

5-1-1975

Preacher's Magazine Volume 50 Number 05

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Olivet Nazarene University

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Recommended Citation

McGraw, James (Editor), "Preacher's Magazine Volume 50 Number 05" (1975). *Preacher's Magazine*. 530.
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MAY • 1975

THE

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

—proclaiming Christian Holiness . . .

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PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

JAMES McGRAW

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MAY, 1975

VOLUME 50 NUMBER 5

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In the Stream of the Spirit



ON PENTECOST SUNDAY, we are reminded of the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind that accompanied the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Christians waiting in the Upper Room (Acts 2:2). Caught up in that “stream,” Peter was bold to stand up, declare his faith in the Christ he had so recently denied, and watch the Spirit’s power at work. Men and women were pricked in their hearts with Holy Ghost conviction, the other 119 Spirit-filled Christians were speaking the word of God with boldness, and 3,000 souls were added to the Church that day.

Since the expression “the stream of the Spirit” has been used by Samuel Shoemaker and others, it has taken on new dimensions of meaning. Christians are becoming aware of some of the implications of the sound of the rushing mighty wind that filled the house on that first Pentecost Sunday.

We have seen a planeload of passengers fretful because of a delayed departure from Chicago on their nonstop flight to London. More than an hour behind schedule at takeoff, they landed in London’s Heathrow Airport right on time. The plane could not fly that fast, but it did anyway! For added to the thrust of four huge jet engines was another force, a stream of air the airline pilots enjoy experiencing when it happens to be moving in the same direction they need to move. They call it the Jet Stream. At altitudes of 35,000 feet and higher, it sometimes reaches speeds of more than 200 miles per hour. Fly into the face of it, and you are in for a time of frustration and failure to keep pace. Pull the throttle as you will, turn on all the effort you may, push ahead at full speed, and yet so very little progress is made. The goals are not reached, the delays interfere, and the results are not satisfying.

But to move into that “stream” is quite another experience; and here the analogy changes. For the airline pilots cannot always be sure to find their jet stream but the Spirit-filled Christians can.

In the stream of the Spirit, the first-century Christians prayed until “the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31). The best description of their life-style

is captured by Luke, who was there and saw it happen. He declared, "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

The members of the New Testament Church, in the stream of the Spirit, were not under any pressure from the pastor to serve the Lord. "They, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2: 46-47). *The Lord* added to the Church! In the Spirit-filled life, this is the significant secret we tend to forget. It is His Spirit at work. It is as Christ said it would be, "Upon this rock *I will build my church*" (Matt. 16:18, italics mine.)

Jesus promised, just before He was taken up into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Mark it well; He said, "You *shall be* my witnesses." Here again the divine imperative removes the guesswork, eliminates the possibilities of failure, and assures the Christian there is no way men and devils can stop God from performing His mighty acts. In the stream of the Spirit we become a part of it, but never the heart of it. It is "by my spirit," He reminds us, and we become increasingly amazed as we learn just how absolutely true this is.

Philip was in the stream of the Spirit when he heard the Lord speak: "Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert" (Acts 8:26). The record shows that "he arose and went." He did not understand why as he obeyed the Spirit, but he discovered why when he saw the Ethiopian in his chariot and again heard the still small voice direct him to "go near, and join thyself to this chariot." This he quickly did, and seeing the man reading from the prophet Isaiah, he asked the type of question anyone could have asked, with or without training in personal evangelism! "Do you understand what you are reading?" was his conversation starter. The Ethiopian's reply shows how the Spirit was there working before Philip arrived on the scene. "How can I," he answered, "except some man should guide me?" And he invited Philip to join him there in his chariot.

In the stream of the Spirit, Philip told him about Jesus and helped him put his faith in Him. This is an excellent example of the way the Holy Spirit leads, guides, and enables those who step into the stream of His power. Philip could not have *planned* that experience, could he? Not in a lifetime of evangelistic rallies, committee meetings, and assorted human schemes. But it happened, because he let go and let God have His way.

Best of all, it is still happening. Christians in our day are becoming aware of how rewarding and exciting it can be to move into the stream of the Spirit. Their prayer is expressed in Mildred Cope's beautiful hymn:

*Holy Spirit, be my Guide. Holy Spirit, my door's open wide.
Make me to know Thy will divine; Holy Spirit, be Thou mine!**

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CALL TO SERVANTHOOD

C. S. COWLES, Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Covina, Calif.

3. SERVANTHOOD

INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE CHURCH?

"Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph. 5:25, RSV).¹

Apart from the Church, there is no salvation! Cyprian said it, evangelistic enthusiasts deny it, and I believe it. Is the incorporation of believers into the visible church necessary for salvation? By and large, we have not thought so. As the familiar evangelistic appeal goes, "We are inviting you to receive Christ—not to join the church." Then we are puzzled later why so many take our word seriously. I cannot think of any issue of more decisive importance confronting the contemporary pastor than this matter of the church's position in evangelism. If the Church is optional in terms of carrying out the worldwide commission of the Master, then perhaps our friends are right when they chide us for remaining within the ecclesiastical squirrel cage when we could be out doing something important—winning souls. But before we jump to conclusions and take refuge in simplistic truisms, let us hear what others have

to say and consider the biblical evidence.

Karl Barth agrees with the Catholic formulation that "outside the Church, there is no salvation." Rudolf Bultmann, though a radically liberal New Testament scholar, nevertheless affirms: "In Christianity, the individual believer stands within the Congregation." Luther stated that the church is "the mother who conceives and bears every Christian through the word of God." Calvin said, "Separation from the Church is nothing more nor less than *denial* of God and Christ." Lesslie Newbigin holds that God uniquely and exclusively "committed the entire work of salvation to that community." Few have put the matter as forcefully as Cyprian (A.D. 200-258):

If you abandon the Church . . . you are cut off from the promises of the Church. If you leave the Church of Christ you will not come to Christ's rewards . . . You cannot have God for your father unless you have the Church for your mother . . . Can you believe that this unity, which originates in the immutability of God and coheres in heavenly mysteries, can be broken in the Church and split by the divorce of clashing wills? He who does not

1. From the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946 and 1952.

keep this unity does not keep the law of God, or the faith of the Father and the Son—nor life and salvation.²

Our problem is our inability to resolve the dilemma of how an unholy concourse of sinful men and women can be in truth the body of Christ. A common solution is the one first proposed by St. Augustine: that is, the idea of two cities, one divine and the other human, and two churches, one invisible and the other visible.

However, the New Testament knows nothing of an invisible Church. It is always the church at Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, or the churches in Asia Minor. The 3,000 souls baptized and added to the Church on the Day of Pentecost were hardly invisible spirits, nor was the Church they joined located in heaven. As Bultmann points out, "*Ecclesia* sometimes means the total church, sometimes the local congregation," but always "visible as a worldly fact." Newbigin scores the "invisible church" concept by saying that "it is our ideal church, containing the people whom we would regard as fit members." He goes on to say that "it is not the Church of the Bible. . . . The congregation of God is something quite different. It is the company of people whom it has pleased God to call into the fellowship of His Son. Its members are chosen by Him, not by us."

The biblical witness clearly indicates that God's redemptive strategy on behalf of man has always been mediated through a chosen and called-out community. At the climax of God's creative work, there stands the original congregation: man, woman, and the Creator-God, dwelling together in a relationship of absolute immediacy. It is through the community of Noah's family that God

saves the world from the dark waters of primeval chaos. It is through the community of Abraham's family that God promises to bless the whole earth. The covenant community of Israel becomes the locus of God's saving deeds in the arena of world history.

Though the human community is unfaithful, God remains faithful to the promise and covenant. Though the human covenanters are often chastised and judged because of their failures, they are not utterly cut off. As William Childs Robinson affirms about the Old Testament, "Whatever is said about individual knowledge of God, there is no idea . . . of the individual apart from his relationship to the community."

The New Testament Church does not conceive of itself as a wild branch, or an entirely new creation, but as the genuine fulfillment and inheritor of all God's covenant promises made to Israel and now realized in Jesus.

The first activity to which Jesus gave himself after His baptismal inauguration was the calling of a disciple-community to be with Him. Jesus chose 12—a number with obvious covenant-community implications. To this "little flock" the Father was pleased to give the Kingdom. To them Jesus revealed the secret things of God. He explained the inner meaning of His parables. He manifested His transfigured glory to them alone. He shared with them the secret of His messianic calling, His sacrificial service as the Suffering Servant, and His resurrection from the dead.

Jesus loved His own. He ate with them, travelled with them, rebuked them, was impatient with them, scolded them, wept before them, rejoiced over them, and often drew them away from the multitudes to be with himself in retreat solitude. He commemorated the Passover with them and introduced them to a new

2. *Early Latin Theology*, S. L. Greenslade, ed. and trans. *The Library of Christian Classics*, Westminster Press, 1956, 5:127-28. Used with permission.

feast by which His victory was to be celebrated until He came again. In the face of the Cross, His disciples proved unfaithful: they scattered and left Him to walk alone. And yet He loved them and gathered them back to himself after His resurrection. In His risen glory, He made himself known only to His own.

It was to this disciple-community that Jesus committed the keys of the Kingdom. He gave them authority to forgive sins. He bestowed upon them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Into their hands He committed His gospel of eternal salvation, and designated them as the eschatological congregation of the end time (Matt. 16:16-19; John 20:23; Matt. 28:18-20). Though there were many devout men in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out only upon the gathered community, and subsequently on those who heard the Word and believed.

It is a fact of striking significance that the word of salvation and the gift of the Spirit are always tied to the direct personal touch and contact of the Church. It is as the Church scatters out that Samaria believes, Cornelius is converted, and the Ephesian Baptists are filled with the Holy Spirit. There is no record of personal salvation occurring outside the direct influence of the visible body of believers in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh—potentially; but actually He is manifested only within and through the ministry of the Church.

But you say, "How about the Apostle Paul? Where was the Church when he was lying prostrate on the Damascus road under the power of a heavenly vision?" Thank you for bringing him up, for he is a superlative example of the point I am trying

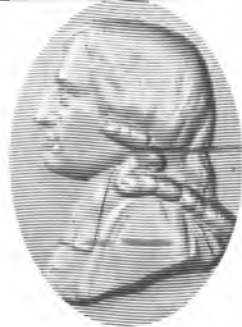
to make, namely, that apart from the Church there is no salvation.

