level of benefit due everyone. However, to make Social Security and the "Basic" Pension Plan the only elements of retirement income funding, thus making everyone "equal" in retirement would be as inequitable as paying every worker in the country the same salary. Even though there should be certain guaranteed minimums in compensation (and pensions are just a part of compensation) there must also be the ability for employers to have some discretion in structuring the compensation of workers who perform with a variety of efforts, skills, time commitments, and experience.

Discretionary Elements Allow Personal Choice

The older one gets, the more one's life becomes a product of personal choices. Some are in the area of financial decisions, such as the funding of one's retirement. However, no choice is given on the fact that sooner or later present earnings will stop and living expenses will have to be met with whatever income provisions have been made for retirement.

The TSA and IRA elements of the four-part retirement plan are areas where appropriate choices may and should be exercised. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate planning for the funding of his or her retirement income. Even very small levels of participation can yield significant reward and enhancement of retirement income.

Increasingly, local churches are seeing the importance of their choices in providing retirement income through TSA for the pastor and other employees. It is an essential compensation element just like salary and health insurance. "Paying the bill" for the human resources the employer (local church) consumes means considering that bill as a total compensation issue, not just a "better pension" issue.

The real issue is not that pensions must be improved, but that overall compensation must be considered and improved. To make pensions the only issue when considering compensation enhancement is to miss this important point. The Manual of the Church of the Nazarene clearly establishes one of the duties of the local church to be "...raising money for the support of the church and of the pastor, that he may be free from secular care and anxiety and may give himself wholly to the work of the ministry." Included in that statement is the need to provide the minister with not only present salary but also "deferred salary" for retirement income.

For information on any elements of the retirement income program, write to the Board of Pensions and Benefits USA, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131-1284.

HEARTLINE HELPS THE HELPER

Christian Counseling Services

SIX YEARS OF TELEPHONE COUNSELING WITH PARSONAGE PEOPLE

No one knew for sure what the response would be to a telephone counseling ministry for Nazarene parsonages.

A program of this nature had never been attempted in any denomination, much less within a conservative group like Nazarenes. Did pastors and their wives really have a need to talk with Christian professional counselors?

And if they had the need, would they actually make the call? After six years of manning the phones, the resounding answer to both of these questions is yes. There is the need, and our parsonages are taking advantage of the opportunity.

In the early 1980s, Wilbur W. Brannon and the office of Pastoral Ministries recognized the need for pastors to be able to consult with Christian pro-

fessionals. Pastoring had always been a difficult and demanding task, but it seemed that a changing society only complicated the situation. The stress being experienced by the pastor is now frequently shared by the spouse and children.

Responding to the needs of the pastorate, a vision of a toll-free telephone ministry was conceived. It would provide pastors and their families with



Michael Malloy, A.C.S.W., Executive Director.



Mrs. Terry Johnson, Receptionist: first point of entry for all calls.



Don Harvey, Ph.D., Clinical Director.



Praying. left to right: Michael Malloy, A.C.S.W., M.R.E., Executive Director; Doug Williams, M.A., CONET Counselor; Don Harvey, Ph.D., Clinical Director; Mrs. Adrienne Brewer, Graduate Student, Peabody/Vanderbilt, CONET Counselor; Peter Wilson, M.A., CONET Counselor.

direct access to professional counselors. Whether their need be for consultation regarding a counseling situation, the recommendation of a Christian referral source in their geographical area, opportunity to discuss personal stress, or concerns within their own marital and family relationships, the "Heart-line" would assure quick, professional, and confidential assistance.

What began in 1984 as a pilot project involving twelve districts quickly

spread to include all fifty states. Over the past six years of service, the counselors at Christian Counseling Service in Nashville who answer the phones have been honored to talk with thousands of callers. Occasionally it is for a referral source or consultation, but more frequently the call is regarding personal and parsonage concerns. The rewards of ministering to those who minister have been many — but it has also been sobering.

The reality is clear. Parsonages are not exempt from normal humanity. Pastors do become frustrated and confused. Pastors' wives do become stressed. Their marriages can become strained. And both can experience pain. We have heard this a lot over the past six years . . . and we are glad that we were there when they needed us.

