

7-1-1975

Preacher's Magazine Volume 50 Number 07

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Olivet Nazarene University

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Recommended Citation

McGraw, James (Editor), "Preacher's Magazine Volume 50 Number 07" (1975). *Preacher's Magazine*. 528.
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PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

— proclaiming Christian Holiness —

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THE

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

JAMES MCGRAW

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JULY, 1975

VOLUME 50 NUMBER 7

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The Communicating Christ



WHEN JESUS SPOKE, people listened. The poor heard Him gladly, the children pressed through the crowd to be closer to Him, the ignorant and unlearned understood what He said. The officers who were sent to take Him prisoner returned to their superiors without Him, and when asked why they had not arrested Him, the only explanation they could give was, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

When we preachers speak, we hope people listen. If the poor are not very glad about what we say, or if the children seem interested in other things, and the unlearned cannot make sense out of our messages, we tend to place the blame on them. Too often our attitude could be expressed: "I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I am not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant." Such bewildering uses of language—some would call it gobbledegook—is a curse wherever you find it. It is nowhere more of a curse than in the pulpit.

It should concern us that words, which are vehicles of communication, are being abused as often as used. Too often they conceal rather than reveal meanings. A high school principal in Connecticut recently resigned when he was found to have spent over a thousand dollars of public funds for his own use. In his letter of resignation he said, "I have exerted poor judgment resulting in errors in the area of financial procedures."

When Lieut. William Calley testified that he had been ordered to attack My Lai, he did not say he had been told to kill but to "waste" everyone in sight. Murder of an enemy spy, in military language, is called "termination with extreme prejudice." An air raid is a "limited duration protective strike."

Several months ago the voters of Ohio were asked to vote on the repeal of their income tax law. They were hardly prepared for the word-

ing of the ballot: "Shall the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the State of Ohio relative to conditions for and prohibitions upon the levy of a tax on income, except a municipal income tax, or increasing rates thereof, without the approval of the majority of the voting electors, be adopted?" The secretary of state explained that a yes vote meant a vote against the income tax, a no vote was for the continuation of the tax. Do you suppose every voter understood?

Do the people in our churches understand when we use theological terms which mean nothing to them? Would they grasp what John A. T. Robinson means (or do you?) when he writes in a recent periodical: "To assert with the apocalyptists that there is a necessary correspondence between *kairos* and *chronos* is always to say that the world must die on a certain date, and to give *chronos* the determination of *kairos*. But if one abandons this perversion of the prophetic truth, the eschatological principle still stands—the ultimate truth will be the final act"?

In contrast, Jesus used the language of His listeners. He connected the unknown (what He taught) with the known (what they already knew). He wanted them to know about God's forgiveness, so He told them about a father who welcomed his son back home. Replying to the question "Who is my neighbour?" He compared the priest and the Levite who passed by on the other side with the Samaritan who got down in the ditch with the man who had been robbed and beaten, and helped him with medication and food and lodging—but most of all, with love.

He spoke to His listeners about a farmer sowing seed, a sparrow being protected by God, a shepherd going out to look for a lost sheep, and a woman sweeping the house in search of a lost coin. He taught them by using examples such as a barren fig tree, a tiny mustard seed, a hidden treasure, a friend at midnight, the leaven in a loaf of bread, and the marriage of a king's son. He demonstrated that profound thoughts can be communicated best in simple language.

He knew how to use words that had meaning, and He also knew how to communicate in other ways. "Nonverbal" communication, the experts tell us, is sometimes more powerful than the spoken variety. Jesus looked upon Peter after that disciple had denied Him, and the message in that look was quite clear. "Peter went out, and wept bitterly" (Luke 22:62).

Jesus took a towel, girded himself, and with a basin of water washed His disciples' feet. With that act, using such unlikely instruments and employing such unusual methods, He taught them what genuine humility, loving service, and true greatness are like.

John Wesley once said, "When you think with the learned, you must speak with the common people." Thorndike reminds us that "until they get into the mind, words are only puffs of air or streaks of ink."

We need not be like the preacher who was said to be "incomprehensible on Sunday and invisible for the rest of the week." We must preach to be understood. With this as our goal, and Jesus as our Example, we may yet communicate His message to the people of our world before time runs out.



CALL TO SERVANTHOOD

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

5. THE PRIORITY OF PREACHING

"And his gifts were that some should be apostles . . ."

—Eph. 4:11, RSV¹

MY FRIEND GEORGE made an astonishing discovery as he reviewed the notes he had taken after several months of pastoral calling. He had begun his ministry in a certain church by interviewing his key laymen and asking them this question: "If you were the new pastor of this church, what would you do?" Many and varied were the responses. As he compiled and summarized the answers given, he was surprised to discover a glaring omission: *Nobody mentioned preaching!* Not a soul.

As George reflected on this striking observation, he recalled that no particular interest had been shown in his preaching ability when he was being interviewed as a pastoral candidate. A trial sermon would have been easy to arrange, but no one suggested it. As far as he could tell, there were no inquiries on the part of the official board in regard to his preaching.

George's experience troubled me, for I too have become painfully aware of the lack of interest in my role as preacher, which has too often been reflected in my congregations. Considering the public worship time devoted to preaching and hearing the Word, this "deafening silence" is cause for concern. I am not surprised that many of our colleagues have just

about given up on sermons entirely, and have moved toward snappy sermonettes (which produce Christianettes), drama, liturgical litanies, testimonial services, musical specials, panels, motion pictures, Bible studies. The earmark of truly great Spirit-filled services to many of our brethren are those when they don't get to preach. That is worth telling.

Yet I cannot escape the conviction that preaching is the heart and soul of my servant-task. Herman Melville's description of the whaler's pulpit expresses the lifelong feeling I have had about preaching:

Its panelled front was in the likeness of a ship's bluff bows, and the Holy Bible rested on a projecting piece of scroll work, fashioned after a ship's fiddle-headed beak.

What could be more full of meaning?—for the pulpit is ever this earth's foremost part; all the rest comes in its rear; the pulpit leads the world. From thence it is the storm of God's quick wrath is first described, and the bow must bear the earliest brunt. From thence it is the God of breezes fair or foul is first invoked for favorable winds. Yes, the world's a ship on its passage out, and not a voyage complete; and the pulpit is its prow.²

Unfortunately, Chaucer comes much closer to describing the parishioner's image of the pastoral task

when he draws a portrait of a good country parson in this manner:

But he would not be kept by rain or thunder,

If any had suffered a sickness or a blow,

*From visiting the farthest, high or low
Plodding his way on foot, his staff in hand.*

He was a model his flock could understand. . . .

*He did not rent his benefice for hire,
Leaving his flock to flounder in the mire,*

*And run to London, happiest of goals,
To sing paid masses in St. Paul's for souls,*

*Or as chaplain from some rich guild
take his keep,*

*But dwelt at home and guarded well
his sheep*

*So that no wolf should make his flock
miscarry.³*

George is the one who brought Chaucer's poem to my attention. He added that if he had interviewed a thousand church members, he doubted that anything substantial would have been added to Chaucer's vision of the kindly, approachable, gentle, and utterly innocuous pastor, in which the shepherd-image completely overrules the prophetic. George made the irreverent remark that parishioners are, by and large, a self-centered lot. Although Robert James St. Clair overdraws the picture, he does point out the absurdity to which flock-serving ministry can descend:

Across the supper table, one minister was conversing with a woman officer from his church. He had learned the technique of eating and smiling at the same time. After every remark of hers, his head nodded soberly and gently, twice, as if moved by a spring.

One remark elicited the sweetest joy, and another an expression of profound thought at the revealed wisdom. She remarked that the meat was nice and warm, and he exuded an ineffable radiance of sheer fulfillment. She made the observation that the butter had not been

around yet, and he dropped his fork, raised his eyebrows, and was clearly stunned at this collapse of the social amenities. When his poise was restored and the butter found, he continued nodding and smiling until he solemnly bent low to catch another pearl. She commented that they would all burst if they ate another speck, and it was only with the greatest effort that he restrained himself from roaring at her trenchant humor. One could only hope she wouldn't complain of a pain somewhere. Her pastor would be deranged with panic.⁴

"If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:17). And if the gospel of God (*euaggelion tou theou*) proclaiming (*kerusso*) this great salvation-deed is not announced (*euaggelidzo*) and taught (*didasko*), then our people walk in darkness. The "service" rendered by Jesus on behalf of the world is first and foremost preaching: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). The indicative of the gospel announcement is followed by the imperative of the gospel invitation: "Repent."

The servant's witness is not merely an esoteric word which a man may ponder among other words; it is the word about Jesus who confronts man in the power of suffering love and who thrusts man's whole human existence into crisis. It is the Word which causes Satan to fall like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18), plunders demons' strongholds (Mark 3:27; Luke 10:18), and announces that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). The Word thrusts man into the "now . . . of decision"—a decision to abandon the false security of present human existence and embrace the new life to be found in Christ and His kingdom (Luke 14:26). Or as Gunter Bornkamm puts it, "life, world and the existence of every individual, now

stand in the sudden flash of light of the coming of God, in the light of his reality and presence."

The commission of Jesus to His servant-disciples is nothing more nor less than the carrying on of His own activity, which was "to preach the kingdom of God and to heal" (Matt. 10:7-8; Mark 6:7-12; Luke 9:2; 10:9). The only difference now is that the Proclaimer has become the Proclaimed. Jesus preached the Kingdom; His servants preach Jesus. Yet the mode remains the same: that is, the kingdom of God comes to men in the person of Jesus by the word of preaching and the deed of healing. Or as Hans Kung phrases it, "Jesus' preaching of the reign of God is genuinely continued by the Church's preaching of the reign of Christ."

