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THE

# PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

—proclaiming Christian Holiness . . .

*inside this issue:*

**ANointed TO PREACH**

*The Editor*

**DEPENDENCE UPON GOD FOR  
INDEPENDENCE DAY**

*Joseph T. Larson*

**EVERYTHING BUT A BROKEN HEART**

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**HOW TO PREVENT WORSHIP**

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**A MORATORIUM ON HOLINESS PREACHING?**

*Dennis A. Brenner*

**PREPARING AN EFFECTIVE SERMON**

*Gordon Chilvers*

# PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

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## *Anointed to Preach*



**T**HE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel” (Luke 4:18).

It was no accident that Jesus found this passage from Isaiah 61 that day when He entered the synagogue in Nazareth. It was not by mere chance that He read it. Better than any other word from the books of the prophets, this was the word that said it best. Christ was anointed to preach.

Therein lies the secret for those of us who have experienced the call to preach in our time. Jesus Christ, our supreme Example, sets the pattern for our preaching. Bold He was, and He was always candid; forceful and courageous, yet never without compassion. He was interesting and attractive enough that the children pushed in close and listened to every word He spoke. Dynamic also, as suggested by the simple explanation of those officers who were sent to arrest Him and returned without Him: “Never man spake like this man” (John 7:46).

Anointed to preach!

Whatever qualities there are that can make the difference between good preaching and the ordinary kind, this one must stand high on the list. Of course, good preaching is characterized by adequate preparation. John Henry Jowett used to say preparation is a long process. The best sermons are not just made, they grow. The apt analogy is not that of the factory, but the garden.

Good preaching always indicates a clear purpose. To aim at nothing in particular and prove you are an excellent shot does not really help God get His message across to your listeners. A clear purpose helps the preacher add the materials that contribute to his goal, and delete those which are beside the point and irrelevant.

Good preaching must also be interesting. If the listeners do not pay attention, they will not be persuaded to do anything else the preacher may challenge them to do. What irony there is in the paperback novels with their trivia appearing to be suspenseful and exciting, while the

Bible, with the most dramatic material in all of human history, seeming to be dull and uninteresting in the way it is preached.

Good preaching, of course, must be understandable. What would be the point in using words and sentences if they mean little or nothing to those who hear them? Winston Churchill, whose credentials as a speaker would not be questioned, said: "Short words are the best, and the old words when short are best of all."

A student in Claremont wrote to his friends in Phoenix about his seminary education: "And Jesus said to them, 'Whom do you say that I am?' And they replied, 'You are the eschatological manifestation of the ground of our being; the *kerygma* manifested in conflict and decision in the humanizing process.' And Jesus said, 'What?'"

Your editor needed help from an interpreter when he preached last December to people who understood Zulu but not English. But may it please God that he needs no interpreter when he preaches to people in English—the kind they can understand.

By all means, good preaching must be Christ-centered. Paul said, "We preach Christ," and this is the criteria of all preaching. Our listeners are not sitting there saying, "We would like something clever," or, "We would hear some good advice this morning." Their hearts are crying, "We would see Jesus!"

Whatever else you may conclude, you know that good preaching is always biblical. It may not be expository, in the narrow definition concerned with the fine points of sermon construction. But it is biblical. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, pastor where G. Campbell Morgan once preached, gave 60 sermons from the Sermon on the Mount without repetition. John Riley, while pastor of College Church in Nampa, Ida., delivered a series of 39 sermons from the prophet Jeremiah. Such was the interest of his listeners that one remarked after some time had elapsed since he heard a message from Jeremiah, "Wonder what happened to our old friend Jeremiah? I miss him lately!"

But of all the qualities of real preaching, the anointing of the Holy Spirit is the most indispensable. Anointed to preach! Indispensable, and also indefinable. How can you describe it to one who has never experienced it for himself?

The late J. B. Chapman said it was like the Holy Spirit "putting His thumb in my back letting me know He is right there, He is with us, He is helping us." Donald G. Miller, in his book *Fire in My Mouth*, describes it as "an event taking place," and that it is. God is speaking, and He speaks through human instruments. It is the miracle of anointing. It makes the preacher's words more than mere words. It means the message is God's Word.

Like the Christ we preach, our message is both human and divine. We prepare, we know our purpose, we use all our ransomed powers to make it interesting and understandable. We present God's inspired Word. We preach Christ.

But the overpowering element in our preaching, and the quality which dwarfs all others by comparison, is the divine aspect. It is the unction and anointing of the Holy Ghost upon us. Our prayer each week should be that we may say with Jesus, "He hath anointed me to preach."

Americans who celebrate their independence  
this month need to remember what it  
really means

## *Dependence upon God for Independence Day*

**By Joseph T. Larson\***

**A**BRAHAM LINCOLN in his Gettysburg address said, "That this nation under God might have a new birth of freedom." This implies our humble dependence upon God for freedom. We need to affirm our dependence upon God as a people. The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, did not declare that the United States had become independent of God—but rather dependent upon Him.

A grade school lad once gave an essay and said in part, "America is the place where we can do as we please." No, America is the land where we may learn to do as God pleases.

Too many in our nation have declared their independence of the Bible, of moral standards, of the family altar, and of other good customs in the American way of life. Many are seeking their own ways in pleasure, in business, in society, and in material things, ignoring the authority of God.

America needs to return to God, to Christ as Saviour, to the verities of the Bible, and to Christlike living. America needs to learn to dwell under the protecting shadow of His wings (Ps. 91:1).

Americans need a faith that will

save them from fear of their enemies, making them truly free under the American flag and under God. If democracy shall survive, we must embrace all that for which Christ and Christianity stands.

The late General J. J. Pershing said, "The foundation of America rests upon Christianity and our democratic way of life; it is the salt of the earth and the light of the world."

True Americans should sense their responsibility to God and to other citizens. This is the highest form of service. We cannot lead other nations until our own house is set in order. Revival fires over our nation will become a reality if men will repent, seek God's will, and truly worship Him. Tyrants and political corruption cannot long endure if revival comes to the nation. Our prayers, our faith, and godly living will help statesmen to be true to God and their fellow citizens.

Living faith in the Bible and in Jesus Christ as Saviour will bring new life and new hope, enabling Americans to solve many weighty problems, domestic and national. Jesus Christ invites youth and adults to seek His wisdom for daily guidance.

Many ungodly persons will defeat our nation, if allowed to gain control, unless these men are won for Christ in our generation.

\*Tucson, Ariz.

There is no greater failure than to fail God in His purposes for our nation and the world. George Washington in Valley Forge dared not fail God, but suffered with his soldiers in the bitter cold of winter with other privations. Abraham Lincoln dared not fail God in the crisis of 100 years ago, praying sincerely for freedom of the slaves and the preservation of the Union. That prayer was heard.

America needs a vision which Isaiah had, when he said, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5). He saw God high and lifted up and His train filled the temple. The vision of a great God, a great

purpose, and the possibilities of victory over every foe, should stir every citizen to the highest loyalty to God and to our nation. We need a revived vision of what God can do for our people. Such a revival based upon contriteness of heart will bring life, liberty, and true happiness for everyone.

May our sincere prayer be:

*"Our fathers' God, to Thee,  
Author of liberty,*

*To Thee we sing.*

*Long may our land be bright  
With freedom's holy light;*

*Protect us by Thy might,  
Great God, our King!"*

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Now, more than ever before, we need anything else but a moratorium on holiness preaching

## *A Moratorium on Holiness Preaching?*

**By Dennis A. Brenner\***

**P**AUL WROTE to Timothy some power-packed words that should be reemphasized in our day: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own

purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. 1:7-9).

A fellow pastor recently commented that he felt the churches were a bit "straightlaced" and that we would do better to concern ourselves with the simple gospel that Jesus Christ saves sinners. He went on to say, "There is too much controversy about holiness preaching, in regard to conduct and practice."

Does this mean that our people do not need a deeper life in the Spirit that follows subsequent to regeneration? And if we do realize the need,

\*Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Lansing, Ill.

how are they to seek it if it is not preached? Our congregations need a guide in things spiritual. They need the Word from someone—supernatural, superhuman, divine. Yes, man as a sinner needs divine revelation to bring him to repentance, but how much more the regenerate man needs divine revelation and a cleansing of the heart of double mindedness.

No preacher in his right mind has attempted to handle the Word without seeking the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We depend upon the Spirit to guide us into all truth. Then why not tell our people they too must seek a life guided by the Spirit—not by self?

In a day when holy lives are noticeably void in our churches and on church boards, we need more than ever a voice from the pulpit, a voice directed by God—dead to self, and awake to the gentle leadings of the Holy Spirit. A voice not of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind.

Are we guilty of being ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, who made himself of no reputation, but took upon himself the identification of a servant doing completely the Father's will? This was the apostle's concern for Timothy. Ashamed men are weak men. Ashamed men have no vital influence on people or principles of darkness about them.

It was in Miami, June 18, 1972, that Nazarenes were challenged by their General Superintendent V. H. Lewis that this was "The Time for Truth." He reminded his listeners that if an earlier generation saw as their sole reason for existence the proclamation of the doctrine of full salvation, then dare we miss our golden opportunity in our day to preach holiness?

In the pressures to expand the borders of the church, are we going to become careless enough to take in

members before they are ready? Can we say we have really expanded the church when to do so in breadth we are sacrificing depth? When we take members in who are neither in the experience of sanctification, *nor* seeking it, we are *not* building; we are laying seeds of destruction.

A moratorium on holiness preaching may give us a rapid growth, but I question how long it will give a sustained growth. There is "an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace," and if we exist apart from that "calling," I question our reason for existence.

We must seek every means to give to every man the gospel in the same measure as we have received it, and in *seeking* every man, we must not forget the *same measure*. The full gospel is the message of heart holiness. Even John the Baptist declared to those who came for baptism unto repentance the need of being baptized with the fire and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11).

In the midst of the energy crisis we, as holiness preachers, need to remember there is no shortage with God. In fact, the promise is to those with the Holy Spirit, that they shall have power: power to live a godly life in an affluent society. Sometimes the more affluent we become, the less holy we are. We need power to trade the "good life" for the "godly life"—power to keep both success and God's Word in perspective.

