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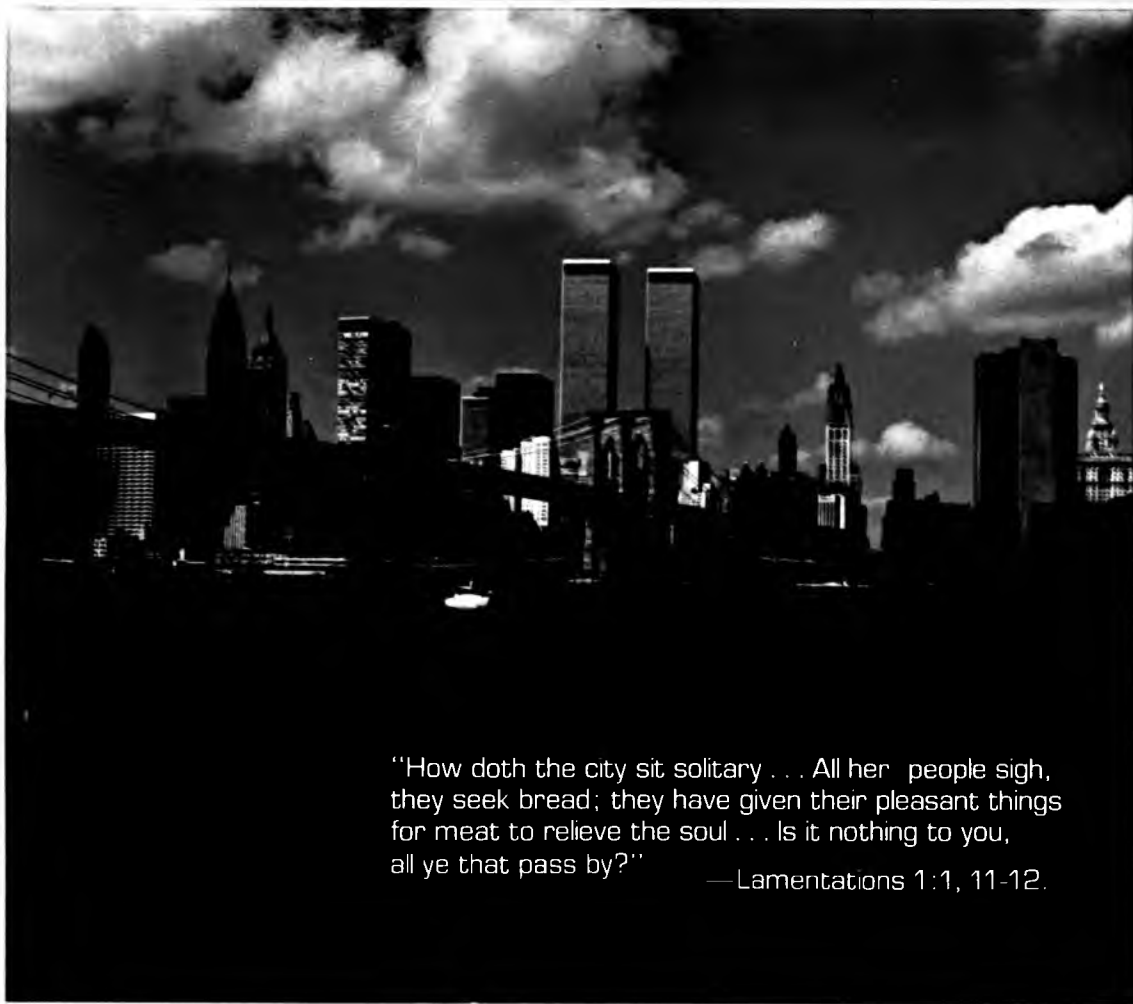
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THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE



"How doth the city sit solitary . . . All her people sigh,
they seek bread; they have given their pleasant things
for meat to relieve the soul . . . Is it nothing to you,
all ye that pass by?"

—Lamentations 1:1, 11-12.

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suitable for Framing

I asked God for strength that I might achieve,
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity that I might do better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy,
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for—
but everything I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself,
my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am among all men,
most richly
blessed.

—by an unknown soldier



by
Wesley
Tracy

Praise Junkies



No question about it: praise feels good. Small doses given in a supportive environment do no real harm and may even help a little. But praise is an addictive substance and there is a fine line between casual use and addictive abuse. People addicted to praise may find themselves doing only those things guaranteed to bring them more of the stuff they crave.

The thoughts of the preceding paragraph come from Dr. Rick Curwin (*Instructor*, October, 1980). He wrote about elementary school students. But what about us preachers? Since the advent of "sloppy-agape" and "warm fuzzies," isn't it easy to become addicted to ego-cuddling praise? Then the preacher spends his prime time as a peony plucker strolling through the congregation plucking praise blossoms.

When that happens, we have in the pulpit a genuine praise junkie.

Praise junkies come in several varieties. One sort is always putting himself down, in order to get a parishioner or wife to build him back up. He says things like, "I think there was something worthwhile in my sermon, I just wish I had been able to bring it out in a meaningful way." "Oh, pastor, it was great as it was," the dutiful parishioner chirps. "A real two-eyed whooper of a sermon" the manipulated mate adds. And our preacher hooked on praise is on another high.

Some praise addicts brag all the time. They introduce sermons with statements like, "When I was asked to give the benediction at the White House prayer breakfast

..." "While I was chatting with Billy Graham..." "When Professor Sagacious of Prestigious U. asked my advice..." Thus they boldly demand nosegays of praise-plaudits.

Another type of praise junkie tends to go overboard repeating whatever brought praise in the first place. Compliment him on a creative Communion service and the next one will be a genuine extravaganza complete with recorded poetry and a spotlight on an empty chair.

The praise addict is, tragically, so busy pleasing potential praisers that he (or she) may never discover his own unique abilities. If he does bump into his own gifts he won't linger there long unless observers cheer like he has scored a touchdown in the Super Bowl.

The more praise the hooked preacher gets the more he needs. Soon it's not enough for the wife and the parishioners to pay him praise homage. He now has to have the hierarchy praise him. Anything he does that is at all noteworthy, the beleaguered district and general superintendents hear about at least three times. The praise junkie keeps on until rebuffed or until he pries out a pellet of praise. Even then he will be back, because for this addict the need for praise increases with each dose.

All praise addicts are vulnerable to manipulation. Years ago a university class manipulated a professor into a corner. The teacher in question habitually roamed about the front of the

room as he lectured. The students agreed that when he spoke from the corner of the room, just to the left of the chalkboard, they would listen with eager-eyed admiration. Whatever he said from any other place in the room was met with disdain and yawns. Soon they manipulated him into that corner left of the chalkboard and from there he lectured the rest of the term.

Church members, once they make a praise junkie out of the clergybird, can control him. They may change their minds about liking him and six months before recall vote cut off the supply of the praise drug. No matter how avidly the preacher plays praise-getting checkers, the rewards are withheld and he's sweating it out "cold turkey." First, he becomes mously malcontent. Then he begins to appear at board meetings looking like a dilatory bill payer having his credit checked. By recall Sunday, he is preaching as gingerly as John Updike's "kudu dipping his muzzle at the edge of a hyena-haunted waterhole."

Praise can be positive and healthful. The danger is that praise can become for us what coconut cream pie is to the "foodaholic."

If you find yourself prying praises, counting compliments, or hovering around the church door hoping for plaudits for your homilies, you may be hooked. So kick the habit. We are called to preach, not to be praised—or even appreciated.

P. S. If you like this editorial, please write and tell me.



THE ARK ROCKER

BARELY ALIVE!

The alley is narrow and filled with trash. The buildings lean forward under their own weight, blocking the sun. The seasons never change in the alley. It is always dark like a tunnel; and, if you stand at one end to see where it leads, the alley just goes on forever.

Children from our church live in the buildings on the alley; so do I. I like to watch them play. They play like children everywhere, except they have to dodge the trash, the bottles, and the bums. They make up games that can only be played in an alley. Most games involve contact, generating hostility rather than enjoyment, because you can't run full-steam in an alley without running into somebody and getting knocked down.

"They grow up too fast here," one of the mothers told me. "They run the alley; they see what's wrong. They see too much, too early. They become adults before they were ever children; and they end up like me, feeling barely alive."

Sunday is a joyful time for me as I walk the alley. For worshipping together reminds me that we, as the church, are one community. We are called, especially, to celebrate the hopes and the dreams

and the lives of people "barely alive." While these words describe the quality of life in our alley, they also mysteriously point to the fulfillment of Christian hope. For in conditions not unlike these, the Hope of the World was born, clinging to His mother's arms, "barely alive."

The stories of Christ's birth in the Gospels suggest that we ought to regard marginal living situations like stables and alleys more highly. For marginal living situations can become the birthplace of truth, the truth about ourselves and the truth about our society.

More than one life has been changed simply by walking down an alley like ours and wondering how a place like this can exist in a rich, Christian nation like America. In moments of reflection in places like these, truth is born—truth that can set us free. The truth of Christianity has always had humble beginnings. It is frequently in the possession of those "barely alive" and can be found in places where "we would not be caught dead."

Can you hear the Savior calling you to walk forgotten alleys and pray for those children "barely alive"?

The Ark Locker

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URBAN MINISTRIES



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ES

WHERE CROSS THE CROWDED WAYS OF LIFE

by Frank Mason North

In haunts of wretchedness and need,
On shadowed thresholds dark with fears,
From paths where hide the lures of greed,
We catch the vision of Thy tears.

The cup of water given for Thee
Still holds the freshness of Thy grace;
Yet long these multitudes to see
The sweet compassion of Thy face.

O Master, from the mountainside
Make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
Among these restless throngs abide.
Oh, tread the city's streets again.

*Ready or not, Jonah,
dry yourself off and confront the city!*

THE JONAH SYNDROME

by R. Franklin Cook*

To some extent, all of us have a Jonah Syndrome. We hear God calling us to the wicked city. Having heard, we try another way. But God's voice will not be stilled. He delivers us into the arms of that city. The final irony is that when people unlike us suburbanites do respond to the gospel, we often despair because those new believers are difficult to accept into our fellowship.

In the United States, the Jonah Syndrome is reflected in our basic anti-urban bias. Whereas 78 percent of the people live in cities, we still romanticize the "Church in the Wildwood." Whereas very few people schedule their lives around needs for milking cows or tending crops, we pastors often construct church schedules around a rural motif. In our thinking, cities and churches do not mix well.

God called Jonah to Nineveh. That ancient city was an unknown quantity, filled with pagans who were "not of our kind." It represents cities today that are unknown (and, to some, unknowable), alien, pagan, polluted, crowded, dirty, noisy, smelly, and filled with strange people who are "not of our kind."

Jonah objected and rejected God's call. He was afraid. He was the first victim of the Jonah Syndrome: hearing (but fleeing), delivered unwillingly to the city, and angered by God's compassion. In

today's context, this has been called the "suburban captivity of the church," a captivity of money, method, system, focus, and mission.

Jonah's own syndrome created internal conflict. Afraid to go; tormented by not going. To escape God's call to go where people are pagan proved impossible. But Jonah's impulse was to do battle with that imperative. Could not the comfort of preaching to home folks fulfill God's call? The subsequent storm, his fear of the unknown and unpleasant, substituting doing of other good things, could not bring peace with God.

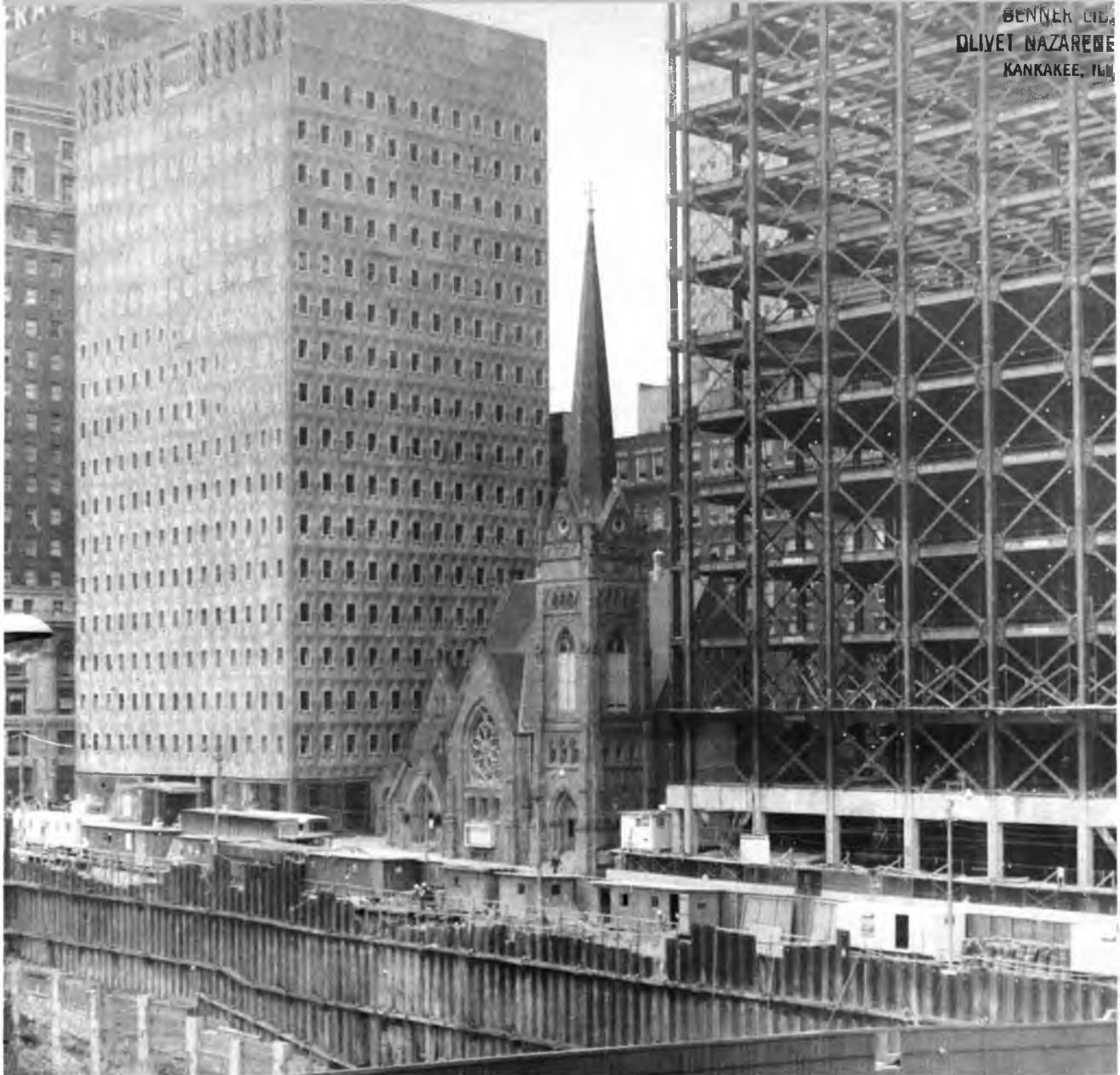
God finds a way around Jonah's syndrome. The Nineveh's of this world are obviously there, in Chicago, Calcutta, New York, New Delhi, Los Angeles, and London. Pagan, unknown, spiritually darkened, waiting for God's delivery system. In Jonah's case, the whale (I realize it was a "large fish," but prefer to use the more colorful "whale") proved to be the vehicle of delivery. An unlikely and ungainly vehicle it was. Often God uses systems that do not fit stereotypes. Whatever the system, the important thing is that God snatched up Jonah, syndrome and all, and abruptly and unceremoniously delivered him to the place of his calling, the city of Nineveh.