Paul gives us three lists outlining some of the major charisms imparted to the Church for the building up of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:8, 28 f.; Rom. 16:6 f.; Eph. 4:11). Each enumerates the gifts of the Spirit differently. But each of them gives priority to the charisms of the Word—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers. The Early Church realized that it was not right that the apostles "should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables" (Acts 6:2). There is nothing demeaning about serving tables: *diakonia*, "service," is used both in speaking of the "service of the Word" and in "serving tables." Contemporary lay-renewal theology is perfectly right in its insistence that there are not two classes of Christians, clergy and laity (*laikos*, "laity," never appears in the New Testament), but that the whole body of believers is elevated to *laos*, the "people of God." Nevertheless, *the law of service by which the community is called, established, sus-*

tained, built up, and ordered is the service of the Word. Gifts of the Spirit calling forth servants of the Word have precedence. God's act of "reconciling the world to himself" is made known by "the message of reconciliation" which is entrusted to the community in the person of "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

Whether the church recognizes, honors, and celebrates the priority of preaching or not, a divine imperative is laid upon us in whom the Spirit has inspired a charism of preaching to fulfill our service. More than it ever knows or will acknowledge, the *laos*, "people of God," live by the Word. The Word bearing the life of God accomplishes its purpose whether it be received with applause or rejected with contempt. Paul and Barnabas went into Lystra preaching the good news of Jesus and healing. One day their message was received with cries of adulation bordering on idolatrous worship. The next day they were thrown out of the city, and Paul was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19). Nevertheless, some were converted and a church was established.

So George, hang in there, preach the Word, and let everything else take a secondary place. The people may never rise up and call you "blessed," but they will be blessed nevertheless.

1. All scripture quotations in this article are from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946 and 1952.

2. Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (Random House), p. 39. Used with permission.

3. Theodore Morrison, ed. and trans., *Chaucer* (New York: The Viking Press, 1959), pp. 74-75. Used with permission.

4. Robert James St. Clair, *Neurotics in the Church* (New York: Revell & Co., 1963), p. 101. Used with permission.

The conscientious pastor sometimes wonders whether or not it is time to move. God's guidance takes many different forms.

The Saturation Point

YOU HAVE REALLY HELPED ME."

That was a welcome comment. Any preacher enjoys hearing such a response, but when the compliment comes from a fellow pastor, it is a double blessing.

My friend was one of dozens of us who had come to the end of his row. Not that he had reached retirement age by any means. He was healthy and quite flamboyant in the pulpit when the Spirit demanded it. He was pastoring a rural church. He admitted they were some of the best people he had ever pastored.

"I'm running into some serious opposition. I can't lay my hands on the problem. For a while we were going great and the people responded well," he lamented.

My friend was well educated—a graduate of one of our church schools. He had done additional work in other colleges. He loved science and could make the prophetic scriptures live for the hearer. Frankly, he was one of my favorite preachers, and I told him so.

"It seems I don't get through to the people anymore," he continued. "Sometimes I just don't want to go and preach. . . . Maybe I just don't have what it takes. Perhaps I've spent all I have to give."

"You're getting very close to the truth," I told him. "Let's examine your situation. You are now preaching to my people as a guest evangelist, and the people are 'eating you up.' That tells me that you still have something to give." He perked up a little.

"Buddy, let me tell you something that will shock you, but when you see through it, you will know that many pastors could have been redeemed from secular jobs, had they realized it."

"I respect what you have to say," he said eagerly.

"At one church there was a situation where numerous well-qualified men had done their best. One had bought new ground. Another had built a parsonage, and still another had led in the building program of a spacious church. The attendance had never taken a sharp curve upward. There were gains, but they made no headlines in the minds of the community.

"Then a gung-ho preacher came and stayed for about a year and a half. They began a bus program and expanded to five or six busses. Attendance doubled in a six-months period. But he, like you, reached a point as we all do."



by
Carlos H. Sparks

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"What's that?" he asked excitedly.

"The point when the people had enough of him."

"You mean people get tired of a guy like that?"

"Yes. Much sooner than a slower-paced leader."

He listened intently as I gave him my views.

The facts are that most leaders who feel they are washed-up are just getting a signal. All human beings are capable of just so much and no more. The minister who feels he has nothing more to say obviously has a great deal more to say. For instance, in my friend's church, the folk are not highly educated. They would soon tire of heavy intellect.

"Think of your people as sponges," I told him. "If you pour water on a sponge it will retain just so much, and the rest runs off. You can pour on a half gallon or 10,000 barrels, but those sponges retain only their capacity."

"You are saying that I may be a five-gallon preacher that has only put out a quart and my people are full."

"You've got it," I said. "This doesn't mean that your people do not appreciate a good thing. It surely doesn't mean they are carnal. They soaked up every sermon when they were dry and thirsty for what you had to give."

"I see," he mused.

"Now here is what happens. With proper spiritual guidance you move

on to another charge. The new set of sponges open every pore and drink you in. For a year, 2 years, or even 10 years, you can keep filling them. Meantime, back at your present church a new pastor comes and enjoys the same success you had there and are having in your new charge."

"Well, I never thought of it just that way," he said. "What do I do now?"

"I believe I would talk to my district superintendent and frankly express what you have told me. No doubt he has 'full sponges' in several spots on the district."

"I might just do that." He seemed excited.

"Love your people. Realize that you both have a problem. You can extend your effective tenure by more numerous revival campaigns with varied types of evangelists. You can read some of the master pulpiteers, and borrow some facet of their style if it fits you. In all of these ways, you are bidding for a little more space in a saturated sponge. Just have sense enough to know that wherever you go, most of the people can take only so much of what you have to give. It's not your fault or their fault. God made us these different ways."

"You have helped me a lot. I'm surely going to think of my situation in a different light. I guess this is the reason for some of the abrasions that come from time to time with my people. Thanks, buddy."

Worry

Hudson Taylor lived a wonderful life of trust. Here's what he said: "Let us give up our work, our thoughts, our plans, our selves, our lives, our loved ones all over into His hands. When you have given all unto God, there will be nothing left for you to be troubled about."

What Do You Pity?

(God Pities the Cities)

TEXT: "And the Lord said, 'You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?'" (Jon. 4:10-11, RSV**).

INTRODUCTION: God pities great cities, wherein are packed and stacked the teeming loose ends of humanity with the snob-nose upper crust of humanity. Too often we believers pity castor-oil plants (as one commentator calls "the gourd" of KJV).

God doesn't pity the cities because of their unsavory economic and architectural environment, but because of the unsaved condition of the millions living there. The whole Book of Jonah is a front-page story of the sorrowing God who weeps over the lost condition of the souls of Nineveh, and the sorrowing covenant believer who weeps over trivialities, the gourds of petty notions.

What a contrast! It is very similar to the contrast between the Pharisees and Jesus. They were more interested in teaching their donkeys to refuse corn that hadn't been tithed than in teaching sinners about God's forgiving love. They were more concerned with the width of their phylacteries, or the border on their

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



by
Neil E. Hightower

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coats, than in the width of separation God could reach across to redeem a soul.

Jonah and his spiritual descendants are reflected in the dangerous straits of the holiness church of this day. We can foster a heartless, sour holiness, if we are not careful and prayerful. This kind of church is a cloistered church which has lost its vision. It is living in the glories of yesterday. It is building more hedges than bridges.

What we pity deep in our hearts, both on a personal basis and an ecclesiastical basis, is a revelation of our character. What do you pity?

I. IN SINCERITY WE CAN PITY THE WRONG THINGS.

The broad road to destruction is paved with the blocks of sincerity.

The Church can pity the wrong things—not so much out of definition but from emphasis. We can pity our statistics, until they become our only measuring rod of success.

We can pity our architecture and appointments until we vote no on a bus ministry because it will bring in a lot of misbehaving children who will cause our lovely buildings to deteriorate too quickly.

We can pity our decorum and worshipful sensibilities until we are chagrined if either poor street people should stumble into church or shouts of blessing should punctuate the service.

We can pity our conferences on every subject of church life until we talk more than act. Years ago Dr. A. W. Tozer spoke of the danger of conferences, describing the sterility of many Evangelicals who had notebooks in their libraries, full of wondrous writings on Bible prophecy and soul-winning plans, but who were hearers only, not doers.

We can pity our organized programs so much that a spontaneous overflow of the soul-winning drive of a new believer scares us.

Individual Christians can pity the wrong things.

We can pity ourselves until we are enervated. We can pity our assignment in the church until we are filled with jealousy over a brother believer's apparent achievement.

We can pity the seeming inequity of God's mercy in the greater bestowal of talent or resources on another believer until we refuse to attempt anything.

We can pity the church's constant challenge to total commitment, which cuts cross grain to some of our ambitions or lack of strong convictions.

We can pity the poor understanding of other people about our true genius and become overly sensitive and embittered.

II. WHAT GOD PITIES OUGHT TO FASHION US.

God pities destiny-bound, immortal souls. He pities the barriers of separation between men and himself, and men with men. He pities the crowning separation of all indwelling sin. He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

He pities the pollution of the environment. God pities the pollution of external space, for He speaks of "much cattle." He pities the pollution of inner space, for He speaks of the knowledge of right and wrong (those "who do not know their right hand from their left").

God pities the imperishable values of life. He counsels the priority of the Kingdom (Matt. 6:33). He says that without the new birth, man will perish (John 3:3). He emphasizes the culture of the soul (Prov. 4:23). He underscores timeless convictions (Rom. 14:17).

III. OUR DAY POSES GREAT AREAS WHICH DEMAND GODLIKE PITY.

There are many barriers: emotional, cultural, social, spiritual.

In no place are these more real and more evident than in the great cities of our world. The mission of the Church and believers must be that of the ministry of reconciliation which Paul heralded with a bleeding heart. Reconciliation begins not in reformation but in repentance. It is carried forward in heart passion, not bead counting.

The great cities, full of the anonymity

of high-rise apartment living, cry to the company of the concerned believers for evangelism and spiritual nurture on a personal level. The great cities, full of the everlasting needs of sin-stained souls, need the everlasting gospel that cleanses from all sin.

The great cities will challenge the greatest display of committed stewardship the Church has ever exhibited.

CONCLUSION: What we pity and what the Church pities will determine our spiritual effectiveness. We can, like Jonah, be angry over God's concern with the contemporary. We can continue to evangelize "straw people" and pity ourselves because no one responds to our gospel. Or we can pity people as they are, and trust God as He is, and let the Holy Spirit break through us as we are.

Our own growth in grace and our church's growth in grace and multiplication of converts depend on what we pity.

Little Mary of Philadelphia had great pity and God used it to build a great church. Many years ago a pastor in Philadelphia got a burden for an underprivileged area of the city. He started an afternoon Sunday school in the area with the help of some concerned laymen. They rented an abandoned church building. From the first Sunday afternoon the little building was comfortably attended, and shortly it became evident that it would not hold all who came. Little Mary attended from the first and became greatly concerned over the boys and girls who had to be turned away. So she set about on her own to save pennies and nickels earned from errands she did. She put them in a little red change purse, often remarking to her mother, "This is for a large building so none will have to be turned away from Sunday school."

