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THE NAZARENE PREACHER

DECEMBER 1970

DON'T BE A QUITTER
D. I. Vanderpool

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The Editor

PREACHING AS SPIRITUAL REALITY
Wilbur W. Brannon

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T. Crichton Mitchell

—proclaiming Christian Holiness

THE
NAZARENE PREACHER

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Don't Be a Quitter

By D. I. Vanderpool

CAST NOT AWAY therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:35-37).

The events of life may have poured for you a bitter portion to drink—heartbreaks, losses, unreached goals, lonely hours, undeserved criticism, and apparent failures. Don't bow your head and groan with self-pity. Millions have drunk from the same cup. and today with head up and steady step they march toward the country with a cloudless sky and the city where the sun never sets. Don't be a Demas. Don't be a quitter!

Unwavering confidence in Christ and His promises will give courage and enable you to smile through your tears. The real test in our lives comes not in doing the will of God, but rather in the delay following our doing the will of God. Satan has a field day while we wait for the unfulfilled promise. Why the delay? Who is to blame? Did I make the wrong decision? What shall I try next? The simple answer to the problem is, We have need of patience, that, after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise.

Daniel's prayer was answered after 21 days of earnest seeking. He ate no pleasant bread during that time. He did not quit or look for another field of service. He dared to trust God and wait. In due time the answer came. Daniel arose from his knees and stood on his feet when the angel of God touched him. (A new touch from God can put a man on his feet.) Daniel was assured that God heard his prayer the first day he prayed. Evil forces try to thwart the plan of God. Stand up; be a fighter! Don't be a quitter!

Yes, I know the revival did not turn out too well. Everybody seemed so busy. Some of the members do not have a proper respect for the Lord's Day. The Sunday school attendance is down. Some of our fellows are out of work. The church finances are not too good.

Wait a minute! God is interested in this whole business of building His Church. As a minister, you and God have a mutual task, just as God and Joshua had in bringing the children of Israel into Canaan. A discouraged people, a swollen river, and a walled city! Joshua had a call to answer—God had a promise to keep.

As a minister you have a call to answer and God has a promise to keep. You furnish the daring as Joshua did, and God will furnish

(*Continued on page 4*)

*General superintendent emeritus, Cupertino, Calif.

From the EDITOR

Commercialism, Communism, and Créches

If Paul resolutely chose to exult in the preaching of Christ even when he knew it was sometimes done to deepen his peril, we can with equal reason rejoice that even commercialism becomes the preacher of Bethlehem's story. Millions of dollars are spent just in making people Christmas-conscious. (What if the Church had to do it single-handedly!) And this is so all over the world, in Tokyo as well as in San Francisco. True, there is a shameful amount of paganism, lakes of alcohol consumed, the Santa Claus ballyhoo, and many of the advertising motifs and popular Christmas ditties breathe of fairies and fables instead of Christ. Yet always also there are the shepherds and the wise men, plus the constant singing of the old carols, many of them pure gospel in every verse. There is plenty to make little children ask questions, and keep the grown-up world from quite forgetting—even if they would.

The motive may not be Christian, but the effects may be. As an aid in teaching English, one high school teacher in Japan taught all the standard Christmas hymns and carols, and the students were delighted to sing them to visitors. It was profoundly moving to hear Buddhist youth sing "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Maybe it was to learn English, but they were getting gospel.

Then there are the créche displays, not only in Western nations, but in unlikely recesses and corners. None was more remarkable than the display in Communist Prague last Christmas which drew 100,000 visitors, not only to see, but to pay to see. Perhaps the amazing mechanical intricacy of the 487 moving figures in the one-and-one-half-ton display was partially the appeal. But these Communists saw the Christ-story enacted before their eyes—from the Bethlehem birth to death on the Cross. One of thousands doubtless was the little girl who, as Christmas carols were played from a tape, looked up and asked the inevitable question, "Daddy, who is Jesus?"

No, the world can't keep Christmas out. And where Christmas is, Christ is too, bidding quietly but powerfully for the souls of men. It is the wistful season. Let not the preacher ignore it—or worse, belittle it—but use it to draw himself and his people into the real presence of Christ.

Bethlehem's Promise of Peace

Every Christmas is a fresh call for Christians to return to first principles. At no point is this more true than on the thorny subject of peace. Why has not the promised "peace on earth" become a reality?

Because peace cannot exist piecemeal. We cannot have war in one dimension of life and peace in another, and we cannot have peace *among* unless it exists *within*. When the inner man is at war, the outer man will be also. Mental health is elusive as long as the conscience is bound and gagged. Tranquilizers may induce sound sleep, but this is not peace.

Man simply must learn that inner peace relates first, last, and always to God. Discord both within and without is the direct consequence of rupture with God. Until the vertical schism is healed, the horizontal strife cannot cease.

We have forgotten that the Bethlehem Babe was the Harbinger of "peace on earth" only because He was a "Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Unless He is allowed to become both Savior and Lord, He cannot be to us the Prince of Peace.

Significant is the phrasing of Zacharias, who ascribed to Jesus the role of directing our feet into "the way of peace" (Luke 1:79). It is the path of repentance, of serving, the path always to and from the Cross. And there is no other way. When will we learn this and give up once for all the alluring illusion that somehow peace can be negotiated by the forums and treaties of men, or won by their armies?

Peace cannot be coerced. It cannot be bought. It cannot be gift-wrapped as a Christmas present. It cannot be transmitted from one to the other, except the one be the One who said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27). And this He said to disciples who were willing to take "the way."

The kind of peace heralded that first Christmas was not peace at any cost. It was peace at great cost, but not any cost. Later this Holy Child Jesus, now become the Man of Galilee, pronounced a blessing on the peacemakers, but He did not mean peacemakers with evil. Capitulating to the devil is not the way of peace. Jesus never compromised with sin, and announced frankly: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). Jesus did not come to achieve peace by dissolving moral distinctions, or by signing a truce between the powers of evil and the forces of righteousness.

Paul pinpointed the relationship between peace and righteousness: The kingdom of God consists of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:11). Peace follows righteousness,

never precedes it, and never exists apart from it. And it is "in the Holy Ghost." It can be found only in the spiritual dimension of reality, and known only by those who know Christ in the Spirit.

This means two things which are relevant to our times. One is that the birth of Christ marked the advent of a Kingdom not of this world, composed solely, in its earthly beachhead, of transformed men who would understand that their Kingdom could not be extended by earthly weapons. Their weapons would be heavenly—but "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (II Cor. 10:4). They are love, justice, prayer, faith, and the Word, wielded in the Spirit. When Christians scorn these weapons as being feeble and impractical, and rely on carnal weapons, they fail Christ and prove themselves unbelievers at heart.

Unregenerate society must rely on education, the ballot box, the law, and in some cases even the sword. These are the best society has as devices for harmonizing human relations. And the Christian is involved on this level too, inescapably so. But he must guard against pinning his hopes on this level, or becoming so involved that he fails to use his own weapons.

And let it not seem too strange to talk about weapons and peace together, for one of the elementary principles which belong to peace is that Christ gives peace because He has won a war. But in the mopping-up operations we share in the conquest. Every won soul is a won battle—and the circle of peace is enlarged.

The second application to our times is that the kingdom of God will not be extended by the Christian becoming unnecessarily embroiled in the senseless strife of men. He must side with right against wrong. But he should avoid being sucked into the maelstrom of emotional hysteria which confuses right with wrong, and is swept along by fears, hates, and prejudices under the guise of standing for principle. It is diabolical for a professed Christian to be a fomenter of strife, whether between nations, neighbors, or races. No matter how stormy the seas of society, the Christian should be an island of loving calm—not compromise, but calm. Let him in deed and in truth be a peacemaker rather than an inflamer. Let him bear this character in his school, in his office, in his factory, in his block. Then there will be some recognizable kinship between the Christ of Bethlehem and those who profess His name.

Don't Be a Quitter *(Continued from page 1)*

the miracles as He did in that day. Together God and Joshua performed the apparent impossibility. The discouraged people were inspired. The swollen river was crossed. The high walls of the city went down at the first blast of the rams' horns and the shout of God's people.

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Don't cast away your confidence. *Don't be a quitter!*

Preaching with power
is more than a technique

Preaching as Spiritual Reality

By Wilbur W. Brannon*

THE GREATEST TASK of the preacher is to maintain a high level of sensitivity to the *presence* of divine reality within the church. The decay of spiritual life is the result of insensitivity to spiritual reality. The spiritually real may be present without the Church being alert enough to apprehend it.

Man is brought into personal encounter with God in the event and the occasion of the sermon. It is not simply proclaiming the incredible good news of forgiveness. It is an occasion where something *happens.* God becomes real and His forgiving love is communicated. We must not only define love and forgiveness in our preaching. We must forgive and love! The discovery of spiritual reality will not be possible for our people unless we have a right relationship with God, ourselves, and others. The sermon must be more than a human production, a religious lesson, or an ethical speech. As William B. Oglesby, Jr., says, it must be the "incarnation of love."

P. T. Forsyth affirms, "The great, the fundamental, sacrament is the sacrament of the Word." If this be true—and I am inclined to agree—as Nazarene preachers, we have no more important task in the world than at the moment when we stand in the pulpit and allow the creative energy of the Spirit to act upon the total personality of each hearer. This spiritual contact that God makes through the preaching of His Word has a way of drawing man into the realm of the holy and at the same time creating a desire for the holy. The positive gospel is the revelation of God's love issuing from His holiness. God's attitude toward sin and the sinner becomes clear. He reacts against sin's corruption, but He responds to the sinner's need of redemption.

If the sermon is to be a dynamic event in which God's forgiveness becomes personally real, the preacher must immerse himself in the Bible. For in the sermon the Word of God must be communicated. The Word is not merely a statement; it is a deed. The story of God's great acts of creation, redemption, and preservation is the story of the Bible. It is the story of events. God is acting. The preacher is to witness to these acts as he confirms God's faithfulness in his personal experiences of living.

Don Miller states in his book *Fire in Thy Mouth,* "Preaching is the act through which these saving events are re-enacted in the experience of the church pew. A sermon, therefore, is not primarily something said, but

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something done." Only the man himself is the sermon. That is the reason no man can convincingly write or preach someone else's sermon.

Salvation is man's response to what God has done. Man is not saved by some analytical knowledge of God and His processes or of man and his processes. He is saved by grace, a divine act. If we use the pulpit to vent our passions which resemble the eruption of volcanic anger, what chance have we to reveal God's love? Dr. Oglesby asks, How many times has the pulpit been used to explode our hostilities on our people? It may be that we have not been treated so well. But does that excuse us from telling them off on Sunday, and cloaking our message in some acid-cutting scripture that will take the hide off our members, and claiming that if they answer back they are defying God and are on the road to hell? There is no redemption in that!

