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THE
PREACHER'S MAGAZINE
DECEMBER 1972

PREACHING—A PRIVILEGE
General Superintendent Lawlor

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The Editor

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Ron Lush, Sr.

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THE INCOMPARABLE CHRIST
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—proclaiming Christian Holiness

THE
PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

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Preaching—A Privilege

By General Superintendent Lawlor

PRIME MINISTER ATTLEE of Britain was once asked how Winston Churchill won the Second World War. His answer was, "He talked about it." History will never let us forget the speeches of Winston Churchill, the man of the century.

After 36 years as an ordained preacher in the Church of the Nazarene, one of my deepest impressions is the rare privilege of preaching. This I think is the greatest and most unique calling to which a man can be summoned. It is thrilling, exciting, rewarding, and in many ways wonderful to think that we can, through our words, walk up and down in the hearts and lives of men. In spite of all the contemporary arguments to the contrary, it is still a conviction of mine, as the scripture states, that ". . . it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). Therefore, preaching, to the minister, must be primary.

The minister must learn the discipline of study. The imperative need for study must claim an important part of a minister's schedule. Dinsdale Young, the great preacher, once said, "A minister's most awful peril, next to dying in soul, is not to grow in mental quality as the years pass by." Only regular and retentive study can save us from intellectual poverty. We may excel as organizers, promoters, public-relations experts, but we shall degenerate into mere "chatterers" and miserably fail as preachers of the gospel unless we study and read constantly. Paul urged the young preacher to "give attendance to reading." In your study, make the Bible your Textbook and, as one preacher wrote, "it will become to you a book of texts."

It was said of John Henry Jowett, that great preacher of other days, that he read hard. He himself said he read everything—theological works, literature of life, poetry, biography, science, and history. He used to say, If the study is a lounge, the pulpit will be an impertinence. The secret of the great, spiritually giant preachers of the past was that they intelligently planned their time for study and prayer, and relentlessly adhered to that plan. They kept study and prayer in correct perspective and due proportion to the various aspects of their ministerial lives. A preacher must always have a burning desire to pray, for he can never "talk *for* God until he has talked *to* God." It is the unique combination of intellectual study and devotional prayer that brings the indispensable divine unction that makes our preaching to be in the demonstration of

(Continued on page 36)

From the EDITOR

The Christmas Story Is Evangelistic!

OVERLOOKED among the exciting details of the angel choir, the virgin mother, the journeying wise men, the Bethlehem star, and the rustic setting of the birth of Jesus is the response of the shepherds who saw and heard the good news. "And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child" (Luke 2:17). Their experience sent them out to tell about it. Their Christmas was to become the missionary message. Their Christmas story was evangelistic!

Twenty centuries later the story is the same, but the responses to that greatest story ever told have taken some strange forms. Christmas is the winter holiday season. Christmas is the family reunion. Christmas is finding a gift for each person on the shopping list. Christmas is the time to retreat behind the cliché that "it comes but once a year," so that indulgence in too much rich food and intoxicating beverages somehow becomes acceptable to far too many people today.

It is significant that the Judean shepherds did not go everywhere telling about the unusual setting where it all took place, nor the ethereal quality of tone when the angels sang, nor the pleasant sensations experienced during those unusual events. They "told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them *about this child*" (*Living Bible*).

Let the Good News be *told*.

Let the message be clear, so that what is told is the *good news*. Somewhere, in all the tinsel and the trappings that accompany the celebration, let it be shouted from the housetops, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

The *Preacher's Magazine* Broadens Its Circulation

Next month, with the beginning of a new year of publication, the *Preacher's Magazine* goes interdenominational. The Free Methodist and Wesleyan churches will be sending the magazine to their pastors, as the Church of the Nazarene does, and inserting their own "Pastor's Supplement" in their editions.

This move has developed as a result of the desire of the other members of the Aldersgate Publishers Association (composed of holiness denominations cooperating in the publication of holiness literature such as the *Beacon Bible Commentary* and others) for a cooperative *Preacher's Magazine*. A meeting of representatives from the various sister denominations was held a year ago in which the idea was presented and discussed. Approval of the denominational leaders was given soon afterwards, including the Board of General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene. Another meeting of representatives of holiness churches held during the Christian Holiness Association convention last April in Indianapolis brought agreement in details and methods of procedure. The decision was made to begin with the January, 1973, issue.

The Nazarene Publishing House will continue to publish the magazine as in the past, and your editor will be in charge as always. There is no "surrender" of control. There is, however, the assistance of associate editors from the Free Methodists and the Wesleyans, with the added flow of good material expected from their writers. There is also the increased circulation with half again as many readers as in the past, and the prospect of double the circulation eventually. Most of all, there is the demonstration of ecumenicity in the real sense of the word, where unity is present without the necessity of uniformity, and where love and trust prevail, so that the body of Christ wastes no energy in senseless competition and rivalry.

The editor and his family,
and our office staff,
wish for you and your loved ones the most blessed
and joyful Christmas season you have ever known.
May it be so for you, so that it may be
passed to those who sit under your ministry.

Seeking Christ at Christmastime

Scripture reading: Matt. 2:1-12

There is a plethora of books on the subject "How to Get the Most out of Life." Their popularity would seem to suggest that great numbers of people do not feel they are presently getting the most out of life. It would also indicate that they are seeking for a means by which life can yield them a greater measure of satisfaction.

One truth emerges from this that is increasingly obvious to the discerning Christian: If all men are not seeking Christ, they are certainly seeking for that which can be found *only in Christ.*

Our Scripture lesson introduces us to two types of men, both of which were ostensibly seeking Christ.

The wise men said, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?"

Herod said, ". . . when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."

The wise men *found* Christ, but Herod did not. Why?

The wise men found Christ because:

1. *They sought a Person.*

It is one thing to be constantly searching for a perfect church, an able preacher, a friendly crowd, an agreeable creed, or other "things." It is something altogether different to be searching for Christ.

You may be sure of this—whenever and wherever men are willing to bypass these distractions and concentrate their search on finding Christ, the Son of the true and living God, they are already well on their way to finding Him!

2. *They "walked in the light."*

For the wise men this meant the light of the star that God sent to guide them. Without this they could not have found Jesus. The truth is that no one can find Christ by himself. We need the help of God. And God is faithful! He sends the "light" of His Word and the voice of the Holy Spirit. He is more anxious to find us than we are to find Him. We owe everything to the faithfulness of the Holy Spirit. Just a little study of the Scriptures soon makes obvious this truth.

3. *Their motive was right.*

They said, "We have seen his star in the east, and are come to *worship* him."

It is always wise to examine our motives for wanting to "find" Christ. If we are seeking only the "loaves and fishes" which He can provide, our search will be disappointing. Much has been said about why people come to church. The following bit of poetry expresses it:

Some go to church just for a walk;
Some go there to laugh and talk;
Some go there to meet a lover;
Some go there their faults to cover;
Some go there for observation;
Some go there for speculation;
Some go there to sleep and nod.
Few go there to worship God.

by
Kenneth L. Dodge
Pastor, Syracuse, N.Y.

But those few (if the poem is correct) who do go to worship God invariably find Him. The church service, the preacher, the other "worshippers" may all leave somewhat to be desired. But if the motive in going to God's house is to seek and worship Him, the seeker is seldom disappointed. Motive makes the difference.

Herod failed to find Christ.

He claimed he wanted to worship the Christ Child and he did seek Him, but his seeking was not rewarded. Why?

1. *He did not follow the light.*

When his own "wise men" explained the prophecy to Herod, he probably understood the explanation just as much as the wise men did. But understanding the Word of God is not enough. There must be obedience to what we understand.

That may seem so obvious and elementary that one would wonder that it should even be mentioned. But if everyone who is presently failing to enjoy fellowship with Christ, and everyone who ever has failed to enjoy fellowship with Christ—simply because he did not walk in obedience to what he understood to be the pathway to fellowship—were to say, "Amen," in unison, the sound would be heard around the world!

2. *Herod did not want to give up his throne.*

Jesus is more than a great teacher, a good example, a wise philosopher, and a good man. He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings! Every man who expects to find Christ in reality of fellowship must be prepared to make Christ King of his life. No "sharing of the throne" of the heart will do.

Jesus came to bring good news. But if all He receives from us in return is "good views" and we stop short of owning Him King of our lives, we cannot and will not find Him.

3. *Herod sent a proxy.*

Herod said to the wise men, in effect, "You search for Him; you find Him; you make the way easy for me—then I'll come and worship Him."

Here is an ever present danger. We can come to depend on the choir to do the singing, the preacher to do the praying, the Sunday school teacher to do the "digging" into God's Word, until we find ourselves enjoying our Christian experience by "proxy." When this happens, our fellowship is, at best, secondhand. It lacks that freshness, that firsthand contact and up-to-date reality that makes our fellowship with Christ a real and precious experience.

If this continues for long, our fellowship with Christ will cease. We cannot successfully expect someone else to "find Christ" for us. Our experience must be a *personal* one. It begins that way when we find Him for the first time. It continues that way throughout our lives if our relationship with Christ is to be maintained.

Conclusion

We are celebrating Christmas again. It is a reminder once more that "wise men" can seek and find Christ. But the pathway to fellowship with Him in this twentieth century is the same as it was 2,000 years ago.

We must "walk in the light" as God gives it to us today.

We must seek Him in order to worship and serve Him and make Him King of our lives.

We must seek Him for ourselves and not expect someone else to do it for us.

We will never "get the most out of life," in spite of what else we may accomplish, if we leave Christ out of our living. But if we will follow that very simple pathway of obedience, surrender, and service, we will know the reality of Christ's presence in our hearts and lives just as "wise men" of all ages have.