It is true that Saul was not in immediate proximity to a gathered Christian community at the precise moment of his heavenly vision. But it is also true that the entire context of Saul's life prior to his conversion had been the Church. He had been laying waste the Church of God for months, going into Christians' homes, dragging them off to prison, listening in on Stephen's sermon (hoping—I imagine—to find some heresy with which to charge him). Saul consented to Stephen's death and witnessed the glorious manner in which he died. God literally encompassed Saul, the self-righteous rebel, with the grace and peace and power of the Church's witness. What happened on the Damascus road was a direct consequence of Saul's in-depth personal encounters with believers.

Furthermore, after his blinding heavenly vision, Saul walked in the dark. He was confused, distraught, and had no idea of where to turn or what to do (as is true for so many "instant converts"). It was not until Ananias, personalizing and representing the community of believers, sought out Saul, spoke to him, prayed over him, and laid his hands on him that the scales fell from off his eyes and he received the blessed Holy Spirit in His fulness. Later it was Barnabas who took him by the hand, introduced him to the congregation at Antioch, gave him a place of acceptance and a position of service. It was only then that Saul of Tarsus began to emerge as Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ.

Apart from incorporation into a visible body of believers, there is no real and lasting experience of salvation.

Wesleyana



A Letter to Charles Wesley

By his mother*

October 2, 1740

DEAR CHARLES,

I do heartily joyn with you in giving God thanks for yr Recovery. He hath many wise reasons for evry event of Providence far above our Apprehension, and I doubt not but His having restor'd you to some measure of Health again will answer many ends which as yet you are ignorant of.

I thank you for yr kind letter. I call it so, because I do verily believ it was dictated by a sincere desire of my spiritual and eternal good. There's too much truth in many of yr accusations nor do I intend to say one word in my own defence but rather choose to refer all things to Him that knoweth all things. But this I must tell you, you are somewhat mistaken in my case, alass it is far worse than you apprehend it to be. I am not one of those which have never been en-

lightened or made partaker of any Heavenly Gift, or of the Holy Ghost, but I have many years since been fully awakened and deeply sensible of sin both original and actual. But my case is rather like that of the church of Ephesus, I have been unfaithful in the talents comitted to my trust and have lost my first love—"Yet is there hope in Israel concerning this thing." I do not, and by the grace of God, I will not despair—for even since thy sad Defection, when I was almost without Hope, when I had forgotten God, yet I then found He had not forgotten me, for even there He did by His Spirit apply the merits of the Great Atonement to my soul by telling me that Christ died for me—And shall the God of Truth, the Almighty Savior tell me that I am washed in His Blood, and Righteousness and shall not believ Him—God forbid. I do, I will believe, and tho I am the greatest of sinners, that does not discourage me at all. For my transgressions are the sins of a finite person, but the merits of our Lord's sufferings, and righteousness are infinite! If I do want anything, without which I can't be saved (of which I am not at present sensible) then I believ I shall not die before that want be supplied. You ask many questions which I care not to answer, but I refer

*This is a verbatim copy of a letter from Mrs. Susanna Wesley to her son, Charles. It answers a letter of Charles, in which he had sharply criticized his mother and even called her Christian experience into question. Notice the modesty and courtesy of her reply, her careful reasoning, able writing, and unfaltering personal faith in an infinite Saviour. This is the last letter, now extant, known to have been written by a mother who, under God, gave to the world two disciplined and devout men, John and Charles Wesley. Dr. Frank Baker of Duke University certifies that "there is no doubt in my mind that [this is] an original manuscript by Susanna Wesley."

you to our dear Lord Who shall satisfy you in all things necessary for you to know—I cannot conceive why you affirm yourself to be no Christian, which is in effect to tell Christ to His Face, that you have nothing to thank Him for, since you are not the better for anything He hath yet done, or suffered for you—Oh what great Dishonor, what wondrous ingratitude is this to the ever Blessed Jesus! I think myself far from being so good a Christian as you are, or as I ought to be, but God forbid, I should renounce the little I have—nay rather let me endeavor to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—Amen. I know not what other opinion people may have of Human nature, but for my part I think, that without the grace of God we are utterly incapable of Thinking, Speaking, or Doing any-

thing good; and therefore if in any part of life we have been enabled to perform anything good we should give God the Glory. If we have not improved the Talents given us, the fault is our own. But I find this is a way of Talking much used among these people which has much offended me; and, I've often wished they would talk less of themselves, and more of God. I often hear loud complaints of sin, etc., but rarely, very rarely, any word of Praise and Thanksgiving to our Dear Lord, or acknowledgment of His infinite . . .

The remainder of the letter is lost. This portion is reproduced by the courtesy of Dr. A. H. Backus, from whom the editor of the "Wesleyan Advocate" obtained the original manuscript. The original spelling, capitalization, and punctuation have been preserved.—G. E. F.

Time to Be Pastor

They begin to arrive about 2:45 in the afternoon. They keep coming until the sun goes down.

Often I've made a silent agreement with myself not to answer the door, but I have never kept the agreement. Once I even tried plugging my ears with cotton so I wouldn't feel guilty about not answering the doorbell. If I don't go to the door immediately, they keep ringing, and knocking, and pounding, and yelling.

Have you ever tried to concentrate on a sermon, a Bible study, or even prayer, with 25 boys clamoring to ride the mini-bike? Is this what being their pastor is all about? Most assuredly yes!

When we first arrived at our new pastorate, we encountered a neighborhood of children who didn't know anything about church. Not that they were heathen; Mom and Dad just never had the time to get them up for Sunday school.

Now, nine months later, 90 percent of these boys are learning scripture, and some are even coming to Sunday school. Their tremendous enthusiasm mushroomed when I endeavored to become "all things to all boys." A Honda 70 mini-bike has made a gigantic difference in many of these boys' lives. Whereas once the Man Jesus had little, if any, effect upon them, now these boys are conscious that Jesus loves them.

Time does not permit my saying more. The doorbell just rang. It's time to be pastor to my boys.

Dennis Adams

Hiding the preacher behind the Cross in true self-abasement will allow hungry souls to see Jesus more clearly

Christ in the Pulpit

By David Nixon*

ASCHOOLBOY DECIDED to enter the ministry and was asked when he had come to that decision. He said that he had come to it after hearing a sermon in school chapel. He was asked to name the preacher. He answered that he could not recall the preacher's name; all he knew was that this preacher had shown him Jesus.

As I read this story, I began to recall the many preachers I have listened to in my lifetime. Some I remember for their shoddy dress; others for their flashy clothes. Some for the eloquence of their speech; others for their marked lack of preparation. Some for the laughter they produced; others for their sense of inappropriateness. Some for the lofty intellect they displayed; others for the stupidity of their logic. Some for the humility of their spirit; others for their haughtiness and pride.

Then it dawned on me that something of ourselves will always shine through. Some blunders and shortcomings are forgivable, to be sure. Many preachers do their best in dress, English usage, and logic, but still fall short of the ideal. This is almost forgivable. But the unpardonable sin of preaching is to let self

push Christ out of His rightful place in the pulpit, and so obscure the view that the people cannot see Jesus. To whatever degree and for whatever reason self is allowed to take the sacred desk as its throne, to that extent our preaching is just so many idle words.

What must shine through in all our preaching is Christ. Paul's defense of his ministry to the Thessalonian believers makes it clear that self must be negated in order that Christ may be remembered. He said, "We never came with flattering speech . . . nor with a pretext for greed . . . nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others" (1 Thess. 2:5-6, NASB).** We, too, must obliterate self and show men nothing but Jesus.

There are times when we all have prayed, "Lord, hide me behind the Cross." How well we know that God answers this prayer! Sometimes to our discomfiture. There have been times when all of us have suffered with "tisted twongues" even though our preparation was complete. How we wished in those moments for something to hide behind! Yet somehow through all our blunders and mistakes, Jesus shined through, and

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**From the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971.

we were made to realize all over again how "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Hiding behind the Cross in true self-abasement will allow hungry souls to see Jesus more clearly.

We must believe and act like Jesus is Lord of the pulpit. Men and women will remember us for something. As a former senior pastor once said, "You must so exalt Christ from the pulpit and in daily life that the people won't remember that you were here when you leave. Fix their gaze on Christ." The human tendency is to be remembered as a good preacher. But the only thing that really matters is that the people remember Jesus. And really, our job can be considered

well done only as we cause them to remember Jesus and His Word.

When we begin to realize that people have good memories, we will be careful to plant only those things which exalt Christ in their minds. Among other things, clothes, speech, laughter, intelligence, ignorance may be remembered. If self has ever been allowed to shine through, we can only hope that people will be able to forget. The goal of our preaching should be that people will remember Christ, and seek to serve Him because of the spirit in which He was exalted and self was abased. It matters little if they remember our names. It matters most that they remember Christ.

God's Pattern for Church Board Members

An Installation Message for Board Members

By Herb Ireland*

THE ORGANIZATION of the first official church board took place very early in the history of the Church. Here is the background as recorded in Acts 6:1-8.

The Jews who were in Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost were of two types. There were the Jews who lived in Palestine and spoke Hebrew and Aramaic. They were firmly rooted in the traditions of their fathers, and developed feelings of superiority over foreign Jews. They looked with disdain upon the half-breed Samaritans and the Gentiles.

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The other type of Jew lived outside the Holy Land. His ancestral roots were outside of Palestine for generations past. He had long since forgotten Hebrew and Aramaic. He spoke Koine Greek, the commercial language of the Mediterranean world. His outlook was much more cosmopolitan than his provincial counterpart in Palestine. According to Acts 2:9-11, these Jews lived in what is now North Africa, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Greece, Syria, and Italy.

The Jewish synagogue had a kindly tradition of helping those families suffering from temporary hardship. Each

week alms and goods were collected from the members of the synagogue to give to those in need. The Early Church, with its roots deep in Judaism, borrowed this custom from the Jews.