If we build the Church in our day we will do it with holy hearts, with clean hands, with pure motives. Let no one fool us; this type of individual—be it pastor or people—will seek a sanctified heart. This will be the result of a holiness message by a preacher that believes it's time for truth—holy truth.

Gentlemen, let's be holiness preachers!



Making the Scriptures relevant is the primary task of preaching, and there are steps toward this goal which every pastor can follow

## *Preparing an Effective Sermon*

**By Gordon Chilvers\***

**I**F OUR SERMON is doctrinally correct, is that all that matters? Can any congregation expect more from us than that we are accurate in all that we say?

Yes! Even though the basic requirement for any sermon is doctrinal accuracy, that is not enough if our sermon is to fulfill its true function.

Many people today have horizons that are black with outsize problems. Their knowledge of the Bible is confined to some popular stories and a few statements of doctrine. They have little time or energy to find out what God has to say on these problems. They rely on their preachers to show them God's solution. It must be a satisfying solution, and it must be stated in a way that they can appreciate.

This is where good form comes in. Our sermon must have the shape that will enable our hearers to assimilate the truth more easily and live it more completely. A dinner of fine food is always welcome. Yet how much more we value it and gain our needed nourishment from it when it is well cooked and attractively served. The Word of God, which is our Authority for preaching, is spiritual food, and

is described as "milk" and "strong meat."

While many methods abound, and some suit one person better than another, any good method is better than none at all. Here is one that has been found valuable by one preacher and so could be useful to others.

Quite rightly, congregations stress that they expect the preaching they hear to be relevant to them in 1974. Their needs differ from those of men 50 years ago, so they expect the sermons to be different from what they were 50 years ago.

As we consider a section of Scripture, whether one verse or an extended passage, we find a statement or an incident that reveals a principle of God's dealings with men. We ask ourselves in what circumstances this would be useful. We then look for a current problem to which it will give an adequate solution. We choose a problem that could well be in the minds of some members of the congregation who will hear the sermon.

We then know our goal. We state clearly, in a single sentence if possible, how God meets the situation that is the subject of our sermon, a situation in which a hearer finds himself. It will assist us in our continued preparation if we write out that goal. It is the theme of our sermon. Writing

\*Norwich, England.

it out will give us a guide in selecting what material to put in and what to leave out.

We are then in a good position to make our introduction, in which we show how our specific question is answered by a particular passage of scripture. We can then state the problem in current terms, outlining it as fully as will show each hearer that we understand the problem and see it from his point of view.

This type of sermon has several distinct advantages. The hearer will see at once that our sermon could be relevant to him. His attention will be focused. Also, his interest in it will be aroused, and that is always a tremendous advantage to the preacher.

Further, this method will answer the questions that sometimes come before a listener. Much has happened since the Bible was written. Space travel has changed the face of the world as well as of individual lives. Has the Bible anything worthwhile to say to the contemporary scene? By using a modern problem for his introduction, the preacher will indicate that the Bible is not antiquated, but is as up-to-date as the news bulletin he hears.

Again, by this method we shall stress that our sermons are based on scripture. Our hearers will learn that this is our Authority for what we say. We are not relying on our own wisdom, however "profound," but upon what God has to say to us in the Bible.

This emphasizes that the Scriptures, properly interpreted and applied, are alone essential as our Guide. They are sufficient to teach us God's will for us and the blessings we enjoy in Jesus Christ.

Then we seek to show from our selected passage what God has to say on this problem. To do this adequately requires a period of concentrated thinking and hard study. This

demands diligence and perseverance, but we do nothing that is more worthwhile or fitting to our calling as preachers.

We begin our study by reading one or more English versions. Few of us can handle the original languages as well as we can our English versions.

Although we usually read the King James Version publicly, and take our texts from it, we find the British Revised Version, the American Standard Version, or the Revised Standard Version to be better for study. These versions are best as a basis for careful and exact preparation. Modern paraphrases can often throw light on a phrase, but we must begin with the translations that are closest to the original.

Reading the selected passages several times is an essential foundation for the building of our sermon. Through this repeated reading of the passage, we hear God speaking to us clearly. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan tells us that he often read a passage 40 to 50 times before he prepared his sermon from it. This reading will enable us to understand the context as well as the text. Knowing the context is essential, for as Charles Haddon Spurgeon reminded us years ago, a text without a context is only a pre-text.

When the preacher has the essential knowledge, a study of the text in the original language should follow. By the use of Hebrew or Greek lexicons, concordances, word studies, and grammars, the preacher will be able to gain a clear understanding of the different words used in the passage and the grammatical meaning of the sentences.

Every preacher should try to master the Greek alphabet. It takes only an hour or two and has value which is far beyond the time involved in learning it.

The preacher without even this

knowledge can gain enormously from the use of a good concordance such as Strong's *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. He can start from the word in the English version and find out from Strong the essentials for expounding the passage he has selected. He can also get considerable help from Young's *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*. This book has indexes showing how each word is translated in Old and New Testaments. This gives a clear idea of the emphasis a word is likely to have in the passage being studied.

Having done this essential work, the preacher is ready to consult commentaries. Following this order will prepare the preacher to read his commentaries with discrimination.

Conscientious preparation will yield a wealth of information. Most of this can be used profitably, but some will have to be discarded. The simple test for inclusion is whether the information helps to carry on the theme to its proper conclusion.

The preacher then proceeds to the main part of his sermon. The material will need to be divided into various sections. Each section will have as its purpose the explaining of the theme and the development of the argument. It leads from the introduction to the conclusion in stages easy for each hearer to follow.

Care is needed to see that the sermon has a logical and progressive course. The sermon must progress steadily to its conclusion, or the hearer's attention will be lost on the way to the goal. The number of these sections will depend on the subject and what sort of treatment the preacher is giving to the passage. Three is a useful number, and the great British preacher Alexander Maclaren could find a three-pronged fork in any text. Yet three is not a necessity. Robertson of Brighton needed only two, while C. H. Spur-

geon often had more than three.

More important is that these divisions arise naturally from the passage selected. They must never be forced, nor added for the sake of completeness.

What sort of headings should be given to these divisions? Some prefer alliterations, as it assists memory. Headings are single words, each beginning with the same letter for at least one main word. Using an extension of this idea, the last word in the heading has the same termination, such as *tion* or *ing*. This is all right if it does not sound artificial.

The writer prefers to use propositions for the divisions. The advantage of this is that it makes it easier for the preacher to see if the divisions lead naturally from one section to the next, and on to the conclusion. Also, these propositions can stand in their own rights and say something to the hearer.

Should the preacher announce his headings? Usually it is good to do so. This enables the hearers to know what is coming next. More listeners than the preacher realizes have difficulty in following close reasoning. Announced headings will help them see the logical argument more easily. If the propositions say something worthwhile, hearers will remember them when the details of the sermon have been forgotten.

Each of these divisions should be subdivided and given headings. This will help check the preacher if he is wandering from the theme. The characteristics of good headings apply also to the subheadings—though few preachers will decide to announce them.

Having done this work carefully, the preacher can prepare the skeleton of his sermon consisting of headings and subheadings. It is certainly good to write this out fully. Ought the preacher write out the whole ser-

mon? In his early days, yes, as far as time permits. It is a good discipline. It also stimulates thoughts and avoids the possibility of his saying the same thing each Sunday with only the text varied.

Few preachers have time to write a whole sermon each week. Some write out a different paragraph or two or important parts such as the first and last sentences.

Consulting again one or two standard commentaries at this point is essential. The preacher can compare his interpretation with recognized authorities on the passage. There is still much light to break out from God's Word, and God may give spe-

cial illumination.

The sermon must ascend to its climax or it will be like the tide that wastes itself in the sand. The climax is the goal which the preacher had before he began his sermon.

The final paragraph is the preacher's challenge to his hearers. The object of the sermon is to move them to action. He wants them to begin a different sort of life, at least in one section of their lives.

Our hearers will never tire of such sermons. They will captivate and hold attention, which is the first step towards their being informed, guided, and strengthened by our preaching.

## *Criterion of Success*

Addressing a class of theological students, a minister once said, "Young men, I wish I could say something that would deliver you from the limited ambitions which I cherished when I was a theological student. In those days I wanted only to be a personal success. I wanted to rise to the top of my profession, become the minister of a big and influential church, preach to great congregations, receive a large salary, and be proclaimed as a man of importance. I wanted to have the right kind of people watching me and saying, 'Well done! Isn't he wonderful!'"

"Well, these ambitions have all been fulfilled, but what have they accomplished beyond feeding my own little ego? And believe me, that kind of food becomes tame and tasteless.

"Someday, young men, you will be forced to realize that the Christian minister has only one criterion of success. Have I reconciled men to God? Have I healed their broken bodies and souls? Have I changed their lives? Have I helped to make the kingdom of God a reality in the Church and in the world? These are not our works. These are the mighty works of Christ. It only matters that we believe in Him and yield our lives to Him in faith and obedience."

*Submitted by J. C. Mitchell*  
Liverpool, England

Only the Lord Jesus Christ can accomplish this desperately needed work, and He needs sensitive men and women through whom He can do it

## *Everything but a Broken Heart*

**T**HE PROPRIETOR of a welding shop displayed this catchy sign: "We can mend everything but a broken heart."

Like much modern advertising, the claim is boastful enough to make us wary. Yet it must be admitted that man's mechanical ingenuity is a marvel. A good weld can be stronger than the original metal. And clearly the last four words of the ad contain honest truth.

When auto makers developed a transmission that shifted its own gears, mechanics had to go to school for weeks to learn enough about its complicated insides so that they could repair it. By dint of hard work some of them succeeded. What man can make, man can mend—if he tries hard enough. But man did not make himself. Transmission experts don't pretend to mend broken hearts.

The car owner with heart broken by life's disasters may drive away from the shop with a machine well

mended but with his own inner hurt still throbbing, wrenching his inmost being, robbing him of all joy. The hurt, indeed, may be so poignant that it produces reckless driving and lands him in the hospital.

Of course the doctors and nurses who attend him there are experts, too. They have studied much longer than the transmission men have, because the human body is more complicated than any machine—so complicated that many things about it still baffle the experts. And from a physical standpoint this particular case is comparatively simple: a fractured hip, a lacerated scalp, and not-too-serious internal injuries.

