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THE

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

—proclaiming Christian Holiness—

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GOD PLANTED BOTH TREES

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PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

JAMES MCGRAW
Editor
FEBRUARY, 1974
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Ministerial Malaprops



A MALAPROP, according to the dictionary definition, is a word or phrase used in the belief that it has the meaning which belongs to other words that resemble it. Therein lies a lesson for preachers, who, among others in the professions which use words as the tools of their trade, find at the same time delight and chagrin in these inadvertent slips of the tongue.

Ring Lardner made a fortune in the use of these oddities, and of course he did it intentionally. In his book *You Know Me, Al*, he used such expressions as "although he was not a good fielder, he was not a good hitter either," and "we could hear his footprints coming down the hall."

Rare is that person who is not amused by such marvelous verbal blunders as "radium was discovered by Madman Curry," or the one perpetrated by a minister we know who supported a scriptural point by referring to "Madam Clarke's commentary." So subtle sometimes as to escape notice, these phrases, that are almost but not quite correct, delight us when they convert a platitude into a laugh or provide unintended condensations of truth. "An oral contract is not worth the paper it's written on" almost makes sense. "Underneath those shabby blue jeans beats a heart of gold" somehow does not come out quite as accurately as intended.

Was there ever a child who did not add occasionally to our treasury of verbal malaprops? In Wisconsin, a kindergarten pupil drew a picture of a man with tiny tailed creatures creeping all over him. The teacher, of course, asked what the drawing meant, and the child explained, "That's John, with all the mice on him." "What John, what mice?" he was asked. "From the poem, Diddle diddle dumpling, mice on John," was his explanation.

A 10-year-old girl read the Easter scripture lesson in Norman, Okla.: "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Margarine and the other Mary" (cf. Matt. 28:1). And it was in one of our Sunday schools that the memory verse for

one of the primary pupils came out sounding like, “Forgive us our trash baskets, as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets.”

Malaprops are not limited to the verbal communication of ideas; they are also the nightmare of editors and writers. One newspaper referred to “Patrick Clancey, a defective on the police force,” and had to run a correction the next day, which came out “Patrick Clancey, a detective on the police farce.”

But there are behavioral malaprops, just as there are the verbal and editorial varieties. The malaprop of a minister is of greatest peril when it occurs in his conduct, his attitude, his theological understanding, or his motivational life. There is little to laugh about when he discovers that he is working to build his attendance mainly for reasons of personal satisfaction, ecclesiastical aggrandizement, or statistical superiority over another pastor. It looks so much like the real thing that it may happen to the most conscientious pastor under the pressures he faces. He slips slowly into a situation that resembles, but is not quite the same as, being motivated “by the love of Christ [which] constraineth us.”

The preacher exhibits a behavioral malaprop when he raises the inflections in his voice, affects a tremble in his speech, and even wets his eyes with real tears, when it is only a skill he has developed instead of genuine emotion from the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Only he knows, sometimes, when this happens; but hopefully he brings himself into line, so that whatever else he may be, he is authentic and real.

He can even give the illusion of preaching holiness by using the word *sanctification* occasionally in his sermons, or by referring to other terms associated with this doctrine. A lady told her pastor that a certain well-known radio pulpiteer was a “holiness preacher,” which was news to the pastor, since the man was an extremely vocal opponent of the Wesleyan doctrine of perfect love. It turned out that this man had used the word *holiness* in one of his radio sermons, and this was the basis for her conclusion (which, incidentally, helped her decide to send him a contribution in response to his appeal for donations from his listeners). Just as a malaprop resembles, but is not the same as, the word it is supposed to represent, so there is more to preaching scriptural holiness than an occasional mention of the term.

An unfortunate example of the ministerial malaprop is the spectacle of a preacher who resembles someone earnestly “contending for the faith once delivered to the saints” but who actually is venting his personal feelings, expressing his human opinions, and riding his pet hobby. It is good that he hates sin, of course, but it is tragic when he discovers he is hating people who have sinned.

A pastor discovered one day that he was working to bring people into his church mainly for reasons of statistical gain and personal ambitions. The discovery, in a moment of open honesty before the Lord, brought him to his knees in a penitential rebirth of his priorities and motives, and it revolutionized his ministry.

Whether they are intentional or otherwise, the results of these “near-misses” are equally harmful. Our efforts and our prayers may well be directed toward their elimination. Help stamp out ministerial malaprops.

The Lord's Supper can be a time of spiritual refreshment and a means of grace

Spiritual Refreshment

By John C. Bowling*

A SMALL BOY was overheard saying that he preferred to go to the Christian Church down the street because they served refreshments every Sunday. He was referring to the fact that the Lord's Supper was a part of every Sunday morning service.

Children often lead us to profound truths, for, indeed, Communion should be a time of refreshment—spiritual refreshment.

The Lord's Supper should be a time when people examine themselves, to remember the death of Christ, to reaffirm their faith in Him, and to offer themselves for service to Him.

John Wesley and H. Orton Wiley agree that the Lord's Supper is a means of grace whereby God can do something for the participant. God can and will refresh and renew a person's spiritual experience if he humbly approaches the Lord's Supper as a means of grace.

The Lord's Supper is also a commemorative act for Christian believers. It was not an accident that the institution of this sacrament took place on an evening when Jesus had completed observing the Passover meal with His disciples. In such a setting the minds and hearts of the disciples had already been directed back to an important event in the religious life of their forefathers.

This Passover season reminded them of the deliverance of their fa-

thers from Egypt. It also recalled the covenant relationship with God which was instituted at Mount Sinai during the Exodus. In the same manner, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper brings to mind the new covenant, sealed by Christ's atoning blood.

We see in 1 Cor. 11:26 that the Supper also points to the future. Christians are admonished to observe the sacrament "till he come." The Lord's Supper has past, present, and future relevance.

During the Eucharist the person participating should experience a time of self-examination and meditation before, during, and after the observance. He should commune with God during this sacrament. The individual should remember what God accomplished for him in the death of His Son. The bread and the cup are reminders of the body and the blood of Christ.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians to let them know of his concern for the sacredness of this sacrament. Paul said it ought to be observed with dignity and in an attitude of worship.

This divine ordinance should not be tacked on as an appendage to the "main" service. It should be an act of worship itself.

By remembering exactly what the sacrament represents, the highest expression of God's love, and by expecting God to do something for us as we participate, the Lord's Supper can be for us, too, a refreshment.

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A candid look at some conditions
which contribute to "defeat by secondary
success" in church growth

Which Way Are We Growing?

SOMEONE HAS accurately observed that there is a vast difference between being big and strong and being big and fat. Weight-conscious Americans know well that size can, in some cases, be a very undesirable addition to our physical anatomy. Is it not reasonable that—in our efforts to make churches grow—undesirable growth is a possibility? Every pastor is anxious to make numerical gains. We all hope for bigger and better buildings. The demands for increased financial strength grows with spiral-inflation.

However, the question of motives, methods, and direction cannot be ignored. The motive to advance God's kingdom and save the lost is unimpeachable. Every pastor rejoices when there is a new name written down in heaven. And unless we have this kind of growth in our churches,

it is generally agreed among us that we are not getting the job done. No Christian would ever seriously question that which brings men to Christ in saving faith.

But church growth is not necessarily synonymous with converting the lost. Maybe it ought to be, but it doesn't work out that way. We sometimes fail to bring our converts into church membership. This is regrettable. But worse, we can also fail to make converts of those we reach for the church. If we are satisfied with either failure, we will likely be guilty of what Woodrow Wilson described as "defeat by our secondary success."

The question, then, of motives and methods cannot be ignored if we are to have a strong church in the years ahead.

To seek size for its own sake is to grow fat rather than strong. Any church in a populated area that is not growing has something wrong with it. There are not many justifiable reasons for a church remaining the same size numerically year after year. Some churches in declining communities or remote areas where people are moving out and few new families moving in do face problems. The rest of our churches should grow with the community.



by
R. E. Maner

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of the Nazarene
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However, just adding numbers is not the primary goal. The philosophy of the cancer cell is growth for growth's sake. The motive behind all the effort at growth is to populate heaven. If we work toward this goal, we will build churches that are big and strong.

Church buildings built for beauty rather than blessing can be an indication of fatness. Our church buildings can and should be as beautiful as the budget allows. Poor taste and inferior material and workmanship are seldom the money savers they seem to be. Buildings that are well designed, well constructed, and well located are always in order.

There are occasions, nevertheless, when beauty for beauty's sake is obtained at the price of blessing. No church has a budget this large. The building must reflect our theology. The altar is primarily a place where seekers can pray, and Christians can pray with them. The acoustics should afford good congregational singing and, hopefully, good preaching. The aisles should be wide enough and numerous enough for people to get out if they desire to go to the altar. The whole building should be designed with our purposes in mind. If we have to choose between beauty and utility, the latter should have priority. To reflect the theology of a liturgical worship at the expense of our own form of worship is not likely to be a source of strength. It will result in unwanted fat.

Services that entertain rather than inspire and evangelize may bring in crowds but the growth can be fatness, not strength. Any preacher would rather preach to a full house than to empty pews. The latter is discouraging to the members and deflating to the pastor. Services that are drab, singing that is poor, and preaching that is inferior usually result in empty churches. They don't deserve a

hearing from the community.

We live in an entertainment-oriented society. People see and hear the best in the nation today. If we expect people to come to church, we had better have something worthwhile in progress when they come. But the object is not to entertain, but rather to inspire, motivate, and evangelize. The singing and other elements of the service may be entertaining but our objectives must go much deeper than that. A packed auditorium may create the illusion of a big, strong church; but if entertainment is the goal, it is only big and fat.

Finally, to gather about us disciples that seek to be served rather than to serve others is but to grow fat. Lazy Christians, like the poor, we will always have with us. James, in his Epistle, indicates that there were some even in the New Testament Church. It is the pastor's duty to indoctrinate every new Christian with the urgency of dedicated good works. "O land of rest, for thee I sigh," may be the way the song begins, but it ends with the words, "We'll work till Jesus comes." We are indeed justified by grace, through faith, without works; but we will never justify laziness when we are called to give an account of our stewardship.

People must be taught that every member is a crew member and not a passenger. They must also be motivated, inspired, and challenged to do what they know they should be doing. We all need this kind of stimulation. This is why we need preachers' meetings, zone rallies, camp meetings, and retreats. Revivals offer fresh enthusiasm. People who sit around get fat and lazy. Some churches do the same thing. People who are overweight are not as healthy as they may appear to be—and neither are churches.

“Sanctified imagination” goes behind the scenes and makes the Pentecostal experience seem like yesterday.

The Ten-Day Prayer Meeting

By Ira E. Bray*

THE GOSPEL STORY of Christ’s earthly ministry ends apparently with His resurrection. Then follows His 40-day post-Resurrection ministry. In it we are told of the gathering on the mountain in Galilee; of the lakeside incident with its miraculous draught of fishes and its account of Peter’s threefold confession of his love for Christ, and of Christ’s repeated command to “feed my sheep.” The period actually ended, however, with His final command to “tarry until,” just before His ascension.

Immediately the Eleven returned to the Upper Room in Jerusalem, where they were joined by 109 other believers to begin the 10-day prayer meeting leading up to Pentecost. Rather than in the Temple, this Upper Room was likely in the home of John Mark, where Jesus and the Twelve had eaten the last Passover and the first Lord’s Supper.

This day-by-day account of the thoughts, sentiments, and prayers of this waiting group is not in the Bible, but it is possibly and very probably true.