Love is sharp at times, but it is always directed toward life, never toward death. "Love knows no end to its endurance." And if our people are to know this about God, they must know this about their pastor.

If the event of the preacher's sermon is to be a spiritual reality in the lives of his people, he must know well who they are and where they are. H. H. Farmer, in *The Servant of the Lord,* says, "The preacher whose sermon wrestles with the fundamental struggles of life will find his people will sense in him a man who can understand their struggle, who will not make light of their failures, but be patient in walking with them through the valley of the shadow of death." In this way, the sermon can be the occasion of spiritual renewal in the church.

The idea of revival in the church cannot be separated from its primary source in the life of God. The holiness of God has often been visualized as only blazing-white purity. But it is also absolute moral and personal energy. Our God of fire is like the sun in the heavens, providing the source of all vital force for the Christian and the church. This is the good news that rescues and redeems us from a progression toward decay.

For the Bible to become the *living* Word, more than a scholarly understanding of the Scriptures is necessary. The preacher must base his message on the results of personal experiments in applying the Word to his life. The Bible is not to be merely a Quarry for sermon material. It is the interior Sanctuary from which we may come and speak with authority. We are not to preach our experience, but the Christ who comes into our experience.

We must not allow the Bible to fall into disuse among our laity. This has been the mistake of Catholic practice. If we follow their procedure, it is only a step farther to the Catholic idea of the Church in which the sacrament displaces the Word, rather than the Word remaining a sacrament. The prophet is killed that the priest may be enthroned.

Our preaching of the Bible must not ignore men's ignorance of the Word. Yet we should so speak that a new interest in it will be kindled. The Church lives by the Word, not by the preachers. Therefore its preachers are duty-bound to communicate the Word with the authority of the Divine Person. That is the authority of the pulpit.

Everything in the sermon should point toward an inter-penetration of the Holy Spirit with the human spirit. For out of this union is the birth of the "new creation." Every sermon should have this much of an evangelistic purpose and sacramental

value for the benefit of the individual who listens. However, unless the preacher engages in searching, pastoral, theological, priestly prayer, his sermons will be devoid of any redemptive benefit. His prayer life must be more than a devotional catharsis in the morning and a conscience "NITOL" at night. It must be an ingredient of his day's work. This alone will save us from becoming familiar with holy things, which has been the cause of so many articulate and successful ministers forsaking their calling.

D. Elton Trueblood, in agreement with the New Testament, has used a military metaphor to describe the ministry. He says that the real opposition to the Church is encountered by the Christian on the front lines. "The front lines of the Christian cause are in factories, schools, legislatures and homes." Here is where the fiercest struggle takes place, for this is the place where the witness for Christ takes place—not "in church."

It is obvious that the Christian is in the minority. For that reason, he needs courage to meet ridicule, and wisdom to give the right witness. If the Christian is to keep his strength on the front lines, it is necessary for him to withdraw periodically behind the lines for times of renewal. Otherwise, the danger of being overtaken by the advantage of an aggressive enemy or breaking down as the result of battle fatigue is always imminent. "His greatest support, intellectually and morally," states Trueblood, "must come from those operating chiefly in rear areas, who exist in order to strengthen the ones on the front lines."

These are the pastors and teachers, whose primary purpose is to assist others in their ministry of witnessing. The good pastor, then, is really an "assistant in the ministry." That is the import of Eph. 4:12, which says that our gifts are "for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (RSV).

The success of a pastor is not to be measured by his talent for attracting large audiences or handling large budgets. We would never discount these, but a pastor is truly successful when the people of his congregation become effective witnesses in their daily lives in the world.

Thus, church renewal—or revival, if you will—is dependent on how well we fulfill our calling and respond to His Word: "Preach the word . . . make full proof of thy ministry." The proof of our ministry will be in the life of our churches.

Let us make the sermon an event wherein the grace of divine forgiveness becomes personally *real* and as a consequence surging spiritual life will seek outlets of sanctified expression. May God help us, in spite of our failures, to generate a quality of spirit and an adequacy of power in our people which will demonstrate to the world that God still lives and gives life—eternal life—to all who will believe.

Christmas is more
Than earth's glitter and gold,
Its meaning more glorious
Than carols have told.

Christmas is more
Than fond greeting and fun.
It's God's way of saying,
"I love you, each one!"

From *Fullerton Fellowshipper*

An art within reach
of all who care

Make Your Bible Reading Live

By Gordon Chilvers*

"He read Revelation, chapter five, and made each sentence become pregnant with new meaning. The Bible became alive." These words described Dr. Mander's public reading of the Bible when he first preached at Heath-Street Baptist Church, Hamstead.

Can this glowing testimony be given to our public reading from the Bible? Seldom. That is not because we do not reckon the reading of the Bible to be important. As Protestants, we give a central place in our public worship to the Bible. In the coronation service in England the sovereign is presented with a Bible. He is told it is "the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the royal Law. These are the lively oracles of God."

We have an incentive to good reading as we recall that the Bible is a real power that can vitally affect us and all who hear our reading from it.

Although we know the value of scripture, much of our public reading from it is ineffective. Why should this be? Reckoning the Bible to be important in our services does not remove the special difficulties we face as we read the Bible publicly today.

As a result of lack of training, the principles of interpretative reading are unknown to most preachers. Failure to read effectively is the result.

Because of their lack of training, preachers often neglect this part of their ministry. Quite rightly, much thought is given to the preparation of sermons. Public prayers even in nonliturgical churches are often thoroughly prepared. Yet how seldom does the reading of the Bible receive much forethought! Indeed occasionally a person reads publicly a passage that he has obviously not read privately in the previous month.

Again, sometimes preachers have thought that they should change their tone of voice when they read the Bible. They have therefore adopted a clerical voice, believing this exchange would convey piety and devoutness to their reading. But monotonous reading of drone or drawl will fail to make any impact on the hearers' minds.

Admittedly, the public reading of the Bible has specific problems that increase the difficulty in reading it effectively. The language of the Bible is different from that of other

*Norwich, England.

books currently read. There are technical theological words that are seldom if ever used outside the pulpit or theological discussion. Reading King James Version has the added problem that scores of words are used there in a different sense from what they are today—over 300 years later. Also, there are obsolete words such as "goodman" (Matt. 20:11), the husband or male head of the household; "governor" (Jas. 3:4) refers to the pilot or steersman of a ship. Again, there are sentences where we get a wrong idea until we know the force of the word. "Harnessed" (Exod. 13:18) means "equipped for battle." The children of Israel did not do the work of horses! In Josh. 22:22 the word "he" is redundant. Retained, it gives a false idea of what is meant.

Public reading of the Bible thus bristles with difficulties. Yet we want to read it effectively. What steps can we take to improve our reading?

Care is needed in any public reading to make sure that we give sense to what we are saying. The reading of the Bible, and especially when the reading is from King James Version, calls for particular care or our hearers will not get the right meaning of the passage.

At Christmastime, younger listeners especially have often been given the impression that Joseph was told to take a small insect with him to Egypt (Matt. 2:13) instead of being given an injunction to leave the country speedily. A slight pause before "and" will help avoid this misconception.

Most serious of all is a verse where we make Jesus a notorious sinner if we do not observe the comma. Unless we make the short break indicated by the comma after the word "other," we shall read: "Therefore were also two other malefactors, led with him to be put to death" (Luke 23:32). Then our hearers will receive the suggestion that Jesus was in the same class as the other two and so was a malefactor. We should be careful to accent "other" and give a perceptible pause before we say "malefactors."

Also, we must be certain we know how to pronounce the words in the selected passage. This suggestion seems unnecessary until we recall that we can meet strange names. Bible books include Habakkuk, Haggai, and Philemon. Also proper names include Melchizedek, Merodach-baladan, Pochereth-hazzebaim, and Chedorlaomer. A further complication arises because pronouncing dictionaries and Bibles do not always agree on pronunciation. "Sarai" can be pronounced with two or three syllables. Here, consistency is the main rule.

Again, only what we understand can we read intelligently. So we must be sure of the meaning of the passage before we read it. It is good to study the proposed passage in depth. Reading other versions will help to give us the general sense of the passage. The use of a commentary will help to clear away any mists. The meaning of any unfamiliar words can be gained from a Bible dictionary or commentary. Reading the passage slowly several times during the week before reading it publicly will give needed familiarity with it. This repeated reading gives the passage an opportunity to speak to us before we try to help others hear it speak to them.

Next, as reading scripture aloud is interpretative reading, we must seek to feel the emotion or feeling appropriate to the passage we read. As Leslie E. White has put it: "When the text is noble, dynamic, exalting or

didactic, the readers should strive to convey these characteristics to the congregation. When the passage is grave, reverential or less moving in emotional fervor, the intonation of voice should still be in keeping with the intrinsic meaning of the words although less demonstrative."

The tone of our voices should reflect the emotion in which the words were first spoken or written. To show the fitting emotion of a passage we should read it as if we had written it ourselves. Then our reading will arrest the attention of our hearers. True, a theatrical approach which suggests pretense and vulgarity is to be avoided at all costs. Yet stilted, feeble reading is little better. A dramatic approach which makes it living and real is vital.

Reading the Bible effectively requires both study and regular practice. Yet good reading will give satisfaction that will reward both reader and listener. It is worth all our efforts to succeed in reading the Bible well.

Practical Points *that make a difference*

"I Worshipped This Morning—and I Needed To"

Dear Son:

Our pastor led us in an *act of worship* this morning—and, oh, how I needed that hour!

We had just completed an evangelistic crusade and, though we were happy with the results, we were weary of the intense drive of a full week of services. We needed, with our new converts, to worship!

Our pastor started with an appropriate invocation—bringing his people before a loving Heavenly Father. The hymns were magnificently moving. We were led in "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing," "How Firm a Foundation," and "Satisfied." The pastoral prayer spoke to all our hearts and moved us to greater devotion and work for our Lord. The choir and "special" lifted our spirits and prepared the mood for the oracle of the hour.

Then our pastor preached. He quickened our spirits and touched our emotions. His preparation was so thorough that he spoke from the "overflow" and moved among us with his rhetoric. It was as though God was speaking—and I believe that He was!

When he was through, we sat for a moment examining our hearts to see what difference it might make—and for me it was a new week.