They set to work with anesthetic and scalpel, with a metal pin and skilful sutures, and patch him up admirably. During the days that follow, natural processes finish the healing. In due time the patient is dismissed, his body whole again. But alas, the mended man leaves with his heart as broken as ever. The doctors, if the ethics of their profession permitted, might well advertise as the welder did: "We can mend everything but a broken heart."

The unhappy fellow, defrauded by business associates he had trusted, falsely accused, deserted by his wife, criticized by his children, harassed by financial losses, finally goes to a psychiatrist. Unfortunately, the fact



**by**  
**Allen Bowman**

Professor  
Marion College  
Marion, Ind.

that the practitioner rejects the Christian faith is of no significance to him. Is not this specialist even more highly trained than the average physician? Is he not skilled in probing the inner recesses of the mind?

To this expert the despairing man pours out the secrets of his past life. He gets temporary relief. But he finds that he must go back again and again. Finally, with debts piled higher than ever and unhappiness still corroding his personality, he sadly concludes that even psychiatry has definite limitations. The psychiatrists might well confess, "We can't mend a broken heart."

What now? If the brokenhearted man only realized it, there is one more person he should consult. In fact he should have consulted him years earlier, before blow after blow fell upon his defenseless head. That person is the man of God. The sufferer needs a specialist in matters of the immortal spirit—the expert who can introduce him to his Maker.

Jesus Christ announced one day to His hometown folks the nature of the commission He had received from His Father. Among its various phases was this: "He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted" (Luke 4:18).

A housewife who had suffered serious mental and emotional troubles since her early teens was told by her psychiatrist: "You will just have to accept yourself as an emotional cripple." The words seemed like the crack of doom. With dismay she reflected on her unhappy childhood and still more unhappy adolescence and adulthood. Must she look forward to nothing except misery?

Then someone led her to Christ. Possessed of a new hope, she sought God further and by faith appropriated the fullness of the Holy Spirit. In the weeks that followed she wept many tears. But they were not tears of despair. True, she seemed to be

living over again the unhappy years of her past—the hurts she has suffered, the hurts she had inflicted on others, the corroding fears. Yet with every memory she confessed her fault in the matter and implored God to forgive her and the others involved. The Spirit himself was helping her infirmities (Rom. 8:26).

One evening the process came to a climax. In a fresh flood of tears the penitent drew very near to God—and suddenly the storm cleared away. There was a great calm. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps. 34:18). The Lord Jesus had healed her.

"He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted." Yet there are ministers who seem unaware of how deep-seated man's need is. Their social gospel, they believe, will somehow heal mankind. They are busy with reform, confident that more organized effort and better legislation will end racial discrimination, poverty, and war. Their position is quite comparable to that of the welder: "We can mend everything but a broken heart"—or can they? What a pity!

In reality God has called you as His ministering servant to a task much more fundamental. A correct stance as to the ills of society is important, but far more important is the work of bringing heartbroken people to the Great Physician. As a minister of the gospel you are a practitioner of much greater value to society than the repairman, the physician, the psychiatrist, or the reformer. Valuable though these men are, their skills cannot bring peace and solace to the human heart.

Only the Lord Jesus can accomplish that desperately needed work. And He is looking for sensitive men and women through whom He can do it.

True worship directs attention to Christ as the Saviour and Source of life, without stuffy dignity or cheap nonsense

## *How to Prevent Worship*

**S**OME OVERLY EAGER leaders of public religious services remind me of the super-conscientious teacher at a grade school who called the children together during recess and lined them up in rows, then made a pep speech expressing her desire that they be happy and have a good time in their play. One little fellow, who before she came had been having the time of his life, muttered, "We were playing great until she came and organized it."

A common mistake of the inexperienced leader is to be so anxious that the service not drag or get into a rut that he structures it to death. He tries to plan in advance every move and every moment, almost to the point of telling how many words can be included in prayer. Or, he makes the opposite mistake striving so hard for spriteliness and "spontaneity" that he wears himself and everyone else out. He talks about "freedom" until he chokes it with gush.

This is the mark of the amateur. Such wordiness amuses and confuses people, but does not lead them into a real worship experience.

One layman writes: "I'm seeking to adjust to a new pastor who is so bent on achieving 'freedom' that I, at least, have a hard time worshipping. I have the notion that in order to worship, you have to think about God and not about what people are doing all the time."

When in a misguided bid for excitement and novelty, something new is constantly being sprung, and the order is turned topsy-turvy every service, until no one knows what is going to happen next, there may be interest (of sorts), but there certainly will not be worship. Worship, in which people personally sense the presence of God and are in personal contact with Him, is impossible in the midst of a three-act play. This is doubly true when the worshipper himself is supposed to have a role in the play and doesn't know in advance just exactly where he is to stand and what he is to say. He will be so busy watching others and following cues that before he knows it the hour will be gone without any sense of worship seeping into his restless spirit. The only thing that will have been achieved will be the avoidance of boredom. It is not so certain that there equally will have been the avoidance of irritation.

J. B. Chapman had a sounder insight when he said that if people were to worship God they had to be minimally conscious of the form and structure, which meant that there had to be some regularity and dependability in the form which caused the worshippers to be able to forget



by  
**Richard S. Taylor**

Director of Continuing  
Education, Department of  
Education and the  
Ministry

it and still participate in it. In other words, there needed to be a sense of the familiar. Only then could there be that comfortable feeling of relaxation that makes worship possible.

More recently, Keith Walkins, professor of worship and parish ministry, Christian Seminary, Indianapolis, made a plea for a direct and simple order of service, with extensive

reading from the Bible. He advised against bizarre, novel fads, and anything which was fake and phony. There could be relaxed good grace without either stuffy dignity or cheap nonsense. Above all, the service must direct the attention to Christ as the Saviour and Source of life.\* To such advice we could profitably listen.

\*Article in the *Christian*, September 10, 1972.

---

## The Difference About Love

T. D. Hersey\*

**To Preach:** *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am only an empty noise.*\*\* The ability to communicate with others, to impress them deeply in their emotions, to convince them widely in their thinking, and to influence them fully in their living—but without love. The fluency of oratory and the passion of empathy, the rhythm of poetry, and the harmony of song—but without love—brings an empty message with no meaning that produces response to life.

**To Teach:** *Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not love, I am nothing.* The capacity to receive all revealed truth, to perceive all concealed truth, to comprehend the whole of all truth, and to pass it on to others; by interpreting with simplicity, expounding with plainness, and applying with all thoroughness to life—but without love—fails to bring understanding of truth or its purpose to life.

**To Reach:** *And though I have all*

*faith, so I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.* To remove mountains is to overcome all impossibilities, to provide for all necessities, and to promote all blessedness in life—but without love? Have I done anything at all to make life worthwhile?

**To Serve:** *Though I give all that I have to feed the hungry, and burn out my life with passion for others, and have not love, I have gained nothing.* To channel all benefits and values to others, to transmute all detriments and reverses into wholesomeness by sacrificial living, to practice constant involvement in the concerns of others in satisfactory giving—but without love! What gain at all to myself or to others?

Love cannot be substituted by the various religious activities intended to bring significance to life. Without love, no religious activity, by any discipline or application to life, can bring the expected results. Yet love is not the vital ingredient to make the difference between success and failure. For were we to say “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels” and *have all love* that

\*Moravia, Ia.

\*\*Translations by author.



could be considered vital to my preaching, teaching, reaching, and serving, it is not enough. I remain an empty noise. I am still nothing. I have gained nothing.

Because the ultimate of love cannot be contained within the limitations of my life. But does not the possession of love to the full extent of my limitations make possible a useful and effective life? The answer is no. Does that mean that all religious effort is in vain? The answer is yes. Then are we without hope of attaining any good in life? The fulfillment of that hope is possible on an entirely different approach to life.

For it is not what I have or do with love that makes the difference in life. It is what I dedicate of myself through love to God. The fullness of love is too much for me to contain; therefore I must yield myself to the infinity of love to attain the wholeness and fulfillment of life, as a fish in the infinity of water or a bird in the air.

Whether I speak . . . or am completely dumb in the expression of truth and love from God, if I am totally subjective to love, I do not control it but it controls me, and makes my life a blessing. Love then continually overflows my life as living water to refresh the souls of men. Love is that constant radiation of healing light from God through my life to others.

Whether I know all things or nothing at all, whether I am able for all things or helpless, is not important, if only love has complete control of my life.

What then is love? Love is that which is beyond my capacity to contain or control. Love brings me into beneficial harmony with God and others. Then will my life of service bring praise to God and blessing to others.

## Practical Points

*that make a difference*

### The Pastor's Thoughtfulness Made Me Feel like a King!

Dear Son:

I felt like a king! The pastor knew that we were leaving for a month's vacation, and you know what he did?

First, he called over the telephone and wished us *bon voyage!* After telling us that they would miss us, he remarked that they were happy that we could get away and promised to pray for our safety and rest.

If that wasn't enough, the pastor listed those who were on vacation in the bulletin, and again wished us well. You know what that did to me? He didn't create any guilt feelings about my being gone. I felt that he was interested in my welfare, and I left with a great spirit of appreciation and love.

By the way, though the pastor said nothing, I left my tithe and saw to it that my church responsibilities were taken care of. I could do no less.

Now our pastor is smart. He knows that our vacationing may leave a leadership vacuum for a while, but he handled it so well that *I can hardly wait to get back!*

Son, I have heard men whine and cry about people leaving, and create such an atmosphere as to defeat the very things that the church was trying to accomplish. Your optimism and appreciation of your people will bring them running back for more. Have a good day Sunday!

Love,  
*Dad*

# *Pushed Outside the Wall*

By a layman\*

**T**ODAY MY PASTOR pushed me outside the wall. I had come to church to worship the Lord and join His people in fellowship with Him, but my pastor spoke to us during the whole service as if we were the “world” and needed to come to the Lord.

I love evangelism and believe it is the heart of our aim and purpose, but even steak becomes unappetizing if nothing else is ever served.

Must we go to some other church to worship? To school to learn our Bibles? When every service is directed to the unsaved we are robbed of worship and learning.

To evangelize with effect we must also both worship and learn. Ten minutes of worship cannot sustain an hour's evangelism, and not many men can shift gears in the middle of a service. Leading a congregation in true worship is every bit as fine an art as lining an altar with seekers. Teaching is different from both worship and evangelism, and Christians need to learn their Bibles.