—by Donald R. Harvey, Ph.D.
Clinical Director, CONET



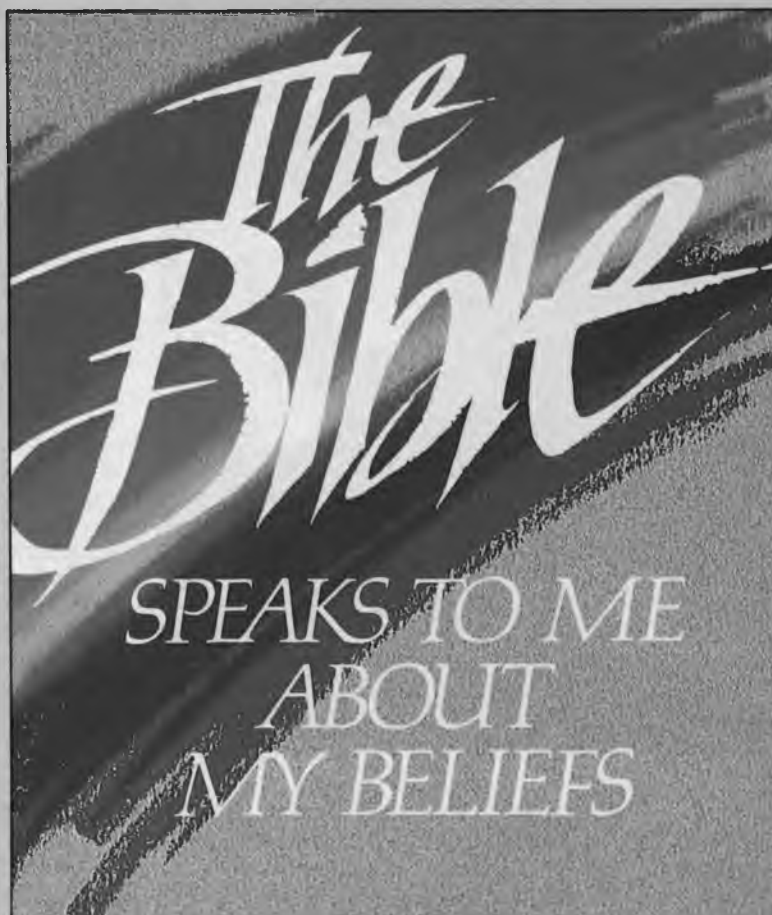
Doug Williams, M.A., CONET Counselor.



Mrs. Adrienne Brewer, CONET Counselor.



Peter Wilson, M.A., CONET Counselor.



