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DECEMBER • 1973

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THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

—proclaiming Christian Holiness . . .

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THE

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

DECEMBER, 1973 VOLUME 48 NUMBER 12

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From the EDITOR

Editing the Gospel

A DEDICATED LAYMAN shared his concerns for the salvation of lost souls and the building of the Church, and he was puzzled over what appeared to him as the omission of certain aspects of the gospel in the preaching he had heard.

"We hardly ever hear sermons on holiness. We have not heard a sermon on hell or the judgment in years. We do not hear anything about repentance or the second coming of Christ. We hear of love, and of mercy, and of grace and forgiveness. I know this is part of the gospel, but it is not all of it.

"Do we have a right to edit the gospel, and proclaim only that part of it that we choose to present?"

His question should haunt every preacher who prepares his messages for the listeners who come to hear the gospel preached. Are we indeed "editing" the gospel we proclaim? Do we tend to omit from our messages any aspects of the whole counsel of God which, for whatever the reasons may be, our congregations never hear?

The duality of truth has long been recognized by venerable pulpiteers who saw their goals in preaching "to comfort the afflicted, and to afflict the comfortable." Both are proper; neither is the whole and exclusive need. There are indeed dark feelings of despair and defeat and guilt that must be healed; but there is also a spirit of callous unconcern and rebellious cynicism that needs to be pricked, not healed. It is unfortunate that some preachers major on one of these aspects to the neglect, if not the total deletion, of the other. Does one have the right thus to edit the gospel?

There are some preachers who never preach on the rapture, the return of our Lord in glory, and the prophecies concerning the future, perhaps because they do not know all the answers or possibly for a variety of other reasons. Do we have the right to ignore this aspect of the gospel? When there is twice as much said in the New Testament about

the second coming of Christ as is said about the atonement, and there is eight times as much written about the Second Coming as there is about the first advent of Christ, should we edit it out of our preaching?

True, there have been examples of "crackpot" theories about future things; but the same could be said about any facet of truth. The answer should be more careful attention to this aspect of the gospel, not less.

In our emphasis upon God's love and mercy—and certainly this should be emphasized, no argument about that—are we pretending that there is no day of judgment, there is no other attribute of God's nature, no such thing as the "wrath of God"? One would have to be either naive or ignorant of the Word of God if he failed to see the graphic picture portrayed by John of those who hid themselves "in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. 6:15-16).

Jesus, the Lamb of God, is meek and lowly, and He loves little children and preaches good tidings to the poor. But He also takes a whip and drives money changers from the Temple, He denounces Pharisees for having hearts like neatly painted sepulchres with putrefying dead men's bones inside, and He warns of the day of reckoning when the Father will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

Both the love of God and His wrath are aspects of the whole truth. The gospel is neither side of this question to the exclusion of the other. We have no right to edit it, and to present only that aspect we enjoy proclaiming.

The gospel is both law and grace; it is both mercy and judgment; it is both sin and holiness; it is both freedom and bondage; it is both heaven and hell; it is indeed "accepting and receiving Christ" in a sense, but it is also repenting and forsaking sin.

In His relationship with the old covenant and the law, Jesus is often misunderstood. He is seen as the Deliverer from the bondage of law, and He is! But some seem to forget that He made it clear, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil" (Matt. 5:17). He permitted His disciples to pluck the corn on the Sabbath as they walked through the fields, but do you really think He meant by this that we are free to desecrate the Lord's day as we please? Certainly not. When we love the Lord our God with all our hearts, we are not likely to do anything that would be disrespectful to Him and to the day He has set aside as the holy Sabbath.

The truth is, His way of grace is not in conflict with the old way of law, but goes further, right to the heart of it, where the motives lie. The law demanded, "Thou shalt not kill," and Christ's way of love does not even permit us to hate. The law required, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and Christ went further to show us that love does not permit lustful thoughts.

Paul said to the elders at Ephesus, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). He must have believed it unthinkable to edit the gospel. So let it be with those of us who are called to preach the gospel in our time.

Run to win, preach for souls, strive for mastery, be a disciplined minister, rekindle the fire.

The Minister Maintaining His Inner Fire

"STIR UP THAT INNER FIRE which God gave you at your ordination" (2 Tim. 1:6, Phillips).

Adam Clarke tells us that this gift to which Paul makes reference "is the Holy Spirit, and through the Holy Spirit the particular power to preach and defend the truth. The gift is represented here as a fire, which if not frequently stirred up and rekindled will go out." Three things are necessary for the minister to maintain this inner fire.

I

There must be a continuing conviction that God has called him to preach. This compulsion was never lost by the apostle. He began this Epistle, as he did most every book which he wrote, with these or similar words, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God . . ." Further, he declared, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling" (1:9); "Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (1:11). When one lives under the burning conviction of a divine appointment he is not looking for a place to quit or for something else to do. This inner fire will not permit him to do so.

II

There must be a correct concept of the nature of the ministry. The minister must exemplify what he preaches. "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2:1). One of the perils of the minister is to live lower than he demands of his people.

The minister must be able to communicate. "The things that thou hast heard . . . commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2:2). Preach the truth using words the people can understand. There is a relationship between the effectiveness and simplicity of the message.

A minister is like a soldier. "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2:3-4). The soldier severs those civilian pursuits which hinder in the service of his country. He is wholly at his commanding officer's direction, willingly enduring hardships.

A minister is like an athlete. "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet

by
Virgil A. Mitchell
General Superintendent
The Wesleyan Church

is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (2:5). Those running in Olympic races discipline themselves and strain every nerve to win the crown. Run to win. Preach for souls. Strive for the mastery. Be a disciplined minister. Rekindle the inner fire.

The minister is like the hardworking farmer. "The husbandman that laboureth must first be partaker of the fruits" (2:6). A farmer doesn't expect results without first doing his own part. He does, however, have the advantage of first partaking of the fruit of his labor. The sermon must catch fire twice if it is to accomplish its mission—when it is being prepared and while it is being delivered.

The minister is a student. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2:15). This is both an agricultural and medical term. It means to plow a straight furrow, to leave nothing unturned. Like a physician who is about to perform a crucial operation, the minister must take that Word, cut it open, reveal its meaning. Like a skillful surgeon, he must know how to wield the scalpel. If the surgeon does not cut deep enough, he will leave the diseased member of the body with its putrefaction and its corruption. The surgical procedure will be useless and wasted. If he should cut too deeply and go beyond what he should, then the result could be sudden death.

He must clearly proclaim and rightly interpret God's Word. If he does not thrust in the Sword of the Spirit as deeply as the Holy Spirit intends and to the extent the context allows, he will only slightly heal the hurt of God's children. God pronounced a curse upon the minister who does this. If, on the other hand, he cuts, slashes, or goes beyond the Scriptures, then he will kill, maim, and destroy. Keeping in mind that he is always to be a student will keep the inner fire burning in his heart.

III

There must be a complete commitment to the ministry. "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (4:5). Fully perform your ministry. To accomplish this, three things must be done:

1. The minister must be committed to giving full attention to the social, physical, intellectual, and spiritual needs of his personal life. Paul is in prison in Rome, forsaken by some and separated from others, but longing for Christian fellowship. "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me" (4:9). "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (4:11). There was urgency in this request. It is interesting to hear Paul say, "Bring Mark with you." There was a time when he didn't want Mark along. But he needed him now. Fellowship is an essential part of the ministry.

Physical needs are important. "The cloak . . . bring with thee" (4:13). Paul needed the coat. His comfort and health depended on it.

Paul was interested in the intellectual. He requested that Timothy "bring . . . the books" (4:13). He was shut up in prison, but he felt that he had to have something to feed his mind, and stimulate his thinking.

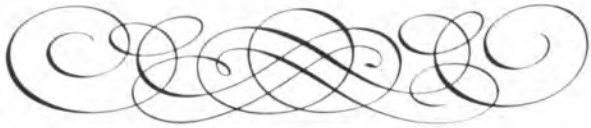
The spiritual needs must not be overlooked. "Bring . . . especially the parchments" (4:13). Leave the cloak if necessary but not the parchments!

2. The minister must be committed to preach the Word. "I charge thee . . . Preach the word" (4:1-2). A few years ago expository preaching fell in disrepute. We are now reaping the spiritual dearth resulting therefrom.

3. The minister must be committed to keeping the faith. "For I am

now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (4: 6-7). Paul was pulling anchor, setting sail. He had been a good fighter. He had been a good trustee, never swerving from his trust. His race had been run and his crown awaited him.

Give your best. Maintain that inner fire. Kindle it into a mighty flame!



Pastoral Ponderings and Prayers

By G. Lewis VanDyne*

Lift Me to the People Level, Lord

As I survey the experience that has been mine in the pastoral ministry, I come to the conclusion that some of the really deep and untouched areas of ministry are in the arena of family problems. I have met so many people who seem to be successful in every other area of their lives except in the area of happy marriages, solid family life, and person-to-person relationships. Lord, are You trying to tell me that we have been overlooking this vast area of human need and dealing mostly with superficial issues?