Church people need to know what to expect in advance. There is preparation needed for both pulpit and pew for each type of service, and lack of homework leaves few results. The idea of switching services so people never know what to expect is good entertainment but poor business. When a store has a good product it does not mind advertising it in ad-

vance; people who come for groceries make poor customers for a new car.

I am starving to worship with a group of fellow Christians, and my pastor keeps pushing us outside the wall—and inviting us back in. I am hungry to learn, and the preacher is busy getting the same souls born again. One soul born again is of little value unless he can worship and praise God intelligently. No one would ever grow up if a mother was so busy giving birth to babies that she had no time to feed and instruct those she already had. One preacher told me that evangelism was all the worship and learning he needed, but many of us are different.

No preacher should ever leave the Bible school and come into the church; he should bring the Bible school with him and let us sit where he has sat—to learn and worship. Then we could all go into the world and evangelize with power. When the church becomes only a mission field, then both pulpit and pew become lonely and hungry. When we have seen the Lord, high, lifted up, powerful, and when we have heard conversations from heaven, then we will say, “Here am I, send me.”

So we'll go to church again tonight. I cannot tell what it will be. The bulletin says “evening service” and that can mean anything. One thing is certain—we will all be pushed outside the wall and invited to “come back” again.

\*Name withheld.



## Christlikeness in the Pulpit

Henry Fielding (1707-54) wrote, "There is not in the universe a more ridiculous, nor a more contemptible animal, than a proud clergyman."

Immediately one can picture what Mr. Fielding had in mind: the overstuffed, pompous, stiff shirt who overpronounces his words, underplays his faults, carries his nose high in the sky, and balances his black book with a condescending air of snobbery.

Unfortunately, the pulpit can become a display box for human personalities. The holy desk can prove a platform for those who yearn to call attention to themselves. In what other situation are the people forced to listen to a monologue without interruption, whether they like it or not? If they want to get to heaven, they know they have to worship. And so sit there they will, having to listen to the man behind the lectern.

That lectern is a perfect spot for the one who would glory in his own self; in short, in his own haughtiness. He can rant. He can rave. And in some instances, he can try to brag about one venture or another.

He can use the pulpit to show off his wardrobe—new suits, ties, shirts.

Even more subtly, the minister can exert his authority to the point of preaching forever and ever. Showing his pride in long-winded preaching? Can be, sure. How he loves to hear his own voice!

But then there was Jesus—carpenter, natural, lowly, stopping for the children to listen to their chatter. No one would ever have had the chance to call Him a "contemptible animal," that "proud clergyman."

The word *humility* has almost worn itself out, supposedly. Then perhaps we should be careful in its use when referring to the men of the cloth. But one could never go wrong or be misunderstood if he were to challenge the clergy to be Christlike, emptied of false pride in the calling.

The plaque on the pulpit top reads correctly when it states: "Sir, we would see Jesus."

\*Pastor, Fishkill, N.Y.



# NAZARENE



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Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission

EARL C. WOLF, *Executive Director*  
HAROLD O. PARRY, *Office Editor*

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## FANTASY GAMES



**W**E WERE ATTENDING the annual Conference of the Bishops and General Superintendents of the holiness churches. In one of our sessions we met in a room recently vacated by another group. A large blackboard which they had used remained in the room. On it was the outline of the agenda which the group had followed. It began with "Brainstorming." The fourth heading was "Fantasy Games." I had no idea what subject was under consideration or how the game was played, but the topic caught both my eye and my imagination.

Could it be that too much of our ecclesiastical activity is actually nothing more than "fantasy games"? Do we unconsciously tend to see situations as we wish they were rather than as they actually are? In reality, fantisizing is falsifying. It is a deadly peril, as is every form of dishonesty, be it deliberate or unintentional.

Take the matter of financing the church, for example. How often we labor under the misapprehension that nearly all our people are giving maximum support to the church! Based on this false premise, we tailor our budget to the amount of money which is being received, and compliment the congregation on its faithful stewardship. This is too often a "fantasy game." A careful study of the number of constituent families and the amount of their tithe based on a reasonable estimate of average income for the area will dispel such illusions. Without being harshly judgmental, these facts should be presented to the church as a biblical basis of Christian stewardship. This minimum figure plus a generous amount of offerings should be held up as the norm. An unapologetic emphasis upon both the duty and the privilege of the paying of tithes and the giving of offerings is part of the preacher's responsibility. Silence at this point is no favor to our people.

A corollary truth concerns the dispensing of church income. It is possible to play "fantasy games" about our generosity to

*Continued on page 16b*

causes outside the local church. Can we honestly demonstrate concern for others by spending 80 percent to 90 percent of our total income on ourselves? Presbyterian Robert Hudnut states: "A precise indicator of a church's success is how much of its money it gives away. Churches are in business to lose money. A church's profit is its loss" (*The Sleeping Giant*, page 65). Ten percent for World Evangelism is a base minimum. Budgets for Home Missions and Education are the floor, not the ceiling.

And just as it is with tithing, the more we give, the more will be given back to us. Luke 6:38 is for churches as well as individuals. "Give to others and God will give to you. . . . The measure you use for others is the one God will use for you" (TEV).<sup>\*</sup> This is no "fantasy game"! Pastors whose churches have broken through the "minimum barrier" on benevolences will testify to this truth. There is more for salaries and other important local budget needs when we go all out for others.

<sup>\*</sup>From the *Today's English Version of the New Testament*. Copyright © American Bible Society, 1966.

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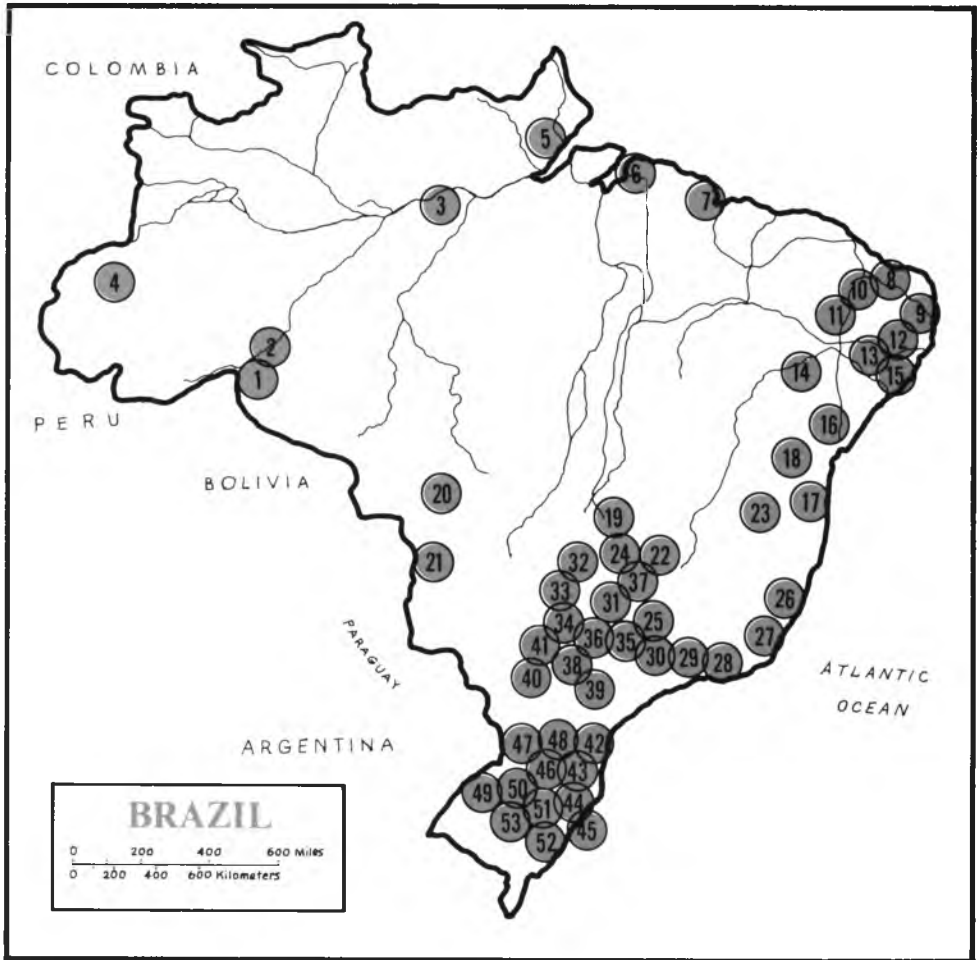
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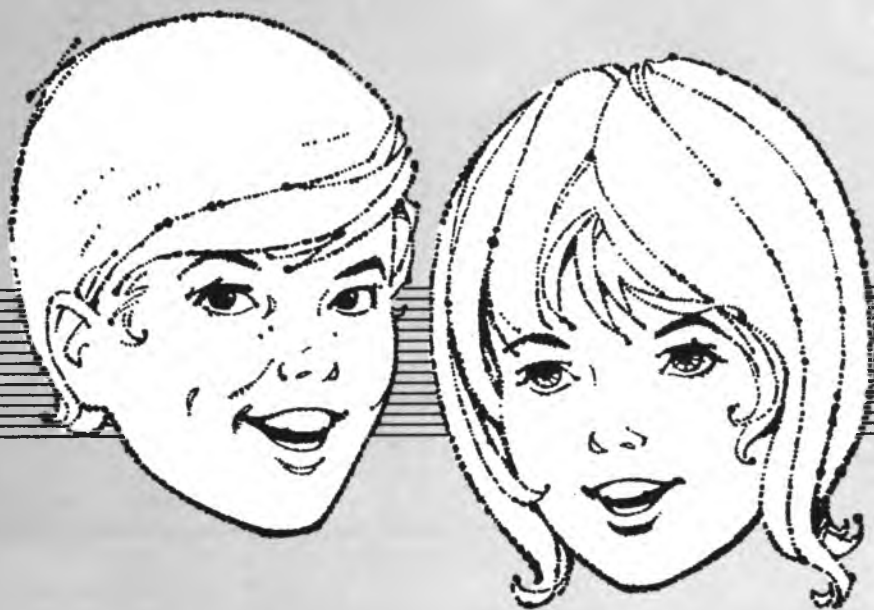