As the number of disciples was increasing, there arose a conflict between the Jews of Palestine and the Grecian (Hellenistic) Jews. The Palestinian Jews were reluctant to share their alms and goods with the more open-minded Jews of the Mediterranean world. Hence the Grecian Jews claimed that their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food and giving out of financial assistance.

The 12 disciples reacted wisely to this crisis by calling the congregation together for an emergency meeting.

At this meeting they said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables" (6:2, NIV).** Therefore select from among you seven men to form the first church board to deal with this crisis.

It is in this crisis that we discover God's pattern for church board members.

I. GOD'S PATTERN FOR SELECTING CHURCH BOARD MEMBERS (6:3)

A. *These members were men of good reputation* (honest report).

1. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22:1).

2. Jesus expressed it best concerning the reputation of a Christian: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

3. Jesus calls every Christian—and especially board members—to be "transparent lights" in a dark world of sin.

4. Men of good reputation *walk* in the light of Jesus and consequently *reflect* the light of Jesus.

5. Men of good reputation are transparent, and consequently others look through them and see Jesus.

B. *These board members were full of the Holy Spirit.*

1. Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He commanded His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they had received the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

2. The apostles must have had foresight into the difficult situations the first church board members would encounter, and therefore charged the congregation to select only those filled with the Holy Spirit.

3. They were emphatic about those who guided the Church being filled with the Holy Spirit because they realized that only through the power of the Spirit could the Church withstand the external pressure and persecution of the Roman world. And they realized that only through the love of the Holy Spirit could the early leaders and board members withstand the internal pressures and criticism.

4. Board members who are full of the Holy Spirit will have lives characterized by love. This attitude of love enables them to enjoy people like they are instead of the way they want them to be. This love is not critical or divisive, but is characterized by harmony, acceptance, and a spirit which is patient and self-controlled when subject to annoyance and provocation. For a beautiful description of this love, study Col. 3:12-17.

C. *These board members were full of wisdom.*

1. Paul in his letter to Titus (1:7-8) indicates that wisdom is evidenced in the man who is able to rule his own home and his own spirit.

2. A man who can control his home, business, and most of all his own personality, makes a good board member.

3. The converse is also true. The man who is not able to deal effectively with his own personal problems will not likely use good wisdom in handling the problems of the church.

II. GOD'S PATTERN FOR DISTRIBUTING RESPONSIBILITY TO CHURCH BOARD MEMBERS (6:2-4)

A. The Early Church recognized a distinction not between the clergy and laity, but between responsibilities. A fundamental fact of the Early Church was that all men were to be evangelists. There were no paid professionals whose sole responsibility was to witness, but all excitedly shared their faith in a living Christ.

B. Nevertheless, there was a distinction

**From *The New International Version*, copyright © 1973 by the New York Bible Society International. Used by permission.

tion between responsibilities. The Twelve told them to select a church board of seven men who could be put in charge of serving tables. Then they would devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.

C. God's pattern was for a seven-man church board to quiet the murmuring of the people by effectively dealing with the secular needs of the church, thus freeing the ministry to do the spiritual work more effectively.

D. Church board members, this is your God-assigned responsibility this year:

1. To deal wisely, fairly, and effectively with the secular needs of this church so that your pastor may devote himself more fully to ministering to the spiritual needs of the congregation. When the responsibilities are clearly defined between pastor and board, then the church runs smoothly and harmoniously. Each side complements the other's work—rather than compounding it.

III. GOD'S PATTERN FOR EMPOWERING CHURCH BOARD MEMBERS (6:6)

A. God never calls a man or woman to any task without furnishing the power to accomplish that task.

B. In the case of these first board members, we see in 6:6 how they were empowered to face the terrific responsibilities of nurturing the Early Church. These seven men were brought before the apostles, and "when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." God's pattern for empowerment then and today is through prayer.

C. Further it appears, from my study of the New Testament, that when the apostles laid their hands on men, it was usually accompanied by a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 13:2-3; 19:6).

D. Board members, the *strength* you need to make tough decisions, the *patience* you need to work with people, and the *love* you need to accept people in the church as they are without trying to

change them comes only through *prayer* and a *fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit* upon you.

IV. GOD'S PATTERN FOR BLESSING CHURCH BOARD MEMBERS (6:7-8)

A. When church board members are prayed up and filled up with the Holy Spirit, they will be a blessing to others and in turn will be the recipients of numberless blessings from God.

B. Notice the blessings when the first church board members worked harmoniously together:

1. "The word of God increased" (6:7). This was due to the fact that the apostles were able to devote themselves to the teaching and preaching of the Word of God.

2. The Church increased numerically. "The number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (6:7).

C. Finally, notice that the first martyr of the Church was from the church board, not from the apostles. "Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people" (6:8). This trustee of the official church board was finally stoned to death for his testimony and godly life.

CONCLUSION: It is not the easiest job to serve on the church board today. There are no actual stonings, but pressures do mount and sometimes become acute. It is disappointing to see some people explode under this pressure. However, what a blessing to see others *use* this same pressure for their advantage. They seem to turn stumbling blocks into stepping-stones through the power of the Holy Spirit.

May God grant to each of you board members the fullness of His Holy Spirit this year as you serve on the church board.

(Installation of church board members at the altar of the church)

Evangelistically Speaking—

A Christian—*Not a Church Member?*

By Harold L. Volk*

DO I HAVE TO belong to the church to be a Christian?"

This question, asked of me by my host while at the dinner table in his home, both startled and puzzled me. Since there were two high-school-age young people at the table with us, I knew at once I must be very serious and honest with my answer. Not only for my host's sake, but especially for the sake of his two youths who were all ears and interest.

My answer was: Until the opening of this century that question would never have been even considered, much less asked. For even the sceptic of an earlier period never considered that he could be a Christian and remain outside of the church. When England and the Continent were in the heat of the Reformation Movement, men did not move away from the Roman Catholic church into no church. They moved into another church. Both Martin Luther and John Calvin were most explicit on that point. They denied that they ever left the church. Rome was subverting the church that they were trying to establish. To them, as well as to a devout Romanist, it would

have been a contradiction in terms for anyone to claim to be a Christian and remain outside of the church.

Not that either of them—Luther or Calvin—had any illusions about the character of people who got into the church. Calvin was especially abrupt about this: "Churches do include many hypocrites who have nothing of Christ but the name and appearance. Many persons, ambitious, avaricious, envious, slandering and dissolute in their lives." But granting this unhappy fact, Calvin never for a moment wavered in his insistence upon membership in the church. Putting it negatively, he said, "A departure from the church is a renunciation of God and Christ."

When John Wesley began to encounter a few who tried to separate loyalty to Christ from membership in the church, he made short shrift of their plea. "There is no such thing as a solitary Christian."

But though all the Luthers, Calvins, and Wesleys stand against it, many of the contemporary religionists continue to argue that it is possible to be a Christian without being a church member.

As I pressed my host on this point,

*Evangelist, Nampa, Ida.

his answer took two forms: First, he reminded me that there are hypocrites in the church—by which he meant to imply there is no connection between being a Christian and being a church member. That is not only a lamentable fact, but the argument must be granted. I have never known a church member who doubted or denied it.

Then he said that he believed in Jesus Christ and the Sermon on the Mount, and tried to live by the golden rule. With that astounding claim he sat back in self-righteousness, leaving me with the choice of either admitting the claim and losing the case for the church, or challenging that claim and probably losing a friend. But friend or no, that claim must be tested because it is hopelessly superficial.

Of course the basic question in all of this is an ancient one. What is meant by being a Christian?

Jesus identified the great commandment as requiring love of God and love of neighbor. He gave the golden rule, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. 7:12). He admonished the disciples, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). To be a Christian must mean to love and to serve Him. How can any man do this on his own? Inside his own skin, as it were, they are deeply personal matters. They touch the wellspring of thought, feeling, and moral commitment, but they are as profoundly social as any conviction or enterprise could be.

Take believing in Jesus. Will even the most confused individualist among us claim to be able to do this unassisted by anyone else? We would not even know of Christ had it not been for the church—the fellowship of the faithful who gathered around

Him, and His disciples as witnesses. The church alone has made it possible for us—any of us—to know about Him, let alone believe in Him. Actually all that we do in the church is a finger-pointing to a fact—and Jesus Christ is that Fact.

If we are going to mean by *love* what He meant, it is impossible to love Him in our own strength. He was not talking about an aesthetic yearning for beauty when He spoke of love. To love God as He meant it was to identify with the Object of love—to identify himself with the needs and the welfare of the neighbor, no matter who the neighbor was. Love, as He understood it, is the very antithesis of drawing apart from others. Rather it is the endless quest for an ever-deepening relationship with them.

It would seem, therefore, that one must answer the question, Can I be a Christian without being a church member? in this way: I might be a Christian, but I would be a poor sort of a Christian. Why would I? The answer is that a Christian would be in the church. The Holy Spirit makes a man a Christian, and if he is a Christian through the work of the Spirit, that same Spirit draws him to other Christians in the church. True Christians through the centuries have always been in the church.

If any man could have felt the church to be unnecessary, that man was Jesus. Yet He did not stay away from the organized Judaism of His day. He was circumcised as a baby, became a part of the Jewish faith, the earthly people of God. His religious duties included the rituals of the Jewish faith.

If you do not join the church, you rob yourself and your children of the ministry of the church.

You miss the *ministry of education*. This is a necessary work for an institution which tries to bring over four millennia of human experiences

to bear on our problems today. The Bible is the central Document of our religious tradition, and only one who has never studied it seriously can think it is a simple and easily understood Book. It is no easy task to establish the relevance of biblical teaching to many of the problems we face today. But the Bible must be brought into a vital relationship with everyday problems. To do this requires not only understanding the problems that are breaking the minds and spirits of men today, but also an acute understanding of the Bible which offers the solutions.

This calls for the most careful kind of planning of a serious educational program in and through the church and its ministry. Even one who tries to live in splendid isolation is dependent on the church with its Christian scholars and teachers of the ages.

You also deny yourself the *ministry of fellowship* which is fundamental to the church. Historically the church began in the homes of the faithful. The ministry of fellowship began there and continues to be an indispensable part of the church. We are social beings. We are not meant to be alone. We are meant to live in communion with others.

