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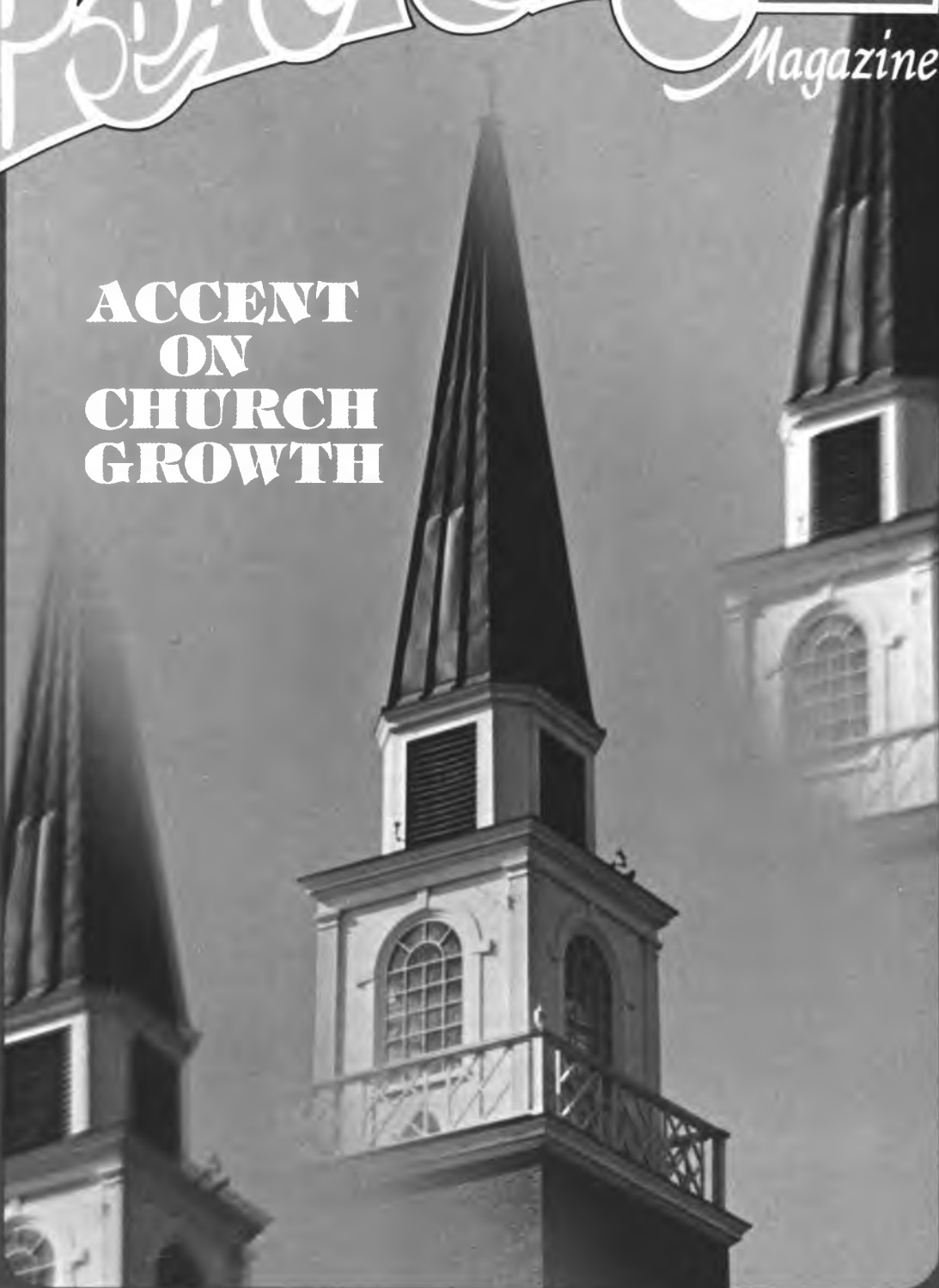
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# *The* **Preacher's** **II** *Magazine*

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**ACCENT  
ON  
CHURCH  
GROWTH**



**June, July, August, 1980**

# suitable for Framing

## The Creature Who Is His Image

God has created man to be a creaturely reflection of His spiritual, holy, and blessed nature. That they might be a mirror of His spirituality He gave them the understanding; that they might be a copy of His holiness and love, the will; and that they should be a vessel of His blessedness and happiness, the feelings.

But then came sin. The whole man fell. His understanding was darkened (Eph. 4:18), his will became evil (John 3:19), and his feelings became unhappy (Rom. 7:24).

Out of this total ruin the work of Christ now saves him.

As Prophet He brings knowledge, i.e., light, delivers the understanding from sin's darkness, and establishes the kingdom of truth.

As Priest He brings the sacrifice, cancels the guilt and thereby the consciousness of guilt, thus delivering the feelings from the crippling pressure of misery and an accusing conscience, and establishes the Kingdom of peace and joy.

As King He rules the will, guides it in paths of holiness, and establishes the kingdom of love and righteousness.

Thus does His title Christ, embracing a threefold salvation, become the unfolding and explanation of His name Jesus. It is because the Redeemer is the Christ, the thrice-anointed, that He is Jesus, the Savior. His threefold office sets man free in the three powers of his soul, the understanding, the feelings, and the will. A full, free, and complete salvation is introduced, so that the redemption could not be more perfect than it is. The threefold wretchedness of darkness, unhappiness, and sinfulness is met by a threefold, yet organically single salvation of enlightenment, blessedness, and holiness, and the spirituality (Col. 3:10), glorious happiness (2 Cor. 3:18), and holiness of God (Eph. 4:24) shine anew out of the creature who is His image.

Erich Sauer, *The Triumph of the Crucified*



by  
Neil B.  
Wiseman



## AN INVITATION TO YOUR FUTURE

**S**ome preachers are greeting the 1980s shoulder blades first. To them the future looks like a grinning Medusa that can hardly be glanced at, let alone stared down. Worldwide double-digit inflation, accelerating energy costs, rising crime rates, frighteningly rapid change, all coupled with a subtle resistance to the gospel of Christ can add up to clergy discouragement in our time. Our situation reminds me of a missionary's statement that every period of history has had hindering opposition but the opposition keeps changing. It is true, we face obstacles that the church has never known before.

Just now I have been listening by cassette tape to Samuel Kamaleson's message, "Holiness—Living Beyond Fear," preached at the Christian Holiness Association Meeting at Olivet Nazarene College. He reminds me that God gives us freedom from every kind of fear, including our fear of the future. Since the power of the Holy Spirit stretches us to become and to do something more than we can ever do on our own, our future service for Christ and to the human family looks very bright. Real spiritual leaders, the kind God always uses, are ready to be shaped by new experiences and forces of faith which make them see things they previously overlooked.

Perhaps your future includes the soon return of our Lord. These could be the last days. But since we are His possession, that possibility holds no fear for us. How thrilling it would be to go into His immediate presence from a pulpit where we had been declaring the full counsel of God. What a blessing it would be to go into His presence from a hospital room where we had been offering hope in the name of the Lord to the ill and the afflicted. What a glad reunion experience it would be to go into His presence from an altar in a revival meeting where we had been helping a fellow beggar find bread. And it might be even more enjoyable to go into His presence from an experience of mended

broken human relationships. His instructions, "Occupy until I come," send us out again to faithful service. Look up, your future is bright.

Maybe your future includes the apparent destruction of a dream. Perhaps you have been captured by an idea or truth that would literally revolutionize the situation where you minister. And maybe someone has so undercut your vision and so questioned your intentions that you cannot now turn the dream into reality. But take the long view; God still lives. If He is the Giver of the dream, He will either bring the dream into reality or challenge you with a bigger vision of what He can do through you.

Recently I overheard a conversation, "A dream of months and years was dashed to dust by a bungling brother. He could not be satisfied to squelch the dream but he went on to cast a cloud on my integrity and to cause the deepest pain of my ministerial career." And you have people like that in your life experience who can shatter your dream and question your motives. But no one can keep you from dreaming a new dream. Remember those tried and true friends in the gospel who have been bound to you by your ministry to them. No one can take them from you. And with your God-given dream there will be others who will be won and nurtured by your future ministerial efforts. God as the Giver of the dream and you the doer of the dream are still in eternal partnership; the delays are only temporary. Your future is bright.

**U**nprecedented opportunities loom in the future of the holiness movement. At least three different groups of people are already eager to hear our message.

Tens of thousands of persons are among the world's walking wounded because of loneliness, alienation, and divorce; the caring attitude of a church that connects the Savior and the sinner is

the most magnetic force in the world to such folks. How will they hear our message of love made perfect.

Our understanding of our opportunity grows when you consider another target for our message is the good people who hunger for spiritual reality in churches that have given their major emphasis to insignificant issues. They long to hear the whole message of the Bible and to be challenged to life-transformation through the power of Christ. Of course, they will not be attracted by puny spiritual pride or faith based on dreary duty. They want reality, and in our finest hour we know how to communicate it. These kinds of spiritually serious persons would already be in our churches if they only knew who we really are and if we could more effectively model the faith we profess. They need to know us and to see our faith in action.

And this unprecedented opportunity increases again when you add the thousands of serious Christians who will eventually be burned out by the emotional excesses in the charismatic movement.

But they will not want to give up on spontaneity in worship and reality of personal faith. Both of these factors are a viable part of our kind of church.

So in addition to the gigantic evangelistic opportunities we have enjoyed throughout this century, we add these three additional targets in the population who will respond to our ministry. Think of the unprecedented opportunities. Your future looks bright.

Isolationists, traditionalists, doubters, overly cautious colleagues and dream destroyers may hound your steps in the future. There are a thousand nearly valid reasons for fearing the future. You can allow your tomorrows to be mesmerized by problems or motivated by possibilities. E. Stanley Jones once wrote, "Yourself on your hands is a problem and a pain, yourself in the hands of God is a potential and a possibility." Can you really afford to allow anyone but God and you to shape your future ministry?

Here comes your future—are you ready to embrace it with joy?

## GRIEF and promise

This is my last issue as editor of the *Preacher's Magazine*. When you read these lines, six months after they are written, I'll be settled in the pastorate of a great Florida church, Pompano Beach First Church of the Nazarene. The time has gone too quickly and my editorial work with the *Preacher's Magazine* has been so much briefer than I had ever intended. The weight of the task has been heavy because of the long list of stalwart ministers who have served as editors before me. But our faithful ministers, people just like you, with their eagerness to find a fulfilling ministry, really made me dig to help make the magazine what it has become.

During this period the magazine has changed. It has moved from a monthly to a quarterly. Full color has come to the cover and the inside graphics have made the magazine more readable. Every issue has been planned around a theme by a rotating editorial board known as the Editor's Chair. This theme approach has provoked reaction and conversation between readers, writers, and editor. Even the pay scale to writers has slightly increased. Hopefully the magazine is making some kind of positive impact on your life and ministry.

I have grief in laying down this assignment. My sorrow comes because I will miss our quarterly dialogue and the hundreds of letters that readers have written. My sadness increases when I think of the fun I will miss from planning each issue with the staff and fellow ministers. The pain intensifies

when I consider the fact that this one phase of my ministry is closing even as another portion opens.

The ministry of the holiness churches of our time is important to me. There is so much that we can accomplish in these times. As I have traveled the church I have been impressed with the commitment for improved ministry that I have met nearly everywhere. Should the Lord tarry His coming, the 80s and the 90s are going to be a period of great need and blessed opportunity. If we only know what to do with such a time, it will be a great period for service to Christ and the church.

Greater impact and influence for the *Preacher's Magazine* is just ahead. Wesley Tracy, a gifted writer and a careful editor, now shortens his title and increases his responsibility from managing editor to editor. I have known Wes all of my ministry, and for significant periods of time we have worked together on writing projects and at times our offices have joined each other. Wes pastored successfully for 12 years, has been an editor, a college teacher, and now earns his living as a professor at Nazarene Theological Seminary. His ministry of writing has touched thousands around the world. The *Preacher's Magazine* is in good hands. I salute the Board of General Superintendents on their choice of my replacement. The viable future of the magazine is assured.

Amidst the nearly empty packing boxes in my Pompano Beach study, I am finding fulfillment. Of course, I am a little out of breath with the demands of two new sermons every week, funerals, Bible studies, staff development, finance, counseling, and endless round of committee meetings. Here among a loving congregation and a needy city I feel at home. And I think that being a pastor is fun.

# THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

*Proclaiming Christian Holiness*

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# THE ARK ROCKER

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## COMMITMENT OR COMPROMISE:

### Which Will Be the Road Not Taken?

The holiness churches are going through a time of change, adjustment, groping for identity and carrying heavy guilt in some places—floating guilt, for at times we are having a time of it figuring out why the guilt, but it is there nevertheless.

Let's be honest with ourselves in order to love Christ's church more, shall we? In some quarters there are those who are genuinely concerned about the lack of membership increase in our denominations as well as those who are quietly leaving us for other than holiness loyalties. In other quarters there is a backlash against some fanaticism of the past—so much so that a monotonous formalism has set in. Still in other areas there is a boredom of church routine that has taken over—a continuing to mouth the "God words" of saving grace, holiness, and the like, but somehow the majesty has gone with the mystery of His presence.

Others are sensing that subtle compromise has undermined the cutting edge of years past—a quiet living with worldliness. Materialism has crept in as so-called holiness people still mouth the words of sacrifice and all-outness for God. Skirting the edge of worldly entertainments is tolerated in many quarters for fear of being narrow and legalistic. Looseness of the Lord's Day observance is likewise allowed since we no longer want to be classed with the "fogies" of other times, nor, more honestly, do we want to miss out on the leisure-time allurements that beckon us away from Sunday morning and evening worship. In too many places a sophisticated

compromise has taken the place of strong religious conviction about the holiness life-style—why not give in a little there and a little here, after all what can be so wrong with this or that?

Further, in some churches there has been such a fear of being emotional because of a few nuisances of the past that things have become downright dead in straining to be proper. Granted, it is hard to keep a balance, yet that is forever the challenge to the alive church—to keep on target with the Spirit. But of course, that means vibrant prayer lives on the part of all, laity as well as clergy. That means family altars that are on fire. That means truly committed Christians who are faithful to worship. That means tithing Christians. That means individuals who have the Spirit in their own spirits so that when they gather together in one place one can sense the power of the collected strength. That means preachers who prepare meaty sermons.

It means more than going through the motions, saying the same orthodox lingo, pulling out "Amen's" from the congregation—whether they want to say Amen or not. It means more than simply singing loudly the same old hymns just because they are there and we still want to hang on to the holiness banner. It means more than prying testimonies out of a Sunday evening service and forever telling the people to smile on the next hymn "if they really mean it"; (oh, how trite that gets after about the fourth smile-pull).

Among clergy and laity there is a tiredness settling on us, threatening to smother us. We are tired

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of dragging into church, dragging into another program, dragging into another promise of wow-growth, another bonanza that won't float, another poster, another come-on, another set of clichés, another seminar, another conference, another let-down.

With the tiredness there comes disenchantment. How many times can we be given the promise of this formula, that set of how-to-do-its and have them cave in, without throwing in the towel? Then there are those reports of "spectacular this-or-that church" that realistically turn out to be a mirage, just not nailed down to the facts; so another suspicion level is grown on the skin of the church. We've been fed a "line"—either intentionally or unintentionally—that simply did not have the goods behind it.

Could it be that we have looked unto our own ways too much—that old trick of the enemy from the pit? Moreover, can it be that we have failed to face realistically the fact that the church just won't be

hear? Sure, the world wants to hear a message that promises eternal security—carry the Bible and live as you please. Sure, the world wants to hear you can have the Friday night "bounce in the Spirit" at some prayer meeting—with tongues besides—without having to live the holy life. Sure, the world wants to hear that one can parrot some ritualistic phrases for a quickie hour early Sunday morning without "coming through" for Jesus in a complete commitment from Monday through Sunday the next week.

The church—that is, Christendom—has come up with these baits so as to get its adherents to do everything but be all-out for God. Yet the holiness denominations historically have preached that it is holiness or forget it. But the world just does not want to hear that, by and large. Yet we continue to kick ourselves for not growing like the Calvinists, the charismatics, or the Catholics; but we demand more than an eternal security theology and an emotional Friday night religious party often void of biblical depth or a call to holiness. We preach a death to

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**We have heard the dialogue sermons and experimented  
with those "loose" Sunday evenings when  
the preacher sat on a stool in his Levis.**

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all that popular in the world? Further, can it be that we have outdone ourselves from the wrong motives with the wrong objectives? And can it be that we have tried everything but the basics in attempting to keep up with the denominational Joneses, not reckoning that the same factors which brought their sterility will bring ours? Can it be that we have wanted the spirituality without the cost, desired the winnings without the put-out, craved for the end result without consulting the Bible for the means to that end?

Furthermore, as holiness denominations, with our particular mission for the Lord within Christendom, have we honestly faced the fact that what we preach is the last thing in the world the world wants to

self-centeredness and a consecration to a daily infilling with the Holy Spirit. With preaching like that, face it, we are not going to grow by leaps and bounds.

Yet we still continue with the strain and the push and the pull and the yank and that constant floating guilt. Yes, here and there are those fortunate freak cases where there is overnight growth and a people sincerely 100 percent for the Lord so that the local congregation seems to pop up within days—and it is all "for real." But those happenings for some reason just do not reproduce everywhere all the time.

Then could it be that one of the guidelines for holiness churches would be this: those in the local



congregation be happy in the totally committed life—whether they number 20 or 2,000—be happy, smiling for the Lord, genuinely joyous for this day that God has given. Then those in that church truly love one another with an outreaching fellowship that runs deeply. That the preacher of the flock prepare the best messages he can under the guidance of the Spirit, coming into the pulpit with the most buoyant preliminaries that he can find in the leading of the Lord. Then those who have gathered in the Lord's name recognize that He promised to be where two or three meet.

at your altars. Then I'll give somebody something to testify about that will be fresh—so that you preachers won't have to yank and plead from the pulpit for someone to groggily rise from his seat to repeat the same worn words. Then I'll bring sparkle to your worship and meat to your sermons and a new vision to your eyes. Then I'll throw out some of your two-by-four programs and give you something to really sing about."

Could it be that God is simply waiting by the side of the road till we follow through with what we promised and what He has called us to?

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## **Can it be that we have tried everything but the basics in attempting to keep up with the denominational Joneses?**

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With that the people will sense the Lord's creative nearness—boredom gone. With that the worshipers will weld their like-mindedness in the Spirit—staleness leaving the room. With that the genuine disciples will stand up to testify if they like, and if they do not feel so led, then they will stay seated, the service moving on in a new direction—with all being under His control. With that the altar will be opened and people will come to pray or they won't whichever, those present will have done their best for that service—and so floating guilt will begin to drain out. With that the people of God will go to their work on Monday mornings in the Spirit—blessed, sound in mind and spirit, ready to live the life even if everyone else seems to want to go to hell.

Could it also be that as a whole—throughout the holiness denominations—we need to back up the local happy worshipers with a new sense of conviction concerning our holiness causes? We have boycotts concerning nicotine, alcohol, movies, and dances, but rarely does anyone talk about these anymore. We might offend someone. We might look stupid or not appear contemporary. We might not "fit in" with some group that is eyeing the church. We might "run off" someone who looks like a good prospect. And so rarely is a crystal-clear statement forthcoming from our periodicals or pulpits concerning the holiness causes to which we have committed ourselves before God.

Could it be that part of the "canned feeling" we get in so many of our services is due to the Spirit simply saying, "When you people called holiness folk get back to what you were called to do, then I'll add My fire to your efforts. Then I'll come to sweep across your hymn-singing. Then I'll get to new hearts in conviction so that they'll get saved


I don't know, but I get the feeling that maybe it is coming to all this. After all, I saw an ad from one of our headquarters inviting people to a clergy gathering in order, in the words of the ad, to get "back to the basics." And I heard a denominational leader say that perhaps we have concerted, seminared, conferenced, and conventioned ourselves to death; that it may be that we holiness people will have to get back to our knees, back to real revivals, back to praying and fasting, back to biblical preaching that "calls the shots" as the Old Book states them.

We have waded through the skepticism of the 60s with the God-is-dead stupidity. We have frolicked through the Jesus People movement. We have also examined, written about, and analyzed the charismatic sweep. We have heard the dialogue sermons and experimented with those "loose" Sunday evenings when the preacher sat on a stool in his Levis. We have had our hugs-and-kisses times in the name of Jesus. You know, the love-Jesus-and-do-as-you-please fests. We have then grown up a bit with the weekend retreats, study seminars, and the like with the accent on head-intake. And so here we are, most of us where we were when this all started.

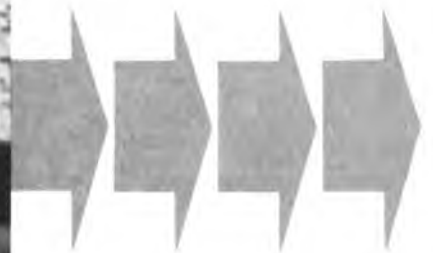
What has been missing? Why didn't we make it? Why were we left in the dust? Why didn't our "boat come in"? Maybe the ad is getting near to the truth of it all—perhaps we conveniently forgot the basics—the old-time fundamentals of what makes a holiness person a holiness person. Perhaps God is waiting to see if we can find the basics again—that is, what is supposed to make us sanctified folk "tick."

Wouldn't it be a breath of fresh air to find them again?





# **ACCENT ON CHURCH GROWTH**



# CHURCH GROWTH STARTS HERE

Excerpts from Donald McGavran's forthcoming book,  
*Certainty: The Convictional Foundations of Church Growth.*

**L**asting church growth requires convictional support. Church growth is not merely good methods, better management, and multiplying Class Two workers. Church growth is not merely recognizing homogeneous units. Churches grow not merely because they evangelize receptive individuals, and deliberately become friendly churches. To be sure, these good things will help. A spurt of growth will likely take place. But without Bible-based conviction, churches will lapse back into a stagnant condition.

If a congregation holds a sub-Christian position concerning the lostness of mankind, how can we remedy the situation? If it doubts whether anyone is ever really lost, if it has read more of Aldous Huxley and *Time* magazine than of John the Evangelist, a good starting place is to teach what the Lord actually said.

In any congregation, if the people are fed on the Word, they come to believe the Word. Part of the problem in churches today is weak biblical preaching.

Since the foundation of the pluralistic order is the conviction that each life-style is about equally right, Christians find their own

children and themselves drifting almost unconsciously toward relativistic religion. This holds that *no one has The Truth*. All religions and ideologies are partly true and partly false. People say, "You know a part of the truth. So do I. Let's get together and dialogue. Perhaps we shall together arrive at a truer concept of reality. Jesus Christ was a very great man; but then so were Gautama, Krishna, Confucius, and Marx."

This climate of thought is the antithesis of that of the New Testament Church. Indeed, of the entire biblical revelation. Yet church growth today must proceed in this pluralistic milieu. What is the right attitude toward this influential contemporary dogma?

We hold that church growth is not mere gimmicks and gadgets which will operate in any organization, and on any theory of eternal truth. Rather, church growth presupposes that the biblical revelation has been given by God and that, in the absolute matters concerning man and God, God has revealed His perfect will authoritatively and completely enough so that Christians in this

century or any other, this land or any other, may confidently go forward knowing that they are basing their action on unchanging truth.

While Christians are thus, by divine command and the example of Christ himself, to proceed on the basis of religious freedom, they are to reject as they would Satan himself, the slick lie that all opinions about absolute values, about God and man, freedom and justice, eternal life and eternal death, repentance and morality are equally true and equally false.

Devout Bible reading and Bible obeying Christians from the islands of the South Pacific, who 150 years ago were totally illiterate cannibals, will be seen to be remarkably like earnest Christians in Scotland who 150 years ago were a totally literate society. In short, when God's revelation is accepted as the One Authority, the Unchanging Word of God, then human opinions yield and a Christian way of life results.

In this Christian way of life, the good things in the Scottish and the Fijian cultures have been preserved. Indeed they have been enhanced and made still more beautiful. All this has been

achieved not by watering down biblical truth to fit ways of thinking about God and man achieved by other cultures; but rather by bringing the wealth of the nations into Zion and there purging it of all sin, sorrow, sickness, and death. The whole Church is richer because of the enriched contributions of many cultures.

Early Christians had every human reason to consider other ways at least as true as theirs. To shout aloud that the One Savior was a crucified Jew was a logical impossibility. Yet that is exactly what they did. They went everywhere preaching the gospel. If we think it difficult for us today to counter the tides of relativism, we should remember that it was ten times more difficult for the Christians in the first century to do so. But they disregarded the tides, and proclaimed the Word with boldness. They were certain. They believed intensely. Unshakeable conviction was one of the secrets of church growth in the Early Church.

It is still a main secret of growth today. Church growth rises from theological roots, from Christian certainty. People of unshakeable conviction can profitably employ many of the insights from the social sciences, and those of communication and management; but without certainty, all human resources suddenly become mere methods.

**C**ompassion is one of the seeds of church growth. Why do churches grow? Because Christians care for people. The world is full of hurting people, most of whom carefully conceal their anxieties, fears, and oppressions.

If churches are to grow compassion must be shown to *outsiders*—to publicans and sinners, to jailers and soldiers, to those outside the normal community of the faithful. The church must be more than believers who are very kind to each other.

### **The Fellowship of the Crucifixion**

No wonder the early churches multiplied. They gloried in the Cross! Nothing could stop them—not even a cross!! All other ob-

stacles, all other costs, deprivations, and sacrifices seemed small in the light of Calvary. In paying the cost of Christian living, the believers were simply sharing in the redemptive suffering which their Lord had endured. They declared that suffering for Christ was a high privilege.

Obstacles to the evangelization of the rest of the world must not stop Christians today. The early Christians overcame far greater obstacles. Given firm conviction, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and endurance born of being comrades of the Cross, we Christians must make sure the gospel is proclaimed at home and abroad with ceaseless, fervent faith.

The opportunities for the spread of the gospel were never brighter than they are today. The Early Church not only had courage and tremendous endurance, they also evangelized receptive peoples. For 20 years they concentrated on the Jews. For another 20 years they concentrated on the receptive Gentile fringes of the synagogue communities, planting hundreds of churches. Today in America and around the world, we also must seek out receptive communities—they are legion—and multiply churches and Christians in them.

Sometimes a community which seems hostile is actually quite receptive. It is hostile only to a form of evangelism which does not speak to them. The Navaho nation is a case in point. It has been extensively missionized and evangelized, but without much effect. Recently, by proclaiming the gospel in the Navaho language and thought forms, and adapting it to their felt needs, more than a hundred new churches have been established. The great evangelization of ethnic minorities in this country await similar application of Paul's principles—"to the Jews I became as a Jew in order to win Jews . . . to those outside the law, I became as one outside the law . . . that I might win those outside the law. . . I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:19-22, RSV).\*

Christians and churches from one strand of this social order usually find it difficult to evangelize individuals and societies of another. The Christians of Jewish background did not evangelize the Gentiles easily. It took a special revelation of God and special messengers like Paul and Barnabas to lead a few of them to "speak the Word" to the Gentiles. Substantial barriers face upper middle class churches when they evangelize lower class neighborhoods and, even more, when they evangelize neighborhoods of different ethnic and linguistic hues. But these barriers are not as formidable as those faced by John, Paul, Philip, Peter, and Barnabas. Difficulties did not stop them and today are not going to stop the Fellowship of the Crucifixion. If any one plan fails—if God does not bless it to the salvation of lost men and women and the multiplication of cells of His Body—Christians devise new plans. We will not turn back.