A BIBLE STUDY FOR THE HEART AND MIND



THE BIBLE SPEAKS TO ME ABOUT MY BELIEFS

By William E. McCumber

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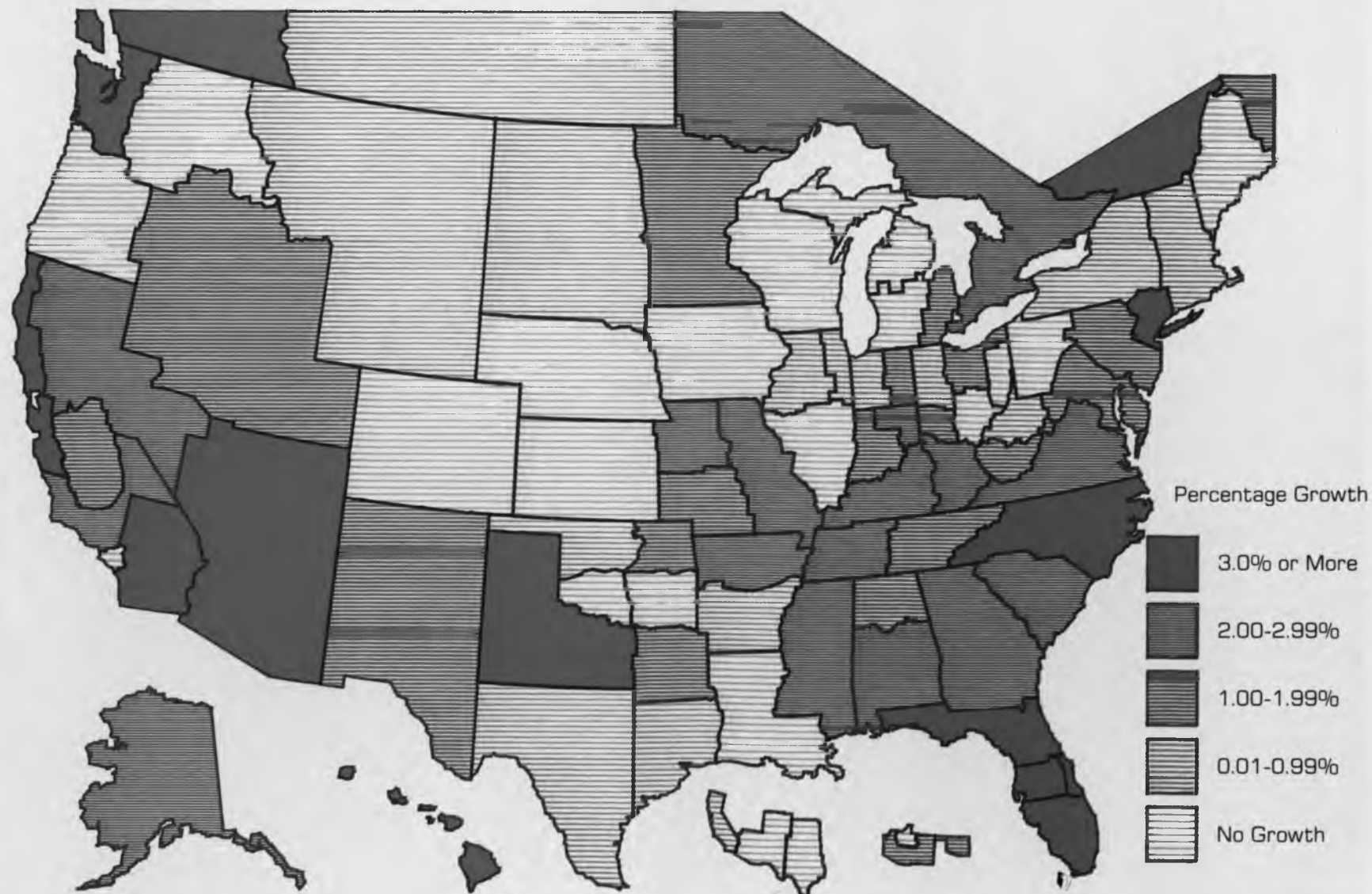
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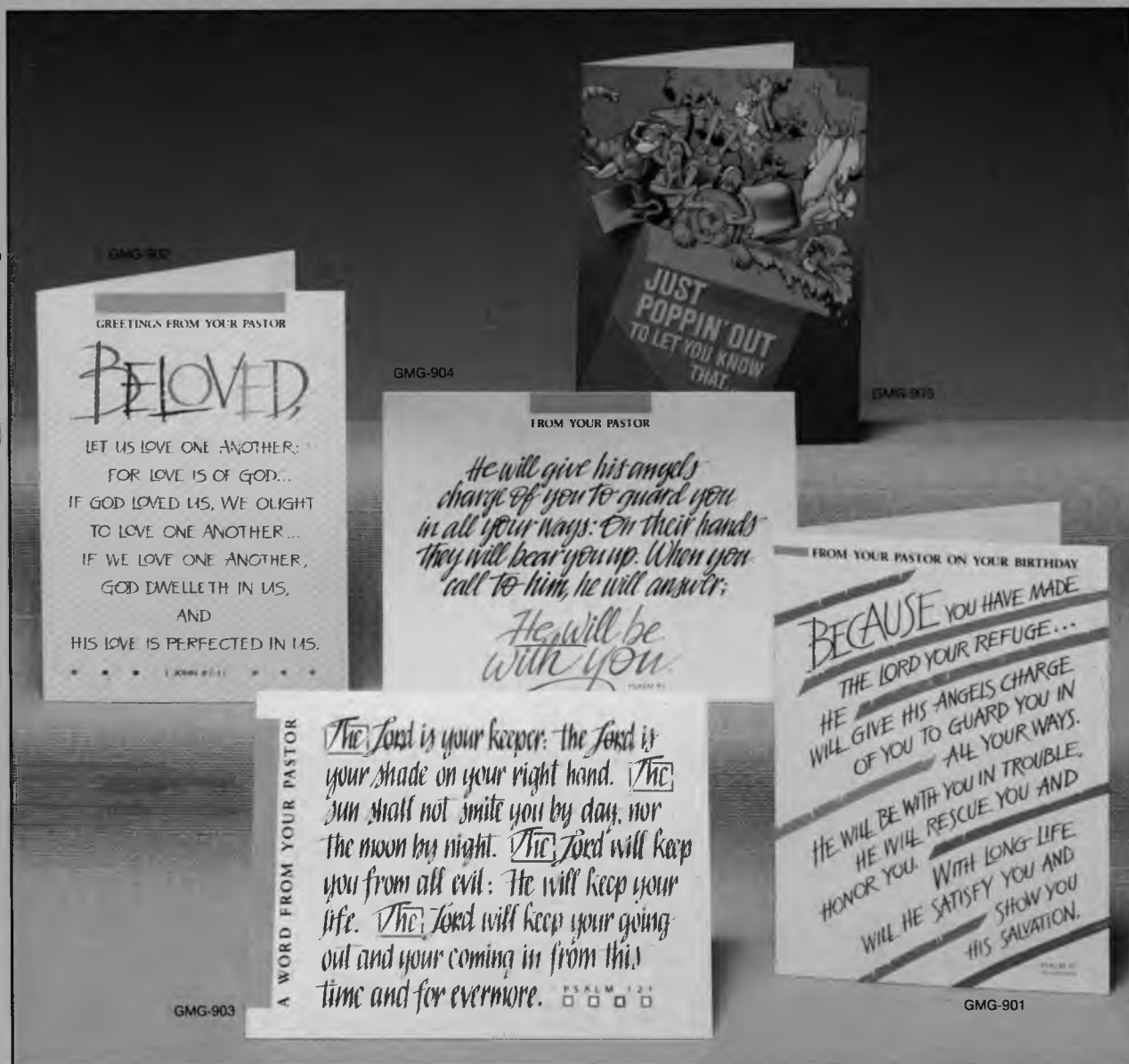
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RESEARCH AND TRENDS