Reluctance to Seek Holiness

By Ralph A. Gallagher*

WHY ARE PROFESSING CHRISTIANS so slow to seek the most wonderful gift that God has ever offered to His people? Why are some not only slow, but even reluctant, and some actually fail to manifest any interest whatever in the gift of the Holy Spirit? The problem surely does not reside in the Gift. Nothing more wonderful can happen to a soul than to experience the cleansing power of the inner man. This is Immanuel, God with us, in the true biblical sense.

We face a major problem in trying to persuade believers to seek this experience. Why? Why do we have to spend so much time and energy in thinking up ironclad arguments to encourage the professing Christian to seek this incomparable gift? Why do we have to beg and plead when common sense suggests that they should be hungrily seeking? Let us put on our "thinking caps" and probe into this problem.

Several possible problem areas present themselves:

1. Maybe something went wrong in conversion. A normal new birth should be accompanied by normal appetites that would assure the survival of the new babe in Christ. There should be a desire for "the sincere milk of the word" (I Pet. 2:2), and there should be a hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5:6). If these fail to appear, something must have gone wrong. Maybe it was a premature birth—we picked the fruit too soon. Perhaps it was a "still" birth—there was no real sorrow for sin, and as a consequence there was no repentance or turning away from sin. It could be that the birth was normal but for some reason the appetites were not there. Like an instinct that was not satisfied, they faded away. Whatever the defect may have been, it resulted in a reluctance or failure to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

2. The carnal heart will not be enthusiastic in seeking the gift of the Spirit. In Wesleyan circles this source of trouble has received more attention than any other. Carnality is a deep-seated factor that is adverse to seeking holiness. Have we come to depend too much upon carnal manifestations to emphasize the need for cleansing? Maybe this is getting started a little late. Souls may be pretty far down the drain before they awaken (if they do) to their need. It could be that a little more emphasis upon "the promise of the Father" and upon the Lord's command to tarry in Jerusalem until the Spirit comes would be helpful at this point.

3. Another problem area may be the lack of really good examples of Spirit-filled lives. In New Testament times the people had the advantage of many such examples. I get the impression that some believed on the Lord Jesus

*Pastor, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Christ not alone for the forgiveness of their sins but that they were also looking forward to receiving the gift of the Spirit. This helps to explain why the apostles could lay their hands upon them and they received the Spirit. Conditions had already been met.

4. Our last problem area to be considered will be that of instruction. What can we do by way of instruction to encourage the new convert to move along to an early Pentecost? Can we, in our preaching, inculcate a pattern in the minds of the unsaved that will be helpful in solving our problem? I feel that we must begin with the sinner, for two reasons:

First, because this method more nearly conforms to the New Testament experience. In Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost the overriding factor was the gift of the Holy Spirit. When the people asked Peter and the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" they were thinking not alone of forgiveness, but also of how they might receive the Spirit. Peter's reply established the New Testament formula, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). These unsaved people were being taught that they should expect to receive the Holy Spirit immediately after they had repented and had been baptized. There was no long period of consecration or the "discovery" of carnality. It would be naive to believe that everyone without exception moved along this way, but this was the pattern that was presented.

In the second place, this harmony with an insight that came to John Wesley in his later years. He came to see that he had made a mistake in not putting more emphasis upon the new babe in Christ seeking immediately the gift of the Spirit. No finer time for seeking the Holy Spirit can be found than immediately after a soul has been reconciled to God. The momentum of the love, enthusiasm, peace, and joy of the new life should be of great assistance in moving a soul along to Pentecost. We should seek to capitalize on it.

We should also consider some emphases in our preaching that may be helpful in achieving the goal of an early Pentecost for the new babe in Christ.

1. Pentecost must be *primary* in our preaching. Our excessive emphasis upon seeking Christ for the forgiveness of our sins so as to avoid being lost has reduced Pentecost to a secondary role. We find ourselves back under the Old Testament economy, where forgiveness was the important thing and the coming of the Holy Spirit was a prophecy to be fulfilled sometime in the unknown future. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit is the great distinctive of the New Testament era. I feel that the apostolic pattern of preaching was to emphasize the baptism of the Holy Spirit and that the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God were necessary prerequisites to receiving the Holy Spirit. The grand objective of the seeker was the Spirit.

2. Have we become victims of our *terminology?* Has it become a hindrance to seeking holiness? We speak of being saved when this means only being forgiven and reconciled to God. The term "saved" of itself tends to create a feeling of completeness and finality. There is little or no incentive to look forward to anything more. The question I raise is, Are we really "saved" and *safe* without the supreme provision that God has made for dealing with the sin problem? Are we really "saved" short of the "whole armour of God"? Does our emphasis upon being saved create a false impression that blocks the immediate seeking of the Holy Spirit?

3. Taking this a step further, how about emphasizing the fact that *the new birth is not complete without the*

baptism of the Holy Ghost? Was Jesus thinking only of forgiveness and reconciliation when He was speaking to Nicodemus about the new birth—being born again? Or did He have in mind the complete New Testament experience? My own feeling is that He did have in mind the complete New Testament experience including forgiveness, reconciliation, and the cleansing, filling baptism of the Holy Spirit. The fact that the apostles did not carefully distinguish between the "two works" of grace would seem to indicate that these two experiences were a unit in their thinking.

To them Pentecost had been such a marvelous experience that they expected all who accepted Christ would immediately seek the gift of the Holy Ghost. This emphasis would in no way endanger our Wesleyan position. Rather, I would hope that it might help some into the Canaan Land experience of the Spirit-filled life without the wandering in the wilderness they seem to believe is normal.

CRADLE AND CROSS

The candles in the window shine,
As mistletoe and spruce and pine
Give holidays like this a touch
That mortals all admire so much.

The Christmas tree is all aglow
With colored lights row after row;
The firelight dances on the walls
As happy laughter fills the halls.

Yet while the hours go swiftly by,
One feels more than meets the eye;
For as this day draws to its end,
Two seasons almost seem to blend.

Beneath the glitter and the gloss,
Two branches form a perfect cross;
And Christmastime and Easter Day
Are joined in some mysterious way.

Author unknown
Maywood, Calif., church bulletin

Practical Points *that make a difference*

He Makes the Word Live

Dear Son:

It is fascinating how the Word "carries" itself in sensitive areas where otherwise it might be offensive. Our pastor is an artist in this regard. He plans his Wednesday night Bible studies with care. It is obvious that he has bathed them in prayer, study, and thought. When he gives them in a spirit of love, we cannot help but be receptive, even though sometimes they get pretty close.

Last Wednesday evening we opened our Bibles to Romans 12, where our pastor has been "working" for a number of weeks. It is pretty strong "stuff." He read from verses 14-15: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice," and remarked that it was sometimes harder to rejoice than to weep—especially when it covered our own disappointments.

Now that came pretty close to some of us, but we needed to be reminded of the need for a generous spirit. And you know, an otherwise offensive sermonette became a sensitive rebuke, not from our pastor, but through the Word. It spoke, and I answered with a positive Amen!

What a great combination! A God who speaks through His Word—a pastor who with love shares that revelation!

Love,
Dad

there's MUSIC in your church

Use Them or Lose Them

When the music participation theory is emphasized, there come results of far-reaching importance. Thinking is stimulated, action in the church program is encouraged, old-fashioned concepts are revitalized, architectural barriers become apparent, activities multiply, publicity freshens its look, space problems arise, leadership lack accrues, involvement principles are reviewed, new motivation techniques are inspired, music budgets are augmented, program plans are enlarged, and evangelism moves forward in a greater way. All of this ties in with the basic purpose of the Church—which is to win souls and promote growth.

The music program of our church must be reevaluated and its concepts analyzed in terms of the contemporary world. The word "revival" could be used to express the change that is needed, but I would rather use the word *reevaluation* (or perhaps better yet, *revolution*), for more than a revival is needed in our music program. A definite change from the traditional concept of only a small adult sanctuary choir in a small, closed-in choir loft must be made if the gospel is to be presented to a needy world.

The youth in today's world are stirring up revolution in every quarter for causes sometimes worthy, and often not. It is the youth of today's Church, the avowed followers of Jesus Christ, who must carry the gospel to the world. It is today's youth who will, and must, participate in the program. It is their spirit and enthusiasm that can give new life to the Word. Today's youth will help change the sound of music, the look of our platform, the outreach of our Christian responsibility, and the effectiveness of the mission of our church. For this new sound, we need room for people, a wide-open choir loft, a place for "wall-to-wall people."

Let us look again to the principle, "A little child shall lead them." Let us realize that involvement will challenge our youth—that participation does pay—that if we use them, we will not lose them. This does not mean that we must use every religious rock-and-roll tune that comes along. But neither are we bound to insist on nothing new unless it sounds like our eighteenth-century favorites. There is a middle

by
Ron Lush, Sr.
Song evangelist
Church of the Nazarene

ground where basic principles of fitness are preserved while new and exciting sounds are experienced.

Action should begin with emphasis upon involvement and maximum participation. The youth must be challenged to accept their rightful share of responsibility in the great battle for souls.

The traditional methods that have for these many years been used to carry the gospel to our people are becoming meaningless. The use of one adult choir to project our singing spirit has limited our opportunities for using participation as a growth factor. The restricted use of children and orchestra members has militated against the involvement principle that we must use to win souls.

The time is upon us to reevaluate and strengthen our evangelistic position by putting our people to work. Youth should be a dominant part of this general move forward. Children should have a place in the service. Orchestra members should be accepted. Adult choir members should realize their responsibility in assuming the lead in this emphasis upon participation.

There must be a place for the adult choir, a place for the teen choir, a place for the orchestra, a place for the pianist and organist, a place for the children's choirs. Yes, a place for everyone in the new participating action. Are we ready for this emphasis? Are we able to grasp the composite picture? *Are we willing to change?* Are we willing to involve more people that more might be saved?