FIRST DAY—Someone speaks out, “Well, brethren, here we are—nothing to do but pray and wait. I surely hope it won’t be long. Truly the har-

vest is white and that last ‘Go ye’ burns like fire in my soul. It looks to me like we’re killing time.”

Another speaks up: “You’re right. Why shouldn’t we go out and hold weekend revivals, win a few souls, then come back and tarry some more? But . . . let’s pray.”

SECOND DAY—Then spoke Philip, the practical one: “Say, whisper it, I don’t see any need of this myself, but don’t ever forget that little word *obey*. Remember old Samuel told Saul, ‘To obey is better than sacrifice.’ We’d better obey and ‘tarry until.’” Most everyone nodded approval and all bowed their heads.

THIRD DAY—This day seemed marked by a spirit of caution. Perhaps it was Thomas, “Brethren, let’s be careful; could this be best? Of course it is. He knew best! Power! Of course we’ll need power. Remember dear old John the Baptist. This is a wicked old world. Surely, we want to be our best for our Lord. Surely we should ‘tarry until.’” But a few frowned and turned away.

FOURTH DAY—Serious, thoughtful Bartholomew seemed to be the spokesman for that day. “Brethren,” said he, “I’ve been thinking pretty carefully. This is a beautiful *theory*. And it seems so *reasonable* too. Every

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true child of God wants power—power to witness, power to convince people, power to win souls.

“Yet, with all this zeal and carefulness, there seems not a thought of personal need of heart purity—no recognition of the great truth that purity is power. Thus it has ever been—great numbers want ‘power from on high’—but few are concerned about ‘Blessed are the pure in heart.’”

FIFTH DAY—First thing after the psalm was sung, someone asked Simon the Zealot, “Simon, do we really need more power?” He replied, “Now you said it. Surely we do. Power to preach big sermons, power to heal, power for miracles, power to speak, power to win souls, yes, and power to build up big churches.” Then he continued: “Just see what we have done already—70 of us. We cast out devils in His name; now with this new power we’ll really do things and go places, won’t we!” And he smiled to himself with satisfaction. So did all of them.

SIXTH DAY—Sometimes divine light comes slowly—sometimes fast. Simon Peter, quiet until now, spoke out and testified almost sadly: “O brethren, the light dawns. Last night I could hardly sleep—I prayed—the vision came—the angel seemed to point at my proud, selfish heart and say, ‘There’s your trouble.’ Woe is me! Is there any deliverance? What a failure I have been! Sleeping instead of watching, cutting off ears, forsaking my Master, denying Him thrice instead of standing bravely by His side!”

Then he continued humbly: “What made me do it? I didn’t want to. Yes, I need power—power to control this ugly self.”

All were quiet until someone exclaimed, “Tarry until!”

SEVENTH DAY—A deep seriousness had come over all of them when

one spoke up humbly (perhaps practical James) and exhorted them as follows: “Brethren, I too see my poor, selfish ego leading me astray. I always want my way. I need more grace and more determination.

“Let’s go to the Temple—let’s win souls, let’s pray for those priests to find the Spirit of Christ, let’s pray harder. The truth is I’m tired of *praying* and not *doing*. Let’s get busy.” The afternoon was spent in activity. They worked hard.

EIGHTH DAY—The day began with gloom. Everyone seemed defeated and discouraged. They had gone out in their own strength, had tried hard, and had failed. Several spoke their sentiments: “The harder I tried, the cooler my spirit.” “I began boldly, but ended weakly.” “I thought I knew how, but I failed.”

Then spoke up loving John, “I’m sick of all our striving and failing. I want *His* way, not *mine*! Remember ‘tarry until.’ That is God’s way, and His way is best.” Several agreed to this.

NINTH DAY—Wise, patient Andrew! He knew and spoke the sentiments of everyone: “I see it all now. I give up. I need it. I must have this blessing. I need a pure heart far more than showy power. I’m coming in the morning and will pray and ‘tarry until’ the Holy Spirit comes to *cleanse* and *fill* my poor soul.” To this the rest heartily agreed.

TENTH DAY—For some time all prayed fervently. Then simply and humbly Levi concluded their prayer as follows: “O God, Thou all-wise, powerful, loving Heavenly Father, Thy way is best. Thy will be done. Our need is so great! Come with Thy purifying, sanctifying fire.”

After a few quiet moments he concluded, “I trust Thee—Thee alone. All is in Thy hands.”

And the fire fell.

Not outward circumstances but inner attitudes paralyze our praying.

When It's Hard to Pray

By Allen Bowman*

ONE OF THE MOST SAINTLY ladies I have ever known told me of a period in her life when, as she expressed it, "the heavens were like brass." It seemed that her prayers weren't getting through. Even after this period, she seemed unable to find a reason for it. I suspect that it was a trial of faith. Madam Guyon once experienced a seven-year period when her praying produced no emotional reaction whatever. But she kept on praying just the same.

Ordinarily, however, when it is hard to pray, the reason is discernible. We need to face the facts honestly and courageously.

A young ministerial student, out on a rabbit hunt one day, made up for lack of success by shooting a tame rabbit and taking it home. The matter seemed trivial—yet whenever he tried to pray he saw that rabbit. Needless to say, his prayer life didn't revive until he had paid the owner.

One often hears complaints like these: "I can't find time for prayer." "When I try to pray, I can't concentrate." "I always get drowsy." Such problems are symptoms rather than causes. Everyone finds time for the things that really interest him. You have time to talk with the people you love. As to wandering thoughts, praying aloud easily cures that ailment. And standing up or walking around will fend off drowsiness. Maybe you

have done too much of the talking anyway! Remember, God wants to speak to you too.

Actually, the roots of the trouble go much deeper than a busy schedule or woolgathering or sleepiness. Let's look at a few examples.

One man of God was puzzled by an indefinable block to his devotions. His conscience kept hurting him for spending so little time with his Lord, and he would resolve to do better. But it was always the same old story. His attempts to commune with God would fail within minutes. At the same time, he was spending very little time with his wife and children, a condition of affairs he chose to ignore.

Finally it dawned on him that the two situations might be connected. With humiliation he acknowledged to those dearest to him his inexcusable neglect. Setting aside less important matters, he undertook to remedy it. At once his prayer life was transformed. Strange, is it not, how we consider as minor the very things with which God is most concerned?

When Frank Ineson, later known affectionately as "Uncle Frank," went to Japan in 1951 as business manager of Youth for Christ, he found the missionaries in his locality facing a stalemate. Their prayer life was at a low ebb. Though "only a layman," he persuaded them to meet for the purpose of confessing their faults and praying for one another.

"We were getting our horizontal

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relationships cleared up," Uncle Frank explains, "to open the door to vertical relationships." It took days to do it, but at last the hearts of those good people were prepared. Then prayer became easy. So effective did it become that within two years a revival broke out. Says Uncle Frank, "We cannot pray for others when we aren't right ourselves."

It is the higher levels of prayer—intercession, communion with God, praise to Him—that are most easily impaired by wrong attitudes; and most of these attitudes stem from simple neglect.

Years ago one of my students (I shall call her Ellen) became a valued friend of my wife and myself. After graduation she wrote to us faithfully. Upon her marriage she sent a picture of her husband, whom we were anxious to meet. She was almost like a daughter. We longed to see her.

Then Ellen and her husband moved 2,000 miles away. Their route took them right through our area. But she didn't stop—not even to say hello and good-bye. All we got was a note saying that she had been economizing, and had had a cold, and so hadn't stopped. Later she moved back to a state adjoining ours, but still no Ellen appeared. Years have passed, and still we haven't seen her.

Maybe it was somehow our fault, although we do love her. But obviously the relationship has been severely strained. Suppose she finds herself in our community again. Will she look us up? If so, what apology will she make?

Sad to say, that is how many people treat God. And they hate to admit it. Outward circumstances are not the basic barriers to prayer. The crux of the problem is wrong attitudes. Resentments, doubts, selfishness—these paralyze our praying. Let's confront these insidious foes head on, with no illusions!

Practical Points

that make a difference

Friendliness and Holiness

Dear Son:

Have you ever recognized that, as far as winning people, theology takes a backseat to friendliness? Now that runs against my "grain," but I have to admit that it is true. Guests evaluate churches at first, not so much of *what* they say, but *how* they say it! That is why we must "speak the truth in love."

The Johnsons were that way. They united with our fellowship yesterday over a large, well-organized church that had everything to offer them. One of our good lay ladies made the difference. She greeted them with warmth and enthusiasm. She invited them with a group for dinner. She was in their home during the week and helped to unpack and wash their dishes. They were "SOLD."

Now I believe we preach the truth. Our pastor is a superlative pulpiteer, our facilities simple but attractive. Do you know what won the Johnsons? It was none of these. The truth came home through the love of caring friends—which, after all, is the heart of holiness.

We can argue our case until the Lord's return and win no one. But if the spirit of love shows through, the message of truth comes clear and beautifully poignant to the heart of the believer.

You know as well as I do that your dad is not a college man, but I know where there is love—and that makes the difference. It does every time!

Love,
Dad

Faith in **ACTION**

The Flip Side

IF "JUST AS I AM" is a valid song for the seekers, "Just as They Are" is an excellent attitude for their pastor.

Our churches receive various kinds of people. Some are well educated. Some are not. Many are good singers. Others can't carry a tune. A few will help provide an excellent financial base. Others will give only "as the Spirit moves them." Only a fragment may ever become what we would call ideal churchmen. Yet it takes all kinds of people to accomplish our job. As a pastor with my own special piece of the Great Commission to fulfill, I must accept each one just as he is.

Learning to accept people "unmolded to my ways" has not always been one of my finest attributes. I had to think it through and study carefully the history of my own ministry. At times I may have been guilty of unintentional abuse in the high name of some personal Utopian dream.

There was Aunt Lizzy (not her

real name). She knew everyone in the church from Uncle Buddie to the present pastor. She loved the church and supported it loyally. She was "Mrs. Nazarene" throughout that community, but she was the last to understand anything. I recall a building program which she interrupted, insisting the plans called for a door on the other side of the room. When I was completely exasperated, she admitted she was wrong and the committee was right. At least a dozen times the devil had me thinking the church would be better off without her. What a terrible attitude for me to harbor!

One Sunday morning my spirit had hit bottom. That morning I could have resigned without second thought. I must have looked like I felt as I sat down in the pew ahead of Aunt Lizzy for Sunday school opening exercises. She reached over the pew and touched me on the shoulder. Her voice conveyed all the curative benefits of grandmother's cookie jar.

"Just want you to know, Pastor, you're among friends. We all love you." I went from flat rock to the Milky Way in seconds. Soon after, I tried to put her on the altar, but I found it was only my attitude. Finally, I accepted her just as she was—the good points and the bad. I recognized her usefulness to the Kingdom



by
Carlos H. Sparks

Pastor
Church of the Nazarene
Sylvania, Ohio

work. How the community will miss her when she goes away to be with Jesus! She is a hill with a light on it.

I have been frustrated with folk who have been around the church for years and insist on "only tipping God." Arnold was that kind of guy. He made an excellent salary, yet his weekly offering was only \$5.00. No more. No less. Though I never used the pulpit as a whipping post, I was often tempted until one day I discovered that Arnold's \$5.00 a week was \$260 a year, and that was about what the coal bill amounted to for one winter. That church has gas now, but I would guess that Arnold is still paying a \$260 chunk of the expenses. That's what you get when you are willing to accept people just as they are.