We do spend a great deal of our time in the church world promoting programs as if they were the answer to the deep human needs. Yet Jesus did not promote programs but spent time with people at their point of need personally, and often one by one. I know all this sounds strangely familiar, and I have probably talked with you about it before, but I keep coming back to this place.

Lord, lead me out of the morass of involvement in petty little programs and into the exciting arena of human relationships. Let this be the time when I am able to rise above the program level to the people level. Teach me how to bring cold, clear, clean water to the thirsty souls dying of spiritual thirst. Keep me from being so concerned about the condition of the water jug, the method of getting to the thirsty souls, and the theories that deal with thirsty people—why they are thirsty and so on. Allow me the privilege of using the tools at my command to do in a manner pleasing to You this task of getting water to thirsty men.

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Evangelistically Speaking—

Constructive Restraints in Evangelism

FULL-TIME EVANGELISTS make up one of the most sacrificing groups to be found in the work of the Lord. I stand in solemn salute to this committed army of workers who are filling so great a place in promoting God's kingdom on earth. Without the spirit of true evangelism, the Church will soon grow old and die. She may exist as an organization, but will fail to be a life-giving force in the world.

This may come as a shock to some, but in my humble opinion the cause of evangelism is being wounded most by evangelists themselves. It is sad but true that many pastors and churches are fearful of evangelists. And for the most part, these pastors and lay members are godly, consecrated people of God.

I fear that more than one pastor has been betrayed by the person he called in good faith to minister to his people. After being burned once, wise folk are careful about putting their hands in the fire. In order for men to work together, there must be an element of trust and confidence. Many pastors, unwilling to place their faith in the unknown, call a neighboring pastor to conduct the special meeting.

For years we evangelists have been a special "breed." We have a kind of independence that many other workers do not enjoy. If not carried to excess, this is necessary and good. Too much of this spirit, however, can do great harm.

Any God-called minister should be free to preach the gospel of Christ. It should be preached without fear. There should be no compromise with sin or the great doctrines of Holy Writ. A Spirit-directed and God-anointed ministry will never do harm, though at first it might appear to do so.

The danger lies in the fact that an evangelist can branch out in so many areas. Some of these have very little, if any, relationship to the gospel. When extreme, undocumented statements are made which downgrade the church and reflect on God's people, the preacher has departed from the gospel. In many such statements he is voicing his own pet peeves. We must obey God rather than men, but we should be sure that it is God we

by
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are obeying and not the vibrations of our own ego or the prejudices of some personal notion.

Examples could be given of extremism running in opposite directions. Such preaching hinders the sincere efforts of those who labor to reach the lost. We evangelists should stand aside long enough to observe our own work. This might determine how much of it is for our own glory and how much for the glory of God.

Some evangelists have become chronic complainers. There may be some reason for this—the feeling that we are forgotten, unnoticed, a sort of tolerated necessity. But is the failure of others an excuse for our own grumbling? Such shallow thinking is typical of this permissive world. To feel like forgotten men is part of the price we pay for the high honor of doing the work to which God has called us. When did Jesus ever promise anything but a cross?

When an evangelist accepts a call to assist in a revival effort, he is then in the employ of that church. If there is counsel and instruction from the pastor as the leader of the group, this is appropriate and should be accepted graciously. Sometimes the tension is so great and the situation so delicate that the results of years of work can be jeopardized by an insensitive and undiscerning evangelist. The pastor and local leaders may know of explosive situations where a wrong word will set off a destructive bomb.

Do we really expect the people to accept our message of correction when we ourselves are so very independent? Only when we are willing to learn are we qualified to teach. Should an evangelist become peevish because a pastor asks him to refrain from certain subjects unless led of the Spirit to speak of them?

Evangelists must be awakened to the fact that they are as much under authority as any other worker in the church. When this is recognized, the work of evangelism can be redeemed. In many areas it needs to be.

There are many tried and true men in this special work. They can be fully trusted in any pulpit. It is not our purpose to reflect on them or their useful work. We live in changing times. We need not change our principles, but our method and outlook may need some overhauling. There was a time when I needed this advice. If only there had been someone with the courage to speak, I might have learned long ago the lessons of restraint which enhance the ministry of evangelism.

"Merry Christmas" may mean many things, since the word "merry" bespeaks mirth, gaiety, jollity, high spirits, and lightheartedness. But centuries ago the word meant peacefulness and blessedness.

The editor and his family, and our office staff, wish for you and yours a Christmas season that is in every sense of the word "merry."

May Christmas bring you peace, and may the blessings of God be yours.

Faith in ACTION

Anointing with Oil for the Sick

THAT WHICH HAS PROVED to be a special opportunity for the moving of the Holy Spirit to our local congregation is what we refer to as the "anointing for needs."

Each Sunday in the evening worship there is a portion of the service (usually during the preliminary segment) which is set aside for this particular prayer emphasis. The procedure usually follows these steps:

1. The congregation is asked to stand to sing a hymn or prayer chorus (for example, "Fill My Cup, Lord"). The pastor invites any worshipper who may have a physical and/or spiritual need for which he would desire special prayer to step forward for the anointing with oil and for prayer.

2. A simple explanation is provided concerning Jas. 5:13-15, as well as a supporting passage such as 1 John 5:14 (which gives instructions concerning the anointing as well as guidance as to *how* to pray—that is, "according to Thy will").

3. As the congregation sings, those desiring this special prayer ministry proceed to the altar. We also invite friends or relatives who may wish to accompany such persons to the altar.

by
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4. Each person kneeling for prayer is approached by the minister, who places a drop of oil on the forehead and then proceeds to pray for the healing presence of the Holy Spirit and for the unfolding of God's perfect will to be accomplished. Prior to the actual prayer, however, the minister asks the person if he has come for a spiritual need or a physical need or both. Then the minister knows more specifically how to pray.

5. Following these prayers, the minister instructs the congregation to be seated and offers a brief word of encouragement to those leaving the altar.

Since we have opened up this opportunity to the Spirit of God, we have experienced three primary "feedbacks":

1. The prayer time during the anointing brings a new warmth of sharing one another's burdens to the worship hour. The people are drawn together and find themselves genuinely empathizing with one another in a most practical way.

2. Some have been touched with the healing presence of the Spirit. One woman was healed of cancer of the throat. Another was touched physically so that she did not have to undergo surgery which her doctor was planning. A man was healed of a heart ailment. A woman was healed of a sprained neck which previously had given her much pain. These are representative of others who have had similar experiences.

3. Such an anointing opens up the opportunity for the minister to explain the importance of praying for God's will to be accomplished, so that those who are not healed by the Spirit know better how to relinquish the situation more completely to the perfect plan of the Father.

With the emphasis of healing throughout evangelical Christianity, it is important for the clergy to explain clearly the biblical position which can be posited so simply in the two primary passages of Jas. 5:13-15 and 1 John 5:14. We are commissioned to anoint the sick with oil along with prayers to the Father. And we are commissioned to pray for anything that we want "according to Thy will."

Some Christians hold to the position that we have the right to demand of God that He heal any person brought to Him in prayer. And other Christians who pray for the sick by injecting "Thy will be done" are criticized as being weak in their faith by concluding with such a resignation to the Father's will.

Praying for the Father's will is not a sign of weakness but a sign of wisdom. It is recognizing that our will cannot finally know all, that only His will knows all; that our wills are finite and His will is infinite. To pray dictatorially to God is to over-assert our finite, limited knowledge of any situation; but to conclude with leaving the circumstance within His perfect knowledge and will is to be wise spiritually.

The anointing for the sick provides the minister this most opportune moment to explain in simple fashion what the Bible teaches us concerning the prayers for the sick.

Another benefit of this anointing ministry within the worship is to meet other than physical needs in special prayer. For instance, a Christian woman who is particularly burdened for a chaotic home situation makes her way to the altar for prayer on behalf of this spiritual need within her family. A Christian man who is especially confused about a decision relating to his future work kneels for special prayer, asking for God's insight into the situation. And not infrequently a person comes to the altar simply to be prayed over with the request for personal salvation, that Jesus will forgive sins and remove guilt.

Still another benefit of the "anointing for needs" is the opportunity for persons to pray "in proxy" for another's needs. For instance, a fine Christian couple in the church was given little hope for the life of their new baby daughter. The doctor had exhausted medical resources—only a miracle could save the child. The baby was born on Friday morning. The next Sunday morning in worship, the secretary of the Cradle Roll department knelt at the altar and was anointed on behalf of the child. The Holy Spirit came to the entire congregation in an especially warm and beautiful way during those moments of intercessory prayer. During the next week the Christians continued with their intercession at the family altars in their homes. The Lord touched that baby, and the next Sunday the couple took the baby home in perfect health. What a spiritual "shot in the arm" for the congregation when this was announced! When the situation was given to God, He entered in and not only saved the baby, but also lifted the worshipers to new heights in faith and commitment.

Announcing the "anointing for needs" by way of a news release in the local newspapers and in the weekly church listing information on the newspapers' church pages has brought others into the church who are seeking out a community church

with such an emphasis of daring faith in God.

Could it be that we would see more of God's miracle-working power if only we made provision for such in our worship services? We emphasize that need for salvation and sanctification, but there are other emphases of the Scriptures which can be likewise brought to the growth of the congregation to the glory of God, one of them being the "anointing for needs":

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him (Jas. 5:13-15).