Must we continue to accept the reasoning that only adults can do the work, that only trained singers can be used, that teens should "grow up" first, that children should be "seen and not heard," that orchestra instruments are too noisy, that soft music and candlelight constitute "atmosphere"?

Today's world moves in a rapid pace of innovation and change. Because of radio, television, and the changing world, we must be ready to adapt our program to a people accustomed to action. A revival in music, yes, but

(Continued on page 42)

*A Private Writes to His General**

Dear General:

It was exactly four years ago this month that I wrote you last. One letter every four years could hardly be called excessive communication.

Thank God for the sixteenth quadrennium of our church. Many changes for the better have come about during these four years. Those of us who travel and work with large and small churches across the nation are privileged to share the fellowship and spirit of the total church as few others.

*This "letter" was written to Dr. V. H. Lewis by J. J. Steele, an evangelist for many years in our church, near the close of the past quadrennium.

Many lay people as well as ministers are hungry for a deeper walk with God and greater results in the mission of the church. Traditional methods, programs, and objectives are being questioned by many. Our younger people are natural innovators, while the older tend to cling to old ways.

Thank God also for the host of dedicated young ministers and wives who are struggling to get God's work done against an increasing tide of material prosperity, secularism, and complacency that has affected us all.

Because of the preoccupations and pressures of our time, far too many are satisfied with a mediocre Christian life. Some are completely defeated in their personal walk with God. Family altars are often abandoned in the parsonage. Spiritual defeat in the parsonage is reflected in the pulpit. Defeat in the pulpit is reflected in the homes of the laity. It is easy for any of us to allow ministerial and denominational success to become a substitute for the very things that brought our church into existence. We can become so heavily involved with production machinery that we lose interest in production quality.

The trend of life is from the simple to the complex. Especially is this true of institutional life, whether it be political, educational, social, or ecclesiastical. All governmental forms begin out of simple necessity.

The New Testament Church began without governmental structure, but necessity became "the mother of invention." It was not an end in itself but the means to an end. The sole purpose was the salvation and nurture of each individual. The grand objective was to bring all into conformity with the mind of Christ. Personal salvation was not a by-product. The individual did not exist for the church. The church existed for the individual.

Within a few centuries this concept was lost. The all-powerful, totalitarian Catholic church became the master of the individual, who existed for the church. Many persons were sacrificed for the "good of the church." Her passion today is to bring all souls under her dominion. This is history's extreme example of ecclesiastical totalitarianism. It is also institutionalism "gone to seed."

We are seeing the same trends materialize in politics. There is little comparison between the simple, uncomplicated government of pioneer Americans and the present, almost total domination of the individual by local, state, and national governments.

It was once said that a university was Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a pupil on the other end. That concept also died long ago. The individual now is lost in the massive educational institutions of our time. The emphasis now is on the institution, not the person. The status of the institution is all-important. Many disadvantaged persons can't even get in.

God grant that neither our church not its educational institutions will ever fall victims to this trend. The passionate zeal and holy fervor of early Nazarenes was not for denominational success. They organized for one objective—"To spread scriptural holiness over these lands." Much was lacking in the "machinery" of organization, but they were great in production. However, they did see that organization was needed to accomplish the transcendent objectives. So they formed a simple, uncomplicated organizational framework. A minimal doctrinal statement

was adopted along with a simple disciplinarian statement. Then they "went every where preaching" and proclaiming the good news of redemption and sanctification of every person. They had no zeal or intention to build a "super-church."

The doctrines and guidelines or "rules" were never to be forced on anyone. They were to encourage a holy walk with God. The early Nazarenes believed daily attention to God's Word, private and family devotions, faithful attendance at church, and serious attempt to bring others to Christ would all greatly help to maintain spiritual fires upon our altars. Anything they thought would hinder was ruled out.

Now a minority among us feel that many of the guidelines laid down 70 years ago are no longer relevant. They simply ignore them. They cling to the religious institution of their childhood, but they do not conform to its standards of personal piety. Their rationale is that personal, family, and church life are different now, and that old-fashioned ways do not fit into the jet age.

This compromise with the demands of modern life has robbed many persons and churches of spiritual vigor. Far too many ministers have failed to keep holy fires burning on personal and family altars. This failure has led to tragedy in many parsonages. And far too many laymen are languishing spiritually for lack of leadership and encouragement. Many deeply spiritual pastors would be shocked to know how few of their members live victorious personal Christian lives. They are too satisfied with their church attendance and financial support to be concerned about their spiritual prosperity.

Can there be a substitute for our "rules of conduct"? Have we found a new and better way? If not, then let's "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered," and keep it up. Let those who think they have found a better way prove it by their fruits.

Many have rejoiced this past quadrennium for the strong emphasis on these very things. Gains have been made, and holy fires rekindled on many altars. These fires are reflected in the large number who have come into new life in Christ and increased our holy ranks. Many are praying for a great ground swell of holy living and witnessing in the next quadrennium.

This letter has already become an epistle, but I wanted to share with you some thoughts from the ranks. I think we have far more going for us than against us. We are encouraged to close ranks and march against the foe. We are not about to waste time in peace talks with the enemy.

May God bless you and your colleagues as you prepare to lead us on in this holy warfare through another quadrennium.

"Private" J. J. Steele

Let's spend less time looking forward to this Christmas, and more time looking backward to the first one.

Evangelistically Speaking—

The Church Evangelizing

THE CHURCH is called to evangelize the world. Jesus gave His final promise and proclamation just moments before His ascension: "But ye shall receive power, after that the holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

This was a tremendous and challenging assignment. The little group of loyal disciples faced every problem that could come to a church. They had no buildings for public worship. Their finances were very meager. Means of transportation and communication were primitive. They could not depend upon the government to shield them from bitter persecution at the hands of their enemies. In spite of adversities their record of success is a challenge to us. God used the New Testament Christians in a mighty way.

When a local church shows a good record in soul winning and membership increases, we inquire as to the methods employed. In the New Testament Church it was not so much their methods as the spiritual quality of the members who made up the Church.

by
Buford Battin
Evangelist, Lubbock, Tex.

The New Testament Christians *knew that they were redeemed from sin.* John the Baptist preached repentance with all his might. Jesus exclaimed to religious leaders, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5). James, the great New Testament pastor, warned that neglect and indifference to duty are sin, and he implied that church members may need to repent. He said, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17).

If the Church is to evangelize the multitudes of lost people today, God must have a people who are redeemed from all sin. Sinners have little concern for the lost and cannot be a channel through which God can reach and redeem sinners. We must continue to preach repentance—yes, preach it to church members who need to repent. People who, either by omission of duty or commission of sin, need to repent will cease to be evangelical and evangelistic until they are *redeemed.*

It is essential also that *believers be baptized with the Holy Spirit.* When Jesus was approaching Calvary, He prayed for His disciples with a burdened heart that they be sanctified. In John 17, Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. . . . And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified

through the truth." As He continued His petition He included us, saying, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

This petition was answered on the Day of Pentecost when the disciples were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Peter testified that their hearts were purified by faith. They in turn went out to teach new converts and bring them into the experience of heart purity.

Evangelism succeeds through a church made up of Spirit-baptized people. We must preach entire sanctification to people of the church. James said, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (1:8). Paul made an analysis of the weighty problems in the church at Corinth and found that because they were yet carnal they responded as babes in Christ. Until Christians have come to the place of complete commitment and a sanctified heart, they will not be alert to witness nor will they be efficient in evangelism. There was never a greater need for holiness preaching than there is in our day.

Then, the church *must be a praying people* if they are to evangelize. An entertaining program may attract a crowd, but little will be accomplished without the power of the Holy Spirit. Personal interviews with sinners may bring some to a mental acceptance of the historical Christ and the gospel, but without conviction for sin brought by the Holy Spirit there will not be any depth of sorrow for sin and genuine repentance. Only by prayer is there divine power in moving people to God. Personal or mass evangelism efforts will fail when carried on merely through human manipulations and wisdom of men. "This is the word of the Lord . . . saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). Of the church in Jerusalem we read, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together" (Acts 4:31). A praying church is a powerful church.

We have been often reminded that *we must put feet to our prayers.* In Ephesians 6, Paul speaks of the Christian warfare and he reminds us to go with "your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." And again he reminds us of our strong Weapon in the warfare, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Bible preaching under the anointing of the Holy Spirit is the means God has used since the days of the Early Church to bring people to conviction and salvation. The church must not fail to employ the mighty weapons of prayer and Bible preaching as means of evangelism.

Christians today must be willing to *give of themselves sacrificially* if revival is to come and souls are to be won. Our revivals are often planned at the most convenient time for people to attend. We arrange a time when school, work, weather, and vacations will least interfere. The length of the meetings must be a limited number of days and each service brief, so as to make the least demands upon people who can be persuaded to attend. We want convenience and an easy means of evangelism with no real, personal sacrifice demanded. Easy methods will not bring miraculous results.

The New Testament Christians were liberal in giving of their time and money, and suffered discomforts in order to proclaim their message. In Ephesus, Paul spent two years speaking daily in the school of Tyrannus. The weather was so uncomfortably hot at midday in Ephesus that labor stopped and Tyrannus likely vacated his school. It could be that at the time of the intense midday heat Paul spoke to people daily. "And this continued by the space of two years; so that all which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God

wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul" (Acts 19:10-11).

If the church is to exert its full influence in evangelism, *every Christian must be a personal witness.* When Peter and John were arrested after the healing of the lame man in the Temple area, they were commanded not to speak at all or teach in the name of Jesus. Their reply was, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). They could not forget the last words of Jesus, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me."

✳ A Christmas Song Is Born— ✳

Dear Friends,

Most songs have a story behind them. I hope this brief resume of the origin of "O Bethlehem" will enhance the song for you.