Then I knew two fellows who always needed a ride to church. Almost anyone would admit that a preacher can't be his sharpest when he must run a taxi all over town for his congregation. Often I almost wished I would get a call that would tie up the phone until it was too late for my taxi service. (If you think that is an unrighteous attitude, it's because you've never been a preacher cab driver.) But the Lord had a revelation for me. Kindness.

My wife was in the hospital and our people had decided to bring in the evening meals for the boys and me. It was Wednesday and I was late returning to the parsonage. The phone was ringing when I walked in through the door.

"Jim is on his way with your hot supper. Could you go meet him?"

I hurried to the car and started toward Jim's house two miles away. Jim, laden with two steaming pots and a sack of bread, was puffing through the wind-driven sleet. He was red and cold. I reprimanded him for walking that far in the cold, but it was obvious that he loved his pas-

tor and family. I took him back home, shook his hand, yet bent from his icy clutch of the kettle handle. I repented over the steering wheel before I returned to the parsonage. A few years before, Jim had come to the Lord singing, "Just as I am," and the Lord had accepted him just as he was. The rest is up to me. Am I able to accept him just as he is?

If you have read these thoughts and feel that I have herewith licensed non-tithers, cranks, and hitchhikers, you're wrong. If I seem to be implying that people do not change—or never will—I've failed to convey my point. I have seen unbelievable changes in people and in their ways. Rather, this is a plea for patience and understanding on behalf of those who do not seem to be able to change their engrained circumstances or ways. It is a "Search me, O God" prayer. It is a petition for guitars or flutes or harps—whichever fits my people's moods or tastes. This is an appeal to every pastor to encourage the joy of participation in service to every man, woman, and child that occupies space in our sacred buildings.

Last night Charlie sang! He was off key a place or two, but he was composed and serious. As he finished his "special" he walked back to his place. He was 10 feet tall. He had just done something he had wanted to do for a long time. The people were blessed and responsive. I was proud of him.

"Just as they are." That's the only way we get them.

One man was telling another man about a friend of his who had recently died and left \$50,000.

"What a pity," replied the friend, "that he left it behind when he might have sent it on ahead. He is not likely now to ever hear of it again."

there's MU ♩ IC in your church



More Ideas for Your Music Program

Your Music Committee

When we accept the participating choir program (see "Stereo-phonic Choir," March, 1973, issue), we must accept the leaders of each of the several choirs and of the orchestra. To involve these leaders in the new emphasis, each must be given an opportunity to share in the responsibility of planning the music program.

Most churches have a music committee of three to five who serve in all planning. Place these officials as the executive committee, but invite the directors of the various choirs—adult, senior high, junior high, Junior Department, Primary Department, Kindergarten Department—and the orchestra as members of the music council or committee.

With participation in the planning of the programs will come responsibility and interest. Quarterly meetings will help them to inform each of their groups of coming activities and help keep the motivation at a high level.

Get the best P.A. Speaker

The best money that we can spend in our public-address system is that which we spend on a speaker. Just as a pipe organ must be voiced and regulated to the house of worship, so the sound system can be voiced to match the design characteristics of the building.

For best results use the overhead speaker, above the pulpit: sectoral horns that control the sound projectional angle while maintaining excellent reproduction in the middle and high frequency. Because the dispersion pattern is carefully controlled by the sectoral expansion, the full spectrum may be directed exactly where it is needed. These horns should be used in conjunction with low-frequency speakers.

One place where the voice has a profound effect on people is in the church sanctuary; thus, the control and distribution of voice and music becomes a most critical consideration. We must reach every member of the congregation. It must be person-to-person communication with clarity for all ages. Many situations must be considered: overflow audiences, the elderly, the hard of hearing, recording, and transmission to other areas. No church is too small for a P.A. system. The tendency in a smaller sanctuary without a public-



by
Ron Lush, Sr.

Music Evangelist
Church of the Nazarene

address system is to raise the voice to an unpleasant shouting quality. This is unnecessary with a P.A. system.

Good microphones, amplifiers,

loudspeakers, and sectoral horns are a part of the equipment to present the spoken word and music to each individual with clarity and naturalism.

Pastoral Ponderings and Prayers

By G. Lewis VanDyne*



Lord, Make Me a Channel of Blessing

HERE I AM, LORD, still feeling that I am working against the odds—the odds against my being effective in the pastoral ministry. Yet I feel constrained to list the positive aspects of my situation before launching into the negative ones. I know that victories are won not altogether because the odds appear in one's favor at the beginning. I am still staying with this mountain—to borrow a thought from Robert Schuller and his "Possibility Thinker's Creed."

Help me not to look upon my present status and situation as a trap, but rather as an opportunity to be poured into a narrow channel with definiteness of direction. Like the aqueduct that runs from Oroville Dam down through the Mojave Desert and brings water to the Los Angeles area, help me to see the importance of being confined to a definite sphere of activity in order to accomplish a specific purpose. Water poured out on the desert without any goal or direction will quickly sink into the sand, make the flowers bloom for a few months at the most, and then be gone. But water kept

within the channel passing through the desert will reach the city, where people will turn the tap and drink the refreshing, life-giving flow. Lord, give me a willingness today to be that channel.

I want my ministry to be free of any obstructions to the free flow of the Spirit of God into the lives of those to whom You send me. Help me today in particular, as I prepare for the church board meeting, to be able to clear away any debris that may have accumulated in these years of my ministry. Help the church board members to catch this same vision and be united in the work of being the channel through which You can work.

It's going to be a week of busy activity. Help me to be on the lookout for obstructions, and also be careful to stay within the channel of Your revealed will and of Your specific will for my life as You give the capacity to comprehend it.

Thank You, Lord, for all the good things that are happening in my life, and for all the possibilities. I want to make the possibilities realities as You will them to be so in my life.

*Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Santa Barbara, Calif.

God's desire is for free obedience; hence the alternative for disobedience must be present.

God Planted Both Trees

GOD PLANTED BOTH TREES—the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil—in the Garden of Eden. I would not have done so—I am quite sure of that. Admitting that He was right when He assured us that His ways are higher than our ways, I know that I would have been wrong in refusing to plant the evil tree. But since He did it, I have sought to find the reason for it.

It is evident from the text that the planting of these two trees was purposeful. Earlier in creation, God had “created . . . every plant of the field” and then created man, and then “planted a garden eastward in Eden.” There He placed man and caused to grow in the garden “every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:8-9).

The question immediately arises,

Why did God plant the tree of knowledge of good and evil in this Edenic garden? It was used as the instrument of man's destruction. Why place it before him? To understand this more fully, one must know something of God's problem with free moral agency which resulted in the split in heaven.

The unbending law of the universe is the sovereignty of the Father, acknowledged and expressed by full and absolute obedience. The first test known to man, of the free moral agency in the universe, was made in heaven. When that freedom was exercised, Lucifer and many heavenly beings, following, used their freedom for self-exaltation and were cast out.

Testing is a prerequisite to safety and dependability. No car manufacturer would market an untested car. The law will not allow an untested drug to be sold. We depend upon fire to burn, for it has been tested. A sharp knife will cut a finger—my scars prove that. In like manner, the free will of man must be tested. The supreme test is, Will man have his own way, or will he yield himself in full obedience to the will of God?

God made man for eternal fellowship, and man's obedience is an inexorable law of that fellowship. Man must be tested. He must not go untried into the presence of God and his



by
T. W. Willingham

Kansas City, Mo.

heavenly home; hence, the tree of testing. The basis of the test was the command, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Gen. 3:3). This was the command of God known to Eve and quoted by her to the devil. She knew both the command and the penalty for its violation. This she admitted before the act of disobedience.

The planting of the tree teaches us many valuable lessons. It teaches there is no virtue in obedience if disobedience is impossible, and God set before man at the very beginning the means of his own disobedience. To have removed from man the possibility of disobedience would have defeated the very purpose of God. God's desire is for a free obedience; hence the alternative of disobedience must be present. God did make His command clear, and He told man frankly and plainly just what the consequences of disobedience would be.

Another lesson we learn from God's way is that, if one obeys, no outside object, circumstance, or tempter can destroy him. The determining factor of the test is within man, and nowhere else. The occasion of sin may be outside, but the cause is invariably on the inside. Because of this, God always deals with the cause and not the occasion. In fact, He is responsible for the occasion. He planted the tree and He let the devil run loose and tempt man. He could have banished the devil before He made man. He will banish him later, and it is folly to think that He could not have done so earlier.

We may never know God's design in leaving the tempter around until He has closed the human race, but He has. The devil will not be put into his final abode—the bottomless pit—until humanity's race has been fully run. It might not be amiss to think on the matter for a moment, using facts that we know to reach a

reasonable answer, although the Scriptures are silent at this point.

We may be sure that disobedience was a possibility in man, even if there had been no outside tempter. Freedom of will implies the possibility of both obedience and disobedience. This is inherent in freedom, and God made angels and man free. He seeks the loving obedience of a freely tested will. It is evident that the test came sooner with the devil's presence and temptation, and perhaps an early testing was more desirable to God than a delayed one. We may well suppose that perfect harmony reigned in heaven for aeons. It is certain that the division was not a created one—the possibility, yes; the fact, no. This grew out of the angels' freedom. The devil's presence would hasten the day of testing and determine the free loyalty of His creatures in the face of possible and suggested disobedience.

The Eden story illustrates the power and the finality of the human will in determining one's own destiny. From the very beginning God was "not willing that any should perish," but the execution of His will was powerless against the execution of man's free will. Paul reminds us "that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey" (Rom. 6:16). Note, the yielding is the power of the individual. Neither man, the devil, nor another can yield one's will to God or the devil. Upon this fact rests the justice of man's eternal punishment if he yields to sin. Only the one who has the final decision in the matter can justly bear the consequences of the act.

Both trees were planted that man might exercise his God-given power of choice. He exercised it, and exercised it contrary to God's desire. He must bear the full responsibility for his free act. True, he was influenced

by both God and the devil. God erected a strong barrier to ruin by explaining the ultimate consequences of self-will against God's command. The devil used the power of persuasive reason, and man followed the reasoning of the devil and disobeyed the command of God.

The Eden story illustrates the power of external forces—God's and the devil's—but neither can draw from man a decision that is not his. In the

final analysis, the decision is his and his alone. The tree of evil and the deceitfulness of sin and Satan are ever before us, and so are the commands of God and His warnings of the consequences of disobedience. But neither can elicit a decision from man that is not freely made by him. The tree and the command are necessary; they are ever before us, but we govern the choice that we make between them.



The Consecration of Hymnbooks*

I. Ceremony of Retirement

(The people will hold the hymnbooks)

MINISTER: In our hands, O Lord, we hold a precious instrument of Thy peace and power. This hymnal has served us long and well, and we would not dismiss it without the blessing of our acknowledgement and thankfulness.

PEOPLE: We remember with affection and gratitude those whose faith was nurtured from these pages, friends of Christ who entered this house of worship and took a song away. We bless Thee, O Lord, for the souls fortified and ennobled through the ministry of this book.

MINISTER AND PEOPLE: With mingled feelings of sadness and rejoicing, therefore, we remove from our sanctuary a book which has given itself for us in long and honored service. We now ask that this old hymnal will continue to bring the joys of salvation to those of our brothers and sisters in our churches in

South Africa. May many souls find Christ through the ministry of this book.

II. Ceremony of Consecration

MINISTER: In our hands is a new thing, with all its beauty and thrill. We earnestly wish that for many of us a new hymnbook will mean a new vision, a new consecration, a new concern for the kingdom of God. We would wish for a renewal of faith through the singing of old hymns; and through the learning of new hymns, new insights and a new loyalty to the old faith.