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us (1 John 5:14).

The Prophet of Dundee

THE YEAR 1843 will long be memorable in Scottish church history. That was the year that saw the great cleavage in the Church of Scotland known as the "Disruption." More than 400 congregations, under the leadership of Thomas Chalmers, withdrew from the State Church and formed the Free Church of Scotland. To those acquainted with religious biography, the year 1843 might recall another event in Scotland—the death of Robert Murray McCheyne.

McCheyne (pronounced MacChain) was undoubtedly one of the most saintly and devoted ministers the Scottish kirk ever produced. His name is still synonymous with holy living, anointed preaching, and successful soul winning. All through his short ministry of seven and a half years, his constant prayer was, "O God, make me as holy as it is possible for a sinner saved by grace on this earth to be." Writing to a friend who was preparing for the ministry, McCheyne counselled: "It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God." To spend time with McCheyne is a spiritual discipline and he has much to say to us today as holiness pastors. The aim of this article is to make us a little more familiar with this outstanding servant of God—the prophet of Dundee.

by
Herbert McGonigle
Pastor
Leeds, England

The outline of McCheyne's life is quickly sketched. He was born in Edinburgh on May 21, 1813. He was a brilliant pupil at Edinburgh's High School and later at the university in the same city. In 1831 he was accepted as a candidate in the Divinity Hall under Dr. Chalmers to prepare for the ministry of the Church of Scot-

land. As yet he knew nothing of personal saving grace. He had a thorough grounding in the classics, read both Testaments in their original languages, and made good progress in philosophy. He also possessed remarkable poetic talent, as many of his hymns reveal. Intellectually his preparation for the ministry could hardly have been improved.

It was the death of a beloved younger brother that brought him into living contact with Christ. Awakened to a sense of sin, it was through reading "The Sum of Saving Knowledge," a statement of evangelical truth usually appended to Scotland's "Confession of Faith," that he found peace through personal faith. In 1836 he became minister of the new St. Peter's Church in Dundee, where he labored with amazing industry and success till he was called to a higher service in 1843. During the time at St. Peter's, he spent one year with three other Scottish ministers on a mission of inquiry among the Jews of Palestine.

All through his short ministry, McCheyne was seldom free of bodily pain. Attacks of fever were constant and he suffered much from lung trouble. He very rarely preached outside his own church, and the only writings he left behind, apart from his hymns, were an exposition of Revelation 1—3 and two sermons. In spite of this almost parochial seclusion, it is not too much to say that his ministry moved the whole nation, and all Scotland mourned his death. His close friend, Andrew Bonar, brother to the hymn writer Horatius Bonar, became his biographer in what is one of the great spiritual classics—*Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne.*

McCheyne's life was full of fragrance, beauty, and spiritual grace. He had one great, absorbing ambition—to be like Christ and to be a successful soul winner. Scotland has produced greater preachers than McCheyne, and ministers whose intellectual attainments were superior to his, and evangelists who won more men to Christ than he did, but never has that land seen another minister in whom all these gifts were so wonderfully combined. In spiritual fervor and delight in God, McCheyne most nearly approaches that other Scottish saint of two centuries earlier, the Covenanter Samuel Rutherford. Among the great treasurers of McCheyne's ministry were his letters. In style and spirit they closely resemble Rutherford's "Letters," though they never quite reach the ecstasy of spirit expressed by that lyrist.

How can we evaluate the life and work of McCheyne? To look into his amazing ministry is to be humbled and silenced. What was the secret of this man of God? As preachers, can we learn anything from him today? After careful analysis of Bonar's moving biography, four marks of McCheyne's ministry seem most important:

1. From the day he first found peace through the blood of Christ until the day he drew his last breath, McCheyne *never ceased to seek holiness.* "I am deepened in my conviction," he wrote to his friend, W. C. Burns, "that if we are to be instruments in God's work, we must be purified from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. O cry for personal holiness, constant nearness to God by the blood of the Lamb. Bask in His beams, be filled with His Spirit or all success in the ministry will only be to your own everlasting confussion."

It would be a mistake to think of McCheyne as seeking for holiness as understood by the "holiness" people —at least as far as terminology is concerned. He never thought of it as

a "second blessing," would most probably have rejected the term "entire sanctification" as we understand it, and definitely refused the term "perfect love" as referring to anything but God's perfect love to us. McCheyne was nurtured in the strong Calvinistic atmosphere of the Scottish church. Calvinistic theologians and preachers were his spiritual guides, and his seeking for Christlikeness must be understood against this background.

Countless entries in his diaries show how keenly he felt the power of inbred sin and he labored to find the victory in Christ. And the victory came. McCheyne saw in the Scriptures the "rest of faith" promised to the people of God, and by faith he entered in. The fragrance of his life, the ardor of his spirit, his deep humility and yearning love for God and man—these were the marks of one who had "put on Christ" in all His fullness. "He was the living epistle of Christ," said Mrs. Andrew Bonar, "a picture so lovely that I would have given all the world to be as he was."

2. McCheyne's *prayer life was consistent.* Here is a typical entry from his diary: "Rose early to seek God and found Him whom my soul loveth. Who would not rise early to seek such company? They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Another entry reads: "Very happy in my work. Too little prayer in the morning. Must try to get to bed earlier on Saturday that I may rise 'a good while before day.'" Bonar adds: "These early hours of meditation he endeavored to have all his life, not for study but for prayer."

McCheyne prayed early in the morning; he prayed from house to house among his people; he prayed mightily as he prepared for the pulpit ministry; in short, he prayed "without ceasing." His notebooks show that he followed a strict method of prayer in his private devotions. He began with prayer for his own family, then for his closest friends, thirdly for his congregation. These he had divided into no fewer than 11 categories according to their spiritual standing, and all were prayed for in turn. Lastly he prayed for Scotland and for the work of God everywhere.

3. McCheyne's *pastoral visitation was regular and systematic.* He kept a book exclusively for the purpose of recording his visits and making observations on the spiritual condition of his people. To read the book is to follow this diligent pastor and lover of souls from house to house in his parish. There was Bible reading and prayer in every home, and tender, loving dealing with each one about his spiritual welfare. Among his "Rules" was: "When visiting in a family, speak particularly to the strangers about eternal things. Perhaps God has brought you together just to save that soul." Most nights found his frail body utterly worn out with his demanding pastoral ministrations, but there was no slacking the pace until the very end.

4. Last, *there was about McCheyne's preaching an inexpressible tenderness and beauty.* "It is difficult to convey to those who never knew him," wrote Bonar, "a correct idea of the sweetness and holy unction of his preaching." St. Peter's was always crowded, the people drawn by the preacher's love of Christ and souls. His very heart seemed to be poured forth as he pleaded with men to forsake their sin and follow Christ. More eloquent and touching than all his oratory were the tears that fell freely on the pulpit Bible.

A review of his sermon subjects shows how often he preached on hell and judgment, but always with tenderness and flowing tears. Walking one day with his friend Bonar, he

asked him what he had preached about the previous Sunday. "'The wicked shall be turned into hell,'" was Bonar's reply. Thinking for a moment on the awful text, McCheyne asked: "Were you able to preach it tenderly?" His counsel to his colleages was: "Preach hell tenderly, with heartbroken sorrow and compassion. One who has not these feelings ought not to preach at all."

Shortly after his death, a visitor to St. Peter's asked the sexton what was the secret of McCheyne's influence. "Sit down here," said the sexton, pointing to the chair in the vestry. "Now put your elbows on the table." This was done. "Now put your face in your hands." The visitor obeyed. "Now," said the canny old Scot, "let the tears flow. That was the way Mr. McCheyne used to do." Then the sexton led the inquirer to the pulpit. "Put your elbows down into the pulpit." The visitor did so. "Now put your face in your hands." He obeyed. "Now let the tears flow. That was the way Mr. McCheyne used to do."

On returning from his year in Palestine, McCheyne found that revival had broken out in his church under the ministry of Rev. W. C. Burns, who later became the apostle to the Chinese. Like a true brother and servant of Christ, McCheyne entered into the glorious work, which continued for more than three years. From scenes of great spiritual triumph he was translated, at the early age of 29, into the heavenly Kingdom.

To study McCheyne is to make us long to be more Christlike and have a deeper love for the souls in our care. Who can tell what scenes would follow if we could weep over lost souls as he did? McCheyne's prayer is the prayer all of us must constantly pray: "O God, make me as holy as it is possible for a sinner saved by grace on this earth to be."

Practical Points *that make a difference*

The Old Story with a New Look!

Dear Son:

Say, I wish you could have seen our pastor Christmas Sunday! I wondered where he was during the time preceding the sermon—and then here he came through a side door dressed like a shepherd. His auburn beard was topped by an Eastern headress, and his gown was authentic to the rope belt and the slippers.

He started reminiscing the moment he came through the door as though it were 30 years following that first blessed morn. He took us through that beautiful "silent night." He described the coming of the angels and the glorious heavenly choir.

He hurried with the shepherds across the valley to Bethlehem and described the scene of Joseph, Mary, and the 'babe lying in the manger." Then he walked silently back to the hills from whence he came.