In December of 1969, I was privileged to travel to Israel. Often, even before the trip was planned, I reflected, imagined, and dreamed about what it would be like to visit the places made sacred by their association with our Lord. At none of these sites were my hopes more firmly predetermined than at Bethlehem and the Grotto of the Nativity. How I wanted my pilgrimage there to be a quiet one—intense with a holy hush! Reality exceeded my fondest expectation.

On the evening of December 23, Mrs. Najarian, a Nazarene missionary, drove five of us from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. As the village came into view, someone began singing, "O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!" As the rest of us joined in, my thoughts drifted back over a hundred years to 1865. Along this same road the writer of that song, Phillips Brooks, had ridden horseback down to the birthplace of Jesus. The inspiration of that experience produced the now familiar carol. Within me I yearned to share in similar form the emotions I felt.

That night the Church of the Nativity rose in majestic quietness as though the venerable building was bracing itself for the multitudes who would throng its portals the following day. But for now the setting was as I'd always dreamed it would be. In the courtyard of St. Jerome a full moon filtered through the palms and flooded the premises with soft light.

Special arrangements were made with a Franciscan monk to open doors and guide us to the Grotto. As we drew near the place where the Holy Child once lay, none of us could speak. How can anyone express feelings so deep? Standing there in silence before the silver star which marks the traditional place of Christ's birth, I noticed the monk was down on both knees—hands folded, head bowed. Perhaps the rules of his order required this. No matter—the sight so stirred me that I knew that we must express our hearts' adoration somehow, regardless of the poverty of words. I voiced a spoken prayer, but each one there sang a silent hymn of praise to the Lord of Love. This scene is referred to in stanza two, last line, "With others now I bow before Your manger."

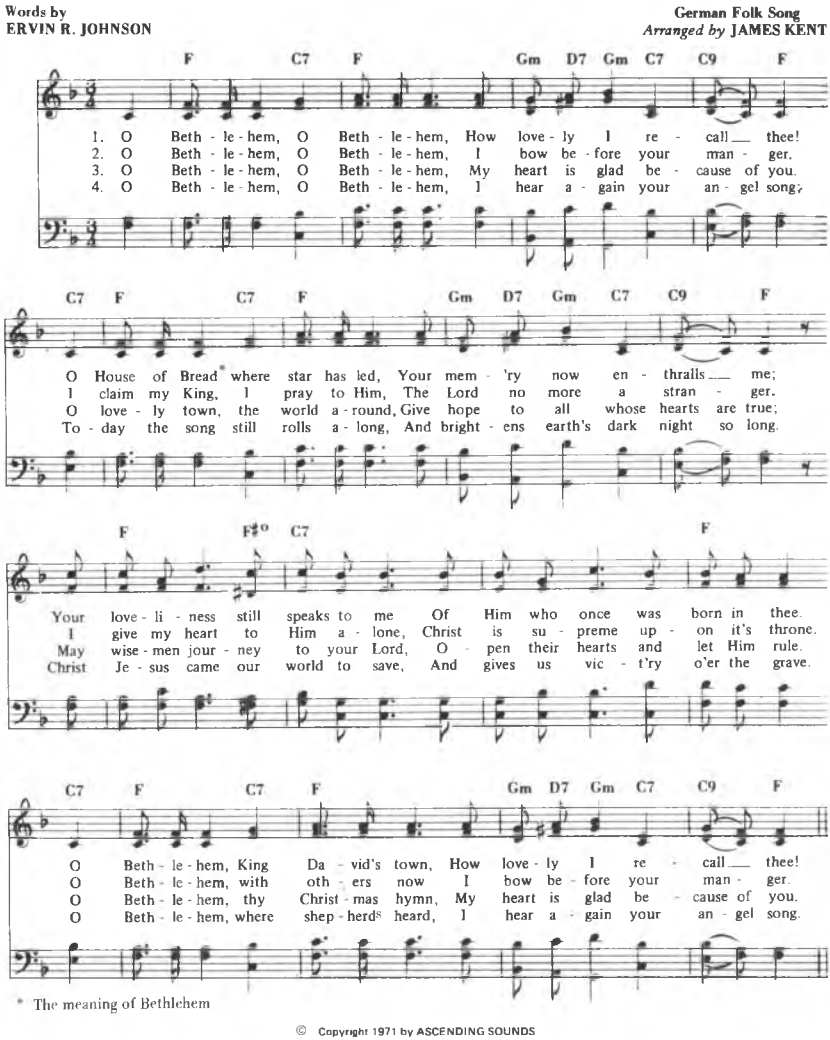
Many experiences in the Holy Land were enriching and rewarding, but for me none surpassed this one. I refused to return to the Grotto with the milling, pushing crowd on Christmas Eve, because I did not want the memory of my first visit tarnished.

Almost a year later, on December 15, 1970, in Albuquerque, N.M., I attended a carol singing with my ciildren. The last song of the evening was "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Again the desire to write my song to the Saviour revived. Before midnight the song was completed. It remains essentially the same as the final revision of that night.

And now we send to others a carol which we no longer claim as ours. But we trust that the Spirit, whom we believe prompted our thoughts, will own and use it to encourage and draw many to our wonderful Saviour. To Him be all honor and glory.

Sincerely
In His glad service,
ERVIN R. JOHNSON

O BETHLEHEM



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The
PASTOR'S
SUPPLEMENT

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission **Harold O. Parry,** Editor

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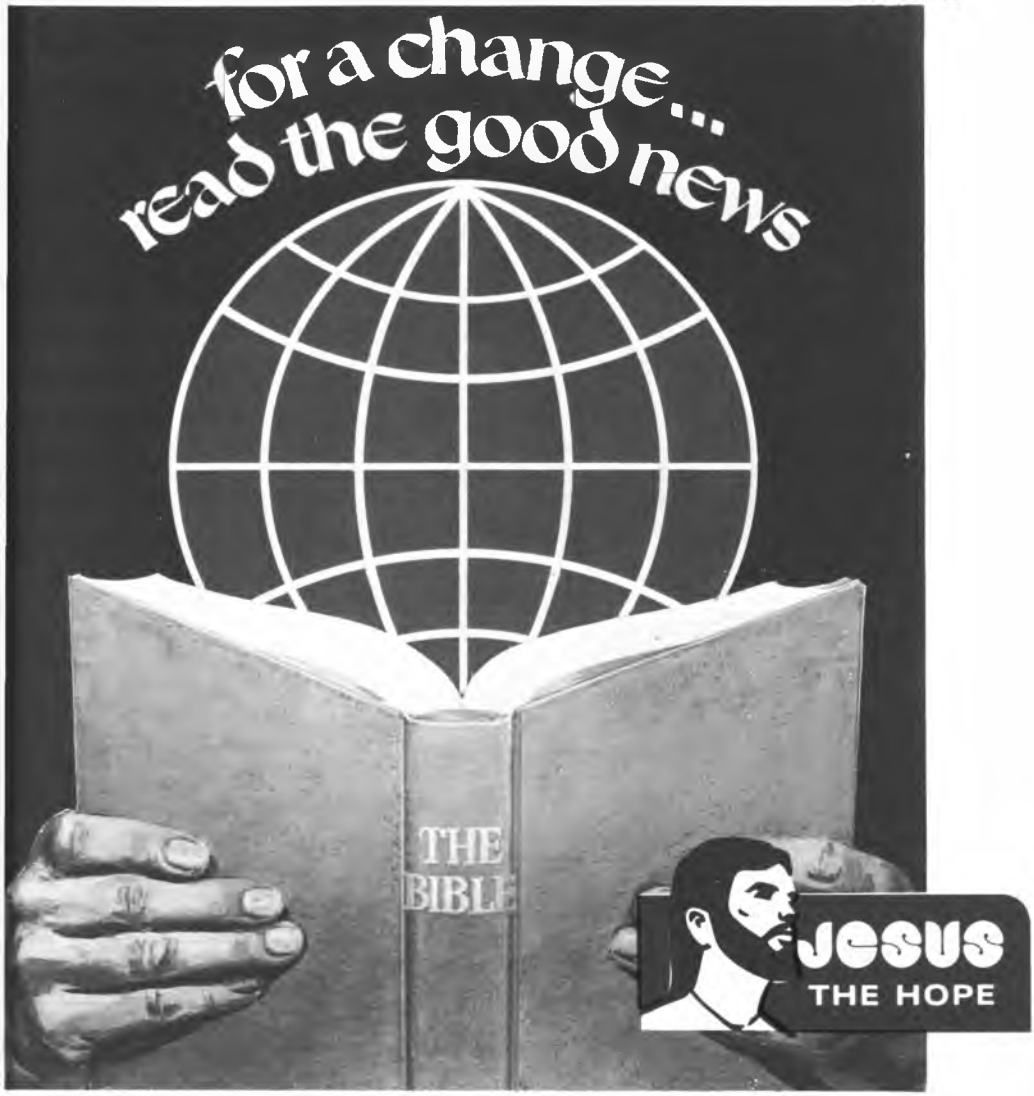

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December, 1972

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45	36,509.90	267.25
50	24,095.90	176.38
55	14,181.80	103.81

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40	46,438.24	359.39
45	34,306.36	265.50
50	23,293.46	180.27
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For further information contact *Dean Wessels*, Executive Secretary, Department of Pensions and Benevolence, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131.