Mary developed an illness that had no cure, and soon died. The pastor of the parent church was called to Mary's home. In ministering to the bereaved family, he was shown the red purse that contained 57 cents. Mary's mother told him the little girl's concern. The mother gave the purse to the pastor, with the hope it might be useful in some way.

The next Sunday the pastor took the little purse to his pulpit, and in his message he told the story. Pouring the 57

cents out on the pulpit, he said that surely God could use the coins as seed to help provide a larger building for the branch Sunday school, but that God would need helpers. That day one man was moved; he told the pastor that he had several acres in the area of the Sun-

day school that he would sell for 57 cents. The papers picked up the story and donations began to tumble in. Today near the great Temple University, there is a church that can seat several hundred—because a little girl became greatly concerned over the need for a larger building.

Evangelistically Speaking—

The Personalities of Revival

By C. D. Hansen*

REVIVAL IS NOT OPTIONAL! Rather it is relative, even obligatory, on the part of the Church.

We have been reminded that our church was born in a revival atmosphere, and such being the case, a revival emphasis and spirit must prevail or the church will die. We cannot survive without revivals.

Perhaps no group is more cognizant of the exigency of revival than Wesleyans. However, unless we take personal introspection at what we are doing in scheduled revival meetings, we may find ourselves in serious trouble.

Recently, while reading through the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, I came across the following statement concerning revival:

It does not require much observation to be assured that the course of religion, in either the individual or the community, is not uniform, but has its ups and downs, its seasons of greater and lesser intensity. To what these variations are

due may be a deep question; but that they occur is a fact lying on the surface. There are times of flood-tide in the soul, which are accompanied with great happiness, and leave a deep impression on the memory, and there are seasons in the life of the church when there are given from on high what the scripture calls "showers of blessing." The psychology of the human spirit may have its own reckoning to render for such phenomena; but in the last resort they are to be traced to the Spirit of God, blowing where it listeth.¹

It was Charles G. Finney who described revival as "... nothing else than a new beginning of obedience to God." Joseph W. Kemp declared, "Revival, strictly speaking, means the reanimating of that which is already living but in a state of declension." J. Edwin Orr has written, "The best definition of revival is the phrase, '... times of refreshing ... from the presence of the Lord.'"

Therefore, to doubt the necessity

1. James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (Charles Scribner's Sons) 10:753. Used by permission.

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of revival is foolish. Revival becomes, in effect, a pillar of stabilization for the pastor and people, both individually and collectively, and it is on this basis that we must continue to conduct revival meetings.

As can readily be seen, the word *revival* has been defined and redefined by men of great repute; and while we must apprise ourselves of what revival is, as well as what causes it, we cannot, on the other hand, afford to become so concerned with methodology that we lose sight of the far greater goal—building the kingdom of God.

Perhaps one of the real blessings of past eras was either the inability to distinguish between the meaning of the words *revival* and *evangelism* or else that those early revivalists did not separate the two.

Much of what we do does not produce revival. Admittedly, we need group prayer sessions, good advertising, promotion before and during the revival, soul-winning clinics, and anything else that will help bring revival. Within themselves these will not bring revival. Neither will calling an evangelist or announcing a date.

On the other hand, revivals cannot be measured by the number of seekers who come to an altar, although this is important. We must recognize, too, that many are helped who never came to an altar.

As a pastor and observer of revivals for many years, it seems to me that unless we begin to see anew not only the importance of revivals, but how we conduct them, we can deal the deathblow to an important function of the Church.

I believe that there are four personalities that must be operative in order to have a successful revival.

I. The Holy Spirit

The first prerequisite for a successful revival is the Holy Spirit. He

must have preeminence from the planning stage until the final amen. Human personalities and methodology will fail when substituted for the Holy Spirit.

This is not a call for a trumped-up emotionalism. Rather it is a plea for some semblance of sanity in allowing the presence of the Holy Spirit to permeate every service of the revival. When He is allowed to do His office work, we do not have disorder—rather we have an established order.

II. The people

People are important to the revival. That statement may seem trite, but if we are not careful, we will keep the people away by the way they are treated.

They do not come to be harrassed or browbeaten but to be fed and lifted through the Word of God. There is a difference between delivering biblical truth and clubbing people.

They do not come to listen to trivia. Humor has its place but we are handling souls that face eternity. Therefore, we must not only entertain them but lift their souls into heavenly places.

They do not come to be talked down to or preached at.

We should remember that the layman has usually worked hard at a secular job all day and will probably come to the service tired. Sometimes it is difficult to respond with enthusiasm, so the workers and pastor must provide an atmosphere that will help them forget the cares of the day and the problems they must face tomorrow. If they do not experience a peculiar uplifting by the Holy Spirit, they will leave the service the same way they came. In many cases, they will not return the next night.

Therefore the service should be planned with the people's needs in mind—both physical and spiritual.

III. The pastor

The pastor bears a great load of responsibility during the revival. He is the key individual for the success of most activities in his church, and the people will usually feel the same way the pastor does about both the revival and workers.

Considering this, we offer the following suggestions for the pastor:

1. Keep the announcements brief and relevant to the revival. Do not labor on unnecessary items during this important time.

2. Do not sermonize. You have called the evangelist to do the preaching—your parishioners can hear you any other time of the year.

3. Boost the evangelist both publicly and privately. Encourage your workers in genuine praise.

4. If you have called a song evangelist, refrain from using local singing talent. Use them after the meeting.

5. See to the well-being of the workers and make sure their needs are adequately met. Allow them a free phone call home. Most evangelists are reluctant to ask for anything for themselves, so ask them if there is anything they need.

6. Be careful about pleading for money during the services. Take care of the finances by way of pledges or by board action prior to the meeting. Naturally an offering should be taken in each service, but it should not develop into a three-ring circus. It is embarrassing to all to have the offering "auctioned off." Rather, make it as worshipful as any other part of the service.

7. Adequate pay should be given for services rendered. If possible, have a fixed amount cleared with the evangelist prior to the meeting. It should be reiterated that if every church would give according to its means, every evangelist would be well paid, thereby allowing the work-

er to accept calls as they come—to both large and small churches. While most evangelists are not in the field for a large salary, they should be paid in accordance with the guidelines from the Department of Evangelism.

8. Make the prayer time relevant to revival. While we should always remember the sick or those in great need, the pressing need during this one week is revival, and undue time should not be given to lengthy prayer requests. Pastors should train their people to hand in prayer requests prior to service time.

9. Keep the service moving at a fast pace, giving the evangelist adequate time to preach and draw the net. Length of service should be kept between one and one and one-half hours.

10. In summation, make every part of the revival meeting pertinent to revival and evangelism.

IV. The evangelist

We recognize the high and holy calling of the evangelist, and the church cannot afford to be without him. Therefore, what follows is offered as suggestions from a heart of love and concern.

The saying "A person's own worst enemy is himself" is never more true than for the evangelist, for if he is not careful, his future as an evangelist can be destroyed. Those evangelists who make excessive demands on churches or pastors—whether it be financial, housing, or what-have-you—will not remain in the field over the long haul. Pastors do talk with each other, and it doesn't take long for the word to spread where there has been abuse.

Certainly the life of an evangelist is not the most appealing, but when circumstances are thrust upon us that are not altogether the most agreeable, we must grin and bear it.

With this in mind, we offer the following:

1. Hold the length of the sermon down. Usually 30 minutes is adequate time to deliver the truth. Keep the message pertinent to the text. Keep it alive and fresh. Make the illustrations coincide with the gist of the message and use them in the modern vernacular. Update them. Stay away from personal "corny" or "homespun" stories. Preach the Word of God, and by all means do not play on people's sympathy with personal problems. Sermons should be well rounded—with seriousness, humor, and up-to-date illustrations.

2. If you are a song evangelist, lead the singing, sing the specials, BUT do not preach or sermonize. Do not harrass the people for not singing; rather, compliment those who do.

3. Do not browbeat the people if the attendance is low. Feed those who come with the very best you have.

4. Study. It is fine to have a "winning combination" of revival sermons, but why not allow the Holy Spirit to anoint you with some fresh material? An evangelist cannot be effective in the pulpit by running around all day. Good Bible study will eliminate a constant barrage of negative preaching.

5. Take the lead in evangelism. When the seekers are at the altar, come down and pray with them.

6. When the congregation stands to sing, the evangelist should stand and sing with them. If we wish for the congregation to participate in

each phase of the service, the pastor and the workers must offer the example.

7. Sit on the platform with a smile. Do not talk back and forth with the pastor. At the close of the service shake hands with the people and be friendly.

8. Don't complain about what the former church paid you.

9. When possible, encourage the pastor—for he may be discouraged.

10. Be careful about the sale of extra materials. Too much valuable time can be given to what has been called an "extension" of the evangelist's ministry. Never should book-racks or record stands be manned at the expense of an altar service. Both evangelist and song evangelist should be at the altar until the last seeker has found the help he has come for. Evangelists should not go through a congregation selling suits, insurance policies, or other merchandise. If God has called you to be an evangelist, do not stoop to be a traveling salesman.

11. Do not cancel a smaller church in favor of a larger one. Remember, the pastor you cancel on will in all probability one day be the pastor of a larger church.

The burden of revival and the accompanying responsibility does not rest on any single individual. Rather it must be a cooperative venture on the part of all. Therefore, may a spirit of optimism and unity prevail to the extent that many souls will be added to the Kingdom in each revival.

HONEST FAILURE is a necessary part of learning. Few worthy efforts have ever reached success without some failure along the way. It is the *fear* of failure, the *shame* attached to failing, the notion that you must *hide* it, which is damaging—not the failure itself.

—Victor D'Amico

The basis for the exercise of divine power lies in God's will and not ours; therefore all of our petitions will be fruitless until they pass from the area of our choosing into the area of His wisdom.

God Is Not Governed by His Power

GOD IS NOT under the control of His own power. He does not do all that He is capable of doing. He uses His power, but He is not ruled by it. He is guided by His wisdom. His use of His power is determined by this wisdom.

These statements are evident to one who thinks. God has power to blot men off the earth. He did this once and has not lost the power to do so again. He destroyed cities and wicked men in the past, and He retains that power. The use of His power is not determined by its presence but by His infinite wisdom.

He saved Daniel from the lions. He healed the blind and the leper. He raised the dead. He stilled the storm.

Because His power is the same, we feel that He should use it in our behalf.