There was not a voice to be heard in the congregation—and all the children were there. They were fascinated by the same story dramatized with simplicity.

Son, you can do a lot of things with a little imagination, and your people will respond with a great Amen! It breaks the routine and gives the annual message a new flavor. We are praying you will have a good day Sunday.

Love,
Dad

Letter to a Future PK

By Larry O. Howland*

Dear Baby-to-be:

It is Christmas Day, and according to the calendar it will be only 25 more days before you arrive. The days seem to be passing altogether too slowly. Members of our congregation have been quite amused by your anxious, expectant father as he counts the days.

This Christmas Day your mother is writing a letter from the parsonage to her family. This is the very first Christmas she has been away from her family, and even though I have not heard one word of complaint, I have sensed the nostalgia. Of course we could not travel the thousand miles, since you are to be here so soon.

Because I am thinking of you, I am now in my study writing you this letter. Perhaps I can express my fears and hopes and joys on paper that I cannot voice to anyone else. We have waited a long time for you. When your mother and I were first married, we chose five names for five children. But the Lord did not plan it that way. After six long years, you will be our first. Neither of us is certain if we want you to be Jimmy or Rebecca. To be honest, one day I hope you are Jimmy, and the next I hope you are Rebecca. I know it is foolish, but I have been afraid that, if you turn out to be Jimmy, I will be too old to play ball or wrestle by the time you reach the proper age. And if you are Rebecca, there may never be a boy good enough to date you!

Ever since we heard that you would be coming to us, there has not been one single day go by that I have not prayed for you, not only for your physical well-being, but for something so much more important—your spiritual well-being.

More than anything else, we want you to be a Christian, to love God and to put Him first in your life. We do not want to fail in our spiritual responsibility to you. There may be times when you will question our wisdom, times you may even wish you had someone else for a mommy and daddy. Some pastors' children feel it is a disadvantage to be a minister's child. I sincerely hope you never feel that way.

We have what some today regard as archaic convictions. Your mother and I try to let Christ rule our lives. Because of this there may be times when you do not understand why we will have to forbid you to do some things, and insist that you do certain other things. There will be times when you feel we have disappointed you and let you down. I pray for strength and wisdom during these times.

If you are Rebecca, we already have you pictured as the prettiest little girl in the world. If you are James, we have you pictured as president of the youth group and the captain of the football team.

But primarily we want you to grow up to love the God that your mother and I love so much.

Love,

Dad

*Pastor, Free Methodist church, Guthrie, Okla.

THE OVERTONES OF THE MINISTRY

By Raymond C. Kratzer
Dist. Supt., Northwest Dist.
Church of the Nazarene

XII. Reverence

FROM THE EARLIEST PAGES of Sacred Writ to the last chronicler of God's Word, there is a constant, haunting overtone of reverence and awe concerning sacred things. Moses was asked to remove his shoes as he stood on the sacred ground of God's will for his life in the presence of the burning bush. Isaiah was entranced by the cherubim and seraphim repeating, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord," when he entered the sanctuary of the Most High. Peter, James, and John were overcome by the effulgent glory surrounding Jesus as they shared with Him the Transfiguration experience.

We find ourselves at times caught up in the mood of the day which considers nothing sacred. Morality, leadership, institutionalism, the government, the school, and even the Church are charaded by well-paid entertainers who seem to please the populace. The appellations of "Super-Star" and the "Man Upstairs" to our blessed Redeemer are carelessly mouthed by unregenerate persons, and often condoned in substance by the silent majority.

The ministry must strive with every available tool to recapture traditional reverence concerning sacred things, lest our current generation lose completely the basic foundations for a God-pleasing life.

The dramatic and terrifying experiences outlined in the Bible, of persons who flippantly handled sacred things, or who carelessly regarded God's instructions, must be considered as "teachers" to guide us in this day of grace. The misappropriation of the spoils of Jericho, in the case of Achan at Ai, caused terrible judgment to come to him and his family. Uzza, who put forth his hand and touched the ark of the covenant to steady it, when the oxen stumbled who were hauling it, was smitten dead by the hand of God because he disregarded the importance of sacred things. Ananias and Sapphira died in an instant because they lied concerning their gifts to the Church. God's judgments today are not so immediate, but this is no sign that impiety is less grievous to Him or will receive less punishment in the long run.

It is trite to say that "example is more potent than precept." But it should be said often! The minister needs to hear it said and he needs to head the admonition to teach well by his example, especially in the area of piety.

Too often good preachers, to gain a laugh, will relate a story in which sacred things are put in a frivolous light. Repetition in this vein will dull the conscience of the servant of God,

and it will also damage the image of reverence which should always be a part of his life. Even the way he laughs at the impiety of others can "ring a bell" of uncertainty or shallowness which will prevent the overtone of reverence from sounding forth a blessedness to those within the circle of his influence.

The attitude of the minister toward his church—even the church building itself—can enhance the image of reverence which *must* be recaptured in this day of such irreverence. Just recently a dedicated layman of our Zion met me at one of our small churches. Since he was a real-estate man, I had asked him to appraise the building prior to our advertising it for sale. The day was cold and the interior of the church seemed even colder. I walked ahead of him into the sanctuary with my hat on to protect my head. But as he walked through the door, without fanfare he almost automatically doffed his hat and held it in his hand as he looked the church over. Of course I followed suit. My heart was warmed that day —even if my head was cool—because of the aura of reverence that pervaded the atmosphere.

Little things speak loudly at times. The manner in which the pastor holds his Bible, and the skill with which he reads it, can sound forth a sweet tone of reverence. The public prayer, indicating that the man of God has been oft at the drill, can stimulate a whole congregation to experience the presence of God. The way he places his offering in the plate as the firstfruits of his labors can lift the offering to a place of sacramental glory.

We would not at all try to say that the padre is to inspire a sanctimonious robot by his performances. No one should more fully epitomize the joy of the Lord by his whole life than does the minister. He should evoke the heartiest of laughter and the most exciting type of living. But he should always remember there is a time and a season for everything under the sun. But there is never a time for him to deviate from his influential position so as to make his shibboleths sound like "clanking cymbals and tinkling bells."

It is strange that at times holiness brethren are fearful of appearing prudish or "holier than thou" to their fellows. This compulsion causes some men to inhibit their finer motives and exhibit a false joviality which causes heartaches and a throbbing conscience at the end of the day. After all, what is wrong in being thought of as "the man of God"? Could it be that our carelessness along this line sometimes prevents the full blessing of God moving in our midst?

The sermon is still the man! Through thoughtful and daily discipline, one's life can speak volumes that will extend and broaden the scope of his usefulness. History is full of illustrations of preachers who changed their world for good because they dared to be different. I can recall many men across the years who caused me to feel that God was speaking through them, because they possessed the "overtone of reverence." Their messages had a touch of eternity in them, and people were changed for the better because they came in contact with them.

Let us as ministers dare to be different, not being conformed to this world, but rather exuding the transformation which we preach as the possibility of divine grace. Aping the styles, accommodating to the flairs of society can only place us on a lower plane, which will increase the difficulty of the task of lifting others to the higher life. Let us align ourselves with God's pattern and strive to produce the kind of influence that is expected of servants of the Most High.

NAZARENE FOCUS

FOR PASTORS and LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission | EARL C. WOLF, *Executive Director*
HAROLD O. PARRY, *Office Editor*

General Superintendent Lewis

Where Have They Gone?

I AM CONCERNED and alarmed at our losses! They are staggering in their implications! They are more than statistics, for they deal with souls! We, the ministers of the church, are responsible for them—the souls, I mean. Please be alarmed along with me!

We are gaining in membership—yes. But we are losing too many while we are gaining. For example, a district received 750 new Nazarenes in an assembly year but showed up with a net gain of 48. What is wrong? Why? Where did they go—the 702?

1. Some of them went on to their eternal reward. This is a statistic beyond our control. But this is only a small fraction of the total and tragic loss.

2. Some moved away, but this number need not be lost to the church. Pastor, you can and should send their names and new addresses to the Department of Evangelism. The Department will see to it that the pastor near their new address can contact them. You didn't know where they were moving? Why didn't you ask them? *They knew* where they were going. Their souls are yet your responsibility. To try to keep them on your roll is selfish and futile. They have moved away. They are gone. But let's keep them in the church—at least, let's try!

3. The rest are just gone—*where? when?* and above all else, *why?* Did they lose interest? The question is still, *Why?* Didn't they fit in well? The question is again *Why?* To be real honest, let's scrutinize some things related to our loss of people who are still near geographically but are among the missing.

a. The altar. Do we carefully, prayerfully, and certainly "stay with it" and see them into a real, definite experience of grace?

b. The follow-up. In those first "oh, so crucial" days did you or your people keep close to them?

c. The church. Did your people accept them and assimilate them into the operation, structure, and fellowship of the church?

d. Involvement. Did they get to be a part of the activities of the church—spiritual, functional, social?

We all know that the altar is the first step, the beginning. All the rest of the church is there to keep the glorious start from being the tragic ending.