His benediction was from Jude 24-25, and the choral response was scriptural. The whole service was for me! He had prepared thoroughly. He was warm of heart—and God used him!

Son, your people will come to the sanctuary looking for bread—don't settle for a stone!

Love,
Dad

Do You Have a Samuel in Your Church?

By Robert H. Green*

IT WASN'T TOO MANY years ago that I attended the seminary of another denomination and heard them lament the fact that they had only three ministers for every five churches. Since we in the Church of the Nazarene were quoting at that time about five ministers for every three churches, I thought I knew what their problem was—they were not spiritual enough. Now that we are having similar difficulties, I am not so sure (it's different when it affects us).

There are many reasons for the lack of ministerial candidates, but I would suggest two that I think contribute to the lack:

First, the concept that, "if you can do anything else but preach and still make it to heaven, do it." This is neither logical nor scriptural. The implication is that there is something about the ministry that is to be avoided at all cost except the damnation of your soul. It would be like Isaiah saying, "If I can't get out of it, Lord, I'll have to go." Rather Isaiah said, in effect: "Look me over, Lord, and see if I will do." I believe this positive concept taught by our ministers to the children in the church will produce more youth that will be listening and praying for God to call them into the ministry.

How many times have you heard a devout Christian say, "If I can do anything else in the world than be a doctor [or a lawyer or merchant] and still go to heaven, I surely will do it." We ought to teach that God's will in selecting a life profession is essential regardless to which area it should be directed.

The other reason why not many finally enter the ministry is the tendency for some who are called to go into sociology or psychology as a substitute fulfillment.

With the great surge of activism among our youth today, the great awareness of social needs of their fellowman, and the feeling that the Church ought to be more "relevant" to the needs of the "less fortunate" people, many become infected with the notion that the Church is irrelevant and want to be "where the action is." So they become social workers, peace corps volunteers, etc.

The question of the relevancy of the Church is too great for this article, but somehow we have to show our young people that a call to full-time Christian service is primarily a call to minister to people who are lost because they need a Savior, and

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sociology or psychology cannot supply that Savior.

I believe that we ministers will have to shoulder most of the blame for not having more of our youth enter the ministry. God is calling sufficient laborers for the harvest, and more of those who are called would respond if they had a good example of a pastor who loved his work, felt God had been good to him to let him be a minister, and loved his people.

There needs to be something more than being a good example. *We must learn to train our responding children and youth by some sort of apprenticeship program.*

Instead of saying to a young boy when he tells you at summer camp he feels God is calling him to enter the ministry when he grows up, "That's fine, Son, but make sure you really are called," take that as an opportunity to begin developing him for the ministry that will pay dividends years later.

Let's call it an "Eli and Samuel Program." Just as Eli took young Samuel under his leadership and gave him special jobs that trained him for the great task God had for him years later, every minister should have one or more children from his home or congregation who have heard the call of God and are being shepherded in a special way toward the day they will accept their own place in the ministry.

This type of program will help those called to be steadier in their Christian experience, especially in their teen years. And it will give them a greater insight into the ministry.

Give the "ministerial candidate" special small jobs; take time frequently to talk with him; show him some of the "behind-the-scene" workings of the ministry; share with him some of the victories of a minister; talk to him about his problems; help him plan his education for the ministry.

Dr. James Kennedy said, "It is better to train a soul winner than to be one yourself." Similarly it is better to train successful ministers than to be one. But no man can effectively train others and be a failure himself. And perhaps the most tragic failure is to *seem* to be a success, yet have no one follow in our path.

God calls. Let's help our youth respond to the call.

Preach the Word

O evangel, called of God,
Preach His Word to me
And fool me not by fancy tales
And pretty falsities;
Nor water down the Word
With men's opinions and half-truths
That please my ears
But deceive my hungry heart.

The rugged truth
Is what I want
In fullness preached, and power;
And let it hurt and prick and cut
If this will bring me
To my knees,
Where through His blood
I sweet redemption find.

Love God enough
To proclaim all His truth
And hold not back
For fear of offending me.
For honest souls will heed the truth
And fall headlong
With contrite heart
Opon the Rock, the Christ.

And if I broken be
And sorrow and repent—
And lose my life in His—
And if in my loss
I gain the cross, and crown,
And find my Lord at last,
Shall not we both be glad
That you were true,
O evangel, called and sent of God?

—Eleanor L. Cunningham

Grace is available for
both service and purity

The Father Image in the Pastor

By Milton Harrington*

THE LETTER from the serviceman in Viet Nam asked his pastor to visit the home where his wife and small boys were living. Apparently something in the letters from his wife had suggested a need for some type of masculine influence in the home. Not knowing where else to turn, he chose to place his trust in his pastor and opened the door with this request for a pastoral visit. The pastor understood the serviceman's concern, but he was also troubled with a fear. The wife and mother in this home was a very attractive person and there was the possibility of imaginative gossip circulating in the community.

In a very timely and pertinent way, James writes to the very heart of such a situation and to the responsibility of the pastor to project a father image under identified circumstances. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (1:27).

Most commentators relate this verse to the profound difference between a religion of profession and one of action. Men have a tendency to try to make ritual and liturgy a substitute for sacrifice and service. Some would also faintly leave the implication that such religious action, an active concern for the ghetto situations and circumstances, will bring with it this condition of holiness that is pleasing to God—that somehow one purifies himself in the process of scrubbing up the human pigpens of our society. True it is that the Pharisees in the time of James were obsessed with their ceremonial and liturgical holiness until physical human need was shunned as an act of righteousness. They protected their holiness image with the complexity of laws which sought to clothe their naked neglect of those needs demanding compassionate concern. They tried to legislate themselves out of touch with human need.

What then is James seeking to say? There wasn't a war going on in Viet Nam when he wrote, but he understood the need created by such separating forces. He recognized the need in homes where the father has been removed temporarily or permanently. He also recognized that the most adequate projection of the father image comes through the sanctified life, and where is a better essence of this than in the person of the spiritual

*Pastor, Kennewick, Wash.

pastor? In the pastor are the representative presence and influence of God. David wrote, "Let God arise . . . A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows" (Ps. 68:1, 5). "Let God arise" through His human instrument, the pastor.

We disagree thoroughly with the practice of calling a pastor "father," as it is the formal title among some, but we must also honestly confess that it does have a certain psychological value that immediately projects a desirable relationship. The Apostle Paul enlarged this relationship by setting a goal for himself to become all things to all men. James has clearly stated the responsibility for the masculine influence to those homes now deprived of a father's reality.

Then we must face what the pastor recognized in our opening paragraph —fear. James is emphatic that the projection of this father image must not lead the pastor into moral difficulties. He chooses the word "unspotted," which is translated from "being free from vice, unsullied." Both of these words speak of a moral weakness. Even more than that, a moral fault already in existence, not in a sense of actual immorality, but in the sense of that human susceptibility to strange emotional rumblings when subjected to strong pressures. This explains why James carefully speaks of *pure* religion. The danger is real and the fear proper, but it must not be permitted to destroy our usefulness. The father image is correctly needed in many circumstances, and it is within the moral power of the sanctified pastor adequately and with holy purpose to fulfill that need. Paul exemplifies the discipline needed when he writes, "I . . . bring my body into subjection" (I Cor. 9:27). No man of God even dares to play with immoral emotions. His responsibility—solemn, holy responsibility—is to "keep himself unspotted," free of moral weakness, in all of his ministries. Paul also discovered that "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7). Bring this trichotomy into the framework of strong moral discipline and there will be little difficulty.

The rich rewards in fulfilling this responsibility are inestimable. Let us go forth to meet the need with a great strength of moral character and the keen consciousness that Jesus Christ is right by our side.

Lessons I Have Learned

1. You can be more thoroughly Christian when you don't feel like it than when you do.

2. Learn to trust your high hours. Never doubt in the darkness what God has revealed to you in the light.

3. Be challenged by Christian ideals, but not frustrated by them.

—Jim Bond

The Mechanics of the Ministry

By Raymond C. Kratzer*

XI. Attendance Insights

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID about the significance or the insignificance of numbers. But all of life is involved with numbers in one way or another! We are constantly made aware of the number of years of our age, or the time of day, or the amount of dollars we have left after all of the bills have been paid. Sales propaganda thunders the shortness of time in order to take advantage of a sale, or the diminishing number of days until Christmas. Periodically Uncle Sam knocks at our door to correct his statistics concerning our growing population. And on and on we could go.

In the church we have one well-used measuring stick for our success —"How many do you have in your Sunday school?" Unfortunately, this is not the best rule of thumb by which to measure the success of a church, but it is important. It holds such a place of prominence in our Zion that each church posts this number in a conspicuous place for all to see. This is not beside the point. In fact, we discover as we read the Bible that God puts such a premium on "numbers" that He has one whole book in Sacred Writ captioned by that term. Sacred writers often mention specific numbers in recounting certain events. For example, the 5,000 who were fed by the small lunch of a boy, the number of disciples in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost, and the number of converts as a result of Peter's great sermon on that same occasion.

We are certain that we should not worship at the shrine of numbers. Neither should we discount them. They do have some special significance. And the pastor who disdains their importance will discover that his program lacks dynamic and motivation. Likewise, his enterprise may be moving toward diminishing returns on his investment.

I am confident that a steady growth in Sunday school usually develops a like growth in every area of the church. It is still true that the church school is the "arm of the church" to reach out and bring in new people. Its techniques and methods have been greatly improved through the years, and they will bring results, if they are faithfully worked. New buildings, nicer facilities, and more adequate tools are invaluable to the growth of

*Superintendent, Northwest District.

this arm of the church. But these will not take the place of hard work in terms of visitation, prayer, and concern. Likewise, dedicated and well-trained teachers are essential to a growing organization.

As important as the Sunday school attendance is, the number of people present in the morning worship service, the evening evangelistic service, the midweek service, and the revival service, is equally important. In fact, every area of church attendance should be scrutinized by the pastor to see that the work is growing in a well-proportioned way. Some churches may boast a great Sunday school, but the rest of their services are anemic. Others may pride themselves on a great Sunday morning attendance while their church school languishes and the midweek service is almost dead.

An alert pastor can work out an attendance record for all of his services which can be kept from week to week. Usually some good layman will be glad to assume this responsibility. Attendance at the Sunday school, in the morning and evening services, the midweek service, and the revival meetings can be carefully recorded. A year's record at this point can begin a service-by-service check to see if progress is being made.