Provided by Church Growth Research Center
Dale E. Jones, Director

Large Church Growth

K-Churches increasing . . . now 13 Nazarene churches of 1,000 or more members or attenders in Canada/USA . . . up from 10 in '79, 3 in 1969. Bethany, Okla., First and Pasadena, Calif., First have been on the list all twenty years. Newest additions are New Life in Pismo Beach, Calif., and Portland, Ore., First.

When a large church puts on a special Christmas pageant . . . or catches positive media attention for specialized ministries . . . if identified as Nazarenes, all smaller churches in town benefit with "free advertising."

Goal of 50 large churches in Canada/USA by year 2000. Already four in world mission areas . . . India, South Africa, and two in Cape Verde.

Sunday School Growth

Now is the time to plan for SS growth . . . one of two best growth times in Canada/USA. If a church is considering going to double services, early spring is a good time to start . . . otherwise, September.

Responsibility List

Census Bureau gearing up for decennial census. But no "religious" questions allowed . . . not even ethnic questions if religion is implied.

So Church Growth Research Center will conduct interdenominational census this year. Over 100 denominations will take part . . . listing how many people their churches are responsible for. Based on previous surveys, nearly 50% of Americans aren't claimed by anyone's church. Even in "Lutheran" Minnesota . . . or "Catholic" New Orleans . . . **one in four people aren't claimed by anybody.**

Nazarenes use the responsibility list to identify adherents . . . those our church would try to minister to in case of need. Now is a good time to be sure the list is complete . . . including all those who look to the church as their spiritual home, even infrequently . . . but not inflated with names of people who no longer live in town, or have died.

New Nazarenes

Largest "New Nazarene" figure ever . . . good gains overseas and in many Canada/USA churches. About 500 churches worldwide reported at least 25 new Nazarenes . . . received by Profession of Faith or Transfer from Other Denominations. 170 such churches in Canada/USA . . . and 30 took in at least 50. Top 3 took in over 100 . . . **160 in newly organized Northern California Korean**, 117 in New Life (Pismo Beach, Calif.), 103 in Metroplex Chapel (Fort Worth).