Jonah's arrival was hardly neat or pretentious. He had no elaborate support system, perhaps little cross-cultural training, and he was certainly not an enthusiastic participant in the affair. Yet here he was, at the gates of a wicked city, filled with sordid and potentially hostile or (even worse) apathetic people. Ready or not, Jonah, dry yourself off and confront the city!

The results of Jonah's confrontation with Nineveh are recorded well. God used a man with complexes,

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Paul M. Schrock Photos

fears, doubts, and resistance, to pour out His Spirit on a city. So confrontational evangelism resulted in that city's redemption, and throughout all subsequent history the story of "Jonah and the Whale" has been told and retold.

Indeed, it is to Nineveh we are called. Worldwide, over half the people live in cities. In the United States and other industrialized nations a much higher percentage reside in cities. Ours is, then, a world of cities.

The urban environment is constantly changing. At one and the same time, the city is polarized into the best and the worst. Any city has neighborhoods that are deteriorated and in disrepair. Yet, in the midst, stand multimillion-dollar complexes, housing projects, gentrification of older areas, new parks, and new urban universities. People in the cities constantly move. The young arrive seeking new opportunity. Upward mobility often suggests moving to another neighborhood. In the 1950s and 60s, this meant moving to the suburbs in what has been called "white flight." The racial balance of neighbor-

hoods constantly changes. If the local church can respond to all these changes only by moving away, then the church has become captive to the Jonah Syndrome. The church too is called, but often flees to Tarshish. Too often churches are tempted to respond to the changing neighborhoods much as a business would—thinking primarily of the "profit and loss" statement, and following the money to a place of greater financial security. Often, in that effort, years of investment is uprooted, with equity moved to a new area, leaving a spiritual vacuum in the old neighborhood. It is important to note that there is no "eternal security" even in comfortable suburbs. Cities change so rapidly that solutions appearing tenable in the short run may prove damaging in the long run.

Cities are the cutting edge of mission. D. L. Moody said many years ago, "If we reach the cities we will reach the nation. If we fail in the cities, they become a cesspool that will infect the entire nation." Dr. Phineas F. Bresee, reflecting a Wesleyan heritage of involvement with the poor, engaged in mission to the heart of Los Angeles. The cutting edge

of mission must be kept sharp. It cannot be allowed to wear itself dull on the Jonah Syndrome of fear, resistance, and anger. This does not suggest that strong ministries in rural areas, small towns, and suburbs are not of high priority. They are. But a retreat pattern to those areas, leaving a vacuum of spiritual putrefaction in the inner urban core, will allow the spread of infectious and satanic influence to the core of the nation itself. It is in the city the opinion makers work and do their deeds. Centers of power in the media, the purveyors of trends, the writers of school curricula, the political power base, union organizers and leaders, bureaucrats in governmental agencies, moguls of industry, money changers in major banks, the artists, musicians, writers, dramatists all emanate out of, market in, or revolve around the cities. If the church steps neatly over, or out of, this stream of influence, and lets Satan control it all, then we have been party to building our Ninevehs.

Cities are centers of pollution. One urban staff member, looking down a Manhattan street, described his environment as "a real hell." Gay bars and clubs, pornographic pollution, literature, brilliantly parading every whim of belief, amorality, and human ambition, create a hell on earth. No wonder Jonah developed a complex over God's call. But God did not change His call, nor did He intervene in Nineveh. Instead, He started preparing the whale.

Dr. John Naisbitt, senior vice-president of Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, and publisher of the "Trend Report," recently presented a report articulating "What's Really Happening in the U.S." In the article are some revealing insights which set a framework for situations today's pastors must confront in effective urban ministry.

1. The melting pot is a myth. Today we recognize profound pluralism. The church cannot and must not escape racial, cultural, and linguistic pluralism. Recently a Chicago pastor said to me, "the number one prerequisite for ministry in my area of Chicago is speaking Spanish." The concept of cookie-cutter, vanilla-flavored Americans is a mythological dream of the past. Today the United States consists of ethnic, economic, educational, and cultural coalitions. And there is such cultural pluralism that who moves "next door" to the church building will likely be who "walks through" the front door. Nineveh is all around.

2. The number one occupation in America is clerk. This nation has moved from a society of farmers, to a society of laborers, to a society of clerks. Technocrats and people in the marketplace are the predominant group today. The pressures and frustrations of this group must be dealt with. Family life, marriage and divorce, low birth rate, high professional demands and competitiveness, hectic schedules, are all part of a clerk-oriented society. Yet, in the marketplace, people look for a

Where It's Happening...

Many good things are happening in cities. Here is a quick sampling of Nazarene Central City Projects.

Seattle—Research to focus on the city. Seattle North Church innovates by using a public school building as a church.

Los Angeles—Two districts (Los Angeles and Southern California) aggressively pursuing urban mission. Plans for 60 ethnic churches (with 21 already operating) on the Los Angeles District. A Cross-cultural Task Force, sensitizing the district on the Southern California District. Multi-congregational and interracial models developing rapidly.

Pittsburgh—A new look with energy plans under study by a city study group led by new D.S., Jerry Lambert.

Atlanta—The Georgia Urban Ministries moving in to plant many Black congregations with a training program to support the effort.

Detroit—A Task Force busy at work developing a program to proliferate urban church planting.

New York—

Brooklyn—Beulah about to complete a massive renovation of a grocery store to provide 1,000 seating and a gymnasium.

Manhattan—Development of Spanish ministries at The Lamb's ministry.

New Milford—Over 200 received by profession of faith this assembly year in an East Coast revival.

Baltimore—After years of investment, a sudden spurt of membership in Faith Church which crowds out the recently remodeled sanctuary.

Washington—The Community of Hope now "recycles" the congregation Sunday mornings to accommodate the crowds. Continued strong social ministries.

Miami—An aggressive program of church planting among Cubans and Haitians with ministerial preparation cooperatively managed by the seminary in Costa Rica.

Buffalo—Five new worship centers with 50 planned in Buffalo, a supposedly "unreachable" city. Strong district support with Buffalo First the primary planting agency.

Too often local churches are tempted to respond to the changing neighborhoods much as a business would—thinking primarily of the “profit and loss” statement, and following the money to a place of greater financial security.

sense of participation and fulfillment. When the Japanese Matsushita Company bought out Chicago's bankrupt Motorola Corporation, Matsushita retained all 1,000 line workers, and fired 50 percent (300) of the supervisors and managers. Production doubled in two years. Television sets rejected because of faulty construction declined from 60 percent to 4 percent in the same time. If the church is to impact cities, it will not be by ecclesiastical managers, but by prophets and workers.

3. The present generation of high school graduates are generally less educated than their parents. This is the first such provable decline in American

history. Public school systems, especially in cities, are in deep trouble. SAT scores drop year after year. Link this with the career changes which average three in an average American adult, and the need for training becomes apparent. Today's church must, more than ever, be a center of schooling. Some possibilities: remedial courses for adults; teaching English to immigrants; operating after-school training for the children of working adults and single parents; developing coalitions of churches to sponsor adult educational training; functioning as a working internship location for our college youth interested in ministry at all levels. Even the role of church staff may change. A “Minister of Music and Youth” may be less able to work in an urban setting than a “Dean of Training,” or “Associate for Social Ministries.”

4. National policies uniformly applied are out of touch with the times. No one method, or strategy, applies to all places. Even Jonah's approach would not work everywhere. The United States is a nation of nations, with thousands of cultural and economic coalitions. Ten years ago, two great national trend magazines, *LIFE* and *LOOK*, died. In the same year, 300 new special interest magazines were born. In 1976, people contributed more money to special interest groups, such as “Save the Dolphins,” than to the two major political parties. These trends give a clue for a national urban strategy. In a word, don't attempt to have one. Strategies for urban ministry

Orlando/Tampa Bay—Aggressive plans with several training centers fully operational. New influx of Hispanics—strong Black church ministry and training, with Orlando Gorman Memorial bursting at the seams for space.

Denver—Two Korean congregations, and dynamic Hmong (Laotian) ministry coordinated by William Morrison.

Several districts now have language or ethnic coordinators, including Southern Florida, Los Angeles, Virginia, and Southern California. It is, indeed, a new day!

WHERE IT'S HAPPENING IN THE WESLEYAN CHURCH

Toronto, Oakwood (Central Canada District)—Utilizes a public school building while looking for a building to purchase for its growing ethnic congregation. Three other Toronto congregations (one Korean) meet in schools.

Los Angeles (California District)—Several Korean churches are under way, with more beginning.

Chicago (Northern Illinois District)—This multi-ethnic district has Laotian, Korean, and Black congregations.

Washington, D.C. (Capital District)—New Korean and Spanish churches are thriving.

New York City (Penn-Jersey District)—Two Haitian churches in Brooklyn and a multiracial church in Jersey City spearhead the thrust into this area.

Miami (Florida District)—Spanish and Haitian churches under way.

Indianapolis, Dayton (South Ohio District)—These historic churches continue their special ministries to Blacks.

Buffalo (Western New York District)—Houghton College's Buffalo campus provides inner-city studies and experiences and is a hub for ministries of Buffalo area churches.

Montreal (Central Canada District)—One Haitian church under way and another being studied.

Boston (Champlain District)—Ethnic ministries in a tenement complex.

Muskegon (North Michigan District)—Ethnic ministries continue.

must emerge from within, and cannot be imposed from above. What the church always needs is clear leadership which establishes the priorities, sets the objectives, and sounds a clarion call. Given that, strategy will develop creatively at a local level thought through, planned through, and prayed through.

Many pastors feel they have been "swallowed up by the whale," and spewed into the city.

Urban ministry takes place on the front line. Desk bureaucrats have a role to play, but the real front-line work takes place in the trenches. Strategists are useful, but real evangelism occurs on the streets and in the apartments of the cities. Demographics are important, but only they shape perceptions of mission. The local church is the primary agency in which the Body of Christ exercises loving care and compassion, and a call to righteousness. The local fellowship is the shining reflection of the Light which shines in the darkness of this earth's Ninevehs.

The pastor must become the proclaimer of a prophetic ministry of the church in the city. It is the pastor who must first come to grips with change, with ethnicity, with mission, with poverty, with spontaneous church extension. Then Nineveh can be confronted. The Jonah Syndrome is a desire to escape these concerns or, having been forced to face them, to resent it. Many pastors to whom I talk feel they have been "swallowed up by the whale," and spewed into the city. Others find themselves uncomfortably swallowed up by the city, facing situations for which traditional ministerial training neglected to prepare them. Some sense despair, frustration, and a sense of aloneness. Pastors must deal with poverty. Pastors must deal with social dislocation and alternative life-styles. Pastors must deal with transitional communities and differing cultural values. Pastors must deal with high cost and low incomes. Pastors must deal with commitment and personal sacrifice. Ultimately, the Jonah Syndrome must be overcome by the pastor, who then leads staff and people to the promised land of vision and hope and opportunity.

The very Ninevehs of pagan, cultic evil, can become the Bethlehem for new pioneering opportunity. Why? In the urban environment, the church must be the primary social center. It is the lighthouse in the midnight storm. It is the rescue mission in the



HOW TO LOOK AT YOUR CITY

Master planning is a key concept. The fundamental value of planning is to planners. It helps focus purpose, increase vision and involvement, and develop an understanding of cost. In the course of research and planning, resources are identified. You discover where you are, and decide where you want to go.

PHASE I—THE CONTEXT

Section A—Analysis of the City

Look at the local scope of the city. Include:

- Ethnicity
- Economy and industry
- Education
- Unique societal issues
- Transportation
- Political structures
- Demographics

cold secular blizzard. It is the body of fellowship in the loneliness of the city. It is the cup of cold water in an overindulged society thirsty for spiritual reality in a world of competitive tension. In a strange way, the urban church has become the kind of social center in the city that historically is associated with the church on the lonely American frontier.

In an urban environment, the church is the college for evangelism and training. Christians in the city, such a minority, cannot afford the complacency of suburban lethargy. Minorities tend to be aggressive; fight for their rights; try to be heard. So with the fellowship of believers in the secular city. Training becomes most important. Most urban believers eagerly look to the church for discipleship, biblical training and even vocational preparation.

In the cities today there is a cadre of urban pioneers, pastors, staff, and volunteers, who have sold their souls to the God of Jonah.

In an urban environment, the local church becomes a primary agent for church planting. House churches in apartments, special ministry churches

(such as for single adults, or linguistic groups, or senior adults), Bible studies, sponsorship of ministerial training for those called to preach; all this develops a climate within which church planting can spontaneously occur. Preconceived notions, often formed in suburban settings, about buildings, methods, training, or innovations, cannot be allowed to kill urban church planting. Costs are high, risks are great, and creative flexibility (which gives innovation permission to operate) is required.

Even when Nineveh repented, and God relented, Jonah was "angry enough to die" (Jonah 4:9), but God yet persisted. "Should I not be concerned about that great city?" (Jonah 4:11).

In the cities today there is a cadre of urban pioneers, pastors, staff, and volunteers, who have sold their souls to the God of Jonah. They have heard the call. They have responded, and are serving heroically, and with small reward and little recognition. May their number increase!

The city! what charm, and attraction it is to some. What mystery and strangeness it is to many. A place to flee from, and hear a call to. With their glitter and their decay, and with the teeming millions of unreached pagans at all economic levels and from the cultures of the whole world, the cities call the church. God will find a way to accomplish His purpose, even if we are trapped by Jonah's Syndrome.



Section B—Analysis of the Church

Growth patterns

Historical perspective

Member analysis (age, sex, ethnicity, social consciousness)

Felt needs

Section C—The Community

Usually define the "community" as the geographical area within less than 10 minutes driving time. Look at access to public transportation and what kind of community could realistically walk to the building. Apartments, condominiums, single family dwellings, income level—all are factors.

Section D—Other Churches and Agencies

Study what other churches and social agencies are doing to meet needs in this community. How successful are they? Do people respond in a positive way? Are they effective and efficient? Are existing churches and agencies meeting all the needs?

PHASE II—THE OBJECTIVES

Section A—Goals and Objectives

The church needs a set of objectives that people "own." A key is local or regional ownership.

Long-term goals, 10-20 years

Mid-term goals, 5-10 years

Short-term goals, 1-5 years

Immediate goals, this year

PHASE III—THE ACTION PLAN

Section A—What Is Really Needed?

Develop key concepts in terms of community programs, apartment ministries, calling programs, church planting, training programs based on what you identify as being the primary needs of your reachable constituency.

Section B—Projected Costs

Attach some dollar figures to what you hope to do. For example, starting a Spanish Sunday School class will involve some cost for materials, etc. Starting a Spanish church will involve some investment in a person to lead, materials, etc. An intelligent analysis needs to be made of each specific program with a cost analysis so that people will understand what is involved in implementing these programs and what the expected results will be.

Section C—A Task Force

Usually a task force, study group, supervising committee, district board, or some specific group is needed to provide focus, profile, and continuity to a city strategy. There is an excess of creative energy everywhere. It just needs to be released, challenged, and directed.

Section D—Handling the Goals

Goals need to be understood, realistic, biblical, and measurable. Any board or study group should constantly "dial back" to the goals and objectives—and ultimately the Great Commission.

SERVING IN THE CITY MEANS SACRIFICE— AND SPIRITUAL REWARDS



An interview with an inner city pastor, Jim Bledsaw

Franklin Cook: Jim, where did you go to school and when did you complete your college work?

Jim Bledsaw: Olivet Nazarene College. I graduated with a B.A. in 1968, and I am working on a master's now.

Cook: After you finished college, what is the general flow of your ministry? Can you give us a summary of where you've pastored and some of the kinds of things you've done?

Bledsaw: I started out in small-town rural churches. I started in Lewistown, Ill., in 1967, and went from there to St. David, Ill., and then from there I went to Kenosha, Wis. I was there for six years, and Kenosha was oriented more to Chicago than to Wisconsin. So there I began to think more in terms of the city of Chicago. God gave me more of a burden for the city.