I am reminded of the statement in the *Manual* (page 220, paragraph 401.3). It is for all of us ministers. Let us read it again right now. We cannot stop all the losses, but we can try. We can do better than we are doing, not for statistics' sake, but for souls' sake.

You can see by now that I am all "worked up" over this matter! And I am! I have just passed through an assembly season. I rejoice in our great year. I am happy for every one we have gained. This has been a good year. God has blessed our church in a very mighty and unusual way. We are having the largest crowds we have ever had. We are having more seekers at our altars than we have ever had. We have had more people join our church than we have ever had in a period of time like this. But today I am also alarmed over our losses—too many, a tragic figure. And they are souls for whom we toiled, whom we won *and lost.* What will we say to HIM when HE asks us about them? *Please be alarmed along with me!*

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". . . HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE. . . . WITH JUDGMENT AND WITH JUSTICE FROM HENCEFORTH EVEN FOR EVER."

Join the Positive Protest !!

IF YOU THINK HIGHER TAXES, inflation, and the spiraling cost of living are problems now, think ahead to your retirement years. Whether retirement is close at hand or years away, you probably feel optimistic about it now, as most ministers do. Many are looking forward to it as a time of relaxation and rest. Some view retirement as a time for travel, study, family appreciation, and hobbies.

Yet unless you provide positively now, *very few of you will have adequate income* to cope with the ever increasing cost of everything. Well over half of all clergymen will have to move from their present homes upon retirement, further intensifying their financial plight when costs keep going up and income suddenly goes down.

What can you do about it? Taking to the streets with signs, rallies, and marches might attract attention, but it is extremely doubtful that this would solve the problem. But *you can "protest" in a positive way* by taking advantage of congressional provision that gives you the opportunity to save for your retirement *under extremely favorable tax conditions,* by means of a tax-sheltered annuity.

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You have a right to enjoy your retirement when it comes, so JOIN THE POSITIVE PROTEST against higher taxes, inflation, and the cost of living. JOIN THE NAZARENE SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PLAN!!! For details and information, contact Dean Wessels, executive secretary, Department of Pensions and Benevolence, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131.

1974

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now is the time

Register Today for the Denomination-wide Study

MISSION POSSIBLE

February—March, 1974

See page 16 I for registration blank.

A Christmas Prayer
FOR OUR GIVING

LORD, giving is such a vital part of a heart and life touched by Your love!

HOLY SPIRIT, be our Guide throughout this year . . . and teach us to give liberally of ALL that we have—not just our money, but our time, our talents, our love, guided by You.

Thank You, HEAVENLY FATHER, for answering prayer . . . for helping us to see the needs of our very own, and impress us with WHAT WE SHOULD DO in our own church concerning MEMORIAL ROLL for this year!

Please make this prayer REAL to all who read these lines.

Thanking You in advance, I am
One of Your children,
BARBARA WALL CHANEY (Mrs. R. L.)
GENERAL NWMS COUNCIL
MEMORIAL ROLL

THE MISSIONARY AND THE MISSIONS CONVENTION

Missionaries must change a lot of their ideas as to what a church needs when they visit. Number 1 . . . The church does not need missionaries to preach. No matter how good a preacher the missionary may be, the first rule must be "Don't preach." Share . . . yes, and that is desperately needed. People want to hear about people, customs, background, climate, food, missionary living, how their children are educated, the recreational outlets, what is appealing about their adopted land, the costumes of the nationals, how the missionaries dress, information about jungle camps, what the medical facilities are, and how the missionary sick are cared for. The methods of evangelism and the singing of national songs are always a big hit.

I would suggest a three-day convention rather than a "one-night stand." The missionary is given a chance to become acquainted with the local people and there is more opportunity for him to share his vision and burdens. The congregation is given the chance to see that missionaries are "just people" like themselves. I would suggest the following subjects for the missionary to handle:

1. *Where do I work and what is my work?*

Medical work, village evangelism, a day at the dispensary, etc. At every session I think the missionary would be wise to leave 10 minutes at least for questions. This helps bring about a sense of being a part of the work of the missionary.

2. *A session for ladies* (if it is a lady missionary or a missionary couple)

What do mothers, or anyone, want to know? How life is on the field, what the missionary eats, where the food is obtained. It is time to come out of the ivory towers, the grass shacks, so that our local people can understand how the missionary does live.

3. *A session on the national church—What is happening?*

How does it happen? By "it" I mean the emergence of the national church. What does this entail on our part? Why are we afraid? What chances will it mean we must take? Our people have read enough about nationalism in our day that this truth will not shock them. In other words, it is necessary to bring the national church right into our local church setting and make the congregation a part of it.

4. *A session for young people . . . alone . . . where they can learn about people their own age around the world*

Names . . . challenges . . . pictures of these young people. What does it mean to be a Christian in that particular country? The missionary must be willing to answer *many* questions *honestly* from the young people. What about the "call" today to the mission field? How has it changed, and does the missionary have any answers? These and related questions will come along for sure. A suggestion would be to have this session with the young people away from the church on a picnic-type, relaxed situation.

5. *A session for the "60-plus" or the retired folk*

They would like to know what has happened to the influence of the missionary they remember back in . . . How has the field changed? Etc.

The above is the brief outline we have used at Pasadena First Church very successfully. There are a few safeguards:

1. The pastor must know what he wants in the few days. If he is heading for the "Shares for Others" . . . "All Out for Others" Day . . . or some other like name, the missionary and the pastor must be in agreement. The culminating day is Sunday. In our services we take only seven minutes for the pledging of the giving. We make it a fun time. The use of the thermometer . . . the mountain climbing . . . the clock . . . etc., is in front of the church. Everything is headed toward this moment . . . IT IS NOT MONEY . . . IT IS PEOPLE. Everything that has been shared in the last few days is a part of the investments now being made. It is electrifying.

2. On the closing Sunday the missionary must be especially "with it." Brief, 15-minute, relevant messages right from the heart will greatly help the overall attitude of the day.

3. Dinner meetings for the special groups for the Thursday night and other gatherings assure you of a good attendance. It also is good for close personal sharing. This group will always feel they know that particular missionary. A potluck idea is fine. Advertise the group meeting (example: Thursday—young couples; Friday—teens; etc.). Have a sign-up sheet. Make it an important function.

Now to sum it up, I think the pastor and the missionary must have several hours together in planning before the convention begins. The missionary will have fine suggestions to make to the pastor which have come from other similar conventions. And as they share together, the pattern for these few days will emerge. The pastor should not program so tightly that there is no room for elasticity. The Holy Spirit is the Author of creativity; and if the pastor and missionary are open, it can be one great weekend for the church.

EARL G. LEE

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See page 16 I for registration blank.

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THE PREACHER'S WIFE

Mrs. B. Edgar Johnson

The Christmas Bells Still Ring

AMONG the special pleasures of the Christmas season are the letters which many of our friends, "scattered abroad," enclose with their greeting cards. Several years ago we received one letter that was so precious and inspiring, it was as a gift to my spirit. As I read it again recently I decided to share a bit of it, for it expresses so well the true joy and peace that is the spirit of Christmas. The letter included a clever paragraph of news about each member of the family:

Our "littlest" lady, Becky Sue, is now a budding musician . . .

Joy became interested in quizzing this year . . .

Cathy is eagerly anticipating graduation in June . . .

Carol, our eldest, is spending her first Christmas with her Father in heaven. In February her illness returned, and July 25 she passed away—but she did a "heap o' living" in the meantime. In spite of cobalt therapy five days a week most of the winter and spring, she rarely missed a day of school except for two weeks near the end . . .

In June she graduated with her class . . . During the remaining weeks at home there were warm family times together and long talks with Carol and her parents alone. The last one was Sunday evening, July 23. . . . Tuesday morning a few minutes after six o'clock a most beautiful sun came up behind the trees on the eastern bank of the Kankakee River flowing by her hospital window. Just as this magnificent sun rose over the treetops lighting her room with its brilliant rays, Carol, without a struggle, simply breathed her last and went up with the sun. . . .

And this Christmas, though Carol is greatly missed, the bells still ring at our house. They ring out the words of her favorite scripture, Philippians 1:20-21, ". . . it is my eager expectation and hope . . . that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death" (RSV).

This year had its shallows and its "deeps," its laughters and its griefs. But all has been touched with "great grace," so that we say it is our year of victory.

* * *

May the bells of joy and victory ring in each of your homes this Christmas season.

Our Red Bedspread

By Francine Duckworth*

THE LADY on the other end of the line chose her words very carefully. "Mrs. Duckworth, our church would like the privilege of making up a Christmas box for you and your family. We did this for a pastor and his family last year and received such a blessing from it."

My reaction was one of complete surprise, since this idea was new to me. A lady I didn't know was calling to ask if her church could do something for my family. Automatically I said, "Yes, thank you. I appreciate your thinking about us."

Now I don't know what you think of when someone says, "Christmas box," but I thought of several cans of food, some candy for the children, a few little odds and ends for the house. Little did I know when I accepted the kind offer that Monday morning what was in store for us in our Christmas box.

As a bit of background, we had been pastoring a home mission church for about 15 months, and I was tempted sometimes to wonder if they even wanted a Church of the Nazarene in that town. Thanksgiving Day was just three days away, and we would be spending it alone for the first time since our marriage.