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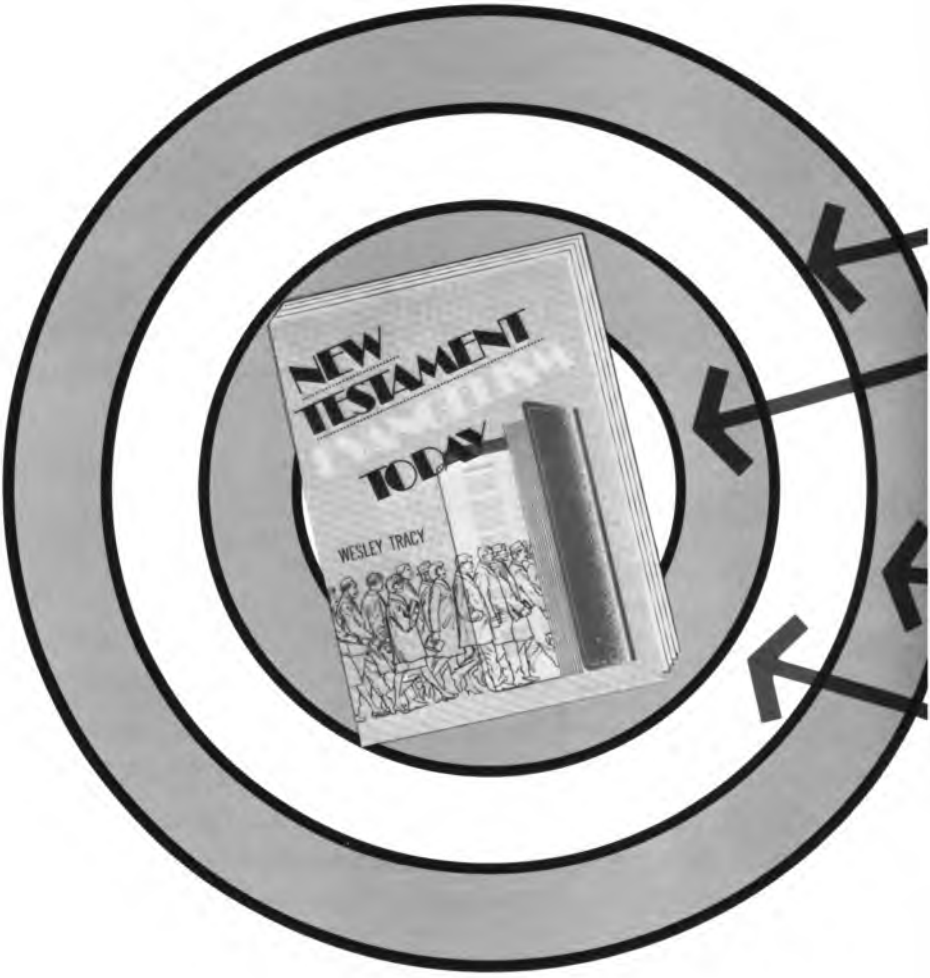

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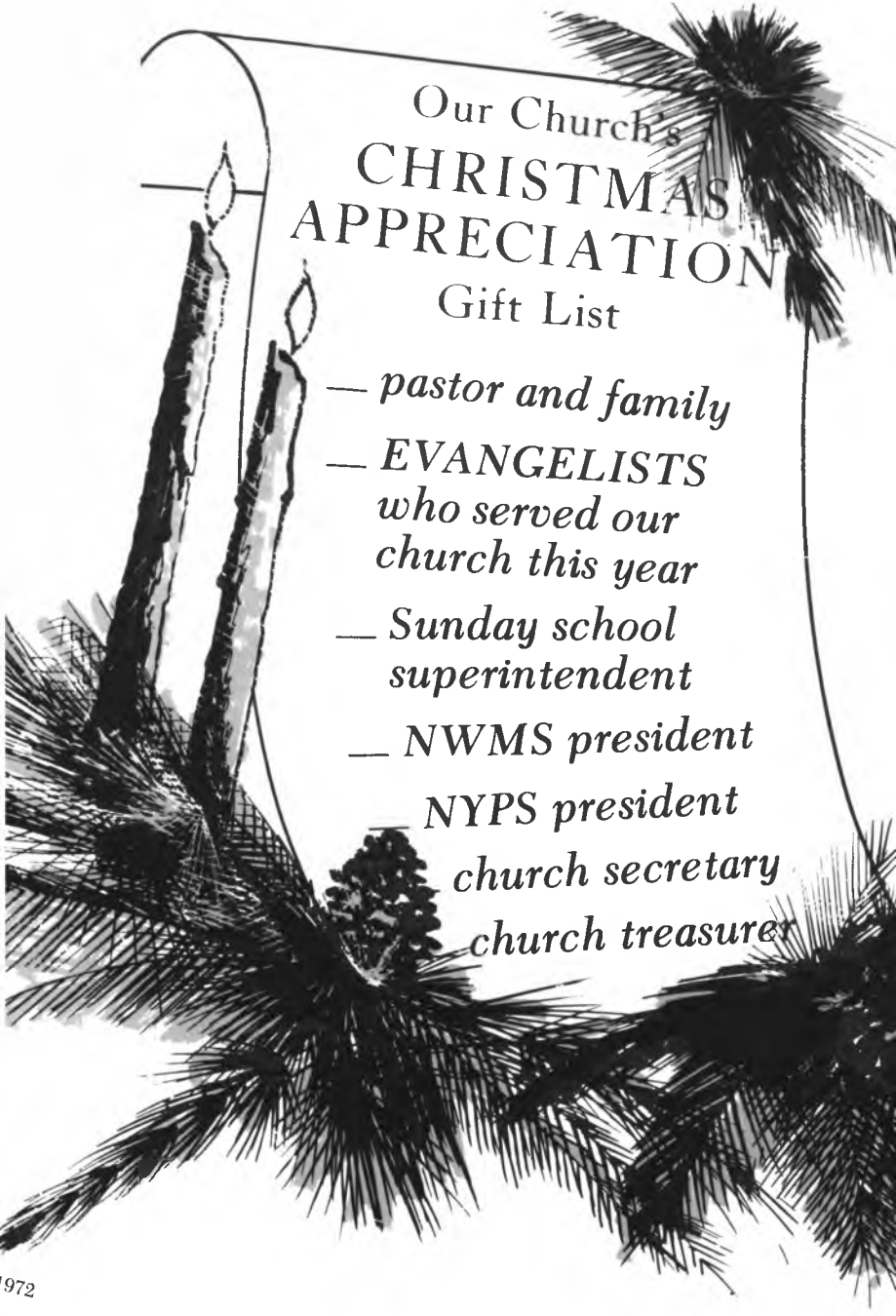
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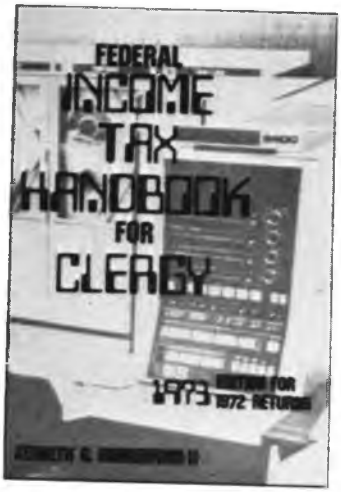

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not just a building—but a vital, growing, soul-winning organism. Christmas is a good time to start an outreach Home Bible Study. During 1973 we should start 2,500 such outreach units. Some of these could result in new churches. Thirty-six infant churches organized during 1972 will have their first Christmas program. What a thrill to present the Christmas story for the first time!

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Give a church this Christmas.

Start a Home Bible Study.

January 7-13

Nazarene FAMILY WEEK

Meet now with your Christian Family Life director to plan:

- Family Altar Sunday—January 7
  —Prepare pledge cards for your families to sign, pledging that they will maintain a family altar during 1973.
  —Give each family with children of junior age and below a copy of *Table Talk,* the magazine of devotional guidance for Nazarene homes. (NOTE: If you did not order these with your regular Sunday school literature for December-January-February, rush an order to the Nazarene Publishing House now!)
  —Preach a sermon which emphasizes the values of having a family altar.
- All-church Family Fellowship. A potluck dinner at the church, or in a community building, would be appropriate. Or you might just have refreshments after the Wednesday evening or Sunday night service. A good program idea is showing a film on some aspect of Christian Family Life. For suggestions write: NAVCO, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131.
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THE PREACHER'S WIFE

Mrs. B. Edgar Johnson

Memories Are Made of This

By Betty Bowes*

CHRISTMAS is a time for making memories. It doesn't take a lot of money—mostly some thought and planning.

Not enough in the budget to buy all the gifts you'd like to give? Make some memories. A fabric remnant makes a scarf or tie. A yard and a half of Indian head makes a set of napkins. A yard of burlap and some felt can become a wall hanging.

From your kitchen can come all sorts of goodies—nut and fruit breads, jelly, salad dressings, and candy.

Decoupage, tole and fabric painting, macrame, and ceramics offer inexpensive gift possibilities. Some of the things I cherish most are handmade gifts from friends and loved ones. "Memories are made of this."

But Christmas is more than gifts. Christmas means family traditions. Some of our most precious memories come from traditions we started the first year we were married. Many of them we still follow, even though our family is now grown.

One of these is a special Christmas breakfast. While I am busy getting the turkey in the oven, the man in my life gets breakfast. And what a breakfast! Sectioned grapefruit halves with maraschino cherries, Swedish pancakes rolled around crushed strawberries and dusted with powdered sugar, and little sausages fried golden brown all develop under his careful attention. M-m-m-m!

Another tradition which was fun when our boys were small was a trip downtown at night to see the lights and the store windows. On this trip each member of the family chose one ornament for the Christmas tree. Some ornaments still hang on our tree each year that were chosen by the boys when they were toddlers. "Memories are made of this"!

Our most precious family tradition centers around our Christmas Eve worship service. First we have fun time. We sing Christmas songs other than carols, including Pogo's famous "Deck Us All with Boston Charlie." After our fun time each one chooses his favorite carol, which we all join in singing. We read the Christmas story. Each one tells what he is most thankful for at that Christmas time. We close our worship service with a short prayer by each family member. In the center of our family worship circle, on a low table, sits a beautiful candle. This special candle burns only on Christmas Eve. Last year our candle burned for the last time before flickering out. It had been a part of our traditions, at the center of our family circle, for 20 con-

*Director of Cradle Roll and Children's Church, Kansas City, Mo.

secutive years. We have now replaced it with a new candle and started the tradition all over again.