Weaknesses which may be revealed by annual comparisons can motivate a pastor to bolster a sagging program and strengthen the weak spots. In my last pastorate, I recall a year's records of all of our major services revealed that, although our Sunday school had grown adequately, the midweek service was staying about the same. This revelation was enough to motivate me to improve the midweek service until it was more interesting. We involved more people in its performance, varied its program, and were rewarded with a joyous increase in attendance.

We should be as wise as the business world in appraising our strengths and weaknesses. We dare not be too unrealistic in our assessments of success. I recall talking to a pastor one time and of asking how his church was coming along. He responded somewhat on this fashion: "Oh, we are coming along great! God is blessing us, and I have never felt closer to Him. Oh, we just lost one family of six members and another family of four members. I don't know exactly why, but they just quit my church. But we are getting along just fine."

Of course I appreciated his optimism. But I felt he was looking through "rose-colored spectacles" at the facts of life. The truth of the matter was that he was losing the battle and didn't know it.

There are times in the life of any church when attendance ebbs rather than flows. These occasions try the soul of any pastor. And when they come, the true shepherd will do his best to correct the trends and will find a way in due season to be in the plus column. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:6).

In the parable of the talents, Jesus implies His expectancy of getting an increase from His investment in us. To be sure, we cannot adequately evaluate all of the efforts put forth by the minister in terms of statistics. Only God can determine the results of loving service, of burdened prayer, and of selfless devotion. His records will no doubt be quite different from our appraisals. On the other hand, let us not be so ethereal that we presumptuously assume our investment is paying good dividends when the figures shout otherwise.

The
PASTOR'S
SUPPLEMENT

Compiled by The General Stewardship Committee **Dr. B. Edgar Johnson,** Editor

Merry Christmas

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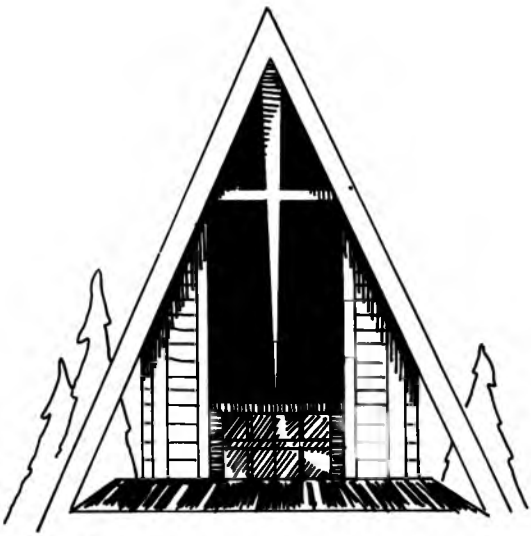

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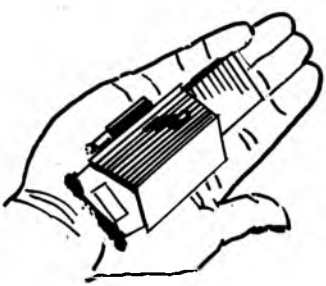

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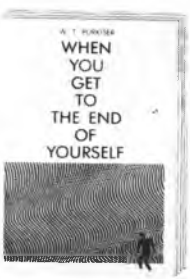

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NAZARENE INFORMATION SERVICE

Note on 1970 News Review

NAZARENE PASTORS should send now for copies of the 1970 denominational year-end review story if they plan to distribute it to their local newspapers and broadcasting offices.

A separate story covering some highlights of the Nazarene gospel work through the Department of World Missions during the last year also is available on request.

Pastors are urged to request as many copies of each story as they can use. Mail requests to: N.I.S., 6401 the Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131.

The annual Nazarene news review will not be sent automatically to all pastors, but this year will be mailed instead directly to newspapers and broadcasting news editors in cities where the Church of the Nazarene is known.

Nazarene pastors may make certain that copies are mailed to their local community newspapers by sending a card or note to the Nazarene Information Service at the address above.

Pastors should give the name and address of their newspaper(s) and the name(s) of their church editor or individual(s) who should receive the articles. N.I.S. will take care of the rest.

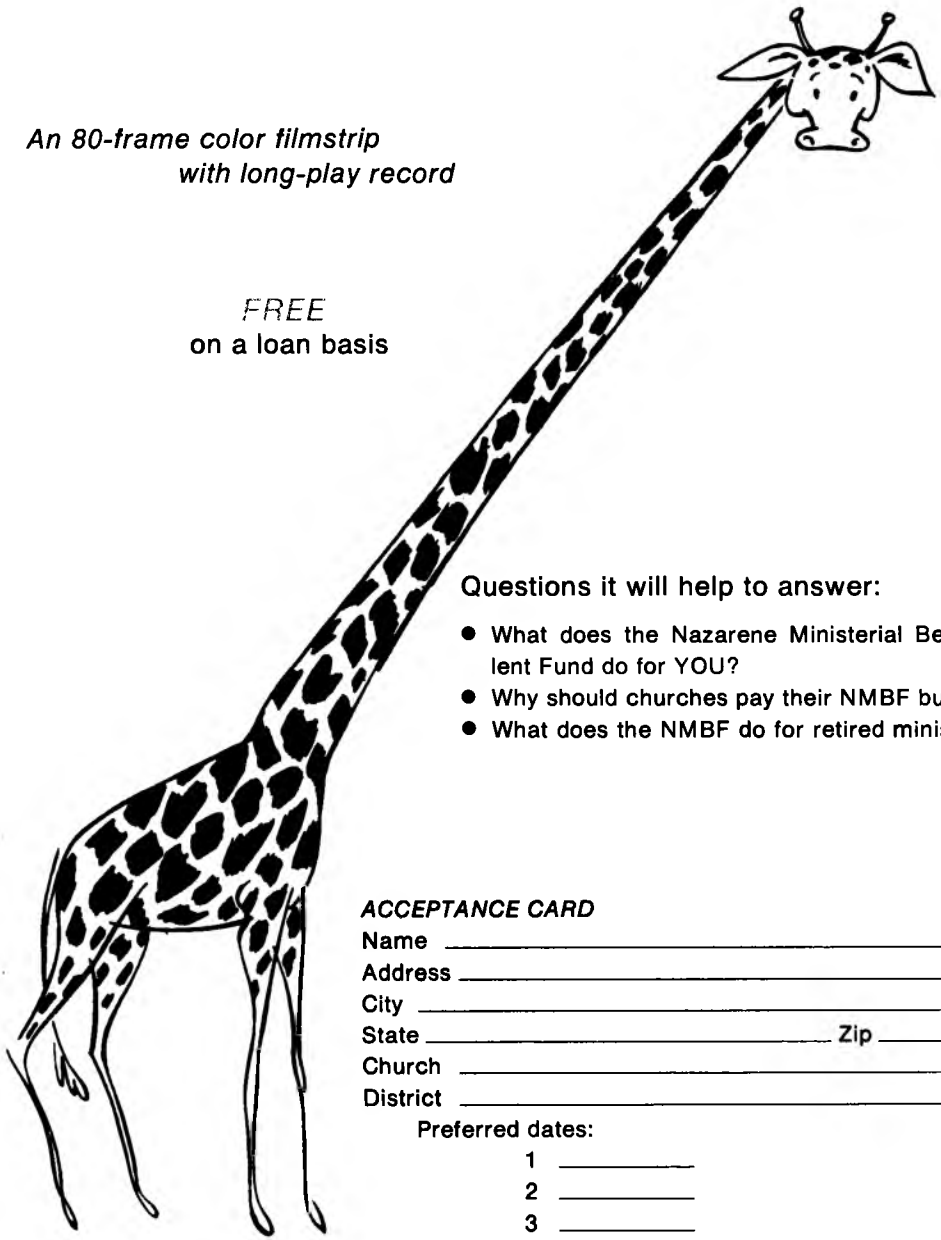
This will be the thirteenth annual Nazarene year-end review for newspapers and broadcasters.

The revised plan of distribution has been adopted in order to lighten the load for some pastors at a time when they are most heavily involved in Christmas and watch-night programs.

O. JOE OLSON

"BEYOND THIS DOOR . . ."

is worth looking into!



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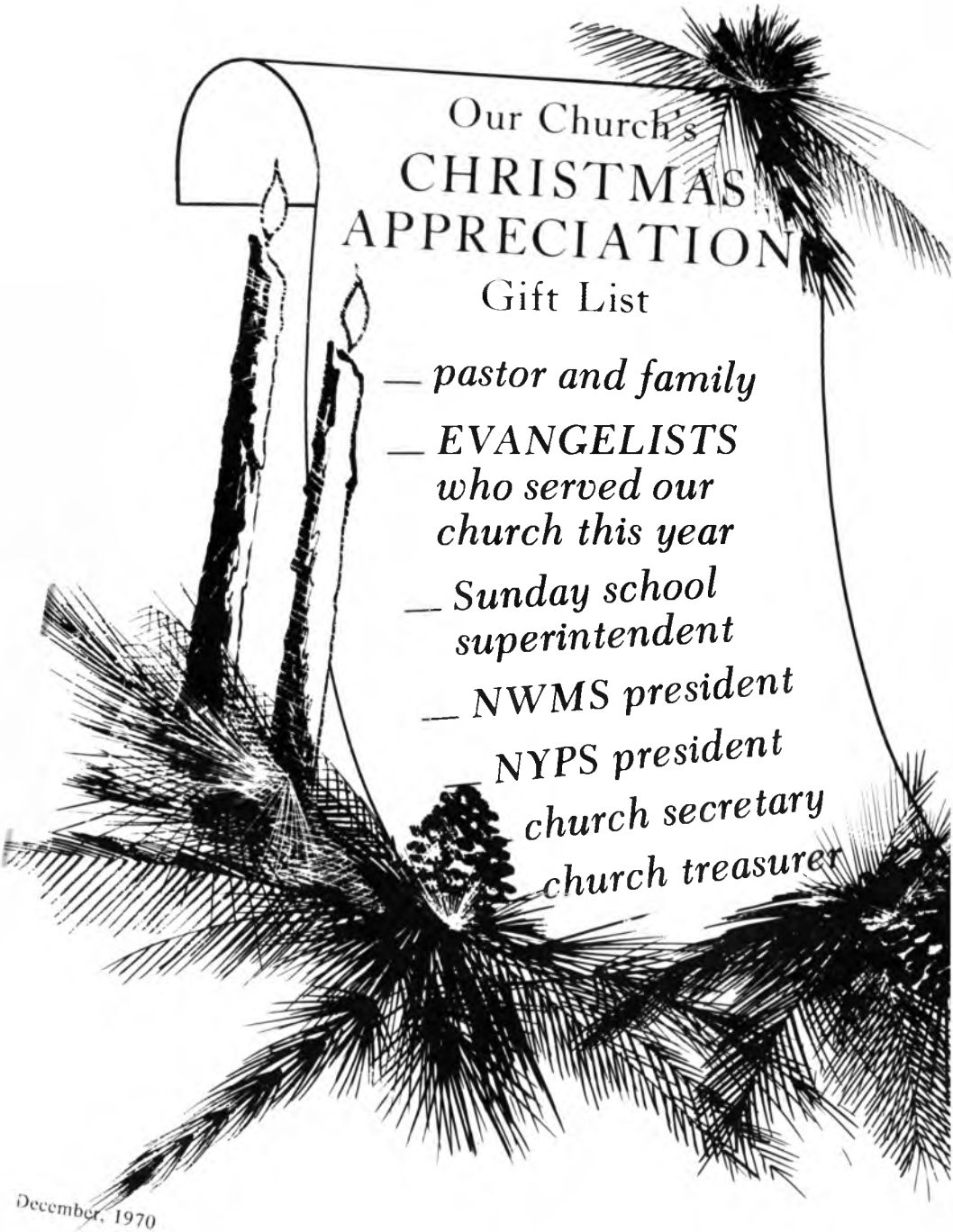