You deny yourself the *ministry of worship* which is fundamental to the church. You deny yourself the ministry of social conscience which has been articulated in the church over the years.

Alfred North Whitehead once wrote, "Religion is what a man does with his solitariness." But more important, it is what we do with our togetherness, for John Wesley was correct when he said, "There is no such thing as a solitary Christian."

It's Tomorrow

Pastor, do you remember when you said you'd spend more time with your own family tomorrow? Well, it's tomorrow!

We must not fail to win our own children to Christ and the church because we are too busy with our own worthwhile church responsibilities.

It's tomorrow. And if you are so busy that you have no time to spend with your family today, then adjust your schedule now. Activities that you can do together with your family can be simple, such as: playing table games, going to the park, flying kites, playing together in the backyard, visiting the zoo, taking a tour of a manufacturing company or other place of interest, nature studies, wiener roast, eating a sack lunch in a favorite place, visiting pet shops, or going out for a hamburger or ice-cream cone.

—Betty B. Robertson

You need not sacrifice your joy
to fit anyone's preference. Be
your radiant self in the Holy Ghost.

Be Your Radiant Self

IT SEEMS TO ME that preachers and their families must be a very unique breed. Our lives must be subject to sudden changes and flexible to new people, without losing our own special identity. It takes a man and woman steadied upon principle to keep their family from becoming neurotics with the sudden changes that are required.

Changing pastorates is usually a traumatic time. We have made several big changes in our ministry. I will mention two:

Move 1: We were moving from a country pastorate to the city. The rural folk were demonstrative in their expressions, and the new folk were very unexpressive. I missed the spontaneity. I felt myself buckling under the pressure of becoming the preacher's wife to suit the occasion. I believe with Paul that we can be "all things to all men . . . [to win] some," but

my motivation was fear of people more than winning some.

My husband has a way of reading me, and he's not partial when I'm falling short. One day he said, "Young lady, I think you're afraid of these people." I felt like Nathan had said, "Thou art the man."

The Lord wasn't any easier on me because He directed me to Isa. 51:12-13: "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy maker . . . ?"

With the Lord and my husband agreeing, there was nothing to do but surrender. I was afraid of those "changes" and "no-change" auctions at the end of the year, and I was slowly losing my identity. Becoming aware of the sin of being "afraid of their faces," I confessed it to the Lord and again He freed me from the yoke of bondage. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." It's amazing how tall, how free, how serene I felt when it was just God and I together again. The people knew I was free. We had a five-year revival. I'm glad I didn't miss it.

Move 2: There were other moves, but this was a "biggie." We had nurtured this pioneer work through many crises. Our two children



by
Ruth Ann Polston

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

squallied for a couple of hours in the back of our station wagon as we left our flock standing in the parking lot crying. Most of them had known no other pastor. They warned us that no one ever got saved in that cold region where we were moving.

I am by God's grace an outgoing person, and have known a spontaneous, natural life in the Spirit ever since He filled me. Our new flock was tight, tense, and altar-shy.

I cried after a telephone conversation one day. "They don't like me here. They have no enthusiasm, no praise, no joy. I think maybe I should be like them or they'll think I'm just too much." My husband has no hesitation where truth is concerned. He said, "Don't you ever sacrifice your joy to fit anyone's preference. Be yourself in the Holy Ghost."

The first one to be recharged was our secretary. She was so full of joy and praise that it jarred the whole congregation. One of her friends said, "What are you trying to do, be like the preacher's wife?" It never daunted her. She was so positive that old, negative friends stopped calling. "No use to call her. She'll just praise the Lord and say, 'God is working.'"

Swiftly our congregation changed from the frozen, "churchy" type to a people ablaze with love, warmth, and the Holy Ghost. Sometimes people cry when they come in the door and don't know why. They are overcome with love which fills the house as the fragrance of the alabaster box in Simon's house.

Be your radiant self. Beware this fear of men's faces. All man has is the "breath in his nostrils." Be yourself!

Practical Points

*that make
a difference*

Our District Superintendent Practices What He Preaches!

Dear Son:

We are trying to find a new pastor! The board met with the D.S. last evening and your dad was present. Now I know that the D.S. is always "on the spot," and we are dependent on him for suggestions and recommendations, but our board was not very happy with his last recommendation.

He was wise enough to ask what kind of man we wanted—and we told him! He was ready with recommendations of his choice.

Finally we shared with him who we thought we wanted, and all of us discussed the pros and cons.

When we voted, the nomination was someone other than the superintendent desired, and although he had the power of veto, he graciously stated that he would work with the nominee if he were elected. He also reminded us that we would have to live with our choice.

I liked the way he worked. He did not get his way, but was not hostile about it. He expressed his concern, but did not press the claims of his authority. He accepted the decision with grace and expressed his admiration for the board, praying for each member.

Don't you think that was holiness in action! Son, I trust that you will always be gracious in any position the Lord places you, even though you don't get your own way.

Our superintendent may be tempted someday to say, "I told you so," but I'm quite sure he won't. He is the full expression of what he preaches, and I am thankful.

Love,
Dad

● **General Superintendent Coulter**

Is There an “Ostrich Syndrome” Among Us?



IN A PROMINENT news magazine, a well-known syndicated writer called the attention of his readers to some of the crucial economic crises facing the nation. He complained about the lack of action by leaders and lawmakers to counteract these ills. He concluded with the remark, “There is a sort of Ostrich Syndrome—ignore it and it will go away.”

The ostrich syndrome is not peculiar to any particular branch of our society. It is found everywhere—even in the church and among preachers.

It is evident in the pattern of losses in membership, Sunday school attendance, payment of budgets which seems to dog the footsteps of certain men wherever they go.

Some constructive course of action must be undertaken to achieve in any area of activity. Ignoring the conditions which produce losses in finances and members will never bring gains. Gains do not simply “happen.” Someone makes them happen.

The lesson is obvious in the economy and in the church. The downward slide can only be counteracted as we are willing to face up to the problems, set priorities, and pursue a course of action with diligence and enthusiasm.

Budgets which are allowed to drift for the first 8 or 10 months of the assembly year rarely get paid. It is a dangerous situation when a church or a pastor begins to feel comfortable with a declining membership in the church or in the Sunday school.

The first and most important step toward recovery is to look at the problem openly, squarely, and honestly. Ignoring problems never solves them. But diligent, forthright action will rally support, turn the tide, and create a climate of confidence and growth. □



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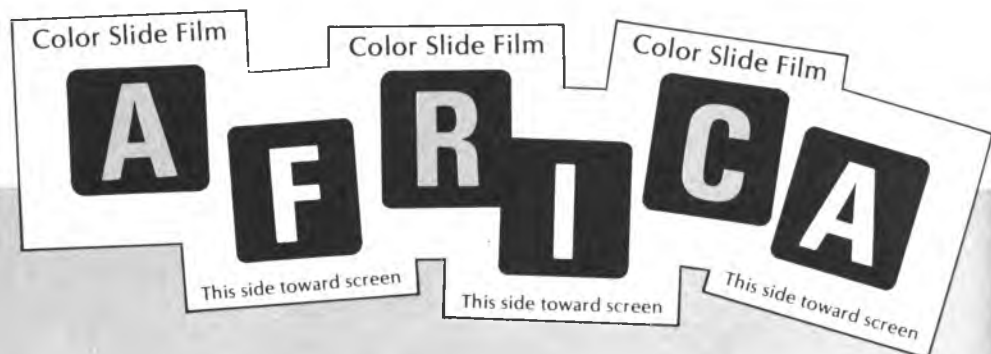
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Dear Pastor:

Here are some facts about Nazarene higher education worth noting.

Enrollment. After two years of declining enrollment we now have the highest attendance in history, with a total of 9,810 students registered in the 12 institutions affiliated with the Department of Education and the Ministry. The increase over the preceding year was 379, which compares favorably with the national trends in enrollment this year. All institutions are to be congratulated for both renewed emphasis and improved methods in their recruitment procedures. As expected, the accreditation of two of the colleges had an adverse effect on the enrollment of some of the nearby institutions.

Financial. Nazarene support for higher education continues to be most encouraging, with contributions reaching a new high of \$5,772,582 for the fiscal year 1973-74. This total represents an increase of \$594,507 over the preceding year. The average per capita zonal support increased from \$10.74 to \$11.46 and the total per capita support from \$12.08 to \$13.07.

Accreditation. Both Mid-America Nazarene College and Mount Vernon Nazarene College received accreditation at the annual meeting of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools last March. Since this was accomplished in the least number of years possible for new colleges, it appears that Nazarene higher education has finally come of age. Other indications are the election of Nazarene administrators to the governing boards of state and regional college associations, the use of Nazarene educators as members of accreditation teams, and the recognition of both Nazarene educators and colleges on the programs of state, regional, and national educational meetings.

Students. The concern of Nazarene students for spiritual matters continues to be most impressive. Despite the financial pressures which now confront students, approximately 1,000 volunteered for the 1975 summer ministries. Since less than 200 of these can be used, there exists a large reservoir of Nazarene college students who are available to assist churches and districts in various types of outreach programs.

And the Ministry. The addition of Dr. Richard S. Taylor as an associate justifies the new designation of the Department of "Education and the Ministry." Dr. Taylor has already designed, administered, and analyzed the results of the questionnaires which were sent to all ministers to help ascertain their interest in and need for a program of continuing education. He also has secured from district superintendents and chairmen of boards of ministerial studies a vast amount of material relating to the Home Course of Study for ministers. Pilot courses in continuing education are being set up in cooperation with several of our colleges. Plans have been made also for the local committee on the Course of Study to hold frequent meetings during the coming year.

Cordially,

Edward S. Mann

Executive Secretary
Education and the Ministry

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Faith in **ACTION**

Reordination

By Mike Ross*

LAST WEEK I attended my first ordination service since becoming an ordained elder a year ago. Other than experiencing God's works of grace, my becoming an elder has been the highlight of my life, and I was eager to witness the ordination of three other men.

Hours before last week's service, I began to realize a Presence that I had experienced preceding my own ordination. It was more than anticipation; it was God preparing my mental state for a unique anointing of the Spirit.