Christians who evangelize faithfully and help churches grow are blessed by God and are a blessing to multitudes. They are the precious wheat. Christians who form an ironclad resolution to let no pain, no humiliation, and no obstacle deter them from doing God's will, are part of the Fellowship of the Crucifixion.

Church growth that anticipates quick, painless advances will stumble easily and fall short; but church growth ready to pay the price will win through. If some of our programs in evangelism do not succeed, we follow them with others. If our present missionaries do not plant churches, we shall send out others who will. We are not out for an afternoon stroll, to turn back when it begins to rain. No! Rain or shine, wind or storm, sorrow or death, we are going to carry the good news of God's plan of salvation to all men. We have resolved to pay the price, today, tomorrow, this year, next year, as long as the Lord keeps us in this world! We belong to the Fellowship of the Crucifixion.



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# CHURCH GROWTH...

## Is It a Passing Fancy?

By Raymond W. Hurn

*Executive Director, Department of Home Missions, Church of the Nazarene*

**P**assing fancies or fads have long affected the spiritual tone and progress of the Church of Jesus Christ. Some have brought momentary spurts of interest and growth. Often this brief spasm has diverted the church from its central redemptive mission. It is appropriate, therefore, that concerns should be raised now and again about the status of the so-called "church growth movement."

### **Crusade Evangelism**

For a time we were all caught up in crusade evangelism (interdenominational city-wide campaigns) and imagined that great growth would come to individual churches through that participation. We learned the truth much later that very few members were added to the local churches. Those profiting were churches of extremely high visibility who were well prepared to participate and follow up on all converts through a discipling process. Crusade evangelism had benefits in creating a spirit of religious fervor and it drew the attention of the community to the gospel. However, it has been well established that most "decisions" were church people already, who went back to their home church after the crusade.

### **Saturation Evangelism**

Saturation evangelism, especially in South America, followed a similar pattern with too few new converts being discipled and enlisted in Christ's Church. "Here's Life, America," a publicity man's dream for motivating large numbers of Christians, had similar results. Only a tiny percentage of those "making decisions" by telephone ever showed up in Bible study groups. A fraction of those who did became discipled and enlisted in a local church as new converts.<sup>1</sup>

### **Church Growth as a Concept**

Pastors have been through many "programmatic" innovations that were quite fadistic. The human mind, being what it is, accepts prepackaged programs quite readily. Conceptual thinkers are rare. It is much easier to make a commitment to a specified program that is promoted through "channels" than it is to conceptualize basic principles.

Church growth, on the other hand, conceptualizes principles and deals with the end result of whatever programs, campaigns, or specialties are used in the development of Christ's work in the earth.

Indeed, good stewardship demands concern for the end result of our strategies and programs... especially on the part of church planners. The gospel itself builds in accountability that none of us should or could escape. It seems inconceivable that church leadership would attempt to divorce itself from accountability of the dollars and lives that are employed in the promotion of the work of Jesus Christ. Programs in themselves are not bad; in fact, they are a necessity. Good programs will change and be replaced by better ones. Good strategies may be highly productive for a short time, to be replaced later by equally good strategies.

This is the way it is in all pursuits of life. Jesus proposed to make His first disciples "fishers of men." They understood that terminology extremely well. Jesus modeled for them changes in strategy when He urged them to "try again" by casting their "nets" on the other side.

To "sniff" at something new when it obviously is working for some people in some place is neither sensible nor good stewardship. Neither is it sensible to think it will work everywhere equally as well for all people in all circumstances.

### **Innovators**

John Wesley did not take easily to field preaching. Reluctantly at first and then with great enthusiasm, he preached to thousands of miners outside Bristol, England. Standing on the brow of a hill with natural voice amplification, he fully exploited this new method of the harvest. His method may have embarrassed old friends and associates, but the hungry-hearted miners heard the gospel gladly.

Francis Asbury led his circuit riders with unequalled zeal and enthusiasm in an age when horsepower really meant "horses." Later, the crusade methodologies of Billy Sunday and others who have followed in his train were opposed by some.

When William Carey proposed to take the gospel to the "heathen" in distant lands, his peers, colleagues, and superiors thought it a huge waste of time and effort; for after all, if God intended for the heathen to be saved He would see to that, they observed.

There is a sense in which one cannot escape "fads" in religious life any more than in other phases of life. After all, a fad is a "temporary fashion" and excites the attention and develops prestige. However, a fad can be somewhat "irrational."

I wanted to start off by saying, "The Church of Jesus Christ just simply doesn't have time for fads and gimmicks," but honesty forces me to admit that a great deal of "temporariness" has gotten involved in our methodology. Is the church growth movement a passing fancy . . . a fad . . . a temporary fashion?

### **Basics of Church Growth**

In the light of the possibility that we may be "wasting" our time on another fad, it is appropriate that we consider the basics of church growth. After all, none of us want to waste our time on superficialities, temporary solutions, or fadistic programs that could backfire. Church growth thought is quite complex. It cannot be explained in a paragraph or two. Dr. Donald McGavran intended that the early church growth writings should deal with enunciating a clear mission, a theology, a mission theory, and mission practice. He felt that mission theory and mission theology were in dispute.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. McGavran, who never claimed to know "the last word" on the subject of church growth, set out to attempt to seriously present the reconciliation of sinful men to God through the Church of Jesus Christ. He took the position that it was pleasing to God that churches be established, comprised of baptized believers, and that some attention should be given to anthropological foundations, that is, the matter of "size, number, ethnic, cultural composition, and relationship to the undisciplined. These are matters which, if the Christian is to be a good steward of God's grace, can be measured and must be known."<sup>3</sup>

Up to the beginning of the 1800s, only Europe and America knew much about the expansion of the Church of Jesus Christ, which was due perhaps largely to the failure of Reformation leaders to pre-

serve mission orders indispensable to the Catholic system of extension of the gospel.

Dr. McGavran saw "faithfulness to God" as being an essential definition of church growth. "Where there is no faithfulness in proclaiming Christ there is no growth."<sup>4</sup> He believed that church growth would follow where Christians exemplified faithfulness in finding the lost and restoring them to life in the kingdom of God. "Folding and feeding" were essential factors in this faithfulness.

Obedience to God in planting and developing churches was seen by him as more than a sociological process, though sociological factors were never ignored. The complexity of church growth is readily discernible in seeing how we approach different kinds of people in the process of "making disciples."

### **Universal Fog**

Chapter four of *Understanding Church Growth* is entitled, "A Universal Fog." Semantic, psychological, promotional, and theological causes are seen as restricting growth. Some of these deterrents are perceived by church growth advocates to be universally applicable. Catering to upper classes instead of the masses of working class people will soon "slow" a religious movement. Establishing unattainable membership standards and making high academic requirements for *all* pastors likewise are seen to restrict growth. Pastors who can't release parts of "their" ministry to others and can't graciously receive feedback from members may be in the growth-restricting "fog."

### **Rapid Change**

All this is complicated in the light of the rapid societal changes of the last two decades. Since 1960 we have seen student riots, civil rights marches, assassinations, Jesus People, men walking platforms, loss of affluency, high cost of energy, Watergate, decline of religious interest, and growth of pluralism. This has perhaps made churchmen even more suspicious of any new approach to the gospel.

Earlier there were two world wars and a national depression. The churches of America responded by building buildings. This is the medieval concept of "church." It is no wonder that a younger generation would reject the concept of the church being a building. The people of America were ripe for the growth of various cults and isms. The great preoccupation with cults is evidence of widespread spiritual hunger among the people. This should spur us on to greater effort to portray a saving Christ.

### **Guiding Principles**

There are at least two ways of looking at the church today. One is through the eyes of the biblical scholar or theologian, the other is through the sociological factors that surround the life of the church and its activities. In any basic understanding of church growth one must begin, first of all, by acknowledgment of certain biblical principles.

### **Supremacy of Jesus Christ**

(1) The first principle of church growth is recognition of the absolute supremacy of Jesus Christ as Savior, Lord, and Head of the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:10, 22; 2:20; 4:15). With Christ as Head of the Body, we receive spiritual blessings in Christ. He “chose us” to be holy (Eph. 1:4), adopted us His sons (1:5), gives grace freely to us (1:6), provides redemption through His blood (1:7), lavishes grace upon us (1:8), is the Head of the Body (1:10). We are chosen and marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit (1:11, 13).

At the top of the human body is the head, containing brain, sensory organs—eyes, ears, nose, etc. The brain permits learning, the use of experiences, controls sounds, and controls the entire body. So it is with Christ as the Head of His Church, the Body of Jesus Christ. As the Head of that Body, He is God (Col. 1:15-20).

### **Authority of Scripture**

(2) The second principle of church growth is the belief in the authority of the Scripture as our guide in knowing God’s will for our service. In every case church growth movement leaders accept the Word of God as our guide. If the true Church of Christ is to be built and is to grow, it must do so upon the principles and doctrines laid down for us in the inspired Word of God.

### **Obedience to the Will of God**

(3) The third principle of church growth, implied in the second principle, deals with the response of the individual. The church growth person is obedient to the will of God as laid down for us in the Holy Bible. He is obedient to observe the laws of God, our scriptural guides for spiritual development. He is quick to fulfill the command of Jesus “to make disciples.”

There is a sense of urgency in this obedience to the Great Commission. The Great Commission contains action verbs and has one imperative (“Go make disciples”). This imperative becomes a driving passion in the life of the church growth person.

Faithfulness to Christ and His will is the highest challenge. Willingness to put self-interests in the background to fulfill the will of Christ is the hallmark of church growth attitude.

### **Accountability**

(4) A fourth principle of church growth centers upon accountability. The principle of accountability of stewards is very prominent in the teachings of Jesus. When He sent out His large evangelistic force of 70, He urged upon them the responsibility to “pray . . . the Lord of the harvest . . . [to] send forth labourers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2). Finding the lost is central to His teaching in the parables of the lost coin, the lost sheep, and the lost boy.

Humanitarian service is good but must never be substituted for “finding.” Being “there” to live the good life, to model by Christian example, is excellent but is only the beginning element in accom-

plished evangelism. Proclaiming the “good news” from pulpit, by tract, book, or media is fine but does not fulfill the accomplished mission of Christ. Our Lord was not content with “feeding” the hungry and healing the sick. He pressed on to give His life a ransom for many and to send out His followers to disciple all nations.

### **Internal Growth**

Maintenance of institutions, service, good works, or shepherding the sheep that are already “there” is not quite enough. Findable persons are continually lost. The degree of growth rests upon how well we find and disciple the lost. The Church of Jesus Christ must grow beyond its small, primary cell of 35 or so members. The cell must grow, divide, grow, redivide, expand. Continual emphasis on internal growth will not suffice. “Internal growth” is good and is a vital part of the process of growth, however. Doctrine, prayer, koinonia, devotional development, worship, all come into full play as internal growth occurs.

### **Expansion Growth**

“Expansion growth” must also be a normal part of the process within the church. Expansion growth will bring in people from the outside as new converts to continually add winable people to the Body of Christ. A local church grows greatly when many scattered cells are created which form the Body of Christ.

### **Extension Growth**

“Extension growth” takes place as new churches are continually planted. Maximum finding occurs when local church bodies become expendable in the extension effort that multiplies many churches.<sup>5</sup> Somehow we must confront our accountability to the Master for a lost world. Local churches must become primary agencies for rapid planting of many churches.

Reconciliation must take place. Again, where else can we look except to the local church as the “primary agency” for compassionate ministries that “heal the hurt,” bind up the wounded, and extend the mercies of loving brethren as well as that of our loving Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **God’s World View**

(5) A fifth guiding principle of church growth deals with having God’s view of the world. Everyone has a “world view.” We see the world around us; understand it depending upon our perception of the world, the people in it, societal conditions, etc. Only when we see the world as God sees the world are we motivated to the maximum in our efforts to cause “growth” in Christ’s Body.

We turn again to the Scriptures to understand God’s view of the world. Second Peter 2—3 helps us to look upon the world as being under the judgment of God. It is a lost world, an unsaved world, a world that awaits the fiery judgment of God.

When God looked upon this kind of world, He was “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).



Every Sunday school child learns a great motivational verse when they are taught to quote "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). A true sense of mission is not content with merely searching or even "finding" winnable people, but is satisfied only with bringing them to Christ. This is an irreplaceable element.

### Church Growth Strategy

With this prefacing statement, we now come to strategizing. Church growth teaches that every Christian must have a strategy for reaching the lost for Christ. The right goal is "to make disciples." Having the right strategy is imperative if satisfactory results are to be achieved. In order to find the right strategy one must know something about people in general and a great deal about a particular segment of the population which he hopes to win. Practical data has been made available to churchmen through church growth in developing the right strategy. Not all need to have the same strategy.

Christ's parable in Mark 4 (about the sower and the seed) gives emphasis to putting the seed in the right place at the right time. No self-respecting farmer, then or now, would promiscuously broadcast seed everywhere in hardened roadways, among stifling thistles, or in shallow soil if responsive soil were available in which to sow the seed. The concerned worker in the vineyard of the Lord seeks out the right place, the right time, and the right strategy in order to maximize the effort, energies, and money that are utilized in Kingdom building. This does not rule out some speculative broadcasting of the seed of the Word. One "holds lightly" the unknown or unresponsive area. The "hard" areas are not ignored entirely.

This is difficult for some to grasp or appreciate. Some are more comfortable without accountability. Proclamation without measurement of results is preferred. An "open door" policy is declared. This puts all responsibility on the unsaved and denies the theology of "search" that joins Christ in "seeking" out those who may be saved. Responsibility is abdicated.

"Compel them" to come in is relegated to a position of "let them come if they want to." The lack of a strategy becomes a strategy in itself—a strategy of inaction. Deciding to do "nothing" is the strategy.

### Homogeneous Units

Targeting on racial or cultural groupings becomes a legitimate strategy of soul winning (known as the homogeneous unit principle). Urban church growth could take place differently than rural church growth. The bigger the church, the more recognizable different cells, interest groups, and task-oriented groupings become. In really big churches, some groups do not relate to or socialize with others, and yet they worship together in oneness on Sunday mornings.

### Goals/Solutions

Setting local growth goals, measuring progress, and analyzing effectiveness have a high priority. Church growth becomes a positive force that is solution seeking, countering negative thinking, and accepting "change" as a life-style.

### Body Evangelism

The concept of body evangelism gives importance to all members of the Body of Christ. Spiritual gifts are recognized and deployed effectively. Dr. McGavran wrote an entire book on the "Bridges of God." Recently I heard him emphasize again that growing churches are continually "going over the bridges of God" to relatives and friends. Through these channels of interpersonal communication, they are winning and discipling the lost.

### Faithfulness

First Corinthians 4:1-2 requires faithfulness to our trust. That faithfulness requires thinking, researching, study, and comparing in order to husband resources and deploy them effectually.

Is church growth theory a fad? I don't believe it is, though some may conceivably make it so by seizing a piece here or there and "overpromoting" a segment.

### When Church Growth Becomes a Fad

When the pastor is obsessed with professional success as primary motivation, church growth could become a fad. If one organizes, lays plans, trains and deploys workers in order to "look good" or "look better" than anybody else, church growth could be a fad. If motivations stem from getting in more members in order to pay off the debt or in order to get "points" with denominational leadership, that motivation will lead down some fadistic blind alleys.

True church growth is solidly based in Scripture. The motivation is that of fulfilling the commands of the "Lord" of the harvest. He calls us to battle. That call is one to find, train, and deploy large numbers of lay persons in the harvest. Where pastors try to do it all alone, growth stops.

Personal evangelism, local church revivals, planting new churches, crossing cultural and linguistic barriers, constructing suitable buildings, door-to-door canvassing, preaching the gospel, launching pioneer districts—all are wrapped up in church growth. Church growth goes before all of this to conceptualize, to plan, to prepare, to research, and to articulate principles. Church growth follows up to measure effectiveness, evaluate workable programs, and weed out ineffective programs. Church growth is optimistic that "Christ will build His Church."



1. Dr. Win Arn, "A Church Growth Look at . . . Here's Life, America!" *Church Growth America*, January/February, 1977, p. 4.

2. Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 5-6.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.





# FOUR PRICELESS GIFTS YOU CAN GIVE YOUR CHURCH

An address to laymen by Win Arn

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**A** growing number of people are finding their church to be a spiritual reservoir of renewal and strength . . . a center that provides their lives with focus, balance, direction, and hope.

They look to their church as a place that gives spiritual and moral training to their children, a caring group of Christian friends, corporate worship experience, plus an opportunity for meaningful service.

It is also a widely held, and generally accurate, belief that practicing Christians are better able to cope with personal problems. Ask any involved and "alive" Christian what their church means to them and they will easily recite the benefits of being an active member in their congregation.

During his 1960 inaugural address, John Kennedy struck a responsive chord in the nation's conscience when he declared, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country." However, few Christians involved in their local church have seriously considered the religious paraphrase to that statement . . . "Ask not what your church can do for you, but ask what you can do for Christ and your church." Here are four important gifts you can give your

church in appreciation for what Christ and your church have given to you.

## **Discover and Use Your Spiritual Gifts**

The New Testament is clear in its teaching that "each of us has been given his gift, his due portion of Christ's bounty. . . . 'he gave gifts to men.' . . . to equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:7-12, NEB).<sup>\*</sup> Paul also says that he would not have us ignorant of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1), and Peter reiterates that every Christian has received a gift (1 Pet. 4:10).

Taking seriously this biblical concept of each Christian as a unique, contributing member of the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:5) could set in motion a "spiritual revolution" in your church that would bring an outpouring of God's blessing through new growth and vitality.

As one who has served as a "midwife" in seeing scores of churches come alive in new growth and outreach, I know that when those in a congregation identify and apply their gifts, the whole body grows. But the opposite is also true, that a congregation which allows its members to

be "unemployed" in using their gifts, will decline and eventually perish. What is true of the congregation is also true of the individual. A person who has found and is using his unique gift, is productive, fulfilled, and contributing to body growth and development. The individual not using his gift will be spiritually frustrated and seldom experience real personal growth and development.

As more and more individuals identify their gifts, have them confirmed by others in the congregation, and apply their uniqueness in service, the church is immeasurably enriched and strengthened.

## **Influence Your "Web" of Friends and Relatives**

Imagine your church as a large water tank, out of which a one-inch-wide pipe drains water. People leave through this "pipe" by death, by transferring out, and by reversion (falling away through indifference). In some denominations the policy used to be to move ministers every year. Now the ministers stay . . . it's the people who are moving. In the average American congregation 40 to 60 percent of the members have changed residence, and therefore churches, in the last

three years. To replace and add to our water tank we must have a two-inch pipe bringing in the water.

### **"HOW DO PEOPLE COME INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST AND THE CHURCH?"**

I have asked that question to over 8,000 people throughout America in the last two years. The results have been strikingly consistent:

- .0001% of those surveyed listed some evangelistic crusade or television program as the reason.
- 1-2% listed "visitation." Someone called and because of that they are now part of that fellowship.
- 2-4% listed the church program as the major factor . . . perhaps a young single group, a recreation program, or a special interest group.
- 3-6% said the Sunday school was the major reason.
- 4-6% of those surveyed indicated they were "walk-ins." One Sunday they visited, stayed, and are now a part of that congregation. (Usually in their background there was some previous identification with the denomination of the church.)
- 6-8% listed the "minister" as the reason they are now in Christ and that church.
- 70-90% said the reason they came to Christ and their church was because of friends or relatives.

The fact is clear . . . church growth is related to present members influencing their friends and relatives. Since biblical days the Church has grown most effectively through natural "webs" . . . people with some social or family ties to each other. Within this group of friends and relatives, a person's ability to influence is far

greater than outside the "web."

But why influence one's friends and relatives for Christ and the Church? We do it in obedience to Christ's command to "go and make disciples," and because of a loving concern to share with those close to us the joy and fullness of life in Christ and the Body. Influencing your friends and relatives for Christ is the second precious gift you can give your church.

### **Keep Your Circle Open**

In every church—regardless of size—visitors and new members must be assimilated into the congregation if they are to become an active and contributing part of that congregation. This is most effectively done by incorporating them into a small group—a fellowship circle, task group, Bible study—where they are known personally, know others personally, and feel a sense of belonging.

While most would agree in theory to this principle, there is a marked tendency in practice for such groups to close themselves off to others, especially "newcomers." Churches may consider themselves to be quite friendly, but many times this friendliness is shown more to one another than it is to the "stranger."

In my own experience, I vividly recall being an "X" in a congregation. An "X" is a member of the church, but not integrated into any small group. I first tried one group and then another. I was told I was welcome, but I didn't feel that I "fit."

In this particular congregation of people with Swedish backgrounds, the Johnsons, the Svensons, the Larsons, the Olsons, all seemed to fit; but the Schmidts, the DiGiulios, the Garcias, and the Arns were unable to "integrate."

Following the worship service the Swedes hugged each other, greeted each other . . . in Swedish . . . and went out to eat smorgasbord together. But no one hugged me or spoke Swedish to me or invited me to the smorgasbord. Soon, like any "X" in a congregation, I drifted out the back door.

There is little value of a church reaching out to others if those

who are won are not integrated into the congregation. Give a third priceless gift to your church by keeping your circles open and encouraging other circles to be open to these new people.

### **Keep Before You a Vision of the Possibilities**


In a survey of pastors the question was asked, "What is your greatest desire for your church?" The answer that appeared more than any other was: "For the lay people to have a vision for growth and to be involved in the process."

Perhaps the greatest discouragement a pastor faces is a congregation without vision: self-centered, self-satisfied, self-occupied. In board and committee decision making, there is the natural tendency for a church group to take the "safe way," which usually translates into little risk, little venture, and little vision.

Many congregations have inadvertently organized themselves on a "problem base." "Where will we find enough Sunday school teachers?" "How will we pay the bills?" "Can we keep the doors open another year?" The problems are endless, the solutions tedious, and the service often joyless.

A far stronger and more effective base is to organize the church and its components around vision and possibilities. In the ministry area of every congregation there are numerous opportunities for effective ministry. These opportunities can be seen and seized. One denomination encourages all of its churches to have a "needs committee"—a group of people actively looking for needs to be met in their community, opportunities to be seized, and ministries to be extended.

Seeing possibilities usually begins with one person, then spreads to others. Being that person in a congregation is the fourth priceless gift you can give your church.

"I will build my church," said Jesus. We become builders with Him by giving our gifts. 

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# PREACHING AND CHURCH GROWTH

by Bill Sullivan,

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the Department of Evangelism,  
Church of the Nazarene*

*Photo by Wes Tracy*

**P**reaching is not widely discussed in church growth literature. It is not even in the index of McGavran's *Understanding Church Growth*, which is the bible of the church growth movement. Peter Wagner does not include it among the factors of church growth in his widely circulated book, *Your Church Can Grow*. A leading periodical of the American Church Growth movement, *Church Growth America*, seldom mentions the relation of preaching and church growth. In expressing his view on the subject, the editor, Win Arn said, "Unfortunately, many churches, in choosing a pastor, place greatest priority on the man's ability to preach. Certainly congregations are entitled to well prepared and well delivered messages. Yet sermon delivery represents a very small portion of the pastor's total work week. Indications are that the sermon, by itself, is a relatively minor factor in the growth of the church."<sup>1</sup>

Some of the basic concepts of the church growth movement have led to this conclusion. The goal of church growth is obedience to the imperative of the Great Commission, which is to "make disciples" (Matt. 28:19). Going, preaching, baptizing, and teaching are understood to be only part of the process of making disciples. Going into all the world is considered "presence" evangelism. Preaching the gospel is "proclamation" evangelism. Both of these forms of evangelism are good but incomplete. Making disciples requires *persuasion* evangelism which means "responsible church membership." This hierarchy of evangelistic goals removes preaching from a position of primacy. It becomes one among many factors in making disciples.

Another principle which has affected the importance of preaching in the Church Growth movement is the Body Life concept of

the church. This metaphor leads to emphasizing the laity and their role in the functioning of the church, including evangelism. No longer is ministry the private responsibility of a professional clergy. The pastor is now the "equiper," the "enabler" of the saints so that they may do the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12). Just as the body has various parts and each performs a particular and complementary function, so the church has many members, each with a gift or gifts for doing the work of the church. Thus, layman is as likely to have the gift of evangelist as the pastor. "Eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy" (1 Cor. 14:1).

The logical conclusion of the Body Life concept is the disjunction of preaching from the core of essential clergy functions. For it only follows that if the pastor may not have the gift of prophecy or evangelist and a layman may

have either or both, then preaching should not be an absolute requirement of the clergyman. This reordering of responsibilities for the clergy has shifted preaching to a lower level of priority.

One other principle of church growth thought which has directed attention away from preaching is the emphasis on research. Data from hundreds of churches has been evaluated by church growth analysts. Factors other than preaching have been found to produce church growth. One piece of research revealed that only 8 to 12 percent of the people in a typical congregation came to that church because of the pastor. Such data powerfully affects church growth thinking. Thus, in most church growth literature not one priority on preaching can be found. This is particularly interesting since one of the first considerations on any list of church growth priorities is leadership. It must be remembered that leaders symbolize the organizations which they lead. Their constituents see in them a representation of the whole. It is this perception of leadership that creates a high degree of authority for leadership and strong loyalty in the constituency.

Pastors who are leading their churches into growth have earned a great deal of authority in the congregation. Church growth writers believe that this is not some authority he has because of his ordination, education, or job description. This is an authority he has earned through relationships. But it is questionable if a person can earn enough authority through relationships to supercede the power of key lay leaders whose relations are of much longer standing than the pastor's. And it is not only longevity of relationships that must be overcome but there are family loyalty and psychological debts to contend with.

A pastor must have some divine authentication in order to rise to a position of primary leadership. Ordination to the eldership or election as pastor is not enough. The act of preaching is

required to place the seal of divine authority upon a pastor's leadership. The fact that he assumes the right to preach and demonstrate ability in preaching, tremendously affects the people of the congregation. The people anticipate that the preacher will speak the very words of God (1 Pet. 4:11). His ability, style, and spirit will either fulfill their hopes or disappoint them.

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### **In most church growth literature, not one priority on preaching can be found.**

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Preaching that is an experience in the life of the proclaimer, lifting him above oratory and making him radiant with the reality of his message, is bound to give divine authentication to the pastor among his people. The foundation for authority in leading a church is effective preaching.

This is not to say that preaching is the sole source of a pastor's authority. Without good interpersonal relationships and leadership activity his authority will be contravened.

Effective preaching not only establishes a pastor's leadership, it may also be very important in producing converts for the church. While personal evangelism may be successful in some churches, public evangelism may be more effective in others.

Preaching, as an evangelistic method, may in fact produce growth in holiness churches. Two factors are particularly effective in public evangelism. One is the urgency of evangelistic preaching with a call to immediate decision. The other is the public altar which provides a time and place for religious experience and an event which is easily a functional substitute for baptism. Such an experience is a dramatic and comprehensive introduction into

the community of believers. Thus, while preaching may not draw the crowds it may "draw the net," resulting in many conversions.