Population Growth Areas

Areas of population gain have good potential for Nazarene growth. Of 27 counties that gained 100,000 or more people from 1980 to 1987, 26 showed Nazarene gains, too. Of 26 counties where population grew at least 50%, 15 showed Nazarene gains . . . but **another 10 had no Nazarene work at all**.

Of 28 counties that combined good percentage growth (25%) with large numerical gain (50,000 people), Nazarenes grew in all . . . and in 15 of the counties Nazarenes grew faster than the population . . . most of these in mid-Florida and Texas.

1990s Growth Counties

Growth projections for early 1990s available from Church Growth Research Center. **Top 20 growth counties concentrated in southeast** . . . 8 in Florida, Jacksonville to Port Charlotte . . . 4 in South Carolina (but 3 were in Hugo's path) . . . 2 in Atlanta area . . . rest are scattered in Alabama, Texas (2), Arizona, Nevada, Colorado.

New Churches

Preliminarily, 78 new Canada/USA churches were reported last assembly year . . . continues high level established last quadrennium. **42 districts reported at least one new church** . . . New York reported 6, Central Florida and Los Angeles 5 each . . . 3 each for Arizona, Canada Quebec, Central Ohio, Florida Space Coast, Georgia, and New England.

Worldwide, 437 new churches reported during assembly year. Another good year expected in 1990 as Year of Church Planting finishes up.

RESEARCH AND TRENDS



REVIVALS REVIVALS REVIVALS

REVIVAL FIRE BURNS FOR TWO YEARS—The East Ridge Church in Chattanooga continues to celebrate a revival experienced in January 1988, led by Evangelist Russell Coffey. The congregation anticipates even greater results when Coffey returns this year for a second revival series.

According to Pastor M. K. Weaver, the 1988 meeting, scheduled for one week, spontaneously expanded into a second week. Due to a last-minute cancellation, Coffey was able to continue as evangelist. Apparently the arrangement was in divine order inasmuch as seventy-eight people sought the Lord during the second week.

Sam Stevenson, an example of many conversions, knew little about the church but was working as an electrician on the church's new fellowship hall. There he became acquainted with people from the church and accepted their revival invitation. As a result, he was wonderfully converted. Five months later, he was elected to the church board. He now chairs the trustees and directs the bus ministry.

GOD USES TENT CRUSADE IN FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE—Pastor Jerry W. Smith reports a zone tent crusade with Evangelist Morris Chalfant in their area near Nashville last summer. The pastor writes, "It has been some months since the close of the crusade and the victories hold true today." The pastor summarizes, "Perhaps the greatest value of this week is that our people were exposed to the heart of a wonderful evangelist. His heart throbs to see the Church of the Nazarene revived."

PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPHASIZED—Pastor Lloyd Howell reports a revival with Rev. Ken Staniforth at the Sun Valley Church on the Sacramento District: "We have, through the holiness preaching of Rev. Staniforth, returned to our spiritual roots of Wesleyan-Arminian tradition and the Holy Spirit was faithful. Lives have been changed to a holy lifestyle and many have been renewed." The spirit of revival continues.

SIXTY-FIVE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN PRAYER VIGIL—Pastor Calvin Nicholson, Evangelist John Hicks, and Song Evangelist Tom Dale teamed with sixty-five lay Christians in a prayer vigil for revival in the Ontario, Oregon, Church of the Nazarene. And God answered. Following the revival, Rev. Nicholson reported, "The revival was truly what the term implies. Many renewed commitments to Christ. Many came to the altar to allow the Holy Spirit to remove bitterness and other hindrances from their lives. Our theme was 'Seeking His Face' — we really saw Him. It was a time of renewal, as we had prayed it would be!"

THE BEST REVIVAL IN YEARS AT WEST MAIN CHURCH—This South Carolina Church in Rock Hill, led by Pastor William A. Ulmet, prepared for the revival with forty days of prayer and fasting. Evangelist Jerry McGee preached on the theme "The Supernatural Manifestation of Jesus in the Spirit-Filled Life." Rev. Ulmet summarized the results, "This was the best revival in our church in years. Jerry McGee's ministry is just what the church needed. People needed to hear his message."