I listened to every word of the general superintendent. I knew he had ordained hundreds of men and women, but he approached the service as though this were the only ordination service in his lifetime. As the district superintendent read the scripture, I tried to let every word grip my heart, for it was the same scripture that had been read at my ordination. I watched the candidates march in as we sang "Holiness unto the Lord." I remembered my own procession as I had walked down the aisle with my head high, proud of my soon-to-be status.

Finally they called the elders to surround the kneeling men for the

prayer of ordination. With our hands on their shoulders, we prayed the three would experience the same unique anointing we had experienced in our ordination.

The Spirit of God came, and it was evident that He touched the kneeling ones. But then He came in a greater measure, for He touched my own heart. I felt a revitalizing of my call and my anointing. I felt that same Spirit that one year ago had taken my proud, lifted head and had lowered it weeping in humility. The sense of dependence upon God was thrust upon me again. My call to the ministry of the gospel sprang up refreshed and renewed. That feeling of unworthiness swept my soul again, and as I saw Calvary I responded with another obedient yes to His will.

I was reordained that service. Oh, I know my certificate says I will be an elder as long as my spirit and practice are becoming the gospel, and as long as I hold fast the form of sound words of the established doctrines. I also know last week's service wasn't for me, but for three other men. But I am thankful for the return of the Spirit in a way I had experienced only once before, and I'm thankful for the renewal of His anointing and call on my life and for my total consecration to His will.

*Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Miami, Fla.

The Facts About Preachers' Wives

Section Seven: A Summary Statement (Continued) (Educational Differences)

IN A STUDY of Nazarene pastors' wives, differences were indicated among the women relating to age, educational achievements, and size of church being served. In the last section these differences were explored according to age, younger women being under 35 years of age and older women being more than 50. In this section the findings will be further reported according to differences in level of formal education. "Less education" means 12 years or under. "More education" means college, usually indicating graduation.

1. Approximately 40 percent of pastors' wives have a high school graduation certificate or less, while 25 percent are college graduates. Only 36 percent have had some college work, but did not graduate.

2. Level of education does not make any difference in the number of telephone calls received each week by the pastor's wife. About three out of four calls are church-related. However, it does seem strange that women with less education receive twice as many calls from men as do other women.

3. Women, with or without college education, receive the same proportion of calls from adults. However, women with less education received nearly three times as many calls from senior citizens as those with a college degree. College women, however, received more calls

from teens and young adults than the wives with less education.

4. College graduates report more calls of a "very serious nature" while women with less education report more calls which are "not very serious."

5. The kind of problem dealt with by telephone more often by women with less education is the "church-related" problem, while the college graduate deals most often with "home and family" problems. Both groups report the second most frequent kind of telephone call relates to "physical health" and the third kind of call relates to "emotional-spiritual" problems.

6. Education makes no difference in the way the women respond on the telephone. All of them report that they "try to listen and understand," and then "try to get them to talk to their husband."

7. Education seems to make no difference in the level of "enjoyment" pastors' wives receive from their telephone ministry. A little less than two-thirds of them enjoy this ministry, and none of them feels it is "not part of their obligation." Also, education does not seem to matter in the tendency to initiate calls as a ministry, nor does it matter in the attitude of the pastors' wives toward the parsonage phone. Nearly 90 percent of them are positive in their feelings toward the telephone ministry.

8. Both women with less education

and those who are college graduates receive the same number of persons each week face-to-face who come for help. Most of those who come are married women and in both categories; a little over 20 percent of them are single. Both categories of pastors' wives receive about the same proportion of visitors among children, teens, young adults, and adults. However, the pastors' wives with 12 years of education or less receive more than twice the number of problems from senior citizens as do college graduates. However, college graduates receive more than twice as many problems which are reported to be "very serious," while those with less education have considerably more calls which are indicated as "not very serious."

9. The number one problem dealt with by pastors' wives with less education and by those who are college graduates is the "emotional-spiritual" area. However, women with less education find their number two face-to-face problem to be "church-related" while college graduates deal more often with "home and family" problems.

10. Level of education seems to make no difference among pastors' wives in the way they try to handle face-to-face problems. First, they try to listen; and second, they urge the counselees to talk with their husbands.

11. There seems to be little difference in the proportion of parsonage women with less or more education who "enjoy" their personal ministry. However, 10 percent of the women with less education report this face-to-face ministry is "not part of my obligation," while no college graduates seem to resist it. Also, there is no difference at the educational level in the tendency of pastors' wives to initiate "helpful discussions."

12. Sixty-six percent of women with less education reported that they enjoy their role as pastor's wife very much, while 88 percent of college graduates reported the same thing. And, educational level of achievement seemed to make little difference in the degree of

effectiveness pastors' wives feel in their role. About 25 percent feel "very effective" and approximately 75 percent feel "moderately effective." None of them feel that they just "get by," or that they are "not very effective."

13. Level of education makes no difference in matters of physical health among pastors' wives. However, college graduates seem to have more surgeries than those with less education.

14. Women with less education seem to have greater "frequency of misunderstanding" with their pastor-husbands. Sixteen percent report frequency of misunderstandings to be "often." However, all pastors' wives indicate that these misunderstandings are "not very serious." It is rather surprising, however, that 5 percent of women with less education have given serious thought to divorce.

15. Pastors' wives who are college graduates seem to receive more positive feelings from their congregation than do women of less education. Approximately 13 percent of those with less education believe the feelings of their congregation toward themselves is negative, while only 4 percent of those who have been to college or graduated received these same feelings. However, twice as many college graduates see their congregations as "not very spiritual" as do women with less education. Women with less education seem to give their congregations more of the benefit of the doubt concerning the level of their spirituality.

16. Approximately three out of four pastors' wives, regardless of educational level, like life in the parsonage "very much." However, 12 percent of the college graduates feel their parsonage is inadequate, while none of the women with less education see this problem.

17. About 40 percent of all pastors' wives see "special problems in the parsonage" relating to the raising of children. Those with less education seem to see more problems in this category than do college graduates.

(Next month: A summary statement concluded)

THE

STARTING POINT



By C. NEIL STRAIT

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Some Thoughts on Pardon

A number of months ago President Ford granted a pardon to Richard Nixon, in matters related to Watergate. It prompted a new look at the thought of pardon.

1. Pardon is only as valuable as its source. I suppose, if the country reacted violently enough, a president could withdraw his pardon. But God never withdraws His pardon—or His mercy.

Isa. 55:7 says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (NASB).*

2. Pardon has as its purpose, freedom. A legal pardon, however, has nothing to do with the conscience or the heart. A man may be legally free, but inwardly in bondage. The Bible includes a thrilling chapter concerning God's pardon.

Paul says in Rom. 5:1, "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." John 8:36 is a great verse: "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." Paul again reminds us in Gal. 5:1, "It was for freedom [from sin] that Christ set us free."

3. Pardon has its price. We are reminded in 2 Cor. 5:19 that "God

was in Christ reconciling the world," and in 1 John 2:2 that Christ "is the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10 states further: "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Titus 2:14 states: "[Christ] gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed." Finally, Gal. 3:13 is a great reminder: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us."

Pardon is an Old Testament word, implying the mercy of God, under law. In the New Testament, the mercy is expressed through grace, forgiveness, redemption, and reconciliation.

What's in a Worship Service?

Ezek. 40:4 has something that could be applied to worship. "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show it to you. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see."

1. *Worship is a personal moment.* "Give attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show it to you."

*All scripture in this article is from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971.

2. *Worship has a personal message for each individual.* Notice how often the pronoun *you* occurs, and how it occurs in relation to God's message.

3. *Worship has a personal mission implied.* "Declare to the house of Israel all that you see."

Any pastor, acquainted with where his people are in their pilgrimage, can add to these thoughts.

Something to Ponder

I ran across these words in *Sunshine* magazine: "That man proves his worth who can make us listen when he is with us, and think when he has gone."

What a challenge for the pastor to keep in mind as he prays and prepares!

A sermon for Pentecost Sunday

The Basic Aspects of Pentecostal Experience

By E. E. Wordsworth*

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:1-13

TEXT: "What meaneth this?" (Acts 2:12)

INTRODUCTION: Israel had three national annual feasts—Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. The feast of Pentecost followed the Passover by 50 days. In Christian experience also there must be a Passover—"When I see the blood, I will pass over you"—before we enter our Canaan, or Pentecostal life. But much confusion exists regarding the meaning of Pentecost. Some teach three works of grace: conversion, sanctification, baptism of the Spirit. Another emphasizes shallow emotionalism, another the baptism of power, but the rejection of heart purity. Others teach certain gifts as the evidence of the Spirit's baptism.

We must look at the Scriptures, for the criteria for judgment of the true meaning of Pentecost *must be the Word of God*. Here we find valid doctrine. All other ground is sinking sand (see 2 Tim. 3:16-17). What are the constituent elements of Pentecostal experience?

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I. PENTECOST MEANS HEART PURITY.

John the Baptist preached two baptisms—water and fire (Matt. 3:11-12).

Fire separates, purifies, purges, and destroys. Paul says in Rom. 6:6: "That the body of sin might be destroyed." "For he that is dead is freed from sin" (v. 7). Peter affirms that both Jews and Gentiles received identical cleansing and Spirit-filling (Acts 15:8-9). Ralph Earle points out that the verbs *giving* and *purifying* suggest a crisis rather than a process, described by the aorist. Daniel Steele, speaking of Acts 15:9, says: "This verse is a key to the instantaneous, sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost wrought in the hearts of believers on the day of Pentecost—since the words 'even as he did unto us' refer to that occasion." Dr. Earle in *Beacon Bible Commentary* mentions Knowling's pertinent observation about *purifying* (cleansing, *katharisas*) *their hearts*. He says: "Here it stands in contrast to the outward purification of circumcision upon which the Judaizers insisted."

When Jesus cleansed the leper, which

is a striking type of sin in the soul, He completely cleansed away this disease (Matt. 8:3). It was also instantaneous, not gradual—"immediately."

II. BASIC PENTECOSTAL EXPERIENCE ALSO MEANS THE INFILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Acts 2:4; 4:8).