Indeed public evangelism is the method the Church of the Nazarene has used throughout its history. Without evangelistic preaching, which calls for immediate decision, growth in the denomination could easily cease.

Preaching also provides instruction for believers and helps in their growth toward responsible church membership. Dr. McGavran supports this use of preaching in *How to Grow a Church*. Proclamation and instruction are frequently joined in the typical sermon. The repetition of basic truths makes a telling impact. The instruction in preaching is especially important to those new Christians who are not involved in structured Christian education.

But preaching not only has evangelistic and instructional value; it also provides a tremendous focus for celebration. It is questionable if the primary focus of worship should be prayer rather than preaching, as has been claimed.<sup>2</sup> The Word present in the living Christ and proclaimed in the reading of Scripture and its exposition is a very exalted focus of worship. Celebration in worship is more than coming together. Christ's presence and proffered salvation must be acknowledged, proclaimed, and praised. Preaching provides the divine-human act to inspire worship.

Preaching, then, must not be rejected as unimportant to church growth. Its contribution may be in areas not normally considered, or even understood. But that must not cause us to underestimate the effectiveness of preaching in the continued growth of evangelical churches. Attention to this biblical imperative, personal call, and Spirit-enabled method will surely contribute significantly to the expansion of God's kingdom.



#### **NOTES**

1. Win Arn, "The Pastor and Church Growth," *Church Growth America* (Sept.—Oct., 1977), pp. 4, 16.

2. Ken Parker, "Back to Antioch," *Church Growth America* (Mar.—April, 1977), p. 4.

# BIBLICAL AUTHORITY AND CHURCH GROWTH

by Morris A. Weigelt

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**T**he whole church growth movement has raised an interesting variety of questions. One of the more persistent is the relationship of church growth and biblical authority. Precisely stated, the issue is: "In what ways will the attention to church growth and the contextualization of the gospel affect the function and force of the authority of the Bible within the church?"

It is exciting that we are giving such careful attention to the processes and definitions of the church growth movement. The educative functions at so many different levels of the church are significant.

The process of internationalization, for example, forces us to separate the essential elements of the gospel from the merely cultural components. The increasing pluralism in the church affects our definitions. The tendencies toward an inflexible coer-

cion using the Bible as an exhaustive set of endless rules tends to frustrate the process of internationalization. The necessity of defining clearly the great affirmations of the Word in preparation for translation into differing cultural applications will probably be a painful process for some. The alternate temptation to abandon rigid authority and live with boundaries also exists.

These issues are complicated by the prevailing subjectivism and relativism of modern culture. Authoritative proclamations are not readily accepted. Preservation of a clear-cut understanding of the nature of the authority of the Word is difficult under the pressure of subjective experience-centered religiosity.

Our failure to fully understand our own Wesleyan heritage also complicates the issue. The inadequate

**The Tone of the times is to turn to the behavioral sciences as the true authority. But Christians must be ready to submit to the judgment of the Word as the final authority.**

understanding of the work of the Spirit in the process of inspiration guaranteeing the revelation of God has also contributed to the problem. The "Battle for the Bible" has affected the problem as well. Although a great amount of energy has been expended in the debate, it appears that much of it has been misdirected. The emotional elements in the debate have served to obscure the really significant matters.

In light of such factors, it is obligatory for holiness denominations to carefully explore the implications of church growth for the understanding of biblical authority.

## I. Definition of Terms

One segment of the issue involves careful definition. The classic Protestant stance has always affirmed that Scripture is the final *authority* in all matters of faith and conduct. The precise meaning of "authority" needs to be explored. Frequently "authority" has been understood as the person or agency which has the power to control, direct, or command—to enforce obedience. In light of this definition the Bible has been used as an arsenal of proof texts with which to assault all forms of supposed heresy or as a club to bludgeon followers into submission. The power to create belief and compel action is the primary concern of too many who defend the authority of the Bible.

A more adequate definition denotes "authority" as the recognized standard or norm to which final appeal is made. John Bright defines the authority of the Bible as follows:

We speak of the Bible as the authoritative source to which Christians must appeal in attempting to determine the nature and content of the Christian faith as originally held, in order that they may evaluate their own beliefs and actions in light of it. The question is not now primarily one of demonstrating the correctness of the biblical teaching, or of determining what it is that constrains men to believe in the Christian faith; rather it is a question of what the Christian faith *was*, and, by extension, properly *is*. Viewed in this light, one may say that the Bible is not only the supreme authority in matters of faith and practice; it is the only sure and primary one (John Bright, *The Authority of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967], p. 29).

The distinction must be made between an exhaustive authority which provides basic instructions and guidance for all possible occasions (like the rule book in baseball) and the normative authority (like the Constitution of the United States or Robert's *Rules of Order*). Failure to make such a distinction creates a variety of problems. The Bible certainly is an authority in the latter sense. The Bible, then, is a norm against which we measure ourselves and our practices to see whether they indeed are Christian. That is its primary authority.

God has revealed himself in the creation, in the history of Israel, and, definitively, in Jesus Christ. That revelation is inscripturated for us in the Bible and becomes the standard against which we measure our understanding of God, His demands upon our lives, our understanding of the processes of

redemption, and the ways in which we respond to Him on every level—social, political, economic, etc. Scripture stands in judgment, then, over our theology and our conduct. It is indeed the supreme authority—not because it beats us into submission, but because we have chosen to submit to its authority because we wish to be Christian.

Such a concept of authority has profound implications for our hermeneutics, our understanding of inspiration, our theological systems, and our practices of evangelism. Through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit it is a dynamic interaction. That interaction constantly guides and judges our actions.

**When the "homogeneous unit" principle ceases to be a means of evangelism and becomes the source of exclusive groupings within the Body of Christ, the principle must submit to the judgment of the Word.**

**Church Growth** is the technical title given to the movement fathered by Donald McGavran with goals of increasing efficiency in evangelism, church planting, and responsible church membership. The movement has been given essential definition as follows:

Church growth is that science which investigates the planting, multiplication, function, and health of Christian churches as they relate specifically to the effective implementation of God's commission to "make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19-20). Church growth strives to combine the eternal theological principles of God's Word concerning the expansion of the Church with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioral sciences, employing as its initial frame of reference, the foundation work done by Donald McGavran (Church Growth Seminar notes).

The standard work in the field is McGavran's *Understanding Church Growth* (Eerdmans, 1970). The book raises a number of significant issues in the definition of church growth. First, it creates awareness of the processes of church growth. Using sociological and empirical patterns, the causes and hindrances to church growth are examined. Second, it examines the social and cultural structures which must be taken into consideration in the whole process of evangelism. Third, McGavran states the principle that "men like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers" (p. 198). This principle has been more fully developed into the "homogeneous unit" principle

*(Continued on page 58)*



# THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES AND CHURCH GROWTH

by Paul R. Orjala

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**T**he behavioral sciences are psychology, sociology, and anthropology, plus the applied fields which relate to them. These applied fields, such as communications, learning theory, leadership theory, and developmental psychology, have all been drawn upon at times by church growth writers.

"Church growth" itself is defined as a technical specialty in the field of missiology represented by writers who use the technical language and concepts originated by Donald A. McGavran and developed by his students and colleagues. Its origin in the field of missiology makes church growth thought revolve around the concept of mission. When agreement is reached on the mission of the church, then church growth can be studied in its proper frame of reference.

The writers in the church growth movement deliberately use the behavioral sciences in developing concepts, describing data, and employing methods. A number of these writers have their doctorates in the behavioral sciences and most also have seminary degrees. Almost all of them have been missionaries and most of them presently teach within a seminary context.

The basic question here is whether or not the empirical approach of the behavioral sciences can be reconciled with the relevatory base of theology

to give us a valid conceptual frame for dealing with the growth of the church. The answer is both yes and no.

The theological fields have always made use of the behavioral sciences whenever their content includes description of the behavior of human beings in their society. The input derived from human observation is more massive in the area of practices, but it is also clearly seen in church history, Bible, and theology proper. In this regard, the study of secular as well as church history is seen as the study of the acts of God as observed through the grid of human history. From this perspective, church growth is merely following in a well-established tradition and is not unique at all in the sources of its inputs.

In another sense, however, we must acknowledge the basic incompatibility of the behavioral science that merely observes and attempts to interpret a social order which has been infected and disorganized by sin with the theological enterprise which is based on the revelation of a Holy God whose perspectives and organization are perfect.

There can never be an ultimate harmony of science and the Bible because science is always changing and adapting with each new input of information while the Bible is fixed in its viewpoint and content.

Since only those elements of behavioral science which are affirmed by the Bible can be applied with complete assurance to the mission of the church, a careful, conscious, discriminating use of these sciences is indicated.

The question is, have the church growth writers taken observations and conclusions from the field of behavioral science and then attempted to legitimize them by an appeal to certain biblical and theological arguments, or have they begun with their basic theological commitments and found corroboration and refinement in detail and data from their empirical studies?

The goals of behavioral science are description, explanation, prediction, and control. The last two goals more properly belong to the applied sciences in their respective fields. None of these goals is in conflict with biblical and theological commitments except that the word *control* implies a manipulation somewhat in contradiction to our theological commitment to the basic human right of self-determination. Whenever the content of theological study has to do with people, society, or culture, then these scientific goals legitimately come into play in the establishing of an adequate information input for theologizing.

Data obtained through behavioral science methodology, reflecting as it does the activities of a distorted society, must be processed through a biblical/theological/historical grid before it can be used as the material for theological argument. This information, however, is of significant value in understanding the things that are, and in devising strategies for change that are consistent with our theological commitments.

Missiologists, and especially those working in church growth, must be self-regulatory at the point of utilizing the behavioral science input only in ways which are consistent with our faith. On the other hand, biblical scholars and theologians must develop a sophisticated understanding of the behavioral sciences and their use if they are going to be of help from the viewpoint of their discipline in critiquing missiology and church growth.

Church growth assumes the consensus of missiology. In fact, it is a subfield of missiology. Unfortunately, in the past this relationship has not always been communicated adequately so that some people have latched onto church growth and have started using its concepts without a sense of responsibility to the constraints of its parent field of missiology.

**Mission** is the first and foremost category of missiological thought. The mission of the church and of every believer rests on the *missio Dei*, which is God's redemptive intention to bring His reconciliation to every possible human being that can be brought to respond to His grace. Any other understanding of the role of culture as related to the gospel and church growth is inadequate.

**Indigeneity** or incarnation is the second category of missiological thought. No one receives the gospel in a cultural or social vacuum; the gospel and church must be incarnated into every linguistic and cultural unit of the human race for adequate communication to take place concerning the will of God for those persons in that cultural unit. As long as the gospel or the church is in a cultural form which is foreign to an individual or group, it will be a barrier to the acceptance of its own message.

**Growth** is the third category of missiological thought, and its interpretation must be developed in the context of a prior commitment to mission and indigeneity or incarnation.

If care is taken to properly filter the behavioral science input through the biblical/theological filter, and if the missiological hierarchy of theological constraints is observed, then many of the problems and fears related to the understanding and application of the homogeneous unit principle will be resolved.

A homogeneous unit is "any group whose members self-consciously belong together" (Verkuyl, 1978:67). The kinds of groups that can serve at homogeneous units are very diverse (Orjala, 1978: 63-73):

1. Biological: race, age, sex, kinship.
2. Locality: residence, origin, neighborhood, school, or work location.
3. Cultural: language, social class, nationality, ethnic group.
4. Economic: work/profession/trade (blue collar, professional, clerical, unemployed).
5. Personal: special interest (hobbies, sports, common experiences).

One of the problems about discussions of the homogeneous unit is that they usually are limited to categories that are current emotional issues, such as racial and social divisions. These issues should be discussed, but they should not be allowed to obscure the fact that we do constantly use the H.U. principle in most of the other areas with almost universal approval in the context of both church and society. We could not organize most of our activities without them. It is extremely important to note the functions that homogeneous units perform for those people who belong to them (Orjala, 1978:64):

1. Identity and belonging.
2. Credibility and protection.
3. Influence and control.
4. As a communication network.

Contrary to widespread opinion, the H.U. construct is not a borrowing from the behavioral sciences, but a missiological construct which views empirical data from the standpoint of the theological constraints of the missiological consensus itself.

(Continued on page 59)



# CHURCH GROWTH RESEARCH— THE WHY AND HOW

**R**esearch, according to Webster's *New World Dictionary*, is the combination of two Latin words, *re* meaning back, and *circare* meaning to go around as in a circus ring.

"Back to the circus" might be one rather perverse way of defining research.

Before we get carried away with neo-scholarly interpretations, however, let us acknowledge that there are other places than circuses where it is possible to go around in circles.

Not always is such circumlocution profitable, however, and that is the point of this article.

For us, research simply means to *search* the *past* for keys to the future. It has no other justification.

In circling back to study the past, we need to know what to look for, where to find it, and what to do with it after it is found.

We might prefer to study the present, but the present is rather elusive. Certainly by the time present statistics of the church and state find their way into the record books, they have achieved a certain similitude to the days of yore.

Two significant categories of demographic research are of value to any pastor—his church and his community.

Although the two objects of research may be approached separately, the information gathered must be capable of being compared.

by John C. Oster

*Department of Home Missions, Church of the Nazarene*

## **First: The Community**

You are the pastor; you are new in town. What do you do first?

A windshield survey is helpful at the very first. Obtain a street map and mark the location of the church. Then identify the main thoroughfares and follow them through from one city limit sign to the other, north and south, noting as you do the visible community factors as you drive by.

You will note such things as shopping centers, schools, industrial areas, residential areas, apparent economic levels of different neighborhoods, other churches, traffic patterns.

*Next stop:* Chamber of Commerce. Identify yourself, tell them you are new in town and have made a brief community survey. Ask for information about population, income levels, types of businesses, economic projections, major changes planned (as in new residential development), business zoning, bond issues, or freeway construction.

Some chambers of commerce will have a wealth of information;

others will not. It depends on the individuals in charge. Most information you receive from a Chamber of Commerce will be slanted on the optimistic side, but that's all right. Take it for what it is. You are learning things about this new community you didn't know before.

*Next stop:* Newspaper office. Subscribe to the local newspaper. Tell them why you're there. If the person behind the desk doesn't invite you to meet the editor, ask to meet him (or her, as the case may be).

Tell the editor your story—You're new in town, have made a brief community survey, and talked with the Chamber of Commerce. Ask, "What other things do you think I should know?"

Depending on the editor, you'll probably get a more realistic assessment of community prospects than you got from the Chamber manager. But that's all right—you are adding to your store of knowledge and building a friendship with the editor.

Some time spent in reviewing past issues of the paper may also

prove helpful in identifying the kinds of things that seem to interest the people of the community and the types of people who live there.

**Third stop:** Radio and television stations. Repeat your story. They may want to take advantage of your recent arrival for a news item or an interview. That isn't the real reason for your visit, however. Radio and television station managers have access to marketing surveys with extremely important information about the finances and buying habits of the people you hope will be filling your church.

**Fourth stop:** City library. Talk to the librarian. Repeat your story. Seek population and economic data in the reference section of the library. If perchance it is a university or college library, they may have extensive data on the past, present, and future.

**Fifth stop:** Public school officials. They will know enrollment trends and projections that may be vital for you to know. You will also want to begin a friendly, supportive relationship between you and the schools because of your common interest in the youth of the community.

Keep looking. There are other sources. The state capitol or the county courthouse are repositories of data which are available to you. How valuable they are to you depends on your location. You probably wouldn't want to drive all day to the state capitol to find out what you could have found out at the city library or by a simple letter to the secretary of state.

If your area is large or particularly complex, you may wish to avail yourself of sophisticated computer analysis from the Department of Home Missions in Kansas City.

The Department of Home Missions is a cooperating agency in CAPC (Census Access for Planning in the Church) and can supply detailed computer read-outs by census tract for any area in the United States.

This service will become particularly valuable as the 1980

decennial census data is added to the computer file, probably by 1982.

At the present time, the CAPC material is of significance primarily if the area in which you live has not changed drastically in the last 10 years.

The way that you as a local pastor can tap into the CAPC system is to write to the Department of Home Missions and state your request.

Dale Jones, the department statistician, will help you determine what you need and advise you of the probable cost. You pay only what it costs the department to get the information you want extracted from the CAPC computers.

Census information from CAPC includes age, sex, economic levels, racial characteristics, housing characteristics, and many other specific modules of information.

### The Church

For the community data to be of primary use to you, you must also be researching your own church history.

The pastor's **CHURCH GROWTH PLANNING NOTE-BOOK**, available from Nazarene Publishing House, is a useful tool in gathering and organizing data about your local church so that it can be used in planning for the future.

You will want to compile and graph the recorded statistics of your church including Sunday school attendance, morning worship attendance, and church membership which together comprise the "composite membership" figure which is the commonly accepted measurement unit in church growth statistics.

You will also want to compile information on levels of giving and on the racial or other sociological unit composition of your church.

This will enable you to compare the membership of your church with the population of your community and ask such questions as:

1. Is my church growing as fast as the community population? Faster? Slower?

2. Is the membership of my church comparable to the population of the community or are there segments of the community that we are not reaching?
3. Is the financial support being given by the members of my church where I would expect it to be, given the general economic level of the community?

It is from questions like these that you can design your church program to more effectively reach your goals of ministry.

If, for example, there are few young children in the community but a growing number of senior citizens, you need to be prepared with Senior Adult Ministries before you ever go out to canvass the community for prospects. You need to have something to offer.


On the other hand, if you find the school board is planning to construct three new schools in the next three years to take care of anticipated increases in the number of school-age children, then you need to be ready to minister to a growing number of families with young children who will be moving into the community.

If a significant portion of your community population speaks a language other than English, you need to consider a specific language ministry to that part of the population.

If members of a particular racial group are a significant part of the community population, they should be present in the same ratio in your church membership or you should be devising specific outreach strategies to reach them.

If singles are a significant part of your community, as in a college or university town or area adjacent to a military base, then you need to be prepared to minister to them.

Concentrations of nursing homes, hospitals, or other convalescent facilities all have implications for ministry.

As pastors, you know the ministry that is required once you know that that population exists. The research is only the preliminary to your ministry. 

# CHURCH GROWTH THROUGH CHURCH PLANTING

by Kent Anderson, *Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Eugene, Oregon*

**T**he first step in impacting a city is research. We must be able to see the harvest. Holiness people are really committed to the harvest; there is no question in our minds about that. Why then are we not harvesting? The answer is: We simply do not see the harvest. We are blind. We want to harvest souls for the Master. We pray about it. We have even organized some churches to do it. Our problem is not our will, but our skill. We must be able to see the harvest in terms that we can understand.

There are two groups of people that must deal with research. The first group is the technical people; the second group is made up of the members of your congregation. Your people are ready, and if you can help them see the harvest, they will reap it.

Research becomes more and more important in proportion to the number of churches you wish to start. If you want to start only one church in a metropolitan area, then research is a long road to nowhere for you. You can just put up a map, close your eyes, throw a dart, and you're home. Literally, that's as good as any other method. If, however, you have a problem like we do in Eugene, which is a very small metropolitan community—only 185,000—and if it's a problem for us it must be a problem for those of you who live in towns larger than Eugene—if you really want to impact a significant population for Christ and the gospel, you have to do your homework.

You see, there is a great credibility gap between our lay persons and the ministry. I have businessmen in my church who would go broke if they ran their businesses like we run our churches as far as impacting a population is concerned. They don't think we're serious. No salesman in my church

could get by with the impact on the population that we have in the combined churches in Eugene and Springfield, and my lay people know that. Unless we are able to demonstrate that we know what we are talking about, that credibility gap is going to become wider.

## How to Do Community Research

Now let's talk about how you do research; it's really very simple. You start with the widest and work to the narrowest. Your beginning research is about population characteristics. You can start with the widest population you want to—you can start with the United States. You don't have to start there; we didn't. We started with the population characteristics of the Pacific Northwest.

You narrow that down to population characteristics of Oregon, the lower Willamette Valley, the cities of Eugene and Springfield. We then studied the cities of Eugene and Springfield in great detail. Now you don't need to do this if you don't plan to plant multiple churches in your town.

You may want to use the excuse, "My town is too small." There is no such thing as too small. Let me give you an illustration. We have a community in our state that we'll just call "Community M." Community M is a sleepy little suburb of one of our metropolitan areas. It had about 2,000 people and one particular church that was running about 150. That is an excellent ratio attendance to population. The temptation of that church was to say that they were making sizable community impact.

In this community called M we have an interesting sociological phenomenon. The community was made up of Old Ms. The Old Ms knew each other; they had great community identification. Community politics was all handed around to the Old Ms.

But something began to happen in this sleepy little town. New people began to move into town. They were the New Ms. The New M population increased to about 1,000, but the New Ms were having a tough time breaking into the Old M community. They were not being well received into the town politically; they were not being well received into the town socially. The New Ms drove to the metropolitan area to work, but they lived in Old M and their kids raced up and down the streets on their motorcycles and upset Old M people. When these New M people went to the Old M church, Old Ms in that church said, "Well, you're a part of them New M people, aren't you?" And they didn't get along too well.

A good friend of mine, who is a Conservative Baptist church planter, decided that this town of M needed a brand-new church. He saw that there were enough churches for the Old M people, so he decided to concentrate on the New M people. In four years, he put together a church that was running 500.

He went from zero to 500 in four years in a town of 3,000 because he understood that in a town of 3,000 if you have significant sociological differences you can have more than one church of the same persuasion, both of them doing well. That is important for us to understand—the population dynamics of the town in which we work. One of the granite laws of church growth is that new people in the community are the best targets for evangelism.

### **Grid Analysis**

We divided our town into what we called grids. We have 37 grids in our community. Eventually we could have 37 Churches of the Nazarene in the city of Eugene. That would not be at all unrealistic.

We have taken a look at each grid in our community in 26 different ways. Black population per grid, Chinese population per grid, age-sex ratio per grid, and so on. We want to see if there are significant population segments that need to be ministered to.

We have put together population receptivity index models that tell us where the hottest spots in our community are. That's where we want to give our planters their first opportunities at starting churches.

We look at such things as population change, change in number of housing units, occupancy of less than five years, and we weigh these; we assign them certain mathematical values. Occupancy for less than five years gets 15 points, because it is about three times more valuable to us than such things as a population change. Those two put together would value 20 points. And the more points you have in one of these grids the more receptive that grid is going to be to Christ and the gospel. And that's where we're going to assign our young men.

So every one of these grids has assigned to it a certain mathematical value. And obviously when our young pastor-planters come in we just hold up the mathematical chart and say, "Choose your grid. You can go to a grid with a mathematical value of one, which would be the toughest area we can think of to penetrate with the gospel through the Church of the Nazarene using a white Anglo-Saxon young man using Nazarene methodologies that he's been trained to use in college or seminary."

The higher the value, the more receptive the population ought to be and the more success we ought to have in planting a church.

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## **The Number One unchurched state in the U.S. is Washington. Oregon is second, California third.**

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We've taken a look at projected population increase, age distribution—we think we do better with young people than with old people—our research tells us that. For the percentage of population under 40 gets a point assignment of 20. We go after young married couples. We have found in church growth thinking, people in change-of-life situations tend to be more receptive to the gospel than at other times. So we zero in on those who have moved, had children, or recently married. We tend to do better with husband and wife or what are called nuclear families than we do with divorced couples and singles.

### **The Population Funnel**

Next we look at population characteristics. We note the population characteristics of Eugene, then the population characteristics of the census tracts or grids.

That's the population funnel. Now over that funnel we now do a church demographic. We studied all the churches in the United States and we were assisted in this by the Glenmary Research Center and Fuller Theological Seminary. The Number One unchurched state in the United States is Washington. Number Two is Oregon. California is third, Hawaii fourth, Alaska fifth, and Nevada sixth. Las Vegas ranks 13th in a list of cities with the most unsaved people in the United States. Now what does this tell us who live on the West Coast? Simply that we live in the middle of the most unchurched population in the country.

We can take one or two attitudes about it. Two shoe salesmen went to an island and they saw all those natives running barefoot. One of them sent back a telegram to his headquarters, "No possi-

bility of sales here; nobody wears shoes." Of course, the other one sent back the message to his headquarters, "Great possibility of sales here; nobody has shoes."

We can look at it one way or the other. We can hide behind the excuse, "Hey, nobody goes to church out here." Or we can say, "Nobody is going to church out here. Look at all the prospects for our church."

Next, after studying U.S. churches and denominational declines, we studied the Church of the Nazarene nationwide and in the Northwest. We studied other denominations in our region. We then analyzed denominations and the Church of the Nazarene in Oregon and then for Eugene-Springfield, or Lane County, and then, of course,

Eugene First at the bottom. So that we can put all of this into perspective.

This is basically what you do in the research. You can start as broadly as you want and then narrow the field. The more churches you want to plant, the more research you have to do.

Your people need to have confidence in the fact that you know what is going on and that you're not operating by the seat of your pants, and that it is not a by-guess and I-hope-so sort of thing.

What do I need to know? I need to understand the concepts well enough to explain them convincingly to my people. I need to know that there are 185,000 in my town, that 40,000 of them go to some church on any Saturday or Sunday, that there are 145,000 people left in my town who need the gospel of Jesus Christ in a saving way, and that no one church is going to evangelize the whole 145,000. I need to continually impress upon myself and upon my people that we are just playing games if we do not develop church planting strategies to evangelize the 145,000.

#### Putting a Team Together

Is more research necessary? Absolutely. If you are going to start churches in all of these areas, the man who is going to deploy the workers has to know where those workers are going to find the most fertile soil. It is dumb to waste good men on nonresponsive areas. That is poor stewardship of the rankest sort. If we can't tell the difference between what a good area is and what a zero area is, that's our fault.

Somebody has to know. And that leads to the second point on how to impact a city for Christ—you have to put a team of people together. You will never do it by yourself. Two distinct teams must be in cooperation. **First, existing pastors.** Imagine the potential, the resource, the possibilities that are latent in a cooperative evangelization of the 145,000 as opposed to several different pastors operating different strategies. We need to organize ourselves for the evangelization of the cities. Let the churches go together and hire an "expert" to help them research and each pay part of his salary.

The second team that has to be put together is your **administrative support team**. Someone has to be responsible for locating housing, solving transportation problems, coordinating meetings, organizing volunteers, collecting materials, and hundreds of other administrative details. If the planter is to be busy "knocking on doors," he does not have time to do all these things himself. Neither does the sponsoring pastor have time to do them, for he has his own church to run. This is especially true if multiple church plantings are being attempted.

#### Planting the Planters

**How to impact a city:** research it, put a team together, and then get the laborers.

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The church planters have to be out on the streets. They and their churches are going to grow in proportion to the number of people they call on. They have to hit the streets. They have to go door-to-door. They have no other alternative. How can I help make their job easier? Sunday school busing is a good way to see people; but on Sunday morning, nearly every church in Eugene is busing. They all go after the same children out of the same pool; same places at the same time on the same day! Why should I be number 143 getting into the same pool for the same kids at the same time on the same day? I'm not going to do it.

So when am I going to run my bus ministry? On Saturday. I'm going to run a Saturday Funday School because you can do all kinds of things on Saturday that you can't do on the Lord's Day. You could have a fantastic run and fun and gun—let's do it on Saturday. Who's competing for the kids on Saturday? I checked with the Seventh Day Adventist Church and they don't have a bus program. So go after them on Saturday.