It is normal for man in distress to appeal to the power of God for de-

liverance. With a son in combat we pray, "God, You have the power to protect my boy from the deadly missile." In sickness we pray, "Lord, You can heal my child. You have that power to heal and we ask You to do so."

In such cases we are asking God to exercise His power according to our desire. It seems to us that to spare the life of the son in war and raise the child from the deathbed is the proper thing to do, so we insist that God exercise His power to that end.

Power can only be exercised by one who has it, and the exercising is determined by the person who possesses it. The will and wisdom of its possessor, and not the will and wisdom of the petitioner, is the determining factor. Therefore the basis for the exercise of divine power lies in God's will and not ours. All of our petitions will be fruitless until they pass from the area of our choosing into the area of His wisdom.

We should not condemn ourselves for appealing first to the power of God. It seems so sensible. We have the need and He has the power to meet that need. So we ask Him to exercise His power according to our seeing.

We should not condemn ourselves for thus asking and acting. It is ac-



by
T. W. Willingham

Kansas City, Mo.

cording to our best judgment. We are further justified in presenting to God our best judgment, for the Master followed this same path. He was "made like unto his brethren," and He too made His first appeal to God's power when in a crisis.

More than two instances are on record, but we shall use only two. In Gethsemane He prayed, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mark 14:36). Here He appeals first to the power of the Father, but yields to the will of the Father. However, God chose not to use His power and the cup was not taken away.

Again it is said of Him, "... when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. 5:7). Here again He appealed to the Father's power first but put the Father's will ahead of His desire and "was heard" but not saved from death.

This passing from our will—based on what we think to be best—to His will, which is best, is oftentimes a painful process. We feel so sure that our way is best that we are reluctant to surrender. This struggle does not invalidate our consecration. If we have settled it to go God's way, we will find it—although it may be "with strong crying and tears." That was true of the Master.

This obedience to the Father, which was Christ's avowed and unaltered purpose, must be learned. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8).

We may come to Him in all honesty, knowing that He has power to grant our requests and believing that our asking is in His will, but we must remember that His ways are

above our ways as truly as the heavens are above the earth. Therefore, in the end we must say, "Thy will be done." There is no other way. Life begins with surrender. It was true in Christ's case and must be in ours.

We cannot cling to His power as a basis for the answer. His wisdom controls its use and we cannot fathom His wisdom. Hence the necessity of surrendering our will and wisdom and seeking to find His, that we may be guided by it.

To persist in our petition, assuming that it is best, is to place our will above His, and that is sin—a sin that the Son would not commit. If we do, our prayers will go unheeded.

Someone may say, Then why pray? We pray so as to enter into the mind and thought of God and unite our prayer with His will. This is praying in the Holy Ghost—being united with God in our asking. This is nothing more nor less than a surrender of our plan and will to Him.

Let us turn for a moment from the Scriptures and use our common sense. Do we honestly believe that our will and way are better than His? If we really believe that His way is best, why should we hesitate to relinquish our will for His? Jesus did this and taught us to do so too. If we refuse to say in truth, "Not my will, but thine, be done," we are elevating ourselves above our Maker. It matters not how it may seem to us, the indisputable fact is that God's way is the best for us, as well as for Him and His cause.

The driving force of our praying should be, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is [done] in heaven"—perfectly. This is what Jesus taught.

Surrender—absolute, complete, eternal surrender of our selves, our wills, our loves, our hearts, our all to the Master—is the only condition

that will make heaven possible for us.

This surrender must be made in the face of possible rejection by every member of our family, every friend, every church, and life itself. To willfully hold back any part of what we are or what we have is to be cut off from Him. God killed two at the altar of the Early Church who held back only "part of the price," but claimed that they had paid it all.

In the light of this demand, we may more easily understand the Master's words, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord . . . And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me" (Matt. 7:22-23).

We can know when our surrender is complete. We will have peace, rest, and a Presence—the presence of the Holy Spirit. Cast your prayer in with the intercession of Christ and the Holy Spirit. They pray in the Father's will, and the Father hears them.

Letter to an aspirin company—

Dear Sir:

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

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—Selected

Practical Points

that make a difference

Hostility Is a Door to Service and Love

Dear Son:

I don't know why it is that men shy away from hostility. Now I don't want any more of it than I have coming, but it has always represented an open door to service and love.

John missed services for two weeks and I heard that he was stewing about something. I called him up Saturday evening and he wouldn't even talk to me. We have private phones on the farm and there was no reason why he shouldn't talk.

Monday I dropped in, took his hand in mine, and told him how we missed him.

He said, "Well, I have some issues I must settle." I replied, "Do you care to share them?" and we sat down for a few minutes to talk man to man.

I cannot tell you what the issues were, but here was a man who was unhappy in his job, using his family as a sounding board, and venting his unhappiness on his church.

He was out to service yesterday with a testimony for the congregation; and I glowed with the inner satisfaction resulting from love in the face of hostility.

Son, to take a backward step may be the ground for taking two giant strides forward. It usually works that way.

Love,
Paul



FOR
PASTORS
and LOCAL
CHURCH
LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission

EARL C. WOLF, *Executive Director*
DON WILDE, *Office Editor*

● **General Superintendent Strickland**

A Philosophy of Mission



Preachers develop a philosophy of mission, usually in the early years of their ministry, which influences and sometimes determines later courses of action. We have a beautiful model for study in the life of St. Paul. His philosophy of mission is set forth in his Roman letter, chapter 1. Three statements form the bulwark of his philosophy of service.

In verse 16 he says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (NIV).^{*} This is conviction and declaration—a fundamental concept and assertion of the adequacy of the gospel for every level of human society. One may observe this element in all of Paul's preaching. It will be noted today in the positive ministry of Christian certainties.

In verse 14, Paul says, "I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish" (NIV). This sense of obligation took Paul across frontiers and into new territories on long and hazardous journeys on land and sea, and finally to Rome. At Rome he announced, "I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:6-7, NIV). This sense of obligation has pushed the frontiers of the Church to the outer reaches of the earth and motivated preachers and missionaries to become "poured out" for the gospel.



In verse 15, Paul completes his philosophy with these words, "That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome" (NIV). This eager readiness may be observed throughout his ministry. It follows naturally the conviction and commitment already expressed.

The list of preachers whose lives are characterized by Paul's philosophy of mission is a long one. Their actions are predictable because of this philosophy, and it is noteworthy to observe that they are remembered long after their earthly ministry has ceased.

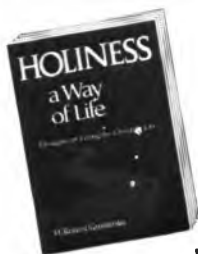
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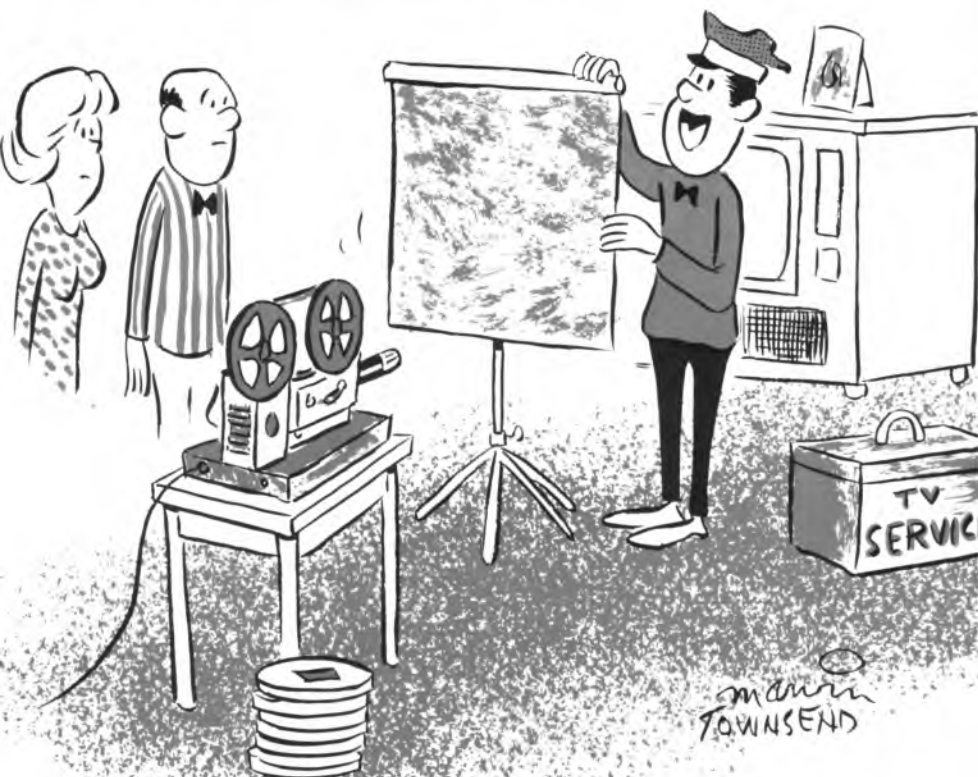


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THE PREACHER'S WIFE



Dishpan Devotions

By Nita Crawford

DISHES, DIAPERS, crying babies, unmade beds, unpaid bills, an overworked husband! Dear God, I know I should spend more time in prayer with You, but with all these problems, how can I ever find the time?"

Since I uttered this plaintive cry as a harried young housewife, I have found this problem to be universal. Finding time for communion with God is difficult but it is not impossible. Time can be found. As I was working in the kitchen that day, these words thundered into my consciousness, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." If this were true, I reasoned, He would be with me as I did the dishes.

Thus reassured, I decided to pray as I worked. Before I began, however, self-pity engulfed me. As I wallowed in it, I remembered the admonition, "In every thing give thanks."

"But, God, how can I give thanks for dirty dishes?"

Suddenly I realized that dirty dishes are a tangible symbol of a blessing—plentiful food.

"Thank You, Father, for caring for us and for giving me a hard-working husband."

A stew simmering on the stove reminded me of other blessings. Its

tantalizing odors of beef, onions, and tomatoes made my mouth water.

"Thank You, God, for all the good-tasting foods You have given us. And thank You for letting them smell good too."

As I heard the bubbling stew and the splash of water as I filled the dishpan, I became aware of the gift of hearing. How beautiful it is to hear laughing children, courting birds, babbling brooks, and roaring waterfalls. What a thrill it is to hear the words "I love you."

"Thank You, God, for this marvelous gift of hearing."