Cook: Is there any one thing or one series of things that really precipitated your burden, your concern for the city?

Bledsaw: Well, seeing the city, driving through the city, seeing these apartment buildings, seeing the huge buildings, seeing the multitudes on the sidewalks, and knowing that they're not being reached, knowing they're lost—I think that has had a tremendous effect on me. And the book *To the City With Love*, by Neil Wiseman, had a tremendous effect on me. At the Billy Graham School of Evangelism, there was a speaker who spoke about the city and I think these things gradually shaped my attitude toward the city. So here I am pastoring Chicago Northside.

Cook: So obviously it's possible to come out of a small town, a rural area, and as an adult, turn the direction of your ministry towards the city, and do it successfully.

Bledsaw: Ninety percent of the evangelical urban ministerial force is rural and small town in background. God can recycle all of us, like he did Amos, to do the work of urban ministry.

Cook: Let me ask about your family—a few questions that might be of interest to the readers. Do you have children? What are their names and ages?

Bledsaw: Christy, 10, and Cindy, 4.

Cook: What special problems do they face as children living in the city and what problems do you as parents face in raising those girls here?

Bledsaw: Christy attends public school, which means the education she receives is inferior to what she would receive outside the city of Chicago. We've lived places that had a lot nicer schools. We have no lawn. There is no yard for the children to play in, and their yard is in our basement. They play indoors. It's always an added pressure knowing you have to know where they are at all times. You have to see them at all times, to be in sight. There are many catastrophic things that can happen in a city that you don't worry about in the country.

Cook: Tell us a little bit about your wife—her name, a little bit about her educational background and her professional skills.

Bledsaw: My wife, Lynette, graduated from Olivet in 1967 with a B.A. in psychology. She was a social worker for many years. She has done family and marital counseling in a community mental health center. She's a big help in the church here, and she uses her skills quite well.

Cook: Taking the family, wife and two children, as a unit, how do they perceive your mission? What kind of problems do you face? What frustrations are there that are especially unique to a family living in the city?

Bledsaw: Well, we experience a lot of isolation, of course. We're separated from our relatives. It's about an hour's drive to the nearest Nazarene church, which means if we were to visit another Nazarene parsonage, it would be an entire evening driving there, being there, and coming back. My wife has been working now for about five or six months. She's filling in for Rev. Leigh's secretary for these months, and it's just a one-time thing I hope, but she doesn't get home until a quarter until seven, so she gets home just exhausted, and just about time to put the children in bed. Then she has to leave early in the morning, and it's over an hour's trip commuting on the EL and the subway. She had a close call with a man in the subway not too long ago. Christy and Cindy, I think they really miss a

yard and a swing set and playing outside. I think it gets very boring living *inside* a house.

Cook: So there are personal sacrifices that are necessary in terms of raising a family in a city that are not experienced by a person living out in the suburb or pastoring a church that is located in a suburb or in a smaller town.

Bledsaw: Yes, and the rewards—there are special things that city children can do, too. I can take her to see the works of Van Gogh or Rembrandt anytime I can get on the EL, step off, and walk one block, and we're at the Art Institute. We can go to the Museum and see treasures of King Tut's tomb. We can go to the planetarium or the aquarium or the observatory. So there are an awful lot of pluses to living in the city too, and it's exciting. We try always to communicate only the positive things about the city to the children. I think they are very thankful to live here.

Cook: Let's turn to the work of the local church here—Chicago Northside. Without going into a lot of statistical information or history, can you give us just a thumbnail sketch of this church and its present membership, that is in terms of the kind of people that are in this church?

Bledsaw: Well, the church experienced its strongest period in the early 1940s at the beginning of World War II. From then to the present, the church has experienced a gradual decline in numbers. The church is strong in that it is fully integrated. The church is about one-third minority. We have a good number of Hispanics, we have Asians, we have Blacks who attend here, and they are all represented on the church board in the same percentage as they are in the congregation. We didn't do that on purpose—it just happened that way. The church is excited about the future and the possibility of doing something for the kingdom of God.

Cook: While we're talking about this local church, you might just briefly indicate some of the hope for plans that would involve outreach for this church as a base of operation for impact in the city of Chicago and especially in this area.

Bledsaw: I've been working with an advisory committee, an *ad hoc* advisory committee with the knowledge of the district, and we've been working on a proposal for establishing four new churches in the city of Chicago in the coming year, and a family counseling center. One of those churches would be a Spanish-speaking church which would meet in our building along with the Korean congregation, which also shares our facility here.

Cook: Let me ask about compassionate ministries, special ways in which the church reaches out to help people with their social problems and needs. How do you perceive the importance of compassionate ministry in terms of successful city work?

Bledsaw: City dwellers tend to be a little more cynical, a little less trusting of what the church has to say. If you are unemployed and there's no chance of finding a job, and you feel like you're trapped, and you feel like life is hopeless, what the people are saying on Sunday morning from the pulpit really doesn't seem to have any relevance to your life if

you are totally without hope—and you are if you don't have a job. So, we have to prove ourselves. So many times the people of the church have identified instinctively with the oppressor rather than the oppressed, and these oppressed people know that, and they respond accordingly, and we have to prove that we have the love of Jesus Christ and we want to do something in a meaningful way, so we can't say, "The Lord bless you, be thou warmed and filled," and go our way. We have to do something.

Cook: Now translate that into some very practical kinds of programs that you would hope to have or some that you may, in fact, be doing now.

Bledsaw: We help people who are without an apartment. People that are displaced, we help them find a place. We provide used clothing for those who need them. We provide meals for transients who are down and out. From time to time, in a situation of dire emergency, we will help with a little bit of emergency relief for someone if they're really in dire straits. Our church is limited because we have such tremendous limitations financially. A characteristic of urban ministry is that you are always in a bind financially. There's never enough money to go around. Things that the church needs to be involved in include providing housing for people, providing a job-finder service, a referral service to help people find means of upgrading their skills, and that sort of thing.

Cook: Which brings up the issue of support, external support systems including money, and including resource people, and including a feeling of moral support from your colleagues in the ministry. What do you ideally feel the role of surrounding churches, that is suburban churches who are strong and growing and have very excellent ministries, what role could they play in terms of supporting and providing mechanisms to help you in your ministry and to help any city church that is struggling with these financial and other problems?

Bledsaw: In moral support, one important place to begin is to realize that in some urban settings, success in the ministry is not necessarily always indicated statistically, so that a person can be experiencing tremendous success and planting the seeds for growth that will happen in two or three years, but may not be reflected this year. Suburban pastors can be supportive and understanding of that fact.

Another area in moral support is to understand how tremendously isolated you feel in the city. When you move into the city, you go through culture shock. When you move into the city, you are in a world where the Protestants are no longer the majority, the Evangelicals are not shaping people's attitudes. It is a city which is predominantly Roman Catholic and Jewish. As a minister, you not only may not have much prestige, you may be scorned for the fact that you're an evangelical pastor. People will look on you with a tremendous amount of suspicion. So there's a great deal of isolation in leaving everything you are familiar with, all the security that you knew, and then coming to an entirely new world.

(continued on page 29)

MEASURING MINISTERIAL SUCCESS IN CENTRAL CITY MINISTRY

by Roy E. Carnahan*

Evaluating central city ministries begins with the understanding that central city ministries are the same in ultimate purpose as Christian ministries anywhere. They are distinct only in point of focus and method.

Basic to effective administration and evaluation is a carefully thought-through statement of purpose and well-defined goals and objectives.

All church work should have basically the same purpose. As Wesleyans, our purpose is the same as all other historical evangelical Christian churches, but with the added emphasis of pro-

claiming and propagating the doctrine of holiness as God's will and blessing for His people.

A suggested simple statement of the church's purpose is "to glorify God by making disciples of all people through the continued ministry of Jesus in worship, evangelism, nurture, fellowship, and mercy." If this is accepted as our basic statement of purpose, it will then "sit in judgment" over everything we do. Furthermore, goals, objectives, and programs will be evaluated in the light of how well they fulfill that stated purpose.

Since the purpose of the central city church is no different than any other church, rural or suburban, its distinctiveness is at

the point of goals, objectives, program, and methods. Because specific needs and circumstances are different, innovative programs and methods are needed to fulfill the church's purpose. The ultimate tests of any program, urban or rural, has to do with how well it achieves the church's basic purpose.

The very reason we have an urban, or central city, program reflects the fact that life in the central city is extremely different than other communities. To the average Nazarene, the urban ministry field is a foreign culture. It is often misunderstood and frequently feared.

The people usually live at poverty levels where every day is a struggle for survival. The responses of people who are struggling for survival are much different than those who are merely challenged for life-style advancement. They do not share the average American's sense of security.



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district superintendent of the Washington District,
Church of the Nazarene.

Their religious backgrounds are usually not typically Nazarene and frequently reflect an irrational, unbiblical emotionalism or a blatant paganism. For the most part, their educational background is grossly substandard.

Family life is fragmented, leaving units usually of mothers and small children or single people. For many reasons, the residents of the central city have less sense of responsibility, and despair has replaced hope.

Ministry to such persons obviously demands different methods and approaches. The sincere Christian worker will soon realize he cannot preach God's love and mercy without doing something to alleviate the extreme physical and social needs of the people.

The central city Christian worker must understand the levels of human need such as are outlined by A. H. Maslow.¹ His chart on the hierarchy of human needs indicates that man's first sense of need is at the physical level—that of having enough food and shelter. From this base, his needs rise to include (2) security, (3) belonging or acceptance, (4) self-esteem, and (5) self-actualization. One level of need cannot be satisfied until the levels under it, in order, are met. For instance, if a man is hungry, he must first be fed before he can be helped to find security. He then may move on to acceptance, self-esteem and self-actualization.

These principles are true in any kind of Christian ministry. The real difference is that many poor people in the central city have needs at the lower levels. Thus central city ministries must be directed to more basic needs than would be true of ministries to the more affluent located generally in other areas.

People in the inner city also tend to mistrust those who come to help them. For reasons legitimate or otherwise, they have felt exploited, cheated, and betrayed. The Christian worker will have to build a sense of trust. He must demonstrate his integrity and genuine concern over a longer period of time and through a number of crises tests. Only when the urban minister has proven his

genuine love and integrity will he be able to effectively minister to his community. Works of social compassion will generally precede evangelism.

The basic purpose of the church sits in judgment over everything we do in central city ministries.

The white migration to the suburbs has slowed, and, in some cases, migration has reversed, bringing the more affluent people back into the central city. Urban renewal, with the rebuilding of the central city, now provides, in some cities, quality housing and social life and is changing the scene and the needs. Ministry in the central city may again become more sophisticated, directed to higher social needs, and Christ's salvation presented as meeting the void in man not fulfilled by his materialism.

Evaluation of central city ministries, then, involves the recognition of basic human needs. The effectiveness of the methods is determined by how well they address the people's realized need and lead them to an awareness and experience with Christ.

Most people in the central city have an acre of despair for every inch of hope.

The central city work is no place for the person who wants to do charitable work but has no heart for soul winning. The central city worker must have the same motivation as any other pastor or missionary, but feels the call to the central city scene and has gifts and abilities that enable him to adapt and work in a greatly different life-style community.

Evaluation of central city ministries requires an understanding of wholistic service. This philosophy views man as having many components, but existing ultimately as an indivisible whole. His need in "one department" affects all the others. Christian ministry must touch and heal all areas of life. It is not proper to minister to physical needs and neglect the spiritual or to minister to the spiritual while neglecting the physical. The Christian worker in the central city, like any place else, seeks to bring the whole man to Jesus.

It is a common fault that church programs, in themselves, tend to become sacrosanct. Even unique programs, after some passing of time, tend to become traditional and subtly take on significance (or insignificance) never intended. Preoccupation with methods and order can supplant purpose and goals. Most of us are prone to tradition. Tradition is valuable in that it does give us guidelines of ministry that have proven successful in other circumstances. Tradition should not be scorned and should be considered in developing new ministries. Tradition is usually comfortable and safe. However, the urban ministry worker will probably not meet present-day challenges with methods that are only traditional.

The central city minister must keep an unchanged purpose clearly in view and have the freedom to set goals and objectives, and to establish programs and methods as he deems necessary, in order to fulfill the church's purpose in that unique setting. He must be innovative, creative, and alert to adapt new ideas to implement programs that meet real needs.

He will walk the often narrow pathway between purpose and novelty, and must at least be able to see the difference. He will need to be absolutely committed to timeless purpose, while at the same time open to changing program.

There is no way to perform innovative ministries to the central city without the element of risk. Provisions for failure must be made and close monitoring is

necessary. It is essential that the urban ministry pastor and district superintendent understand this tension.

The central, or urban ministry missionary-pastor, like any other pastor or church leader, will need to be able to evaluate his work based on some kind of measurement. All enterprises, secular or

Mistrust raises itself on one elbow to greet with a suspicious glare the "missionaries" who come to help central city citizens.

religious, tend to drift from their original purposes. Unforeseen obstacles and circumstances will arise to retard progress. Therefore the pastor or manager must have a way of measuring his organization's progress and the means to take remedial action.

High morale, so necessary for the central city pastor, will be determined by a favorable evaluation of his work, recognizable progress towards a goal, and the maintenance of an acceptable image of himself and his mission.

District superintendents who are responsible for central city mission work, and whose assistance and understanding are necessary, must have a standard by which they can measure the effectiveness of the workers and the ministry. Frustration and discouragement come when evaluation is poor or is unattainable.

Evaluating or measuring ministerial success in the central cities is based on the same criteria anywhere: (1) Ministries that meet the real needs of people, and (2) ministries that lead people to Christ and result in making disciples.

The questions we must ask are: (1) Is this service in agreement with the basic purpose of the church?

(2) Is this service helping people at the point of their real needs?

(3) Is this service effectively communicating the Word of God?

(4) Is this service leading people to an experience of forgiveness of and cleansing from sin?

The central city work has no place for do-gooders who have no heart for soul winning.

Evaluating the ministry will recognize that meeting a variety of physical and social needs is a legitimate ministry of mercy. Such may also be necessary to build credibility into the Christian worker's ministry. However, all ministries must move to the ultimate goal of making Christian disciples. Every ministry must be measured on the basis of how well it contributes to this purpose.

Endnote

1. A. H. Maslow, *Motivation and Human Behavior*, revised ed., New York: Harper and Row, 1970.

THE AGONY OF GOD

I listen to the agony of God—

I who am fed,
Who never yet went hungry for a day.

I see the dead—
The children starved for lack of bread—
I see, and try to pray.

I listen to the agony of God—

I who am warm,
Who never yet have lacked a sheltering home.
In dull alarm
The dispossessed of hut and farm,
Aimless and "transient" roam.

I listen to the agony of God—

I who am strong,
With health, and love, and laughter in my soul.

I see a throng
Of stunted children reared in wrong,
And wish to make them whole.

I listen to the agony of God—

But know full well
That not until I share their bitter cry—
Earth's pain and hell—
Can God within my spirit dwell
To bring His kingdom nigh.

—Georgia Harkness

URBAN MINISTRY EDUCATION: THE TASK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

by Jerry Hull

Dean of Students, Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa, Idaho.

"Flight" is both a physical and an emotional response. Flight is one way to escape an unfavorable situation. "Let me out of here" feelings often describe what we perceive to be the best alternative.

The flight syndrome leads many to quit school. Others to abandon their family. Some drop out of wider society and choose an isolated community instead. Flight from the demands of the everyday prompts a few to check out of mortal existence via suicide.

Another often-practiced and less well-known dropout pattern is "urban flight." Urban flight assumes two basic forms. Actually leaving the city is the most noticeable form. Flight into suburbia or the quiet countryside presumes that distance away from the city will allow us to escape the demands, problems, and responsibilities of the city.