Recently we started what we call Joy Clubs—Jesus, Others, and You—and we are looking for 1,000 children by the end of the first year in Joy Clubs. All of those kids are going to come from

grids. Our pastors are in grids. We're going to send out buses and we don't have an auditorium big enough yet so the first one has to go into First Church but we are going to try to find a neutral auditorium and move it there and all the publicity—none of it says First Church—and buses from First Church and from Springfield will cover every single grid and we will advertise on TV and in the newspapers and we're picking up all the bills. It's going to cost us about \$6,000 to produce Joy Club.

Now all of the children that come fill out registration cards. And all of the registration cards are put into the grids and then, if we've got a young preacher who's starting a church here and working these four grids, all of the children with all of the registration cards go to that man; not one prospect goes to any of the established churches. These are preferred leads. Now what is the purpose of Joy Club? To impact people by presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to get these children saved. And these new pastors are going to go to the homes of the kids who've been to Joy Club and got saved. They will say "Mr. and Mrs. Doaks, I'd like to explain to you about what happened to Johnny." They may then lead parents to the Lord and get them into their churches.



## THE OREGON PLAN

In June of 1979, the first crew of church planters began tilling in Oregon. Local directors of the Oregon church planting program had researched their district and found more than 100 areas ready for seeding. District Superintendent Carl Clendenen invited graduates from Nazarene colleges and the seminary to come to Oregon and plant a church—at no salary! As of January 1, 1980, no fewer than 25 young ministers have answered the call, most of them from Nazarene Bible College in Colorado Springs.

Only six months into the program, 10 new congrega-

tions exist and have declared their intention to organize.

These church planters came with the promise of little but an opportunity to serve. The Oregon district provided moving expenses and insurance, but no salary. The sponsoring churches have supplied a weekly "food barrel" program to help. The people challenged by the dedication of the church planters have opened their hearts and their wallets. At least six cars have been donated, two houses have been provided rent-free, the food fund has burgeoned, and other services and equipment have been provided.

At the district assembly, pledges were taken to underwrite the expenses of the Church Planting program. The people gave more than anyone had a right to expect them to give. Therefore the district has begun, on a temporary basis, to provide its fledgling church planters \$300 per month for rent and \$200 for food.

The leaders of the program—Carl Clendenen, Kent Anderson, Paul and Linda Schwada—are enthusiastic about the future of church growth and church planting in Oregon.

# 12

by Lyle E. Schaller

*Parish Consultant, Yokefellow Institute, Richmond, Indiana*

**E**xperience suggested that inspiring preaching plus an excellent choir plus a high quality and comprehensive Sunday school were the three crucial ingredients in the congregation that expected to increase in numbers. There is still considerable merit in that formula, but it has lost some of its attractiveness for at least three reasons.

First, that formula involves a relatively passive role for most of the members. The minister is responsible for the preaching. The choir director, perhaps with the assistance of several paid soloists, is responsible for the music. The Sunday school superintendent, and a relatively small number of dedicated teachers, is responsible for the Sunday school. This means that in the typical 400-member congregation perhaps 350 do not have any major program responsibilities. A second reason for the dissatisfaction with this formula is that it often placed the central responsibility on the paid staff: the preacher, the choir director, and the director of Christian education; and there simply are not enough exceptionally competent people in those three categories to meet the demand, and there never was enough to go around. Third, the church boom of the 1950s was directed primarily at adults born during the first quarter of this century. Today's emphasis is on reaching persons born during the middle third of the 20th century, and many of

## TIPS

them are looking for more than can be found in the traditionally passive implementation of that old formula.

The challenge is still to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, but the method of communicating it is changing. Therefore it may be useful to review several ideas which have helped spark church growth in other congregations. These are presented in the order of ease of implementation. The easiest ones to implement are described first.

### 1. Wear Name Tags!

Everyone appreciates being called by name. Everyone appreciates polite people. Everyone appreciates help in being able to identify and remember people by name.

One of the rudest and most widely-used procedures in the churches today is to ask the visitors, who already feel very conspicuous and who know none or only a few of the members by name, to wear a name tag while none of the members wear name tags. This creates a "game" which the visitor is certain to lose. Everyone who can read can call the visitor by name, but the visitor has great difficulty in understand-

ing and remembering the names of the persons he or she meets during a visit to that church. Why return to a place that plays a game which the home team is certain to win?

A far more effective, courteous, and inviting procedure is for everyone present on Sunday morning to wear a name tag. This not only does not make the visitor feel unusually conspicuous, it also helps everyone learn, remember, and use the names of other persons. The regular use of name tags by the members is a sign of the congregation that expects, welcomes, and assimilates newcomers.

### 2. Add Directional Signs!

Another suggestion that is relatively easy to implement is to add

## FOR

directional signs that welcome the stranger and make it easier to find one's way into and around the building.

The beginning point is the erection of three or four signs a block or two or more from the meeting place which direct the stranger to your church. Next, if you have off-street parking, post directional signs which indicate that this is a church parking lot. Third, if the building has two or more entrances, place a sign on the outside of the main entrance saying, "Welcome!" and identifying what is behind that door. Next, place a set of directional signs inside each entrance to guide strangers. If this is a large, complex structure consisting of the original building and several additions, place a labeled floor plan near each entrance. If the rooms for young children are not close to the major entrance, run colored tape on the floor from the entrance to each room. A red tape on the floor might lead to the nursery, a blue tape to the two-

year-old room, a green tape to the three-year-old room, a yellow tape to the four-year-old room, and a brown tape to the kindergarten room. Make it easy, inviting, and attractive for young children to find their own room! That will encourage them to want to return.

### **3. Provide a Good Nursery!**

A statistical fact worth noting in evaluating the quality of the rooms for your church nursery is that in 1975 only 3.14 million babies were born compared to nearly 4.3 million in 1960. In 1960, however, 1,100,000 women gave birth to their first child while in 1975 1,315,000 women gave birth to their first child. What this means is that, despite the sharp decrease in the number of babies born each year, there has been a significant increase in the number of new mothers each year. The real client of the preschool program is the young mother (very few three-year-olds walk in on their own) and the number of potential clients has been increasing, despite the decrease in the birthrate since 1960.

cated close to the main entrance from the parking lot is an asset in planning for church growth.

### **4. Fill the Pews!**

An increasing number of studies have demonstrated that on the typical Sunday morning the growing church is comfortably filled at the major worship service. When the congregation gathers for the corporate worship of God and one-half or more of the seats are vacant, this often has a depressing effect on the members, on the minister, and on the visitors. While it is normal for the front row or two to be largely vacant (except on Easter), the worship experience is enhanced when most of the seats are filled.

What can you do if your congregation averages 80 to 100 at worship in a building that seats 250 or more? The answer is simple. Take out some of the pews! The first to go usually are the rear two or three rows. This will open up the rear of the nave for an easier flow of traffic, perhaps for a display table or two at the rear and possibly for coat racks if

ship experiences of people in 1980 or 1981. The comfortably filled sanctuary attracts. The largely vacant sanctuary repels. Who is in charge today?

### **5. Expand the Choices!**

Most Protestant congregations offer people five choices for Sunday morning worship. These are (1) worship with us at the hour we gather and in the way we worship God; (2) go to some other church for worship; (3) stay away from worship; (4) watch a worship service on television; or (5) listen to a worship service on the radio. Many congregations which are interested in growing have expanded this list of choices to include (6) worship with us at an earlier hour on Sunday morning, (7) worship with us at an alternative time such as 7 p.m. Thursday or 6:30 p.m. Saturday or 7:30 p.m. Sunday, and/or (8) choose between two different worship styles on Sunday morning. In four out of five congregations the shift to two Sunday morning worship services will produce a 10 to 20 percent increase in the attendance.

The two most common objections to this relatively simple change are, "But why go to two services when we can't fill the place at one?" and "But that will split our congregation." A quick examination of these two objections suggests that the first one

# CHURCH

The typical young mother of today (a) was born during the 1950s, (b) is very much concerned about the physical quality of the facilities for her child, (c) is especially concerned if it is her firstborn child, (d) was reared in the new buildings constructed after World War II, and (e) is far more concerned about health and safety standards than was her mother's generation.

Therefore, if your nursery is (a) in the basement, (b) a long distance from an exit, (c) a relic of the 1950s, or (d) moldy, dirty, or unattractive, do not expect a flood of the young mothers born during the 1950s to come flocking to your church. An attractive, inviting, easy-to-find nursery lo-

none are available elsewhere at a convenient location. A second choice is to remove some of the front pews to expand the chancel area. A third alternative is to widen the aisles or to create a new cross aisle. The point of this is not to allow the actions of the building committee of 1924 or 1953 or 1961 or 1905 to produce a depressing impact on the wor-

# GROWTH

is based on the assumption that corporate worship is to please the building by filling it. That is very difficult to proof text. What is the purpose? To fill the pews? Or to encourage people to gather to worship God? The second objection represents a member-centered rather than an outreach perspective. It also is deceptively worded! After all, most congrega-



tions already are divided into three segments: (1) those who regularly attend worship; (2) those who attend occasionally; and (3) those who rarely attend. What is the harm in adding a fourth group, those who attend "the other service" if this means reaching more people?

It should be noted that in perhaps one-third to one-half of all congregations this third suggestion is not feasible unless something is done to reduce the seating capacity of the nave so the worshippers will not be depressed by being surrounded by a sea of empty seats.

The first five suggestions on this list are relatively simple to implement. They do not require any radical change. The next six are more difficult to implement in any congregation since they involve either more change or a more active role by the members.

#### **6. Change the Pedagogical Style!**

Most Sunday school classes for children and youth are verbal skill-oriented, dull, based on the expectation that every person will be present every Sunday, boring, building-centered, unexciting and passive events, tedious, humorless, and based on the memorization of content. The procedures, methods, materials, ideas, and models are now readily available to develop a pedagogical style in the Sunday church school that is visual skill-oriented, emphasizes experiential learning, is more creative, is based on a greater degree of participatory learning, expects the participants to teach themselves, and also results in the students remembering more of what they have learned. This approach may be worth considering if you are interested in reaching children and youth who are not in any church now.

#### **7. Promptly Return All Visits!**

Interviews with recent adult new members indicate that the overwhelming majority are tremendously impressed by a prompt, personal, and interested call by a member or by the pastor soon after they have visited a

congregation for the first time. Incidentally, two calls are better than one.

Far less effective are postcards, letters, and telephone calls. When their first visit is not returned, many potential new members assume that congregation is not interested in them and they continue their church shopping by going to a different church the following Sunday.

#### **8. Start New Groups for New Members!**

While it is true that most longtime members prefer to see new members join existing circles in the women's organization or adult classes in the Sunday school and other ongoing groups, it also is true that few members find the existing groups to be easy to enter and gain a sense of belonging.

There are sufficient exceptions to that generalization to delude the longtime members into believing that it is not necessary to form new groups to assimilate new members. The congregation that expects to grow and fulfill that expectation, however, usually is creating at least one or two groups annually.

#### **9. Call on the Potential Dropouts!**

One of the most effective methods for facilitating church growth is to reduce the number of members who drop out and disappear from view. The easiest approach is to monitor the nonverbal signals that members send the church. One approach is to make a personal call on each member whenever that person makes a change in his or her behavior. Thus, whenever a regular attendee at worship misses three Sundays in a row or whenever an occasional attendee is present on three consecutive Sundays, that person receives a personal visit. Likewise, whenever a member increases their financial commitment or cancels their pledge or makes any other change in their behavior, that person receives a personal visit. All of the evidence indicates it is far easier to keep a potential dropout from becoming inactive than it is to activate the inactive members.

#### **10. Trade Lists of Inactives!**

In a city of 65,000 residents, the pastors of the four Presbyterian congregations met and exchanged the names and addresses of inactive members. Each pastor "placed" the names of his inactive members, not on the basis of geographical considerations, but rather on matching that inactive member with what he thought would be the appropriate minister and/or congregation to match that person's needs. Someone from that church was expected to make a personal call on the inactive member within a week, a second call would be made within another 10 days, and a third personal visit would be made within a month following the first call.

Three months later an evaluation revealed (a) several elders were disturbed about "the pastor giving away some of our members to another church" and (b) nearly 40 percent of the inactive members had displayed an active interest in the church from which someone had contacted them.

#### **11. Set Goals**

An almost universal characteristic of growing churches is that the minister and the members expect that congregation to grow. If the members of your congregation do not share that expectation, one means of arousing it is by setting goals. Goals can create expectations.

In setting growth goals steer away from setting goals on what other people will do such as, "Our goal is for 50 people to join our church." A better approach would be to articulate the goals in words that assume a more active role for you and your members and that gives you control over what happens. Five examples of this could be: (a) during the next year we will invite at least 100 adults to join this congregation; or (b) during the next year we will make 500 visitation-evangelism calls on people who are not now actively involved in the life of any congregation; or (c) within six months we will organize a "Fisherman's Club" with at least 8 members and each member will spend at least one evening or afternoon


every week in visitation-evangelism; or (d) by the end of next year we will have identified at least six of the barriers that, without knowing that we were doing it, we have built around this congregation and which tend to discourage prospective new members from becoming interested in this congregation; or (e) by September 30 next year we will have had at least one Lay Witness Mission here which will strengthen the faith and enhance the ability of at least 20 of our members to witness to their Christian commitment to others.

In each of these five examples, the members of the congregation formulating that goal have control over whether or not that goal is achieved. The implementation does not depend on the response of other persons and the formulation of this type of goal does create new expectations.

## 12. Advertise!

If your congregation wants to grow, advertise with special emphasis on your distinctive role and on any unique ministries or programs you offer. If the meeting place is difficult to find, include a line drawing showing the location.

The yellow pages in the telephone directory is your first place to advertise. Many people born since 1935 frequently turn to the yellow pages. Direct mail advertising is useful if you can secure mailing lists for a specific segment of the population. For example, send one direct mailing to widowed persons, but send a different message to newcomers to the community. Many congregations have a response rate of 2 to 3 percent (that is 20 to 30 out of 1,000 letters) to direct mailings and find this to be well worth the time and expense. Other congregations prefer spot announcements on the radio while a few use display ads aimed at young mothers in the foods sections of the Thursday edition of the newspapers.

Now, which of these tips fit your situation? Pick out the two or three or four that fit, discard the others, and go to work! 

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# AN ODYSSEY★★

by Marilyn Millikan\*

**T**his is a true story of a family of four who set out on a journey to find a church.

**Church number one** made them feel like they were in a funeral home. It was cold and indifferent—there was a total absence of concern.

**Church number two** seemed to be alright. Then the family began getting letters suggesting the amount of money they should give. One letter said non-givers would be dropped from the roll. The only times they heard from the church was when it needed money.

They attended **church number three** for six weeks. During that time no one introduced themselves or made any effort to get acquainted. Super cold.

Some friends invited the children to the **fourth church**, and they liked it. In fact, the boy even went to the altar and got saved. The preacher called in the home and told the parents if they didn't get saved right that minute they were going to hell.

A calling program was active in **church number five**. A couple came to call each Thursday night, but just sat and didn't say much. When the couple met the family in public those church folks acted like strangers.

**Church number six** actually had fellowship gatherings during the week. For some reason, though, these gatherings were usually in the daytime which eliminated working adults.

**The next church** was very large—many people coming and going. It had a sizeable bus ministry without proper supervision, so the children were often disrupting the services. The main objection, however, was the inconsistent preacher. For instance, he preached against women working, but hired a woman to work in the nursery.

Friends invited them to **the next church** to hear a quartet. They felt they were at a show and they noticed most of the folks seem to come for entertainment.

On Easter Sunday this family's search ended when some neighbors invited them to our church. They were saved during camp meeting that summer, and have been active Christians ever since.

Why did they settle on our church? Here is what they said:

*"We were embarrassed to come on Easter since we had never attended before, but we found we were readily accepted. We felt a warmth, found new friends, and saw that the church ministered to varied groups. We were not put on the spot, and the pastor did not shake his fist and scream."*

An odyssey ended when they found a church home and, most of all, Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.


This story is told for one reason: to illustrate the need for churches that are loving and caring. My heart hurts when time after time our folks report visits to other churches where, *"no one spoke, no one cared, no one shook hands."*

A recent survey conducted on why people attend church the second time shows these 3 things at the top of a list of 10:

- they liked the preaching
- people were friendly
- people seemed to care

Church growth? Here is a way to help your church grow that requires no money, no new buildings, no new equipment.

**Urge your people to:**

shake hands, be friendly, visit in newcomers' homes, help the needy, bring them to socials, visit the sick, console, encourage, go the second mile, and smile. 

\*Marilyn Millikan, pastor's wife, Decatur, Illinois, First Church of the Nazarene.

# INCARNATIONAL PREACHING

by Oscar Reed

*Professor of Preaching, Nazarene Theological Seminary*

One of the great experiences of life is to hear the Word preached with authority—but in a manner in which Word, preacher, and congregation are caught up in the preaching event. If a preacher is not aware of those factors and spends little time contemplating the theology of preaching he is doomed to frustration. This may be one reason why many preachers leave the ministry. They have divorced theology from practical homiletics and consequently are left with only the rhetoric of preaching.

Theology and homiletics have never been married, for many. They have never learned that *preaching* is the natural expression and end of *theology*. When one “does theology,” he will inexorably end up as a preacher. That may be one of the reasons that most, if not all, theologians are preachers. In fact, in Europe and in many of the traditional churches of America, the seminary professor will be found pastoring the church of the community. “Doing theology” must emerge in concrete forms, finding its expression in all of the pastoral functions.

Clyde E. Fant asks: “If theology does not unite the human dilemma with its ultimate concerns, is it truly theology? Likewise, if preaching has no theological basis for its considerations of form, method, and delivery, can it be justified as practice at all?” (*Preaching for Today*: p. xiii).

Now before I am misunderstood, allow me to say quickly that “preaching is preaching only when a sermon is being preached.” Attention must be given to the practical aspects of the preaching experience—rhetoric, speech, delivery, etc. On the other hand, the sermon *must be united theologically* with the theory of preaching, and therein lies both truth and dilemma. The consideration is far more practical than many of my readers will give me credit for—but please read on.

When a pastor stands in his pulpit on Sunday morning, his preaching is more than the proclamation of the Word—it is the Word proclaiming! I do not intend to obscure the unique event in Christ with what happens in preaching. However, there is a real sense in which “the proclaimed Christ is the real Christ.”

In proclamation, Jesus Christ again takes form as the Incarnate One and dwells among us. In preaching He must continue to become enfleshed in our midst. What a great discovery it is for the pastor when he suddenly realizes that when he stands behind the pulpit and preaches, he is not telling people what to do, but that there is an actual personal encounter with Christ until Word-event encompasses the three elements of incarnational preaching—Word, preacher, and congregation, all caught up in the mystery of communication. Tillich helps us when he makes a distinction in religious language between *sign* and *symbol*. The latter is actually participating in the event until some words are more than signs, but actively involved in the event that preaching defines.

That means that the pulpit of the city and the pulpit of the prairie are one, for it is Jesus Christ revealed in both. Whether the pastor is speaking to 20 or 1,000, when he preaches incarnationally, God in Christ is there!

All of us need to hear again the theological dimension of preaching. So many things get in our way until we wonder if the cost makes preaching worthwhile. When we lose ourselves in the preaching-event, any sacrifice is worthwhile for that kind of experience.

Many years ago I was meeting with a District Church School Board at beautiful Lake Placid, New York. That evening we trudged through the snow to

*(Continued on page 33)*

# INCARNATIONAL PREACHING

(Continued from page 32)

our log cabin church where an evangelist was pouring his heart out in revival services. I listened dispassionately.

The evangelist crucified the king's English and made a mockery of homiletics. But when the altar call was given, three stalwart young men gave their hearts to the Savior. Then the Spirit started speaking to me in a way I have never forgotten. "You see, son, I used him in a way that I could not use you." I learned two important lessons that night. First, that every man, regardless of his ability, has something to say to me. Second, that Christ was there incarnationally speaking in ministry.

There are two questions that we would like to ask: What is "incarnational preaching," and what price must be paid to preach incarnationally?

## The Fact of Incarnational Preaching

Clyde E. Fant reminds us that the struggles of the Early Church were christological. Was Christ God, man, or God-man. How could the divine Word be enfleshed in the human? The early heresies took the paradox apart. To the Ebionites, Jesus was none other than man. For the Docetics He was none other than God. His appearance was manlike, but He was only disguised as man. In both heresies the incarnation was denied.

Preaching faces the same problem by denying the paradox of the presence of both: "the historical given of the eternal Word" and the present situation of our own contemporary existence. The temptation is for preaching to become all human or all divine. In one case, "there is nothing of God," in the other, "there is nothing for man."

God, himself, became incarnate to communicate with man at his most profound level. Nothing in all the universe could compete with this ultimate revelation that "God was in Christ" and that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). It is only reasonable to understand why the incarnation is the truest theological model for preaching because it was God's ultimate act of communication. Jesus, who was the Christ, most perfectly said "God" to us because the eternal Word took on human flesh in a contemporary situation. Preaching cannot do otherwise.

The problem is that all of us as preachers are pulled between two poles. We may either see preaching as proclamation alone and forget the human situation, or we may preach the human situation and forget the proclamation of the Word. In each, there is heresy.

There are those who can give the minute details of the scripture and forget there is a congregation awaiting the word of grace. There are others who with compassion can speak with love, but are empty of the authoritative Word and in the end preach only platitudes. As Fant observes, this is the "true

split chancel in the church." To the right "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees"; but likewise to the left, "Beware of the leaven of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6).

Only when the preacher sees the mystery of paradox in preaching grounded in an incarnational model does Christ truly stand in the pulpit to enflesh the message and actuate the Word-event.

**Some preachers can give the most minute scholarly details of the text and forget there is a congregation awaiting the word of grace.**

## The Imperatives Involved in Incarnational Preaching

The preacher who preaches incarnationally must position himself in relation to the Word. That is, he is under the Word and under its judgment.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of thorough exegetical study in preparation. I have discovered in working with seminary students that when they take their exegetical study seriously, usually they communicate better; and second, a number of sermons may come out of the one study. There

**Some preachers can speak with love, but are empty of the authoritative word and in the end preach only platitudes.**

is a third dimension: genuine biblical study places one under the Word and helps us to acknowledge our humanity in the light of God's sovereignty. When we see our weakness and failure in the light of God's sovereignty, we are well on our way to a confessional dimension in preaching which is the bridge between the Word proclaimed, the Word present, and the congregation who sees their preacher as one with them.

It is already apparent that the pastor-preacher has a profound obligation to interpret the Word to the best of his abilities with the instruments which are at his disposal. *The many written resources at our disposal make "sloppy" exegesis unpardonable.*

Many years ago when I was a teenager, a prominent preacher-friend of mine preached a holiness message grounded not in the Word, but in a syllogism. In a social occasion later I asked him if he was aware of the fallacy in the minor premise. His answer was:

"Yes, I knew, but remember there were 20 at the altar." I replied, "But having taken logic, I would not have been there."

**Neglect of the Word in favor of an existential approach will result in pragmatic fallacy.**

How many have we lost because of either *carelessness* or lack of integrity. We didn't think it that important and used an existential hermeneutic whether the interpretation was reasonable or not. The result was a pragmatic fallacy.

The other side of the picture is just as important. One of my senior students in a seminary research report brought to our attention that H. H. Farmer, the great English preacher, observed that we should bring our sermons *home*, speaking of "you and me," rather than "our." His view is far more important than we might first envision.

Proper speech is essential to the communication of the Word. The best of exegetical studies will remain in the office unless we can take those theological motifs and make them "pabulum" for the congregation. Tillich suggests in the *Theology of Culture* (p. 213), that we must overcome the wrong stumbling block (the lack of proper communication) in order to bring our people to the right stumbling block—the gospel. He is not speaking of persuasion. A man who turns the gospel down has heard the Good News. *But many never hear the gospel* because of the stumbling blocks of errant preparation or poor communication.

I will be speaking in Canada next Sunday. I pray that I will not fail them. For if I have met the imperatives, Jesus Christ, the Word, will speak through me and be present in Word-event. That is my hope—but that is also my assurance. Join me in that adventure whether speaking to 10 or 1,000. It is your heritage as God's ministers of the Word.

Bonhoeffer put it all together in *I Have Loved This People* (p. 45).

In the midst of a Christendom that has been smitten with quiet beyond measure the word of the forgiveness of all sins through Jesus Christ and the call to a new life in obedience to God's holy commandments must once more be proclaimed.

... We call to preaching. Proclaim and hear in all places the wholesome commandments of God for a new life. Come together to worship as often as possible.



In the "Preacher's Magazine"

**50 Years Ago**

**The Drive to Preach**

There is no greater misfortune as regards the success of a preacher than that he should lose the preacher "urge." There is something in the spiritual make-up of the God-called man very like that indefinable instinct which drives the migratory bird "on south" in spite of hindrances of every kind. And the preacher who feels, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," will brave difficulties and endure hardness in order to continue in his work that a cool, calculating man will permit to stop him.

—J. B. Chapman

**Preaching and Growing Old**

A preacher may "get by" on zeal and emotion until he is about 40, but if he has not developed something more enduring by that time his force will begin to wane, and he will have to fight to keep from getting sour because the people do not "stand for straight preaching" anymore. And there is nothing more pathetic than a misfit preacher at 50. If he were younger, he could change; if he were older, he could quit; but at 50, what can he do?

—J. B. Chapman



## ROUTINE VISITATION VS. PASTORAL CARE

by Milton E. Poole

*Associate Pastor of Counseling, Salem, Oregon, First Church of the Nazarene*

Have you ever wondered if the persons on whom you've called felt treated as a "commodity for success"?

"Routine visitation" may imply just that—calling to meet a numerical goal. "Pastoral care," however, could indicate concern for the person as one to whom you may minister.

It seems to me this tension between calling to accomplish a commendable goal, and calling which communicates is ever with us in our ministry.

On a scale of 1 to 10, just where would you place yourself? On the "1" side a minister may be more concerned about numbers and routine calling, while on the "10" side another minister may be almost oblivious to the pressure of numbers, and more aware of quality of his work. Where do you think you are?

The "1" man may say to himself, "I've got to make 1,500 calls this year or I can't make it. If I don't, I won't look good."

The "10" man may say to himself, "I'm so tired of this emphasis on numbers. How can I keep a record of my calling? I'm interested in quality work and effective relating, not tabulating figures."

There is danger in either extreme. A perfect balance may never be fully experienced—only a wavering between both positions. Hopefully, even an imperfect balance will enable you to be not only more effective in calling, but more effective in interpersonal relationships.

The "1" minister may be guilty of judging fellow pastors who do not make a high number of calls. "If that guy only had it together,

he'd do better. Look at me. If I can manage my time, why can't he?" So goes the inner reflection. How confident I feel in my position.

A "10" minister may look at his fellow brother who is making twice the number of calls and say, "So what? At least I do quality calling."

Just how can you find the balance? What would be a healthy movement toward the center of the spectrum between the "1" and the "10"?

I remember statements made in my earlier ministry which I never took time to evaluate. "A home-going pastor makes a church-coming people." On the surface this sounds great. However, it thrusts me into a vicious cycle of desperation. To achieve the coming, I must increase my going. At this juncture, I rearrange my schedule, reset some of my priorities, and give more person-attention than program-attention. But a rude awakening comes. I've neglected my study and my administrative responsibilities. And again life is out of balance. Now the tension between the "1" man and the "10" man brings a sense of guilt, the feeling of "less than," the adept reinforcement of failure.