The stew itself was a constantly changing composition of deep reds, green, brown, white, and yellow. Back at the sink I discovered anew the beauty outside my own window, and on my drainboard the delicate, flowerlike design in a golden carrot slice.

"Oh, thank You, God, for this wonderful gift of sight. Thank You for the gift of seeing my children's faces and my husband's smiles, for the privilege of reading, and the enjoyment of beauty surrounding me."

As I splashed fresh water over detergent, soap bubbles floated merrily into the air and childlike joy erupted within me as I chased them.

Swishing my hands through the warm water and squeezing the fluffy white layer of suds, I appreciated the sense of touch which enables us to feel the caress of a loved one; the sticky, lollipop-flavored kiss of a toddler; the fever on a baby's brow; and a thousand other things.

"Thank You, God, for this gift.

Thank You, too, for dirty dishes. Today they have taken on a new meaning for me."

Dishpan devotions have become a regular habit and so has praying while doing my other tasks. From these experiences I have learned that it is indeed possible to "pray without ceasing."



Happiness Is Not In—

WEALTH: The famous American millionaire Jay Gould had an enormous fortune. When he was dying, he said, "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

PLEASURE: The author of "Hours of Idleness," Lord Byron, who reveled in sinful pleasure almost all his days, wrote on his last birthday, "My days are in the yellow leaf; the flowers and fruits of life are gone; the worm, the canker, the grief are mine alone."

POWER: The name of Napoleon the Great truly stands prominent for power. Musing, a lonely prisoner on St. Helena, he summarized thus: "Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires. But on what did we found them? On force! Jesus Christ alone founded His on love, and today there are millions who would die for Him."

POSITION: One of the greatest wonders of men who rose to position was Benjamin Disraeli; yet he wrote, "Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, old age a regret."

FAME: Sir Walter Scott probably attained to fame excelled by none. Though he spent his life in writing fiction, when he came to die he wanted fact and said, "Bring me the Book." When his faithful servant asked which book, Scott said, "There is but one Book, the Bible."

WHERE IS HAPPINESS? In Jesus Christ alone! "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he" (Prov. 16:20).



Portraits of Paul

I. Paul, a Servant

One stanza of Charles Wesley's great hymn of challenge is:

*A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.*

To serve my present age. The servant complex. The "others" philosophy of life. This is what it means to be a dedicated Christian.

Paul is the example supreme of a man who denied himself, charged himself, subordinated himself to this place of service to God and his fellowman. The idea, *servant*; the action, *serving*; the result, *service*—these are prominent in the writings of Paul. A terse summary is given in 2 Cor. 4:5, "For we preach not ourselves, but . . . your servants for Jesus' sake." This text shows Paul in the background, others in the foreground, Jesus as the reason.

It is significant to note that *Paul was in the background*. Paul the learned, the leader, the gifted, becomes Paul the servant. The servant idea is phrased again and again: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:1); "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10); "Paul and Timotheus,

the servants of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:1); "He that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (1 Cor. 7:22); the text, "We preach not ourselves, but . . . ourselves your servants."

The servant concept appears in the salutations of his letters. It is the beginning, the greeting, the way he identifies himself. This is the way he lets folk know who he is. Not an ambassador, not a king or president, not the descendent of proud heritage, which he surely was. Not Paul of Sanhedrin fame; not Paul, zealous for right; but Paul, servant of God.

As the signature music of a program is ever recurring in that program, so the servant complex appears again and again in Paul. As the signature music tells what the program is, so "servant of the Lord" tells who Paul is.

Paul puts himself in the background, and *others in the foreground*. "Ourselves your servants."

This is not a subservient bondage to others. It is not a fear resulting in a cringing attitude. There is no subordination of personal dignity because of some supposed superiority of others. It is, rather, the realization of the meaning of every man. It recognizes that man is made in God's likeness and is potentially God's child. So we, like Paul, put ourselves in a position to redeem the concealed image, not by exalting people as lords, but by humbling ourselves as servants.

To embrace such a concept of life is to make the menial task meaningful; it is to make the burdensome task bearable. It is also to enter into



by
J. Melton Thomas

Evangelist
Mt. Vernon, Ohio

the very spirit of Jesus, "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:6-7).

The fact of Jesus, the Servant, is the explanation of Paul, the servant. Jesus is the reason. Jesus, who was God's equal, humbled himself to become a Servant of mankind. Now Paul would follow the example and himself be a servant.

Mind this, however: It was a servant to Christ. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." We all serve someone. Paul had decided to let that Someone be Christ. It was for Jesus' sake.

Christ loved others and trusts us with others. Jesus gave himself for others and places confidence in us to herald that message to others. So it is for Him that we serve others.

A man explained his extreme devotion to his invalid wife by relating the story out of which her inability grew. A partner of his had stolen from their business but made the theft appear to have been done by the man telling the story. The guiltless man's wife, however, continued to believe in him and was about the only one who did. She stayed by him until his innocence was established but in doing so broke her health. "She gave herself for me," he said, "so now I give myself for her."

THE STARTING POINT



By C. NEIL STRAIT

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A Great Invitation

Isaiah 1:18-19 is no new text to the evangelical preacher. It breaks down very simply into three divisions:

1. The *Person* of the invitation, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord" (v. 18).

2. The *problem* of the invitation. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (v. 18).

3. The *promise* of the invitation. Implied in the forgiveness and the cleansing from sins (v. 18) and in v. 19, "If you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land" (NASB*).

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

The second point needs some comment. It might be read as "easy forgiveness" by some, but the "if" of v. 19 should not be overlooked.

Also, as regards the "sins" of v. 18, it means "twice dyed" or "double-dyed," pertaining to the word *scarlet*. This would imply a "colorfast" situation. It is not presumptuous, then, to share the fact that only grace—the grace of God—through Jesus Christ and His atoning death, *and* the cleansing of the Holy Spirit, can deal adequately with the sins of life.

The Blessings of Obedience

There is a thrilling story in Acts 9:10-19—the call of God to Ananias to anoint

Saul. In it we see the blessings of obedience.

1. Obedience to God's call allowed Ananias to see God's plan. "Go . . . for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (v. 15). Two beautiful words occur in v. 17—"Brother Saul." They speak volumes.

Ananias, like any of us, had questioned the conversion of Saul. But when it was translated from cold fact into the warmth of a loving and obedient heart, it appeared differently—"Brother Saul." Then he saw the plan of God.

2. Obedience to God's call allowed Ananias to see God's possibility. To see firsthand the change, the burning soul, the new birth, was truly a rich experience for Ananias.

3. Obedience to God's call allowed Ananias to see God's provisions. Ananias knew what Saul had been in the past. But now to see what he was to become, through Christ, was a convincing experience. Truly it was something to share.

Gospel Affects All of Life

Let me pass along a "scripture nugget" from a cassette tape that crossed my desk. It's from Dr. Warren Wiersbe, SAID, produced by Ken Anderson Films. He shares these thoughts from Heb. 11:7:

The gospel makes an impact on all of life: the *mind*—"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet"; the *emotions*—"moved with fear"; the *will*—"prepared an ark."

Growing in Christ

I pass along these thoughts from Eph. 4:14-16:

1. There is *growth*—or *progress*—in the Christian life. We are to "grow up into him" (v. 15).

2. There is *genuineness*—or *perspective*—in the growing process. "In all things" (v. 15). All of life is touched by growth. Thus all of life should be touched and affected as a man grows in Christ.

3. There are *goals*—or *priorities*—as a person grows in Christ. We are to "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (v. 15).

A Word About Preaching

Dr. Reuel H. Howe, in his book *Partners in Preaching: Clergy and Laity in Dialogue*, has this interesting comment about the minister who truly desires to communicate: "[He] must learn to preach out of the weakness of his understanding of the Gospel and of life as well as out of his strengths."

I believe what he is saying is that the preacher shouldn't sound like he knows it all.

Words from Corrie ten Boom

The life of Corrie ten Boom has been an inspiration to our generation. Here's a few words any preacher could run a long way with: "God has no problems, only plans" (*Decision*, Nov., 1974, p. 13).

How do pastors see men? As opportunities for exploitation, for argumentation, or for evangelism? Do we see men en masse or are we aware of individuals? Jesus saw men who could be redeemed—poor, broken, bleeding, blinded.

—Carl B. Clendenen

IN THE STUDY

Looking at Our Lord in Luke

July 6

THE LOST SHEEP (15:4)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 15:1-7

INTRODUCTION: The key verse of Luke is 19:10—"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." That theme is the basis of the three parables on lostness that comprise this fifteenth chapter of Luke. The first is the lost sheep (vv. 3-7). The second is the lost coin (vv. 8-10). The third is the lost son (vv. 11-32)—better known as the prodigal son.

The last one is really two parables in one: the lost son (vv. 11-24) and the lost brother (vv. 25-32). So we shall treat them here separately.

The parable of the lost sheep is recorded also in Matthew (19:12-14). But the parables of the lost coin and the lost son are found only in Luke.

The occasion for these parables is given in the first two verses of the chapter. Some "publicans" (tax collectors) and "sinners" (so called by the Pharisees because they were considered ceremonially unclean) were coming to Jesus to

hear His teaching. The Pharisees and the scribes were muttering, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them" (v. 2, NIV*). It was to answer this criticism that Jesus told these parables.

I. THE SHEEP LOST (v. 4)

Flocks of sheep are still commonly seen in the Middle East. Some contain as few as half a dozen or a dozen. A flock of 100 sheep, though not uncommon, would be of good size.

One sheep strayed away from the flock, apparently lured by greener-looking grass. When the shepherd counted his sheep at the close of the day, he found only 99. He left these in the care of someone and set out in search of the one lost sheep. He hunted for it until he finally found it.

II. THE SHEEP FOUND (v. 5)

When the shepherd discovered his lost sheep it was probably dark, or at least getting dark. Tenderly he lifted the sheep to his shoulders and carried it safely home.

III. THE SHEPHERD REJOICING (v. 6)

The shepherd's heart was glad when he found his lost sheep. So happy was he that when he reached home, he called together his friends and neighbors to rejoice with him.

The meaning of the parable is clear. The Pharisees criticized Jesus for associating with sinners in order to save them. But He wanted them to see that He, as the Good Shepherd, was more



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concerned for each individual lost sheep than for the men who prided themselves on their own righteousness and felt that they did not need to repent. He put it this way: "I tell you that in the same way there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent" (v. 7, NIV). Perhaps the last part reflects the attitude of the Pharisees rather than that of Jesus.