PEOPLE: We would express our pleasure in this new hymnal which, as a true hymnbook of the Christian Church, transcends sectarian differences. We rejoice that the hymnal includes offerings of many. We rejoice that it includes the Word of God in responsive readings, the message of the new birth, of holiness of heart, of comfort and consolation, and of challenge to Christian service.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION—

*Adapted from several sources by W. S. Muir, pastor, Harvey, Ill.

● **General Superintendent Strickland**

Am I Worth It?



I AM SOMETIMES TEMPTED to overconfidence and to an exaggerated feeling of self-worth. It is always a humbling experience when I meditate upon the enormous investment which has been made in me to make me a minister of the gospel of Christ. Somehow my feelings of self-importance shrink in the light of these investments, and I begin to question seriously, Am I worth it?

The eternal Trinity has made a large investment in me. God loved me, and though He loves the whole world it sometimes seems so personal to me. While Jesus died for the sins of the whole human race, I felt one night He died just for me alone. Wherein the Holy Spirit was outpoured upon the entire Church, one day it seemed He came just to me. While the Spirit guides the whole Church, it has seemed that He has been my special Guide and Comforter.

The church has made an enormous investment in me. The church accepted me into her fellowship, fostered and cared for me in my spiritual infancy, encouraged me in my spiritual struggles, and gave me both information and inspiration in my search to find God's will. Her institutions trained me for the ministry. Her people patiently carried me through my ministerial apprenticeship. Across the years the people have prayed for me, loved me, supported me, and encouraged me.

Friends and colleagues have a great investment in me. They have prayed for me, shared experiences with me, given me counsel, and offered a fellowship that is rich and meaningful.

Am I worth it? Measured by commercial values, I have a heavy indebtedness. I have not developed sufficient assets to justify the enormous investments.

I have, however, just received some very good news. I have just concluded a service and heard the cry of a newborn soul at the altar. In a quiet whisper to my inner soul, a sweet Voice seems to be saying, "This makes you worthy."

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Northwest Indiana
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San Antonio
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Southwest Oklahoma
Southwestern Ohio
Upstate New York
Washington Pacific
West Texas
West Virginia

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New Mexico
North Arkansas
Northwest Oklahoma
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MAY

Southern California
SEPTEMBER
Nebraska

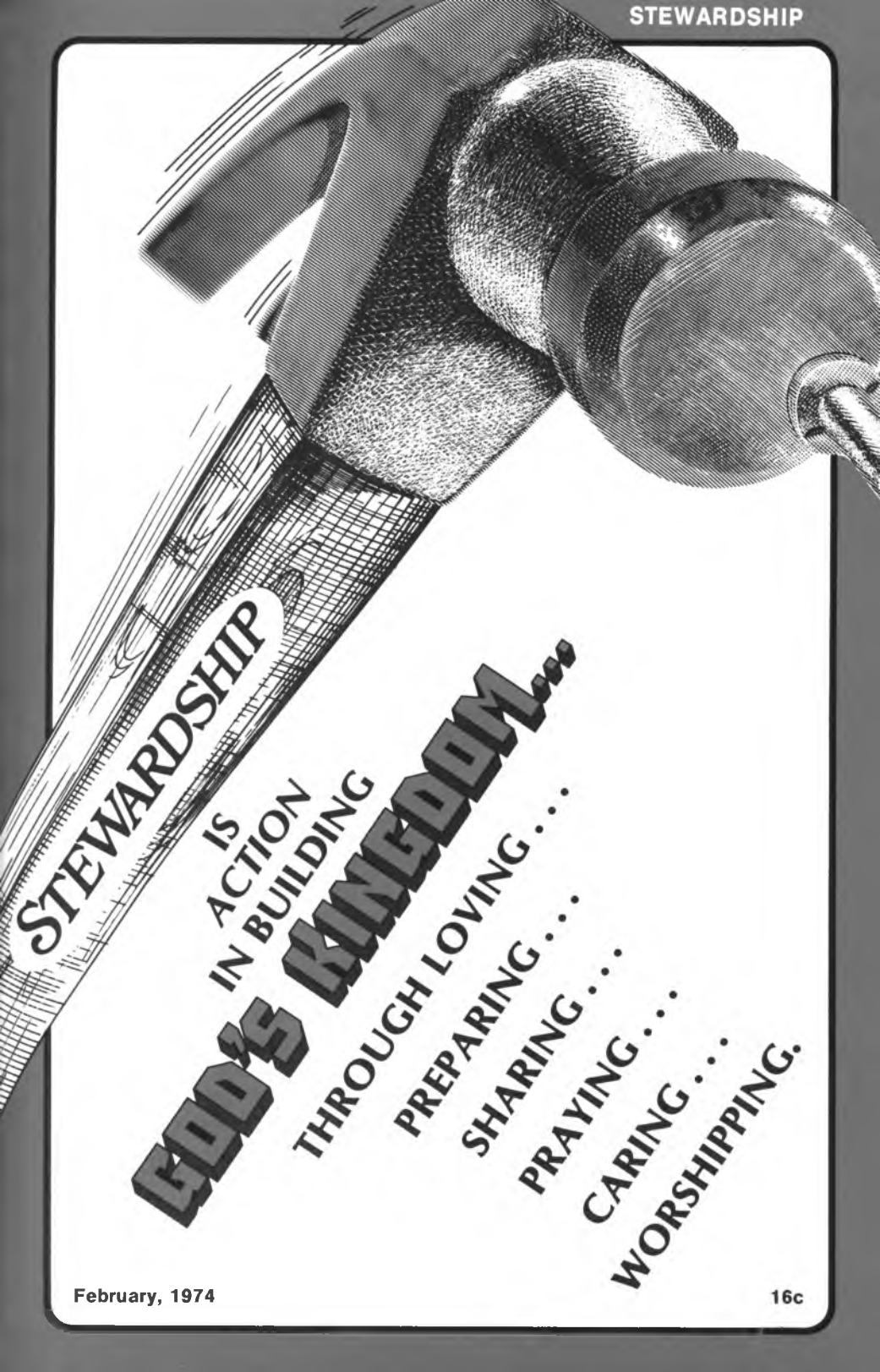
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OCTOBER

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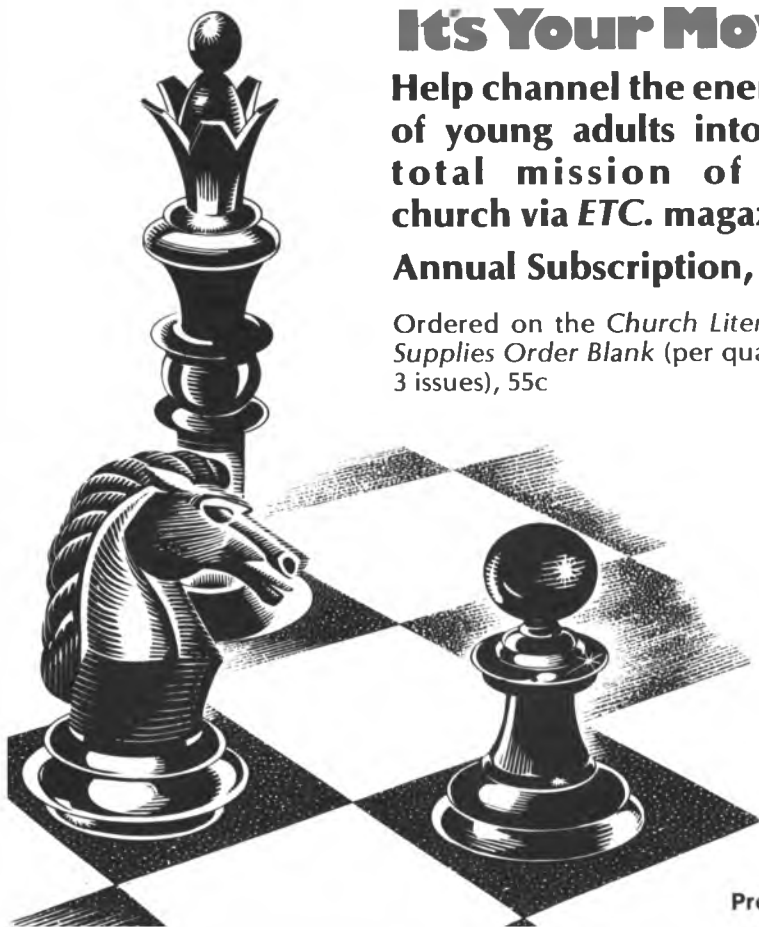
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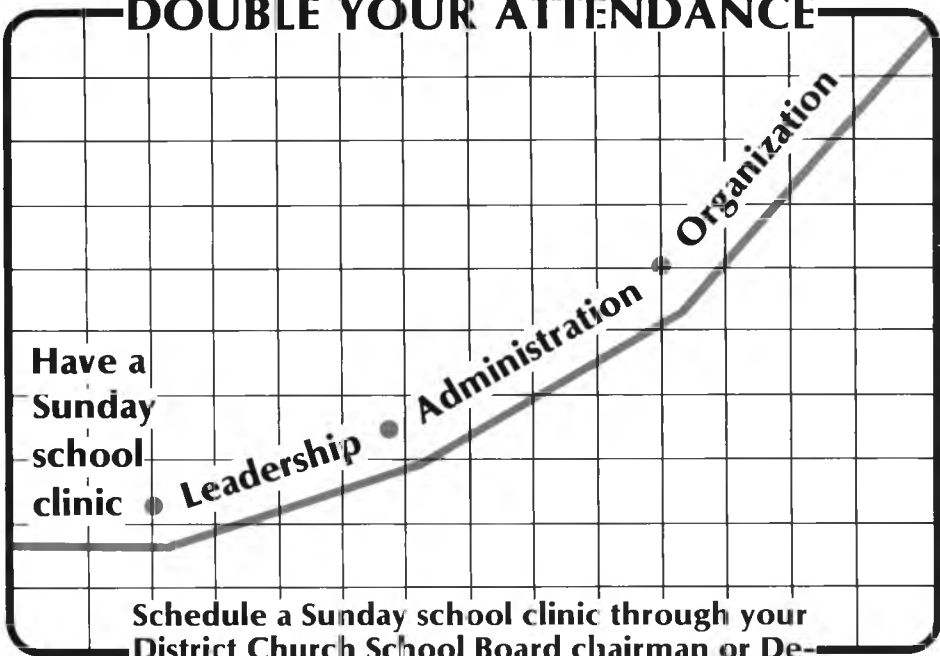
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Schedule a Sunday school clinic through your District Church School Board chairman or Department of Church Schools, K.C., Mo.

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SIONARY MELODIES*

"I'll Wish I Had Given Him More"—No. 66

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A prayer of dedication and open Alabaster boxes.

Close—

With suggested hymn "To God Be the Glory, Great Things He Hath Done" and prayer.