RESTITUTION NEW THEME TO MAN AT STUART—Evangelist Fred Lester reports an effective meeting at Stuart, Florida, with Pastor Gary Durham where the church experienced "great crowds, great interest, great singing, and great expectation in every service." Lester continued, "The subject of restitution was new to one man well over 50 years of age. He wanted to know where that subject might be found in the Bible. He took a great attitude and walked out, determined to make some things right so he could have power with God and man."

EVANGELIST FREDERICK GROSSMITH PLANTS CHURCH AT CLEETHORPES—After four years of evangelism in Scotland and England, Evangelist Grossmith used his broadcasting and journalism skills to plant a new church at Cleethorpes. The new church, starting on November 4 with 27 charter members, is located in a small holiday resort on England's east coast — 30 miles from the birthplace of John Wesley. The fact that 92% of the population do not attend church demonstrates the spiritual needs of this area. In February 1989, Grossmith made broadcasting history when BBC Television screened nationwide the first Christian commercial, part of a series he had written and produced.

Revival reports—The church wants news about how God used revivals to change ordinary people and renew churches; one purpose of *GROW* is to report such miracles of grace. The editor welcomes revival reports, which should be type-written in concise sentences, giving specific details, precise dates, and accurate spelling of church, city, and individuals' names. Your name, address, phone number, and mailing date should be typed on all items. We want to hear from you, even though revival reports cannot be acknowledged or returned because of the rush of publication deadlines. Revival reports can be sent to *GROW* Editor, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

REVIVALS REVIVALS REVIVALS



Teacher . . . You're an Evangelist to Your Class

GROW — A JOURNAL OF CHURCH GROWTH, EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

Volume 1, Number 1, March 1990

Bill M. Sullivan, Director, Church Growth Division, International Church of the Nazarene • Neil B. Wiseman, Editor

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GROW welcomes local and district reports of revivals, church plants, and church growth but because of publishing deadlines, reports cannot be acknowledged or returned. Manuscripts on related subjects are also welcome, but unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied with a return self-addressed envelope and adequate postage. Reports and manuscripts may be addressed to Neil B. Wiseman, **GROW** Editor, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Missouri 64131.

PRAYER

A DRIVING FORCE FOR REVIVAL

A short while ago I preached in a revival immersed in prayer. The church gave itself to prayer weeks before the revival began. Much more than a pressing duty or a new program, pastor and people simply determined to seek God's mind for their individual lives and for the church's ministry, outreach, and service. They learned that prayer is a significant component of genuine revival. As a result, that church is well on its way to making prayer as normal as worship, giving, or singing.

In that church, prayer for revival built a red-hot spirit of expectancy in the minds of lay leaders, pastor, faithful members, casual attenders, and the evangelist, too. As you might expect, such expectancy positively affected the attendance and altar response.

Prayer helped spiritually hungry folks think often about the possibilities of their needs being met during the revival. And when they sought God, the old, old story of salvation, heart cleansing, and healing for backsliding became their story. The church experienced the exact results for which they prayed.

Praying also improves preaching. This preacher, like every minister I know, always preaches better when he knows someone is praying. But people hear preaching better when they have prayed for the preacher and for the transformation of their friends and neighbors.

Then, too, revival prayers unite believers now even as they did at the first Pentecost. Who can pray side by

side with a fellow believer with a grudge in his heart or gossip on his mind? It appears that it took ten days of prayer and waiting for unity to be experienced in the Upper Room, but it can be a reality in a much shorter period when believers pray in one accord for revival.

Prayer for revival in the church I visited was more than a schedule—it was a heart burden. The church has men's prayer meetings, women's prayer meetings, Saturday prayer meetings, and church board prayer meetings. Lay leaders gathered before every revival service in the pastor's study with the pastor and evangelist to

intercede for the meeting. And can you imagine the power this evangelist sensed from God when the church board gathered between Sunday school and church to lay hands on me and pray for my anointing? These people did not talk much about

prayer, they just prayed.

You know what happened—the atmosphere blazed with the Presence; participation in congregational singing was nearly 100%; seekers came to the altar; and the church was revived.

Prayer changes things. Prayer changes people. Prayer changes the environment. Prayer does wonders for leaders—both preachers and laymen—even as it transforms churches, neighbors, and nations.

Why not pray more? We know prayer is the driving force of revivals.

—NEIL B. WISEMAN
Editor, GROW





“Follow me
and I will
make you
fishers of men.”
—Jesus