July 13

THE LOST COIN (15:8)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 15:8-10

INTRODUCTION: The parable of the lost sheep pictures Jesus as the Good Shepherd seeking His lost sheep until He finds it. The parable of the lost coin describes the work of the Holy Spirit in diligently searching for lost souls. Jesus not only died on the Cross for the whole human race, but He is interested in the salvation of each individual. And the Holy Spirit is His Agent at work in the world today, ferreting out the sinner, convicting him, and bringing him to a place of repentance.

I. THE SEARCH (v. 8)

Jesus told about a woman who had 10 "pieces of silver." This is one word in Greek, *drachmas*. The *drachma* was a Greek silver coin worth about 20 cents, the same as the Roman silver *denarius* mentioned frequently in the Gospels. The word "drachma" occurs only here (vv. 8-9) in the New Testament.

The woman's careful search implies that the coin may have had special value to her. It has been suggested that the 10 drachmas may have been a wedding dowry, which she wore around her neck. Perhaps the string broke and one was lost. In consternation she lighted a candle, swept the house, and sought diligently until she found it.

II. THE REJOICING (v. 9)

When she finally found the lost coin, the woman called in her "friends and her neighbours" to rejoice with her. We found the same thing with the shepherd in the

previous parable. But there is one little difference in the Greek that does not show up in English translations. In the parable of the lost sheep the word for "friends" is masculine, as would be expected. In the parable of the lost coin the word for "friends" is feminine. Naturally, the woman called together her *women* friends and neighbors.

III. THE APPLICATION (v. 10)

In similar language to that at the end of the previous parable Jesus declared that there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

CONCLUSION: The sheep was lost out on the hills somewhere, and the shepherd had to go perhaps a considerable distance to find it. But the coin was lost right in the house.

This suggests two kinds of sinners who need to be saved. One goes astray and needs to be found and brought back home. But there are those who are lost right in the church and even in a Christian home—just as surely lost as those who are far out in sin. Are you one of these who is lost in the home?

Only God could tell us how many people living in Christian homes and attending church regularly are actually lost. It is a sobering thing to contemplate.

July 20

THE LOST SON (15:24)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 15:11-24

INTRODUCTION: The parable of the prodigal son is one of the best-loved stories in the Bible, because it is so true to life. There have been prodigal sons in every century and in every country. One can read a papyrus letter written back home to Egypt in the first century by a boy who had run away from home but found the distant world cold and cruel. There is something about this parable that touches the heartstrings of people around the globe. It tells about a young man who started out as a proud possessor, became a prodigal, and then a pauper, but ended as penitent and pardoned.

I. THE POSSESSOR (v. 12)

The younger of two sons said to his father, "Father, give me my share of the estate" (NIV). "So he divided his property between them." The older son, in accordance with the Mosaic law (Deut. 21:17), got a double portion. So that left only one-third of the family estate as the younger boy's share. But it doubtless looked to him very large.

This young man was like many a youth today: "I want everything right now!" But young people who insist on experiencing all of life in their teens mortgage their twenties and thirties. When life should be opening up for them with all its beauty and blessing, they find that they have grabbed it with greedy fingers and crushed it like a rosebud. The fragrance and freshness are all gone. All that is left is drab and dreary disappointment. This is the fate of thousands of teenagers today.

II. THE PRODIGAL (v. 13)

Eager to get away from parental discipline, the younger son took all his newfound wealth and left home. Probably he said to himself, "I'm tired of having my father tell me what to do; I'm going to be my own boss." But every person who does that soon finds that the meanest master he can have in the world is his own selfish self—a tyrannical slave driver!

To make sure that he escaped entirely from home influence, the young man went to "a far country"—perhaps to Rome. There he could do as he pleased—for a while.

In that distant land he "wasted his substance with riotous living." Of course this literally means that he "squandered his wealth in wild living" (NIV). But one is tempted to make a spiritual application here: While he was wasting his money on "wine, women, and song," he was also wasting the inner substance of his soul. The greatest tragedy in America is not the money wasted on alcohol, drugs, and immorality, but what these do to men's bodies and souls.

III. THE PAUPER (vv. 14-16)

The lad would not have started out so gaily as the proud possessor if he could have seen himself at the end of that road—a pauper in a pigpen. "When he had

spent all," there was a severe famine in the land. With no money and no food, the fellow began to be desperate. He finally hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him into his field to feed the pigs. For a Jewish boy this was the lowest disgrace imaginable, for the Jews avoided any contact with pigs as unclean animals. The boy had hit bottom!

But not quite. For we read: "He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything" (v. 16, NIV). When a man gets down so low that he envies the hogs, he is pretty low! But this is where sin and selfishness had led this fellow who started out in such high hopes.

IV. THE PENITENT (vv. 17-19)

Finally the young man "came to himself." This is the literal Greek and it is good English idiom. It means that he "came to his senses" (NIV). He had been acting like a stupid fool. But he had to strike bottom in order to discover himself.

He began to think of how even the hired servants back home had plenty to eat, and here he was starving. So he made a new resolve: "I will arise and go to my father" (v. 18). He would make his confession: "I have sinned against heaven"—that is, God—"and before thee." He realized what every sinner must acknowledge, that he had first of all sinned against God and then secondarily against his father. For all sin is a sin against divine love.

He would also tell his father that he was no longer fit to be called his son but would ask only to be a hired servant (v. 19). Repentance means humility, with contrition and confession.

V. THE PARDONED (vv. 20-24)

Good resolutions are not enough; they must be put into action. And so the young man got up and went to his father. While he was still some distance away, his father recognized him. Ragged and emaciated though the son was, his father had compassion on him. He ran, fell on his neck, and kissed him (v. 20).

The boy started to make his speech of confession and penitence (v. 21). But he never got a chance to suggest being taken

back merely as a hired servant. For his father interrupted him with an order to his servants: "Bring forth the best robe" to cover his rags, "and put a ring on his hand" to show that he was again a full-fledged member of the family, "and shoes on his feet," perhaps to go to work again and keep out of mischief!

There is a beautiful touch here. The ring was the family signet ring. Putting this on the returned prodigal's finger meant that he could now transact official business in his father's name. The father had not just half forgiven his son, as David did Absalom. Instead he gave him unconditional forgiveness, handing him the family charge card! This is divine forgiveness, the kind we are to give.

In addition the father ordered the fattened (stall-fed) calf to be killed, and a big banquet to be prepared. Why? "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (v. 24). "So they began to celebrate" (NIV).

CONCLUSION: As the parable of the lost sheep describes Christ the Good Shepherd seeking the lost, and the parable of the lost coin the Holy Spirit searching for souls, so the parable of the lost son shows the Father waiting for His wayward child to return. So all the Trinity is involved in our salvation. And the Heavenly Father is still waiting for every lost son to come home to Him.

July 27

THE LOST BROTHER (15:31)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 15:25-32

INTRODUCTION: We noted that the parable of the lost sheep pictures a sinner lost outside the fold, whereas the parable of the lost coin suggests a sinner lost inside the house. We have the same parallels in these last two parables. The prodigal was lost in a far country; but the older brother was just as much lost right at home.

I. THE BROTHER INFORMED (vv. 25-27)

When the prodigal son returned, his older brother was out in the field, apparently working. As he neared the house,

he heard music and dancing. Surprised, he asked a servant what was going on.

The servant told him that his younger brother had returned home and that their father had prepared a special feast because he had received the boy back "safe and sound" (v. 27, NIV).

II. THE BROTHER ANGERED (vv. 28-30)

The older brother reacted with sullen anger, refusing to join the festivities or even go into the house. So his father went out and pleaded with him to come in.

Then this older son really exploded. Glowering angrily at his father, he said: "Look! All these years I've been slaving for you . . . Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!" (vv. 29-30, NIV).

Two things show up in this brother's words. The first was his pathetic concept of filial devotion: "All these years I've been slaving for you." Jesus clearly intended to portray him as typifying the Pharisees, with their legalistic conception of religion. Serving God meant slavishly obeying all the minute rules and regulations of the law. It was all a matter of duty, without any love or joy in it. Too many people still think that this is the kind of service that pleases God

The second thing that we see here in the older son is his contemptuous attitude toward his brother. He did not refer to him as "my brother." Oh, no! He said, "This son of yours." This was hateful contempt, which is one of the cardinal sins in God's sight. This worthless wretch, he told his father, "has squandered your property with prostitutes." This may or may not have been true. But at least the father had given the property to his two sons. What had the older son done with his? Probably the hard-hearted miser hadn't spent a penny of it. In his own way, he was just as miserable as his prodigal brother. Stingy people are never happy!

III. THE BROTHER REPROVED (vv. 31-32)

The father said, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." In other words, "You could have had a

big party with your friends any time that you asked for it." But the poor, miserly soul did not know how to enjoy life. Some religious people today seem to think that joy and happiness are proof that one is not very pious!

Notice that the father gently but firmly answered the sneering reference to "this son of yours" (v. 30) by saying "this brother of yours" (v. 32). He was reminding the older son that he had a responsibility to his own brother, even in spite of the way he had acted. And we need to face up to our responsibility in this matter. There is a sense in which every man is our brother. We must show compassion, not contempt, toward all men.

day we shall be reunited with our loved ones in the blessed by-and-by. And one for love—love that even death cannot sever but is still ours and will be ours when we shall meet around God's throne, where we shall know as we are known."

Then follows prayer and benediction.



A Burial Service

By Lyman Salisbury*

The following burial service is adapted and used for special Christian friends and members. The part of the usual burial service that always seems so final is: "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." In this service the minister holds three flowers in his hand. Scripture from John 14:1-6 (or other scripture) is repeated. The service continues as follows:

"We have gathered here today to pay our last respects to one whom God in His wise providence has taken from us. We dare not think of it as misfortune for the one who has gone. He [she] has entered into life, to be forever with the Lord. We are not bidding him [her] good-bye, for we hope to see him [her] again.

"Yet I want to remind you that it is with a personal sense of sorrow and loss that I am here, for the one who has passed away was my friend. So I have brought with me these flowers to lay over his [her] silent form—one for faith, one for hope, one for love. One for faith—faith that God's promises are true, and that through the blood of His dear Son there is no death for any who die trusting in Him. One for hope—hope that some

What Hurts the Good Name?

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

INTRODUCTION: Solomon suggests in this passage that there are seven things that hurt the "good name." The good name is the name of Christ at which one day "every knee should bow." What hurts the good name?