Mrs. ELIZABETH GRACE, Council Member
British Isles

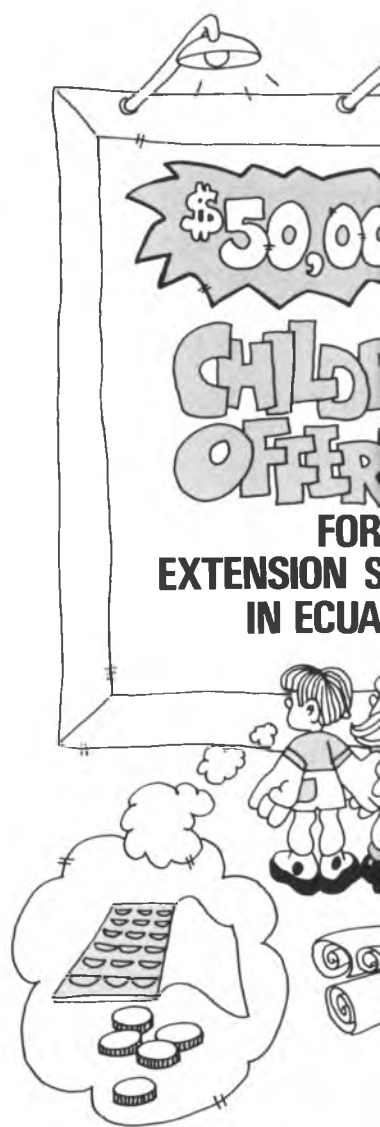


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"The Glorious Adventure"

In his foreword to **MISSION POSSIBLE**, Dr. George Coulter uses the words *"the glorious adventure of reaching people today with the message of Christ."*

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This month and next, Nazarene churches everywhere will be joining in the CST study of **MISSION POSSIBLE**. There is still time for you and your church to be a part of the "glorious adventure" that can result from this heart-probing study of the church and its mission.

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Send Report Blank, Registration Material to:



February 17-23

BROTHERHOOD WEEK

Another "glorious adventure" comes in the realization that God's love works its miracle in the hearts of all men who commit their lives to Him, regardless of race or cultural background.

Enlarge your perception of Christian brotherhood during **BROTHERHOOD WEEK** through friendship activities such as dinners, rallies, musicals, or service projects.

On Sunday you can exchange ministers, Sunday school teachers, or musicians with a church of a different racial or cultural background than your own.

BE A BROTHER



You need more **MEN IN MISSIONS**

Men need to be vitally involved in missions education. As pastor, you can help lead in this area. In many cases, men would prefer meeting in a separate chapter.

Officers will need to be elected with a brief job description. Set a time and place for your meetings. Your men's fellowship will not need to always meet at the church. In fact, to reach new men it may be best to meet in a home. A relaxed, informal atmosphere is important.

This would be an excellent program for men to bring their sons or a friend who does not attend church.

Here are just a few ideas you can develop:

1. A missionary can report on his work and, also, give the scriptural emphasis on men in missions.
2. Group members can report on a missionary book or current world events.
3. Set up stimulating discussions:
 "How to Reach the World for Christ"
 "Biblical Basis of Missions"
 "Are the Heathen Really Lost?"
 "Missionary Martyrs"
4. Study non-Christian religions.
5. Discuss practical ways a man can dedicate his work to missionary

partnership (percentage of time, acreage, profits, contracts, etc.).

6. Overnight Missions Retreat
 Study, pray, and discuss the responsibility of what you are doing and what can be done.
7. Locate a person in the community from another country. Arrange for him to visit the chapter and tell about his homeland.
8. Distribute Bibles and scripture portions to special language groups or families in the community.
9. Make a display for a prominent place in your church building showing how your church's cooperative dollar is divided.
10. Several missionary films are available through the Department of World Missions.
11. Slide sets on every mission field are available through your district leader or Nazarene Publishing House.
12. Conduct small repair jobs at the home of an invalid or an older person.
13. Collect and provide wholesome magazines and books for institutions, invalids, military personnel, and others in need.

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▷ Planned giving allows an individual to consider the financial security of his family at the same time he considers a gift to aid some area of Kingdom work. Planned giving allows a person to take full advantage of the charitable deductions allowed by law under both the income tax and estate tax laws. Even a planned gift has a cost to the donor. But the actual cost of a contribution will be substantially lower with proper planning.

▷ The service offered will include guidance and information concerning estate planning, wills, life income gifts, trusts, gift annuities, bequests, and many other forms of charitable gifts. These gifts may provide many benefits to you, such as—

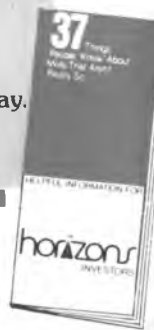
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THE STARTING POINT



By C. NEIL STRAIT

Pastor, Taylor Avenue Church of the Nazarene, Racine, Wis.

The Loving Father

(Luke 15:11-24)

I RAN ACROSS a new slant to the prodigal son story that spoke to me. Reginald Goff, in his book, *Prayer an Exciting Adventure*, terms the story as one of a loving Father, rather than a story of a prodigal son.

The Father is the main character of the story, Goff points out. "... 'There was a man who had two sons'" (Luke 15:11, RSV).

Goff has several interesting interpretations of the loving Father. But let me offer some others along the line of the loving Father theory.

First, this story is a reminder that behind every crisis and every case of hopelessness there is a Father waiting—waiting with hope and help.

Second, we see that the son reaches his lowest *away* from the Father. This is always true. Anything is downward when man leaves Christ behind. How many have tried it, only to prove its truth! Again, it points up the importance of the Father.

Third, when the son saw his predicament—in the depths of despair—the first thing he remembered was his father. What a tremendous thought! To remember that there is a loving Father—waiting, watching, wishing.

Such a thought is the one thought—among others—that saves a man from doing the tragic thing like committing suicide or giving up in some lesser way. To know there is a Father, to know there is hope, is a lifesaving thought indeed.

One of the great thoughts of the gospel story is that the Father is always available, waiting with arms of love wide open to comfort a wandering child.

A fourth thought lingers. The prodigal knew he could go to his Father. Where else? Jesus is the only One waiting with any word or any hope at the end of crisis and failure and sin. And He is always there—loving and caring with the welcome mat out, the robes ready, and a feast prepared. Here is good news for the man who is down to nothing. There is the loving Father, and that's everything!

The next time you read the story of the prodigal son, think of it as the story of the loving Father. Someone may need to hear about a loving Father more than he needs to hear about a wasted, rebellious life—with which he is all too familiar.

Share with him the loving Father and turn him on to hope.

The Preacher's Wife and the Missionary Program in the Local Church

Lora Lee: I suppose, Mrs. Oliver, that everything you have ever done in life has prepared you for this present assignment as general president of the missionary society organization. What kinds of experiences have been the most helpful?

Mrs. Oliver: Well, I guess everything has been helpful—even the bad experiences. I've been a pastor's wife in a very small church. The largest missionary society was in our church in Danville, Ill., where I learned to work with multiple chapters. But probably the most helpful experience was the oversight of missionary work on two districts where I worked with my husband, who was superintendent. These were in Alabama and Illinois.

I think I have counseled or talked with people who surely must have faced every local missionary problem there is. Then, too, the years on the General Missionary Council and the trips to mission fields have been great experiences.

Lora Lee: But you feel the district missionary work was the most helpful?

Mrs. Oliver: Right. There is nothing better than working right at the grass-roots level with men and women who lead the missionary thrust in their local churches.

Lora Lee: Then tell me, what is the role of the preacher's wife in the missionary program of the church where her husband is pastor?

Mrs. Oliver: I don't think any generalization can be made that covers all churches and all pastors' wives—except one.

Lora Lee: What is that?

Mrs. Oliver: Develop a genuine interest in world missions and a commitment to the Great Commission at home and abroad.



An interview with
Mrs. L. S. Oliver,
general president
of the Nazarene
World Missionary
Society

Lora Lee: Can you be specific?

Mrs. Oliver: Yes. In the small church the life of the missionary society often depends for its survival on the pastor's wife. She may not be able to play the piano or sing, or even make speeches. But she can be the leader in a genuine local concern for missions. In the larger churches where there are more people for leadership roles, the best thing the preacher's wife can do is inspire others to lead.

Lora Lee: What about the role of study chairman?

Mrs. Oliver: I think this is excellent. If the preacher's wife is capable and will lead the monthly study, the result is almost bound to be positive. Through her husband she probably has more resources for presenting the study—even audiovisuals. And, incidentally, I don't think it is bad to involve the preacher in these meetings once in a while. It does him good as well as the people.

Lora Lee: What else can the pastor's wife do?

Mrs. Oliver: She can become a knowledgeable person on missions and the countries where missions are operating.

Lora Lee: How? Can you be specific?

Mrs. Oliver: Yes. Reading is one of the best ways to learn the most and enjoy the most in missions study. Besides regular denominational study books, there are many thrilling biographies of scores of missionary people.

Lora Lee: Are all of these strictly religious?

Mrs. Oliver: Many are, but some are not. For instance, the Pearl Buck books on China, and the great output of books on Africa such as *Cry the Beloved Country*, are helpful reading to understand missions, but are not, strictly speaking, missionary books.

Lora Lee: We're running out of time, but just one more word. Besides regular attendance, genuine interest, and knowledge by reading, is there a last thought you'd give pastors' wives?

Mrs. Oliver: Yes, I think so. We haven't said anything about missionaries and the parsonage family. I like the hyphenated word "parsonage-home" instead of parsonage. The word "parsonage" means it is the congregation's home for their minister—the manse, as some call it. But for the preacher's family, it is their home—the only one they have. Home means love, fun, fatigue, conversations, and devotions. Parsonage means adequate housing. And it's possible to have one without the other. But back to the point. In our parsonage-home, the physical presence of missionaries as dinner guests and sometimes as overnight guests was a source of great blessing to our children and to us. Missionaries are people just like us. They respond to love and reassurance and appreciation just as we do. Whenever they came to our home, we always got a new appreciation for these dedicated people.

Next month: Mrs. Parrott talks with
Mrs. Howard Hamlin of Kansas City.

The Preacher's Personal Appearance

By Doyle Brannon*

If you are looking for success in the ministry, make sure you keep up your personal appearance. Here are some hints for the minister:

WARDROBE-WISE: Whatever anyone says about men's fashions, the look that dominates most preachers' suits can be summed up in one word—*conservative*.

Top men in the business world seem to avoid fads. They are usually clad in the well-cut, dark-colored business suit and neat tie. Jewelry is limited to a watch and neat (never gaudy) tie clip or tack.

Where clothes are concerned, keep the clergy image. A parking lot attendant at a hospital was looking in one of the cars parked in the clergy parking area to see if there was a Bible or something to identify the minister as such. He remarked to me, "I think this is a minister's car, but he didn't look like one."

OPERATION HEADSTART: Longer haircuts are acceptable these days, but they have to be kept in line. Hair needs to be trimmed, lest it start looking like an overgrown hedge.

Hairspray (perfume-free) or pomade is handy for controlling unruly hair. A good brush is a must.

Keep a shine on your shoes.

Remember to give shoulders a brush-off, lest lint and dandruff deck them.

Carry the minimum in your pockets—when they bulge, you do also. Be sure you have a handkerchief—a clean one.

Nails need scrubbing every day.

Wear a shirt only once, then have it laundered.

Avoid socks that "shout" for attention.

PERSONAL DETAILS: Don't risk your "social security"—

Shower and shave daily.

Use an effective deodorant.

Keep your breath pleasant.

You don't achieve a look of great grooming in an instant. Some of us have to work much harder than others, but let's keep at it.

Good grooming isn't a great big job. Do the little things as they need to be done today, and you eliminate major things tomorrow.

As ministers, these are things that add to or subtract from the initial impression when meeting new people. So get off to a good start with others by projecting a sparkling image—not one of merely good grooming, but of great grooming. I do not consider myself the best-groomed minister, but I am working at it, as His representative.

*Pastor, Berkley Hills Wesleyan Church, Grand Rapids, Mich.

"The Inspired Letters"

FOR MANY YEARS I have enjoyed reading Dr. Frank Laubach's translation of the Epistles of the New Testament. Dr. Laubach named the translation *The Inspired Letters*. These letters are translated in a style that the translator felt could be understood by individuals who had just learned to read the English language.