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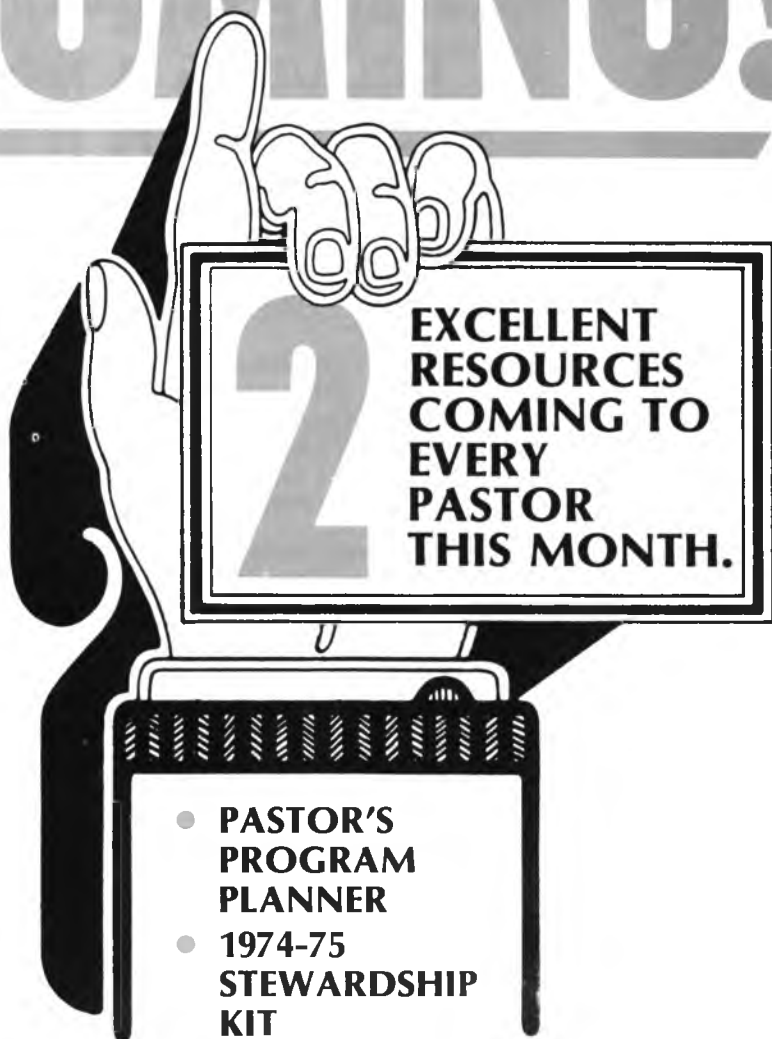
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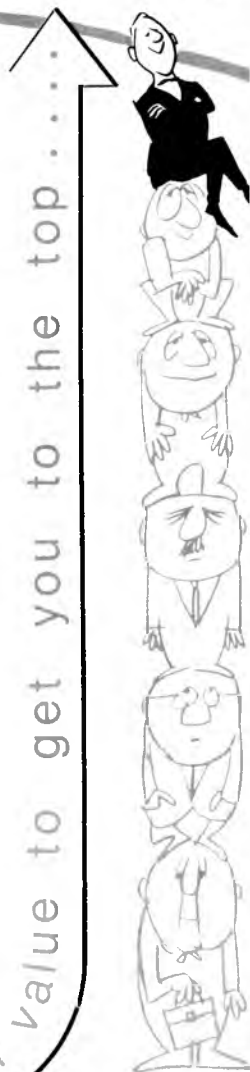
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## ***Retirement Is Exciting***

**By Wesley C. Brough\***

After 41 years, and due to the health of my wife, I felt it best to take retirement. God had provided a beautiful, new home on a hill facing the Pacific Ocean. After sitting there and watching the waves wash up on the sandy beach for three months, we became fed up with retirement. We went to the Lord in prayer, asking if there wasn't something we could do.

The last three churches we pastored were small churches, so we know the burdens and problems of a small church. After much prayer we let it be known that we would go to any small church that couldn't afford a full-time evangelist for just our entertainment and whatever they could afford to pay. In the past two years, we have held 22 revivals and have seen over 1,000 souls at the altar.

Last fall we were headed for Indiana and Michigan for a series of revivals. On the way we stopped off at the Los Altos Church in Albuquerque, N.M., where my brother Norlyn was pastor. He asked me to preach in the morning service. At the close of the service a young man about 30 years old came down the aisle weeping and knelt at the altar. He was a Catholic in a Protestant church for the first time, and knew nothing about praying. We instructed him and he said a prayer after us and was gloriously saved.

We found out he had driven 75 miles to that service, and he continued to do so every week for a year. Then he moved to within three blocks of the church. He confessed to us later that he was on the verge of a divorce, was sick of life, and didn't feel it was worth living. Today he is a member of the church and teaches the college-age young people.

There are many more instances that we could relate from the last two years' experiences.

Yes, retirement is exciting if you continue to do what you can afterward. Looking at the Pacific Ocean is beautiful, but seeing a soul bow at the altar for the first time and come up with a shining face is more beautiful still. Retirement is exciting if you continue to win souls to God.

\*Evangelist, Morro Bay, Calif.

## The Facts About Pastors' Wives

### Part One: Books on Women in the Parsonage

**B**OOKS ON PASTORS' WIVES can be easily divided into time periods. There is no forcing of dates. These books seem to come in small, easily identifiable waves.

*Four books fit strongly into the decade of the forties.* Mrs. Jesse M. Bader, wife of a leader in the National Council of Churches, wrote *I Married a Minister*, published by Abingdon-Cokesbury in 1942. It is a symposium by 18 women of "ability and charm" whose husbands were leading pastors in that era. Arthur Hewitt, who wrote books about rural churches, aptly named his book for pastors' wives *The Shepherdess*. Mrs. Andrew W. Blackwood said Mr. Hewitt "writes more profitably about men than women." Hewitt's book was published in 1943. A 1939 book by Mrs. Anna F. Johnson, *The Making of a Minister's Wife*, was autobiographical and pleasant reading, as was Anna Laura Gebhard's *Parsonage Doorway*, published a decade later.

All of these books have one thing in common—they were written for women in parsonages during the pre-World War II era. All of them have

the touch of rural American Protestantism, where the biggest problems were solved by playing second place to their "big, strong" pastor-husbands, learning to stretch the dollar by better ways to can peaches, dealing with washday blues, and being a woman of prayer. These volumes for pastors' wives in the forties are nostalgic, but of limited consequence for pastors' wives in the decade of the seventies.

The last of the "good old days" books, and probably the best, was written by Mrs. Andrew W. Blackwood, wife of the professor of practices in the Princeton Theological Seminary, and author of many books. The opening line of Dr. Blackwood's introduction to his wife's book, *The Pastor's Wife*, is an excellent indicator of what is to follow. He calls the pastor's wife "the mistress of the manse," and sees her as a full-time partner with her husband. He indicates that Mrs. Blackwood is writing to the wife in the small church. According to the chapter headings, the pastor's wife is "A Worthy Woman," "A Friend to Everyone," and "An Uncrowned Queen." Life in the par-

sonage these days is filled with dimensions of realism that would exclude these approaches.

In the middle 1960s, another wave of books on and for pastors' wives came off the press. In 1964, Moody Press published Dorothy Pentecost's book, *The Pastor's Wife and the Church*. She bridges somewhat the gap between the books of the nostalgic forties and the later studies of the mid-sixties, when the concern shifted to the pastor's wife as a person coping with her professional role. Mrs. Pentecost has shifted the references from the washboard to the telephone. In her chapter on "The Problems of the Pastor's Wife," she gives first priority to the telephone. However, the book still smacks of unrealistic idealism.

After the mid-sixties, writers on the pastoral ministry were showing a new kind of serious interest in the minister's wife and family. The Lutheran writer, William Hulme, in his book, *Your Pastor's Problems*, has a significant chapter on the parsonage family. Also in 1966, Mrs. Marilyn Brown Oden, wife of a Boston University theology student and later pastor in Oklahoma City, wrote *The Minister's Wife: Person or Position?* She represents the new breed of ministers' wives, concerned with her personal identity as a human being while adequately coping with her professional role as a pastor's wife. She sees the possibility for both the pastor and his wife to lose their real identities as persons and have little interaction with each other outside their respective roles as pastor and pastor's wife. Key words with Mrs. Oden are identity, role, freedom, dependency, independency, and interdependency.

In 1965, the first and only major study of pastors' wives on a research basis was published in book form by William Douglas, and entitled *Min-*

*isters' Wives*. Douglas wanted to show pastors' wives as very human. He saw a rich variety of women in parsonages which challenged the stereotypes that had been perpetrated in the literature and by pastors' wives themselves. He set out with the help of the Lilly Foundation and the questionnaire method to drop the marks which have kept pastors' wives from being seen as the persons they really are. Highlights in his findings are as follows:

1. There are *three involvement patterns* among the roles of pastors' wives in relation to the work of their husbands. About 20 percent of the 5,000 wives questioned are a "team worker" with their husbands. They form a team with division of labor and shared responsibilities. They are side by side "on the firing line." With them, church often comes before family. The study also reveals that about 60 percent of the women have a "background supporter" relationship with their husbands' role as pastor. These women have some responsibilities just as other church members, but their first responsibility is just to be wife and mother. About 15 percent of the pastors' wives were "detached" from their husbands' role as a minister. Some of these women were rebellious against the demands of the congregation on their time and energy.

2. Another result of the research by Douglas was the *perceptible difference among expectations of pastors' wives in different denominations*. For instance, 78 percent of the Baptist pastors' wives taught Sunday school classes, while only 28 percent of Episcopal wives did. Also 40 percent of the Baptist pastors' wives led a youth group, and only 6 percent of the Episcopal wives took on this activity. Many other differences were also noted to indicate that the role

(Continued on page 28)

It is no credit to the Creator to flaunt our limitations. It may appear humble to us, but God has other ideas.

## *The Power to Be*

**I**N OUR EARLIER MINISTRY my husband and I were quite active in evangelistic work; we sang together and conducted evangelistic music as well as preaching.

My husband never really relished those calls to the singing ministry because he felt limited and unqualified. God has given him the ability to preach and teach the good news of Jesus Christ and His big life. This is his first love. Finally he said he would accept no more singing engagements—only preaching. He felt he could accomplish more in the lives of individuals.