In city after city, we Protestants have abandoned the heart of the city. Somehow we've concluded that we minister more successfully when our church building is located on a nice corner, in a nice section of town, filled with nice people. "Nice people" usually means people of the same socioeconomic status and racial stock as ourselves.

Flight from urbia sometimes takes another form. In this case, we remain physically within or near the city, but take a detached emotional response. We maintain a city address—perhaps Denver, Chicago, or Miami. We, however,

fail to wade heart-deep into the city. We attempt to disassociate ourselves from the ills, injustices, and inequities of urbia. We seclude ourselves behind locked doors. We frequent only carefully selected stores and malls. We associate only with those similar to us—racially, economically, and socially.

Serious "unlearning" and "re-learning" are required to overcome both kinds of urban flight. Training for urban ministries is not a sterile activity conducted in the antiseptic environment of a college classroom. Preparation for urban ministries begins in the mind-set or perspective fostered by the church.

Would an evaluation of our published literature, a content analysis of the sermons preached from our pulpits, and a review of the topics agonized over in our prayer meetings bring the modern city into prominence? If the answer is "yes," then we are well on our way to training for urban ministries.

If our published literature, sermons, and prayers hardly ever mention the city, then we don't even have a baseline on which to build a curriculum for urban ministry.

The first ingredient in a full-orbed program of preparation for urban ministry is a *confidence that we can claim the city for the Lord Jesus Christ*. Without this confident perspective for a foundation, all efforts at urban ministry will fail.

Education for urban ministry is not something a Christian school

does to pliable minds. It is all too easy to assume that education for urban ministry happens when a student enrolls in a brilliantly designed mix of sociology, economics, political science, and Bible classes. Instead, *education for urban ministry should be a life-long process learned in one's local church*.

Skills, strategies and a knowledge base for urban ministries should be enlarged and refined by the college curriculum. Some suggestions for this dimension will be addressed later. Urban ministries education, however, must occur on location wherever the local church is functioning.

Let's Make the Most of Our Opportunities

Nazarene congregations in the U.S.A., for example, ring every major city in the land. A military strategist could do wonders with such favored positions. We have the potential to assault the city from every side. How can we, then, carry out this mission?

Some strategies by which the local church prepares its youth for urban ministry are:

1. Confidently, as stated above, claim the city for the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Engage in consistent, urgent, intercessory prayer and fasting over the nearby city and its inhabitants.

3. Promote and collect special offerings for urban ministry organizations and missionaries.

4. Involve a significant number of your congregation in service/mission projects to the city. Some possible activities available are to: (a) Use the Men-in-Missions format; (b) Become a partner congregation with an inner-city congregation which may have to be either an independent church or a congregation of another denomination; (c) Assist organizations that supply clothing, food-stuffs, and medical care for impoverished city dwellers.

5. Struggle honestly and openly with what it means to be affluent when others within a few short blocks or miles live in poverty.

6. Select ways to use your plenty to assist those who have little.

Results are not guaranteed. I do, however, strongly believe that any congregation willing to adhere to the above activities will find some of its young people becoming urban missionaries. There is nothing wrong with being

a butcher, or baker, or candlestick maker, but some of our youth should also become missionaries to urbia in the nearby cities.

Eighteen-year-olds reared in an urban-sensitized congregation will be prepared to enroll in a sequence of courses leading to urban ministries. Most typical college majors fail to encompass the many varied skill areas needed for those seeking to minister to the inner-city residents. A multidisciplinary approach will come closer to targeting the many skills or competencies needed in ministering in urbia.

In March of 1980, the Nazarene Urban Ministries Studies Committee attempted to organize a list of competencies needed for one to minister effectively in the inner city. The committee developed the following tentative position (abstracted from the committee's minutes):

"... preparation for urban

ministry should include course work in the following areas:

1. Theological perspective: God, Man, and Biblical Justice.
2. Ministry skills.
3. Communication skills.
4. Coping skills.
5. Urban cultural sensitivity.
6. Knowledge of social/political structures and resources.
7. Community intervention and action strategies."¹

The local church, our regional colleges, and denominational leadership are all implicated in training for urban ministry. We must join these three partners in this demanding task. The omission of any of these three legs will result in an unstable and inadequate effort.

End Note

1. Descriptive statements concerning each of the specific competencies is available upon request. Write me at Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, Ida.



Prayer for the Complacent

O God, make me discontent with things the way they are in the world, and in my own life.
Teach me how to blush again,
for the tawdry deals,
the arrogant-but-courteous prejudice,
the snickers,
the leers,
the good food and drink which make me too weary to repent,
the flattery given and received,
my willing use of rights and privileges
other men are unfairly denied.

Make me notice the stains when people get spilled off.
Make me care about the slum child downtown
the misfit at work,
the people crammed into the mental hospital,
the men, women, and youth
behind bars.

Jar my complacency; expose my excuses; get me involved in the life of my community,
and give me integrity once more.

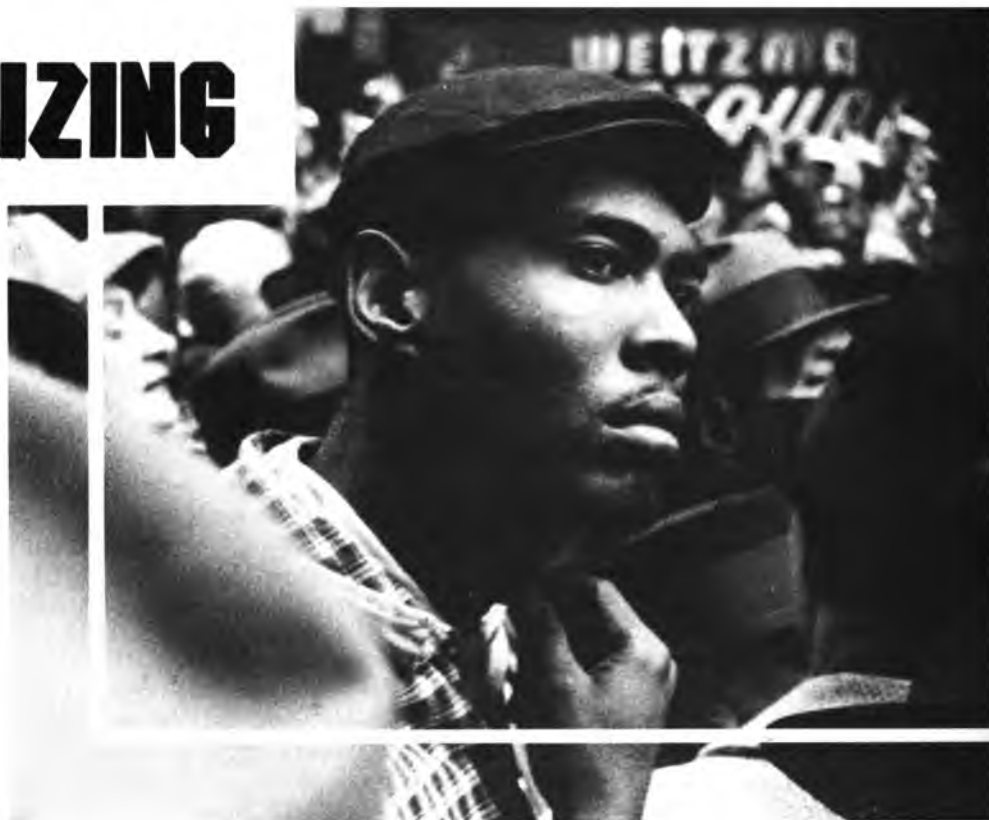
—Robert Raines

Dominique/Daniel Gomes

—From *Creative Brooding*, by Robert Raines. (Used by permission of the Macmillan Company, New York, N.Y.)

EVANGELIZING URBAN BLACKS

by Barry K. Cunningham



Wallowitch

As a Christian, I am encouraged and sense an increasing awareness of a need for the evangelization of the cities.

As a second generation Nazarene, I am inspired to see our denomination designate and emphasize our cities as focal points for evangelism.

However, as a Black Nazarene pastor who is burdened for the cities, I am overjoyed to be on a district which has sensed this need and accepted this challenge.¹

Therefore, it is with renewed vigor that I briefly share a few of my concerns, perceptions, and suggestions regarding the evangelism of "my people."

CONCERNS

Urban Transition

The trend of urban transition has strangled most cities. The migration of individuals, businesses, and churches are just a few examples. The flight from the inner city has not occurred without an effect on those left behind. Regardless of the precipitating reasons for this exodus, a negative message emanates in its wake—a message of despair. Entire church congregations, lights in darkened corners, relocate. Their empty church buildings remain as mute reminders of their reluctance to accept those left behind. Efforts on the part of departing congregations to successfully secure indigenous leadership and cultivate seedling congregations rarely alter the message or lessen the pain of rejection.

I feel the time has come for us as holiness people to resist the impulse to run away, to stem the tide of ethnic exclusiveness and reverse the exclusion-

ary trend of separate but equal facilities for worship. If indeed we are convinced that we have a mission to urban Blacks, we must be prepared to maintain a strong denominational presence in the inner city. This would include efforts to plant new churches as well as preserve established ones.

Urban Blacks and Cities as Mission Fields

The concept of the cities as *mission fields* should be reviewed in order to more clearly understand our proposed relationship to urban Blacks. The evangelization of urban Blacks is a unique and ambitious challenge. It is unique in the respect that many of "my people" share the values and aspirations of the Anglo culture. They are familiar with its idiosyncrasies and are participants in it to a greater or lesser extent.

This, in some instances, would carry over into their preference for participation in existing Anglo worship services. On the other hand, there is a substantial number of urban Blacks who prefer the more traditional style of Black worship. Whatever the case, we need to consider these preferences as we develop future strategies.

Blacks Only

The idea of Blacks evangelizing Blacks is appealing but limited. I believe it is true that Black Christians play a crucial role in evangelizing Blacks. However, I also feel that we must train and utilize all available persons, regardless of ethnic descent, if we expect to enlist the necessary workers for making lasting strides toward our objective. Existing resources have been utilized within the denomination to effectively prepare missionaries to other

countries. Consider how much more urgent and needful it is to modify or create new resources to prepare individuals for our own cities.

PERCEPTIONS

The City

Cities in general are overcrowded and foreboding. Vice and crime are constant companions to those who remain in the inner city. The continual atmosphere of hostility, opposition, and apathy tend to promote the feeling of helpless hopelessness. Personal property is often vandalized. The frustrations of city living reduce the aspirations and ambitions of many to the mere quest for survival.

Although this description of the urban terrain seems bleak, these are the settings in which our churches must grow—rocky soil, perhaps, but not impossible.

Those who would accept the challenge of maintaining a long-term presence in the city should realistically prepare themselves by a gradual entry process into the city (i.e., long weekends, etc.). Serious thought should be given to housing needs of the immediate family as well as the educational possibilities for the children. A minimum of four adults per ministry team, with deep commitment to the city, is critical. These adults would provide the minimum amount of spiritual and psychological support necessary for the challenge. Two couples would be preferable.

The People

Contrary to popular belief the masses of urban Blacks are not unchurched. It has been my experience that most have had some exposure to the Bible and church. There is a proliferation of church gatherings in most cities. They are housed in buildings ranging from run-down homes to beautiful temples. It is not unusual to find several of these "churches" on each block in the Black neighborhood.

However, many of "my people" have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. Others are like sheep without a shepherd. There is a real need for the message our denomination proclaims. But there is an even greater need for a presence of those who can be living examples.

The problems of central city Blacks are often multifaceted. These problems are usually urgent, interrelated, and chronic. Available resources are usually limited and/or inaccessible at the time of need.

The need for demonstrated love (i.e., patience, long-suffering, meekness, kindness, etc.) on a daily basis is a must. This is the key to an effective urban ministry. One should be prepared to minister to the total individual on an ongoing basis. Long-term commitment is a must for effective evangelistic and discipling efforts.²

THE CHALLENGE

It would seem that the challenge of the cities may exceed our resources. It may appear that the returns on our investments may be too few. However, we must boldly accept this challenge. We must pray for divine direction. We must apply without limit our various skills, resources, and energies to this task, trusting God for the increase.

The Cities for God in the 80s is a must, not an option!



Footnotes

1. This article is adapted from an address given at the Eastern Michigan District, Church of the Nazarene, Conference on the Cities, Romulus, Mich., May, 1980.

2. At this point in the address Rev. Cunningham made four suggestions pertaining specifically to the Eastern Michigan District:

(1) That a task force be developed to spearhead the initiative for the evangelization of urban blacks.

(2) That the district superintendent, in conjunction with the District Board and the Department of Home Missions, investigate and identify the potential sources of funding for this effort.

(3) That Rev. Bob Hunter be appointed to the task force.

(4) That Grace Church of the Nazarene be considered as a potential site for future pilot efforts with respect to model building and training.

Best Books on Urban Ministries

THE URBAN MISSION, *Craig Ellison*, ed.—Eerdmans. \$3.95

THE PROBLEM OF WINE SKINS, *Howard A. Snyder*—Inter-Varsity. \$4.95

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WHY WE STAYED IN THE CITY



by Millard Reed*

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Wallowitch

To be suburban or metropolitan—that is the question.

As I talked with Charles Allen, pastor of the largest Methodist church in the world, in Houston, Tex., there was a twinkle in his eye when he said, "I am the best counselor in the world! And I can teach you to be as good as I am. Just ask two questions. The first one is, 'What is your situation?' And the second one is, 'What do you think you ought to do about it?'"

Those two simple questions are also basic for a church considering its own future.

For the last two-and-one-half years the congregation that I pastor in Nashville, Tenn., has been trying to work through the implications of these questions for us.

I. What Is the Situation?

This is the primary question. The answer is surprisingly complex. It takes a great deal of study on the part of the pastor and the people.

**Millard Reed is pastor of the First Church of the Nazarene, Nashville, Tennessee.*

History

During my first two years as pastor in Nashville, I made an exhaustive study of the history of this congregation. By reading old handwritten minutes and perusing volumes of board minutes, I began to discover the character of this church.

It was called into existence in 1898 by a group of laymen who were a part of the holiness movement. J. O. McClurkan was soon called as superintendent. They strongly emphasized the Second Coming, social ministries, and world evangelism in the name of scriptural holiness and in a non-sectarian mood. They were a part of the holiness-merger talk at Chicago in 1907 and Pilot Point, Texas, in 1908, but did not join the Church of the Nazarene until 1915. Rev. H. H. Wise, who had been ordained under McClurkan in 1911, became pastor in 1922 and continued until his death in 1948.

Some 75 pages of historic summary granted me a basic knowledge of the character of this congregation. I would sin against the past were I to ignore that history in my present leadership.

Location

It was fortunate for me that Vanderbilt University was making a study of the immediate vicinity of the church during 1977. I joined that study.

In 1916 a great fire swept through East Nashville. The Nazarenes purchased the burned-out Presbyterian church and rebuilt it. Through the years, adjoining properties have been purchased until today we own more than an entire city block.

The old original building still stands and its chapel accommodates approximately 275. A sanctuary built in 1950 will seat 900. There is classroom space for nearly 1,000, a large gymnasium, and on-site parking for 215 cars and an additional 170 on-street and in adjacent parking lots. The property is valued at \$1.3 million. We are surrounded by residential and commercial property that makes the securing of additional space very difficult and expensive.

The fashionable residential community at the turn of the century has gone through one major transition and is now beginning another. The old homes became multiple dwellings and nearly slum housing. But now the community has "bottomed out." Several blocks nearby have been declared "historic" and there is a surge back to the inner-city residential community by young professionals who are restoring stately old homes.

Recent highway construction makes the location of the church highly "accessible" to the population of approximately 500,000 middle Tennesseans.