Near the close of his life I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Laubach personally. I was much impressed with his deeply spiritual personality and the intense love for Christ that was reflected in his testimony. I had my copy of *The Inspired Letters* that he graciously autographed for me. In the course of conversation he informed me that he had submitted his manuscript to 20 of the best authorities in New Testament Greek for their criticisms and corrections before he gave it to the publisher. Its fidelity to the original language is considered truly amazing.

Dr. Laubach informed me that Paul's letter to the church at Rome gave him the most trouble in translation. He desired to make Paul's words so plain that the contemporary generation could read them with a great degree of understanding. The

Book of Romans appealed to him and the work of its translation fascinated him.

One of my favorite uses for *The Inspired Letters* is for personal devotional reading. I have often felt that had Paul been writing in everyday American parlance he would have said it just as it is recorded in this delightful translation. All of the Epistles seem to come through more directly to me as I read them in the quiet time of devotion.

I have also used this translation in group Bible study. There is no doubt in my mind that the Authorized Version of 1611 will remain always as the favorite of the English-speaking peoples. Its form and cadence have become a permanent part of our literary culture. But because of the changing character of our language, many of the phrases of this beloved version are difficult to be understood by the ordinary reader in our day. *The Inspired Letters* helps to throw light on many of these obscure passages.

In every congregation to whom I have ministered I have urged a widespread circulation of this slender volume. Young and old alike have found it a source of real blessing and inspiration. Dr. Laubach was the author of an amazing number of books. He confided to me in our conversation that he felt confident in his own mind that the greatest literary work of his life was the translation of the Epistles. With the famous twinkle in his eye and his warm smile, he told me with a mixture of both humor and yet sincerity, "I honestly believe that this is the most accurate transla-



by
Ross W. Hayslip

Pastor
Church of the Nazarene
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tion of the Epistles that has ever been made.”

I feel that any preacher who desires to be a more accurate workman with the Word could profitably add this surprisingly inexpensive volume to

his library. A great scholar once said that the Scriptures provide their own best commentary upon themselves. If this be true then *The Inspired Letters* will be of untold value to every serious student of God’s Word.

Letter to the New Church

To our new friends:

Sunday night after service we met with our board and handed in our resignation. It was a hard thing to do. We love these people and this area very much. We have been through a lot together. God has given us some precious victories.

You know how this congregation feels. You, too, recently lost your pastor. Like you, they now enter the period of uncertainty. To complicate their problem, they have a new district superintendent who is due to arrive this week.

I’m sure you would counsel them to hold steady, to keep their eyes on Jesus, and be much in prayer. You would tell them God has a man for them, that the kingdom of God is far bigger than any one pastor, no matter how much he may mean to them. You would especially urge loyalty to keep unity in the fellowship.

I’ll try to tell them the things your experience is telling you. Would you do something for us and them? Would you pray that we will be given His wisdom and Spirit as we end our ministry here? Would you also pray for your brothers and sisters in Christ here? Pray that God will see them through this experience without losing one man, one woman, one teen-ager, one boy or girl!

We waited until after service to tell our children—Beth (12), Karen (10), and Fred-Fred (5). They were so excited as we pointed out the advantages. It was hard to settle them down for prayer and tuck them in Sunday night. It wasn’t until the next morning that we got questions revealing their uncertainty about leaving the security of the familiar.

Bea and I went down the street to talk to my mother about our plans. She accepted the news with mixed feelings. It’s not as interesting here if we move, and it’s hard to move at her age. She loves her own apartment. Does anyone know of an efficiency or two-room apartment there? That may help her decide.

This morning I prayed for our people here. I prayed for you too. How thankful I am that God is enlarging our hearts to love more! It would be tragic to have to quit loving and caring here to begin loving and caring there. God will in the same way enlarge your heart to love one more parsonage family.

The days seem long and short. Soon we will be with you. We know we will enjoy working for the King of Kings with you.

Your pastors-to-be,
Fred and Bea Wenger

IN THE STUDY

Meditating with the Master in Matthew

February 3

DON'T PARADE YOUR PIETY (6:1)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 6:1-18

INTRODUCTION: Instead of "alms" (v. 1), the best Greek text has "righteousness." When John Wesley put out his English translation of the New Testament in 1755, he translated this verse: "Take heed that ye practise not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward from your Father who is in heaven."

So the first verse of this chapter is an introductory admonition. The Jews thought of "righteousness" as consisting of outward actions, of observing certain legal requirements. Goodspeed translates the first part of this verse: "But take care not to do your good deeds in public for people to see."

After this introductory formula, Jesus proceeded to discuss three religious practices. The first was almsgiving (vv. 2-4); the second was prayer (vv. 5-15); and the third was fasting (vv. 16-18). Today we would probably put prayer first and giving last. But the Jews placed primary em-

phasis on giving to the poor. For instance, in the Apocrypha the statement is made that almsgiving atones for sin.

I. ALMSGIVING (vv. 2-4)

Jesus said: "When you do your giving, don't sound a trumpet before you, the way the hypocrites do." The word *hypocrite* has an interesting background. The plural in English is exactly the same as the singular in Greek, *hypocrites* (pronounced heepocreteays). The term was used for an actor on the stage.

Today in the Middle East—for instance, at Jerash and Amman in Jordan—one can see well-preserved ruins of great amphitheaters that would seat 15,000 to 25,000 people. How could people sitting in the top rows of seats hear what the actors on the stage far below were saying? In those days there were no electrical amplification systems. So the actors wore large masks on their faces, containing hidden megaphones.

A hypocrite, then, is one who wears a false face, who is an actor on the stage. He appears to be what he actually is not.

There is another interesting word here, the verb *have*—"they have their reward." The regular Greek verb for *have* is *echo*. But this is the compound *apecho*. In the papyri of that period—many thousands of which have been dug up in recent years—*apecho* is always used as the regular formula for receipts—"I have received payment." So most modern versions correctly translate here: "They have received their reward." Some add: "in full." Phillips puts it strikingly: "They have all the reward they are going to get!" This is repeated in verse 5 and 16.



By Ralph Earle

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II. PRAYER (vv. 5-15)

Hypocrites love to pray in prominent places, so as to be seen and heard by men. But Jesus said: "Enter your closet, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret."

This does not mean that we should not pray in public; Jesus did on several occasions. But we are not to parade our piety by praying in order to be seen by men. The classic example is that of the Pharisee in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14). We must remember that we are praying to God, not to men.

III. FASTING (vv. 16-18)

Here is where we perhaps face the greatest temptation to display our piety. If we let it be known that we are fasting, so as to make a favorable impression on others, we are acting like the hypocrites. They put on the mask of "a sad countenance," or "a gloomy face." Some went even so far as to "disfigure their faces." A modern counterpart is putting ashes on people's foreheads on Ash Wednesday as a sign of piety. But God looks at our hearts to see whether our religion is genuine and deep.

So Jesus said: "When you fast, wash your face and comb your hair." That is the modern equivalent of "anoint thine head, and wash thy face." In those days the people put olive oil on their hair. What Jesus was saying was: "Don't make a big ado about your fasting, trying to impress others with your superior saint-hood. Let your fasting be to God. Then dress normally and neatly, and present a cheerful spirit to others."

CONCLUSION: We once read of a businessman who was very religious. One day each week he fasted. But he was so grouchy and "on edge" that day that his office employees dreaded his fast days. Those were always rough days for them.

Obviously this didn't make these people want their boss's religion. He would have had a better Christian witness if he had eaten a light meal and been able to manifest a good disposition. What will glorify God and attract people to Him? That should be our concern.

February 10

A PRAYER PATTERN (6:9a)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 6:7-15

INTRODUCTION: Prayer is the most important function in religion. It is essential that we know how to pray. Jesus said, "After this manner therefore pray ye." Here is our pattern for prayer. What follows is generally called "The Lord's Prayer." Perhaps a more accurate designation would be "The Disciples' Prayer."

Jesus began by telling His disciples not to "use . . . vain repetitions" (v. 7). This is one word in Greek, the verb *battalogeo* (only here in the New Testament). The sound suggests the sense. It refers to batting words about with no particular logic or meaning. Jesus said that that is the way the pagans pray. Unfortunately, too many Christians pray like that. We should avoid repeating names of Deity too frequently in our public prayers. It actually sounds a bit irreverent to others. We must remember that God is an intelligent Person. We don't have to say the same thing over and over to Him. Of course, under a burden in private prayer we may well use more repetition than in public prayer. But God, our Heavenly Father, knows what we need before we ask Him (v. 8).

I. WORSHIP (v. 9b)

The model prayer begins with worship: "Our Father which art in heaven." The word *our* suggests fellowship in prayer. We are to be a worshiping community. Someone has well said that the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion.

Because God is "our Father," we come to Him with confidence, as children to an earthly parent. But He is "in heaven." So we come with reverence. These two attitudes must be balanced in our praying.

II. PETITIONS FOR GOD'S GLORY (vv. 9c-10)

After the address, the prayer itself consists of six petitions. It is extremely significant that the first three are not for ourselves but for others. When people get down on their knees and immediately ask God for this, that, and the other, they are disobeying Christ's command: "After this manner therefore pray ye." If we are suffering from the disease called "the gim-

mes," we need to pray for forgiveness and healing.

The first petition is, "Hallowed be thy name." Literally this is, "Let Your name be sanctified"—the verb is *hagiazō*. We sanctify God's name by holy living. Those of us who call ourselves "Christians" bear the name of Christ. We have the solemn responsibility of sanctifying that name—keeping it sacred—by Christlike living.

The second petition is, "Thy kingdom come." Yet even in public prayer meeting some people come nearer to praying, "Lord, bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife—us four and no more." We should always pray first for the Kingdom. One thing that will help us to do this is reading missionary books. Then our prayers will girdle the globe.

The third petition—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"—is the greatest prayer anyone can pray. Perhaps we ought at times to make it personal—"Thy will be done in my heart and life, as in heaven."

III. PETITIONS FOR OURSELVES (vv. 11-13a)

We should always begin by praying for God's kingdom to come and His will to be done. True prayer is unselfish. But there is a place—second place!—for proper petitions for ourselves.

The first of these three petitions is, "Give us this day our daily bread." Some people mistakenly think that we shouldn't bother God with our material needs. But if He is our Father, He is interested in every part of our lives. Because He is infinite, He knows all the minute details of our daily lives and wants to share them with us.

The second petition is: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Do you dare to pray that prayer? It is a dangerous one. If God forgave some "Christians" the way they forgive others, they would be in a bad way! Jesus warns us: "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (v. 15).

The last petition is: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"—Greek, "from the evil one" (Satan). He is after us all the time, and we may well pray that the Lord will protect us from his efforts to tempt and defeat us.

(We should perhaps note that the doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer is a liturgical addition; it is not in the earliest Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.)

CONCLUSION: A woman said to John Wesley, "I can't forgive So-and-so for what she said about me." Wesley replied, "Then you are going to hell." When she protested vigorously, he reminded her of what Jesus said in verse 15.

February 17

THE IMPORTANT VIRTUES (c. 6)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 6:19-33

INTRODUCTION: As we noticed in chapter 5, Jesus is primarily interested in attitudes as well as actions, in motives as well as motions. This emphasis is carried over into chapter 6.

I. SINCERITY OF MOTIVE (vv. 1-18)

A. *Almsgiving* (vv. 2-4). Give out of a heart of love and compassion, not to make an impression on others. Hypocrisy is insincerity.