December, 1970

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THE PREACHER'S WIFE

Mrs. B. Edgar Johnson

Room in My Heart

"A HOUSE JUST ISN'T A HOME until you've spent a Christmas in it!" our 10-year-old daughter exclaimed as she joyfully unpacked the tree trimmings the first year in one of our new pastorates.

Yes, it seems we almost measure years by Christmas seasons. The Christmas story—read, sung, pictured, programmed, pantomimed—lives anew for us year after year.

A new inspiration came to me as I read the sacred story from the Phillips translation recently. After the angel had told Mary she would be the mother of a son, Mary had questioned, "How can this be? I am not married!" The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the most high will overshadow you . . ." Mary's response moved me deeply: "I belong to the Lord, body and soul, let it happen as you say" (Luke 1:38).

Such a beautiful declaration of complete dedication—"I belong to the Lord, body and soul." Just a few verses further down are the words of Elisabeth to Mary, "Oh, how happy is the woman who believes in God, for he does make his promises to her come true!"

Because Mary so fully belonged to the Lord—body, soul, reputation—she became His instrument to bear and give birth to the Savior of the world—the incarnate God.

As I thought of her consecrated life and her holy privilege, I recalled Paul's words from Gal. 4:19: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, *until Christ be formed in you.*" Many other verses came to mind that speak of "Christ in you." What an exciting assurance! If we can make this same commitment that Mary made, Christ can "be formed" in us.

The Apostle Paul tells us that there is a secret—a great mystery—which was hidden from ages and from generations (Col. 1:26), which the world was seeking in vain, which wise men from the East hoped they might find, "but now is made manifest to his saints." Paul went through the world just to tell those who would receive it what that simple mystery was: "*Christ in you*, the hope of glory."

Christ in me! Christ—the One who contains in himself all that man ought to be, all that man needs to have, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells! Christ in me—to direct my mind, my will, my attitudes, my conversation, my actions, my decisions, my relationships!

In my teens I knew a man whom I felt so embodied the indwelling Christ that I thought his eyes looked like Jesus' eyes. I was always aware of this when I looked at him. And why not? The look of divine love, of concern, compassion, purity—could they not be reflections of the Christ within? John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." A. B. Simpson put it

this way, "I learned to breathe Him in as I breathed, and breathe myself out."

When Mary's time was completed she gave Christ to the world. Shepherds came to find Him; wise men journeyed from afar; the sinful, the distressed, the diseased sought Him out. The world is searching for Him today. When they ask, as certain Greeks did, "Sir, we would see Jesus," can someone point to you and say, "He dwells there"?

Everyone has his sphere of influence. If Christ "be formed in you," you will bring Him forth. Somewhere in your sphere of influence there are "shepherds abiding" . . . somewhere in your sphere of influence "wise men" are enquiring, "Where is he . . . ?"

Oh, blessed Christmas thought: Not only was Christ formed in Mary, but He is being formed in me—increasingly so as I continue to yield Him my body and soul!

"How can this be?" we ask. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the most high will overshadow you."

And we hear Elisabeth's words echo across the ages to us: "Oh, how happy is the woman who believes in God, for he does make his promises to her come true!"

Were Christ ten times in Bethlehem
born,
And not in me—
My case were still forlorn.

IN THE STUDY

ADVENT SUNDAY

The Kingdom That Is Here and Coming

By T. Crichton Mitchell*

TEXT: "Thy kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10*a*).

Whole libraries of books have been devoted to this theme; on no other theme has the Church been so united and divided. The Kingdom was the constant theme of Jesus, and He urged the Church to make it a constant prayer. "Thy kingdom come." And for 2,000 years the Church has prayed that prayer. Where is the Kingdom? Has it come?

Oh, what long, sad years have gone
Since the Church was taught this
prayer!
Oh, what eyes have watched and wept
For thy dawning everywhere!

*Faculty, British Isles Nazarene College, Manchester, England.

In the New Testament there is a kind of ambiguity, a sort of double-talk about it. "Thy Kingdom come . . . on earth . . ."—so goes this portion; "Not of this world"—so goes another. The Kingdom is a gift: "It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"; and yet it is a conquest: "The violent take it by force." We have to be born again to enter it, and yet at some future time the Father will bid us inherit it! Yet again Jesus speaks as though it were already here: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and, "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out devils, then the Kingdom of God has come . . ." (RSV). And yet again when the disciple asked, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom?" He said, "It is not for you to know."

I. *When we pray this prayer we are confessing that the Kingdom has come in our hearts.*

We come into the Kingdom, and the Kingdom comes into us the moment the King takes over the control of our lives. The Kingdom begins in this personal way. Now it is like a man digging up treasure in his field, and now it is like a successful search for pearls, resulting in the discovery and purchase of the best. Now it is like a banquet in which the lame, the blind, the outcast sit as the guests of God; and yet again it is like a Shepherd rescuing one lost sheep. The Kingdom has come in every heart that has crowned Jesus Christ as King—the kingdom of God is the rule of God in the soul of man.

The heart that believes His kingdom
Receives His power and His peace,
His life and His joy's everlasting increase.

II. *When we pray this prayer we are confessing that the Kingdom has come in the fellowship of hearts in which Jesus Christ is King.*

The Church is not the whole of the Kingdom, but the faith that is wholly individualistic and personal is not the Kingdom kind. The Kingdom is a fellowship of hearts. When Paul wrote to the Philippians he said, "We are a colony of heaven," a part of that Kingdom set up in the earth—colonists bound together by grace, by the bonds of love, by experiences shared and ventures, and dangers, and hopes. The Kingdom is where lives are fused together in love and loyalty to one common Lord, where men and women and young people are committed to Christ and to each other—there is the Kingdom.

Wherever in this world I am, in whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts to keep and cultivate.

III. *And the Kingdom comes in the outreach of such a fellowship.*

God's kingdom is not a refugee camp into which we come with sighs of relief from a doomed world; it is not an isolation hospital. It is rather like the headquarters of Operation Rescue. The citizens are not a group of isolationists trying to keep their skirts out of the world's dirt; they do not seek to avoid contact for fear of defilement, but to make contact without contamination. They are *salt* to be applied, *candles* to be burned. When we work for men in the name of Christ, our King; when we witness to small and great; when we are His body—His hands to lift the fallen, His hearts to love through, and His minds to think through—*there is the Kingdom.* The Kingdom is the outreach and uplift of such a fellowship. Its motto is, "You do it to Me when you do it to these."

IV. *But we are equally sure that the Kingdom will come at the end of time and history.*

The Kingdom that came in power at Pentecost will one day shatter into history, and the King will come, and "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth." In God's own time He will come whose right it is to reign, and "the kingdoms of this world" shall "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ."

CONCLUSION: The Kingdom is here and yet it is coming. Some people now taste "the powers of the world to come." Lift up your hearts, therefore, for the coming of the Lord draws near.

BIBLE SUNDAY

"A Lantern to Our Footsteps"

TEXTS: *Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. Keep steady my steps according to thy promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me* (Ps. 119: 105, 133, RSV).

INTRODUCTION: The title is from the hymn "O Word of God Incarnate." It's about 1,600 years now since the great Chrysostom lashed his fashionable congregation at Constantinople for their neglect of Bible reading. His words are for us also: "I always do and always will exhort you that at home you accustom yourselves to a daily reading of the Scriptures . . . The Bible makes the light of God shine upon the soul of the reader, and after it makes a man of him by means of the Old Testament, it makes an angel of him by means of the New!" Angel or no, daily personal Bible reading gives God one line at least on our number.

How shall we do it? I am not pleading for this system or that, for participation in that "grand Prix" that fairly knocks the

breath out of the soul, "How to read the Bible through six times in a year." I plead just for a plain and direct reading of the Bible, not simply for the sake of reading, and not simply for the sake of the Bible, but for the soul's sake.

I. Obtain a Suitable Copy.

Give your eyes a blessing and get a Bible with bold, big type that can be read easily, and one you can handle easily. Personally, for devotional reading I prefer one without a margin and without notes.

II. Read It Slowly, Letting It Soak into the Soul.

Read it, not merely as great literature—for those who read the Bible just as great literature really don't read it at all. Read it, to paraphrase Bunyan, "as the one and only guidebook whom the Lord of the place whither thou art going hath authorized to be your help."

III. Which Version?

Perhaps you will want a King James Version—this seems still to hold a place in the affections of mature Christians, a place all its own; but why not an RSV, or perhaps a *New American Standard,* or even *The New English Bible?* These will help you understand more readily since they will speak to you in the kind of language you use.

Perhaps if you have more than one version you will want to take time to read the portion of your choice in both translations, for as the great Erasmus said, "More light cometh through the diligent comparison of the various renderings than in any other way."

IV. Read Systematically.

This goes for both time and method. Why not a regular time to feed the soul on the Word of God? Good habits mold good characters. There is not much to be gained from scraping around here and there in the fields of the Lord just like a hen in a barnyard. The Nazarene Publishing House will help you select a simple, clear system of Bible reading, but steer clear of the speed-feed system. It takes *time* to meditate, as the Bible itself declares.

V. Remember the Priority of Obedience.

We simply cannot overstate the importance of obedience in the quest for truth and in the reception of light. We must humble ourselves to receive inspiration. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." The Father does indeed hide things from the proud and reveal them to the humbly sincere.