This was my state of mind when I received this phone call. I wondered how this lady knew we were here—who had told her to do this act of kindness for us. My answer was, "God"! Then I thought, God does know where we are! He is interested in us. He does supply our needs.

After several conversations on the telephone with this lady, I began to realize this was no ordinary Christmas gesture. The whole church was working together for us.

The date and time were arranged for our family to meet with their church family for our "Christmas." It was about a two-hour drive from our home to the appointed place, so with our three little ones we started early.

First we had supper in a country home. Soon after, other members began arriving to join us. We read the Christmas story. Then from every room in the house they started coming with presents: a dress made especially for me, an expensive white shirt for my husband, clothes for each child, toy cars, and paper dolls, and teddy bears. . . . Then here it came! It almost took two people to carry it—a beautiful, red, shag bedspread.

The district provides our mobile home, and I wanted to at least decorate our bedroom—and I wanted it in red, white, and blue. Each month I would ask my husband if we would be able to get that red bedspread I was looking at, and each month we would decide we couldn't. On $50.00 a week and three children, I knew there wasn't much money for extras, and we both feel deeply about getting an extra job in order to afford extra things. And I knew this was "extra."

We returned home about midnight, and as Larry helped get the children in bed I was busy putting

*Pastor's wife, Seymour, Mo.

red, white, and blue sheets on our bed. Then a red, white, and blue quilt made by the missionary society, and my beautiful red, shag bedspread!

I felt this was one of God's ways of reassuring us and saying, "You are where I want you, doing what I want you to do—keep on keeping on."

Each time doubts or discouragements arise, I remember the red bedspread.

A Prayer for My People

By Glenn H. Boyce

A t this joyous Christmas season,

P recious Lord, help us to
R emember that
A Saviour has come; that
Y ou gave Your life for our ransom; that
E xceptional blessings are open to us; that
R epentance and faith in Christ are our hope of glory.

F ather,
R ule in each heart, and so
O rder our thoughts and desires,
M aking us all You would have us be—

T ruth in our hearts, and
H oliness of conduct a daily
E xercise that will glorify Your name.

P lease, dear Lord, in 1974
A bide with each member of this household,
R eassuring them in times of test and trial,
S horing up the weak places, and
O ffsetting the attacks of the evil one.
N ow unto Him who is
A ble to make all
G race abound toward us with
E xceeding great glory, be praise

A nd honor,
M ajesty and power, for all
E ternity, as well as
N ow!

A Living Christmas Tree

Described here are two dramatic ideas for Christmas choir presentations—one for outdoors and the other for indoors.

Outdoors tree

Indoors tree

Thirteen years ago, the Assembly of God Church in Chico, Calif., began a "SINGING CHRISTMAS TREE"—with some 60 singers—on its church lawn. It has become a northern California custom which now draws thousands of visitors during its annual five-day stand.

Men of the church, directed by a local contractor, build the risers in six tiers. Young people of the church bring in truckloads of evergreen bows. The church women help them overlay the scaffolding with the greenery.

The entire town is interested in the event. It gains unbelievable coverage from the two radio stations, the TV station, and the two local papers. Delegations come from 150 miles away to hear the singers.

Plans can be scaled down for smaller congregations. A complete set of plans for constructing the tree and ideas for promoting the event can be obtained from Abner Anderson, 1615 Meadow Rd., Chico, Calif. 95926.

The Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., uses a similar idea, "THE LIVING CHRISTMAS TREE," but indoors. This replaces the usual Christmas cantata. The program, presented several nights, attracts thousands of attenders. The giant tree has ornaments and lights to decorate the evergreen. A picturesque snow scene completes the winter wonderland. Choirs from two groups combine to present old and new songs of Christmas and dramatic readings that depict the timeless salvation story.

Typical is the response of one lady who said, "I've never seen anything like it! I came all three nights, and found Christ as my Saviour at the final performance. Can't you repeat it one more time, so I can bring some lost neighbors?"

The indoor structure is wider and tiers closer together.

IN THE STUDY

Marching with the Master Through Mark

December 2

BARABBAS OR JESUS? (15:15)

SCRIPTURE: Mark 15:1-15

INTRODUCTION: Ultimately everyone must choose between sin and the Saviour. Sin is a murderer. And that's what Barabbas was (v. 7). Yet the Jewish leaders chose to have Barabbas in their midst rather than Jesus. Let us look at the picture.

I. FALSE SON OF THE FATHER (v. 7)

The name Barabbas is Aramaic. It is compounded of *bar*, "son," and *abba*, "father." So it literally means "son of the (a) father." If this name was given him at the time of his circumcision (Luke 1:59), it was perhaps because he looked like "a chip off the old block." But it may have been what he was called when he became a revolutionist against Rome and so a self-styled savior of the people. We are told that he was in prison with his fellow insurrectionists and that they had all committed murder. They probably belonged to the Sicarii, or Assassins. They were daggermen—the *sicarius* was the short sword or dagger.

Pilate asked the people if they wanted him to fulfill his custom at the feast by releasing to them "the King of the Jews." (We are told that he knew the leaders had delivered Jesus to him out of envy.) At the instigation of the chief priests, the people demanded that Barabbas be released. When Pilate asked what he should do with Jesus, they said, "Crucify him." And Pilate, "willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them" (v. 15).

The choice made here was unbelievable. The people chose to have a murderer in their midst rather than the One who healed their sick and raised their dead. The total lack of logic in this insane attitude can be accounted for only by the nature of sin in the human heart.

II. TRUE SON OF THE FATHER (v. 15)

The true Son of the true Father was scourged and then turned over to the soldiers to be crucified. And today people still choose the great murderer, sin, and turn their backs on the great Giver of Life.

The truly ironical fact is that Barabbas was guilty of the very thing of which the Jews accused Jesus—opposition to Roman rule. As we have seen, Jesus told the people to pay their taxes to the government. Never once did He advocate revolt against Rome. Yet Barabbas was released and Christ crucified.

By Ralph Earle
Professor of New Testament
Nazarene Theological
Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

III. False and True Salvation

In the minds of many Jews salvation was deliverance from foreign domination. Liberty meant freedom from Rome, not freedom from sin.

Too many people today are interested only in material blessings. They refuse to face the fact of sin in their hearts as their worst problem and that which will ultimately destroy them. Instead they look for political and social panaceas. One of the crying needs today, as in Jesus' time, is for a recognition and confession of sin and a turning to Christ for salvation from sin.

December 9

SAVING ONESELF OR SAVING OTHERS (15:31)

Scripture: Mark 15:22-38

Text: *He saved others; himself he cannot save* (v. 31).

Introduction: When Pilate turned Jesus over to the soldiers, they led Him into the praetorium and there they staged a mock coronation, crowning Him with thorns (vv. 16-20).

But worse was yet to come. These Roman soldiers could perhaps be forgiven for their cruel sport. After all, they were hardened pagans. But what about the Jews around Jerusalem? We read: "And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross."

Finally came the worst thing of all. The chief priests, who should have been filled with compassion, mocked Him openly, crying out to each other, "He saved others; himself he cannot save."

I. The Jews Who Saved Themselves (v. 30)

The passersby called to the suffering Victim on the Cross, "Save thyself." This was their philosophy of life; take care of No. 1. Again and again in the Gospels we see them looking out for their own selfish interests. They flung their own philosophy into the face of the suffering Saviour.

II. The Jesus Who Saved Others (v. 31)

Never did the religious leaders of the nation speak truer words than when they made the twofold statement of our text: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Of course what they meant by it was: "How does He think He can save others when He can't even save himself?"

What they failed to realize was the profound truth of redemption—that Jesus could not save himself from the Cross and at the same time save us from hell. He had to refuse help for himself in order to bring salvation to mankind.

III. The Cost of Saving Others

"Himself he cannot save." This for Jesus was the cost of saving others. During His earthly ministry He constantly gave His life's energies in healing the sick and bringing help to all those who called upon Him. But finally He gave His very life as a redemptive sacrifice for all men's sins.

These words were evidently spoken sarcastically by the religious leaders of His nation. But, taken seriously, they proclaim the central truth of redemption.

Conclusion: If we would follow Jesus, we must do as He did. We, too, can have a redemptive ministry only as we forget ourselves in service to others. If we want to save ourselves, we shall ultimately be lost, along with many we might have won to the Lord. If we would save others, we cannot save ourselves. But in giving ourselves to others, we shall find life at its highest.

The spirit of the pastor must go beyond mediocre commitment. He must have an intense devotion before he will be effective in stirring a fruitless church. This devotion goes deeper than ceaseless activities and whirlwind schedules.

—J. V. Morsch

Meditating with the Master in Matthew

December 16

"HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED . . ." (Isa. 9:6)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 1:18-25

INTRODUCTION: Today we give our children names that sound pretty or that have some sentimental attachment. Probably most parents never think of the meaning of the names they choose—if indeed the names have any meaning!

But it was very different in ancient Israel. Every name had a meaning, and the names were chosen with great care. Sometimes the names were given by divine revelation and conveyed a message to God's people, as in the case of Hosea's children (Hos. 1:4, 6, 9).