B. *Praying* (vv. 5:15). If we are sincere in our praying, we are not simply saying words but expressing genuine praise and petition. We need to remember always that we cannot fool God. He knows all our thoughts, no matter how hidden to men.

C. *Fasting* (vv. 16-18). Why do we fast? Because people expect us to? Because we have to keep our image of piety? These are not acceptable motives. Fasting has spiritual value only when it is accompanied by burdened prayer. The purpose of true fasting is to free us for uninterrupted praying, especially with a deep concern for lost souls. It should never be done legalistically.

II. SINGLENES OF PURPOSE (vv. 19-24)

A. *Single Treasure* (vv. 19-21). We lay up treasure in heaven by investing our money in God's kingdom. One can lose all his money down here, and in any case he cannot take any of it with him when he dies. But we shall reap eternal dividends from whatever we invest in the Kingdom. If we really believe this, we will be generous givers.

Verse 21 suggests a practical truth. If we induce an unsaved person to give money to our building fund or some other church project, his heart may follow his money and result in his salvation.

B. *Single eye* (vv. 22-23). This expression refers to singleness of intentions or purpose. People with poor eyesight cannot see clearly to act most efficiently. The word *single* here may mean “clear” (NASB). Perhaps in the context it means “generous,” and *evil* might signify “selfish” (Moffatt).

C. *Single Master* (v. 24). In a limited sense a man today might “serve two masters” working for two different bosses on different jobs. But *serve* literally means “be a slave to” (*douleuo*). Furthermore, the word for *masters* is *kyrios*, which was used for slave masters (and also translated “Lord”). It is true that no man can be a slave to two lords. Jesus made the application: “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” If making money is our first love, we are not Christians.

III. SIMPLICITY OF TRUST (vv. 25-34)

A. *Food and Clothing* (vv. 25-32). Life is more than making a living. It is more than food and clothing (v. 25).

With reference to food, Jesus pointed to the birds. If God takes care of them, certainly as our Father He will take care of us. No one by “taking thought”—rather, “being anxious”—“can add one cubit unto his stature.” (The cubit was about a foot and a half.)

The Greek word for *stature* (*helikia*) means “a stage of growth whether measured by age or stature” (Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, p. 199). There is rather general agreement today that *stature* should be “age” or “life’s span” (NASB).

Then Jesus took up the matter of clothes. The wild lilies are more beautiful and glorious than Solomon was in his royal robes. Yet they last only a short time. How much more will our Heavenly Father provide for our clothing! So Jesus says, “Take no thought” (v. 31)—that is, “Do not be anxious.” Anxiety shows lack of trust.

B. *First Things First* (v. 33). One of the most important things in life is getting our priorities straight. Jesus said that, if we would put the Kingdom first,

God would supply all our material needs. Many consecrated Christians have proved this promise to be true. It involves being always in the center of His will, and then He will take care of us.

C. *Future in God’s Hands* (v. 34). It is unfortunate that the King James Version reads: “Take therefore no thought for the morrow.” If we did this literally we would have no Christian schools or even church buildings. Some have used this verse as an argument against buying life insurance. But the correct rendering is, “Don’t be anxious about tomorrow.” Anxiety is wrong. But every Christian is responsible to think about the future—getting an education and providing for his family. And we are to trust God to work out His will as we do.

February 24

DON’T BE A SOURPUSS! (7:1)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 7:1-5

INTRODUCTION: Lemon juice is wonderful for flavoring iced tea, but a squirt of it in the eye is not so pleasant. Humor is the spice of life, but when it turns to cynical criticism it is destructive.

I. CENSORIOUSNESS (v. 1)

“Judge not.” This means, “Don’t be critical!” We are not using this term in the technical (correct) sense of weighing values and testing propositions. Without this proper critical attitude there would be no progress in science or education.

Rather, we are using *critical* in the popular sense of *censorious*. This is what Jesus was condemning—going around finding fault with others. “You’re awfully critical” isn’t usually intended as a compliment. A harsh, critical spirit is unchristian.

II. GETTING WHAT YOU GIVE (v. 2)

This entire verse can be summed up in the brief aphorism: “You get what you give!” There are a thousand applications of this in daily life. Give a smile, and you get a smile. Give a growl, and you get a growl. This is the way it usually works. Of course there are many exceptions, but this is a general rule of life. What we give to life we usually get from life—only in larger measure.

III. FINDING FAULT WITH OTHERS (vv. 3-5)

The word *mote* does not communicate very accurately today. The Greek term *karphos* means a "speck, chip, a small piece of straw, chaff, wood, etc., to denote something quite insignificant" (Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, p. 406). So it may be translated "speck" or "splinter." In contrast, *dokos* means a "beam of wood."

What Jesus was saying was this: "Why do you see that tiny fault in your brother, which is only a little speck, when your harsh, critical spirit is like a big beam in your own eye? Everybody can see it. And you are eager to get that tiny splinter out of your brother's eye" (v. 4).

Then He gave some sensible advice (v. 5). He said: "Pull that big beam out of your own eye; then you can see clearly to get the little speck out of your brother's eye."

The application is obvious. If we have a bad, critical spirit we cannot help others with their faults. Better not to say anything, if we can't show the right spirit. We can help people only when we love them. We need to wait before the Lord in prayer until He bathes our hearts in love for the other person. Then we may be able to help that one with his problems.



The Miracle of a Changed Life

TEXT: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new* (2 Cor. 5:17).

INTRODUCTION: We live in a day of rapid change. Heraclitus, an ancient Greek philosopher, said: "The only thing that doesn't change is change itself." If we look back 10 or 15 years, that which was science fiction is now reality. In medicine we are accepting today as a matter of fact what was once considered miraculous.

Yet all these miraculous changes are not as great a miracle as what God can do in the heart of a man who believes in Him.

A friend recently wrote: "Thanks a million times over for leading me to God." Men bound by fetters of sin can encounter Jesus Christ and become totally different. They are freed; selfish persons become unselfish; hard, ill-tempered people become meek and tender; confused, muddled men find peace of mind and heart.

When Christ walks into a life, He brings order out of chaos.

I. THE MIRACLE OF CHANGE

A. Something changes within.

1. He cleanses the heart. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful . . . to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

2. He absolves from all guilt (Rom. 3:21).

3. He fills the vacuum in the soul. Pascal said, "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which only God can fill through His Son, Jesus Christ." Until God fills that vacuum, there will be emptiness and lack of purpose.

This vacuum led H. G. Wells to say, at age 61, "I have no peace. All life is at the end of its tether."

It led England's poet Lord Byron to say, "My days are in the yellow leaf, the flowers and fruits of life are gone, the worm and the canker and the grief are mine alone."

It led Ralph Barton, a brilliant cartoonist, to write before ending his own life, "I have had few difficulties, many friends, great successes; I have gone from wife to wife, and from house to house, visited great countries of the world, but I am fed up with inventing devices to fill up 24 hours of the day."

B. Something changes without.

1. You leave behind the old affections and interests, old habits and desires.

2. The center of interest is turned from self to Christ.

3. The direction of your life changes. Whereas your life once centered around self and the things of this world, the direction changes to others and the things of God. You change from boredom and

emptiness, unhappiness, frustration, insincerity, uncertainty, aloneness, disillusionment, complacency, defeat, and failure to Jesus, who can turn defeat into victory, sorrow into joy, despair into faith.

II. THE CONDITIONS OF CHANGE

A. Repentance

1. Meaning of repentance: Thinking again; taking a second look; beginning again.

Illustration: A young girl artist exhibited one of her paintings. In reality it was a very poor painting. She began to boast to a great master artist, unknown to her. Then he showed her a masterpiece. She felt ashamed and humiliated and wept because she had boasted of her painting. The great master then asked her, "What are you going to do?" She replied: "I am going to begin again."

That's what repentance means. Not just being sorry we got caught, but sorry enough to turn from our sins and "begin again."

B. Faith—"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). We must believe that we are forgiven if we have confessed (1 John 1:9).

C. Obedience—Make right the wrongs in your life.

Make restitution. Roy Hendley's experience after God showed him he must make right the 10-cent candy bar he had stolen.

III. THE REALITY OF A CHANGED LIFE

A. You know whom you have believed.

1. We do not have the assurance that all our questions will be answered, but we know that our hearts are right with God.

2. We trust God for salvation. "The heart has its reasons the mind knows nothing of."

3. The blind man who came to Jesus knew one thing for sure—whereas once he was blind, now he could see.

B. You will probably make some mistakes.

C. It will not be easy. (Poem: "God Hath Not Promised Skies Always Blue.") But "The Lord thy God shall be with thee, whithersoever thou goest."

CONCLUSION: God stands ready to change your life today. But you must open the door and let Him come in. He won't force himself upon you. He will perform the greatest miracle you have ever seen—make the old disappear and transform you into a brand-new person. Then He will walk with you through life, teaching, guiding, disciplining, helping you become what He wants you to be.

DAVID NIXON

BULLETIN



BARREL

*Yes, we play with the world and complain of the Church,
And we do very little but fuss;
But when we don't take our share of its burden to bear,
Friend, it isn't the church, it is us!*

TIME

**Yes, we want to praise Him
And tell the great things He has done.
We would note His love and grace,
And sing with perfect tone.
We would even decorate
The place of worship where we've come.
We could recite a well-known verse
As we approach His throne.**

**The Master of the Universe
Looks down upon our ways.
He knows if all you sing and say
Is true and sincere praise.
The time we spend in prayer,
The praise we offer there,
Is true measure of devotion,
How much we really care.**

**Time spent in His presence—
Work and worry all shut out—
Basking in the Saviour's presence—
There He banishes all doubt.
Time for heavenly nutrition;
Time for yielding up of sin;
Time for drawing on His power,
Asking Christ to dwell within.**

Time to draw more closely to Him;
 Time for others' needs to share;
 Time for holy conversation;
 Time for fellowship in prayer.
 Time—the great Creator gives us;
 Time for heaven's grace to use;
 Time to share earth's heavy burdens;
 Time to worship as we choose.

Time—do you grasp its meaning?
 Or its value comprehend?
 God in love gave gifts from heaven—
 He has given TIME to man.
 —Kenneth L. Kern

PRAYER

Prayer is so simple,
 It is like quietly opening a door
 And slipping into the very presence
 of God.

There is the stillness
 To listen for His voice.
 Perhaps in petition,
 Or only to listen,
 It matters not—
 Just to be there
 In His presence
 Is prayer.

—Selected

If the Communists took over the
 country and trials were being held for
 the crime of being a Christian, a great
 many people would be acquitted for
 lack of evidence.

* * *

Don't boast of how much you are
 giving
 Until you've given God's part.
 The tithe comes out of the wallet;
 The offering comes from the heart.

* * *

"Dad," said a small boy, "what is a
 religious awakening?"

"A religious awakening, my son, is
 what happens at our church after the
 preacher has ended his sermon."

* * *

A man's prayers for others is a won-
 derful indication of his own prayer life.
 —ANDREW MACLAREN

*A fellow who is always declaring he's
 no fool usually has his suspicions.*

* * *

*Faultfinding in church is like pouring
 sand into a delicate machine—some
 things get injured far beyond repair.*

* * *

*Whatever your lot—why don't you try
 to build something on it?*

* * *

*A closed mind is an enigma indeed.
 Nothing ever goes in, but odd things are
 forever coming out.*

WINTER TUNE-UP SPECIAL

1. Adjust your lights so others may see
 your good works.
2. Set your timing so as to be in the
 assembly on time.
2. Adjust the brakes on your tongue.
4. Tune up your heart and have the
 peace that passes understanding.
5. Align your direction so you may steer
 up the straight and narrow road with-
 out a wreck.
6. Tune your mind so as to think pure,
 holy, noble things.
7. For a quick start and sure victory, be
 ready always to do the Lord's will.
8. Re-tire with full assurance of eternal
 life.