Dynamics

With this term I mean to raise the question of the composition and vitality of the church. In 1978, when we began a serious study about the future, our membership was 1,400, the Sunday School had averaged 910, morning worship had averaged 1,067, and the evening service had averaged 579. Income had been \$610,000. Decadal growth had been 40 percent.

More significantly, there was a spirit of optimism. The ratio of "nucleus" to "perimeter" was healthy (see book, *Let Your Church Grow*), and about 750 families called First Church "home." Virtually all of these families lived within a 30-minute drive. A great majority lived within a 10- to 15-minute drive of the church. My assessment was that the church possessed strong positive dynamics.

Nature of Our Ministry

I did the study of the history, location, and dynamics of the church myself. The material was available to me as I dug for it.

But the question of the nature of our ministry was a study that needed to be shared by the congregation.

Process

There were several steps in the process of securing a consensus from the people concerning their understanding of the church's ministry. (1) During the winter-spring of 1978 we did an eight week CST study on Wednesday night, following the text by Paul Orjala, *Get Ready to Grow*. I prepared survey questions for the congregation to fill out after they were acquainted with the dynamics of church growth. (2) With the Wednesday night study complete, one of our bright young men prepared a four-page survey which was circulated among the entire congregation on Sunday. It gave us further insight concerning the congregation's understanding of our ministry.

In May of 1978, the church board brought all the collected data together and began to make a study on its own part. An all-day meeting asked the "STP Questions" (Situation, Target, and Program). It also reviewed "resources, needs, and problems." The board ordered the study of other congregations somewhat larger than ours, to search for intrinsic differences as well as a leadership-style to determine what the congregation is expecting of the board and the pastor as we grapple with our future. The board also set August of 1978 as the target date for review, reflection, and possible action.

Conclusion

By the August all-day meeting, we asked some questions and made some basic conclusions: (1) God wants us to be a strong center of holiness evangelism. (2) Who are we? We are a fellowship in which God has placed a great deal of potential. (3) What are we doing? We are building a strong New Testament church of Spirit-filled Christians through an ongoing program of evangelism and discipleship to reach all Nashville and beyond. More specifically, we saw ourselves as a "metropolitan church" with a broad range of ministry including specialized ministries. We distinguished "metropolitan church" from "community church." This is not to say that we do not have people from the immediate community. It is to say that we serve the entire "greater Nashville" community. In order to serve the large metropolitan congregation, it is necessary for us to offer a broad range of "special ministries" as well as the regularly anticipated min-

istry of any church. A large gymnasium houses an active athletic program. A large constituency of young adult singles means that we have special ministries to them with particular organizations to serve the single parent and the divorcee, even a special class for the mid-life divorcee. We also have a Christian counseling service that is operated under a separate board but is housed on our property. We have an extensive ministry of benevolence to the poor of our immediate community. All of these features and others characterize our ministry.

Dilemma

We are a dynamic, growing church, with a rich history, a broad ministry, and limited space. If we are to continue to grow and maintain the dynamic, broad ministry that has characterized our history, we must find more space. That is our situation.

II. What Do We Think We Ought to Do About It?

Notice the subjective nature of this question. That is the way it has to be. There are no absolutes. As a church, we must come to a consensus concerning our solution to the problem and act accordingly.

By August of 1978 we were ready to lay out the options and consider the costs and consequences of each. Here are the options we faced.

1. Sell Our Building and Move to a New Location

Costs—Appraisal estimates were made on a sale price of our church, and conversations were held with specialists concerning the market for such a large church in an inner-city situation. A search committee sought out possible sites for the new church and actual property and construction costs were reported. Specific locations were studied at the point of “visibility” and “accessibility.” Earnest money was even placed on one lovely location south of the central city.

Consequences—As we studied the several possible locations, it became obvious that a move would change the nature of our ministry. A move in any direction would put a major section of the “metropolitan community” beyond the 30-minute drive time. We felt it would rob us of the “metropolitan” nature of our ministry. We knew it would do away with our “benevolent ministry.” On the other hand, it would provide acreage for expansion that is so difficult to secure in the inner city. Of course, the prospect of a beautiful, entirely new complex was very appealing.

2. Stay as We Are and Organize New Churches

Costs—compared to the financial outlay for a totally new complex this option was much less

costly. This option was discussed thoroughly. First Church was certainly in favor of organizing new churches. She has aided in the organization of many in the past.

Consequences—“Organize new churches” was an acceptable part of option two, but “stay as we are” was not. It was felt that the internal dynamic was such that to limit the potential of First Church to its present capacity was a statement of unbelief. Already two morning worship services were filling and the parking lot was overcrowded.

3. Build Where We Are

Costs—Estimates were made concerning the availability and cost of adjacent lots for parking. A proposed parking garage could be built for approximately \$4,000 per parking space. By using the present facility, the question of sale and relocation could be avoided.

Consequences—As we looked at the various locations in terms of the nature of our ministry, no location was as good for “visibility” and “accessibility” as the one we were in. We concluded that the nature of our ministry demanded such “accessibility” to Greater Nashville.

We judged that a larger sanctuary, placed in the center of the population of middle Tennessee, would be the platform for an enlarged ministry of the nature that had characterized our history.

Our Choice

This is the far-too-brief story of how one church asked, “What is our situation?” and “What do we think we ought to do about it?” But it would be misleading to allow you to think we are through the entire process. Actually, as one moves through a phase of decision-making, the situation changes, which means one must further assess what ought to be done.

The decision of the August, 1978, board meeting was to remain at our present location and move toward building. But our estimates of construction and financial feasibility were just that—estimates. We continued to reassess our data. In February of 1979, I called the congregation to a “Prayer Mission” to seek out the mind of the Lord, both personally and collectively, concerning our future. In April of 1979, an architectural firm was employed to give us a full construction and financial feasibility study along with renderings. In July of 1980, these were presented to the board and then to the congregation.

Again the situation is altered. We now have specific plans before us with stages of construction . . . and a specific interest rate on mortgage money. Again we are at the point of saying, “What do we think we ought to do about it?”



**We are losing our Christianity because
Christianity is a creed for heroes while we are mainly harmless,
good-natured people who want everybody to have a good time.**

—W. R. Inge



YOU CAN MINISTER TO MORE THAN ONE RACE IN ONE CHURCH

by Robert F. Utter*

Ministering to a congregation with more than one race is one of the greatest challenges facing a pastor. The primary task is to move the people from the chilly atmosphere of tolerance to the comfortable, warm atmosphere of acceptance. You can tolerate a person without accepting him, but you cannot love a person without accepting him.

There are professing Christians deeply involved in the world mission program of their respective churches, who, unfortunately, would not accept a dark-skinned person into their church fellowship. This is hypocrisy in the rawest form. How can one say he loves all for whom Christ died and refuse to accept persons unlike himself? This borders on prejudice which, according to the Bible, is sin.

The Early Church struggled with prejudice. Peter relates his experience with racial prejudice in Acts 10. He frankly admits to the Gentiles gathered in the home of the Roman centurion Cornelius, that God showed him he was not to call any man impure or unclean just because he was a member of another race. Cornelius told Peter about his spectacular vision. Then Peter confessed: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right" (NIV). All men and women are created in God's image. All are equal before Him in worth. All have an equal right to respect. There are no second-class citizens as far as God is concerned. God is no respecter of persons. How can any true followers of Christ believe otherwise? Sad-

ly, some Christian internationals have come to the United States with a vibrant testimony and have backslidden because they were turned away from a "Christian church" by an unfriendly, discriminating congregation.

Prejudice is a judgment or opinion formed *before* the facts are known; literally, a pre-judgment. Children *learn* prejudice from their parents far more from acts than from words such as a raised eyebrow, a joke, a shocked voice, a withdrawing movement of the body and by a long silence. The pastor who wants to minister to more than one race must do all he can to deal effectively with prejudice through prayer, instruction, and personal example.

Glenn, a transplanted Jamaican with above-average intelligence, was a member of our senior high class. One day he came to my office with a real problem. He told me how a certain white boy at the high school hated him for some unknown reason and he used Glenn as a punching bag whenever



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they were alone. Glenn begged him to "lay off," but the white boy persisted in his attacks. One day his patience gave out and Glenn fought back and as a result both boys were suspended from school. I took Glenn to the principal, who was most unsympathetic. Next I secured the name and address of the troublemaker and Glenn and I went to the boy's apartment where I related to the mother what had happened. The mother, after seeking confirmation from her son, scolded him and made him promise to refrain from bothering Glenn. Glenn never had another encounter and graduated with honors, including a scholarship to Yale University.

The pastor who would minister to more than one race in one church must demonstrate his willingness to help that newcomer from another country or culture to adjust to his new environment. He must involve the other members of the church body as much as possible in ministry to the newcomers: housing, furniture, jobs, schooling for the children are some of the basic needs. Since some internationals are not allowed to take more than eight dollars out of their country, many arrive practically penniless. A church member family may be asked to provide housing until the new arrival finds a job with a living wage. Once an apartment is secured,

1) A fair representation of all races on the various boards and committees of the local church. (At our recent Planning Conference, 8 of the 17 participants were of Non-North American white ethnic backgrounds.)

2) A demonstration by the pastor of a spirit of fairness to all, without exception.

3) A flexibility and versatility to provide meaningful worship experiences for the different races in the congregation. (In my congregation, our minister of music alternates music styles. The choir sings a variety of music such as Negro spirituals, choir and congregation dialogue in song, and sometimes he asks the various racial groups to sing a special in their native tongue. We serve the Lord's Supper monthly, since this is the custom in many Asian countries.)

4) A ban on labeling. Help your congregations to develop an intolerance for language and stereotyping with implied racial slurs.

5) A strong emphasis on world missions, especially on those countries represented in your congregation.

6) A provision of opportunities for internationals to share their culture such as a monthly or quarterly International Friendship Night.

You can tolerate a person without accepting him, but you cannot love a person without accepting him.

the men from the church can move the new friends to save costly moving expenses.

One Sunday morning, Dr. Vijay Bisarya, a Hindu dentist, walked into our church foyer out of curiosity. He read the notices on the bulletin board and was invited by one of the ushers to join the worshippers in the sanctuary. That morning Vijay heard his first gospel message. Rev. C. M. Titus, our minister to internationals, invited the doctor to dinner. During the conversation he asked where he might store some books and other personal items. Space was immediately provided in the Titus apartment. Another pressing need was housing. One of our families provided a room with kitchen privileges. One week later Dr. Bisarya returned to the same apartment for a concentrated Bible study and before leaving committed his life to Jesus Christ. In October, 1980, Dr. Bisarya applied to our World Mission Department for permission to serve as a dentist in our hospital in Swaziland, South Africa. All Christian believers are responsible for taking the gospel across cultural and racial lines to people like Dr. Bisarya.

Guidelines for Interracial Ministry

The pastor who would minister to more than one race must establish ground rules for himself and for his congregation. Some of the basic rules are:

Dr. Mark Hanna, director of evangelism and teaching for International Students International, writes in a recent issue of *Doorways*, "Twentieth Century Christians suffer from spiritual presbyopia. Presbyopia is the inability of the eye to focus sharply on nearby objects resulting from hardening of the crystalline lens with advancing age. Impaired by spiritual presbyopia we can see far away places clearly but we don't see the opportunities and the potential in reaching out to the world that comes to us. The frontiers of foreign missions are in our cities, in our neighborhoods and on our campuses." Dr. Hanna, in this same article, reminds us that "the greatest evangelist China has ever known, John Sung, came to the Lord while a student in the United States. He's called 'the father of 10,000 churches.' He preached to millions of people throughout China during the Communist take-over in the late 1940's. One of the greatest church planters in India, Bakht Singh, was converted to Christ and disciplined while a student in North America." An international you welcome to your church may return someday to serve as a leader in his country or work in some profession with a dynamic Christian witness. You have the wonderful opportunity to build a bridge of friendship into that person's life and eventually be present when he commits his life to Christ.



HOME MINISTRY GROUPS: NEW HARMONIES IN URBAN MINISTRY

by Steve Ingersol*

The rehearsal had just ended. The young conductor/composer turned to his middle-aged pianist and asked in anticipation, "Do you like it?"

"Yes . . . I like this one bar. (Pause.) That's the only bar I understand. The rest of it doesn't make much sense. Modern music doesn't make much sense anyway."

Surprised and somewhat frustrated, the conductor/composer pointed out that there were 30 or 40 bars in the piece that she would like if she would try to understand the music.

"I wonder if people who write this way are . . . unhappy," mused the pianist, not hearing the conductor/composer's stammered explanations. "Not your music, of course," she added. "I wonder if they are insane."

Most pastors who struggle with the pressing demands of urban ministry identify themselves as either the frustrated, misunderstood conductor/composer or the one who is truly insane. Established city churches are suffering extreme crises of identity as they attempt to initiate relevant ministries to the city while holding on to their past constituency who have moved to the suburbs. Trying to blend the power and prestige of "First Church" which once held people's loyalties with the unconditional acceptance and

humility which makes all walks of life comfortable before God in worship, taxes the creativity and energy levels of the best of pastors.

The constantly nagging question of how to maintain your ministerial equilibrium as you try to pastor a heterogeneous community requires new chords, new harmonies, and sometimes new pianists as the conductor/composer tries to minister the ageless melody of the Living Word to a new situation.

It is within this field of tension that we minister. Amid the diversity of all the ideas that have been offered to meet the needs of First Church of the Nazarene, Los Angeles, California, one idea took hold and began an exciting new experience for us—*Home Ministry Groups*.

Here's What

Home Ministry Groups are now the new midweek activity of the church. A new curriculum is designed and written by the pastoral staff of the church to meet express needs of our particular situation. It is taught to seven Home Ministry Groups throughout the city of Los Angeles on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

The groups are clustered according to concentrations of constituency throughout the city. This allows for each "homogeneous" group to meet and share in depth while at the same time all groups are studying the same portions of the Word.

Any cultural adaptations that need to take place do so as each Home Ministry Group constructs its own identity as part of the larger Body of Christ. The informal environment of meeting in

persons' homes rather than church buildings or restaurants draws persons closer together in Christian hospitality.

Highlighting the Home Ministry Group experiences of each month is the Celebration Dinner, where one Wednesday per month everyone in the Home Ministry Groups gathers at the church for a special meal. Special music, special people, a special sermon, and special food are the staples of this special banquet. Everyone in the church is invited.

Voluntary donations have always met the cost of the food, allowing the rich and the poor to feel free to come with no restraints. As each quarter comes to an end, more Home Ministry Groups are formed to include and reach more people.

Here's Why

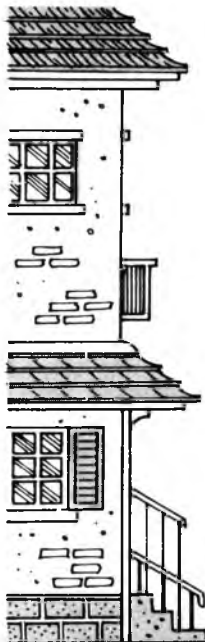
1. We are a city church with a city ministry and a city-wide constituency. There is always the danger of concentrating on just one segment of our constituency to the exclusion of the other groups in the church. With over 11 different nationalities represented in our church and twice that many other classifications of our people, Home Ministry Groups is a good way to better meet individual needs.

2. With people reluctant to drive many miles into the urban location of the church for midweek services, we need to go where the people are. By meeting in homes throughout the city, we do just that. Even the downtown groups experience continued growth by meeting in homes rather than in the church building each time.

(continued on page 38)



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California.



MINISTERING TO A NEIGHBORHOOD

by Ruth Morse*



The phone rings. The voice on the other end of the line explains: "Hello, I'm Lois Watkins, the manager of the apartment building where Tom Cole lives. He's been very sick the last few days, and I got your number from him. I know that you come to visit him frequently, and that you stay by him even when he's not feeling well—I thought you might be able to help him, or at least cheer him up. You seem to be more reliable than his other friends—you don't desert him in his bad times like they do."