There are subtle perils in either caring role as pastor. What are they?

On the numbers side there is the temptation to shift your motive from His glory to your glory. The conflict is not so much in the method as in the motive. You begin to lose sensitivity to the person's inner journey. Your awareness of the other person as

a person is clouded by your motive switch.

Now it seems quite obvious. The difference between the routine visitation and meaningful pastoral care is hidden deep within you. No other person can make that distinction for you.

Is there no place for the "1" style or numbers calling? Yes, because calling styles vary. You may move in and out of the *cliché* level where you talk about the weather and the latest news, to the *concerned* level with your primary concern about the person, his needs, his family, and his friends. In certain situations you are at the *compassionate* level. You feel with him; you get "inside his skin."

Here are some guiding principles to help you maintain a balance between the "1" position and the "10" position.

1. Maintain accurate calling records and set a reasonable goal for visitation and pastoral contacts during the year.

2. Keep in focus the compassionate level as the most meaningful of all levels.

3. Continue to ask these questions:

- a. What have I accomplished today and how many people have I contacted?
- b. On what level did my conversation take place?
- c. Did I sense the person, his uniqueness, needs, and problems?
- d. How do I plan to strengthen my "doing" goals or my "being" goals, whichever is weaker?



# WESLEY'S DOCTRINE OF MAN

by R. Larry Shelton

*Professor of Religion, Seattle Pacific University*

**A**lthough Wesley's doctrine of man is sometimes thought to involve only the concept of depravity in his doctrine of original sin, he operated from a much larger framework of thought on this issue. Only within this larger setting can his doctrines of sin, evil, and salvation be adequately understood.<sup>1</sup> Wesley was concerned that man's significance in relation to the universe be established. To fail to do this would result in a reduction of man to insignificance, which was a tendency prevalent in Wesley's day. The 18th century was bringing to expression the results of the 16th- and 17th-century scientific movement. The old Ptolemaic world view in which man and the earth had been the centers of the universe had been destroyed by the work of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Bacon, Newton, and others. The new astronomy had shown that the earth in fact revolves around the sun, and thus the earth, man's habitat, had been shown to be only a small, somewhat insignificant part of a boundless universe.<sup>2</sup>

The pessimistic and skeptical conclusions which could be drawn from the earth's and man's loss of centrality were many. However, a more optimistic spirit of the age tended to elevate the significance of man in spite of his insignificant size or duration of existence. Wesley tended to agree with this cosmic optimism. He appreciated the scientific discoveries of this period, and his five-volume work on natural philosophy, *A Survey of the Wisdom of God*

*in Creation*, reflects this.<sup>3</sup> Although Wesley held the 18th-century doctrine of the "universal chain of being" which asserts that man is but one species in a chain of beings from plants all the way up to man, and possibly angels, he did not see that this demeaned man or made him indistinct from brutes.<sup>4</sup> Even though science depicted man as significant because of his important role in the physical order, and philosophy saw man as still important because of his primacy in the intellectual order, Wesley went farther and expressed man's significance solely in terms of the spiritual order. He did not see the purpose of science to be the substantiation of man's significance, therefore science was not necessary as a bulwark of religion.<sup>5</sup> Wesley pointed out that neither man's infinitesimal size in relation to the almost limitless universe nor his extremely brief duration of life in comparison to eternity were adequate to assign any meaning whatsoever to him.<sup>6</sup> The love which God shows to man is not based on anything man can do or think, or on any proven data of science. Man's significance in God's eyes is solely based on God's creative will for him through which he is given the right to live with God forever.<sup>7</sup> Thus man's significance is based not on his usefulness in creation or on any inherent quality, but on his relationship to the Creator.<sup>8</sup>

Wesley repeatedly emphasized that man was made in the image of God. He said:

God did not make him mere matter, a piece of senseless, unintelligent clay; but a spirit like himself, although clothed with a material vehicle. As such he was endued with understanding; with a will including various affections; and with liberty, a power of using them in a right or wrong manner, of choosing good or evil . . .<sup>9</sup>

Although the brutes in the animal kingdom have will, affections, and a measure of liberty, these characteristics have become impaired by the Fall. Man is distinct in that his nature is capable of directing these attributes in loving obedience toward God.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the significance of man lies in his being created by God in His image and with the capacity to love and obey the Creator.

In relation to the doctrine of original sin, Wesley taught that the image of God involved both natural and moral forms. The natural image was the capacity for physical movement, understanding and will, and liberty. The moral image was man's original perfection which involved loving and obeying God in holiness and righteousness. The moral image of God, holiness and righteousness, was lost in the Fall, and the natural image was impaired.<sup>11</sup> Human nature thus became corrupt with an inherent disposition toward evil. The strength of Wesley's emphasis on this corruption made it difficult for him to escape from the conception of sin as a substance.<sup>12</sup>

Drawing from the Bible and the Arminianism of his Anglican theological heritage, Wesley emphasized a doctrine of grace which empowers the believer to respond to God. The Holy Spirit, in response to the faith made possible by this "preventing grace," restores in man the moral image of

God, so that he can live in a relationship of holiness and righteousness toward God.<sup>13</sup>

Thus through grace the believer is restored to the original position of significance in the universe and to the proper moral relationship with God. This restoration depends totally on God's sovereign will and freely offered grace. Man's significance in the universe has nothing to do with his importance or performance, but on God's creation of him in His image. Man's recovery of God's image and of God's intended role for him in the universe depends entirely on grace, not moral effort. Therefore, since only God's grace and creative will can give us any significance in the world or any relationship to Him, we should carefully evaluate our values and motives to see whether or not we are attempting to gain status and meaning in life by any means other than our dependence upon God's grace and obedience to His will. Any other criterion for meaning and purpose in life is not Wesleyan, and certainly not biblical.



#### FOOTNOTES

1. Umphrey Lee, *John Wesley and Modern Religion* (Nashville: Cokesbury, 1936), p. 118.
2. William R. Cannon, *The Theology of John Wesley* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1946), p. 176.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
4. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
5. Cannon, *op. cit.*, p. 179.
6. Sermon ciii, part i, sec. 1-7.
7. *Ibid.*, sec. 14, 8.
8. Cannon, *op. cit.*, p. 179.
9. *Works*, vol. vii, Sermon lxxvii, pp. 222-23.
10. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 119; *Works*, vol. vi; Sermon lx, p. 244.
11. *Works*, Sermon lx, vol. vi, p. 243; *Works*, Sermon lviii, vol. vi, p. 223.
12. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 121.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 123-25.

## Monday Morning Pastor's Poem

by Jan W. van Arsdale

Amid a studyful of study  
By dogmaticians, homileticians, and liturgists  
Whose tomes tilt on single-minded supporting shelves,  
Their spines soft-selling my perusal,  
With street sounds just the other side of opaque windows,  
Which cast gray wonder over all weather save noisy  
wetness,  
With parish detail in my brain and logging the future  
Following telephoning in and out and mail deliveries,  
Occasional titles arrest my meandering mind and gaze.

As at an amusement park, I guess a volume's age and  
weight,  
Conclude that younger ones are uniformly thinner,  
As if original thoughts are sparser nowadays  
And the parishes of the mind have shrunk commensurate  
With parishes aching to expand their sage counsel.

Amid a studyful of study  
By historians, statisticians, and metaphysicians,  
I measure their age and weight against my own  
And decide that one day, when my schedule permits,  
I must spar with some of them again.



# CAN WE AFFORD THE HO-HUM SUNDAY SCHOOL?

by Wayne Christianson

**W**hen the history of the Sunday school is finally written it will probably show that the organization's worst enemies were its friends.

By "friends" we mean lay Christians like you and me who week after week labor to keep our Sunday schools going—just barely.

Seen in the aggregate, the cost of ho-hum Sunday schools is staggering. In literally thousands of churches the Sunday school is on the team and in the game but it is fumbling most of the plays.

Where they could and should be reaching out by the scores, or even hundreds, they are reaching fives and tens. They are swallowing up more man-hours of time each week than any other church activity with—let us confess—marginal returns. Too often they are responsible for creating a climate of apathy which spreads through all the church.

Can yours be a ho-hum Sunday school? Ask yourself some questions, not in a critical spirit but by way of throwing out a plumb line to help you see conditions as they really are.

Is attendance up or down? Are pupils and workers enthusiastic?

Do they come because they want what your Sunday school has to offer or because they know they should? Are people getting saved? Are Christians growing? Are workers investing time in Sunday school growth and outreach or is the total effort focused on next Sunday? If the answers seem to show deficiencies, it's past time to be concerned.

**In the long run a church settles for the kind of Sunday school it thinks is "good enough." If the results are disappointing, it probably is because the congregation and especially its leaders do not realize what a really good Sunday school is or what one could do for their church.**

At this point you may be tempted to marshal reasons why nothing better can be done. Church leaders won't cooperate. Members won't turn out for Sunday school. You lack outstanding leaders. People are too busy—and besides, you don't have room.

All these are good excuses—if they are what you really want. But if you want a going Sunday school, there are much better answers.

One is the fact that God is in this matter, too. Leaders of going Sunday schools are quick to say that with all their planning, work, and insights, the big breakthroughs have come through God's provision. Your God is just as great as theirs.

Be encouraged, too, that successful Sunday schools are being built. In terms of size alone the record is impressive. According to Elmer Towns's figures in *The Ten Largest Sunday Schools and What Makes Them Grow*, the top 10 alone are readying a total of nearly 38,000 persons every week. (*Christian Life*, in its run-down of largest Sunday schools, listed no fewer than 75 with weekly attendances ranging from 5,800 to 1,150).



Photo by Camerique

Christian education authorities are far from ready to say that size alone means quality, but scores of less known but highly effective schools are also carrying on purposefully across the nation. Such schools, large and small, are working patterns of success—proofs that going Sunday schools can be built and that they can make tremendous contributions to the church!

### **The Good Signs**

A study of such schools brings out an important principle: effective Sunday schools grow and prosper in churches with a distinctive kind of attitude or climate. If you want a going Sunday school, think first about this climate.

1. First of all, note that the church with an effective Sunday school operation has a zeal to make Christ known, to reach the lost and to share the gospel. It also recognizes that the Sunday school, like other ministries of the church, must be carried on in the power of God. Such churches are evangelistic; their congregations well-taught, well-fed, and with a burden for the lost.

2. Another element of the climate which spawns good Sunday schools is the priority given to the school itself. It is not just one of many worthwhile programs, but the spearhead of church outreach. It is part of the church, not just a church project.

3. The pastor's attitude is also important. With few exceptions, he is closely involved in the Sunday school effort. In large Sunday school churches he often guides the school in person. In other situations he works closely with the superintendent, regarding the Sunday school as part of his personal program. Meeting with this leader regularly, he contributes ideas, sparks enthusiasm, and promotes the work, both from the pulpit and in his personal contacts. With such support a Sunday school superintendent never needs to feel that he works alone.

Small wonder that in churches where these things are true the climate breathes a warm enthusiasm for the Sunday school and its outreach. Workers are made to realize that their task is of first-rank importance, that it can be done only as they and others give time freely from week to week.

### **Even More Needed**

1. But such a favorable climate, important as it is, is not enough. Certain principles must be followed. One of the first is that there must be vision. Breaking out of the ho-hum Sunday school run will be possible only as leaders and workers begin to glimpse what their Sunday school can be. This means exposing key people at least to effective Sunday schools.

The Sunday school convention can be invaluable at this point. Many top Sunday schools trace their beginnings to the inspiration received by two or three at a Sunday school convention. A visit to one or more outstanding Sunday schools nearby may also be effective.

2. A second principle involves building an enthusiastic, forward-looking staff. In many instances this may mean finding, enlisting, and training some person as yet undiscovered, especially as school superintendent. A very special type of individual is needed for this position. He must be a man of faith, commitment and vision. He must be a leader who gets on fire himself and can kindle this flame in others. He



dance, personal interest, and all-around good teaching.

### These Too . . .

Other problems will need to be met and solved head-on when a Sunday school revitalizes its approaches.

1. A solid, Bible-centered curriculum is, of course, essential. Lessons should be focused on the pupil and his needs. These should emphasize the Word of God and the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian growth and living.

The effective Sunday school will have to meet and solve the problem of adequate teaching. This will probably mean teacher training classes, preferably on a regular basis. It will mean definite teacher standards.

2. Pupil visitation? This is a must, of course, especially visits to absentees. Adequate records will also be needed so leaders can keep their fingers on the pulse of attendance, find trouble spots before they become too crucial. Be prepared to deal with special problems as they arise, and pull the weeds which are bound to spring up in any organization.

3. Denominational Sunday school publishers and leaders can give much valuable assistance. Besides having a wealth of information, such persons often have experienced counselors who visit local schools.

4. Last, but by no means least, are the many books, periodicals and other publications dealing with Sunday school problems.

So if up to now your church has assumed that it could not afford a first-rate Sunday school, it may pay to take another careful look. While much depends on manpower, know-how, and resources, far more depends on faith and vision. Most of all, you need the firm conviction that no church, including yours, can afford to trudge along from year to year with a ho-hum Sunday school.



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must be, or learn to be, an effective administrator since much of his work involves making plans and directing others.

Dr. Harold E. Garner, chairman of the Department of Christian Education at Moody Bible Institute, much of whose time is spent counseling churches on such problems, believes that "the Lord has the needed kind of person somewhere in the congregation if only he can be found." Such a person, properly motivated, trained, and supported can ignite the flame which will set the Sunday school on fire.

Almost as much prayer and discernment is needed in choosing leaders for departments.

The departmental superintendent is the vital link between the class and the Sunday school as a whole. He must build and encourage, care for problems and keep in touch with teachers, be-

sides carrying on the weekly departmental program. The school superintendent in turn must keep department heads enthusiastic and on the job so they do not let down or leave the individual worker feeling cut off or isolated.

In short, nothing is more important in vitalizing a Sunday school than building a born again, totally committed, enthusiastic staff. Nor can the staff be neglected once it has been formed. Such workers must be fed and nurtured if they are to be effective in winning souls, challenging and helping pupils, and sending them out to live for Christ.

3. In this connection effective ministry to the individual pupil is closely linked with smaller classes. Large classes under especially dynamic teachers may attract attendance, but there is no substitute for consistent atten-

# STAFF MINISTER MISERIES

by a "Youth Minister"

If not the best, experience is at least a good teacher. For the past three years experience has been teaching me about the position of a youth and music minister. Having worked under three different pastors, I learned the hard way about being a staff minister. The time spent as an associate was well worth it, but I would like to share some thoughts I wish I had known in the beginning.

When a person is thinking of going to a church as an associate he should thoroughly check out three areas: (1) Has the pastor ever worked with an associate before? (2) What is the pastor's relationship with the people of the church? (3) How are the finances of the church? Many of the problems I faced centered around these three areas. Let's look at each question.

*Has the pastor ever had an associate before?* A paid associate is more than just a pastor's adopted son. He deserves the respect in return that he is expected to have towards the pastor. If the pastor has never had an associate before, he may not know how to treat one. Before very long the respect due to the staff member can become respect only for robotlike obedience. If the pastor avoids this pitfall, things will run a lot smoother.

Another aspect of this is competition. In two of the churches I worked in there was a sense of competition between the pastor and myself. Not because there was any, but because it seemed like I was doing something the pastor had not been able to do and he did not know how to deal with it. In both cases it appeared that my youth group was growing faster than the adult group, which intimidated the pastor. It just stands to reason that if there has never been a full-time youth worker before that when a church does hire one, things are going to sprout at first, because it is different and new. It is usually the same when a new pastor

comes; people come at first to check him out. If these pastors had been more secure or had experience in staff ministry, they would have been aware of this growth process and would have not been intimidated.

*What is the pastor's relationship with the people?* I have learned that this is very important to know about before going to a church. If the feelings toward the pastor are bad and if the associate is not aware of it, before very long he may find himself right in the middle of a very ugly situation. People will go the associate to complain. They will try to use the staff member "to get" the pastor. In my first staff position, it turned out that half of the people liked the pastor and half did not. Being a rookie, I was dumb enough to listen to the people and before long there was a division and I was right in the middle of it. An associate can cause a division if he is not aware of the relationship between the pastor and the people. Knowing about this ahead of time may save some trouble down the road.

This can also work in the reverse. A pastor can cause a division by telling his associate about everyone in the church. I worked in another church where there were bad feelings between the pastor and some of his people, and it was the pastor who did the talking. He pointed out everyone that had "done him wrong." He warned me to avoid certain people if at all possible. He fed me with negatives about these people to the point where I disliked the people before I ever met them. The pastor was constantly downgrading these people which led to another problem. After I got to know some of these people, I found that they were not the way he had described them. Then I found myself questioning the objectivity of the pastor. I also realized that the people could be putting on a front. The problem became

*(Continued on page 47)*

# HOW TO GROW AS A PASTOR'S WIFE

by Patricia Wood, *Muncy, Pennsylvania*

As I was contemplating this article I thought of titling it "How to Survive as a Pastor's Wife." However, I believe God wants us to do more than just survive in this world. He expects us to grow.

There are many pressures facing the family in today's world. This is especially true of the pastor's family. If you were Satan, wanting to upset things, to whom would you serve your hardest blow? I believe it would be the pastor's family.

How many people would be hurt by your family breaking up? Those that come first to mind may be your immediate family—your children; you and your husband's parents; brothers and sisters. Yet a pastor's scope of influence affects many more people. Consider the church families of past and present pastorates, and the lasting friendships which have developed over the years. Satan is certainly wise in attacking the parsonage family. I do not mean to give any praise to him, but simply point out the problems we face.

With the women's movements building momentum in our country, I feel a lot of the pressure is faced by the wives of men called by God. Possibly some of the ideas expressed in this article will help you grow as a Christian and to be a better wife, mother, and leader in the parish.

## YOU ARE CALLED TOO

As your husband is called of God to bring the gospel to this world, you also are called. Don't allow yourself to become a millstone around his neck, but with support and love, be the helpmate God calls you to be.

## BE AN INDIVIDUAL

As your husband cannot purchase your way to heaven, neither can he live your spiritual life for you. You must "work out your own salvation" (Philippians 2:12). You must trust Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. You must discipline yourself to spiritual growth through Bible reading, prayer, and fellowship. Your pastor may be your husband, but he is also God's messenger for you. Do you listen to what God is saying through him? Do you take notes on what applies to your life? So often we think of the message as applying to someone else in the congregation. Possibly God wants to apply it to our hearts and lives. Don't ride on your husband's spiritual coattail.

## DON'T LET THE CHURCH PUT YOU INTO A MOLD

Not all pastors' wives must play the piano, teach children, or be missionary president. I felt guilty for so many years because I was not a pianist. For years I taught children and really did not enjoy it. Oh, I believe I did a fair job and many accepted Christ, but I now spend my efforts

with older teens and adults, especially young marrieds. This is where I feel comfortable. This leads to the next point.

## LEARN TO SAY NO

You are human. You cannot possibly take on all the odd jobs people will ask you to do. Pray and ask the Lord's leading on what you will do best for His glory and say NO without feeling guilty.

## ALWAYS HAVE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO

So much of the time we get bogged down with church and household duties and life becomes a drag. Why not plan something to look forward to—an adult education class, a book you want to read, a craft fair, a visit with someone you enjoy, a shopping trip, a women's retreat. I have found these times have made me appreciate my home, family, and calling more. I can do the job better after I've had a time away from it all.

## PLAN TIME FOR YOURSELF

Sometimes you may have an hour, a day, or even a weekend to renew and build your self-image and relationship with God. I have learned if I feel good about myself, I feel good towards my mate, my family, and my world. Ask for help from your family. When our children were small, my husband took them someplace on Saturday mornings for a couple of hours. I really looked forward to this time. Sometimes I cleaned the house, took a bubble bath, read a book, baked a cake, worked on some sewing or knitting, but it was time to do what I wanted to do. It served another purpose as well. It brought the children and their father closer together.

At another period in our lives when it was impossible for Dad to take the children and they were in school, I scheduled one hour each day, just before they came home from school, to read. At that time we had four foster children with great emotional problems, plus our own children. This one hour was a lifesaver. I would seldom let anything interfere with it. I was more stable and ready for the children when they arrived home. Jesus needed to be alone at times. Like Christ, we can't keep on going and giving, without a break.

## YOU WILL NOT PLEASE EVERYONE

Set Jesus as your Example and the One to please. Your husband and family come next. There will be those that love you, those that hate you, and those that just do not care. You can become an emotional cripple if you don't set your priorities to please God and leave the rest in His hands.

Let's take a look at what God wants us to become and keep growing in that direction.

# ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION: Instantaneous—Yes; Gradual—No.

by J. Kenneth Grider

*Professor of Theology, Nazarene Theological Seminary*

**W**ithin the holiness movement, all the theologians and exegetes have taught that entire sanctification is received instantaneously. If anyone were to deny this, he would not be part of the holiness movement; he would be persuaded of the validity of some other doctrinal orientation. Not every holiness scholar would give the same bases for the instantaneousness, and some would emphasize the instantaneousness more than others would; but all would teach it.

As I myself view the matter, entire sanctification is received in a moment of special crisis on several bases. In part, this is because it is obtained by faith instead of by good works—the latter being necessarily drawn out. In part, also, I view this “second grace” as instantaneous because the aorist tense is used in the Greek New Testament to describe it (after it has occurred) and to urge it or pray for it. As examples, the word for “sanctify” is in this aorist tense in Jesus’ prayer for His disciples, “Sanctify them” (John 17:17); and in Paul’s prayer for the believers at Thessalonica, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly (‘through and through,’ NIV)” (1 Thess. 5:23). This tense denotes

action that has been or is to be completed; punctiliar, momentary, crisis action—in distinction from action which is continuous or gradual or repetitive. Actually, the perfect tense, for various verbs which describe the experience of entire sanctification, also suggests its crisis character—for that tense describes what happened in a punctiliar way in the past, with the results continuing to the present time.<sup>1</sup>

Another kind of basis for entire sanctification’s being instantaneous, as I view the matter, is the kind of symbols or figures that are used to describe it in the New Testament. One of these figures is “baptism” (see Matt. 3:11-12; Acts 1:4-5; cf. Acts. 2:4; and Chs. 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 19). Another such figure is sealing (Eph. 1:12-13; 4:30). Still another is circumcision (Col. 2:11-12). When entire sanctification is described by the use of these symbols, the suggestion is that it is received instantaneously—the way what is designated by those symbols is accomplished.

Almost all holiness scholars, for over a hundred years, have taught that entire sanctification is received only instantaneously, and not gradually. All have taught

that growth in grace occurs, and should occur, both prior to and subsequent to entire sanctification. But it has been understood that this growth in grace, prior to entire sanctification (and, naturally, not the kind that occurs afterwards), does not consist of any piecemeal lessening of original sin, but only of a gradual preparation of the believer’s mind and heart for what Wiley calls “the cleansing at a single stroke of inbred sin . . .”<sup>2</sup>

John Wesley himself seemed to teach that the cleansing from original sin is first gradual and then instantaneous. He said, “When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins. And as faith increases, holiness increases . . .”<sup>3</sup>

Adam Clarke, a younger contemporary of Wesley, clearly taught differently. Clarke said, “In no part of the Scripture are we directed to seek holiness gradatim. We are to come to God as well for an instantaneous and complete purification from all sin as for an instantaneous pardon.”<sup>4</sup>

On this matter, the holiness movement (properly, I think) followed Clarke. This includes such writers as J. A. Wood, Daniel Steele, Beverly Carradine, B. W.

*(Continued on page 47)*

# LULLED BY HIGH IDEALS

by John Henry Jowett\*

**“I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and repentest Thee of the evil”  
(Jonah 4:2, ERV).\*\***

“I knew that Thou art a gracious God.” And when that is the indwelling knowledge, lying in the secret heart of a man, what will be the character of the man? “I knew that Thou art a gracious God.” What will be the ethical fruit of such knowledge? What may we anticipate as the spontaneous and shining issue of such convictions? What was the practical and vital logic of Jonah himself? Let me prefix the preliminary sentence of the verse, for I have given only an amputated limb. Here is the full body of the

thought. “Therefore I hastened to flee unto Tarshish, for I knew that Thou art a gracious God.” “I ignored the clamant imperative of the Eternal will, for I knew that Thou art a gracious God!” “I knew that Thou art . . . full of compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy”; and, therefore, “I hastened to flee unto Tarshish,” even though the voice of the Eternal was calling loudly elsewhere, and Nineveh was speeding down a steep path of degeneracy to moral and spiritual death. “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great

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*\*John Henry Jowett spent his entire ministry serving large and influential churches. St. James Congregational Church in Newcastle-on-Tyne; Carr's Lane Congregational Church in Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate, London—these and other key pulpits of England and America were his. Wherever he went huge crowds gathered to hear him preach, and through his ministry the finest emphasis of the evangelical tradition was continued.*

*His deep social concern was demonstrated through his founding of Digheth Institute in 1908. The Institute was designed to serve the poor and underprivileged through ministry of the mind, body, and soul. This concept was a radical innovation for his times.*

*Jowett's ministry was characterized by his compassion for the personal problems of people. His sermons were directed toward human hurt: above all else, he wanted to bring the healing balm of the gospel to bear on the raw wounds caused by sin.*

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city, and cry against it: for their wickedness is come up before Me!" "Therefore I hasted to flee unto Tarshish, for I knew that Thou art a gracious God."

You see the steps of his reasoning. Nineveh is most certainly needy. Its wickedness is portentous and glaring. Things, bad beyond utterance, gaily parade themselves in the public streets. Corruption deepens into intensified filth, all the filthier that it bedecks itself with an artificial grace. Sorrow hides in silence, and wrong smothers its wails for fear of deeper wrong. The end of it all must—ah, well, the end of it all will be all right: the ungodly ferment will issue in delicate wine: the gracious Lord will interpose, the putrefaction will cease, and the terrors of night will be changed into the songs of the morning! Nineveh is bad, but then the Lord is good, and in His gracious keeping I confidently entrust the guilty city. Nineveh is needy! but "I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, and repentest Thee of the evil" . . . "and therefore I hasted to flee unto Tarshish!"

### **I. God and Duty**

Here is an extraordinary mental succession; a gloriously rich conception of Deity used to justify a flagrant neglect of duty; here is indolence finding its sustenance and justification in grace. Let me suggest to you a rather startling scriptural parallelism. In one of our Lord's parables He opens out a man's mind and reveals to us quite another conception of Deity than the one upon which we have just gazed. "I knew Thee." He begins almost after the manner of Jonah—"I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou has not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed." And what will be the issue of such conception, a conception of austerity and tyranny—a Pharaoh on the throne? "And I went and buried thy talent in the earth." The conception of unjust austerity found its issue in moral sterility. A man's conception of Deity is used to justify a deliberate neglect of duty. But here is the amazing coincidence, that the issues of the two conceptions are the same, while the conceptions are infinitely divergent. "Therefore I hasted to flee unto Tarshish," and duty was ignored! "I went and buried thy talent," and duty was ignored! And yet one had its origin in tyranny, the other had its origin in grace. There must be something rotten in the premise when there is something so unhallowed in the conclusion.