The "rushing mighty wind," "cloven tongues like as of fire," and "other tongues" were marginal and temporary. A brand-new dispensation was being ushered in. Paul wrote: "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not" (1 Cor. 14:22). Tongues were for the Jews who required a special sign to convince them that Gentiles as well as Jews may receive the blessings of this dispensation (1 Cor. 1:22).

The blessed fullness of the Spirit is the norm of New Testament experience. The seven deacons were required to be Spirit-filled (Acts 6:4).

Barnabas was a Spirit-filled servant of God (Acts 11:24). Saul received his sight and was filled with the Spirit three days after his Damascus road conversion (Acts 9:17). Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Be filled with the Spirit" (5:18).

E. Stanley Jones, called by many "the greatest missionary since Paul," tells of his personal Pentecost. He had been soundly converted, but found things in the cellar of his life. Tempers, attitudes, disgruntled kind of feeling, a battle, a struggle which puzzled him. He began reading the book *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, and it set his heart afire. The inner voice (Spirit) said, "This is the time to get it." He wanted to finish reading the book first, but the Spirit said, "Now!"

He closed the book and dropped on his knees beside his bed and asked, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" The Lord asked if he would give his all, assuring him that the altar sanctifies the gift. Mr. Jones said he would give all and rose from his knees without any feeling. He walked about the room literally pushing his doubts away from him. Then suddenly he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Waves of refining, cleansing fire went through him, and he walked the floor with tears of joy for some minutes. He said that the Holy Spirit had moved in

and moved into the subconscious. His conscious and subconscious mind were under a single control and no longer at war. He testifies, "I knew that life was permanently upon a higher level. My soul was beating out music faster than ever before. It was the second degree of glory."

The seeker of heart purity and Spirit-infilling must always remember that the experience is received and retained by faith in the efficacious, atoning Blood (Heb. 13:12) and the promises of God.

Do not place your faith in your consecration, emotions, ecstasies, the witness, or tears, but in the blood of Christ and His Holy Word. "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said . . . they that believe" (John 7:38-39). "Sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18). This means faith in the Blood that provides it, faith in the promises of God (Gal. 3:14).

III. ANOTHER BASIC ASPECT IS DYNAMIC SPIRITUAL POWER.

In Acts 1:7-8, we have two Greek words for power. Power is *authority* in v. 7. In v. 8 it is *dynamis* from which we get the word *dynamite*. Properly, this means "freedom to exercise the inward force or faculty expressed by *dynamis*—the power of the Holy Spirit." "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

This power is an absolute necessity for the Church of Jesus Christ—personally and collectively. There is no worthy substitute. Without it we merely masquerade, operate in the flesh, and grieve the Holy Spirit.

We have read of a man who was offered an attractive sum of money if he would attempt to take a motorless automobile from New York to Los Angeles. He accepted the challenge because he coveted the prize. He started, and on the level or downgrade he moved along, but he encountered hills and bad roads and many difficult places. Scores of times he "thumbed" passing drivers for needed help. He always tried to cover up the missing engine. Some cursed him and refused to help. Some gave help. He missed many meals and had sleepless nights, but after many months he reached Los

Angeles and received his prize. He declared he would never do it again for all the money in the world. This is like trying to operate the Church without the powerful engine of the Holy Spirit. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit."

The new convert needs to realize the need of the indwelling Spirit. As we walk in the light, the precious blood of Christ cleanses, and the Spirit fills the inner self.

The apostle not only found "evil . . . present," in Romans 7, but also noticed power absent: "How to perform . . . I find not."

In the Fall, man was not only deprived, he was also *deprived*. Corruption had entered. Vitality was gone. Because of this original sin in his nature man needs the mighty power of the Spirit. Both preacher and laymen need a genuine Pentecost.

We greatly err when we locate power only in gifts. There is not only power for witnessing, but the Scriptures also teach the need of power for daily life. "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim. 1: 8). Here is suffering rather than service. Paul needed more grace and power in the dungeon at Philippi than on Mars' Hill. In Col. 1:11, he crystallized the truth as "power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." This is subjective rather than objective—"strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16).

IV. PENTECOST IN EXPERIENCE ALSO MEANS THE STATE OF PERFECT LOVE TO GOD AND MAN.

Jesus, in His high-priestly prayer in John 17, was burdened for the sanctification of His disciples (17:17). Pentecost

answered His intercession. It came "suddenly" (Acts 2:2). It is always instantaneous in purifying, infilling, and enduement, but it results in a condition or state of perfect love. Note His prayer: "O righteous Father . . . these have known that thou hast sent me . . . that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them" (17:25-26). "That thou and thy love, and I and my love, may be in them . . . That they may love me with that love" (*Wesley's New Testament Notes*).

The pre-Pentecostal religious state of the disciples was characterized by a narrow sectarianism, self-seeking, a vindictive spirit, a self-saving spirit, dullness of understanding, cowardice, doubts, fears, and other carnal manifestations. Their love life was very imperfect. But Pentecost filled them with divine (*agape*) love such as Jesus had.

We recall an aged saint of God who told us how he found the sanctifying grace of God. No doctrinal, clarifying message from the pulpit had pointed the way. But his heart hunger for holiness drove him repeatedly to his knees, searching the Scriptures, and the reading of Cook's *Theology* on sanctification. One day he read these words: "If you have anything in your heart contrary to divine love you are not yet sanctified." He read it again, then put the book on his lap, bowed his head, and began to pray. Soon he was on his knees prevailing with God, tears flowing. In a few moments he was blessedly filled with the Holy Spirit. This was instantaneous, and the years following he lived a victorious life hid with Christ in God. His love was always perfect—one of God's saints day by day.

First Corinthians 13 is a full description of the perfect love we possess when we have received a personal Pentecost. It is for us all today (Acts 2:38-39).

OUR STEWARDSHIP is always showing—in our practice of the art of worship, in the way we support our beliefs with our money, and in the whole disposition of our lives towards God and our fellowmen.

—Selected

IN THE STUDY

Looking at Our Lord in Luke

May 4

MAKING MOUNTAINS OUT OF MOLEHILLS (11:42)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 11:37-42

INTRODUCTION: The name "Pharisees" literally means "the separated ones." In the two centuries before Christ many of the Jews became worldly. They conformed more and more to the customs of the pagans around them. The sect of the Pharisees arose in opposition to this trend.

The Pharisees prided themselves on strict adherence to the law of Moses. Unlike the other Jews, they meticulously observed every least regulation in the Law. They even went beyond this and developed a long list of rules, called "the tradition of the elders." This consisted of minute, detailed regulations for every aspect of daily living. The Pharisees called this "putting a fence around the Law," to keep it from being broken.

All this was a burden too heavy for the common people to bear. But the Pharisees were "the separated ones," who felt they were the only godly people in Israel.

I. MAJORING ON MINORS

One day a Pharisee invited Jesus to come to his house for dinner. We read that Jesus went in and "sat down to meat." This is one word in Greek, *anepesen*. Literally it means "He fell back"; that is, "He reclined." This refers to the prevailing custom in the better homes of Palestine in that day of reclining on couches around the table while eating. The correct translation here is:

"So he went in and reclined at the table" (*New International Version*). *

We do not know why this Pharisee invited Jesus home for dinner, but we do know that he was critical in his attitude. He was watching Jesus carefully and "marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner."

This does not mean that his Guest came to the table with dirt on His hands. But He had failed to go through the ceremonial process prescribed by the Pharisees at that time. The Greek verb translated "washed" here is *baptizo*, which we have taken over into English as "baptize." It was the lack of observing the religious ceremony of washing that bothered the Pharisee.

Noting the attitude of His host, Jesus said: "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." The King James word *ravening* hardly communicates anything to the modern reader. The Greek word

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By Ralph Earle

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means "robbery" or "greediness." While the Pharisees were legalistically bathing their bodies, their hearts were full of greed and wickedness.

Verse 41 seems difficult to understand (read in KJV). The *New International Version* gives a good translation of the original Greek: "But give what is inside to the poor, and everything will be clean for you." That is, do not give just money to the poor, give your heart! Someone has well expressed it this way: "A loving deed makes the hands clean." That was the lesson this Pharisee needed to learn.

The Pharisees were majoring on minors. Jesus said: "Ye tithe the mint and rue and all manner of herbs." They carefully counted out each little item of what they raised and conscientiously gave one-tenth of it to God. But they were failing to give unselfish love to Him and to their fellow-men. They were giving meticulous attention to their outward acts, but neglecting their inner attitudes.

II. MISSING THE IMPORTANT

The charge that Jesus brought against the Pharisees was this: You "pass over judgment and the love of God"—better, "You neglect justice and the love of God" (NIV). They were strong on "judgment" in the sense of judging others constantly. But they lacked that sense of fairness and justice that is emphasized in both the Old Testament and the New.

This is the bane of all legalism. It is so engrossed in the minute details of the minor things of life that it misses the most important matters. Jesus put it graphically on another occasion when He talked about a man asking to pull a speck out of his brother's eye when he himself had a big plank in his own eye. Tithing is important. But the all-important thing is showing a good attitude and being fair and just in all that we do in life.

III. MAKING NO BALANCE

The good life is a balanced life. Jesus said: "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." In other words, "Don't stop tithing, but be careful to show justice and love." God is not pleased with our worshiping Him when we show a bad spirit to others. In His sight this is sheer hypocrisy. Or, to put it in the context here: "God does not care

for ceremonies in themselves, and only cares for them at all when they are accompanied by sincere goodness" (Farrar). The Pharisees were concerned with tithes and ceremonial washing, but they neglected "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23: 23).

CONCLUSION: The chief occupation of legalists is making mountains out of molehills. We need to keep a proper balance between the outer and the inner. The first is important, but the latter is the most important.

May 11

THE MAN GOD CALLED A FOOL

(12:20)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 12:13-21

INTRODUCTION: One day a man came to Jesus with this urgent request: "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me" (NIV). It may be that this man was being denied his fair share of the family estate. But perhaps it was a different picture: This fellow was the younger of two sons. His father had just died. According to the Mosaic law (Deut. 21: 17), the oldest son was to receive a double portion of his father's estate—in this case, two-thirds of the total. The younger son was not satisfied with the arrangement; he wanted his older brother to give him half the estate. Now he is trying to get Jesus, who was obviously kind and loving, to help him out.