I. RESPECT OF PERSONS (v. 2)

Good prospects and poor ones sometimes determined by:

- A. Monetary worth
- B. Social status
- C. Ethnic background

II. PRIDE (v. 4)

May take various forms:

- A. Pride of possessions
- B. Pride of position
- C. Pride of standards

III. DISOBEDIENT CHILDREN (v. 6)

- A. Children are a reproach or a blessing.
- B. Behavior in church reflects parents' attitude toward gospel

IV. SIN (of any kind)

Sometimes expressed in:

- A. Actions
- B. Attitudes

V. STINGINESS (v. 9)

Three ways to give:

- A. Grudgingly
- B. Glibly
- C. Gratefully

*Mt. Vernon, Wash.

- VI. SCORN (v. 10)
Scorners are people who have quit:
A. Reading the Bible
B. Praying
C. Witnessing

- VII. LAZINESS (v. 13)
A. Poor teaching
B. Activities and services of the church

MICHAEL SELLARS

His Holiness Is Sick

TEXT: "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (3 John 2).

INTRODUCTION: Years ago world newspapers carried a headline that read "His Holiness Is Sick." They referred, of course, to the pope. A few weeks later he succumbed to the sickness.

Those words still intrigue me. They suggest to me a long parade of folk whose "holiness is sick." What are the symptoms of spiritual sickness? When is one's holiness sick?

- I. WHEN THERE IS A LOW TEMPERATURE
A. Low temperature is the worst thing that can happen to a church. Thousands are turning elsewhere for a warmer atmosphere. Jesus warned about "lukewarmness."
B. Reason for low temperature: Not the world or the devil or the preacher—we are as spiritual as we want to be.
- II. WHEN THERE IS A FAILING APPETITE
A. Indifference to meals worries the doctor.
Indifference in spiritual menu worries the pastor.
B. Examine yourself for: Appetite for Word of God; for services of the church.
- III. WHEN THERE IS DIFFICULTY IN BREATHING
A. Physically this places life in jeopardy.
B. To breathe spiritually is to pray.
C. When churches cease to "breathe," they are sick.

- IV. WHEN THERE IS A GENERAL LETHARGY
A. If you drag in and out of bed, to work, home again, it is likely you are sick.
B. Dragging around as a Christian indicates spiritual sickness.

CONCLUSION: How can one recover?

1. Admit you are sick.
2. Seek good food.
3. Breathe freely.
4. Get plenty of exercise.
5. Keep in constant touch with the Great Physician.

MICHAEL SELLARS

Sermon Starters

Walking with God

TEXT: Gen. 5:24

- I. A JOYFUL WALK (Ps. 16:11)
- II. A HOLY WALK (Heb. 12:14)
- III. A DAILY WALK (Luke 1:75)
- IV. A REWARDING WALK (Gen. 5:24)

Selling Your Birthright

SCRIPTURE: Gen. 25:29-34

- I. THE APPETITE THAT CONTROLLED (vv. 30, 32)
- II. THE DECEIT THAT WAS PRACTICED (v. 31)
- III. THE RESULTS OF A FOOL'S BARGAIN (v. 34)

Worshipping the Golden Calf

SCRIPTURE: Exod. 32:1-35

- I. THE SINS OF GOD'S PEOPLE (vv. 1-6)
- II. THE INTERCESSION OF GOD'S MAN (vv. 7-14)
- III. THE RETRIBUTION THAT SIN BRINGS (vv. 19-29, 35)

The Lifted Saviour

SCRIPTURE: Num. 21:4-9

- I. THE BITE OF THE SERPENTS WAS FATAL (v. 6)
- II. THERE WAS NO HUMAN REMEDY FOR THE SERPENTS' BITE (v. 6)
- III. GOD'S REMEDY BROUGHT DELIVERANCE (v. 9)

CONCLUSION: The dying thief who said, "Lord, remember me."

ROBERT L. CHASON

The Pentecostal Spirit

- I. Outpouring of the Spirit—Acts 2:1-4
- II. Spreading of the Spirit—Acts 2:5-18
- III. Adding of the Spirit—Acts 2:41-47
- IV. Gifts of the Spirit—1 Cor. 12:7-13
- V. Unity of the Spirit—1 Cor. 13:1-13

DERL G. KEEFER

Sermon Topics for the Love Chapter

(1 Corinthians 13)

- MEN HEAR WHAT YOU ARE! (v. 1)
- I BELIEVE IN LOVE (v. 2)
- GOOD OR GODLY? (v. 3)
- THE HIDDEN MAN OF THE HEART (v. 4)
- THE GREAT MARK OF HOLINESS—
SELF-DENIAL (v. 5)
- THE WHOLE TRUTH (v. 6)
- ALL OR NOTHING? (v. 7)
- I WANT TO BE SUCCESSFUL (v. 8)
- THINGS WE DO NOT KNOW (v. 9)
- THE GREAT TRIUMPHANT HOUR (v. 10)
- LOVE—MAN'S BEST ERASER (v. 11)
- FACE-TO-FACE WITH CHRIST, MY SAVIOUR
(v. 12)
- NOT WHO YOU ARE, BUT WHAT YOU ARE
(v. 13)

J. WALTER HALL, JR.

Ideas for Sermon Series

GALATIANS: THE BOOK OF RELIGION

- Chap. 1 The Religion of Change
- Chap. 2 The Religion of Liberty
- Chap. 3 The Religion of Faith
- Chap. 4 The Religion of Heirs
- Chap. 5 The Religion of Love
- Chap. 6 The Religion of Support

JAMES: BOOK FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

- Chap. 1 Christians and Temptations
- Chap. 2 Christians and Wrong Motives
- Chap. 3 Christians and Wisdom
- Chap. 4 Christians and Aims
- Chap. 5 Christians and Real Richness

1 PETER: THE BOOK TO KNOW HOW
TO LIVE

- Chap. 1 How to Live a Holy Life
- Chap. 2 How to Build Relationships
- Chap. 3 How to Be Spiritually
Beautiful
- Chap. 4 How to Be Ready
- Chap. 5 How to Be a Winner

2 PETER: THE BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE

- Chap. 1 Christians and True
Knowledge
- Chap. 2 Christians and False
Knowledge
- Chap. 3 Christians and Certain
Knowledge

DERL G. KEEFER

Ideas that work—

... Then Send a Letter

Most of us enjoy getting mail addressed to us. With today's stepped-up pace, it is becoming increasingly difficult for a busy pastor to catch busy people at home. Many times when a visit is impossible or inappropriate, a personal letter from the pastor has a lasting effect.

Here are some ideas in using the mail to our advantage:

1. TO ALL VISITORS. Underscore that word *all*. Even though the visitor may live just down the street, or be a member of another church, he is a prospect. Boys and girls especially like to receive mail in their names. Many parents have told me that their children placed my letter in their scrapbooks. Usually it is best to

have a form letter, but it should be typed as though it were personal.

2. TO THE ABSENTEE. It is impractical to send a letter to each absentee every week. But it means a lot to receive a note from one's pastor expressing that you have been missed.

3. TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION. For a special job performed in the church or the community, or even a gift for a special project, I often send a note of thanks. For folks who open their homes to young people, or remember their pastor in a special way, is creates a warm feeling to know it was appreciated.

4. SYMPATHY. We send letters of sympathy to the families of the deceased in our town. In large cities this might not be practical, but the area in which the church is located might be served. More response is received from this gesture

than any other. To the widow or widower we usually send a copy of *Now That Bereavement Has Come*.

5. **CONGRATULATIONS.** Each week our local paper carries the names and addresses of families having births. Instead of writing the parents, we write to the baby. This letter nearly always finds its way into the "baby book," and is read around the family circles.

6. **TO NEWCOMERS.** From the utility companies you can usually obtain a list of the newcomers to your town. To these folk we simply write a welcome and extend an invitation for them to visit our church.

There are various materials with which we stuff the envelopes. Always we include a copy of the tract introducing our church as well as a response card which reads:

I WOULD WELCOME

- ___ More information about your church
- ___ A call from the pastor
- ___ Literature about your denomination
- ___ Special prayer

A rubber stamp with this type of information would save a great deal on printing costs. Also the postage is paid by our church if they return the card.

The response has not been dramatic, but gradually we are building a reputation of "the people who care."

MICHAEL SELLARS

"FIRST NAZARENE CLASSIFIED"

If we are happy people, we are people doing something for others. In the coming weeks, this spot of the *Messenger* will be a "First Nazarene Classified." There are countless ways of service to God and His Church—many that most people are not aware of. Watch this column to find a way you can use your special talent for Him.

WANTED: Someone with carpenter ability. A small pulpit and altar are needed for our children's worship service. Maybe you would like to make this a family project. We'll furnish the material. Call the pastor for further information. (There are other minor building repair and improvement service opportunities.)

—*Midweek Messenger*, Santa Ana, Calif.



D. L. Moody

Edward Kimball hesitated. Was today the right day to go into the shoe store and talk to his Sunday school pupil about Christ? He overcame his fear and entered the store where the teen-aged salesman was wrapping up shoes.

"Dwight, I want to tell you how much Jesus Christ loved you," said his Sunday school teacher. . . . Later, when Kimball asked Dwight if he would like to surrender to Christ, he tearfully replied, "Yes." Simply but sincerely, D. L. Moody met Christ on that day, April 21, 1855.

A PRAYER

(Inspired by a Sunday sermon)

*God, help me to close my ears to the sounds around me,
And let me hear You speak.*

*God, help me to close my eyes to the Actions of others,
And see what acts You have for me.*

*God, help me to close my mind to the thoughts of the world,
And be open to Your thoughts.*

*God, help me when I come to worship to leave myself out,
That I may worship Thee fully.*

—ADRIAN CARLSON

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

ROCKEFELLER can sign his name to a check and make it worth millions.

REMBRANDT could put his name on a painting and make it invaluable.

BACH could put his name on his music and make it priceless.

JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth put His name on our salvation and made it ETERNAL, PRICELESS, AND WONDERFUL!

WE can put our names on His roll and inherit ETERNAL LIFE.

A BOARDINGHOUSE OR A HOME?

"Home, Sweet Home" signs are not found too often in a boardinghouse. It is easy to feel no obligation to stay around on holidays.

If things don't go as you like, you can move. If the meals aren't perfect, find another place.

Your obligation stops when you pay your rent.