We had moved to our present pastorate, which hadn't yet reached its present explosion, when we received a call to minister in California at a lovely camp. For some reason my husband accepted. Doesn't everyone think there is gold in California? This call to minister was a call to come as musicians.

Our local congregation was surprised when we told them we would be in California for a week or so, ministering in music. "Well, Pastor Polston, we didn't know you were a singer!" "What do you know, the 'Rev' can sing." Spontaneously he answered, "No, I can't sing, but I'll be a singer when I get there."

Now you may question this concept if you wish, but he really was quite a good singer for his week of music. The last Sunday afternoon we had to leave before the conclusion of the services. To our surprise, after we had sung the last message in song, that congregation gave us a standing ovation. We were overwhelmed with the warmth of their response.

Phil. 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." It is no credit to the Creator to flaunt our limitations. It may appear humble, but God isn't glorified.

Remember Moses, who murmured about his task because he was slow of speech. He didn't know that his lack of eloquence was his best preparation. Very often the handicapped man is the one most likely to achieve because he knows success is not in himself but in the big life of God in him. This makes him adequate for anything. His callings are his enablers.

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**by**  
**Ruth Ann Polston**

Pastor's wife  
Falls Avenue  
Wesleyan Church  
Waterloo, Ia.



Stop saying you can't achieve. Don't say you're a poor cook. Stop saying you're stupid . . . afraid . . . nervous . . . ugly . . . short-tempered. You can do or be anything you really want to be or do through Christ. When you say you can't, you are locking yourself in—and Christ's resources out.

In our ministry we consider negative words and thoughts of limitations to be an insult to God. We practice the "faith vocabulary."

Here is a partial list of the "faith vocabulary":

I can.

I will.

I expect the best.

I know.

I will make the time.

Positively.

I am confident.

I do believe I am able.

A faith vocabulary can change your life.

Below is the slave vocabulary we listed as "don'ts" for our women's fellowship spiritual therapy on Tuesday mornings:

I get nervous in front of a group.

I can't quit smoking.

I can't make decisions.

I'll never be anybody.

I'm not perfect.

I don't have much "zip" anymore.

I'm not smart.

I don't like my job.

I'm not as talented as he is.

I'm an introvert by nature.

I'm too old to change.

I'm self-conscious.

I worry a lot.

It's never worked before.

But my situation is different.

If you just walked in my shoes for a while.

Job 22:28 says, "Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee."

Think of words as things—creative things. Declare you have the power

to do anything necessary for life and fruitfulness. Away with slave words! Don't be "snared with the words of thy mouth" (Prov. 6:2). The victory is as near as your mouth. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth."

You have the Power to be.

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## An Idea That Worked

Recently I tried something new in our weekly prayer meeting service that produced a much greater response than I had anticipated.

A question box was placed in the church foyer, and our people were encouraged to put any questions in it that they had. I assured them there would be an answer for them. If they wanted a private answer, they would have to sign their names to their question. If they did not sign their names, the questions would be answered in one of the public services, usually the midweek prayer meeting. They were directed to ask questions in any area. If an open question could not be answered due to circumstances, they would simply be told so. They have been very understanding.

Occasionally on Wednesday night, I will deal totally with these questions. To aid in this service I have taken a number of the questions and answers from the "Answer Corner" of the *Herald of Holiness* and presented the question to the people for their reaction. Participation from the young and old was readily forthcoming. The answer of Dr. Purkiser was then shared with them.

This has been a blessing to us, and I thought it might be worth sharing with others.

W. D. JOHNSON  
Pastor, Church of the Nazarene  
Churubusco, Ind.

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# THE STARTING POINT



By C. NEIL STRAIT

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

## *Opening Life to Christ*

Colossians 1:26-27

**T**HE FIRST of these two verses speaks of "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." Then the second goes on to explain: "God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery . . . which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

While there are several ways to approach an understanding of these verses, may I submit this thought:

"Christ in you, the hope" is another way of saying God wants to do some wonderful things in life—here and now.

How to get life to open to Christ, to His hope, to His possibility, is the purpose of this sermon. So I offer some practical ways just as starting points—they are quite incomplete. Maybe they will start you thinking in terms of where your people are in the spiritual pilgrimage.

First, **PRAYER CAN OPEN LIFE TO CHRIST, AND THE UNFOLDING OF THE MYSTERY—"CHRIST IN YOU."**

It is good to know there are no professional pray-ers. Man only needs a need; an open heart; a seeking, sincere heart; a repentant heart, to engage in prayer. What was our Lord's promise? "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you"

(Matt. 7:7). "It is his power that holds everything together" (Col. 1:17, TLB).<sup>\*</sup> And prayer puts man in touch with that power.

The Early Church believed this. The phrase "and when they had prayed" occurs three times—Acts 4: 31; 6:6; and 13:3. The contact point for them was prayer.

So prayer can be the touchstone, the threshold, the beginning point for Christ and what He wants to do in life. Remember, miracles can't be bought. They are prayed for.

Second, **BELIEVING AND FAITH CAN OPEN LIFE TO CHRIST, AND THE UNFOLDING OF THE MYSTERY—"CHRIST IN YOU."**

Col. 1:23 admonishes: "If ye continue in the faith." And Christ says: "Only believe" . . . "According to your faith" . . . and "If thou canst believe."

Our faith in the possibilities of God—if it is a genuine trusting of our belief in God—reaches out to grasp the things God holds for the Christ-follower.

Third, **THE WORD CAN OPEN LIFE TO CHRIST, AND THE UNFOLDING OF THE MYSTERY—"CHRIST IN YOU."**

<sup>\*</sup>The Living Bible, copyright © 1971, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

Col. 1:23 states: "Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." In 3:16 we are admonished: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."

Because the Word gives hope, and points to Christ and redemption and deliverance, it is a miracle to the predicament of life.

John 20:31 reaffirms this. "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

The miracle of the Word—be it read, listened to, studied—is its pow-

er to sustain, to strengthen, to save. The Word then, by what it does, by what it is, by its power, opens life to Christ.

John Wesley had his heartwarming experience while listening to the reading of Luther's *Preface to the Romans*.

These simple suggestions, then, as a starting point. Three ways that pave the way for God to unfold himself in life and explain the mystery of "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Hope for this life and hope for the life to come.

# IN THE STUDY

## Meditating with the Master in Matthew

July 7

### THERE'S A NEED DOWN THERE

(17:14-20)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 17:14-20

INTRODUCTION: We often hear people sing:

*I'm living on the mountain,  
Underneath a cloudless sky.*

But if that is where we are staying all the time we may be living a heavenly life, but we are no earthly good!

Jesus had been with His three favored disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration. It had been the high moment of their lives, as they glimpsed His eternal glory and saw two heavenly visitors, Moses and Elijah. Peter was so thrilled with the experience that he said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you,

one for Moses and one for Elijah" (v. 4, *New International Version*).<sup>\*</sup> He wanted to stay there the rest of his life!

But the heavenly scenario ended, and Jesus led His three disciples down the mountainside to the valley below. Why? Because there was need down there. This

<sup>\*</sup>From the *New International Version*, copyright © 1973 by New York Bible Society International. Used by permission.



### By Ralph Earle

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was the reason Jesus came down from heaven. And it was now the reason why He had to leave the Mount of Transfiguration, which for Him must have been a welcome relief from the sorrows and sickness of humanity. He couldn't stay on the mountaintop when there was need down below.

We must have our high moments of prayer and vision. But, fortified by this, we must move into the valley of need with the healing touch of the Divine Presence.

### I. THE HOPELESS SON (v. 15)

As Jesus approached the waiting crowd at the foot of the hill, a man came to Him with the plea: "Lord, have mercy on my son." The King James Version describes the boy as "lunatick, and sore vexed." A better translation is "He is an epileptic and is suffering greatly" (NIV).

The Greek word for "lunatick" is *seleniazo*. It comes from *selene*, "the moon," and so literally means "to be moon-struck." Found in the New Testament only here and in 4:24, it reflects the belief of that time that epilepsy was influenced by the moon. It was supposed to become more acute as the full moon approached.

That this victim's condition was serious is shown by the fact that in his epileptic fits he often fell into the fire and into the water. He was in danger of being burned to death or drowned. His case was hopeless.

### II. THE HELPLESS DISCIPLES (v. 16)

The father informed Jesus that he had brought his ailing son to the disciples, but they could not cure him. Long before this the Master had sent out His 12 disciples with the fourfold command: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils" (10:8). We are told that on this mission they did cast out many demons, in addition to healing the sick (Mark 6:13). Why had they failed this time?

Jesus gave them a plain answer: "Because of your unbelief" (v. 20). Doubt is destructive, not constructive. It tears down, but does not build. Doubters never do miracles. It is faith that produces results. And this faith was lacking to the disciples at this time.

### III. THE HELPING SAVIOUR (v. 18)

Jesus chided the people for their un-

belief. ("Faithless" should be translated "unbelieving.") He then asked the boy to be brought to Him. He rebuked the demon, and the boy was cured.

The use of "devil" for "demon" in the KJV (and NEB) is misleading. The Greek always distinguishes between *diabolos*, "devil," and *daimonion*, "demon," and the distinction should be maintained in the English translation. The New Testament clearly indicates that there are many demons but only one devil.

**CONCLUSION:** Jesus told His disciples that if they had faith "as a grain of mustard seed" (v. 20), they could say to "this mountain"—figurative language of that day for a great obstacle or impossible difficulty—"Remove hence," and it would move! The statement "and nothing shall be impossible unto you" stands as a challenge to all of us today.

This verse seems to teach that it isn't the size of our faith that counts, but its purity. It isn't the quantity but the quality. Pure faith, unmixed with doubt, is what we need. (Incidentally, verse 21 is not in the oldest Greek manuscripts, and so should not be quoted or used.)

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July 14

## THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM

(18:1)

**SCRIPTURE:** Matt. 18:1-5

**INTRODUCTION:** "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" That is the question that the disciples asked Jesus one day. It may well be that their question was motivated by selfish ambition; each one of them wanted to be "the greatest." But we ought to ask this question with honest hearts, seeking to be great in God's sight so that we might bring greater glory to Him.

What, then, are the marks of real greatness? We note three of them.