### **II. Duty and Service**

But before we make further quest into the roots of the reasoning, let us mark its vital connection with some of the thought of our own time. "Arise, go to Nineveh!" It was a call to the foreign field. It was the foreigner, the stranger, the faraway man, who was in peril, in darkness, in need. And it was foreign service that was disregarded, or say excused, on the plea that all men had to deal with

a gracious and merciful, and all-compassionating God. "It will be all right with the Ninevites! The sword of Damocles is not suspended above them! Their sky is not black with imminent storm, pregnant with the thunders and lightnings of an outraged God. Their sky, like ours, is brimming with grace, and His banner over them is love. There is nothing urgent in their condition; 'He is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy.'" We can go leisurely about our ministries; there is no call for haste!

I ask you—is there not something modern in the ancient reasoning? Let us look at the practical logic by which our conduct is determined. A hundred years ago men held very different conceptions of the needs and perils of the foreign field to those which are commonly held today. The conception of God was more awful, more austere, more severe. The conception of hell was more appalling, irreparable, full of final destruction. To be ignorant of God was to be lost. The heathen—the men of Nineveh—were regarded as sliding, in countless multitudes, into an inevitable and hopeless hell. Men used to make appalling calculations, and they would alarm their audiences by telling them how many were passing, with every tick of the clock, into irretrievable perdition. The state of the foreign field was looked upon with all the urgency with which we look upon a rudderless and broken ship, held in the grip of mighty tempestuous seas, with man after man dropping numb from the rigging into the engulfing deep. And foreign mission work was lifeboat work, and the boat was launched, and men went out to save imperilled brethren on the tremendous seas of common life! And O, the urgency of it, and the sacrifice of it, and the heroism of it! And O, the joy of it, and the shoutings of it, when the lifeboatmen came ashore again, and told the story of salvation, effected on far-off and desolate seas! And so, when men are drowning, their saviours speed upon their mission, and the pleasure trip to Tarshish is delayed.

But now, in many ways, for better or worse, the thought of the Church has changed. We no longer think of the heathen as dropping by shoals into unilluminated and hopeless night. If they drop from the rigging at all, they fall, not into engulfing seas, but into "the everlasting arms!" And because that hell has closed her mouth, and mercy's gates are open wide, we feel that the urgency has gone out of the mission, and that the strain of care and sacrifice can be eased. We no longer go out as lifeboats—to save souls, but as teachers to enlighten minds; no longer to visit possible wrecks, but to beautify the boats whose certain haven is their Father's land. Our emphasis has changed; we know that "He is a gracious God, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy," and the missionary fleetness has gone out of our steps.

That was Jonah's reasoning, and I say it is allied to a similar reasoning which is commonly prevalent in our time, a reasoning which is tragically and



**We have taken the frown out of the sky, and we have removed the peril out of the deep.**

pathetically untrue, and which must crucify the Son of God afresh. It means that hell has more motive power than heaven, and that fear has more constraint than grace. But have they? Let us come to the very crux of the problem, and let us root out the loose and rotten elements in the reasoning. Is fear mightier than grace, and does it endow the soul with fleeter and stronger wings? "I knew that Thou art a gracious God." He knew little or nothing about it! That is the hiatus in his reasoning. That is the rottenness in his conclusion. He knew little or nothing about the grace and mercy of the Lord. He had an opinion about it, but he had no deep experimental knowledge of its enriching and inspiring power. "I knew!" He was using a great word with painfully superficial meaning. In the Old and New Testament, *knowledge* is a word of unspeakably

deep significance, reaching away to the infinite. "If a man say, I know God, and keep not his commandments, he is a liar." "This is . . . life, to know!" To know is to live, to share the life of Him we know. Will you mark the shining peak of this towering aspiration of the Apostle Paul? "What things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung . . . that I may know Him!" The superlative glory which awaits him in the beatific light is this, "Then shall I know even as also I am known."

### III. Knowledge and Religious Experience

The cardinal element in spiritual knowledge is not well-arranged theology, but a religious experience. A well-arranged theology may be like a herbarist's dry museum; a religious experience has about it the life and beauty and fragrance of a "well-watered garden." To have really known the gracious God is to have tasted and seen how gracious He is, and to go about with the taste in the mouth, an ever-pleasant and refreshing inspiration. And there is this sure mark—I think it is the hallmark upon all the grace-blessed children of God, that they are keenly desirous that others should share their experience, and should roam and feed in the garden of their own soul's delight. The grace-blessed child can never tarry comfortably in the garden alone: his own joys are multiplied when others are plucking fruit from the same tree.

This is his cry to those without, "I sat down under his trees, and he has satisfied my mouth with good things!" "O taste and see that the Lord is good!" "Taste and see!" And why? Because in this sphere the taster becomes the advertiser. The experimentalist becomes the herald. The disciple becomes the apostle, inevitably and spontaneously, for every soul added to the Kingdom becomes the witness of his Saviour's praise. To know the grace of God is inevitably to become its messenger. I am not afraid of a broadened conception of the love and grace of the Lord if only men are in the Lord's garden and living on His fruits. Every guest will be a missionary, who will go out into the highways and hedges, intent on multiplying the guests, and the sphere of his enterprise will be as wide as the world. Eaten grace makes one hungry for service. Missionary work will need no urging when the Church takes her meals at the enriching and blood-making table of the Lord. What I do fear is, that we should sing of a grace that we have not known. I am afraid of that merely theoretical and drugging conception of grace which makes us easy about the needs and perils of Nineveh, and which relaxes the thews and sinews of a masculine sense of duty. Let us judge the reality of our discipleship by the intensity of our apostleship. Let us measure our knowledge of grace by the quality of our sentiments towards Nineveh. "In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor



Gentile." He who has tasted the Lord loves the race. Jonah thought well of God, and neglected man.

#### IV. A Second Chance

"And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time." Oh, the mercy hidden in those three closing words! "The second time!" That God should give us a second chance! The mercy of it, as a multitude can testify! And Jonah, after tragic and sorrowing experience, after distress and providence which had brought him into deeper intimacy with his Maker's will, heard the call "the second time." "Arise, go unto Nineveh, and preach!" "So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord." And what happened? He found

that this weary, heart-sickened, sinful people had a secret aching bias towards God! They listened to his message, and they heeded it, they absorbed it, they obeyed it. They "turned from their evil ways," they set their sin-marred, sorrow-worn faces toward heaven, and cried mightily unto God. While this man had been idly journeying to Tarshish, this people had been secretly wearying for God. And is not the coincidence modern? With all my soul I believe that the secret heart of the people is awearying for our Lord and Christ.



\*Reprinted from J. H. Jowett, *The Transfigured Church* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), pp. 119-27. Used by permission of the publisher.

\*\*English Revised Version.

## STAFF MINISTER MISERIES

(Continued from page 41)

more complex when the pastor resented the fact that I was able to get along with these people. If I had known the relationship between the pastor and his people beforehand, I could have avoided many of the problems that centered around this pastor-people relationship.

Also, if the pastor-people relationship has been bad, the pastor can restrict the staff member's work. The pastor is afraid that people are going to "attack" him for something the associate did. It is hard to work in a situation where you have to watch every step you take. An associate needs a little freedom to do his job properly, and he may not have the freedom if there is a bad pastor-people relationship.

*How are the finances of the church?* A youth program takes some money, especially if it is a summer program. An associate cannot go into a church and build a youth program when there are no funds. If he is only there for the summer, he has no time to raise money, and he is put in a very tough situation. He then goes to the board, not knowing the situation, and presents his program for the summer. The board approves it and agrees to pick up the "tab." The program is put into action and halfway

through, he learns there is no money. In one church where I served as youth minister the board agreed to pick up the tab on a certain activity. Three days before our departure, they informed me that there was no money, and I would have to cancel. It was too late and some of us were left in a very embarrassing position that could have been avoided if things had been thoroughly checked out prior to this. I realize when an associate is applying for a position he cannot ask to see the books, but he can inquire as to the amount of money budgeted for his ministry.

I understand that these three areas will not eliminate every problem a staff minister encounters. But I have learned from three different churches that these problems do exist and can destroy a ministry if not dealt with properly. The only way one can deal with a problem properly is to be aware of it, and the sooner the better. I believe it can benefit an associate's ministry if he will be up-to-date on these areas before he plunges into a new assignment.

#### LET THE READERS RESPOND:

If you have "questions" or "advice" to the USM (Unidentified Staff Minister) please pen them presently and send them to "Staff Minister Miseries," *The Preacher's Magazine*, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. If we get a good dialog started we will try to publish the responses.



## ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

(Continued from page 43)

Huckabee, C. W. Ruth, E. F. Walker, Thomas Cook, S. S. White, H. Orton Wiley, Richard S. Taylor, W. T. Purkiser, and many others—my allowed space not permitting me to quote them here. All these writers spoke (or still speak) to this issue specifically,

and all have clearly sided with Clarke. Many of them have used the specific analogy employed by Clarke: that even as the new birth is only instantaneous, and not gradual, so is entire sanctification.

I myself believe this to be the teaching of Scripture. For this reason, I speak of growth in grace toward entire sanctification, and of growth within holiness after-

wards, but not of gradual sanctification.

About entire sanctification, then, I would say, "Instantaneous, yes; gradual, no."



1. See Olive Winchester and Ross Price, *Crisis Experiences in the Greek New Testament* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1953).

2. H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology* (Kansas City: Kings Highway Press, 1941), II:446.

3. John Wesley, *Works* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, n.d.), VIII, 279.

4. Adam Clarke, *Entire Sanctification* (Louisville: Pentecostal Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 38.

EVANGELISM IN THE EIGHTIES—

# PRAYING FOR A GREAT REVIVAL

by Evangelist Hugh Gorman

"A revival quickens dead men, touches men's imaginations and sets loose their hearts. . . . There is a Divine Mystery about revivals. God's Sovereignty is in them. Just when His time comes, 'a nation shall be born in a day,' and it gives us a heart of hope to think of that. It is in His hand. . . . I may not live to see it. But the day will come when there will be a great revival over the whole earth."<sup>1</sup> So prophesied Dr. Alexander Whyte, Principal of New College, Edinburgh.

The world-famous Dr. Whyte, a mighty man of God, experienced the joy of full salvation in the revival which swept through Ulster and Scotland in 1859. During this revival, Dr. Whyte learned the intense power of prevailing prayer.

Before we can experience a revival, we need to prepare by prayer. During the Welsh revival in 1904, a man visited the meetings in Ferndale. He stood and said, "Friends, I have journeyed into Wales with the hope that I may glean the secret of the Welsh revival." In an instant, Evan Roberts replied, "My brother, there is no secret. 'Ask and ye shall receive.'"<sup>2</sup> That's how revival comes—when people pray.

We must have praying preachers! Duncan Campbell tells of suggesting to a minister, who had gone a long time without sleep in

the midst of revival, that he should retire and rest. "How can I sleep," the man replied, "when so many in my parish are in danger of being lost eternally?"<sup>3</sup> With a man of vision and prayer such as this, it shouldn't surprise us to learn that revival reached many of the people in that parish. If there are praying preachers in the pulpit, we will have praying people in our pews.


What a blessing it is to have praying people. One minister explained to another why there was such freedom of the Spirit in his worship services, "We are fortunate in our congregation to have a praying people who produce a spiritual atmosphere."<sup>4</sup>

If we are to experience the refreshing presence of the Lord in our churches, then it is essential that we pray. We must pray either to be revived, or to stay revived. If our church is to grow and have exciting evangelism in the eighties, we must be like the Psalmist of old and pray, "Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved" (Ps. 80: 18-19). Remember God said, "If my people which are called by my name shall . . . then will I . . ." (2 Chron. 7:14).

God promises that when His people turn to Him, He will an-

swer. Revival isn't a gamble—it is a fulfillment of the promise of God. When we pray for revival, we are praying in the will of God. Let us not be afraid to come boldly to the throne of grace and plead the promises of God. We must believe, not only that God can, but will send revival.

During the days of the Evangelical Awakening, Johnny Oxtoby was heard to pray, "Lord, You mustn't make a fool of me. I told them at Bridlington that You were going to revive Your work, and You must do so or I shall never be able to show my face among them again."<sup>5</sup> God answered his prayer, for He delights to have His promises "tested and proved."

When God's people pray in the Spirit and plead the promises of God, revival will come, and revival will generate more prayer than human effort ever could. It happened in the Hebridean revival, where the newspaper reported there were more people attending the prayer meeting in a certain community than attended the public worship service on the Sunday before the revival.<sup>6</sup> 

1. A. S. Wood, *And with Fire* (Christian Literature Crusade, 1958), p. 146.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

3. Duncan Campbell, *God's Answer* (Christian Literature Crusade, 1967), p. 53.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

5. A. S. Wood, *And with Fire*, p. 14.

6. Duncan Campbell, *God's Answer*, p. 50.

Preparing to Preach from 1 Thessalonians 2

# **A DELIBERATELY REDEMPITIVE LIFE-STYLE**

by Morris A. Weigelt, *Professor of New Testament, Nazarene Theological Seminary*

**Text:** 1 Thess. 2:1-12

## **I. Basic Background Material**

The Thessalonian correspondence provides a fascinating glimpse into the functioning of the Early Church. Among the earliest of the Letters of the New Testament (probably at least a decade earlier than the Gospels) we are privileged to view the problems and thinking and doctrines of the Church.

Emphasis upon the nature of salvation and the role of the Second Coming provide interesting windows into the life of the Christians prior to the writing of the rest of the New Testament. The application of the gospel to the everyday needs was being hammered out on the mission field with only a minimum of precedent for that particular culture.

The year was A.D. 50 and Paul was writing from Corinth to the church at Thessalonica which he had visited only shortly before. Paul himself had been a Christian for only 15 years or so and the resurrection and ascension of the Lord were less than 20 years in the past. Paul's own self-concept is presented in an interesting fashion in the midst of a rather pressure-packed setting (cf. 1 Thess. 2:4-9).

The problem of living as a follower of Christ in a pagan society saturated with immorality and indifference calls for Christian holiness and total commitment in light of the second coming of Christ. The decisive call to total obedience to Christ is powerfully made.

## **II. Immediate Context**

The two short Letters to the Thessalonians form the immediate context of the passages chosen for consideration. The passages are connected by the common theme of celebration of the blessings available in Christ in the middle of the pagan environment.

The more specific context involves the first three chapters of the First Letter. In the first chapter Paul opens the Letter with a powerful description of the conversion of the Thessalonians. The transforming work of the gospel found the Thessalonians in their paganism and immorality and sin and created a marvelous example to all of Macedonia and Achaia. To assure yourself of the validity and authenticity of their conversion, try making a list of the evidences of their conversion on the basis of c. 1.

The beautiful combination of vv. 9 and 10 is outstanding. They had turned from blind obedience to their pagan idols *to serve* the true and living God and *to wait* for His Son from heaven. The ideal balance between serving and anticipating the Second Coming has been the tension for the Church since the days of Jesus.

Chapter 2 then discusses the contrast between the opposition Paul and the Thessalonians had encountered and the deliberately redemptive life-style of the apostle. Paul's aggressive and strong personality has frequently been criticized from a variety of angles. But Paul saw himself as a tender and caring apostle who exhorted and encouraged the new converts for Kingdom purposes.

The last section of the second chapter and the third chapter disclose the heart of the apostle to his beloved people. The uprising at Thessalonica (see Acts 17) had forced Paul to leave town secretly—an embarrassment to the great apostle. He had been unable to return in order to insure the safety of Jason who had posted bond to protect Paul. Instead, Timothy had come and had returned with a glowing report of their steadfast endurance in the middle of continuing distress and affliction. How thankful Paul was that the gospel was still working and his prayers for them were in process of being answered. Chapter 3 closes with a prayer that God

will “straighten out” his path to them and, meanwhile, keep them growing in love and established in holiness till Jesus returns.

### III. Flow of Thought

#### A. The Nature of the Opposition

Chapter 2 bristles with response to the accusations which were being leveled at the apostle. Let's go through the chapter first in search of the thinly veiled accusations to which Paul is responding.

In v. 1 Paul declares that his visit was not “in vain.” The word in Greek refers to being empty or void or without effect. The verb “was” is in the perfect tense, which implies that the visit was not useless either in the first place, nor with reference to continuing effects.

In v. 2 Paul reminds them that he arrived in Thessalonica fresh from the humiliation and mistreatment of imprisonment at Philippi. Rather than acting like a defeated ex-convict he had been bold in their midst despite opposition.

The accusation of v. 3 is that Paul shared the gospel with a hidden agenda. Despite the surface reflections, some had evidently accused Paul of error (an attempt to deliberately deceive), of uncleanness (the word implies impurity of the sort often practiced in pagan religions—this may have arisen from the fact that a number of the leading women of the city [Acts 17:4] had chosen to follow Paul), and of deceit (the word implies the use of bait to trap and ensnare in order to contaminate).

The accusation of v. 4 is that Paul simply spoke to please men—he sought the applause of the crowd and the ego-strength which comes from acceptance by the galleries. In v. 5 Paul denies ever resorting to flattering speech as a disguise to hide greed and avarice. He is so involved in the denial that he calls God as his witness that he is not now indulging again in flattering speech.

In v. 6 Paul denies ever seeking honor and praise (the primary connotation of the word *glory* here) from men either in Thessalonica or elsewhere. He notes in v. 7 that he might have resorted to the innate authority of the apostleship to enforce praise and honor but chose not to do so.

In v. 9 Paul brings in the evidence of his hard work (he calls it “labor and hardship”—the first term highlights the fatigue resultant from work and the second highlights the distress, travail, and toil of work) to respond to the accusers. Paul labored hard in order to reduce the burden on those to whom he was proclaiming the gospel.

Verse 10 is another positive statement responding to the accusations behind v. 3. Paul's life-style does not contradict the gospel which he is presenting.

Verse 13 reflects an accusation that Paul was merely propagating the ideas of men. Paul responds by saying that the words of men became the word of God through their acceptance and transformation.

The final paragraphs of the letter carefully explore the connection between the suffering they are ex-

periencing and suffering which the Lord himself faced in Judea. The hostility of those who refuse to obey God is directed toward hindering the flow of the gospel. These opponents “always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost” (v. 16). The hostility and alienation and deterioration and destruction and degeneration created by these opponents of God will be a regular part of this world, but God will vindicate himself at the Second Coming when they will be destroyed by the “breath of His mouth . . . and by the appearance of His coming” (2 Thess. 2:8). The surprising note of 2 Thess. 1:6 is also applicable: “For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you.”

This summary draws the picture of the hostile opposition to the gospel cleverly engineered by Satan (2:18). It would be easy to be discouraged and defeated by such opposition, but Paul does not read the surface opposition. He moves from a secure theological perspective. He sees the opposition for what it really is in light of the final and total victory of God already insured by the Cross and the Resurrection. He moves through the oppressive situation in stalwart fashion—he lives a deliberately redemptive life-style of the type modeled by the Lord at His first coming.

#### B. The Response to Opposition

A second trip through the chapter is useful to see more clearly the way in which Paul handles the situation. In the process Paul's own self-image is revealed. This window into the very heart of the apostle demonstrates the nature of the Christian life-style and ministry most beautifully.

Under the adverse circumstances reflected in the chapter it would be easy to withdraw and search for a more favorable situation in which to exercise one's own spiritual gift. But the demands of the Kingdom and the model of the Master call for a different response.

In v. 2 Paul credits God as the source of his boldness. The Greek verb expresses a process by which confidence, boldness, assurance, and freedom to speak are provided for the apostle. The verb is in the passive voice and Paul is thus the recipient of the emboldening power provided by the true and living God. The word spoken is designated as “the gospel of God” (note the repetition of that phrase in vv. 8 and 9). With a powerful message and an empowering God Paul does not determine his response simply by the energy of the opposition.

In v. 4 Paul takes account of the fact that God has examined (the word means to scrutinize and test in order to identify the genuine) his heart and has approved (a perfect tense of the same verb in the passive voice) him to be “entrusted” (the verbal idea is faith and trust in the person designated) “with the gospel.” Paul understands that this is no ordinary assignment. The person to be pleased is God and not fickle man. The assurance of divine approval enables him to walk into the fiery furnace of opposition without undue fear.

In v. 7 Paul contrasts his own approach to the normal machinations of devious men who flatter

and deceive and seek only to please men. His approach was characterized by gentleness. (A variant reading here speaks of “babes”—the difference is only a single letter in Greek. The idea is the innocence and total absence of intent to deceive.) He saw himself as a nurse who nourishes and cares for her beloved charges.

In v. 8 Paul declares that his concern for them is so deep and genuine that he was prepared to share with them not only the gospel of God, but his very life as well. The basis for this kind of love lies in a secure identity in Christ, a certainty of the approval of God, a burden to share the gospel of God, and a love for the people who need that gospel.

In v. 9 he again asserts his concern for the proclamation of the gospel of God. The way in which he had supported himself by mass-producing tents at night proved that his concern for them was sincere.

The Thessalonians were far from Palestine and had not been exposed to any models of the Christian life. Paul became their model and lived a life deliberately exemplary. He notes that both they and God were witnesses of the quality of life-style. The three adverbs used are: *holy*—with emphasis upon devout consecration to God; *righteously*—with emphasis upon uprightness and justice and correctness; and *blamelessly*—with emphasis upon freedom from contamination and pollution.

In v. 11 Paul turns to the metaphor of father and children. Again he uses three verbs to illustrate that relationship. The first is *exhorting* with the connotation of admonition for purposes of strengthening. The second is *encouraging* with the connotation of consoling, persuading, stimulating, and giving incentive. The third is *urging* with the connotation of testifying on the basis of experience for purposes of guidance.

The purpose of the whole process is given in v. 12—to guide his children into a life “worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” The obsession to share the gospel for Kingdom purposes provides a powerful motivation to the Christian.

#### IV. Theological Affirmation

Paul's life-style grows out of his basic understanding of the work of God in Christ. Paul's own stance under the scrutiny of God gives him confidence and assurance to face the most intense of opposition. The priority of the gospel of God demands that he evangelize and disciple within the possible range of his influence.

He lives for the glory of God who examines the heart and not the surface evidences of a person's life-style. He operates as a nurse caring for children or as a father using the discipline of love to shape and mold the lives of his offspring. He accommodates his life-style and models the highest and best in things spiritual.

The highest reward for Paul is the change in the lives of his hearers. Note especially vv. 12 and 19-20. His greatest glory and joy is found in the transformed and obedient lives of the Thessalonians.

#### V. Proclamation

A number of sermons could easily grow out of this passage. One might emphasize the Christian response to opposition. Another might focus on living for the glory of God and Him alone. A third might center on the self-image of the Christian using Paul's metaphors of nurse and father in contrast to the usual picture of the aggressive apostle. Yet another might carefully delineate the distinction between men-service and God-service. Yet another sermon might present the concept of modeling the gospel of God in daily living on the basis of the three adverbs in v. 10. A sermon on discipling could use the three verbs of v. 11 to delineate the relationship of the discipler and the disciple.

In order to illustrate the vital process of moving from exegesis to proclamation, a more detailed example follows:

The title might reflect the idea of a deliberately and strategically redemptive life-style. The introduction could begin with the intensity of the opposition Paul and the Thessalonians faced with allusions to the first section under flow of thought above. Or the introduction could begin with attention to the haphazard fashion by which most people develop their individual Christian life-styles. Abundant illustrations are easily available.

The first point is a life pleasing to God. Emphasis upon vv. 2, 4, 10, and 12 would then highlight the security of the life hidden in Christ and open first of all to God. The highest priorities are Godward and solve many of the individual decisions of life. Many temptations are automatically resolved in light of this priority.

The second point is life of gentle strength. The metaphors of the nurse caring for her children (v. 7) and the father nurturing and admonishing his children (v. 11) would be the primary basis of this segment of the message. Illustrations translated from common experience to spiritual discipling are easily available.

The third point is a life of proclamation of the gospel of God (vv. 2, 8, and 9). The frequent references to the gospel of God in this chapter will provide the basic direction for this point. The priority of sharing the message gives strength and determination to all of life. Such a life will not happen by chance, but only by design.

The fourth point is a life of sharing oneself (v. 8). The life of basic priorities enables the Christian to invest himself in the lives of others—to be vulnerable in order to share the gospel. There is no inexpensive life-style for the committed Christian.

The conclusion should probably center on the element of deliberate design in becoming redemptive on purpose. On the authority of 1 Thessalonians 2 bring your hearers to the place where they will have to decide for or against total commitment to a redemptive life-style.

Add your own illustrations and tailor the message to the needs of your specific audience.



\*All biblical quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.

*Second in a series on the meaning of contemporary theologies.*

# LIBERATION THEOLOGY: WHAT IS IT?

by Albert Truesdale

*Professor, Philosophy of Religion, Nazarene Theological Seminary*

**L**iberation theology is a way of doing Christian theology that develops from a distinct conviction about the liberating forces within the Christian gospel. It attempts to address the gospel's liberation themes, not only to individual guilt and sin, but to all dimensions of life, including social structures and institutions that depend on massive exploitation of others for their existence. Liberation theology is done within the particular cultural, socio-economic, or political situation of which the theologian is a part, for it is only here, where the gospel interacts with the ingredients of life, that its meaning as liberation can be grasped and employed.<sup>1</sup>

Robert McAfee Brown, professor of religion at Stanford University, defines liberation theology as an "attempt to look at the world in terms of involvement with the underprivileged and oppressed, and to find within the Christian gospel both the analytic tools and the emerging power to work for radical change in the world."<sup>2</sup> To go farther in defining this school of thought, James Cone says that Christian theology is a theology of liberation. "It is a rational study of the being of God in the world in light of the existential situation of an oppressed community, relating the forces of liberation to the essence of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup> The task of theology, according to Cone, is "to explicate the meaning of God's liberating activity so that those who labor under enslaving powers will see that the forces of liberation are the activity of God himself."<sup>4</sup>

At least as a phrase, liberation theology has been

introduced to a wide audience through the popular press. Frequently its more sensational and problematic aspects have been given undue attention. As a result the picture given of liberation theology has often been distorted. It has sometimes been presented (1) as this season's theological fad; (2) as inextricably tied to Marxism; or (3) as a theological pretext for political revolution. Since these simplistic labels misrepresent the center of liberation theology, it is important that we gain a more balanced understanding of it.

To a large extent, liberation theology has become identified with Latin America and with a group of theologians there who classify themselves as liberation theologians. Among them are Hugo Assman,<sup>5</sup> Juan Luis Segundo,<sup>6</sup> Jose Bonnino-Miguez,<sup>7</sup> Enrique Dussel,<sup>8</sup> and Gustavo Gutierrez.<sup>9</sup> But liberation theology cannot be limited to the Latin American situation. Serious efforts by theologians to develop the liberative implications of the gospel are being made from all of the following perspectives: native American, Chicano, Black, Feminist, and Filipino liberation theology; African, Appalachian, and Asian liberation theology.