Preacher! Tell your people how Uncle Bud Robinson learned to read his Bible.

T. Crichton Mitchell

BIBLE SUNDAY

The Best of Books

Text: "Because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Pet. 1:21, RSV).

Introduction: The title is borrowed from John Bunyan—from his description of the picture he saw in the House of Interpreter. It was entitled a "True Servant of God," and he described the person thus: "I saw a very grave person, eyes lifted to heaven, the Word of truth on his lips, THE BEST OF BOOKS in his hand, the world behind his back, and he stood as if he pleaded with men." THE BEST OF BOOKS—the Book supreme!

I. It Is the Work of a Master Architect.

A. This is made abundantly clear by its *adherence to plan.* Here are 66 separate and distinct books; capable of being separated and published individually, yet belonging together like the notes of the clef. Here are perhaps 40 different authors—different in birth, circumstance, training, station in life, eras of history, speaking and writing in three different languages—some of them a millennium and a half apart from each other and in utterly different cultures and civilizations. There is a MASTER MIND at work here.

B. The *plan is discernible.* It is the plan of redemption for mankind. In the opening books there is wanted a priest who will offer a sufficient and permanent sacrifice for sin. In the historical books there is wanted a king after God's heart—regal and royal of heart and soul. In the prophetic books there is wanted a prophet with a perfect vision and understanding (cf. I Pet. 1:11-12). And in the progress of time and revelation we have "this man" who "continueth ever," having "an unchangeable

priesthood"; "Jesus Christ . . . the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords"; we have "the prophet and high priest of our profession"; and we move from "Paradise Lost" to "Paradise Regained." God revealed truth in the beginning, fuller truth as the ages rolled past, and complete and final truth in Christ.

II. It Is the Work of an Omniscient Spirit.

A. And this is made abundantly clear by the way in which its prophecies are delivered and fulfilled. God's men often predict events far ahead of time, against human reason, in opposition to the current trends, and in the teeth of contradiction—and centuries after record their fulfillment, or with a sublime nonchalance leave the reporting to the secular press! Archaeology is bursting at the seams with examples of that.

B. The particular subject matter of Bible prophecy is the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the coming of the Holy Spirit. One apostle was so impressed with this work of an Omniscient Spirit that he cried in ecstasy, "To him [Jesus Christ] give all the prophets witness." And Jesus himself could expound every section of the Old Testament in this light (cf. Luke 24:25 ff.) Which raises another point along the same line: i.e., the acceptance of the Old Testament by Jesus Christ, which is rather a strange thing, to be sure, for those who want to hold to Christ but are not particular about the Scriptures! (Cf. Mark 7:13; John 10:35; Matt. 22:29.)

III. It Is the Work of a Holy and Eternal God.

This is seen in its attitude toward sin—the Bible is dead set against sin. It is very truly the HOLY BOOK. Cheap fiction *parades* sin; the classics *palliate* sin; the Bible *proscribes* sin—ALL sin, and sin EVERYWHERE, and sin in EVERY FORM, and sin in ALL MEN. Now Marx, Engels, Shaw, or who-have-you, do not do that. One can be a very close student and admirer of any one of them and not be bothered at all by his sin. But the sincere man reading his Bible will either soon quit reading it or seek a cure for his sin.

IV. It Is the Work of a Redeeming God.

And this is seen by its power in the lives of those who obey its message—in the lives of men and nations the Holy Spirit has delivered and blessed through the message and meaning of this BEST OF BOOKS. It is a Love Letter from God with my personal address on it. Its theme is the Christ, who delivers from sin and sinning and makes ready for heaven, and empowers to work on the earth for righteousness and true holiness. THE BIBLE WORKS! Read John Wesley's *Preface to the Standard Sermons;* consider Bible activity in the history of your nation; consider how the Christ of the Bible transforms lives known to you; and, as Mark Antony concluded his speech: NOW LET IT WORK!

Study it carefully; ponder it prayerfully;
Deep in your heart let its precepts dwell.
Slight not its history; ponder its mystery.
None can e'er prize it too fondly or well.

T. Crichton Mitchell

CHRISTMAS—

The Kernel of Christmas

Text: *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich* (II Cor. 8:9, RSV).

Introduction: I had a lovely card last year—it carried two meaningful verses written by the sender. The second verse read:

Grant us, good Lord, the power to see
What is the kernel, what the polished shell;
Give us the grace to grasp eternity
And let Thy Spirit richly in us dwell.
(J. Ford)

The shell and the kernel, the husk and the heart, the chaff and the wheat—and the power to know the difference! That's what is in this text. Knowledge through heart experience, not mental reasoning; the grace—that is, the unmerited and spontaneous love of Jesus—but also the graciousness of grace; a linking together of the name of His lordship and that of His humanity. He WAS; He BECAME; that you might BECOME.

I. He Was Rich

Again and again in His earthly life Jesus turned to recapture something of His native

air. Again and again the words of memory are heard. He speaks of the world He knew: "In my Father's house"; of the relationships He knew: "The angels do always behold the face of my Father"; of the glory He knew: "The glory which I had with thee before the world was"; of the resources He knew: "Where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through . . ." He spoke of that world to His enemies: "Before Abraham was, I am"; to Nicodemus: ". . . the Son of man which is in heaven"; to His disciples: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." And to the eternal Father: "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." *He was rich.*

II. He Became Poor

"He wished to become poor for a time for you in order that you might become partakers of His everlasting riches. Moreover, it is not said that He became poor when He had been rich—but He assumed poverty, yet did not lose His riches. Inwardly He was rich; outwardly He was poor. His deity was hidden in His riches, His manhood was apparent in His poverty" (Hervetius). He was "pleased as man with men to dwell." Richer than the richest, He became poorer than the poorest. Only the Cross was His own. He borrowed the tomb. The purpose of His birth was His death; there was a cross before there was a manger. He redeemed humanity from within. He was rich—He became poor.

III. That Ye Might Become Rich

Without Him the richest is poor indeed. That "you might become rich." And how rich? Before His birth His mother sang, "He hath filled the hungry with good things." And after His death His disciple said, "Of his fulness have all we received."

That "you might BECOME." Paul could have stopped right there, for there are many of us who live stunted, shrivelled lives because we will not receive the riches of His grace. The kernel of Christmas is that "you might become rich," as He was in the days of His poverty. Rich in grace, rich in faith, rich in peace, rich in resources for life's mastery. That we might be numbered among those who, although poor, yet make many rich.

Conclusion: Jesus looks on our tinsel trappings and cello-tapings and says, "I counsel you to buy of Me gold that will not tarnish, peace that will not wilt, love that cannot fail, hope that never disappoints." All things are yours, whether the world, life, death, things present, past, or future, because you "are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

T. Chrichton Mitchell

CHRISTMAS—

"They Offered Him Gifts"

Text: *Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts* (Matt. 2:11, RSV).

Introduction: Among those lovely greetings one reads on some Christmas cards I read the following some years ago:

"They CAME" . . . wise men!
"They SAW" . . . wise men!
"They WORSHIPPED" . . . wise men!

And we add this other statement which might perhaps relate the Christmas story to the kind of offerings we make to Jesus Christ Sunday by Sunday.

I. *"They offered him gifts" that had been well PREPARED.*

They left nothing to chance. Perhaps they were Babylonians, and if so were used to giving one-tenth of their income to their god and of making gifts that spoke of real devotion. Remember, there is not a word in the story to suggest wealth, except their gifts.

Our gifts should be prayerfully prepared. At no time should we offer less than the best to Jesus Christ.

II. *"They offered him gifts" that had been well PROTECTED.*

The Christmas hymn probably puts it best: "Bearing gifts, we travel afar." And it was no easy journey in the days of the robbers. Such a convoy would attract attention, but they arrived with their gifts intact.

Let us guard our gifts from (1) personal *need,* (2) personal *greed,* (3) *carelessness* (cf. Gen. 15:7-14). Let us beat off the vultures as did Abraham and protect our gifts.

III. *"They offered him gifts that were beautifully PRESENTED.*

Some people are all for stark utility in presentation as in preparation. But we can also make beautiful the presentation of our gifts. I am all for the nice wrappings! How beautifully God gave His unspeakable Gift! Perhaps that's what gives Alabaster giving its power.

IV. *"They offered him gifts" that made a much needed PROVISION.*

Of course they were not to know about the long journey of the Holy Family, nor the need involved. But God is always beforehand in these matters. And Jesus is still traveling to the ends of the earth in persons of His servants. He is not fleeing this time, but marching. There's a war on! He needs our offerings and our gifts. We are not giving to a church, nor to a cause, but to Jesus Christ.

Take my silver and my gold—
Not a mite would I withhold.

T. CRICHTON MITCHELL

CHRISTMAS—

"Just What I Wanted"

TEXT: *Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!* (II Cor. 9:15, RSV)

The little boy thanked his maiden aunt for the Christmas gift of a pincushion: "Just what I wanted—but not very much!"

God's gift is just what we *needed*—a Savior and Friend.

I. THIS GIFT FULLY EXPRESSES THE GIVER.

Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," in every way that affects our need and salvation. God is like Jesus Christ.

II. THIS GIFT PERFECTLY SUITS THE RECEIVER.

Charles Spurgeon had an acrostic that said, "Jesus Exactly Suits Us Sinners." He is all I need—ALL, ALL I need.

III. THIS GIFT CLOSELY RELATES RECEIVER TO GIVER.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." The unspeakable Gift brings God into the human situation and lifts believing men into the divine life.

IV. THIS GIFT SHOULD BE ACCEPTED GRATEFULLY.

The Africans, I am told, when most grateful for a gift, will take it with both hands. And certainly both of our hands are empty enough to take this gift. "Nothing in my hands I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling."

V. THIS GIFT MUST BE LOVINGLY USED.

We must not thwart the grace of God by sealing up His mercy. "Let him that heareth say, Come"—For:

VI. THIS GIFT CAN BE ENDLESSLY SHARED.

God's gift creates in the heart of the receiver a compulsion to share. It imparts the prerogative of love—to give and give and give, which is really what Paul has just been writing about (vv. 10-14).

T. CRICHTON MITCHELL

CHRISTMAS/HOLINESS MESSAGE

The Incarnation and the Life of Holiness

TEXT: Rom. 8:1-4, RSV

INTRODUCTION: Here is a breathtakingly thrilling scripture. It is also a "kernel" scripture. It contains a full statement about Christ as God's mighty Answer to our desperate depravity. At the center it is the presentation of (1) a mighty ACT—indeed an almighty act: God has done what the law could not do; (2) a mighty FACT: He condemned sin in the flesh in order that . . . ; (3) a mighty PACT: Walk in the Spirit; set your minds on the things of the Spirit.