A home is different. If you have a home, you want to be there and you will work to improve it. You will sacrifice for it. Your people are there. You overlook faults. Everyone needs a home.

Is your church your boardinghouse or your home?

* * *

"I was thinking all those horrible thoughts about my parents when suddenly it hit me," said one teen-ager. "If they are all that bad, how come I am so wonderful?"

Holy Spirit, Guide Me

Holy Spirit, guide me,
For at times I'm so unwise.
If You'll stay right beside me,
I'll walk straight to paradise.

Holy Spirit, use me,
Keep me active in Your work.
I'll not forsake a duty,
Nor a God-launched challenge shirk.

Holy Spirit, touch me;
I'm a novice on my own.
A perfect gem I must be
As an heiress to the throne.

Holy Spirit, fill me
So that I will always know
Your depth and love, which thrill me
As You set my heart aglow.

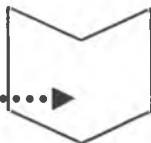
Holy Spirit, show me
As I daily walk with Thee
How Your guidance will bestow me
Heaven's joys eternally.

—Mary Lou Johnson



HERE AND THERE

AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from your Publishing House

A Guide to Preaching

By R. E. O. White (W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973. 244 pp., \$3.95.)

Are you overcome with the task of preaching? Are you feeling a lack in your preaching? Are you trying to help a young preacher get started? Do your sermons lack a deep sense of personal involvement on your part? The author, whom you may know by another of his books, *Open Letter to Evangelicals*, has written this book especially for the student preacher. This is the best up-to-date expression of how to preach. This book fully explains *why* you should do the things you need to do to preach the Word.

The significant thing about this book

is the constant recurrence of the element of enthusiasm in preaching. There are three main divisions: (1) The Aim of the Sermon. This includes the basic elements of the sermon as an aspect of worship, the importance of getting the listener's attention, and the excitement of holding his attention. (2) The Technique of the Sermon. This includes the actual preparation of the sermon materials and the conclusion and introduction. (3) The Continuing Discipline of Preaching. This includes style, logic, and imagination.

In Chapter 12, "Effecting the Introduction," the author says to prepare the introduction at the last. You need to know the whole sermon, and then determine

how to introduce it most effectively. This also avoids too long an introduction and too much of a sermon giveaway. He illustrates how to change the dull introduction by explaining nine ways to introduce the sermon.

In the discussion on delivery is a chapter on the evangelistic adjustments for the pastor. He gives several excellent standards to help evaluate your own evangelistic ability.

Strongly recommended.

M. A. WHITELEY

The One and Only You

By Bruce Larson (Word Books, 1974. Cloth, 141 pp., \$4.95.)

The author is a well-known Presbyterian minister who holds the B.D. from Princeton, and the M.A. from Boston University. Thus his messages reflect the combination of theology and psychology. The result is a positive, optimistic approach to life, and a self-awareness based on the belief that each of us is somebody special in God's sight, and there is a vast untapped potential through His power in our lives. Author Keith Miller (whose ministry is also cut along that pattern) declares this is the best book Larson has written among six previous works that have been best sellers. Refreshing and inspiring.

J. M.

Romans

The Gospel of God's Grace

By Alva J. McClain (Moody Press, 1973. Cloth, 253 pp., \$4.95.)

The late Alva J. McClain will be remembered as a charter member of the Evangelical Theology Society and a teacher of the Bible. Although not Wesleyan in his theological stance, he is rich in his devotional approach to the study of Romans, and divides the Epistle into the following areas: (1) Condemnation, the Wrath of God Revealed, 1:18—3:20; (2) Salvation, the Righteousness of God Revealed, 3:21—8:39; (3) Vindication, the Wisdom of God Revealed, 9:1—11:36; and (4) Exhortation, the Will of God Revealed, 12:1—15:33. The introductory chapter discusses some pre-

liminary facts about the book, and there is a general survey of the book preceding the chapters which deal with the text. On the doctrine of election, he declares, "Men are not lost because of God's election, but because they refused to believe Jesus" (p. 31). His Calvinistic approach is somewhat more evident in Chapter 17, where he discusses the exhibition of divine sovereignty in election; but all in all, there is much more with which the Arminian can agree than disagree. The main value of this book to the pastor is in the wealth of sermonic material and preaching helps in the author's homiletical treatment of Romans.

J. M.

The Methodist Revolution

By Bernard Semmel (Basic Books, Inc. Cloth, 273 pp., \$10.95.)

While not every word has been read, I would be ready to equate this volume with the classic on the social implications of Methodism, viz., *This Freedom Whence?* by J. Wesley Bready.

Semmel suggests Methodism may have had a decisive role in shaping the liberal and progressive England of the nineteenth century—with its unique blending of liberty and order and its special sense of national mission.

"Methodism has been pictured as a regressive, repressive religion. . . . Where Methodist doctrine has been discussed, it has been presented in a highly unfavorable light. . . . The Calvinist sects, it has been argued by Max Weber and others, had helped to produce 'modern' men. . . . I suggest that evangelical religion (particularly in its Wesleyan form) in the eighteenth century probably accomplished for masses of men what . . . Calvinism could only confirm for a relative few." I could quote at length.

The beautiful thing about this volume is that it is not simply anti-Calvin in its approach (which I would not swallow and which would be in its very nature biased historically) but is quite objective in assessing the flaws in the various movements of Wesley's day (including his own). Highly recommended for holiness history pundits and others; it shall be high on my library list.

JOHN JAMES

Preachers' Exchange



WANTED: Good copy of Wiley's *Epistle to the Hebrews*.—Robert D. Hempel, 1220 N. Liberty, Boise, Ida. 83704.

WANTED: Good set of *John Wesley's Works* in 14 vols.—Gary M. Noyes, 11873 London St. N.E., Blaine, Minn. 55434.

WANTED: Old, out-of-print picture postcards of any church, or present photo of places of worship for private collection. Or will buy someone's private collection.—Herb Hartman, P.O. Box 38, Clinton, Pa. 15026.

WANTED: Good set of Alexander Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scripture*.—Wm. Ammon, 10600 E. 26th Terr., Independence, Mo. 64052.

FOR SALE: *Walking Before God*, by L. Milton Williams; *Christ's Militant Kingdom*, by L. R. Scarborough; *Pen Pictures from Life's Pathway*, by U. E. Harding; *Sermons and Special Addresses*, by Fred T. Fuge; *Notes from My Bible*, by D. L. Moody.—Jack Seberry, 3550 Gateshead, N.E., Rockford, Mich. 49341.

WANTED: *Overcome Evil with Good*, Audrey Williamson; *Revelation*, by A. B. Simpson.—Jack Seberry, 3550 Gateshead, N.E., Rockford, Mich. 49341.

WANTED: *The Heritage of Holiness*, by Harry E. Jessop; *Holiness Triumphant*, by J. B. Chapman.—David B. Mygrant, 1812 N. "A" St., Elwood, Ind. 46036.

WANTED: Missing vol. (containing Acts through Philemon) of *The Biblical Museum*, by James Comper Gray. Or any information concerning the history, pub. date, etc., of these works.—Frank H. Johnson, P.O. Box 5, Benton City, Wash. 99320.

FOR SALE: *Preacher's Magazines* from 1945 to 1974; 5-vol. set of *Matthew Henry's Commentary*; 74 vol. of *Peloubet's Select Notes*—First vol. (1875) through 1936 cataloged.—C. F. Rissmiller, 2001 Quayle Dr., Akron, Ohio 44312.

WANTED: The old set of *Biblical Illustrator*; holiness books by J. B. Chapman, S. S. White, and B. Carradine; *Holiness in the Book of Romans*, A. M. Hills; *Possibilities of Grace* (unabridged), Asbury Lowry; *Expositions on Scriptures*, Alexander Maclaren; *Walk, Conversation, and Character of Jesus Christ*, Alexander Whyte.—Lowell Clark, 1022 Denver, Dalhart, Tex. 79022.

COMING next month

● The Gift of Tears

There are not many Jeremiahs around who are weeping day and night. Too many of us have forgotten how to be sorry.

● The Pastor as Preacher

We preachers are entrusted with the care of souls, and their spiritual welfare cannot be taken lightly.

● A Prayer for My Pastor and Wife

A member of the congregation has expressed a prayer that will warm the heart of every pastor.

● Are You Sure, Lord?

A ministerial student's experience should encourage the veterans of the Cross to believe the future of the Church is bright

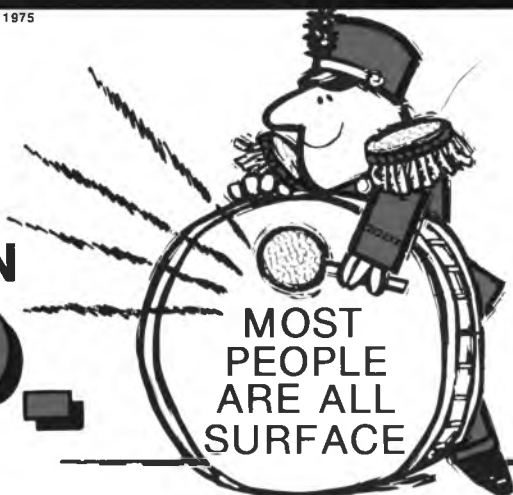


AMONG OURSELVES

Some years ago the National Bureau of Standards received a letter from a plumber. He had found that hydrochloric acid opened plugged pipes quickly, and asked whether or not it was a good thing for a plumber to use. A scientist at the Bureau replied: "The uncertain reactive processes of hydrochloric acid place pipes in jeopardy when alkalinity is involved. The efficiency of the solution is indisputable, but the corrosive residue is incompatible with metallic permanence." The plumber wrote back to thank the Bureau for telling him his method was all right. The scientist had a feeling he had been misunderstood, so he tried again to get the message across: "Hydrochloric acid generates a toxic and noxious residue which will produce submuriate invalidating reactions. Consequently, some alternative procedure is preferable." The plumber wrote again and said he agreed with the Bureau that hydrochloric acid works fine. By this time the scientist was disturbed enough to ask his top boss for advice, and the latter quickly dispatched a telegram to the plumber saying: "Don't use hydrochloric acid; it eats holes in the pipes." Which reminds us that preaching can be a waste of time unless it is understood by those who hear it.

Yours for souls,

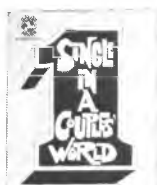
WAY DOWN DEEP-



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