In reply, Christ remonstrated with this selfish individual: "Man, who made me a judge or a divider [arbitrator] over you?" He then went on to warn the man: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (v. 15).

To reinforce this truth, Jesus told the parable of the rich fool (vv. 16-21). The rich man of this parable was a fool for three reasons.

I. HE THOUGHT MORE OF HIMSELF THAN OF OTHERS (v. 18).

This man was blessed with abundance.

We read: "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully." It wasn't he who made his crops grow; it was God. But instead of thanking God for His favor, he only congratulated himself.

He was embarrassed with abundance. Looking at his bumper crop, he cried out in consternation, "What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops" (NIV). It was a hard problem.

What was his decision? "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits"—the Greek says "grain"—"and my goods."

What was wrong with this? Legally it was all right, but morally it was all wrong. Why? Because all around him were poor people, many of whom did not have enough to eat. If this man had had any conscience, he would have distributed his surplus food to his needy neighbors instead of storing it up for himself.

II. HE THOUGHT MORE OF HIS BODY THAN HIS SOUL (v. 19).

On the surface this verse seems to contradict that statement. He would say to his "soul," that is, himself: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." What a fool! He thought he could feed his soul on physical food. That is crazy!

The word *soul* has many meanings in English, just as the Greek word here, *psyche*, had many connotations. In their *Lexicon* Arndt and Gingrich say: "It is often impossible to draw hard and fast lines between the meanings of this many-sided word." Actually, this foolish man was making the mistake that many foolish people make today: He was thinking that the material is the main part of life. It is the same mistake that millions are making today. They live only for physical satisfaction, forgetting that they have:

*A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.*

"Eat, drink, and be merry." This is the philosophy of too many today. This is all of life! But it means a dead soul and an empty heart.

III. HE THOUGHT MORE OF TIME THAN ETERNITY (v. 20).

No wonder that Jesus indicated God

called this man a fool! And then He gave the divine judgment: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

The rich man—who was really "the poor man"—thought only of time; he forgot eternity. This was a serious oversight, as he now learned. He could not take one thing of all the mass of goods he had accumulated.

The fatal mistake that most people make is that they forget eternity. Yet the belief in an afterlife is a definite part of human consciousness.

CONCLUSION: Suppose a person had his choice between one year of pleasure and 50 years of agonizing suffering on the one hand, and on the other hand one year of hardship and 50 years of glorious happiness; which would he choose? Only a fool would choose the former!

May 18

ON BEING READY FOR THE RETURN OF CHRIST (12:40)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 12:35-53

INTRODUCTION: Much today is being said about the Second Coming. Some people would like to call for a moratorium on the subject. But just because a few fanatics say and write a lot of wild speculation is no excuse for our avoiding a topic that bulks so large in the New Testament. All three Synoptic Gospels give a prominent place to it; the note is struck with startling clarity in the first chapter of Acts (v. 11). It is the main emphasis of Paul's first two Epistles (1 and 2 Thessalonians). We are not being scriptural when we ignore it.

Always the main emphasis of Jesus was on watchfulness, rather than on specific events. We need often to sound this important note.

I. THE NEED FOR WATCHFULNESS (v. 40)

Jesus said, "Let your loins be girded about." This is a familiar phrase in both the Old and New Testaments. It is the figure of a person pulling together the

sash of his long, flowing robe in preparation for setting out on a journey. We should always be ready for our last journey—to heaven.

He also said that we should have our lights burning. This reminds us of the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25. Those who let their lights go out or burn low will not be ready when Christ comes.

Then Jesus drew a comparison, that of servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding. They must be ready to answer his knock and open the door immediately. The servants who are ready will be blessed with special favor from the master, who may return late at night or in the early morning hours. We must be ready whenever Christ comes.

II. THE NEED FOR FAITHFULNESS (v. 42)

Peter, as usual, had something to say. He wondered if Jesus was giving this "parable" (vv. 35-40) for the disciples alone or for all the people (v. 41). In reply the Master gave another brief parable. He spoke of a "faithful and wise steward," or house manager, who would have the responsibility of distributing food daily to the members of the household. Then He added, "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (v. 43). He would be put in charge of all the master's possessions.

But if the servant said to himself, "My master is taking a long time in coming" (NIV), and began to beat the men and women servants, eat and drink and get drunk, the master would return at an unexpected time. The servant would then receive the severe punishment he deserved.

The question is often raised as to whether there will be degrees of punishment in hell. Verses 47 and 48 seem clearly to answer that question in the affirmative. Jesus indicated that the severity of the punishment would be governed by its victim's light. The one who knew the Master's will but failed to obey would be "beaten with many stripes," while the one who unknowingly disobeyed would be "beaten with few stripes." Jesus added, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (v. 48). This puts a solemn responsibility on us who have been

privileged to have such great light and who have received so much from God.

III. THE NEED FOR STEADFASTNESS (v. 52)

Jesus came to bring peace on earth (2:14). But here in v. 51, He indicates that there is another side to the picture. Because Christ demands undivided loyalty, He will become the cause of divisions within families. Parents will turn against their children, and children against their parents. All this will require steadfast determination on the part of Christians. Many people have had to make a firm decision between God and their loved ones, and some have suffered severely for their faith. It takes endurance to make it through to heaven. And this is needed if we are to be ready for Christ's return.

May 25

REPENT OR PERISH (13:5)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 13:1-9

INTRODUCTION: Some of Jesus' hearers came to Him to tell Him about a recent tragedy. Pilate had killed some Galileans in the Temple, so that their blood was "mingled with their sacrifices" (v. 1). We have no other record of this specific incident, but it fits in perfectly with what we know of Pilate's character. Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century, tells of a number of horrible massacres that took place during Pilate's administration. Evidently so few were killed in this one that Josephus does not even mention it. Possibly this was the incident that caused Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee, to become an enemy of Pilate (23:12).

In reply Jesus said, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way?" (v. 2, NIV). Emphatically He declared, "No!" Then He added, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The fact that one dies a violent death is no special sign of God's disfavor. But He has, in His Word, revealed clearly His displeasure with every impenitent sinner.

For good measure Jesus added another incident to the one they mentioned.

Nothing further is known about the tower in Siloam falling and killing 18 people. But it is easy to understand what happened.

The village of Siloam is on a sloping hillside just south of Jerusalem. Rains may have loosened the soil, causing the tower to slip a bit and fall.

As frequently, Jesus told a parable to illustrate His point that the unrepentant will perish. This time it was the parable of the barren fig tree (vv. 6-9).

I. THE CONDITION OF THE TREE (v. 6)

A man had planted a fig tree in his vineyard. The next June, when the figs should have been ripe, he came looking for fruit, but found none.

The application to the Jewish nation is obvious. The people were horrified at the terrible massacre in the Temple. But the religious leaders of the nation were the ones who really deserved to die and would ultimately perish. They were not bearing the fruit of righteousness in their lives.

II. THE CONDEMNATION OF THE TREE (v. 7)

Jesus pictured the owner coming to the one who took care of the vineyard and saying to him: "For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?" (NIV). It is hard to miss the reference to the three years of Jesus' public ministry. During all this time the leaders of the nation had borne no spiritual fruit.

III. THE CONSIDERATION FOR THE TREE (vv. 8-9)

The caretaker of the vineyard begged for a little more time: "Leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down" (NIV).

The extension of time could refer to the months that transpired before the Christian Church took the place of Israel as God's own people. Or it could point forward to A.D. 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed and the Temple worship came to an end.

This chapter ends with Jesus' sad lament over Jerusalem (vv. 34-35). The people did not repent, and so they were left desolate.

CONCLUSION: Are we bearing fruit? There are two meanings to fruit: (1) the fruit of the Spirit in our lives; (2) the winning of souls to Christ. Are we bearing fruit in both ways?



Outlines for Mother's Day

By Derl G. Keefer

Portrait of a Good Mother

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND: Luke 1:26-38

- I. A GOOD MOTHER LOVES GOD (v. 30)
- II. A GOOD MOTHER POSSESSES GOD (v. 35)
- III. A GOOD MOTHER SHOWS GOD (v. 35)
- IV. A GOOD MOTHER SERVES GOD (v. 38)

Mother's Hymn Song

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND: Luke 1:46-56

- I. A MOTHER'S HYMN IS ONE OF PRAISE TO GOD (v. 46)
- II. A MOTHER'S HYMN IS ONE OF HUMILITY TO GOD (v. 48)
- III. A MOTHER'S HYMN IS ONE OF REMEMBERING GOD (v. 49)
- IV. A MOTHER'S HYMN IS ONE OF POINTING TO GOD (vv. 50-55)

Mary—A Mother's Mother

- I. MARY—CONSECRATED TO GOD'S WILL (Luke 1:38)
- II. MARVELS AT GOD'S WILL (Luke 2:33)
- III. TREASURES GOD'S WILL (Luke 2:19)
- IV. PRAISES GOD'S WILL (Luke 1:46)
- V. SUBMITS TO GOD'S WILL (Luke 2:22)
- VI. ACCOMPLISHES GOD'S WILL (Luke 2:7)

A Mother's Ideal

A mother's ideal is:

- I. A CHRISTIAN HUSBAND (Matt. 1:19)
- II. A GOD-CENTERED HOME (Matt. 2:11)
- III. A GOD-LOVED OFFSPRING (Matt. 3:17)
- IV. A GOD-POINTING OFFSPRING (Matt. 4:17)

Jesus and His Mother

- I. JESUS WRAPPED IN LOVE (Luke 2:7)
- II. JESUS PUTS GOD FIRST (Luke 2:46-50)
- III. JESUS OBEYS HIS MOTHER (Luke 2:51)
- IV. JESUS MEETS THE NEEDS OF HIS MOTHER (John 19:26)

Sermon Starters

By Robert L. Chason

The Faith of a Harlot

SCRIPTURE: Josh. 2:1-24

- I. ACTIVE FAITH (v. 4)
 - A. Saved the two spies
 - B. Peter and John at the Temple
- II. BELIEVING FAITH (v. 9)
 - A. Took God at His word
 - B. Abraham believing God
- III. A CONTINUING FAITH (v. 18)
 - A. Had to keep the scarlet cord
 - B. Elijah's discouragement after Mount Carmel
- IV. A REWARDING FAITH (Josh. 6:23)
 - A. Saved herself
 - B. Saved all of her family

CONCLUSION: Rahab acted upon the faith that she had, and it resulted in her and all of her family being saved. If you will act upon the faith that God has given you, then you may have the same results.