Even though some will probably treat liberation theology as such, to think of it as a theological fad is an error. For liberation theologians such as James Cone or Gustavo Gutierrez, liberation theology is not simply a seasonal academic exercise; it is their mode of existence as Christians. For them the theological enterprise is not at all a detached,

discursive, and rational exercise that one engages in apart from the political, socioeconomic setting of life. Its principal orientation is not toward books, ideas, concepts, and modes of argument, as crucial as all of these are for Christian theology, but toward human struggle, anguish, pain, and exploitation. According to Gutierrez, liberation theology "offers not so much a new theme for reflection as a *new way to do theology*. Theology as a critical reflection on historical *praxis* is a liberating theology."<sup>10</sup> It is, says Juan Luis Segundo, "an irreversible thrust in the Christian process of creating a new maturity in our faith."<sup>11</sup>

In a true sense, liberation theology is practical theology. Its key word is *praxis*. It emerges not primarily from theory, but from the church's encounter with God's redemptive activity in the present historical situation to which it ministers. Theological thought, liberation theologians maintain, must result from the interaction of deed and thought. The saving deeds of God in the Bible, particularly in the history of Jesus of Nazareth, is the principal model for understanding theology in this way. Liberation theologians want to interpret the Word of God as it is addressed to us here and now. Each new reality which confronts man in history must be understood and interpreted after fresh encounters with the Word. The past and the present must be related in dealing with the Word of God.<sup>12</sup>

As practical theology, liberation theology is also pastoral theology. It "refers to the poor and lowly shepherd who must confront the Pharaoh in order to free his people, without even knowing exactly what to say or how to say it. . . . [It] is a way of pondering the journey of God's people as they seek liberation in the desert."<sup>13</sup>

Liberation theologians believe that the rigid distinction often made between the spiritual and socioeconomic needs of people is artificial. Sin and the alienation it produces, they insist, is not only displayed in the individual, but it also builds up societal orders that generate alienation. These too must be brought under the judgment and promise of the gospel if its meaning is to be realized among people.

In pursuit of its purposes, and because of the extent to which it believes the gospel reaches, liberation theology uses economic, sociological, psychological, and political analysis to ascertain how certain economic and political systems, for example, perpetuate alienation and oppression by distorting the inner and outer being of their victims. The liberation theologian "feels compelled at every step to combine the disciplines that open up the past with the disciplines that help explain the present."<sup>14</sup>

Liberation theologians often speak about the liberation of theology and of the church. By this they mean that both must be freed from their paralyzing identification with, and legitimation of, corporate patterns of life that deny human wholeness to the defenseless. Theology and the church, liberation theologians urge, must be transformed and set free by the gospel. In too many instances, says

Frederick Herzog, "theology and the church are still doing the national henchman's job of legitimizing injustice, however subtly."<sup>15</sup> The church, Rosemary Reuther adds, must be fundamentally transformed so that it ceases to exist as a hierarchical structure set apart from the people and wedded to the old order. Instead, it must become that "people of God" whose reason for existence is to be the servant and midwife of the process of liberation. The church exists not for itself, but to serve the liberating power of the gospel.<sup>16</sup>

**Both Wesley and Bresee insisted that the gospel of Jesus Christ cannot be spoken in its fullness if it is separated from the social needs of people. It refers to the poor and lowly shepherd who must confront the Pharaoh in order to free his people, without even knowing exactly what to say or how to say it.**

We must remember that the Church has only one Bridegroom—Christ. She is wedded to no system. In a significant declaration, 16 bishops of the Third World said, "The church must not place itself in the way of political, economic or social systems."<sup>17</sup> She must be willing to dissociate herself from all systems of privilege. "Furthermore, where we have clung to our privileges and riches, and have not shared what we have with others, let us at least be able to recognize the hand of God correcting us as a father might a son."<sup>18</sup>

Some forms of liberation theology, especially in Latin America, make use of selected aspects of Marxist economic and political theory to implement the *praxis* they think the gospel demands. "In other words," says Enrique Dussel, "they feel they can be Marxists in economics and Christians in their faith."<sup>19</sup> Dussel says this is impossible, because, as he says, "a whole anthropology, ontology, and theology under [Marx's] economics, is incompatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ."<sup>20</sup> Dussel's opinion is shared by North American theologian Carl E. Braaten. Other liberation theologians seek to implement a Christian and humanistic version of socialism in Latin America.

### **What Can Wesleyans Make of All This?**

While liberation theology does not present us a model to ape, it does turn us back to concerns that were important to our holiness forebears. We who stand in the theological and ecclesiastical lineage of John Wesley and Phineas Bresee should be able to appreciate liberation theology's efforts to address the gospel to the whole person. As is well



known, both these men were distinguished in large measure because they identified themselves and their ministry with the socially forgotten people of their day. They chose the dispossessed for their flocks, Wesley in England and Bresee in Los Angeles. Although their methods differed considerably from those used by some liberation theologians, they nevertheless insisted that the gospel of Jesus Christ cannot be spoken in its fullness if it is separated from the pressing social needs of people. Consequently, injustices and oppressions that many others were quite willing to overlook, Wesley and Bresee attacked with a vision of the whole gospel for the whole person.

Neither of them defined the gospel in narrow individualistic terms. Any religion that is not social religion is false religion, Wesley said. Both of them sought to exhibit the liberating power of the gospel in a way that also affected the difficult social and economic situations of the people to whom they ministered. They stoutly rejected every liaison between the gospel on the one hand, and class or social privilege on the other.

One of John Wesley's monumental sermons, "The Use of Money," was addressed to the Methodists, who through thrift and industry had become a part of the prosperous, rising English middle class, but who were also becoming more and more self-indulgent. Wesley warned the Methodists against the serious threat to the gospel's freedom and power when the church becomes more enchanted with ease and social privilege than with being the suffering servant in the world, bearing the word of hope to the lowly and forgotten.

Its message is prophetic; it calls all of us to identify and shake off our overt, or subtle, paralyzing alliances with racial and cultural, political and economic privilege. It challenges us to follow the gospel, to explore the dimensions of its liberating word, to embrace it fully, even though what it calls us to become is fools for Christ's sake. Surely we know "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and . . . the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (2 Cor. 1:27). Our understanding of Christian holiness must be large enough to demonstrate that the gospel of Jesus Christ is indeed the liberating power and wisdom of God.



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3. James Cone, *Liberation: A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1970), p. 15.

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5. Hugo Assman, *A Theology for a Nomad Church*, Paul Burns, trans. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976).

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7. Jose Bonnino-Miguez, *Out of the Hurt and Hope* (Friends Press, 1970).

8. Enrique Dussel, *History and the Theology of Liberation*, John Drury, trans. (Orbis Books, 1976); *Ethics and the Theology of Liberation*, John Drury, trans. (Orbis Books, 1978).

9. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, Inda. and Eagleton, trans. (Orbis Books, 1973).

10. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

11. Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, p. 3.

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15. Frederick Herzog, "Birth Pangs: Liberation Theology in North America," *Christian Century*, 12/15/76, pp. 1120-25.

16. Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Liberation Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1972), p. 183.

17. "Gospel and Revolution: 16 Bishops of the Third World," *New Theology* No 6: *On Revolution, Violence and Nonviolence, Peace and Power*, Marty and Peerman, eds. (London: The Macmillan Company, 1970), pp. 245 ff.

18. *Ibid.*

19. Dussel, p. 133.

20. *Ibid.*



"You're a marriage counselor this time."

# SERMON CRAFT

by C. Neil Strait

## A Word About Relationships

Relationships are so important. Life is made, or broken, at the point of relationships. Paul, in Philippians, gives us some insight into relationships.

There is, first, *the beauty of relationships with Christ*, 2:1-2 (NIV).<sup>\*</sup> Here Paul lists the beauty as unfolding in encouragement, love, fellowship, tenderness, and compassion. Pretty good credentials for relationship.

There is, second, *the bridge to relationships with others*, in 2:3, where Paul admonishes: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."

There is, third, *the becoming of relationship with myself*, 2:4. Paul's advice to look to the interests of others is clue to understanding ourselves. It is true that inner rest comes from being interested in others. It is a great lesson.

## A Word About Attitude

In Philippians 2:5-11, among other deep truths that Paul shares, I gather some thoughts that relate to attitude.

There is, first, *the ABCs of Attitude*. Attitude—what kind? "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (2:5). Being—what kind? Verse 6 talks about Christ's attitude/nature "... being in very nature God." Courageous was the attitude of Christ—"... he humbled himself and became obedient to death" (2:8).

There is, second, *the Arena of Attitude*. This is seen in the human dimension of the Incarnation. He who was the Son of God became servant. And it is in the servant's role that we see Christ in one of His best moments, when around the table He took a towel and began to wash feet.

There is, third, *the Altitude of Attitude*. From "nothing" (v. 7) to "exaltation" (v. 9). From "appearance as a man" (v. 8) to a "name that is above every name" (v. 9). From "death" (v. 8) to Lordship (v. 11). It is a reminder that spiritual destiny is very much an attitude—a mind-set—with proper follow-through of obedience and service.

## A Word About Christian Obedience

In Philippians 2:12-18, Paul has some good advice for Christian discipleship.

One, *the conditions for discipleship*, v. 12, "always obey(ed)."

Two, *the consistency of discipleship*, v. 12, "continue."

Three, *the construction of the disciple*, v. 13, "It is God who works in you..."

Four, *the caution for the disciple*, v. 14, "Do everything without complaining or arguing..."

Five, *the challenge for discipleship*, v. 15, "shine like stars!"

Not a bad prescription for discipleship!

## A Word About Friendship

Friendships are important—for individuals and for the church. Paul talks about friendships in Phil. 2:19-24.

One, there is *the circle of friendship*. Verse 19 has reference to three—Paul, Timothy, and the Philippian church. The bonds of love are deep and definite.

Two, *there is the cost of friendship*. Verse 20 talks about "genuine interest."

Three, *there is the crisis of friendship*. Verse 21 points out that the crisis arises when "everyone looks out for his own interests."

Four, *there is the confirmation of friendship*. Verse 22 says, "Timothy has proved himself." But the important thing is that Timothy proved himself through faithfulness, obedience, and genuine interest.

## A Word About Serving

Paul covers the waterfront in Philippians 2. In vv. 25-30, he has something to say about service.

One, *serving through caring*. Verse 25 has reference to Epaphroditus, who cared for Paul. Throughout the context, Paul admonishes his kind of caring.

Two, *serving through courteousness*. Verse 29 admonishes the Philippian church to "welcome him [Epaphroditus] in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him..." Kindness and courteousness should characterize the Christian community.

Three, *serving that is costly*. Verse 30 talks about Epaphroditus risking his life in the arena of service. It is a cost seldom calculated in the cause of service.

## A Word About Study

Billy Graham has said: "One of my great regrets is that I have not studied enough. I wish I had studied more and preached less. People have pressured me into speaking to groups when I should have been studying and preparing. Donald Barnhouse said that if he knew the Lord was coming in three years, he would spend two of them studying and one preaching. I'm trying to make it up."

(Quote, Dec. 4, 1977, p. 543)

Every preacher needs to examine, on occasion, not only his preaching, but more especially his studying. If something is wrong with preaching, it can be traced, probably, to study—or the lack of study.

## Always Have a Word of Sympathy

Charles L. Allen, the great Methodist pastor, reflects on what one of his college professors used to say, and it is good advice for every pastor. It was: "Boys, in every sermon you preach have a word of sympathy. There will be somebody who hears you who needs it."

<sup>\*</sup>All scripture quotations in this item are from *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, copyright © 1978 by the New York International Bible Society. Used by permission.

# SERMON OUTLINES



## HOW TO HANDLE YOUR DARK MOODS

**Scripture:** 1 Pet. 1:3-9

**Introduction:** Our fathers, in some areas, preached "No blue Mondays." They sang (believe it or not) about the time their "indigo factory burned down." In efforts to express the victory of the Spirit-filled, they were extreme. There are times of heaviness—all kinds of trials and temptations. But we *can handle* our dark moods. Peter tells how under a series of remembrances.

### I. Remember That Their Endurance Is Limited

A. They were with Jesus himself. Illus.: The temptation (Luke 4:13), "The devil . . . ended . . . temptation . . . for a season."

B. So with us—

1. Psalmist (30:5): "Anger . . . but a moment . . . weeping . . . for a night."

2. Phillips paraphrases "at present . . . temporarily harassed."\*

C. Though all of lifetime subject to bondage, yet—

1. Scripture says we are pilgrims (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11).

2. Sing: "Soon this life will all be over," or "Just a little while to stay."

### II. Remember the Whence and Why of Heaviness (vv. 6-7)

A. In this area limit *type* of mood.

1. Not bitterness of carnal rebellion (stated by Jeremiah, 5:23); described by Psalmist (68:6); warned about by Isaiah (30:1).

2. Not physically or psychologically based (resulting from

failure to develop cheerfulness, refusal to discipline emotions, or even lack of sleep and relaxation).

B. Speak rather of experience that has vital part.

1. They need to be (KJV); are necessary (Robertson); are not accidental (Phillips).

2. "No accident—it happens to prove your faith" (Phillips). You declare, "I'm really going through"; then God lets some nasty person, enticing temptation, circumstantial difficulty come along.

C. Surely some accident! No! It happens to prove your faith.

### III. Remember Christ's Expectation of Us (vv. 7-9)

A. He reminds that enduring brings His "Well done."

B. He expects us to make it through. The mother bird pushes young out of nest and expects it to fly; a father trusts son with responsibility and expects him to make good. So God lets trials come and expects us to come forth as victors.

#### Conclusion:

Peter says we have not seen Christ, but we have His love, faith, joy, and glory. We have received the end of faith, our soul's salvation. Christ expects us to be true to all of these and be ready when He comes.

—J. Melton Thomas

## HOW TO HANDLE NEED

**Scripture:** Philippians 4

**Text:** Verse 12

**Introduction:** Attention is called to the subject in the minister's wife's comment to her husband, "I was not so much interested in your subject. *What was your object?*" This subject is definitive. Not *poverty*—we know so little of

that. But *need*. We do know the economic crunch sometimes. How shall we handle it?

### I. Realize You Can Be Content Even in Need (v. 11)

A. Can be content, as Paul in 2 Cor. 11:23-28.

B. Contentment is a relative matter. Illus.: Need now, but content in anticipation of future reward.

C. Contentment is acquired—not given at an altar. "I have *learned* . . ."

### II. Remember That God Is Interested (v. 19)

A. Christ is to *strengthen* (v. 13)

B. God is to *supply* (v. 19)

C. We are to be loyal and claim the promise (Mai. 3:10-11)

1. "I will . . . open you the windows of heaven."

2. "I will . . . pour you out a blessing."

3. "I will rebuke the devourer."

4. "Bring ye all the tithes . . . prove me."

### III. Recycle Increasing Wealth for Good

A. Be content with such things as you have. Don't be on a feverish quest for gold.

B. If riches increase, set not your heart on them. The *negative* approach.

C. Positive—like all other gifts, utilize this gift for good.

#### Conclusion:

As we share with others—money, hospitality, witness—we are blessed. Giving blesses him that gives and him that receives. Illus.: Betty Emslie telling of the African woman who said "Thank you" for the first time *after* she had been taught to give to others.

—J. Melton Thomas

\*From the *New Testament in Modern English*, Revised Edition, © J. B. Phillips, 1958, 1960, 1972. By permission of the Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.

## TRIUMPH OVER TROUBLES

Text: James 1:3, 12

- I. Turn Your Thoughts Toward God
- II. Trust God's Power to Set You Free
- III. Tackle Defeat with Victory
- IV. Take Hold of Your Inheritance

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.

## OVERFLOW WITH LOVE

Philippians 1

- I. Love Overflows with JOY (vv. 1-6).
- II. Love Overflows with SHARING (v. 7).
- III. Love Overflows with PURITY (v. 10).
- IV. Love Overflows with PRAISE (v. 11).
- V. Love Overflows with PROCLAMATION (v. 18).
- VI. Love Overflows with HONORING CHRIST (vv. 19-24).
- VII. Love Overflows with FAITH (vv. 25-26).
- VIII. Love Overflows with LIFE (v. 28).
- IX. Love Overflows with UNITY (v. 30).

—Derl G. Keefer

## LIFTING FOR THE HEIGHTS

Text: Psalm 103:2-5

- I. Learn His Strength in Quietness
- II. Love Life in the Spirit
- III. Loosen Up to Happiness in Holiness

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.

## FINISHED WITH FEAR

Text: Hab. 1:12

- I. Finish Fear with . . .
- II. Faith
- III. Fortitude
- IV. Future

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.

## FOUR LIFE-STYLES

Scripture: Luke 10:28-37—The

Parable of the Good Samaritan

Introduction: In this story we find demonstrated four life-styles.

- I. What's Thine Is Mine if I Can Get It (*the Robbers*)
- II. What's Mine Is Mine and I'll Keep It (*the Priest and Levite*)
- III. What's Mine is Thine if I Can Make a Profit (*the Innkeeper*)
- IV. What's Mine Is Thine Since You Need It (*the Good Samaritan*)

## COURAGE IN CHRIST

2 Tim. 1:7: For God hath not given us the *spirit of fear*; but of *power*, and of *love*, and of a *sound mind*.

### I. COWARDICE (*"the spirit of fear"*)

- A. Satan's followers' lot
- B. Savior's own free from

### II. CONQUERING (*the spirit "of power"*)

- A. Sins of the past
- B. Sin nature of unsanctified
- C. Satan, the archenemy

### III. COMPASSIONATE (*the spirit "of love"*)

- A. Self-regard, value of one's person
- B. Society, cups of cold water in His name
- C. Savior, by keeping His commandments

### IV. CONTENTED (*the spirit "of a sound mind"*)

- A. Sane
  - B. Sensible
  - C. Sanctified
- Auxiliary Scriptures:  
Ephesians 6:13, 16-17;  
Psalm 18:2.

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.

# PREACHER'S EXCHANGE

**FOR SALE:** Antiquarian books—*The Works of John Wesley*, First American Standard Edition. Vols. 1-6, 1833. *Checks to Antinomianism*, by John Fletcher, 4 vols., 1819. *Watson's Sermons*, by Richard Watson, 2 vols., 1857. *The Journal of John Wesley*, edited by Nehemiah Curnock, vols. 1, 3, 4, 1909. *Wesley's Sermons*, 2 vols., 1829. All of the above books are in excellent condition. Phil Batten, 930 E. 348th St., Eastlake, OH 44094.

**FOR SALE:** 1. The genuine works of Flavius Josephus; translated by Wm. Whiston, A.M., containing three books of the Jewish War, Vol. 6, published by M. Sherman, 1838—antique. 2. *Cottage Lectures on The Pilgrim's Progress*—entered by act of Congress 1848 by the American Sunday School Union in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania—antique. 3. *Helps to a Life of Holiness and Usefulness or Revival Miscellanies*. Containing 11 sermons selected from the works of the Rev. James Caughey by Rev. Ralph W. Allen and Rev. Daniel Wise, published 1854—antique. 4. *A Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by William Smith, LL.D. Containing its antiquities, biography, geography, and natural history. 5. The New Testament from 26 translations—General Editor, Curtis Vaughan, Th.D. Copyright 1967 by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.—excellent condition. The first four are in good condition. I would like to have \$10.00 each. Rev. Albert L. Lepley, 1526-D Old Towne Manor, Cumberland, MD 21502.

**WANTED:** Set of older pulpit commentaries. Rev. Thomas L. Blaxton, 403 E. Spruce Drive, Yukon, OK 73099.

**WANTED:** Used books listed as required reading or exam books on pages 46-59 in the *Handbook on the Ministry*. To be used in Extension Bible Classes. Address inquiries or books to the Church of the Nazarene, P.O. Box 19426, Jerusalem, Israel 91000.

**WANTED:** *Whedon's Commentaries on the New Testament*. Also: Loose-leaf Bibles produced by the International Bible Co., and distributed by J. C. Winston Co., in the 1930s. Regardless of condition. Dr. S. Ellsworth Nothstine, Bethel United Methodist Church, 800 Bleckley St., Anderson, SC 29621.

**WANTED:** Old *Preacher's Magazines*—December 1972, 1975; September 1973. Herman E. Rouse, 610 W. 9th, Ada, OK 74820.

**WANTED:** *Open Heart—Open Home*, by Karen Mains; books by John D. Jess; *Living Wisely*, by J. Allen Blair; *For Preachers Only*, by Byron Deshler; *Problem Solving in the Christian Family*, David Seams Seamands; *A Coward's Guide to Witnessing*, by Ken Anderson; *I Will Build My Church*, by James Gun; and *Sharing God's Love*, by Rosalind Rinker and Harry Griffith. Write: Rev. J. Seberry, 18105 Shamrock Blvd., Big Rapids, MI 49307.

**WANTED:** The life story of the two Flemming boys, Rev. Bona and Rev. John. Rev. Asa Wickens, 214 S. Calloway St., Elk City, OK 73644.

# BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

(Continued from page 19)

in recent discussions. Fourth, the evaluation of the level of receptivity to the gospel in the various settings available is the tool to plan strategies of evangelism and mission.

The purposes and goals of the church growth movement are commendable. New attention has been drawn to the specific graphs and patterns of church growth for specific countries, denominations, and individual churches. New sociological tools are being pressed into service in order to examine the processes of church growth in search for more effective strategies. The goals to stimulate stewards of the gospel to plan more effectively and make clearer strategies is exciting.

Some conflict may appear between biblical authority and church growth at the point of "contextualization." This term is used both in church growth and in missiology to connote the process by which the gospel is adapted to a specific cultural setting. It denotes the attempt to search for the essential elements of the gospel which must be shared in the process of evangelization. It implies great care to differentiate between that which is essential gospel and that which is simply cultural accretion.

Dr. McGavran has examined some of the basic issues in a book entitled *The Clash Between Christianity and Cultures* (Canon Press, 1974). He examines the claim of Christianity to exclusiveness in the process of salvation and decries any dilution of the exclusivity. He examines the inadequate attempts to solve the clash. The final chapters of the book discuss the fact that the clash is not between Christianity and culture, but only with certain elements within that culture. The specific question then is: "Which elements of the old religious system (which shades off into a social system) properly accompany becoming a responsible member of Christ's Church and must be forbidden?" (p. 43). The relationship of contextualization and authority of Scripture is identified as the crucial component in the final chapters of the book.

## II. Harmonizing Biblical Authority and Church Growth Science

Now church growth invites us to search for sociological factors to streamline evangelistic methods. So church growth and contextualization raise some fascinating questions: At what point does the streamlining process come under the judgment of the Word? At what point does accommodation become compromise of the essential integrity of the gospel? What is the relationship of sociological analysis and the motivation for evangelism as a result of biblical understanding?

The influence of church growth is, by and large, valuable and significant. It must be granted that efficiency in evangelization is mandatory for any who take the stewardship of the gospel seriously. Insight from every possible avenue is welcome. Holiness churches need to face their own growth

patterns and attempt to determine the most effective way to fulfill their mission.

At the same time, the authority of the Word must never be diluted. The tone of the times is to turn to behavioral science above any other authority. There must be, in evangelical circles, a continued readiness to submit to the judgment of the Word as the normative and final authority. The Bible is the most incisive critic of the life and thinking of the church.

The essential message of the gospel must never be allowed to become a truncated gospel. The processes of contextualization must not be permitted to delimit or emasculate the gospel.

Reaffirmation of the work of the Holy Spirit both in the processes of inspiration and in the processes of interpretation needs to be made repeatedly. Wiley expresses that combination well:

The Spirit which inspired the Word dwells within them [those filled with the Spirit] and witnesses to its truth. In them the formal and material principles of the Reformation are conjoined. The Holy Spirit is the great conservator of orthodoxy (*Christian Theology*, I, 143).

A clearer distinction needs to be made between the *affirmations* of the Word and the specific *applications*. Failure to make this distinction creates further difficulty. The *affirmations* are clear and timeless; the *applications* are many and involve the specific adaptations to concrete situations. The writings of the apostle Paul illustrated adaptation at a very early stage of Christianity. He recognized the need to make specific redemptive adaptations in differing settings (contextualization). The Book of Acts demonstrates the way in which Christianity was being broken loose from the cocoon of Judaism.

The distinction between affirmations and applications demands greater attention to the whole hermeneutical issue. Specific exegesis must be done in light of the whole message of the whole Word. Specific exegesis demands that we strive ever more clearly to understand the cultural cradle in which God revealed himself in the Word.

The distinction also has a profound effect upon the preaching-proclamation process. It is inadequate and insufficient to simply proclaim the affirmations and illustrate them from biblical cultural adaptations. Responsible preaching demands that the affirmation be translated into contemporary applications. Only then will the authority of the Word be visible and valid.

As McGavran insists, it is not a clash of Christianity and culture, but a confrontation of the demands of the gospel with specific components of culture which are antagonistic to, and detrimental to, the life-style of obedience to God. Adaptation is not automatically compromise.

Church growth and contextualization must stand under the judgment of the Word in the same manner as we, as individual Christians, submit our lives to the searching scrutiny of the Word. When adaptation becomes compromise it must be willing to submit to the painful surgery of God. When strategy

becomes an end in itself, the goal of evangelism has been lost. When unchristian or subchristian manipulation occurs, it must come under the judgment of the Word and be corrected.

Galatians 3:28 reminds us, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (NASB).\*

The whole process is dynamic and demanding. There are no neat formulas which can be mechanically applied. There is a constant interaction of specific cultures and the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit in the process.

I pray that we may be able to respond to the demands of this day with genuine dependence upon the Holy Spirit with technical skill in using all possible tools, with solid motivation to evangelism and discipleship, and with a clear and unswerving commitment to the authority of the Word over all!

\*All biblical quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.

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## BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

(Continued from page 21)

Now regarding the homogeneous unit principle itself, the key question that we must ask is this: Are homogeneous units part of the culture that needs to be changed or part of the culture that can help effect the changes? There is no simple answer to this question for it may be different for every culture and society. In present-day U.S. culture, attitudes and practices relating to homogeneous units of race and class need to be changed, but that does not mean that such H.U.s with their vital functions should necessarily disappear. They need to become the vehicles for the manifestation of the Christian graces reinforcing the identity and value of the people involved.

Most Christians will agree that the H.U. concept is a legitimate and valuable tool in cross-cultural and even intra-cultural evangelism. Some are not sure that there is a place for continuing homogeneous unit identity in the church, particularly for H.U.s of race and class. Dividing people up in the church by other homogeneous unit identities does not seem to bother such people, however. Divisions of people by age in Sunday school classes; by abilities, as in the choir; by sex, as in women's circles; by residence, as in local churches; by language, as in Spanish-speaking churches; by special interests, as in volunteer organizations, all are readily accepted.

The basic unity of the church is no more impaired by the existence of churches differing from each

other in their homogeneous unit composition or churches consisting primarily of one homogeneous unit than it would be impaired by the special necessity of meeting separately as individual congregations, provided that:

1. All churches meet the constraints of our basic classical theology,
2. All churches are open and actively seeking to win anyone,
3. All churches are guided especially by the three basic missiological principles of mission, indigeneity, and growth.

### Conclusion

**Mission** impelled Jewish Christians to evangelize responsive people who were available to them (other Jews) and convert them into the kind of believers that they themselves were (Jewish Christians). It took divine intervention to get Jewish Christians to attempt to evangelize non-Jews—as in the case of Peter and Cornelius and the call of Paul to be an apostle to the Gentiles.

The issue that was raised by the realities of Gentiles becoming believers was: In the light of the unity of the church, are they to become believers of the same kind as those who had communicated the gospel to them (Jewish Christians), or are there to be two kinds of Christians in one church—the differences between them resting upon the cultural differences in their backgrounds? The existential question was: Do Gentiles have to become Jews in order to be Christians?