The section is perhaps even more obviously full as a statement of the purpose of the Incarnation than even John 3:16.

I. LIFE IN PREDICAMENT: "The law of sin and death" . . . "weakened by the flesh" (cf. 7:25).

II. LIFE IN PERFECTION: "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh."

Paul does not mean to imply that Christ was either unreal or sinful (He was neither, as reference to the Cross shows), but that here was the HOLY LIFE at its most per-

fect and its highest. This life makes holiness positive, beautiful, and desirable.

III. LIFE AS PURCHASED: "And for sin." God SENT the Son, and God SACRIFICED the Son (cf. 3:25).

The Cross was in the cradle, and the Cross was to redeem us from the curse of the law.

IV. LIFE AS POSSIBLE: "In order that . . . fulfilled in us" . . . life in the Spirit.

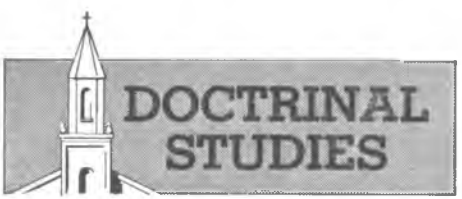
The life as revealed in Christ's walk is the life to which He has redeemed us by His blood. This is the possible life. "He who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked" (I John 2:6, RSV; cf. 3:3). He hath left us an ensample, that we "should follow his steps; who did no sin" (ASV).

V. LIFE AS PROMISED: "According to the Spirit" (cf. vv. 11-17).

The holy life made so desirable and beautiful by "His own Son" is likewise made possible by His death and resurrection. It is available to living faith, and is the work of the Holy Spirit.

It is a very great marvel that we are so moderate in availing ourselves of the promises of God, all of which are in Jesus.

T. CRICHTON MITCHELL



By Ross E. Price*

What Does St. Paul's Greek Teach Us About "the Old Man"?

(Article 11 in a series)

At last, we have now backed up to the real starting place for any foundation of doctrine—a faithful exegesis of the original language in which the revelation came to us. This, our highest hurdle, we have purposely delayed until this point in our discussion, recognizing that not all ministers have a working knowledge of the Greek. Yet it is the Greek that clinches the nail in a sure place. It will be a bit distressing to any who know Greek if we transliterate, but for the sake of those who are not Greek scholars (and the typesetters), we shall do so. Let us begin with Rom. 6:6. It reads:

touto ginōskontes, hoti ho palaios hēmōn anthrōpos sunestaurōthē, hina katargēthē to sōma tēs hamartias, tou mēketi douleuein hēmas tē hamartia.

Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with (Him), in order that the body of the sin principle may be destroyed, so that we should no longer be the slaves of the sin principle.—R. E. P.

Let us now analyze the Greek. *Touto ginōskontes* is the present active participle, nominative masculine plural, of the verb *ginōskō*, "I know," preceded by the accusative neuter singular of the demonstrative pronoun, *houtos*, "this thing." Hence the apostle affirms that we know, perceive and understand this truth, which he then proceeds to state.

Hoti, "that." This conjunction acts also as quotation marks (in the Greek idiom) to introduce and specify the truth which the apostle now immediately states.

Ho palaios hēmōn anthrōpos sunestaurōthē, "the old man of us has been crucified together with [him]." Here the phrase for "the old man," *ho palaios anthrōpos*, appears with the possessive genitive plural pronoun, *hēmōn*, "our," standing in the midst of it in what we call the attributive position.

Sunestaurōthē, "has been crucified with." This verb stands in the aorist indicative passive third person singular form. Its aorist tense is the Greek way of indicating punctiliar (at a point, or momentary) action, since the Greek is more interested in "kind of action" than it is "time of action." This is what may be called the "snapshot tense." The verb is a compound of the Greek preposition *sun*, "together with," and the verb *stauroō*, which means, in its original sense, "to fix or drive stakes." In the passive voice it means "to be cut off by a violent death." Hence the derivative meaning "to crucify, to mortify," in the active sense, and "to become dead," in the passive sense. Now, as Burton reminds us, this aorist tense is to be translated by the perfect tense in English, since the act specified is simple and definite.[1] And, although crucifixion may be a lingering death, Paul avoids the use of a linear tense here for extended action expressly to let us know that he looks upon this crucifixion of "our old man" as a sim-

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ple, definite act done once for all, not as a process, but rather as a spiritual crisis. A. T. Robertson's comment on Gal. 5:24, where again the word for "crucify" is in this aorist tense, is: "Emphasizing the completeness of the extermination of this evil force and the guarantee of victory over one's passions and dispositions toward evil."[2] In his notations on Rom. 6:6, this same writer says: *"Our old man . . . was crucified with him.* This took place not at baptism, but only pictured there. It took place when *we died to sin."*[3] We must treat this more fully later.

Hina katargēthē, "in order that it might be destroyed." Here we have the Greek conjunction *hina,* "that," or "in order that," plus the aorist passive subjective third person singular of the verb katargeō, "to render powerless, to destroy, annihilate, to bring to an end, to abrogate,"[4] used (grammarians call this the telic use of *hina*) in a purpose clause. It thus expresses the reason for which the old man is crucified. "In order that it might be destroyed"—what be destroyed? *To sōma tēs hamartias,* "the body of the sin principle." Note the repetition of the definite article with each word here (*tō* and *tēs*). This places the term for sin (*hamartia*) in the attributive position. Note also Paul's use of the definite article (*tēs*) with the word for sin (*hamartia*) in the singular, thus indicating, not acts of sin (for which Paul would have used the plural of the word for sin), but the principle of sin (for which he specificially uses the singular). We should not overlook the very striking fact that Paul uses the Greek noun for sin (*hamartia*) 36 times between Rom. 5:12 and Rom. 8:10. In 29 of these instances it has the definite article (the) before it, and appears in the singular number. Now 16 of the world's most brilliant commentators agree that when he so uses it the apostle would indicate thereby, not the plural acts of sin (sins), but the singular principle of sin (SIN). And, as Lange observes, "If this power is to be broken, the body of sin must be crucified."[5] For the activity of the sin principle ceases only when it is crucified to death. But he who wears the body of the sin principle is *our old man.*

The next clause opens with the Greek article (*tou*) in the genitive case and acting as a pointer toward the clause that follows it, specifying epexegetically the consequence and result of the aforementioned destruction of the body of the sin principle. In other words, it covers the whole of the clause that follows, making it spell out the result of the destruction of the body of the sin principle.[6] This is "no longer" (*mēketi*) "to enslave" (cf. *douleuein,* articular infinitive, used epexegetically)[7] "us" (*hēmas,* plural first person pronoun in the *accusative* case of *general reference,* hence the direct object of the infinitive) to (*tē hamartia*) "the sin principle" (article and noun in the case called "the dative of advantage," and singular in number). Hence when the body of the sin principle is destroyed, that same sin principle no longer holds the advantage over us by reason of its enslaving powers. We do no longer "go on being" the slaves of SIN (the present tense indicates linear or ongoing action usually).

Full well, then, does Lange observe that "the *Christian* dies to sin by being crucified with Christ."[8] Hence the apostle adds: "For he who has died off has been acquitted from the sin principle" (Rom. 6:7, R. E. P.).

We shall substantiate this article with quotations from several of the leading exegetes in the next article. Thereafter we can give our attention to the other Pauline references to *the old man* in Col. 3:9 and Eph. 4:22.

[1]Ernest DeWitt Burton, Galatians (*International Critical Commentary*), pp. 319-20.
[2]A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament,* IV, 313.
[3]*Ibid.,* p. 362.
[4]Liddell and Scott tell us that *katargeo* in the passive voice means "to be abolished."
[5]John Peter Lange, "Ephesians" (*Commentary on Holy Scriptures*), p. 204.
[6]Cf. Dana & Mantey, *Manual Grammar of the Greek NT,* paragraphs 146 ff.
[7]Cf. H. V. P. Nunn, *A Short Syntax of New Testament Greek,* paragraph 178.
[8]Lange, *op. cit.,* p. 204.

GLEANINGS *from the Greek*

By Ralph Earle*

I Tim. 6:12-21

"Profession" or "Confession"?

"Profession" (v. 12) and "confession" (v. 13) are exactly the same in Greek. Consistency would seem to suggest that we use the same translation in both cases, but which is better?

The word is *homologia.* In the KJV it is translated "profession" everywhere else in the New Testament (Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23;

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cf. II Cor. 9:13). The cognate verb *homologeo* ("professed," v. 12) occurs 23 times in the New Testament. In the KJV it is rendered "confess" 17 times, "profess" three times, and once each "promise" (Matt. 14: 7), "give thanks" (Heb. 13:15), and "confession is made" (Rom. 10:10).

The literal meaning of the verb is "say the same thing" (*lego-homos*), and so "agree with, assent." In John 1:20 it clearly means not to deny but "to declare." In Matt. 14:7 it suggests "not to refuse," and so "to promise."

Thayer points out the basic difference between "confess" and "profess" by calling attention to their roots in Latin. *Profiteor* means "to declare openly and voluntarily," *confiteor* "to declare fully"—"implying the yielding or change of one's conviction" (p. 446). So one professes his faith but confesses his sin. Arndt and Gingrich think that the meaning here is "bear testimony to a conviction." They would translate the combination of verb and noun in verse 12, "make the good profession of faith." They go on to say, "Jesus, the first Christian martyr . . . bore witness to the same *good profession of faith* vs. 13."

In Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* Michel notes that the Greek sense of the verb is "to state solemnly," "to affirm," "to attest" (V, 207). He says that it signifies "a solemn declaration of faith in the Christian sense of proclamation."

Michel also has some helpful observations about the noun. He writes: "*Homo logia* implies consent to some thing felt to be valid, and in such a way that it is followed by definite resolve and action, by ready attachment to a cause. The aim in *homologia* is not a theoretical agreement which does not commit us, but acceptance of a common cause" (p. 200). With regard to our passage he comments: "Just because Timothy has made this binding confession he is committed to passing on the proclamation, keeping the commandment and walking without blame until Christ is manifested" (p. 211). He also holds that the reference here is to Timothy's ordination, when the young preacher made a good confession before the congregation (p. 216). Others think it refers to the time of his baptism.