The Death of the Righteous

TEXT: Num. 23:10

- I. PEACEFUL DEATH (John 14:27)
 - A. Resting in peace
 - B. Jesus will walk with them
- II. VICTORIOUS DEATH (1 Cor. 15:55-57)
 - A. Victory over sin

B. Victory over Satan

C. Victory in Jesus

- III. REWARDING DEATH (Rev. 22:12)
 - A. Hear Him say: "Well done"
 - B. Receive the crown of life
 - C. Live with Jesus forever

CONCLUSION: The death of the beggar Lazarus

The Choice That Determines Your Destiny

TEXT: Josh. 24:15

- I. PERSONAL CHOICE—"Choose you"
- II. IMMEDIATE CHOICE—"This day"
- III. IMPORTANT CHOICE—"Whom ye will serve"
- IV. DECISIVE CHOICE—"Will serve"

Hannah, a Model Mother

SCRIPTURE: 1 Sam. 1:10; 2:19; 3:20

- I. PRAYING MOTHER (1:10)
- II. WORKING MOTHER (2:19)
- III. BLESSED MOTHER (3:20)

Sanctify the People

TEXT: Heb. 13:12

- I. THE PURPOSE OF GOD: "That he might sanctify the people"
- II. THE PROVISION OF JESUS: "With his own blood"
 - A. Personal provision—rather than ceremonial—veil was rent
 - B. Permanent provision (Heb. 3:1)
 - C. Purging provision (*sanctify* means to cleanse)
- III. THE PRICE OF HOLINESS (Heb. 13:13)
 - A. The price to the Jews ("without the camp")
 1. Meant leaving their religion
 2. Meant leaving their families
 - B. The price to Jesus
 1. The Cross
 2. The reproach
 - C. The price to us
The cross of self-denial

MICHAEL SELLARS

Parable for Mothers

The young mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is the way long?" she asked.

Her Guide said, "Yes. And the way is hard. And you will be old before you reach the end of it. But the end will be better than the beginning."

But the young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these years. So she played with her children, and gathered flowers for them along the way, and bathed with them in the clear streams, and the sun shone on them, and life was good, and the young mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this."

Then night came, and storm, and the path was dark and the children shook with fear and cold, and the mother drew them close and covered them with her mantle, and the children said, "Mother, we are not afraid, for you are near, and no harm can come." And the mother said, "This is better than the brightness of day, for I have taught my children courage."

And the morning came and there was a hill ahead, and the children climbed and grew weary, and the mother was weary, but at all times she said to the children, "A little patience, and we are there." So they climbed and when they reached the top they said, "We could not have done it without you, Mother."

And the mother, when she lay down that night, looked up at the stars and said, "This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned fortitude and endurance in the face of hardness."

And the next day came strange clouds which darkened the earth—clouds of war and hate and evil—and the children groped and stumbled. The mother said, "Look up. Lift your eyes to the Light." And the children looked and saw above the clouds an everlasting glory, and it guided them and brought them through the darkness. And that night the mother said, "This is the best day of all, for I have shown my children God."

And the days went on, and the weeks and the months and the years, and the mother grew old, and she was tired and weary. But her children were tall and

strong and walked with courage. And when the way was rough, they lifted her and carried her. And at last they came to a hill, and beyond the hill they could see a shining road, and golden gates flung wide.

And the mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey. Now I know that the end is better than the beginning, for the children can walk alone, and their children after them."

And the children said, "You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates."

And they stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed after her. And they said, "We cannot see her, but she is with us still. A mother like ours is more than a memory, she is a living presence."

—TEMPLE BAILEY

(Clipped from a magazine many years ago
by Mark F. Smith)

BULLETIN



BARREL

A graduate student working on a juvenile delinquent project reported in a Wisconsin University seminar that he was having difficulty in collecting data.

His project was to telephone a dozen homes around 9 p.m. and ask parents if they knew where their children were.

"My first five calls," he said, "were answered by children who had no idea where their parents were."

CHARITY

is *SILENCE*

when words would hurt,

is *PATIENCE*

when your neighbor's curt,

is *DEAFNESS*

when a scandal flows,

is *THOUGHTFULNESS*

for others' woes,

is *PROMPTNESS*

when stern duty calls,

is *COURAGE*

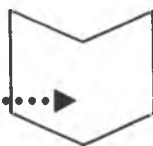
when misfortune falls.

—Anonymous



HERE AND THERE

AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
your Publishing House

Preaching to Change Lives

By *Wayne Dehoney* (Broadman Press, 1974. Paper, 124 pp., \$2.50.)

Wayne Dehoney is pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., and presents in this book 12 of his sermons which he believes represent the kind of preaching that changes lives. In a brief introduction to the book, he suggests some of the qualities of effective preaching. These are: that preaching must be *authoritative*, that it must be *relevant* (in a person-centered rather than an issue-centered relevancy), that it must be *good news*, and that it must be *evangelistic*. The title of his book would suggest a development of these and related issues. It was disappointing to see only the briefest reference to them, followed by the collection of sermons. They are good sermons, and they are examples of the principles suggested in the introduction. Perhaps a more accurate title would have been *Sermons That Change Lives*.

JAMES MCGRAW

Duncan Campbell

By *Andrew Woolsey* (Hodder and Stoughton and the Faith Mission, 1974. Paper, 188 pp., \$1.95.)

Revival is possible in our day. We may have it if we pay the price, was the conviction of Duncan Campbell.

The biography of this Scottish Highland preacher is a moving, God-glorifying account of revival that came to the

Hebrides, Scotland, and North Ireland during the last 20 years.

Duncan Campbell had learned during World War II that fighting was a team-work affair. Upholding this "spokesman for eternity" were many praying bands whom God used to bring down the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. Stirring incidents show the verity of the Spirit's ministry today.

Holiness of life was Duncan Campbell's central message. "Revival must ever be related to holiness," he said. "Holiness is not just a doctrine to be taught; it is a way of life." He experienced and believed in cleansing subsequent to conversion.

Author Woolsey has given us an honest picture of a very human being who preached the Bible in simplicity and sincerity with Heaven's anointing.

Minister and layman will benefit by reading this biography of a man whom God used in contemporary revival work.

HILMA PHILLIPS BOUCK

A History of Preaching, Vol. 3

By *Ralph G. Turnbull* (Baker Book House, 1974. Cloth, 586 pp., bibliography and indices, \$12.95.)

This is the third in a three-volume set, the first two having been written by Edwin C. Dargan. Ralph G. Turnbull follows the schemata adopted by Dargan, dealing in four parts with the four centuries covered in the book (seventeenth through twentieth), with each phase within that structure receiving attention. Turnbull's introduction is refresh-

ing in its expression of faith in the high office of preaching. He notes the dramatic social changes of recent years and the demands by some for a moratorium on preaching because of its seeming impotency, but he declares: "The fact remains that this period was outstanding in preaching. With the ebb and flow of the tides of the Spirit, preaching remains as God's chosen way of confronting man with saving truth and a personal Savior, who is the Lord of all life."

Because American preaching was not included in Dargan's two volumes, this omission is given special treatment in Vol. 3. Part I (seventeenth century) deals with preaching in the United States by Pilgrims and Puritans from Europe, and by Puritans educated in New England. Part II (eighteenth century) covers preaching in that period by Puritans, and by Evangelicals. In Part III (nineteenth century) there is treatment of preaching in the United States by Evangelicals and by liberals. In Part IV (twentieth century) there are chapters dealing with preaching in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and in Great Britain.

Turnbull demonstrates unusual insights into the recent changes in preaching during the first half of our century. He notes that there is no longer a "captive audience," and that the use of radio and television has tended to demand a shorter sermon and a more "journalistic" style of speech. The audience has had to be attracted and held by the manner of the preacher, as well as his message. The challenge of a new generation which thought in terms of new morality and a situation ethic has affected preaching styles. The tragic view of life, a philosophy of nihilism, a generation without knowledge of the Bible and the Hebrew-Christian heritage have challenged the pulpit in new confrontation.

The three-volume set is a classic. When you have a comprehensive and lively presentation of preaching from the Apostolic Fathers to the Space Age, you have a standard in its field.

If Vol. 3 is "slanted," it is in the direction of the author's conviction, as he states it, "that preaching has always been God's method of communication—

above all other methods—and that the future is . . . bright for a revival of Biblical preaching in the apostolic and evangelical tradition."

JAMES MCGRAW



WANTED—Two copies of the book *Perfect Love*, by J. A. Wood.—Perry R. Hipple, 404 S. Columbus Blvd., Tucson, Ariz. 85711.

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● **The Witness of the Spirit**

Notes from John Wesley on this vital theme are prepared by Dr. Roy Nicholson.



AMONG OURSELVES

In these days we are witnessing a renewal of interest in the life and work of John Wesley. Or is that statement merely a reflection of my own feelings, which have been focused anew upon the contribution of this man and all for which he stands since the brethren in Yorkshire, England, conducted me on a tour of Epworth last year? Be that as it may, we welcome to this issue the addition of "Wesleyana," with a recently discovered letter to Charles Wesley from his mother. We are indebted to our associate, Dr. George E. Failing, for this contribution, and for others which will follow from month to month. Thank you, Dr. Failing. No Englishman who has ever lived had any greater influence upon his country, nor indeed upon the world, than this man Wesley with the "warmed heart." Do you recall the story of the English nobleman who asked a peasant, "Why is it that I can't find a place in this wretched village where I can buy a drink of liquor?" The humble villager, seeing the rank of his questioner, courteously replied: "Well, you see, my lord, about a hundred years ago, a man named John Wesley came preaching in these parts." They said of Wesley, "He acts as though he were out of breath in pursuit of souls!" May the same be said of all of us.

Yours for souls,



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