The principle of **indigeneity** was established by the First Jerusalem Council when the decision was made that Gentiles didn't have to become Jews in order to be Christians. They could be Christians within their own cultural framework. By the same token, it is implied to us today that Jews also could remain Jews culturally as Christians without abandoning their Jewishness. The requirement of both Jews and Gentiles as they became converted was that they both come under the new requirements of the gospel with the corresponding cultural adjustments that these demands indicated, but without renouncing their cultural and social identity.

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# OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES



by Charles Isbell

## Mai. 3:13—4:3, Divine Justice

### “Vain” (3:14)

Hebrew *shāw’* means “for no profit,” or with no importance attached to it. Cf. Exod. 20:7, where taking Yahweh’s name “in vain” (*lāshāw’*) does not mean “cussing” but invoking a sacred name in useless or meaningless context.

### “In Mourning” (3:14)

Lit., “in black clothing,” i.e., appropriate for a mourning situation.

### 3:15

I translate: “So now we designate arrogant ones blessed [= happy]. Not only will we build up evildoers; they have tested God and have escaped.” This contains a sarcastic reference to what happens when God is tested in contradistinction to the divine promise of 3:10.

### “Feared” (3:16)

Hebrew *yr’* means to respect or revere, not merely to “fear” (see also 4:2).

### “Esteem” (3:16)

The root here is *hshb*, which basically means “to think.” Here it is extended to convey the idea of thinking *highly* of someone. The phrases “those who respect Yahweh (fear the Lord)” and “[those] who esteem His name” mean much the same thing; taken together, they convey a very

strong picture of deep reverence and highest esteem.

### “My Own Possession” (3:17)

Hebrew *segūllāh* means a special treasure or valued property. Note Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; all of which speak of the people Israel as God’s unique treasure or valued possession. This idea is also reflected in Titus 2:14.

### “Spare” (3:17)

A father would do more than merely spare his son’s life in exchange for faithful service. Hebrew *hml* comes from an old Semitic root, *hamālu*, which means “to carry,” or assume responsibility for the actions of another. In Hebrew, the root most often means, “have compassion.” Here it pictures the pride with which a father associates himself with a loyal son, showing him great favor and openly accepting responsibility for him.

### “Serves” (3:17)

The root *cbd* means both “serve” and “worship.” Its use here sets the stage for a word play in verse 18. As a father reacts to a son who serves him, God will react to a son who serves (= worships, obeys) Him.

### “Arrogant” (4:1)

Hebrew *zēd* really means an arrogant or haughty person both here and in 3:15. But in 3:13, NASB has used the context set by the double use of *zēd* to interpret

the words of the people as more *than strong speech* (as *h̄zq* would normally imply), but actual arrogance in conversation with God.

### “Sun of Righteousness” (4:2)

As Denton notes (IB: 6: 1142-3), this word picture “is derived from the symbolism of Egyptian religion . . . in which the winged disk of the sun is often represented a source of protection and blessing.”

### “From” (4:2)

I.e., “released from” a stall and allowed to cavort in freedom in wide-open spaces for the first time.

### “Tread Down” (4:3)

The root ‘*ss* is used as a verb only here. Its nominal form, ‘*as̄s̄*, means “sweet wine,” or freshly trodden grapes which produce the wine. In the picture used by the prophet, the wicked would be as grapes to be trodden under the feet of the righteous. The symbolism of a conquering warrior placing a foot symbolically upon the neck of a defeated foe is also a part of this idea (see Joshua 10:24).

### “Ashes” (4:3)

Better, “dust” (*‘ēpher*).

### “The Day Which I Am Preparing” (4:3)

Or, “the day when I act.”



# NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

## Matthew 19

### Tempt or Test? (19:3)

The verb *peirazo* has both meanings. In all three Synoptic Gospels it is used of Satan tempting Jesus (Matt. 4:1; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2). But it is also used in Gen. 22:1 (Septuagint) for God testing Abraham. He did not "tempt" Abraham to do wrong!

Our present passage (as also 16:1; 22:35) lies somewhere in between. The basic meaning of *peirazo* is "to make an attempt" or "to test someone." But Heinrich Seesemann goes on to say (in a footnote): "In most cases *peirazein* denotes hostile intent, but this element is not present in *dokimazein*" (TDNT, 6:23)—the other word for "test."

Concerning the use of *peirazo* in this and related passages, Arndt and Gingrich say: "in a bad sense, in order to bring out something to be used against the one who is being 'tried.' Jesus was so treated by his opponents" (p. 640). Most modern versions prefer to use "test" here (cf. NIV).

### Cleave (19:5)

The verb *kollao* comes from the noun *kolla*, which means "glue." So it means "to glue or cement together," and so "to unite, to join firmly" (Abbott-Smith, p. 252).

In this day of a horrible percentage of divorces we need to pray: "Lord, give us more glue in modern marriages, so that they will stick together!" And that glue is pure, unselfish love.

### Joined Together (19:6)

The Greek verb is *synzeugnymi* (A-S), or *syzeugnymi* (AG). It is compounded of *syn*, "together," and *zeugos*, "yoke." So it means "to yoke together." The verb oc-

curs only here and in Mark 10:9. In both passages it is used "metaphorically of union in wedlock" (A-S, p. 428).

Some of us are old enough to remember seeing oxen yoked together. They could not pull themselves apart, because their necks were fastened in the same yoke. That is what is needed in marriage.

### Writing (19:7)

The Greek word is *biblion*, the diminutive of *biblos*. The latter was a variant form of *byblos*, the name of the "papyrus" plant in Egypt from which ancient "paper" was made.

*Biblos* meant a "book" or "scroll." *Biblion* meant "a paper, letter, written document" (A-S, p. 81). It is used here for "a certificate of divorce" (NIV).

### Receive (19:11-12)

The verb *choreo* literally means "make room." It is used here metaphorically for "having or making room in mind or heart" (A-S, p. 486), and so "accept" (AG, p. 890). It is still true today that not everyone will "accept" (NIV) Jesus' statement.

### Eunuchs (19:12)

Our word "eunuch" is taken over directly from the Greek *eunouchos*, which literally means "one having a bed" (A-S, p. 188). And so it properly meant "a bed-keeper, bed-guard, superintendent of the bedchamber, chamberlain, in the palace of oriental monarchs who support numerous wives; the superintendent of the women's apartment or harem, an office held by eunuchs; hence . . . an emasculated man, a eunuch" (J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 260).

Jesus mentions (in v. 12) three types of "eunuchs." The first con-

sists of those who were "born that way" (NIV), the second of those who were "made that way by men" (NIV). "Made eunuchs" (KJV) is the verb *eunouchizo* (only this verse in NT), which means "castrate, emasculate" (AG, p. 323). That is what happened to the eunuchs who worked in ancient Oriental harems.

The third group is described as those who "made themselves eunuchs" (KJV, NASB). This is the literal Greek (*eunouchisan heautous*). But the serious question is: Should this be taken literally or figuratively?

Most of the lexicons agree that this third description should be taken figuratively. Schneider notes that in the OT all castration was forbidden. "There were no eunuchs in Israel itself" (TDNT, 2:766). He also writes: "For the Rabbis marriage was an unconditional duty" (p. 767). His conclusion is that Jesus "cannot have had in view literal castration. He would have had a horror of this like all true Jews. He is thinking rather of those who for the sake of the kingdom of God voluntarily renounce the sexual life and marriage" (p. 768). Hence the translation "have renounced marriage" (NIV).

### Regeneration (19:28)

The word is *palingenesia*. It is found elsewhere in the NT only in Titus 3:5, where we read of "the washing of regeneration." Abbott-Smith notes that the word means "new birth, renewal, restoration, regeneration" (p. 335). The last term fits well in Titus, but here it is "renewal" (NIV) that is most appropriate. Arndt and Gingrich say it is used "eschatologically of the renewing of the world in the time of the Messiah" (p. 606).





# TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

Every book reviewed in this column may not agree at all points with evangelical holiness positions. Yet each book contains sufficient useful material to warrant bringing it to our readers' attention.

## The Care and Feeding of Volunteers

By Douglas W. Johnson (Abingdon, 1978. 125 pp., paperback, \$4.95).

How to develop and maintain an effective network of volunteer workers is what this volume is all about.

Although the author has some excellent ideas on the recruitment of volunteers, he speaks most poignantly concerning the maintenance of such a staff.

His concepts on "keeping people out of vocational boxes," "why people say no," and "the pastor's role with volunteers," are most helpful.

The author strikes hard at the old bugaboo, of "the clergy's unwillingness to let go and let a layman do it."

Of particular interest is the author's concept of "the right of feedback." This, he aptly describes as "mutuality in ministry."

The entire volume "puts the ball" in the pastor's court in the area of planning, but with a significant twist toward "cooperative" planning as opposed to "participative."

Pastors will find this paperback worth their reading time.

—B. Edwin McDonald

## Unhappy Secrets of the Christian Life

By Philip Yancey and Tim Stafford (Zondervan Publishing Company, 1979. \$6.95.)

Years ago, as a struggling new Christian, someone introduced me to Hannah Smith's classic work, *The Christian's Secret to a Happy Life*. Few books have made such a profound effect on my life as that book.

I would have found this book

extremely helpful as a new Christian expecting everything to be "pie in the sky." "A dangerous rumor is making the rounds... that problems fade away when you become a Christian," state the authors. They face up to the human failings that prevent so many believers from fully experiencing their walk with God. Here you will find positive scriptural guidelines for dealing with temptation, guilt, selfishness, anger, doubt, unanswered prayer, and much more.

Space does not allow a chapter-by-chapter critique, but I especially appreciated the chapter on Prayer: What happens when God doesn't answer?

This book is another good resource to turn your hidden struggles into abundant living that others can see.

—Tom Wilson

## Confession and Forgiveness

By Andrew Murray (Zondervan, 1978. 162 pp., paperback, \$1.95).

Andrew Murray has a unique way of putting Psalm 51 into a detailed exposition. His approach is scriptural, doctrinally sound, and sane.

It offers a wealth of sermon material for the minister, as well as an abundant supply of truth for the individual life.

Special emphasis is placed on an understanding of the meaning of the grace of God. He searches for what God's grace actually is, as well as what it does not include.

This psalm deals with David's prayer for forgiveness of his sin. The subject of repentance is dealt with in detail, until no doubt is left about what God's forgiveness will do in a person's life.

David prays, in this psalm, for

forgiveness of his sin. But he further prays for God to "create a clean heart within" him. This book covers beautifully the teaching of a second work of grace. Not only did the Psalmist feel guilty and in need of forgiveness, but he also felt that his whole nature was corrupt, so he desires to be inwardly purified.

Murray's book is well worth the time of both layman and minister.

—H. C. Hatton

## People to People Therapy

By John W. Drakeford (Harper and Row, 1978. 133 pp., cloth, \$7.95).

Drakeford, a professor of psychology and counseling at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, follows his *Integrity Therapy* with this volume of more practical details. In harmony with such writers as William Glasser, *Reality Therapy*, Drakeford insists that if a person takes personal responsibility for his life, and focuses on what he *does now* rather than what has happened in the past, he can be helped.

Small groups help the most, he says—small groups run by laymen, where people freely share with and support one another. Drakeford traces the history, develops the theory, and outlines the practice of small-group therapy.

This volume has many good ideas for dealing with troubled people by involving them in groups. It might be a good manual for one setting up such a program. It might also encourage ministers to structure Wesleyan "class meetings" which Drakeford praises so highly, but which have nearly disappeared in Wesleyan circles.

—Gerard Reed



# CLERGY QUIZ

1. If you were to read a book by Paul Benjamin, it would most likely be on:
  - A. Church History
  - B. Church Music
  - C. Church Growth
2. The theme of the Book of Nahum is:
  - A. Woe to Nineveh
  - B. Woe to Judah
  - C. Woe to Tyre
  - D. Woe to Edom
  - E. Whoa!
3. Which of the following has recently professed that the dead can be brought back, "materializing" in a dark room and can touch and talk with the living?
  - A. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross
  - B. Fritz Peris
  - C. Josephine Neapoli
  - D. Howard Clinebell
4. If you were engaged in a discussion about "filiogue" you would be dealing primarily with:
  - A. Ecclessiology
  - B. Christology
  - C. Hamartialogy
  - D. Eschatology
5. "Jesus, the very thought of Thee with sweetness fills my breast" is from *Jesu Dulcia Memoria* which was written by:
  - A. Abelard
  - B. Peter Damian
  - C. Bernard of Clairveaux
  - D. Longinus
6. The person who made "Implosive Therapy" famous was:
  - A. Jay Adams
  - B. Victor Frankl
  - C. Otto Rank
  - D. Thomas Stampfl
7. Tertullian was a part of which movement?
  - A. Marcionite
  - B. Donatist
  - C. Montanist
  - D. Waldensees
8. The author of the book *Get Ready to Grow* is:
  - A. Peter Wagner
  - B. Paul Orjala
  - C. Loren Eisley
  - D. Donald McGavran
9. All of these men were contemporaries except:
  - A. Amos
  - B. Hosea
  - C. Daniel
  - D. Isaiah
10. All of these men were contemporaries except:
  - A. John Fletcher
  - B. John Wesley
  - C. Charles G. Finney
  - D. Adam Clarke
11. The philosopher, E. G. Spaulding, is associated with:
  - A. Scholasticism
  - B. Realism
  - C. Idealism
  - D. Existentialism
12. Absalom ordered the killing of which of the following men for defiling his sister Tamar?
  - A. Ammon
  - B. Amnon
  - C. Shimeah
  - D. Simeon
13. The persons holding membership in the Church of the Nazarene total:
  - A. 317,000
  - B. 2,000,000
  - C. 591,000
  - D. 460,000
14. Which of the following pairs of passages are most alike?
  - A. Colossians 3 and Ephesians 4 and 5.
  - B. John 4 and Philippians 1.
  - C. Acts 21 and 2 Timothy 2.
  - D. Romans 14 and 2 Thessalonians 1 and 2.
15. Which of the following has written a book on time management?
  - A. George A. G. Hart
  - B. George Eldon Ladd
  - C. Alfred E. Neuman
  - D. George M. Bowman
  - E. George Santayana

ANSWERS:

1-C; 2-A; 3-B; 4-B; 5-C; 6-D; 7-C; 8-B; 9-C; 10-C; 11-B; 12-B; 13-C; 14-A; 15-C.

# THE DIALOG DEPARTMENT

Conducted by Wesley Tracy

## LADIES ONLY



Name and define three things that pastors could do that would make being a preacher's wife a lot better. Don't hold back ladies, we want—or at least need—to hear this. (Do not sign your name—unless you just want to.)

1.

2.

3.

## MEN ONLY



1. Marriage and ministry would be better if pastors' wives did less...

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2. Marriage and ministry would be better if pastors' wives did more...

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## WHAT IS A PASTOR SUPPOSED TO DO?

1. The Pastor's Priorities—Rank the following duties of a pastor in order of their importance as you see it. Mark the most important number "1," the second most important "2," etc.

- \_\_\_ Administration—working closely with the boards and committees
- \_\_\_ Hospital calling
- \_\_\_ Community affairs and public relations
- \_\_\_ Preparing and preaching sermons
- \_\_\_ Personal soul winning
- \_\_\_ Attending the various social functions of classes and organizations within the church
- \_\_\_ District and denominational meetings
- \_\_\_ Being pastor and minister to his own family
- \_\_\_ Study and personal growth
- \_\_\_ Seminars and courses aimed at professional growth
- \_\_\_ Calling in the homes of church members and prospects
- \_\_\_ Personal devotional life
- \_\_\_ Pastoral counseling
- \_\_\_ Fund raising
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Mark the two (2) highest values in a sermon. Number them "1" and "2."

- \_\_\_ Thoroughly biblical \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Intellectually challenging \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Simplicity \_\_\_ Relevancy \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Theologically sound \_\_\_ Communicates skillfully.

I am a \_\_\_ pastor; \_\_\_ evangelist; \_\_\_ pastor's wife; \_\_\_ district superintendent; \_\_\_ educator; \_\_\_ student; \_\_\_ other.

## WHILE YOU'RE AT IT...

What article did you like best in this issue? \_\_\_\_\_

Which one did you like least? \_\_\_\_\_

(Results will be reported in a later issue.)

## CLIP AND MAIL TO:

Wesley Tracy  
THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE  
6401 The Paseo  
Kansas City, MO 64131

# Major HOLINESS Works



## Christian Holiness

By George Allen Turner

Countering the assumption that the doctrine of entire sanctification began with John Wesley, the author traces the progression and development of the holiness message through the Bible, through Early Church history to the Reformation, through the revolutionary 18th century, on down to the present.

He then explores the development of holiness theology with an emphasis upon Wesleyan thought, and concludes with a study of the social and theological issues on the contemporary scene. 104 pages. Clothboard. **\$4.95**

## Studies in Biblical Holiness

By Donald S. Metz

Establishing the fact that holiness is rooted in the attributes of God, and that man's need for it grows out of the fact of sin, Dr. Metz gives the logical, ethical, and scriptural reasons why man has an inner yearning for holiness of heart.

The author discusses the errors which have developed concerning the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification. He establishes that this is a crisis experience subsequent to regeneration which is attainable in this life and which is the springboard for unending spiritual growth. 290 pages. Clothboard. **\$5.95**

## A Theology of Love

By Mildred Bangs Wynkoop

Here is a comprehensive study of the basic insights of the great preacher John Wesley concerning the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification.

The author quotes copiously from Wesley's own writings in an effort to capture the full import of his message. She examines with infinite care the scriptures which he uses in support of the Wesleyan teaching that the essence of holiness is love and that the evidence of love is utter commitment. 376 pages. Clothboard. **\$6.95**

## From the Apostles to Wesley

By William M. Greathouse

To understand the meaning and scope of the doctrine of entire sanctification or Christian perfection as articulated by John Wesley, one must study the foundation stones upon which he built.

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# UPDATE

UPDATE Editor, Susan Downs

## IS BIGGER REALLY BETTER?



The answer to this question would seem to be self-evident. In today's world whether the subject under discussion is economic or athletic—the Gross National Product or basketball players—bigger is always better. Or is it?

In his very perceptive book *The Emerging Order—God in the Age of Scarcity* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1979), Jeremy Rifkin makes a well-documented case for his contention that the industrialized nations have come perilously close to bankrupting our world by wantonly exhausting its irreplaceable natural resources and polluting its land, sea, and air in a reckless economic growth race. And smaller, quicker basketball teams are consistently playing David to the Goliaths stocked with seven-foot centers!

But what about the church? Isn't bigger always better? If we're talking about the kingdom of God and the Body of Christ, the answer has to be "yes," of course. The commission of our King and Bridegroom to go and make disciples of all nations has to mean that growth is good—the more the better. The good seed of the gospel is to be sown for one reason—to produce a harvest. And any harvest that only results in a return equal to the seed is really no harvest at all. Jesus promised that there would be

increase—30-, 60-, or even 100-fold! No zero growth this.

And local churches are where this must take place. Every New Testament church is better when it becomes bigger. Any rationalization for staying small, whether doctrinal or ethical purity or some other equally pious excuse, it is just that—an excuse. Body life will produce body growth.

In this day of the "super-church syndrome," too many of us tend to make size the ultimate standard of success. The reasoning is that if your congregation numbers 1,000 or more, you've arrived. That's really only half true. Thank God for large churches. We need more. But the burning question is, "Are you still growing?" Leveling off at 1,000 is just as unscriptural as stopping at 100.

From a recent survey taken as a part of his doctoral program, one of our men has deduced that on the whole big churches are growing no faster than little churches. Professional staff and programming may provide more quality activity, but in all too many instances it does not seem to result in accelerated church growth. A smaller congregation that is showing consistent net increase in actuality may be more deserving of "super" status than the large church that is the same size as it was 10 years ago. This kind of bigger is better!

—by General Superintendent Eugene L. Stowe



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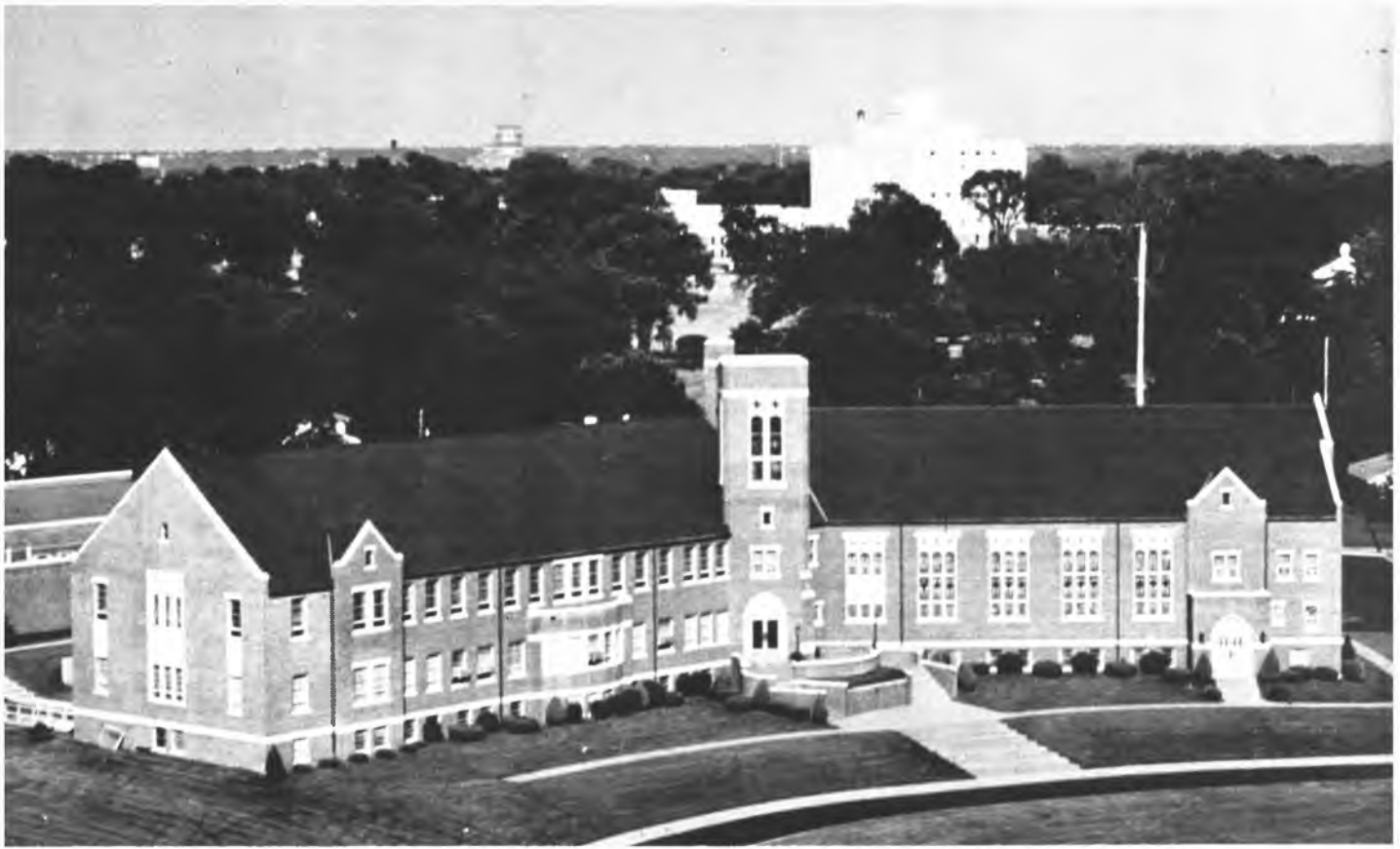
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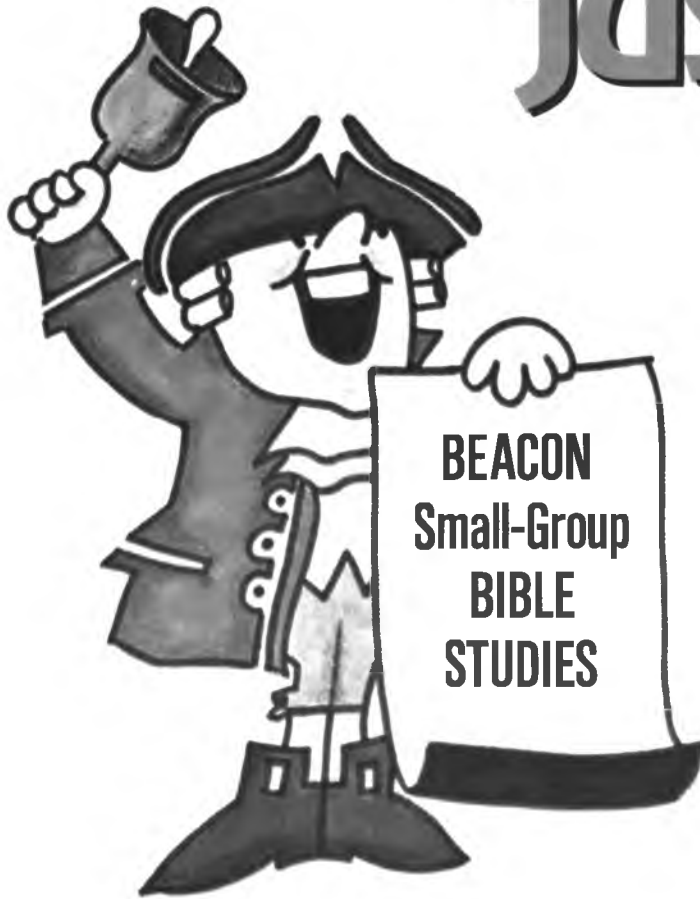


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—Paul Skiles, Executive Director  
Department of Communications

# The Preacher's Magazine

The editorial chair is supported by the wise counsel of a rotating editorial board. Persons with experience and expertise on each *Preacher's Magazine* theme are recruited to help us by consultation and writing. This time the editorial staff went to selected specialists in Church Growth. We consulted with some, and requested articles from others. The editorial staff and the Church Growth team are pictured below.

Our next issue will accent STEWARDSHIP.



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**RALPH SCOTT** is currently pastoring First Church of the Nazarene in Fort Collins, Colorado; has also pastored churches in Illinois and Ohio.

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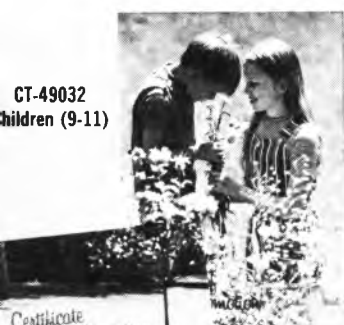
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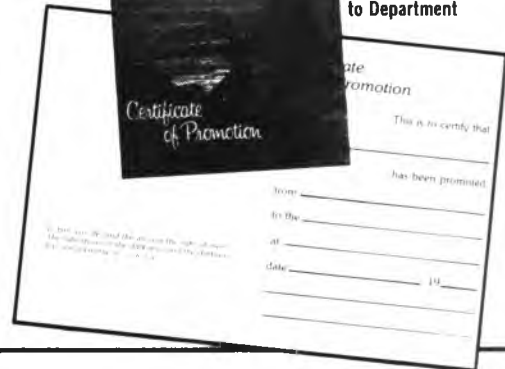
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