So in this first chapter of Matthew we have three divinely ordained names for the Son of God as He became Son of Man. Each one symbolizes some aspect of His ministry to mankind. (The title of the sermon is taken from Isa. 9:6.)

I. CHRIST (v. 18)

This word comes directly from the Greek *christos,* which means "anointed." It is the equivalent of the Hebrew *mashiach,* which carries the same meaning. This title underscores the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, predicted throughout the Old Testament, and for whose coming the Jews had waited for long centuries.

In the Old Testament period we read that prophets, priests, and kings were anointed. Jesus fulfilled all three of these functions. He came as *the* great Prophet, to proclaim God's message of salvation. As Priest, He offered the supreme sacrifice of himself, thus making salvation possible for us. As King, He will reign forever, after His return in glory. All this is implied in *ho christos,* "the Anointed One."

II. JESUS (v. 21)

The Greek *Jesus* is a translation of the Hebrew *Joshua* (or *Yehoshuah*), which means "Jehovah is salvation." But most briefly, Jesus means "Saviour."

The context points up this meaning: "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Note that it does not say *in* their sins, but *from* their sins. Christ came to be the great Deliverer from sin.

III. EMMANUEL (v. 23)

Again the interpretation is given in the context: "God with us." The usual Hebrew word for "God" in the Old Testament is *Elohim.* This has the masculine plural ending *(im)* and is sometimes translated "gods," referring to pagan gods. But usually it is a proper name for the one and only true God of the universe, who exists as a Trinity.

The shortest form of *Elohim* is *El,* which is used in the title Emmanuel. "God with us" underlines the beautiful truth that in Christ the eternal God came down to earth to live among us. It also means that when we have Christ we have God with us all the time. Someone has said that Jesus is "God brought near."

December 23

THE NEWBORN KING

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 2:1-23

INTRODUCTION: Our calendar is divided into B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. *(Anno Domini,* in the year of our Lord). This is a tremendous testimony to the fact that Christ is the Lord of history. Every time an atheist or infidel or any non-Christian dates a document he acknowledges that the birth of Christ is the watershed of all history. What a momentous witness!

But it is obvious that our calendar is in error by at least four years. For it is here stated that Jesus was born "in the days of Herod the king" (v. 1). This was Herod

the Great, and secular sources indicate that he died in 4 B.C. The most commonly accepted date for Jesus' birth is therefore 5 B.C., though some prefer 6 B.C. With millions of dates now in print, it is too late to correct our calendar!

I. WORSHIPED BY THE WISE MEN (v. 11)

Who were these "wise men"? The Greek word is *magoi,* so that we often call them the Magi. It is the same word that is used in Acts 13:6 for Simon "the sorcerer." Originally the term designated the priestly caste among the Persians and Babylonians. Probably here it means "Chaldean astrologers."

They were men who studied the stars. When a notable new star arose—"we have seen his star in the east" (v. 2) can also be translated, "we have seen his star at its rising"—they came to Jerusalem asking, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" This was because the new star had appeared in Pisces, the sign of the zodiac that ancient astrologers said referred to the Jewish nation.

Verses 9 and 10 convey at least the hint of an important lesson. The Magi followed the star to the land of Judea. But when they arrived there, they naturally headed for the capital, Jerusalem, expecting that the King of the Jews would be born in the royal palace. As a result Herod learned the purpose of their visit and slaughtered the innocent babes at Bethlehem. This sad tragedy might perhaps have been avoided if they had kept their eyes on the star (divine guidance), which would have led them to Bethlehem. We get into trouble ourselves and cause trouble to others when we turn away from God's leading, to seek the advice of men.

How many wise men were there? We are not told. The idea of three is simply derived from the fact that they offered three gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These were costly, royal gifts for the King.

Today we think of the wise men as kneeling at the manger to worship the Baby Jesus. But it is clearly stated here that they found "the young child" in a "house." By this time Jesus was several months old. He was evidently born when they first saw the star (cf. vv. 7, 16) and it would take months for them to reach Judea.

II. HATED BY HEROD (v. 13)

In striking contrast to the attitude of the wise men was that of Herod. From the writings of Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century, we know that Herod the Great was a very suspicious man. He maintained an extensive corps of secret police. Though he was by now an old man and did not have long to live, he could not tolerate the idea of a newborn baby threatening his dynasty. There is no record in secular history of the Bethlehem massacre, but it fits in perfectly with the character of Herod, who had three of his own sons put to death, as well as his favorite wife, Marianne, and her mother. As he lay dying at Jericho he summoned all the leaders of the nation and locked them up in the hippodrome, giving orders that they should all be killed as soon as he died. He wanted to be sure that there was national mourning at the time of his funeral! Fortunately, the men were freed after he died.

III. NAMED THE NAZARENE (v. 23)

Where in the Old Testament "prophets" do we find the quotation given here, "He shall be called a Nazarene"? The honest answer is that it does not occur anywhere in that form. It is evidently a summary of such Messianic prophecies as Isa. 53:2, where the word for "shoot" is *netzer.* (See *Beacon Bible Commentary* 6:39-41, for further discussion.)

December 30

TWO BAPTISMS (3:11)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 3:1-11

INTRODUCTION: Perhaps the first distinctly holiness text in the New Testament is Matt. 3:11. So it claims our special interest.

Water baptism is practiced by most Christian denominations. But it is not a distinctively Christian rite. Jews required the water baptism of Gentile proselytes to Judaism. Other religions have baptized people in water.

The one distinctly Christian baptism is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. John

the Baptist baptized with water. But he said that the Coming One, the Messiah, would baptize with the Holy Spirit (read v. 11). In the light of this text it is difficult to defend the almost universal emphasis on water baptism by the Church at large, and its almost total silence on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Fortunately, that sad picture has changed for the better in the last few years.

Our word "baptism" comes directly from the Greek *baptismos*, as "baptize" comes from *baptizo*. The verb meant "to dip" and then (in the middle) "to wash oneself, bathe." The noun was used for religious washing, or cleansing.

John said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. The additional "and fire" suggests that it would be a fiery, cleansing baptism.

From what are we cleansed? A study of Jesus' disciples before and after Pentecost would suggest that they were cleansed from three things which characterize the inner nature of sin:

I. Pride

In the Upper Room the disciples were too proud to wash each other's feet. They were to good to take the place of a slave in performing this menial task. So their Master washed their feet, setting them an example.

Humility is of the essence of holiness. Conversely, pride is of the essence of sin. It seems to have been the particular snare that caused the fall of Satan (I Tim. 3:6). And it has caused the downfall of many Christians. It is one of the worst evidences of the carnal nature in the unsanctified heart.

II. Selfish Ambition

On the way up to Jerusalem on that last fateful journey the disciples had quarreled about who would be the greatest. Worst of all, James and John, two of the inner circle of three, asked Jesus for the privilege of sitting on the left and right of His throne when He set up His kingdom. They needed to be cleansed from this carnal spirit of self-seeking.

III. Self-Centeredness

Before Pentecost the disciples were thinking only of themselves. After the cleansing that took place there (Acts 15: 8-9) they were thinking of others. Their passion was the evangelization of a lost world.

It is difficult to define the sin nature. Perhaps the essence of sin is self-will. If we need to broaden it a bit, we could identify it as self-centeredness. This is what W. E. Sangster says must be crucified (Gal. 2:20). The sanctified Christian is not self-centered but Christ-centered.

The Shepherds' God

Scripture: Luke 2:8-20

Introduction: The birth of the Christ child marked the beginning of a new era.

According to a favorite story in scientific circles, shortly before World War II, two Hungarian refugee physicists went on a fateful mission to find Albert Einstein, to ask him to use his influence in urging President Roosevelt to move swiftly in offsetting possible advance by Nazi Germany in building the atomic bomb. While searching for Einstein's vacation retreat, the scientists became lost on Long Island. After driving around for some time, they asked a small boy, "Do you know where Professor Einstein is?" The lad nodded and said, "I'll show you." He took them to the professor. The letter was written and heeded by the president. In time the atomic age began and history was changed.

Over 1,900 years before, another Child ushered in a more significant age. Christ, the Shepherds' God, came to open the doors wide for men and women to enter a new Kingdom of love and grace. Jesus was indeed the Shepherds' God because:

I. Manner of His Birth
- A. News of His birth
  - 1. First given to simple, ordinary shepherds

2. Shepherds were despised by the orthodox. Couldn't observe all ritual washings, rules, regulations, nor fulfill details of ceremonial law.

B. Place of His Birth
1. Not a palace but a stable
2. Appeared not to royalty, but to shepherds
3. Instead of local musicians gathering at His home, as was custom, to greet the newborn Child, angels sang.

II. Mode of His Ministry
A. Touches a leper and makes him whole (Luke 5:12). Lepers were outcasts—untouchables—but Jesus touched them.

B. Matthew, tax collector, called to be a disciple (Luke 5:29)
1. At reception given by Levi, Jesus associated with sinners.
2. Was accused by scribes and Pharisees.
3. Jesus' reply indicates those with whom He could identify (Luke 5:31-32).