Letter to an aspirin company—

Dear Sir:

*You manufacture aspirins that relieve
 sufferings, colds, and fevers. The mixture
 used in your tablets makes it possible for
 people to get out of bed and fight off
 headaches, muscle spasms, and bad
 nerves. I have noticed these tablets work
 wonders on Monday, Tuesday, Wednes-
 day, Thursday, Friday, and especially on
 Saturday. But people who take them on
 Sunday seem to get no relief. They can-
 not get rid of their aches and pains and
 are not able to attend Sunday school or
 church.*

*Is it possible for you to examine your
 tablet and put in it an ingredient that
 will work on Sundays?*

—Selected



HERE AND THERE

AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
Your Publishing House

Rethinking Church Music

By Paul W. Wohlgemuth (Moody Press, 1973. \$1.95.)

This book is described as "a church and lay leader's guide to the role of music in worship and evangelism," and it achieves this aim quite well. Written simply enough to be understood by those not very literate in music, it nevertheless deals with the basic issues of music in evangelical churches. Dr. Wohlgemuth clearly delineates the objectives and goals of church music. He deals with music in communication, worship from the musician's point of view, suitability of music to text, contemporary music, and many other pertinent topics. His comments on acoustics are worth the price of the book.

In reference to the title, I am not so sure that we need to "rethink" anything. It would help immeasurably if we THOUGHT about church music at all! This would be an excellent starter.

DWIGHT UPHAUS

Discipleship

By G. Campbell Morgan (Baker Book House, 1973. 122 pp., paperback, \$1.95.)

This is a reprint of the first of the scores of books written by the distinguished English preacher G. Campbell Morgan. It is one of seven of Morgan's books which Baker Book House has recently reprinted.

Morgan points out that a disciple, literally, is one who is taught, or trained (p. 12), and that a disciple of Christ is one who permits Christ to teach him. He suggests that we are to learn certain basic lessons at the outset of the Christian life, such as the importance of character, of our influence, of a "new code of ethics," of "self-abnegation," and of charity

towards the faults of others. Then we are to advance in these basic matters as we develop in the Christian life.

The author applies the matter of discipleship in important practical ways, including the way a Christian should "disciple" Christ at home, in business, at play, in friendships, in sorrow, in joy, and as death approaches.

This book is helpful, and the Morgan heirs and others have done a service in permitting it to be reprinted.

The other Baker reprints of Morgan books include one containing six expositions of the Great Commission, *Expository Messages on the Great Commission* (\$2.45); one on Hebrews 11, *The Triumphs of Faith* (\$2.95); one on *God's Perfect Will* (\$1.50); and one on *The Practice of Prayer* (\$1.95).

J. KENNETH GRIDER

I'm OK—You're OK

By Thomas Harris (Harper, 1969. 280 pp., cloth, \$5.95.) Also paperback (Spire, Fleming Revell, \$1.95).

This book has been out for a few years, but during the past year it has been widely reviewed and read. It contains helps in the area of interpersonal relations, so important to pastors. The author, a psychiatrist, a pioneer in applied Transactional Analysis (which expects people to face up to their future, whatever the past has been), suggests that there are four types of persons, and those who can say, "I'm OK—You're OK," are the mature adult type.

The immature, dependent type of person says, "I'm not OK—You're OK"; the despairing person says, "I'm not OK—You're not OK"; and the criminal type says, "I'm OK—You're not OK." Harris believes that Jesus

was "a central historical example of 'I'm OK —You're OK'" (p. 236). He believes that the immature, childlike attitude (and other undesirable ones) is equal to original sin. He explains that "sin, or badness, or evil, or human nature—whatever we call the flaw in our species—is apparent in every person. We simply cannot argue with the endemic 'cussedness' of man" (p. 225).

J. KENNETH GRIDER

The Church in a Changing World

Edited by W. T. Purkiser (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1973. 79 pp., paper, \$1.50.)

This little symposium contains a segment of papers presented at the Nazarene Theology Conference in November, 1972. The theme was "Current Issues and Trends in the Theology of the Church." The proceeds of widely ranged reading on the part of the nine chapter-writers is in it. It contains insights on the Church in our world from biblical, theological, sociological, and pastoral perspectives. The first chapter, by Willard Taylor, is a serious theological study of the nature of the Church itself; some of the other chapters, notably the one by Alex Deasley, contribute to a theology of the Church itself. Most of the chapters have to do with the function of the Church and with its relation to the wider milieu in which it functions. The last chapter, by the book's editor, is a fine presentation of the importance of theology—so often deprecated, in part because it has in the past been far too abstract and speculative.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

What Christ Thinks of the Church

By John R. W. Stott (Eerdmans, 1972. 128 pp., paper, \$1.50.)

This book contains sermons on the messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor, found in Revelation 2—3. After general introductory remarks about the Book of Revelation, and how important it is for us of the Church to know what its Head—Jesus Christ—thinks of it, the British evangelical John Stott examines what Christ says to each of the seven churches of Asia in order to see what His design is for the Church of our day.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

Jesus the Liberator

By Allan Walker (Abingdon, 1973. Cloth, 128 pp., \$3.95.)

This book, by the forthright Methodist evangelist of Australia with such broad ministries there and elsewhere, is about ways in which Jesus, "the freest man who ever lived,"

liberates us. The author shows how Jesus frees us from sin, fear, loneliness, defeat, death, etc. He talks about how we are freed from sexual slavery, from bondage to things, from fear of the future. Walker's own insights, illustrations, scripture, a bit of poetry, are all woven together to support the thesis that those whom Christ sets free are free indeed.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

The Poor: A Culture of Poverty Or a Poverty of Culture?

Edited by J. Alan Winter (Eerdmans, 1971. Paperback, 136 pp., \$2.45.)

This book contains numerous papers given at a conference on the problems of poverty. Some of the writers believe that a child inherits the poverty of his parents because he grows up in a culture which is productive of poverty. Other chapter writers disagree with this thesis. Whoever is right on that question, and perhaps both are, poverty is a fact even in the so-called affluent U.S.A. And some ministers seem to understand precious little of the problems of the "unpeople" who look up with longing from the bottom of society. Reading such books as this is imperative for pastors, as I see the matter.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

Soundings

By Gene W. Newberry (Warner Press, 1972. Paperback, 111 pp., \$2.50.)

This is a well-written, elementary book on theology, written by the dean of the School of Theology of Anderson College—maintained by the Church of God, a holiness denomination. It contains one-or-two-page treatments of numerous matters related to Christian doctrine and the Christian life. The author shows good acquaintance with our times, and writes his brief treatments interestingly.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

The Church—The Body of Christ

By John McArthur, Jr. (Zondervan, 1973. 199 pp., paper, \$1.25.)

This book contains popularly written chapters on the Church as the body of Christ, adapted from sermons by a pastor. It shows good acquaintance with scripture, and contains much illustrative material. The author's Calvinistic doctrine protrudes, as when he says, "God actually determines salvation before the children are born" (p. 38); when he discourses on the "believer's position" (p. 46); and in his discussion of the perfecting of the Church (p. 11). Yet it is a useful, popular treatment of a subject too much neglected among Wesleyans.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

Preachers' Exchange



WANTED—The following books by Vance Havner: *Pleasant Paths, That I May Know Him, By the Way, The Best of Vance Havner*.—Rev. Danny Minnix, 400 University Dr., Mobile, Ala. 36608.

WANTED—*Fifty Years of Nazarene Missions*, Vols. I, II, III, by DeLong and M. Taylor.—Rev. Robert L. McKenzie, Rte. 1, Montrose, Ga. 31065.

WANTED—H. Orton Wiley's *God Has the Answer*, 8 chapters, and Bishop Wilson Thomas Hogue's *The Holy Spirit: A Study*.—Rev. Edward L. Bean, 3265 First St., Wellsville, N.Y. 14895.

WANTED—*The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, by Horace G. Cowan; *The Christian Sabbath*, by D. Shelby Corlett.—Rev. Rich Adams, 1638 Junction Ave., Sturgis, S.D. 57785.

FOR SALE—*Wesley's Works*, Vol. III, dated 1810; *A Manual of the Discipline*, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, dated 1870. Will accept highest reasonable offer.—Rev. A. D. Martell, P.O. Box 1065, Cleveland, Miss. 38732.



● Preaching Holiness

Why do we not hear more preaching on scriptural holiness? First in a series of articles addressed to this vital question.

● Perpetual Victory

God has a way of getting through to us so long as our hearts are honest and we desire His will above all else.

● The Pastor as Organizer

Organization, like education, is not to get us out of work, but to help us do our work better.

STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION		NEW INSTRUCTIONS (ON PAGE 11)
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AMONG OURSELVES

Ron Lush continues to challenge us with ideas for the music in our churches, and there should be more and more of this emphasis. Pastors, do you have a live, effective, spiritual music program going? If the answer is yes, then there must be someone there who is rendering a ministry for you in this vital part of our worship. Why not have him write an article for our feature, "There's Music in Your Church," and share his ideas with our readers? We need help, most of us, in this important work. A good music program can help our churches develop the kind of atmosphere we need for that "Ten-Day Prayer Meeting" for which we have been hoping and praying (p. 6). After all, Peter declared on the Day of Pentecost, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). Something wonderful was happening then, and it can happen again . . . and again . . . and again. May the Holy Spirit sweep in upon your waiting congregation in February, bringing the revival you need. Do you really want Him to come? Have you asked Him?

Yours for souls,

HELP THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE THAT GOOD FEELING OF

ACCOMPLISHMENT

Involve them in some of these
NEW EASTER PROGRAMS

New PAGEANT



GLORIOUS EASTER DAY

In keeping with their "use them or lose them" philosophy, RON and CHARLES LUSH have arranged an Easter presentation with wide participation for Kindergarten, Primary, Junior, and Junior High choirs. Includes six new songs and choral reading with simple pageantry. Performance time: approximately 30 minutes.

ME-13

60c

New DRAMA



SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN

An Easter play by ELVERA M. SMITH in eight brief scenes. As boys and girls involve themselves in recasting the biblical events of Christ's death and resurrection mentioned in the Gospels, as well as other imaginary ones, Holy Week will take on a new meaning. Performance time: approximately 30 minutes. Minimum of eight copies required.

ME-14

75c

New CANTATA



RISEN AND RETURNING

Here is a delightful musical written by BILL INGRAM that your children's choir will thoroughly enjoy singing and the whole church will appreciate hearing. Numbers include seven easy-to-learn, two-part selections with optional flute obbligato and short scripture narrations interspersed. Performance time: approximately 25 minutes.

ME-17

\$1.00

New CHILDREN'S DAY PROGRAM BUILDER No. 7

JULY 7 is CHILDREN'S DAY, and before you know it, it will be here! Start planning early by ordering this new Program Builder compiled by GRACE RAMQUIST. A fresh, varied selection of recitations, exercises, playlets, and songs for children, ages 4 to 11. 32 pages.

MP-107

75c



NOTE: For a complete line of Easter music and program materials for youth and adult consult the Lillenas Easter brochure sent to all churches or send for a FREE copy.

Examination copies available to any program director or choir leader requesting them.

**Plan NOW
for EASTER—**

APRIL 14

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