At the close of our worship service I bring to the circle a beautifully decorated white cake with one white taper burning. From the time our boys were old enough to lisp the words, they joined in singing, "Happy birthday, dear Jesus," as the cake was carried in. It has been a meaningful way to celebrate His birthday. The Christ Child himself seems to join our circle on that night. "Memories are made of this"!

But Christmas is more than tradition. It is sharing with someone outside your family. Over the years our Christmases have been blessed by the presence of friends and loved ones. One year a precious church member, newly widowed, spent the holiday with us. Other years, lonely singles and servicemen far from home have made our day happy through sharing. "Memories are made of this"!

Christmas is loving. The parsonage family is loved and parishioners show that love with gifts and remembrances. Some things you'll cherish all your life, and others you will wonder what to do with. But even the least pretentious gift comes wrapped tenderly in love. Accept each one graciously and let love for your people shine through your "thank you."

Christmas is giving. Christmas is traditions. Christmas is loving. Love for family and friends, and especially love for God, who sent His Son and made it all possible!

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down!

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

That night when shepherds heard the song
Of angels' voices choiring near,
A deaf man stirred in slumber's spell
And dreamed that HE COULD HEAR.

That night when in the cattle stall
Slept Child and mother cheek by jowl,
A cripple turned his twisted limbs
And dreamed that HE WAS WHOLE.

That night when o'er the newborn Babe
The tender Mary rose to lean,
A loathsome leper smiled in his sleep
And dreamed that HE WAS CLEAN.

That night when to the mother's breast
The little Babe was pressed secure,
A harlot slept a happy sleep
And dreamed that SHE WAS PURE.

That night when in the manger lay
The Sanctified who came to save,
A man moved in the sleep of death
And dreamed THERE WAS NO GRAVE.

Author unknown

Either our ministering hearts will be committed to spiritual things, or they will be cluttered with the secular

The Priority of Prayer

By James W. Tharp*

IN THE SCHOOL of Christian experience, prayer is not an optional subject; it is a required course. No believer has ever excelled in spiritual things without majoring in prayer.

The staggering needs of our complex age could be met by Christian leaders determined to excel in the grace of prayer. This does not mean that all other modern approaches to our problems are to be totally ignored. But it does mean that, in his feverish hustle to meet the demands on his ministry, the preacher must consider priorities. And in so doing, prayer—a relish for divine inspiration, a recognition of the need for the divine anointing—must come first.

The Saviour majored, not in teaching and miracles, but in prayer. It was His praying ministry which caused His teachings and miracles to make such an impact upon the hearts of the people. Christ also taught His disciples to pray. And immediately after His ascension we find the believers "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14). After Pentecost and the great harvest of souls we read, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

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After the imprisonment and release of Peter and John for the healing of the lame man, it is recorded, "And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:23-24). In verse 31 the results of this prayer are given: "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

The incredible growth of the Early Church carried with it ever increasing problems. And with these problems went some built-in dangers which, fortunately, the church leaders were wise and spiritual enough to recognize. The success and progress of the Christian movement, as glorious as it was, threatened the apostles' most vital source of spiritual power—their prayer life. It was at this point, and for this reason, that the first major move toward organization was made in the early Church. The Twelve could not afford to neglect first things in deference to the secondary. The Word of God must take priority over table service. Others were secured for secondary services while the apostles resolved, "We will give ourselves to prayer, and to the minis-

try of the word."

To discover how jealously the early leaders guarded their prayer schedule brings embarrassment to the average modern minister. But if it was necessary for the apostles to draw a line on some of the secular activity in the very beginning of the Christian movement, what a revolution some of us twentieth-century preachers ought to have with our weekly schedules! More time in prayer might mean less time with people. But those with whom we did come in contact might not soon forget that we had called. If prayer consumed more of the preacher's time, it is possible that fewer things would get done. But the things that did get attention might count for eternity.

The average dedicated minister in any denomination will not likely deny his need for a more intensified prayer life. But I fear lest so many of us fail to discipline ourselves to the demands of such a rugged devolution. The secret of our spiritual power is not so secret after all—it lies in the secret closet! Either our ministering hearts will be *committed* to the supremacy of things spiritual or our professional lives will be *cluttered* with the shallowness of things secular—things which do not ring with the clarity of eternal values.

The secret closet may not at first hold the excitement of the crowded sanctuary or the hospital room or a board meeting. But to continually neglect our secret meetings with the Most High will soon result in a powerless and almost useless ministry to the waiting congregation, the suffering patient, the needs of homes, and even in administering church business.

God is looking for men who desperately desire to be men of the Word. He seeks for ministers who are restless and dissatisfied with the inconsistent excitement of present-day parish life. He calls for leaders who are willing to forsake the dramatics of serving tables in exchange for the divine experiences in the secret closet.

While it is true that the modern minister cannot live his whole life in the secret closet, it is also true that he cannot truly serve unless he is often in the secret closet. The man of God must be intimate with the Infinite if he is to bring help and healing to humanity. He must give himself "continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

PREACHING—A PRIVILEGE *(Continued from page 1)*

the Holy Spirit, giving words power to wing their way into the minds and hearts of mankind.

Preaching can still be profoundly effective. It can still communicate as the printed word or the pictured message never can. True biblical preaching can bring a communication between the preacher and his congregation that is unique. I do not plead for "professional pulpiteering" or "canned homiletical techniques," nor for any type of professionalism that takes away the greatness of the task. But I plead for the indescribably inspiring spectacle of a man empowered by the Holy Spirit preaching sermons that well up from the depths of his life and awakening a response in the hearts of his hearers.

Thank God for the privilege of preaching, preaching that becomes great when it is joined to a decisive act. So, ministers of God, let our preaching be powerful in the Lord—always preach for a verdict!

Are You Afraid of Their Faces?

ONE OF THE MOST UNUSUAL WORDS in the Old Testament is *punim*—"face." Like *Elohim*—"God"—there is no singular form for it. I do not think it accidental nor a corruption of the Hebrew language that we have no singular form for these words (found first in Genesis 1), but rather think that the writer had a dualistic conception of the meaning of both words.

The word used in Gen. 1:2 shows that the writer understood the universe to have the classical old Hebrew idea of a water that had two faces or parts separated by a firmament that had two faces or sides (cf. Gen. 1:6-7). He felt the same about man too; for as he observed the lack of asymmetry in man's two-sided face, he still used *punim* (Gen. 3:19), and spoke as though he saw the two faces of man literally and figuratively.

To me, and to all preachers and public speakers as well, this should have some import, and it does. The collective behavior of a group is one of the major concerns of the preacher. The group "mind" or "attitude" that develops is also of primary interest to the speaker, for this is the "mind" to which he must address his message. Members within a group—that is, a collective gathering as a religious congregation—do not participate in an anonymous and heterogeneous fashion, but tend to submerge their personalities into a homogeneous oneness. As a man captures the attention of this "mind," something mystical, wonderful, and at times frightening happens. The sociologist calls it the "interreactional amplification factor." As the speaker addresses his message to the mind of this collective body, their faces reflect the reception of his words.

Some react negatively with scowls, yawns, furrowed foreheads, raised brows, enlarged nostrils, mouths agape, eyelids closed, heads cocked quizzically, eyes scanning the room, heads pivoting horizontally in dissension, mouths sardonically formed, placid and "poker-facedness," and smiles or laughs in the wrong places. A speaker affected by this interaction between his audience and himself will react negatively, which in turn causes a greater and more obvious amplification of this reciprocating attitude.

But some react positively by smiles and laughs in the right places, by pleasant and interested looks, by thirsty countenances that indicate a panting after truth like the hart after a brook, by "Amen" and "Praise the Lord," by nods in the affirmative, by a radiant glow, and tears that course unashamedly down their faces. There cannot but be a warm and wonderful reaction to such reception of a speaker's words, and he in turn will get blessed and put more of his talents and dynamic into his delivery.

Yes, the faces of the audience do have an import to speakers, preachers, and prophets alike. When God called Jeremiah, the prophet hesitated and

by
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felt inadequate to stand before the fierce faces of his people who had rejected the prophets before him. He said, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." But the Lord said to Jeremiah, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. *Be not afraid of their faces:* for I am with thee to deliver thee." This is that of which we are most generally afraid—their faces! It is rather childish of us.

Perhaps we should quit appealing to their faces and rather appeal to their needs. How desperately we need men in the pulpit today who are not afraid to speak to the needs of their people! This can be done by an appeal to man's total personality, the elements of which are emotion, intellect, and will. There is a tendency to over-appeal, however, to one of these elements of personality to the exclusion of the others.

To be valuable, a sermon must evoke a balanced response in all three, with the final resolve being a submersion of the hearer's will in God's will.

Or perhaps we should quit appealing to men's faces and appeal to their hearts. We should appeal to the "inner face" of man—that ethereal, unknowable, intangible substance we call the soul. Here is that to which the eternal passion of our Lord cries out: "Son, give me thine heart." Here is that which sent our Saviour to the Cross. Here is that which hungers and thirsts after righteousness. Here is that which cries out for a message from God, a "thus saith the Lord."

Brethren, be not afraid of their faces. Preach the truth, for our God is with us to deliver us.