### I. DEPENDENCE (v. 3)

The Master Teacher often used visual aids—the kind that were available to Him then! This time He took a little child and had him stand in front of the

disciples as a live illustration of what He wanted to say. Then He declared: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (NIV). The disciples were still proud and self-ambitious. Jesus said that they must have a complete change of attitude. These husky fishermen and successful achievers must become like little children if they were going to enter the Kingdom.

The heart of irreligion is an attitude of independence toward God. It follows, then, that the essence of true religion is an attitude of utter dependence on Him. This means not only for our initial justification and entire sanctification, but it includes every aspect of the Christian life—strength, purity, power, guidance—everything we are and everything we do. We must depend on God for it all, just as little children depend on their parents. And the more we do, the more He is pleased and the greater is our real success in life.

## II. HUMILITY (v. 4)

We have to depend completely on Christ to get into the Kingdom. Then, to become truly great, we need to be sincerely humble. Humility is the hallmark of real greatness.

This teaching of Jesus cuts squarely across the prevailing philosophy of our age. The "greats" are the movie stars, sports heroes, and heads of great corporations. They are the ones who receive the top salaries in our society.

But in God's kingdom all this is reversed. The humblest man in His sight is the greatest in the Kingdom. He is the one who will receive the greatest reward.

What is humility? It is not self-depreciation, which is often hypocritical and is actually one of the worst manifestations of pride. We might define humility as honest self-appraisal. When we are really honest with ourselves we will be humble!

## III. KINDNESS (v. 5)

Jesus said, "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me" (NIV).

Too often "great [?] men" have no time for children, and are less than courteous toward young people and ladies. When a "great preacher" will not

allow any children in his audience, he needs to take another look at Jesus. Children loved Him and came quickly to Him (v. 2). He took them up in His arms (Mark 9:36; 10:16). Children loved Jesus because He loved them!

A man may be brilliant, successful, and wealthy, but if he is not kind he is not truly great. Kindness to all—of whatever age, culture, or race—is of the essence of real greatness.

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July 21

## HOW TO HANDLE WRONGS

(18:15-17)

INTRODUCTION: In our very human—or inhuman!—society, we cannot hope to escape being wronged by somebody. What do we do about it?

Jesus prescribed a three-stage handling of such a situation. He spelled out specifically each of the three steps, so that we are without excuse if we do not follow them.

### I. PRIVATE CONVERSATION (v. 15)

The language is clear. Jesus said: "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over" (NIV). It may be noted that the first verb, *hamartese*, means "sins," not "shall trespass" (KJV).

One of the real tragedies of the ages is that this specific command of Christ is rarely obeyed by Christians. When someone does us a wrong, we tell everybody else about it instead of speaking to him alone. If we would follow the directive given here we would protect our brother, instead of antagonizing him and widening the gap between us. This is acting in love.

### II. SEMIPRIVATE CONFERENCE (v. 16)

"But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses'" (NIV). The material within single quotation marks is taken from Deut. 19:15.

A person who will not listen to a kind effort to clear up a problem would be apt

to misquote his brother who came to him. So for the protection of both parties it is best to have two or three witnesses who can testify as to exactly what was said at the conference. This second step might also put a little extra pressure on the erring one and cause him to listen.

### III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION (v. 17)

Only after both of the first two steps have been taken—and in the prescribed order—should the matter be taken to the church. If “he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector” (NIV). That is, he is no longer a Christian brother.

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## July 28

### FORGIVENESS UNLIMITED (18:35)

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 18:21-35

INTRODUCTION: Peter had evidently been thinking about what Jesus said in verse 15. So he came to the Master with this question: “Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” The rabbis said that no one should ask forgiveness of his neighbor more than three times. So Peter felt that he was being generous in saying “seven.”

But Jesus’ reply was shattering to the disciple’s self-complacency. He said, “Not seven times, but seventy times seven.” Whether we translate it this way or “seventy-seven times” (NIV)—the Greek is ambiguous—the answer means the same thing: Forgive without limit! God has forgiven us infinitely, and we are to forgive others the same way.

To reinforce His answer, Jesus told the striking parable of the unmerciful servant (found only in Matthew). We now look at this.

### I. THE FORGIVEN SERVANT (vv. 24-27)

Matthew is the Gospel of the Kingdom, presenting Jesus as King. So Jesus told about “a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants” (NIV). Soon there was brought to him a man who owed him 10,000 talents. Since a talent was worth about \$1,000, this would be \$10 million. Archaeological work in Assyria and Babylonia has shown that high

court officials often handled large sums of money.

The servant could not repay this debt. So the king ordered that he, his family, and possessions should all be sold and the proceeds applied to the debt. When the man begged for mercy, “the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt” (v. 27).

### II. THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT (vv. 28-30)

This is the same man. Having been forgiven the colossal debt of \$10 million, he went out and found a fellow servant who owed him \$20.00 (100 *denarii*). Roughly he took him by the throat and demanded immediate payment. When the fellow servant made exactly the same plea that the forgiven servant had made (vv. 26, 29), this cruel monster cast the poor debtor into prison “till he should pay the debt.” How could he do this in prison? Yet imprisonment for debt was common until very modern times.

### III. THE UNALTERABLE SENTENCE (vv. 31-34)

When the other servants saw what had happened, they were “greatly distressed” (NIV) and reported everything to the king. He called the first servant back into his presence and proceeded to give him a stiff lecture (vv. 32-33). Then he turned the offender over to be tortured until he had paid his debt in full.

CONCLUSION: We are apt to exclaim in righteous indignation at the crass cruelty of the wicked servant. How could he be so infinitely unreasonable?

But how about us? God has forgiven each of us an incalculable debt of sin that we could never pay—any more than the servant could repay the \$10 million. Yet we will refuse to forgive a fellow servant of Christ for some trifling thing he said or did, and perhaps hold a grudge against him for years. We are just as wicked and unreasonable as this first servant.

All of us need to heed the closing warning and application of this parable. Jesus declared: “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses” (v. 35). “From your

hearts” means “forgive and forget.” No person can harbor a grudge in his heart and at the same time be a true Christian.



## Co-workers with God

**TEXT:** “We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain” (2 Cor. 6:1).

**INTRODUCTION:** Paul has more to say about Christian workers than any other New Testament writer. He refers to himself as a worker together with God.

The late Dr. C. K. Vliet enjoyed telling of his early life when as a boy of 13 he was forced to leave school to help earn the family livelihood. He helped his father with the painting and paperhanging business, and became quite skillful. One day his father returned from a nearby town with a package which he gave young C. K. to open. When he saw that it was just letterheads, he was disappointed. But his father said, “Look at the letterhead.” Then the boy received one of the greatest thrills of his life. The new letterheads bore the imprint “C. K. Vliet & Son, Paperhangers.” The boy had become a full-fledged workman together with his father.

If we work heartily at our task serving the Lord, we too will discover what a tremendous thrill it is to be a worker together with God. Consider what Paul has to say about work done for God.

**I. THE MOTIVE OF OUR WORK:** “Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

A. The people addressed:

1. Slaves who had recently been converted.
2. Slaves who needed guidance in their thinking about freedom.
3. Slaves who possessed dignity and worth.

B. The advice given:

1. Work for the glory of God.
2. Work as a testimony of God.

C. The lesson drawn:

1. Am I doing what I am doing for the glory of God?
2. What are my motives? See Jesus’ illustration on motives in Matt. 6—almsgiving, prayer, fasting. Motive is everything in the Christian life.

**II. THE MANNER OF OUR WORK:** “Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (Col. 3:23).

A. Everything for Christ

1. Paul tried to improve relationships between masters and slaves.
2. Even a slave should be a conscientious workman.
3. Slaves, salesmen, SS teachers, board members should be better and more efficient because of their Christianity. Barclay said: “Christianity never in this world offers escape from hard work; it makes a man able to work still harder; nor does it offer a man escape from a difficult situation; it enables him to meet that situation like a better man.”

In Christian service we do not work for pay or ambition or to please men; we serve the Lord Christ (v. 24).

B. Offering of sacrifice

1. Your work is an offering of sacrifice to God.
2. You know whom you are working for—not for the pastor, or the SS superintendent, or the choir director, but for Christ and the Kingdom.
3. You know you are not just working for people. People will often disagree and misunderstand. With God as our Motivator, the work can always go forward.

**III. THE MEASURE OF OUR WORK:** “. . . always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

A. Steadfast, immovable, constant, firm—*dependability*

1. The workman does not render mere external service.

He does not work just when the boss is watching. He does not sweep the dust under the carpet when no one is watching. He may be depended upon at all times.

2. The workman’s heart must be in it.

Barclay said, "The workman must not put on a show of eager efficiency when his heart has a grudge and a bitterness against the whole business."

B. Abounding in the work of the Lord—*performance*

1. This is an interesting word: to exist in full quantity, to be abundantly gifted, richly furnished; to cause to be abundant, to be a gainer, to be outstanding, to be prominent; to abound, to excel, to progress more and more.

2. An intriguing lesson: God is not so interested in personality as He is in performance. Christian work calls for 100 percent participation, involvement, pull, and drive.

C. Your labor is not in vain—*rewards*.

It is worth the sacrifice and hard work. It is worth the disappointments and frustrations. It really counts for something worthwhile.

**CONCLUSION:** We are co-workers with God. We do not stand alone in our work. Sometimes the going gets rough and we think we will faint, but God sees us through. If our motive is to do all to the glory of God, and the manner of our work is as an offering of sacrifice to Christ, and the measure of our work is dependable performance, we have the assurance that our labor is not in vain.

DAVID NIXON

## ... Pastors' Wives

(Continued from page 19)

of a pastor's wife has a lot to do with the denomination she serves.

3. When asked about her *fulfillment and satisfactions* in being a pastor's wife, 85 percent responded with positive feelings of satisfaction. Douglas identified 12 factors which influence the degree of satisfaction a pastor's wife has in her role:

(1) Level of finances is more important than childhood background.

(2) The happier pastors' wives do not have preschool children at home.

(3) More women over 50 are happier than women under 35.

(4) A pastor's wife is more satisfied if she and her husband participated regularly in the life of the same denomination where her husband now serves.

(5) The pastor's wife is happier if she is not the first or second child.

(6) There is a tendency for farmers' daughters to be happier than wives raised in the city.

(7) More happiness is apparent if she married her husband after seminary rather than before or during these years.