C. Jesus anointed by an immoral woman (Luke 7:37)
1. Anoints His feet with precious ointment.
2. Simon rebukes Jesus.
3. Jesus reprimands Simon for not providing water for washing.
4. Jesus forgives the woman of her sins.

D. Jesus heals demoniac.
1. Others were afraid of him.
2. Charged out at Jesus; He commands evil spirits to leave.
3. Jesus is lowly enough to heal a demon-possessed man.

E. Jesus forgives woman caught in adultery (John 8:4).
1. People ready to stone her as law demanded
2. Jesus wrote in sand; said, "Let him who has no sin cast the first stone." Crowd dispersed.
3. Jesus is lowly enough to help a condemned woman.

III. Majesty of His Person
A. Jesus knew how men lived.
1. Barclay's illustration of European monarch who went incognito among his people. His court objected for security reasons, but he replied, "I cannot rule my people unless I know how they live."

B. Jesus knew what sinners needed.
1. Accused of receiving sinners (Luke 15:2)
2. Illustrates His interest in sinners through parables: lost sheep, Good Shepherd.
3. Reconciled world unto himself (2 Cor. 5:19). God hates sin, but loves the sinner. Sent Christ to identify with sinful men.

Conclusion: The manner of His birth, the mode of His ministry, the majesty of His person all point to the glorious fact that "God so loved . . . that he gave his . . . Son" to identify with common, ordinary, sinful people like us.

Though more royal than any earthly king, He was born in a manger. Though He could have associated with the richest, He identified with the ordinary people. Jesus is the God of the little man. Though rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we might become rich. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Shepherds' God.

David Nixon

No Room for Jesus

Scripture: Luke 2:1-7

Introduction: Review story and setting of Joseph and Mary's trip to Bethlehem. Barclay tells us that such census were taken for two reasons: (1) taxation, and (2) to discover those liable for military service. These were taken every 14 years. The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was 80 miles. The weary couple found no room in the inn.

This incident is symbolic of what would happen to Jesus in His lifetime. It is typical of the world's response to Jesus. Someone has said, "The only place where there was room for Him was the Cross."

The pattern of His life was one of search and rejection. And still it goes on!

I. Rejected at Birth (Luke 2:7)
   A. No room at inn because of no vacancy.
   B. Excluded because of ignorance of innkeeper, but excluded just the same.

II. Rejected in Childhood (Luke 2:41-51)
   A. Trip to Jerusalem when he was 12.
   B. On return trip, Jesus found missing; rebuked for being in the Temple.
   C. Jesus' response, "Don't you know I must be about my Father's business?" indicates His parents' ignorance of His mission in life.

III. Rejected in His Hometown (Luke 4:16)
   A. His message and manner offended the folk back home (v. 3).
   B. Could do few miracles because of their unbelief (v. 5).

IV. Rejected in His Ministry
   A. Rejected by religionists of His day —the "Church"
      1. Accused of blasphemy for healing the paralytic (5:21).
      2. Accused of breaking the Sabbath for plucking grains of wheat for food (6:2).
      3. His life was threatened because He healed man with withered hand (6:6).
   B. Rejected by His own people
      1. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). Compare with the man in parable who gave a big dinner but no one would accept (Luke 14:16).
      2. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12).
      3. Messiah had come, but was not received. Rejected and finally destroyed by His own people.
      4. Jesus' heart broke because of the rejection (Luke 19:41-44).

V. Rejected in Death
   A. In Garden of Gethsemane
      1. Prevails in prayer.
      2. Asks the Father's will, but if possible the cup be removed (Luke 22:42).
   B. On the Cross
      1. Jesus suffers the ultimate rejection.
      2. Father turns His back on Jesus because He has become "sin" for us.
      3. Jesus cries: "My God . . . why hast thou forsaken me?"

Conclusion: Story of Jesus' life was one of rejection. Has He knocked at your heart's door to gain entrance, but found a "no vacancy" sign there? Is there room for Jesus in your life?

The innkeeper and Jesus' parents rejected Him out of ignorance. But many reject him willfully and openly. "He came unto his own, but his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

Make room for Jesus today!

David Nixon

BULLETIN BARREL

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

When the song of the angel is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart . . .

—Howard Thurman

(From an old Quaker calendar)

PEACE

In the quiet corners of a rest home . . .
peace
At the cluttered desk . . . peace
In the marketplace . . . peace

Driving in traffic . . . peace
Cooking at the stove . . . peace
Talking on the phone . . . peace

Facing failure . . . peace
Handling problems . . . peace
Winning . . . peace

Happy and healthy . . . peace
Sick and hurting . . . peace
Dying . . . peace.

Wherever you are,
Whatever you do . . .
May the Christ of Christmas
Bring peace to your heart and life.

JIM T. CHRISTY

The Night Before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas,
and throughout the church house,
Not a creature was stirring—
not even a church mouse,
When all of a sudden
through the darkness of night,
In one of the windows
there appeared a dim light.

'Twas in pastor's study—
we saw him there
With head bowed low
in an attitude of prayer.
We started to enter,
but something said, "Wait!
He came here tonight
to meditate."

As he sat there thinking,
he spoke words aloud,
Crying, "O God in heaven,
where is the crowd
That used to attend
all the services here,
And labored so faithfully
year after year?

"Unlike the wise men
who traveled afar,
They've taken their eyes
from off the star."

Nighttime was passing;
the day soon would break.
But the pastor stayed on,
for his heart had an ache.
He got on his knees
and with God did plead,
"O give me the message,
these dear, lost ones need."

God's words were clear
with no pauses between—
"Just bring them the message
from John 3:16."
The pastor arose
and, to his surprise,
He saw that the dawn
was streaking the skies.

Christmas was here,
all glorious and bright;
He must hurry home now—
he'd return here tonight.
For the Christmas service
God's message he'd give,
Proclaiming how Christ came
that all men might live!

—MRS. DAVID LEWIS

A Christmas candle is a lovely thing;
It makes no noise at all,
But softly gives itself away—
While quite unselfish, it grows small.

EVA NICHOLSON

IN CHRIST WE HAVE:

A love that cannot be fathomed;
A life that can never die;
A righteousness that can never be tarnished;
A peace that cannot be understood;
A rest that can never be disturbed;
A joy that can never be diminished;
A hope that can never be disappointed;
A glory that can never be clouded;
A light that can never be darkened;
A happiness that can never be interrupted;
A strength that can never be enfeebled;
A purity that can never be defiled;
A beauty that can never be marred;
A wisdom that can never be baffled;
Resources that can never be exhausted.

—Selected

Did you think the star was meant just for the Magi and the shepherds—just for that one night alone?

Oh, no! God hung it there against the ages; it is for all of us. Its radiance enfolds us all, knowing no bound of creed, color, or servitude. It guides the aged home; it is reflected in the eyes of babes, generation after generation, and in the eyes of mothers seeking in their babes the countenance of Christ. All, all of us are come once more under the spell of THE STAR, come to take new hope in peace and the PRINCE OF PEACE.

Author unknown

WHICH GIFT WAS GOLD?

It is not the weight of jewel or plate
Or the rustle of silk or fur,
But the spirit in which the gift is rich
As the gifts of the wise men were.
And we are not told whose gift was gold
Or whose was the gift of myrrh.

—E. K. Watson

Preachers' Exchange

WANTED—Books, holiness classics by H. C. Morrison, John R. Church, Godbey, Carradine.—Rodger N. Mayes, Rte. 1, Box 64-A, Eagle Springs, N.C. 27242.

WANTED—*How Sunday Schools Grow,* by Kenneth S. Rice.—M. A. Palmquist, 13411 Euclid St., Garden Grove, Calif. 92640.

Two teen-age sons gave their father a surprise Christmas present—a box filled with their sheared hair and a card reading, "Dear Dad: Forgive us our past tresses."

COMING next month

- **When to Keep Cool**
  Surgeons dare not permit themselves the luxury of allowing their feelings to interfere when a life is at stake. Does this say something to physicians of the soul?

- **The Preacher's Wife**
  Lora Lee Parrott, wife of Dr. Leslie Parrott, president of Eastern Nazarene College, submits her first column, and it is indeed a good beginning.

- **Jesus Carried No Books to Night School**
  A penetrating look at the Master Teacher by one who has dedicated his retirement years to the goal of knowing Him better.

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Mrs. B. Edgar Johnson has for the past nine years edited and written the page for preachers' wives. Many are the expressions of appreciation for her valuable contribution to the encouragement, inspiration, and instruction for the distaff side—and their husbands, who also find her articles thought-provoking and interesting. This is Mrs. Johnson's last column for a while—she has asked that we relieve her of this responsibility. We do so with regret. On behalf of all of you, we say to her that we will miss her comments and ideas, and that we will hope she will at least submit an article from time to time. She is, by the way, still to be very much involved with the *Preacher's Magazine,* as the secretary to the editor. Her secretarial duties amount to something deserving of a better title. Perhaps we should call her our "office editor." She will continue to serve in this capacity, and for that we are grateful. Next month Mrs. Lora Lee Parrott will begin her ministry to our wives through these pages. More about her later. Suffice it to say we anticipate some excellent materials from this preacher's wife who has served joyfully in that role and written several books and articles on that subject.

Yours for souls,

J.M.

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