GLEANINGS
from the Greek

I Cor. 8:1—9:18

"Things Offered unto Idols"

This is all one word in Greek, *eidolothyta* (v. 1). It is compounded of *eidolon,* "idol," and *thyo,* "sacrifice." So it literally means "things sacrificed to idols." The term is used four times in this chapter (vv. 1, 4, 7, 10), twice in chapter 10 (vv. 19, 28), twice in Acts (15:29; 21:25), and twice in Revelation (2:14, 20). Thayer says that it denotes "the flesh left over from the heathen sacrifices; it was either eaten at feasts, or sold (by the poor and the miserly) in the market" (p. 174). Arndt and Gingrich note: "From the Jewish viewpoint it was unclean and therefore forbidden" (cf. Num. 25:2; Ps. 106:28). Dean Stanley observes: "This identification of a sacrifice and a feast was carried to the highest pitch among the Greeks. Sacrifices are enumerated by Aristotle and Thucydides amongst the chief means of social enjoyment" (Quoted by Lias, *Romans,* p. 94).

"Edifieth" or "Builds Up"?

The Greek word is *oikodomeo,* which literally means "build a house," and so more generally "build." One could translate the last part of this verse: "Knowledge blows up, but love builds up." The first verb is *physioo,* which comes from *physa,* "bellows." So it means "blow up" or "inflate."

The picture here is a striking contrast. Intellectualism often inflates a person with pride. We can blow up a balloon in a minute or two, and collapse it in a second with a pinprick. So it is with self-important intellectuals. They can be deflated with a single remark.

But building up with love is something else. Just as one has to lay stone on stone or brick on brick in order to construct a solid building, so we must lay one loving deed on another if we would build a solid life that will last.

"Answer" or "Defense"?

The word is *apologia* (9:3), from which we get "apology." But the Greek term

means "a speech in defense." Actually the original meaning of "apology" in English was "defense."

"Power" or "Right"?

The term used here (vv. 4, 5, 6, 12, 18) is not *dynamis*, "power," but *exousia*, "right, privilege, authority." Paul first asks, "Have we not power to eat and to drink?"—that is, at the church's expense. Some evidently insisted that, because Paul was not one of the original 12 apostles, he had no right to be maintained by the church.

In the second place, Paul asks if he does not have just as much right to be accompanied by a wife as had other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Peter. The third question the apostle asks is: "Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?" (v. 6) The last two words are literally "not to work." What Paul is asking is this: "Are Barnabas and I the only ones who do not have the right to refrain from working?" Lias comments: "The reason why Paul and Barnabas refused to accept payment for their services is not hard to discover. They went on a mission to the Gentiles, the other Apostles to the Jews. The latter fully understood that the ministers should be maintained by the offerings of the worshippers. The Gentiles, on the contrary, had so long known what it was to be plundered by greedy sophists who lived by their wits, that it was above all things necessary for the Apostles of Christ to avoid being confounded with such persons" (*op. cit.*, pp. 102-3).

"Goeth a Warfare"

This is one word in the Greek, *strateuetai* (v. 7). The verb simply means "serve as a soldier." It is used literally here and in Luke 3:14 and II Tim. 2:4. In the other four occurrences in the New Testament (II Cor. 10:3; I Tim. 1:18; Jas. 4:1; I Pet. 2:11) it is used metaphorically of making war in a spiritual conflict.

"Charges" or "Expense"?

The word *opsonion* meant "provisions, provision-money, soldier's pay" (Abbott-Smith). That is how it is used here and in Luke 3:14. In II Cor. 11:8 it is used in a more general sense for wages, and in Rom. 6:23 for the "wages" of sin. The general sense of "wages" is found in the papyri (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 148). The correct translation of the first question in verse 7 is: "Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense?" (NASB)

"Carnal" or "Material"?

In verse 11, Paul writes: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things *[pneumatica]*, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things *[sarkica]*?"

The Oxford English Dictionary (Vol. II, p. 123) indicates that the earliest meaning of "carnal" was "of or pertaining to the flesh or body; bodily, corporeal." But it labels this "obsolete." It then came to mean "pertaining to the body as the seat of passions or appetites; fleshly, sensual." This is the usual way that the word "carnal" is taken today, but obviously this is not what Paul is talking about here. Another definition, labeled "archaic," is "material, temporal, secular." That is the sense in which it is used here. The correct translation is "material things"; that is, money. What the apostle is saying in this passage (vv. 11-14) is that the one who dispenses food for the soul should be paid for this just as is the grocer who furnishes food for the body.

"Live" or "Eat"?

Paul says that those who work at holy tasks in the Temple "live of the things of the temple" (v. 13). Instead of "live" the Greek has "eat" *(esthiousin)*. This refers to the fact that the priests were entitled to get their meat from the sacrifices offered in the Temple, as ordered in the law of Moses (Num. 18:8-20). They shared ("partakers with") the food that was placed on the altar.

"Willingly" . . . "Against My Will"

In the Greek there is a play on words: *hekon* . . . *akon* (v. 17). The latter is found only here in the New Testament; the former occurs only here and in Rom. 8:20.

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Obviously the translation should be: "willingly" . . . "unwillingly."

"Dispensation" or "Stewardship"?

The word *oikonomian* means "dispensation" in its original meaning of "a dispensing." Paul was dispensing the gospel to others. But today the term "dispensation" usually refers to a period of time, and so its use here is misleading. The proper translation is "stewardship."

The Necessity of Holiness

TEXT: *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God* (Matt. 5:8).

INTRODUCTION:

A. The holiness people have constantly been under attack from various sources that their doctrine is not necessary. It is just frosting on the cake.

B. It is the core of Christianity if given the right place in interpretation of the Bible and explanation of terminology.

C. Definitions of holiness. State or character of being holy (which means spiritually whole; godly).

D. Holiness is the life from which every possible thing contrary to the will of God is removed.

Why is holiness necessary?

I. THE NATURE OF GOD DEMANDS IT.

A. The Bible teaches God's holiness.

1. Isa. 6:3
2. Heb. 1:8-9
3. Rev. 4:8

B. Other religions are illegitimate children.

C. Holiness and sin cannot exist together.

II. MAN'S NATURE DEMANDS IT.

A. Created in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27)

1. Eccles. 7:29
2. Things that are made for particular purpose, when misused, bring bad results.

III. THE WAY

A. Confession (I John 1:9)

B. Consecration (Rom. 12:1)

ALLAN W. MILLER

The Need Was Great—But Christ Was Greater

SCRIPTURE: John 6:1-14

INTRODUCTION: The story is told of a teenage girl who was hooked on drugs, but who found Christ in saving, forgiving, and delivering power. In the struggles of withdrawal she was heard to say, "I see both Jesus and the devil. Satan is louder but Jesus is stronger."

In all our problems, in all our need, Jesus is always greater.

I. THE MULTITUDES FOLLOWED HIM (v. 2).

A. Some for healing (v. 2)

B. Some for the loaves and fishes (v. 26)

C. All who trusted were fed and blessed (vv. 11-12).

II. THE DISCIPLES HELPED HIM (vv. 10, 13).

A. In themselves, they were helpless (see Philip's reply) (vv. 5-7).

B. They obeyed, not knowing what Christ would do (vv. 10-12).

C. By assisting in this way, they adorned His work by which men believed (vv. 13-14).

III. A LITTLE LAD GAVE ALL HE HAD TO HIM (v. 11).

A. He gave his "little all."

B. Christ added His "big all."

C. Five thousand were fed in abundance.

CONCLUSION:

A. Are you one of the multitude? Why do *you* follow Him?

B. Are you a disciple? Do you obey Him, understanding or not?

C. Do you feel small or insignificant, as the little lad must have? Will you withhold from the Master your loaves and fishes?

ED IRWIN

The Law of God—The Grace of God

TEXT: Romans 7

I. THE DOMINION OF THE LAW
   A. Marriage illustration (vv. 2-3)
   B. Motions of sin (v. 5)
   C. Mold of the commandments (v. 6) —"were held . . ."

II. THE DIVESTMENT OF THE LAW
   A. Death to it (v. 4)
   B. Deliverance from it (v. 6)
   C. Deception of sin revealed by it (v. 11)

III. THE DEFINITION OF THE LAW (vv. 9-14)
   A. Not sinful, reveals sin
   B. Holy, just, and good—contrasts my inward state of sin
   C. Not carnal but spiritual

IV. THE DIVISION WROUGHT BY THE LAW
   A. A city besieged (type depicted here)
   B. Led away into galling captivity

CONCLUSION: The way of hope—the deliverance through Jesus Christ, and the daily dominion of the Holy Spirit (once enthroned). "I thank [my] God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 25)

ED IRWIN

Prepared Witnesses

SCRIPTURE: Luke 22:47-62; John 21:1-3; Acts 2:1-15

TEXT: Acts 1:8

INTRODUCTION:
   A. Witnesses are needed for the gospel today.
      1. In testimony of word
      2. In testimony of deed
   B. There are witnesses for politics, cults, ideologies.
   C. Let us look at the disciples and see how they became prepared witnesses.

I. APPARENT WEAKNESSES
   A. One betrayed his Lord; love of money greater than love of the Lord.
   B. One used a material weapon: love of power greater than love of the Lord.
   C. One denied his Lord: love of self greater than love of the Lord.
   D. Peter followed afar off.
   E. They all went fishing.
   F. What a tragic picture! A disgruntled, leaderless group; no hope, little faith.
   G. But then the Lord appeared and commanded them to tarry in Jerusalem.

II. ACTUAL OBEDIENCE
   A. They tarried in Jerusalem, according to His command.
   B. They prayed.
   C. They were unified.

III. ACTUAL STRENGTH
   A. Cleansed from carnal sin nature and filled with the Holy Spirit. A vessel fit for the Master's use (II Tim. 2:21).
   B. Baptism with the Holy Spirit brings power for service.
   C. Witnessed to Christ.
      1. Boldly proclaimed the gospel.
      2. Fear of persecution was removed.
      3. There were results.

CONCLUSION: Do you lack the power for an effective witness for the gospel? Then seek the experience of entire sanctification, so that you may be a prepared witness.