You respond with reassurance that you will do what you can. Your fingers dial Tom's number by memory, and a feeble voice on the other end answers, "Hello."

"Hi, Tom, this is Ruth, and I understand you've been sick for a few days. Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Oh, hello. I'm glad you called. I've been having trouble with my back, and something like a case of the flu at the same time. I don't want to go to the doctor—at least not until after payday. Anyway, I'm afraid he'll put me in the hospital."

The conversation continues for a while. You try to find out how you can best help. You remember a person in your church with some medical know-how, and, after you finish talking to Tom, you call this person and ask them to visit Tom on the next day. They readily comply. Then you call the

manager back to let her know what you have done so that she'll feel a little more at ease.

That incident happened to me a few weeks ago. The names are changed, but the relationship I have with a man in his 70s with severe health problems, and his apartment manager are very real. It all started about two years ago when a group of Nazarenes start-

David once was as lonely as a "pelican in the desert." Lots of people are just that lonely in the crowd that is Los Angeles.

ed a program which we called Neighborhood Christian Service Corps. We attend a Nazarene church in the heart of Los Angeles. As a group we desired to engage in Christian ministry to the lonely, destitute people right in our neighborhood. Hence, NCSC was born.

I have never felt comfortable with door-to-door evangelistic approaches that only emphasize conversation while neglecting obvious problems that exist in a person's life. I have desired to share my faith and also deal with people's other basic needs, es-

pecially those of hunger, sickness, and loneliness. People on the edge of existence should be more a part of my life, I felt. The theme verses of NCSC, at its inception, and ones which express my feelings are Matthew 25:35-40:

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (KJV)

***Ruth Morse is chairperson, Board of Christian Life, First Church of the Nazarene, Los Angeles, California.**



Los Angeles is strewn with people barely able to exist in the midst of an affluent society. People not only need to hear the gospel, they need to see living expressions of the love of Christ.

Our group decided to go in teams of two to apartment buildings near our church. Our major focus would be providing services to those in need through community agencies or our own resources. As preliminary work, managers in apartment complexes were interviewed to see if they could be open to people going door-to-door in their buildings to help people. If the manager was open to this, a mode of operation was agreed on.

We found that each apartment building had its own unique makeup; mine was mostly elderly persons living alone, while another building was mostly Spanish-speaking family units. So we printed up a handout which we gave to individuals as we contacted them for the first time. It read:

Christian Young Adults in Your Neighborhood Interested in You.

We believe . . . most people in our neighborhood could be assisted by the available community resources if they only knew those resources existed and if they knew where to find them.

Our purpose . . . is to become personally acquainted with those interested and to assist you in discovering helpful resources.

We are not interested in financial assistance (no charge, honest!)

We are not interested in trying to persuade people to be involved in anything they do not want to be involved in.

We are not associated with federal, state, county, or city agencies in any way.

We ARE Interested in YOU! We know that a lot of people will be skeptical of us. Some will want to know what we "really" are or what we "really" want, as if we are hiding our true intentions. We realize this and we know it may be hard to trust us at first, but HONESTLY, . . . we don't have any secret motives. We are just a group of Christian friends in your

neighborhood who want very much to become acquainted with you and HELP YOU (if needed). We know the city can be a lonely, insecure place to live and we feel it's about time somebody should make our neighborhood less LONELY and MORE SECURE for the people who live here.

NCSC opens my heart to the wounds of the city.

One of the major needs we encountered was loneliness—people were desperate for a listening ear.

The first night my partner and I went out to our building (we go every week to the same location, at the same time), we met the person who was the subject of the phone call I mentioned at the beginning of this article. A man in his early 70s with emphysema and other medical problems, Tom really wants to have someone to listen to him and care about him.

He lives by himself in a run-down apartment building just a few blocks from our church. We have discovered that the inner-city can be one of the most solitary places to live. Over the last

couple of years, Tom and I have developed a friendship which has added significantly to my life. I have learned in a deeper sense the part of St. Francis's prayer which states, "For it is in giving that we receive." It has been fun—we have talked about books, gone out to dinner together, laughed, and shared.

I wish I could say Tom has had a miraculous conversion as the result of this time together. He has not. But he has come to church. The first time at Los Angeles First was the first time he had been in a church in over 40 years. I gave him a Bible. He has already read it through twice. Even though there have been no great miracles, there have been small ones. And I am still praying that Christ will become a living reality in Tom's life.

Neighborhood Christian Service Corps is not the only answer to helping a church meet the needs of its community, but it's a beginning. As a layperson I expect my church to evangelize, but I also want to belong to a church that engages in compassionate ministries to broken, lonely persons.

My weekly involvement in NCSC breaks down the barriers of my middle class existence and opens me to the wounds of the city. It has made me a stronger Christian.

The Pastor's Psalm

The Lord is my Pastor: I shall not want.

He maketh me to feel confident and assured; His love leadeth me in a life of peace and serenity.

He encourageth my soul; He revealeth His will for my life so that I may bring Him glory.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of defeat, I will fear no apparent failure,

For Thou art with me. Thy hand and approving smile, they comfort me.

Thou feedeth me with the bread of life in the presence of the skeptics; Thou art sitting at the

Right hand of the Father and praying for my healing; my blessings are more than I can contain.

I know that His love and pastoral care will be with me every day of my ministry, and I will dwell in His church and be in His congregation forever.

—Michael B. Ross

SERVING IN THE CITY

(continued from page 13)

Sometimes the people instinctively begin to draw away from you. You sense that, and you need support.

If churches could only understand what an unbelievable mission field the city really is, finances would be no problem. Chicago is the great unknown mission field. Here it is right in the Midwest. In my community, I have people from over a dozen countries in both hemispheres, in my own neighborhood, right where I live. We have native Americans, we have Greeks, we have East Indians, we have Chinese, we have Koreans, we have Filipinos—all of these people who are unreached people for the gospel of Jesus Christ. There's no way they can possibly be reached unless the entire church is mobilized. So financially, and another way the churches can help is to challenge their young people to be willing to give two to three years of their lives before they settle down and get married and have children to go to an inner-city church, and devote themselves as missionaries for the cause of Christ, throw themselves into the work of Christ. Give us your prayers and your dollars and your young people.

Cook: You mentioned young people. If you were to advise a young person, maybe one that feels a special pull or tug into this kind of ministry, but really knows very little about it, what's some advice you would give?

Bledsaw: First of all, I think you have to understand the relationship between the American dream and why we have abandoned the city. That is, as long as we yearn for a single-family dwelling in a low-density housing area, we have already ruled out the city immediately, because these places don't exist in the city. You have to be willing to live in an apartment. You have to be willing to live in fairly crowded conditions—that's what the city is. So many young people today seem to be adopting the value systems of this world that equates success with making money. If you're called to the city and God brings you here to minister, you may make far less money than you could in the suburbs, and you may miss out on an awful lot of things that others would count dear. You will make sacrifices for the cause of Christ, but I would say first of all, think long and hard about the fact that you want to give for the kingdom of God, and refuse, absolutely refuse, to give in to the values of this world.

Cook: How do you define commitment?

Bledsaw: Being willing to pay any price, bear any burden, go anywhere, do anything that the Lord Jesus Christ would lay upon your heart to bring people to Him.

Cook: What about skills? Are there special skills that would better prepare one for this type of ministry?

Bledsaw: Learn Spanish. The city of Chicago will be a Spanish-speaking city by the year 2000. We English-speaking people will be in the minority before too long. The Spanish-speaking population is growing very quickly in the United States. If we refuse to

learn Spanish, we refuse to do cross-cultural ministry, and that can't please the Lord. Learn Spanish. Second is take all the courses in sociology that you can. Learn about the city. Be exposed to the city. Visit the city. Visit a city church. Ask a pastor in a city church if there's a family where you could spend three weeks in the summer. Those things would be valuable.

Cook: Rev. Gilbert Leigh is a Nazarene elder who has lived a number of years in Chicago, and operates a special ministry called New World Ministries. Please give me your impression of the influence and impact of this man in Chicago, and a little bit about his work.

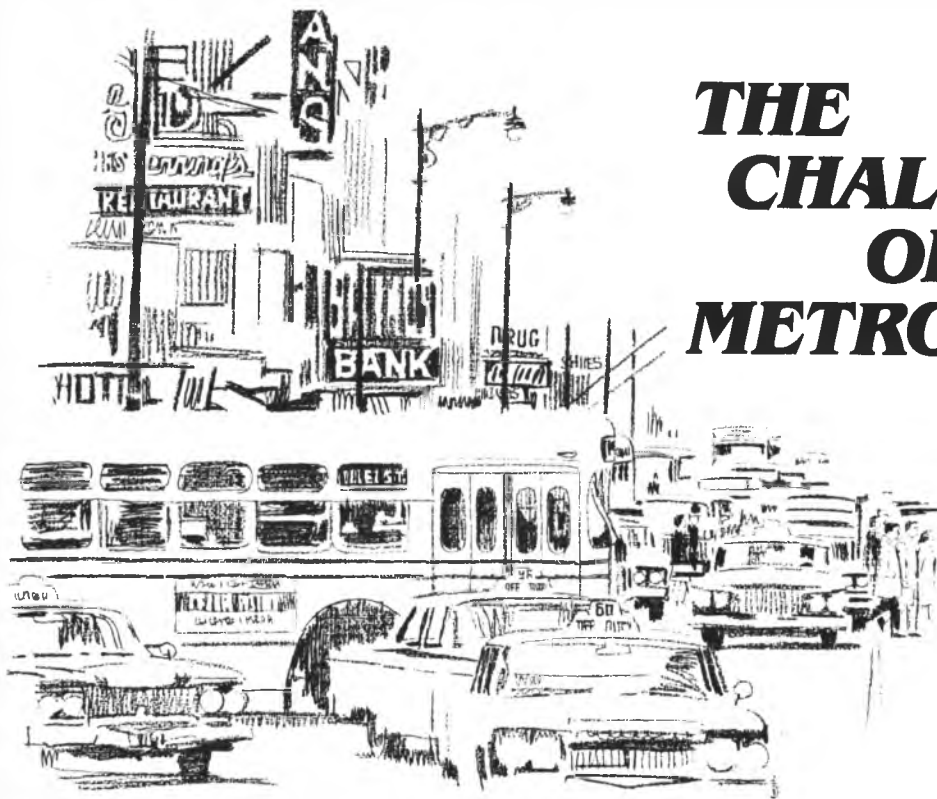
Bledsaw: Well, besides directing New World Christian Ministries, Gilbert also pastors our Engleside Church, which is one of our two Black churches here in the city. Gilbert is widely respected in the city of Chicago. He has a rare understanding of the necessity for Christian concern for wholistic ministries. I think if Gilbert Leigh were in most any other denomination, that the people of the denomination would know much more about him than we do. His agency runs headstart programs, they offer prenatal counseling, dental care for the poor and disadvantaged. He has a genuine concern. I believe he's a valuable resource to the Church of the Nazarene, and I believe God is going to use him in the days ahead.

Cook: Many people have referred to work in the central cities of North America, especially the very, very large cities, as pioneering work. How do you respond to that?

Bledsaw: I think it is an exciting time to pastor in the city in the Church of the Nazarene. I believe that God is going to do a new thing in the cities through our church. I feel like our pioneer missionaries must have felt in the beginning of our denomination when they saw brand-new fields opening and they saw a vision of what God was going to do in their area. That's the way I feel now. I feel that we're beginning to awaken to the tremendous mission field we have right here at home. That's exciting to be part of that, and it's exciting to give your life for that. That's something that is extremely satisfying, very, very worthwhile.

Cook: You feel some rapport with the original Harmon Schmelzenbach when he trekked across Swaziland and saw those villages that were untouched and met people that had never heard about Christ, and experienced the frustrations of communication problems, and lack of support? Does all that sound familiar?

Bledsaw: It certainly does, and I feel a tremendous affinity with Dr. Bresee. The more I read about his burden for the city, the closer I feel to him. When he said that the Church of the Nazarene had a mission as a church to reach the poor for Jesus Christ, and that we would have centers of holy fire throughout the cities of North America—and his vision for meeting the social needs of people, providing free medical and dental services right there in the church, feeding the poor right there in his church—I feel a tremendous affinity with Dr. Schmelzenbach and Dr. Bresee.



THE CHALLENGE OF METROPOLITAN MINISTRY

by Alan Rodda*

A great deal of attention has recently been focused on ministries to the poor and minority populations of the city. Considerable assistance has also been given to the suburban pastor where more homogeneous and geographically proximate populations are ministered to by the church.

Some urban churches, however, reach out considerably beyond their immediate geographical and cultural areas and gather together a variety of individuals who normally commute a considerable distance in order to attend. They have an appeal which motivates attendance and involvement from people who live miles away. While some are consumer oriented, offering sit-down appeal through sermon, music, etc., many are building a quality ministry with their far-flung members. These are exercising an influence throughout the entire city. Many are not complete churches in the sense that they offer a variety of expertly done services, but nevertheless effectively address the needs of city dwellers and help their people come to grips with the challenge of ministering in their complex environments. They are what we call metropolitan churches.

This kind of a church is generally not faced with the problems of urban blight, poverty and racial ferment. They are, rather, brought face-to-face with another huge segment of the city; those whose lives seem fulfilled on the surface, but in whom, behind and beneath the vivid display of their activity, are both visible and invisible aches in their spirit. The city is where the middle-class and af-

fluent wounded live in abundance, suffering from internal lacerations of the heart.

The city is full of such people, crying out with groans from the innermost being. For many city dwellers life is exciting, but for millions of others, life is painful, lonely, impersonal, meaning nothing except economic security. For others unfulfillment means filling the vacuum of their lives with superficial urban diversions. Formerly married individuals and single parents struggle to readjust and survive, often without adequate means. Children act out, often deviantly, the pressures they feel in their large urban schools. Former small-town individuals, for whom life has broken down, seek to get a new start and self-image in the relative obscurity and tolerance of the city.

In this arena, the metropolitan church has an incredible opportunity to attract needy people and minister to them, when it learns how to minister in that environment. While there are many principles of ministry common to both smaller town and metropolitan churches, there are some key differences



***Alan Rodda is pastor of the First Church of the Nazarene, Portland, Oregon.**

that make reaching out in the city a task requiring some philosophical and functional retooling. **One reason most city churches do not make an impact is that their leadership still functions as if they are ministering in the smaller town** with its more homogeneous, stable and predictable “knowing everything that is going on” population. To assume that what works in one place automatically generalizes to the other, is a built-in program for death.

What kind of retooling is necessary if a metropolitan church is to effectively reach out to and get a response in its environment? While the writer makes no pretense of exhausting the subject, there are some principles that might be useful in gearing up for effective metropolitan church ministry.

I. The Principle of Selective Objective. Here the key question is: Whom can you best reach, and how will you minister to them? As previously mentioned, the city is a dynamic blend of many people in varying “spaces” in life. Very few churches in the city have the variety of resources to minister to a broad base of needs, but usually they can effectively address one or two sets of needs. Most successful city churches discover a set of needs that they might potentially minister to and garner their resources to most effectively address the people with those needs. **They pick their target audience and go after it prayerfully with all their energies and abilities.** They relegate other noble but energy-sapping pursuits to secondary priority.

One church in our metropolitan area, only eight years old, decided it could most effectively minister to the struggles of the divorcee and single parent. They concentrated all their energies into learning about addressing the needs of the formerly married in their city. They still don’t excel in some of the other age-interest related programs, but are doing a great job with the population they best know how to serve. As they grow, they are broadening the base of their ministries, but their impetus came in narrowing their objective, knowing what they were going after, how they intended to accomplish the goal, and moving their total energies in that direction.