Which shall it be, "confession" or "profession"? The choice is difficult. Weymouth and Moffatt have "confession," but Goodspeed has "profession." However most of the recent versions agree on "confession" (ASV, RSV, NASB, NEB). The majority of the best commentators support this.

"Spot" or "Stain"?

"Without spot" (v. 14) is a single word in Greek, the negative adjective *aspilos. Spilos* is defined as "spot" or "stain." But since "spot" is used in many ways connoting both good and bad, it is better to adopt "stain" here. Timothy is to keep his life unstained by evil.

"Potentate" or "Sovereign"?

The Greek word is *dynastes* (v. 15), from which we get "dynasty." Literally it means "the one who can do something" (from *dynamai*, "I am able"). Grundmann (Kittel, II, 286) writes: "It was used from an early period for 'ruler,' 'the one who is powerful,' 'the one who exercises authority and rule.' "

The word occurs only three times in the New Testament, with three different connotations. In Luke 1:52 it is used for "rulers." In Acts 8:27 it describes a court official. But here it clearly refers to God, who is the "Sovereign" of the universe.

"Immortality"

Two Greek words are translated "immortality" in the New Testament. In this passage (v. 16) it is *athanasia,* which literally means "deathlessness." It occurs only here and in I Cor. 15:53-54.

The other word is *aphtharsia,* "incorruptibility." Only twice is it translated "immortality" (Rom. 2:7; II Tim. 1:10). Four times it is rendered "incorruption" and twice "sincerity." The English adjective "immortal" is found only once (I Tim. 1:17), though the Greek original, *aphthartos,* is given its more literal translation in half a dozen other passages. The two nouns seem to be used interchangeably by Paul in his great treatise on the Resurrection (I Corinthians 15). There *athanasia* is found in verses 53 and 54, *aphtharsia* in verse 42, 50, 53, and 54.

"Unapproachable"

"Which no man can approach unto" is all one word in Greek, *aprositos.* It simply means "unapproachable." Paul probably had in mind the experience of Moses (Exod. 33:20).

"Highminded"

The compound verb *hypselophroneo* (v. 17) is found only here in the New Testa-

ment. E. K. Simpson (*Pastoral Epistles*, p. 90) calls it "a compound probably of Pauline mintage." The more common Greek term of that day was *megalophroneo*. Both mean "haughty, arrogant, proud." Bernard comments: "The pride of purse is not only vulgar, it is sinful" (CGT, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 101).

"Trust in Uncertain Riches"

The Greek says, "Set their hope on the uncertainty of riches." The word for "uncertainty," *adelotes*, occurs only here in the New Testament. There is nothing in this life more uncertain than riches, as many men have found to their sorrow.

"Distribute . . . Communicate"

Both the Greek words (v. 18) are found only here in the New Testament. They are adjectives, introduced by *einai*, "to be." The first, *eumetadotos*, "is best rendered 'ready to impart'" (Moulton and Milligan, VGT, p. 263). Thayer adds to this "liberal," whereas Arndt and Gingrich simply give "generous." The second, *koinonikos*, comes from *koinos*, "common." It is related to *koinonia*, "fellowship." In classical Greek it first meant "sociable, ready and apt to form and maintain communion and fellowship," and then "inclined to make others sharers in one's possessions, inclined to impart, free in giving, liberal" (Thayer).

Bernard suggests that the second adjective "seems to express a wider idea" than the first, and adds: "As is often the case, the larger word is placed second, by way of explanation; a kind heart as well as a generous hand is demanded of the rich" (p. 102). Lock spells it out a little more fully. He says that the distinction between the adjectives is either "quick to give away to others in charity . . . and ready to share with one's friends that which is one's own," or "*eumetadotos*, of action, 'open-handed' . . . *koinonikos*, of demeanour and temper, 'gracious,' with true sense of human fellowship, the antithesis of *hypselophronein*" (*Pastoral Epistles*, ICC, pp. 74-75). Since God is so rich toward us (v. 17), we should be rich toward others.

Probably the best translation of the latter half of verse 18 is "to be generous and ready to share" (NASB).

"Laying Up in Store"

This is all one word in Greek, the participle *apothesaurizontas* (v. 19). It comes from *thesauros*, which first meant "a treasury" and then "a treasure." The idea here is evidently that by giving generously people will be "storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future" (NASB).

"Eternal" or "Indeed"?

The best Greek text has "that which is life indeed" rather than "eternal life." The correct wording obviously has great homiletical possibilities.

"Guard the Deposit"

That is the simple Greek for "Keep that which is committed to thy trust" (v. 20). The expression is found again in II Tim. 1:12, 14 (the only other places where *paratheke*, "deposit," occurs in NT). This deposit was the truth of the gospel, to be guarded against heresies.

"Oppositions"

The Greek word is *antithesis* (only here in NT), which literally means "placed over against." The best translation is "contradictions" (RSV) or "opposing arguments" (NASB).

"Science Falsely So Called"

The use of the word "science" here is obviously incorrect. The Greek has *gnosis*, "knowledge." Science is only a part of human knowledge. Paul was not anti-scientific!

"Falsely so called" is one word in Greek, *pseudonymos* (cf. pseudonym), found only here in the New Testament. It literally means "falsely named." The reference is probably to the false claims of the Gnostics that they had the true *gnosis*. With them "knowledge" was the key word. They found contradictions between the Old Testament and the New, as elaborated in Marcion's famous second-century work, *Antitheses*. But this does not mean, as some older critics claimed, that the Pastoral Epistles were written later than Marcion's time. Now we know that Gnosticism had already penetrated Judaism before the time of Christ.

Hort, however, feels that the primary reference here is to "the endless contrast of decisions, founded on endless distinctions, which played so large a part in the casuistry of the scribes as interpreters of the law" (*Judaistic Christianity*, p. 140, quoted approvingly by both Bernard and Lock).

BULLETIN BARREL

CHRISTMAS COMMANDMENTS

1. Thou shalt do honour to Christ, the Lord, on Christmas.

2. Thou shalt not spend and be spent before Christmas until thy money is all gone and thy strength is all gone, and thou comest to the day bowed in weariness, debts, and regrets.

3. Thou shalt not take the Christ out of Christmas.

4. Remember Christmas Day to make it holy.

5. Thou shalt make Christmas Day a home day, when they family gatherest together and family fellowship takes precedence over all; when father and mother, and brother and sister are more closely bound in Christian love.

6. Thou shalt not fuss and stew.

7. Thou shalt not give to anyone more than thou art able.

8. Thou shalt not forget the needy.

9. Thou shalt declare, "Merry Christmas," to thy neighbor and mean it.

10. Thou shalt so conduct thy life during Christmas that there will be no hangover—either mental or physical, moral or spiritual, or financial, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who lives this day in vain.

From *Southern Californian*

WHO ARE THE WISE MEN?

Who were the wise men in the long ago?
Not Herod, fearful lest he lost his throne;
Not Pharisees too proud to claim their own;
Not priests and scribes whose province was to know;
Not money-changers running to and fro—
But three who traveled, weary and alone,
With dauntless faith, because before them shone
The star that led them to a manger low.

Who are the wise men now, when all is told?
Not men of science; not the great and strong;
Not those who wear a kingly diadem;
Not those whose eager hands pile high the gold—
But those amid the tumult and the throng
Who follow still the star of Bethlehem.

—B. Y. Williams
Wollaston, Mass., Newsletter
Gordon Wetmore, *pastor*

YOUR CHRISTMAS PLANS

YOUR CARDS—Make them Christian cards.

YOUR GIFTS—Make them gifts of love.

YOUR WORSHIP—Make it of God, not things.

YOUR FAMILY—Make them happy, not haggard.

YOUR CHURCH—Make it your center of light.

YOUR PRAYERS—Pray for peace on earth.

YOUR DINNER—A feast of thankfulness.

YOUR OFFERING—For God and others.

YOUR CHRIST—Make Him Master of your life.

YOUR LIFE—Lived for God's glory.

A harried mother says that at Christmastime the kids hang up their stockings. After that it's a full year before any one of them hangs up anything again.

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Preachers' Exchange

WANTED—Set of 1954-55 missionary reading course books: *India Reborn, Tracy, Sahib of India, Branch of My Planting, Light unto My Path, Treasures of Darkness.* Willing to buy. Floyd Gardner, Rte. 1, Logan, Ohio 43138.

WANTED—1928 Nazarene *Manual* to complete set. B. G. Collins, 2918 Oates Dr., Dallas, Tex. 75228.

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE: Seven books from College Press (write for list); would like a set of *Clarke's Commentary.* Joseph E. Thomas, Box 591, Selma, Calif. 93662.

CALENDAR DIGEST

DECEMBER—

NWMS Memorial Certificates
NMBF Christmas Love Offering
6 Bible Society Offering
25 Christmas

JANUARY—

3 Family Altar Sunday
Nazarene Family Week
31 Youth Week Begins

FEBRUARY—

STEWARDSHIP MONTH
NWMS Alabaster and Prayer Chart
14 Seminary Library Offering
21 Brotherhood Week Begins
24 Ash Wednesday

In September, Evangelist C. T. Corbett, of Bradley, Ill., wrote: "Ten more meetings and I'll reach my first 1,000 revival campaigns." Congratulations! and Heaven's blessing on his *second* thousand . . . They probably wouldn't want their teenagers to see them, but a lot of pastors could be helped in personal witnessing by studying "W.O.W." . . . In *Monday Morning* recently, Forrest V. Fitzburg (Presbyterian) had an article with the astounding title (*not* tongue in cheek): "Close the Front Door—Open the Back Door." He says: "I am convinced that *one* of the reasons many . . . individuals couldn't care less about formal church membership is because we are seen by these good people to be an organization willing to sell our souls—our very identity for quantity . . ." He deplores the fact that the only difference between joining the church and other community organizations, such as lodges and service clubs, is that getting into the church is easier. He insists that while pastoral care should be open to all, "discipleship and commitment," on which church membership should be based, "is not universal and never has been open to all comers on any terms whatsoever." In his own church he has adopted a form of agreement with prospective new members. They must promise to (1) worship regularly, (2) give seriously, (3) serve liberally, (4) submit to pastoral care willingly, (5) study conscientiously, (6) pray regularly, and (7) fight openly and fairly. He concludes: "Discipline *is* love, and . . . a lack of discipline indicates a lack of loving concern" . . . We welcome *ETC.* to the Nazarene periodical fold. It is well-edited and promising (p. 21) . . . Pastors, O. Joe Olson has a Christmas gift for you (p. 29) . . . And now, after you have read p. 17, allow Mrs. Johnson and me to say: "From us too."

Until next month,

BT

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