ALLAN W. MILLER

Holiness Required

SCRIPTURE: Ps. 24:1-6

TEXT: *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God* (Matt. 5:8).

INTRODUCTION: Two themes are present in this passage of Scripture. From these we draw truths regarding holiness:

I. THE POWER AND MAJESTY OF THE LORD (vv. 1-3)
   A. Maker and Sovereign over all the earth (Cf. Ps. 136:1-9.)
   B. All-knowing
   C. Perfection of His work
   D. Purity and righteousness of His person
      "Mere man must hesitate about his duty to worship him, for to draw near unto the holy God is perilous to the sinner and awesome for all" (*New Bible Commentary*, p. 429).

II. RIGHTEOUSNESS REQUIRED OF MEN IF THEY ARE TO BE BLESSED OF GOD (vv. 4-6)
   A. Clean hands—signifies actions and outward life.
   B. Pure heart—motive life.
   C. Not lifted up soul unto vanity—i.e., "hath not directed affection and desires toward things that are empty and worthless instead of toward God" (*NBC*, p. 429).

III. THE PROMISE OF STRENGTH (v. 5)

ALLAN W. MILLER

Faith or Foolishness

SCRIPTURE: Rom. 1:16-32

TEXTS: 1:17*b* and 1:21*b*

INTRODUCTION: *The just shall live by faith.*

I. A FAITHFUL ENDEAVOR
   A. Revealed of God (vv. 17, 19*a*).
   B. Received by man (v. 19*b*)
   C. Remaining for all (v. 20)

II. A FOOLISH EXCHANGE
   A. Exchanging gratitude (v. 21)—"neither . . . thankful"
   B. Exchanging gifts (v. 21)—"vain in their imaginations," i.e., the gift of imagination
   C. Exchanging glow (v. 21)—"heart was darkened"
   D. Exchanging glory (vv. 21, 23)—"changed . . . glory" . . . "glorified . . . not"
   E. Exchanging God himself (v. 25)—"worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator"

III. A FOUNTAIN OF EVIL
   A. Unnatural concourse (vv. 26-27)
   B. Unreasonable conclusions (v. 28)
   C. Unrighteousness and concupiscence (vv. 29-30)

CONCLUSION: Condemned are—
   A. Those that do these evil things
   B. Those that take pleasure in them that do them

ED IRWIN

Use Them or Lose Them

(Continued from page 10)

more than that: a revolution in music to provide that dynamic which should be predominant in our services. We must emerge from the traditional concept of the one choir of limited membership to the use of maximum participation. The use of teen-agers, the use of children, the use of orchestra, the bringing together of our pianists and organists, will help us realize the exciting goal of a singing congregation.

To activate this program, many established situations must be changed. Platform space will have to be enlarged; building acoustics will have to be studied; orchestra and children's choir areas will be needed. Organ and piano must be centered and fairly close together to support the numerous choirs, rather than to be set aside for architectural balance.

Every aspect of outreach through participation and involvement must be planned. The total church program must be prepared to use the added interest and activity. The church sanctuary must be ready to accept the new followers who will come because of the new interest, action, and participation. To win souls for Jesus Christ is the reason for all our activity.

GOD'S GIFT

Do you make great plans for Christmas,
And decorate and shop,
And light a lovely evergreen
With a star upon the top?

God, too, made plans for Christmas
When the earth was dark and void,
And He planned to give a present
That would always be enjoyed.

He gave to men who didn't care,
Who denied He was above,
The gift to Him most precious
To show them of His love.

Though many mocked and crushed it,
He knew that there would be
A few who would receive it,
And through receiving see

The way He really planned it—
For a human and a God
To live as one in fellowship
As on the earth they trod.

This year as gifts are opened,
Do not leave God's gift undone,
For He sends you hope and courage
In the person of His Son.

Accept this priceless treasure
As you bow your head in prayer,
And remember that, to KEEP HIM,
You must GIVE HIM as you share.

—Betty Reber

The joy of brightening other lives, bearing others' burdens, easing others' loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas.—W. C. Jones.

The Incomparable Christ

He came from the bosom of the Father to the bosom of a woman. He put on humanity that we might put on divinity. He became Son of Man that we might become sons of God. He came from heaven, where the rivers never freeze, winds never blow, frosts never chill the air, flowers never fade. They never phone for a doctor, for no one is ever sick. No undertakers and no graveyards, for no one ever dies!

He was born contrary to the laws of nature, lived in poverty, was reared in obscurity; only once crossed the boundary of the land, in childhood. He had no wealth or influence and had neither training nor education. His relatives were inconspicuous and uninfluential.

In infancy He startled a king; in boyhood He puzzled the doctors; in manhood He ruled the course of nature. He walked upon the billows and hushed the sea to sleep. He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for His services. He never wrote a book, yet not all the libraries in the country could hold the books that could be written about Him. He never wrote a song, yet He has furnished the theme for more songs than all songwriters combined. He never founded a college, yet all the schools together cannot boast of as many students as He has had. He never practiced medicine, yet He healed more broken hearts than the doctors have healed broken bodies.

He never marshalled an army, drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun; yet no leader ever had more volunteers who have, under his orders, made rebels stack arms or surrender without a shot being fired.

He is the Star of Astronomy, the Rock of Geology, the Lion and the Lamb of Zoology, the Harmonizer of all discords, and the Healer of all diseases. Great men have come and gone, yet He lives on. Herod could not kill Him; Satan could not seduce Him; death could not destroy Him; the grave could not hold Him.

He laid aside His purple robe for a peasant's gown. He was rich, yet for our sake He became poor. How poor? Ask Mary! Ask the wise men! He slept in another's manger. He cruised the lake in another's boat. He rode on another man's donkey. He was buried in another man's tomb. All failed, but He never. The ever perfect One—He is the Chief "among ten thousand."

He is "altogether lovely."

—Selected

The Greatest Gifts

Someone complained that he could never think what to give people for Christmas. His pastor overheard him, and the next day sent him this list:

To your enemy, forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance.
To a friend, your heart.
To a customer, service.
To all men, charity.
To every child, a good example.
To yourself, respect.

—*Selected*

° ° °

If you hitch your wagon to a star, be sure it is the star of Bethlehem.

° ° °

To the child, Christmas is wondrous because it is so new; to his grandfather, Christmas is wondrous because it is old.

Pondering at Christmastime—

A miser must have a wretched time at Christmas, for Christmas is preeminently a time of generosity. God set the example when He gave His own Son; the wise men followed it, when they gave their gold to the Christ Child; and in proportion to our share of the Christmas spirit, we are walking in their footsteps today.

—John T. Faris

° ° °

Someone has just dreamed up a new kind of Christmas Club: you can save up enough money to pay for last year's gifts.

° ° °

Light of the World, so clear and bright,
Enter our homes this Christmas night.
Relight our souls so tenderly
That we may grow to be like Thee.

—*Selected*

Letter to the Innkeeper—

Dear Inkeeper:

I was a guest at your inn a few weeks ago. My visit to your city was unpleasant—the Romans were enrolling me for another of their miserable taxes. And the stay in your hostel did not improve matters.

I am a patient man, Innkeeper. One must be if he is to be a merchant. I can forgive you for many inconveniences. I can overlook the fact that your wine was poor and your bread stale. But there are several things I cannot forgive. For my private room, you charged an unreasonable price. It was about as private as the marketplace. The stench from the stable was unbearable.

No sooner had I fallen asleep than I was awakened by shouts of "Hallelujah, the King is born!" I saw a group of shepherds in front of the stable. I could see them by the light of bright stars. I ordered them to be quiet but they paid no mind. At long last, they disappeared into the stable and it was relatively quiet again.

Later I was awakened again, this time by the crying of an infant. Strangely enough, the cries came from the stable. I looked out again and through the open stable doors could see the infant and its mother. I yelled down to keep the baby quiet, but apparently they did not hear me.

I could not sleep for the rest of the night. It was a most miserable night—all because of those people in the stable.

If you are going to permit your high-paying guests to be disturbed by those who pay less and are less, then I hope you are prepared to suffer great financial loss. You will never get anything from shepherds and a family which had to be housed in a stable.

With great displeasure, I remain,

Silas of Jerusalem

—Michael Daves

Christmas living is the best kind of Christmas giving.

• • •

The Christmas spirit that goes out with the dried-up Christmas tree is just as worthless.

Preachers' Exchange

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- 25 Christmas
- 31 Watch-Night Service

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- 7 Family Altar Sunday
- Family Week Begins
- Cottage Prayer Meetings Organized

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- Stewardship Month
- NWMS Alabaster Month
- Organized Home Bible Studies
- 2 Denomination CST Study
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- 18 Brotherhood Week
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  A Bible study and exposition with homiletical sermon helps in the Gospel of John, by Dr. Ralph Earle, for each Sunday of the month. This series will continue through the book week by week, and will replace the feature "Gleanings from the Greek."

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"This Christmas, give a church!" What an idea. Impossible? Yes, for most of our readers, if we think it means what it would appear to mean. But not as impossible as we may think if we take the suggestion of the Department of Home Missions and at least start a Bible study group in 1973. The goal is 2,500 of these to begin during the year. Some of them will someday become churches. So this Christmas—why not?—give a church! (Supplement, p. 29) And along that line, why not let the real message of Christmas be heard? It is a missionary message, an evangelistic word, and a proper mood for the launching of the most ambitious undertaking since Pentecost—"Key 73." (p. 22) Exciting! We will either get into this project with the zeal it deserves or we will be left standing on the sidelines while something momentous is happening all around us. Knowing you as well as I do (either personally or by your good works), I believe I can predict which it will be. We will be deeply concerned for souls and we will be completely committed to "Key 73" and the goals for which it stands. For us that means holiness evangelism. Nothing less.

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