How does a church determine whom to pursue? One way is to evaluate existing resources and determine what kind of foundations of ministry could be built upon there. One reason the above mentioned church reached out to singles was because several of their initial leadership, formerly married themselves, had a grasp of how their own needs were met and thus became deeply interested in helping others in similar circumstances. Another way is that of interested people simply looking around their community and identifying needs, learning how to address them, though they may not necessarily be representative of that need themselves. Whatever route is taken, an effective metropolitan church seriously follows the principle of selective objective. They move singly and with considerable energy towards one or two identified needs. **One advantage the metropolitan church has over the smaller town church is their ability to call upon an infinite variety of resources** to gain skills in ministering to the needs they select to address. The principle of selective objective, choosing your

needs and mobilizing to minister to the people who have them, is a very important rule to effective metropolitan ministry.

II. The Principle of Recognition Precipitation. Settling upon the needs to meet doesn’t automatically guarantee an audience for the metropolitan church. With the best of intentions and resources, the challenge of getting noticed still looms. When you consider that statistics reveal that in an average metropolitan population, the most awareness any one church can arouse is about 3 percent of the population, highly scattered throughout the region, the difficulty of the recognition task becomes clear. As a congregation builds, word of mouth becomes the most important vehicle of “telling the story,” but until that kind of interest mounts, **churches must be creative in rebuilding their image and getting the recognition needed to attract interest.** This is indeed one of the most difficult challenges facing the metropolitan church.

The challenge becomes more interesting when it is realized that no one ad or radio/TV announcement will begin to touch the market. Until the “word of mouth” factor begins to go to work in your behalf, the impact of one isolated piece of advertising or communication does very little good. It is the continual exposure in well-placed areas of potential interest that finally begins to raise the awareness level of interested urbanites in the ministry of a particular church. Our church was on area wide television for seven years before a significant number of inquiries and calls for help came in. To even get a hearing, the metropolitan church must make a concerted effort over months and years in intelligent ways. The best awareness raising tools are not necessarily the media unless the church can take advantage of being in the middle of a newsworthy event. The average newspaper church page in the city does little to discriminate one church from the others in the readers’ eyes and say “try me.” The best “recognition weapons” of the metropolitan church are finding out where targeted audiences are most likely to be and interjecting the leadership’s personal presence and communications into those scenes time and time again. **The city church striving for recognition of its services would do well to schedule less “gathering in” or attraction kinds of activities, and send its more gifted people out to where the action is;** i.e., where the people with the targeted needs are.

For example, our church has a strong component of men and women in their late 30s and 40s. It has come to our attention lately how many of these and their acquaintances outside the church are experiencing “mid-life crisis.” Because knowledge of this phenomenon is not so widespread as to have saturated the area, we organized a first-rate course in the subject. Several weeks before the actual course, we challenged our mid-lifers to bring at least one acquaintance to a neutral location. We also advertised this course and its reputable teachers in certain periodicals normally read by middle-age people. I asked one of the city paper editors to run an article on it, under their direction, with the provision that our resources got acknowledged

and announced. In that way, we combined the best of the information and advertising worlds in the city environment and got both recognition and results.

While your church might not take that tack, there are a hundred other creative ways to raise awareness of what you are doing (provided you are on target with the need and its solution) and to get results. Don't forget the great importance of the principle of recognition.

III. Principle of Acceptance Without Compromise. At this point, it is imperative to be truly understood. The high priority of the church is to be a careful steward of the full gospel, which is the only way the "Good News" can be liberating to urbanites whose lives have broken down. But the targeted audiences are often those who exactly fit that category and if the city church is to be built at all, it will be on the faith and obedience of such contrite sinners. It is people like this, liberated from their bondage, who will begin to form the nucleus for exciting outreach and evangelism.

Such people, however, cannot be "half-citizens" of the church. **They must be given the full privilege of belonging and leadership in proper season.** Too many city churches rejoice over the conversion of the divorcees, but do not accord them full stature and opportunity to help lead and forge out direction. At best, there is half acceptance, which at bottom line is no acceptance at all. The old restrictions, built upon a former stable social order, are still operative and it is little wonder that the subtle stigma of being divorced or an "outsider" (not a true Nazarene through lineage or connection) results in the eventual exodus of such prime people to more accepting churches.

The next sentence is true, but at the same time sad. In our church are at least a hundred people who have gravitated to the warmth of our fellowship from churches who had the first opportunity, but which failed to communicate true acceptance. We strongly believe that places of leadership or service are available to any who exhibit spiritual fruit and gifts in their lives, regardless of their past or previous connections. It's an incredible sight to see scores of formerly broken and lonely persons worshipping each Sunday, taking their place in ministry leadership and fulfilling our ministry dreams for them.

Given the nature and problems of the urban citizen, the city church, to be true to the Great Commission, must be unconditionally accepting of people without compromising her call to commitment. Otherwise, the market for ministry is diminished to nearly nothing. This kind of sincere acceptance may require some major mental shifts in the leadership's perspective (especially the pastor), but the effectiveness of metropolitan ministry depends upon it.

IV. The Principle of Personalness. Ten years of ministry in the city have convinced me that outside the need to be restored in Jesus Christ, the greatest lack experienced by many urbanites is personal, meaningful, supportive relationships with significant others. The presence of authentic fellowship is the

number one reason new people identify with a church. On the other hand, the perceived lack of meaningful personal relationships is the first reason people give for leaving. A few metropolitan churches reach out and pull commuters in on the sheer talent and reputation of the pulpiteer and music program. Most succeed, however, because they have prioritized the ministry of vital personal care and fellowship, a need felt almost universally by city dwellers.

Our church spends more time on the creating of relational links and supportive fellowship than any other ministry venture. **Fellowship outreach is so important to success in the city that we dare not take it for granted that parishioners will automatically do it.** One of our most talented staff ministers spends nearly full time motivating fellowship outreach, so high is it in our priority system.

For example, newcomers are given every opportunity to develop meaningful personal relationships with current members through our Host Sponsor Program. Small groups are constantly organized to motivate fellowship through Bible study and prayer support. Our Youth and Adult Sunday School has been organized into what is now called "Small Church." Each church is in charge of a pastor-teacher, who is challenged to "pastor" the people much as they would be in a smaller fellowship sitting. Whatever it takes to highlight and actualize personal interest and support is strongly motivated from the top down.

The key to creating authentic fellowship is the self-understanding of the laity. They must be educated to become more than the consumers and administrators we have historically taught them to be. Continual energy must be given to reeducating them to the absolute priority of their own ministry to others, especially new people. Changing age-old ideas of what constitutes the role of a lay person often requires strong medicine, like insisting on sharing the traditional calling, visiting, crisis intervention, prayer support with them and really releasing them to serve with freedom and autonomy in that role. That is the one way to minister effectively in the city. I would not hesitate to say that **the most rewarding fruits of my ministry in the city are the presence of many laypersons who see themselves in a co-ministry role,** using their gifts and energies to minister where I could not as effectively. The principle of personalness must be implemented in the far-flung parish of the metropolitan church, if there is any hope of meeting needs.

These principles for metropolitan ministry do not include all the important handles needed for effectiveness. They constitute what, I hope, will be beginning ways to develop your own action/perspective on Kingdom work in the city. I'm convinced that the secular city is the most opportune arena in which to minister today. It is also the most challenging. One of the great needs of the holiness witness is for its liberating message to break through with real impact in the great cities of our globe. To those churches who take time to set directions and retool for the urban population, the rewards will be significant!



Nazarene

Update

UPDATE EDITOR, SUSAN DOWNS • DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE MINISTRY

I WANT TO FEEL IMPORTANT

The speaker was driving home his point. It had turned out to be a most stimulating session on management. He was speaking of employees at various levels in a corporate structure. "But all of them," he said, "have an invisible sign hung around their necks with these words prominently displayed, 'I WANT TO FEEL IMPORTANT.'"

How often I have thought of that since then. The psychologists have been telling us of the basic needs of people for some time. And ministers are in the unique capacity to help fulfill those needs.

There appears to be a relationship between these needs, and in this instance this very basic one to feel important, and the possibility of a special ministry to the urban areas of the countries where our church is serving. This would seem to be especially so in North America where we equate urban needs with ethnic needs.

For 11 years, I lived in a country which was not my own. With time my family and I felt totally accepted until Germany did indeed become "the land of our adoption." Yet in those early months of adjustment (and certainly a period of culture shock) we felt very much the differences between them and us. Although our skin was the same color, there were distinct differences. We resented our children being called "little Am's" (short for little Americans). We were, in a sense, an ethnic minority.

I'm not sure the comparison is totally valid, yet there is at least a slight measure of identification with what ethnic minorities must feel in the United States and Canada. I can remember my subconscious feeling rising to the surface, and I found I desperately wanted to be totally accepted by the society in which I found myself. I imagine, if I were to be real honest, I was saying, "I want to feel important." Not just back home, by the people who had assigned me, and even with my own family, but with these, my new neighbors, my

new business contacts, with all of them.

If we could somehow remove the scales of prejudice from our eyes and be able indeed to look beyond the colors of skin, the strange ways of speaking, the different lifestyles, and see people, people whom God has created, reaching out and saying, "Look, I'm here. Don't pass me by. I need you, you and the gospel you preach. I WANT TO FEEL IMPORTANT," probably we would be opening new and literally unlimited potential for ministry and mission for our church.

So much rhetoric is being spoken by politicians concerning the need for urban renewal that the subject continues to be in vogue. This is as it should be. Ghettos do need to be cleaned out. Blighted areas must be restored. The quality of life can be improved. Yet there is a dimension to all of this which cannot be met by increased taxes, free enterprise incentives, or legislative action. The basic need of the urban areas is spiritual, the same as those in the suburban and rural areas. This is where we come in. Not only can we meet this need, but we must do so.

If we can somehow see that invisible sign hung around the necks of vast multitudes and realize what they are wanting from us, we can indeed experience a new and dynamic home mission and church extension thrust in our church that will be unparalleled since the days of our early beginnings. They not only want to feel important enough for us to recognize their presence; **THEY ARE IMPORTANT**, and important enough to challenge our resources and energy to reach out to them with the gospel, the know-how, the financial resources, and the committed talent with which our Lord has entrusted us. I pray, oh, how I earnestly pray, that God will help Nazarenes rise to this challenge.



By General Superintendent
Jerald D. Johnson

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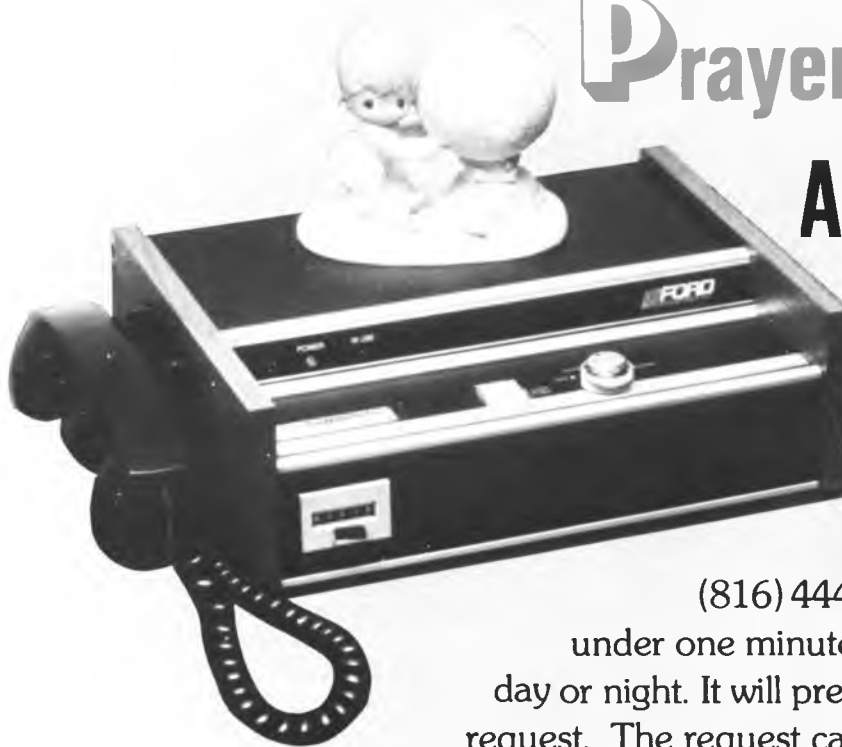
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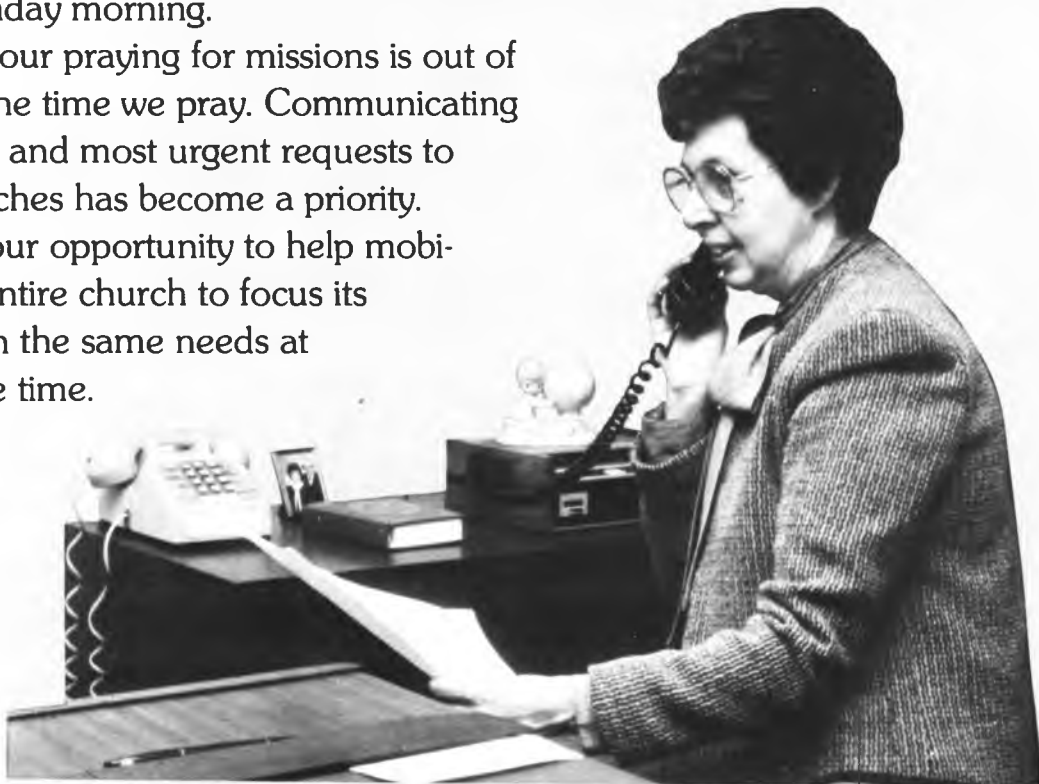