(8) Happier women have husbands five or more years older than themselves.

(9) There is no relationship established between educational level and happiness.

(10) Pastors' wives are more satisfied if deeply involved in their husband's work.

(11) The happier pastors' wives feel called to their work.

(12) Happier pastors' wives have a special work assignment and are not used just for social contacts.

4. Douglas made *three observations on unhappy pastors' wives* based on his data: (a) The problems of unhappy pastors' wives tend to be in the area of emotional needs such as loneliness rather than reality factors. (b) Unhappy wives tend to relate their problems to their situation, and find difficulty seeing the source of the problem in themselves. (c) Unhappy pastors' wives may or may not be involved in the church. Differences are not in how much involvement, but what kinds, and how they feel about it.

In summary, Douglas said, "Those who report themselves to be very satisfied and fulfilled as ministers' wives tend to be women of dedication and energy who are highly involved in their husbands' work and the life of the congregation. They find expression for their religious commitment and the means to their own personal growth in church activities, and view themselves as witnesses for Christ rather than ordinary Christian laymen."

## *For the Church with a New Pastor*

1. Accept him as he is and don't try to make him what YOU think he ought to be. If any changing is necessary, let God do it. He knows best where the rough spots are.
2. Support him in what he feels directed to do. When he suggests a different way of doing things, don't be guilty of the "seven last words of the church": "We've never done it that way before."
3. Work with him, not against him. Remember you called HIM to be YOUR leader.
4. Try seeing from his point of view sometime. His perspective may come from valuable lessons he has learned in his own experience. Don't decide to vote against him because he doesn't always see it your way.
5. As your pastor he is still a human being—treat him like one, and do it with the greatest respect.
6. Give him your full support; it will make him a better preacher. Do this by endeavoring to be present in each service, giving liberally, praying fervently, and calling faithfully. If you plan to be away, inform him of the fact.
7. He has the ability to fail. Don't knock him because of it—you may have contributed to his failure.
8. Be positive, not negative. Major on what IS being done, not on what IS NOT being done. A great church is never built by a wrecking crew of negative thinkers.
9. Always remember his family. They will respect and love you for it.
10. Let him know often that he is appreciated. Don't pour all your affection on him the first six months and then forget him until Christmas or some rare occasion.
11. Go to him for counsel when you first face a problem. Don't wait until you have gotten yourself into real difficulty. When you seek his advice, heed it.
12. Don't be tempted to think he is coming to be the pastor of perfect people in a perfect church. He knows better.

Carl B. Haddix  
Amherst, Ohio





### Sermon-rating

A pastor from another town, so the story goes, has devised a rating system for his sermons to help churchgoers decide whether or not to sleep late on Sunday mornings. He has developed these four categories:

**G**—generally acceptable. Full of in-offensive platitudes. This sermon is usually described as “wonderful.”

**M**—for mature congregations. At times this sermon even makes the gospel relevant—subtly, of course. This is often called “challenging,” though no one intends to take any action.

**R**—restricted to those who are not upset by the truth. It threatens the comfortable, and usually indicates the preacher has an outside source of income.

**X**—limited to those who can handle explosive ideas. It is the type of sermon that got Amos run out of town. It is always described as “shocking” or “in poor taste,” and the minister who preaches it had better have his suitcase packed.

—Selected

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*This learned I  
from the shadow of a tree  
Which to and fro  
did sway upon a wall:  
Our shadow-selves—  
our influence—may fall  
Where we can never be.*  
—A. E. Hamilton

---

Sitting still and wishing  
Makes no person great.  
The Lord does send the fishing,  
But you must dig the bait!

\* \* \*

Opportunities that come our way  
By some event or quirk  
Will often go unnoticed—  
They so resemble work.

God never intended for man to have spiritual problems. Other kinds of problems man must face, but not spiritual problems.

Two things cause spiritual problems: (1) Disbelief—God will not do what He says He will do; (2) Disobedience—man will not do what God wants him to do. Disbelief usually is a covering for disobedience.

Life is filled with problems. To add spiritual problems when they do not have to be there is to invite failure in all areas of life. Believe and obey and rid yourself of spiritual problems.

### MY AMBITION

To serve the Lord with all my might,  
To do His will with sheer delight,  
To help to spread the gospel light—  
This is my ambition.

To strive to please my blessed Lord,  
To be conversant with His Word,  
To wield with skill the Spirit's  
Sword—  
This is my ambition.

To preach salvation full and free,  
To live as for eternity,  
To prove “the best is yet to be”—  
This is my ambition.

To live the gospel I have preached,  
To have concern for those I've  
reached,  
To hold the ramparts I have  
breached—  
This is my ambition.

To witness for my Lord each day,  
To rescue some who've gone astray,  
And show to them the better way—  
This is my ambition.

To be serene when shadows fall,  
To find in Christ my All in All,  
To quickly answer should He call—  
This is my ambition.

And when my work on earth is done,  
To gladly lay my armor down  
And take the promised victor's  
crown—  
This is my ambition.

—Kenneth H. Wells



# HERE AND THERE

## AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from  
your Publishing House

### **Beginnings in Bible Archaeology**

*By Howard Vos* (Moody Press. Paper, 112 pp., \$1.50.)

For those who have not done any reading this field, or who have read only monographs, this book is an excellent introduction. The third chapter, "The Main Geographical Features of Bible Lands," gives the setting. The author discusses the organizing and conducting of an excavation and how the objects found are dated. He then deals with the contribution that archaeology has made to fixing the exact text of the Bible, and with the way archaeology has confirmed and illustrated the biblical narratives. After two chapters on the light that archaeology has thrown on biblical kings and cities, he concludes with a brief chapter on "The Apologetic Value of Bible Archaeology." Here he takes an informed conservative view.

The book is very well written, and contains a wealth of information. For those who want to pursue the subject, an annotated list of books is given at the close.

RALPH EARLE

### **Your Child from Birth to Rebirth**

*By Anna B. Mow* (Zondervan, 1972. Paper, 186 pp., 95c.)

"How to educate your child to be ready for a life with God" is the subtitle of this fascinating little book. In other words, one's responsibility as a parent lies in the preparation of the child for a saving confrontation with God. Response is the key

to this preparation. "God has equipped every child with a natural response to love. *This is the most precious quality in his life.*" A full-grown capacity to respond in and to love, however, is a development, not a "given." Here is the place where the child, guided and corrected, is prepared for redemptive encounter with God. With this thesis, Mow achieves a satisfying description of the unity of education and evangelism.

While the thesis makes the book interesting, the illustrations make it "fun." For example, Mrs. Mow tells of a little fellow, biblically illiterate, who, upon hearing a story of the baby Jesus for the first time, lamented, "Ain't it a pity they named him a cussword!"

One might get a feeling while reading this book that things are always just a little too nicely in hand. Whether that is an unconscious distortion of reality or an evidence of the confidence won by years of experience by the author hardly matters. One's conclusion will do nothing to detract from the thoughtful utility of this warmhearted book.

DAN BERG

### **Evangelistic Sermons**

*By James P. Wesberry* (Broadman Press, 1973. Paper, 124 pp., \$1.95.)

While I do not consider that these 12 sermons are pronouncedly evangelistic, nor that they are properly biblical (being topical in the main), nor even that they are actually sermons (being more like

addresses, or articles), they are useful particularly for their illustrative material and their evangelical warmth. The author is a longtime Atlanta Baptist pastor who has authored several other books.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

### **For This Cross I'll Kill You**

By *Bruce E. Olson* (Creation House, 1973. Cloth, 221 pp., 14 pp. photographs, \$4.95.)

Bruce Olson tells the dramatic story of how, at the age of 19, he went to a murderous tribe of South American Indians, where he faced disease, terror, loneliness, torture in order to carry out his vision to serve God (featured in March, 1974, *Guideposts*). He sought to bring the message of Christ to a savage nation without destroying the beauty of their culture. He prayed, "Jesus, these people need You. Show yourself to them. Take me out of the way, and speak to them in their own language, so that they see You for who You are. O Jesus, become a Motilone." And He did.

## **Preachers' Exchange**



WANTED—*Wesley's Standard Sermons*, edited by Edward H. Sugden (London, Epworth Press, 1921, 1935, 1951), by Nease Library, Eastern Nazarene College, Wollaston, Mass. 02170. (Vol. II especially needed but will purchase both.)

FOR SALE: Life-size, oil retouched photo of the original "Lord's Supper," by Da Vinci, 19 ft. by 42 in. Includes frame, curtains for unveiling, and other equipment. Good condition. Used in services by the late Robert Bradley.—M. E. Bradley, 849 Columbia Ave., Fort Wayne, Ind. 46805.

**COMING**  
**next month**

#### ● **Celebrating the Gospel**

Why the solemn gloom in the worship of some Christians? Joy always has been a vital ingredient in the associations of God's creatures with their Creator.

#### ● **Keys to Successful Ministry**

God wants every preacher to succeed, and those who do the things God wants them to do will succeed in spite of all the opposition they face.

#### ● **Slowing Down to Smell the Flowers**

It is much more rewarding to let the power of the Holy Spirit work through you than to struggle with all your own strength to see the church go forward.

#### ● **Apostolic Succession**

All Christians are in it, as they maintain the beliefs and practices of the apostles, and as they give witness to God's offer of grace through Jesus Christ.

Americans celebrate their independence this month. At least, they celebrate what they call independence. They hope the rest of the world will tolerate their preoccupation with this theme, although other nations do this at other times and in different ways. Our friend H. K. Bedwell, of South Africa, who is just a wee bit English, you know, remarked wryly some time ago as to what a pity it was to waste all that good tea in Boston harbor! And so we believe it is appropriate to focus attention upon what true independence is—dependence upon God. Psychologist Eric Ericksen would agree with Joseph Larson (p. 3) in this approach. Dr. Ericksen sees three dimensions: dependence, independence, and interdependence. The third dimension, interdependence, is the one we tend to forget. It means one is dependent upon another by choice. Although he has the power to be independent, he chooses to need some other person. This is the Christian's reason for submission to God. It is his choice to do so, as he answers Christ's challenge. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). The cross is not forced upon the Christian; he chooses it! The Christian way to genuine independence is found in his voluntary dependence upon God.

Yours for souls,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be the initials "J.M." with a stylized, flowing script.



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