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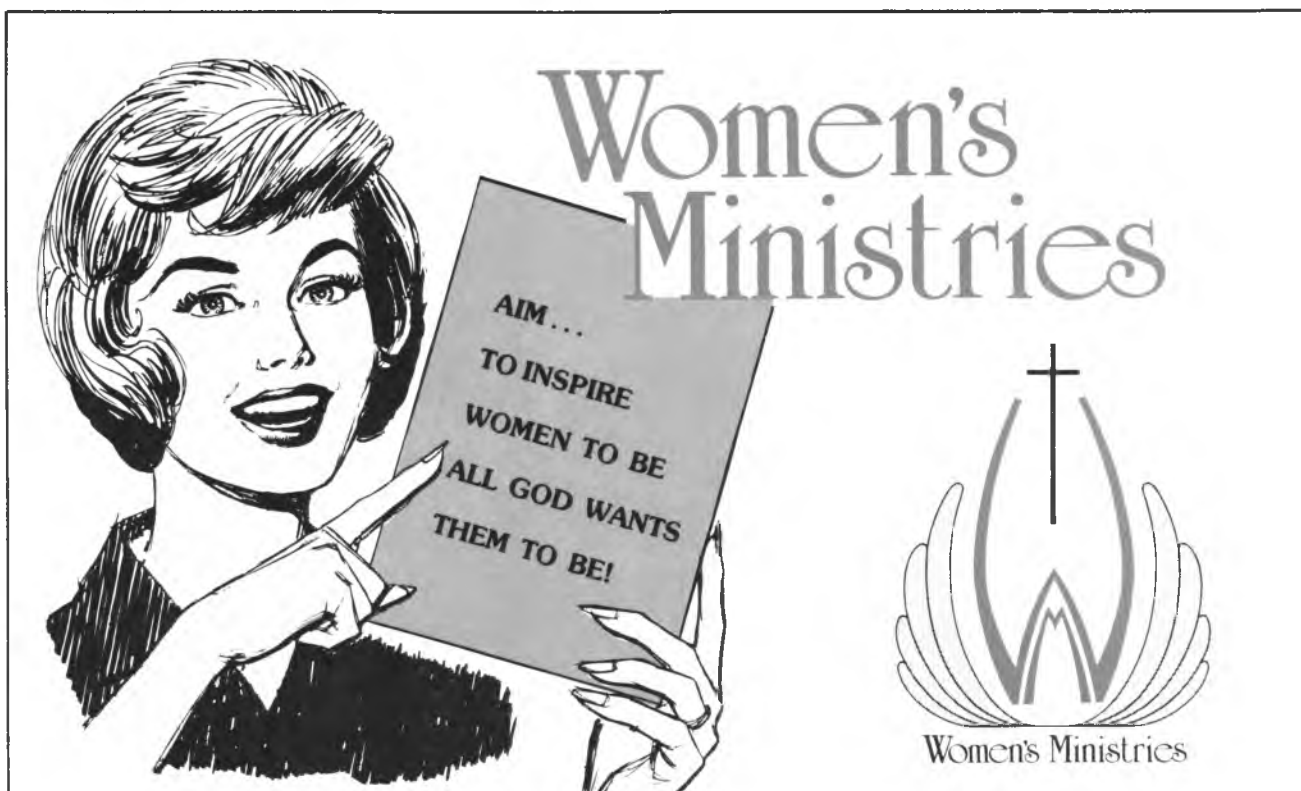
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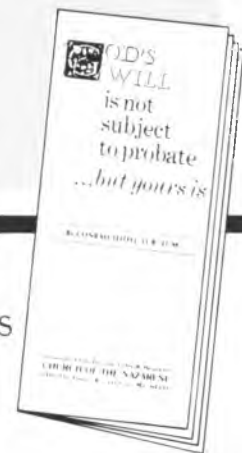
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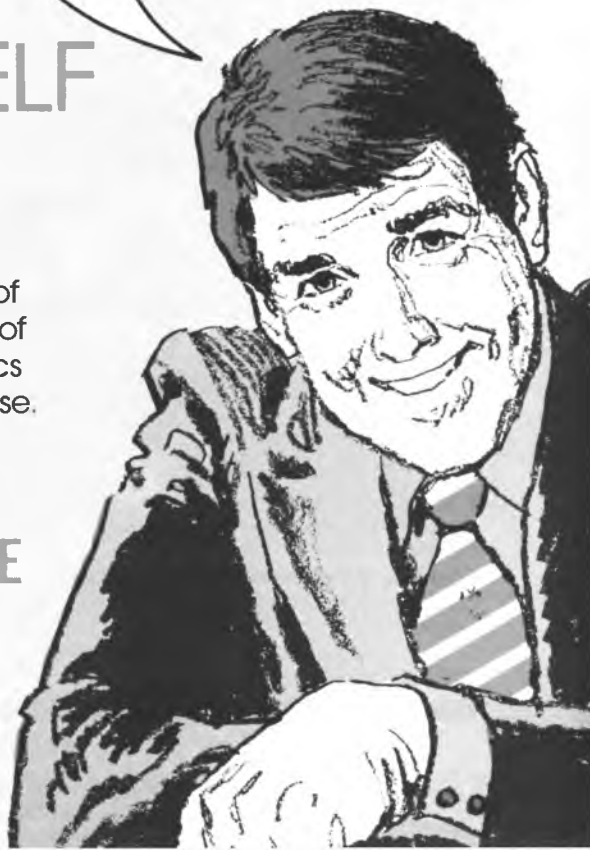


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2 Publicize the action of your District C.A.C. Provide news releases to local newspapers and broadcasters in your region.

3 Publicize denominational stands on moral issues. See the *Manual*, paragraphs 34-36; 904-904.10.

4 Cooperate with General Christian Action Committee programs.

5 Cooperate with *reputable* organizations working for godly goals.

6 Establish contacts with city, county, and state government officials. Some things (like pornography) can be fought most successfully through local efforts.

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New York, NY 10019

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The Editorial Chair is supported by the wise counsel of a rotating editorial advisory board. Each issue of the *Preacher's Magazine* accents a theme. An advisory board of persons with experience and expertise on the subject is recruited to tell the editor and his staff what needs to be said about the accented theme.

The persons pictured here gave us valuable service by helping plan or write this issue.



Future issues of the Preacher's Magazine will accent these themes:

- The Sunday Night Service
- Adult Ministries in the Local Church
- Preaching from Matthew
- The Small Church



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CELEBRATE CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

One of the most important ingredients of successful ministry is long- and short-range planning. The following general church events, with their dates, are provided by the Pastoral Ministries for your convenience in coordinating the local and district church calendar into your total program. We want to help you "Celebrate Christian Holiness." The events and programs should support the theme or be useful in attaining the purpose. We want to assist you in your ministry. Call on us.

1980-81—The Year of the Minister

June 1-4, 1981	PALCON II, Bethany Nazarene College
June 8-11, 1981	PALCON II, Mount Vernon Nazarene College
June 22-25, 1981	PALCON II, Olivet Nazarene College
June 29—July 2, 1981	PALCON II, Eastern Nazarene College
July 1-5, 1981	SOLOCON, Portland, Oregon
July 6-9, 1981	PALCON II, Trevecca Nazarene College
July 13-16, 1981	PALCON II, Mid-America Nazarene College
July 27-30, 1981	American Festival of Evangelism, Kansas City
July 29—August 2, 1981	SOLOCON, Sarasota, Florida
August 3-6, 1981	PALCON II, Northwest Nazarene College
August 10-13, 1981	PALCON II, Point Loma College

1981-82—The Year of the Layman

September 14-19, 1981	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 21-25, 1981	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 28—October 2, 1981	NIROGA, Schroon Lake, New York
October 12-16, 1981	European Military Personnel Retreat
October 12-16, 1981	NIROGA, Banff, Canada
October 26-30, 1981 (Tentative)	Chaplain's Retreat
December, 1981 (Tentative)	Theology Conference
February 22-26, 1982	NIROGA, Lake Yale, Florida
	REGIONAL CHRISTIAN LIFE CONFERENCES
February 15-16, 1982	Mid-America Region, Omaha
February 18-19, 1982	Point Loma Region, San Diego
February 22-23, 1982	Northwest Region, Boise
March 8-9, 1982	Bethany Region, Dallas
March 11-12, 1982	Trevecca Region, Atlanta
March 15-16, 1982	Eastern Region, New York City
March 18-19, 1982	Canadian Region
March 22-23, 1982	Mount Vernon Region, Columbus
March 25-26, 1982	Olivet Region, Chicago
May 31—June 4, 1982	NIROGA, Asilomar, California
July 6-11, 1982	International Lay Retreat, Toronto
August, 1982	Faith and Learning Conference
	Campus/Career Youth Conference

1982-83—The Year of the Young

September 13-18, 1982	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 27—October 1, 1982	NIROGA, Schroon Lake, New York
October, 1982	European Military Personnel Retreat
June 20-26, 1983	World Youth Conference, Oaxtopec, Mexico
Summer, 1983	WILCON II

1983-84—The Year of the Diamond Jubilee

October 5-9, 1983	Simultaneous Revivals
October 9-16, 1983	Diamond Jubilee Week
October, 1983 (Tentative)	Chaplain's Retreat
October, 1983	European Military Personnel Retreat
December, January, February	"How to Live a Holy Life" Enduring Word Series Sunday School Lessons

1984-85—The Year of Church Growth

Goal—75,000 New Nazarenes	
January, 1984	Evangelism Conferences
October, 1984	European Military Personnel Retreat
June 20-22, 1985	General Conventions, Anaheim
June 23-28, 1985	General Assembly, Anaheim



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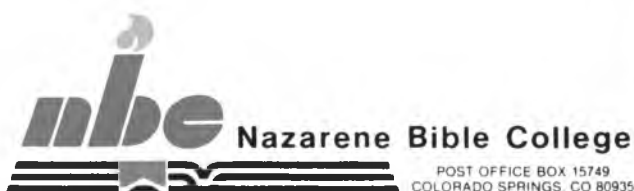
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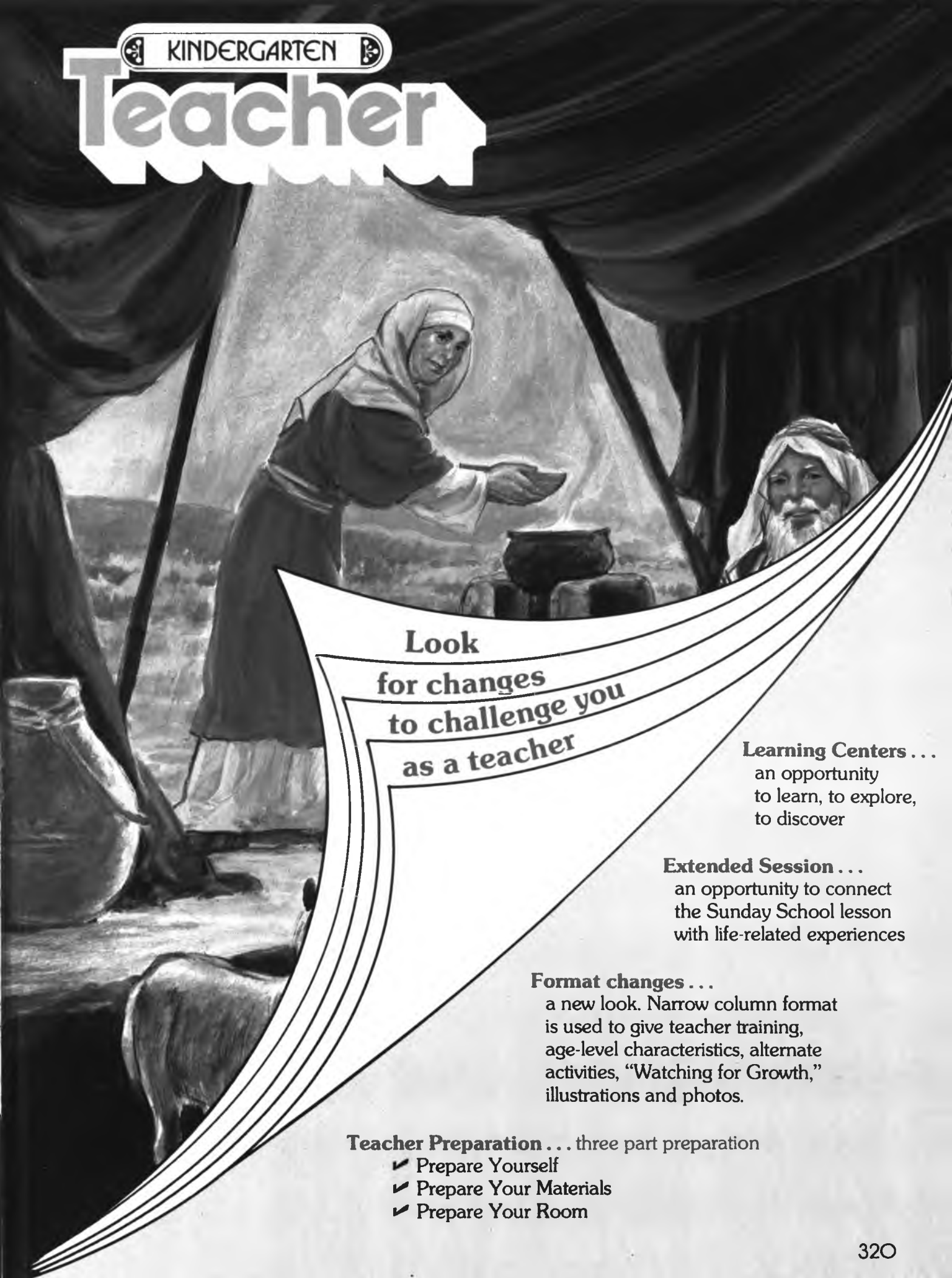
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- We are committed to maintaining worldwide evangelism as a necessary tool for Kingdom building. We need your help to rally each Nazarene church and each Nazarene family behind a renewed vision of our responsibility for reaching the world for Jesus Christ through the medium of radio.

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OUR METHOD

- Nazarene Communications and Nazarene World Mission Society are committed to raising \$275,000 in the World Mission Radio offering during the month of July, a goal which can be easily achieved with your cooperation and with each family committed to doing something.
- **The July issue of the "Herald of Holiness" will contain a special envelope for the Nazarene World Mission Radio offering. Recipients will be instructed to deposit this special offering in their local church during the month of July. This will insure their tax credit and 10 percent credit for your church.**
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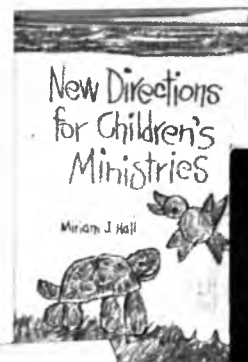
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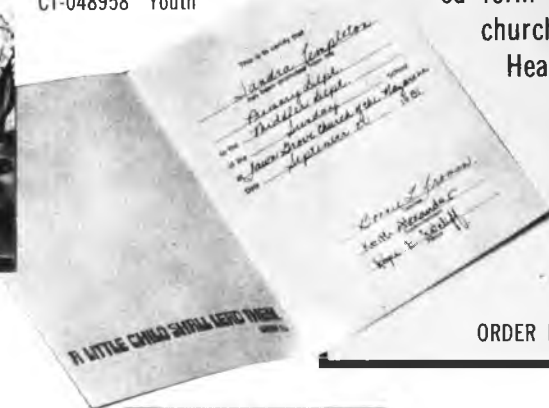
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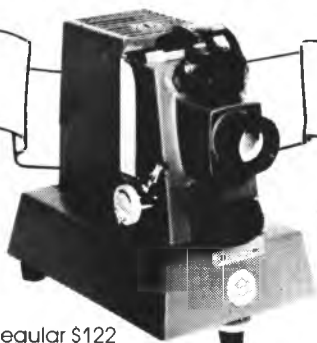
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An adequate budget for evangelism at the beginning of each church year is imperative for each congregation.
A revival savings account is useful in building toward adequate support for the evangelist.

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Marriage Enrichment Ministries Checklist

Pastor, have you thought of . . .

- ☐ **resourcing marriages with "PROMISE," the new marriage and family supplement?**
- ☐ **scheduling a Marriage Enrichment retreat?**
- ☐ **writing the Marriage & Family Life Office for a roster of trained leader-couples?**
- ☐ **letting your own marriage speak as a resource to couples?**
- ☐ **you and your wife taking the Marriage Enrichment training?**
- ☐ **sending a key lay couple for Marriage Enrichment training?**
- ☐ **using Marriage Enrichment as a prevention ministry to balance your crisis intervention ministry?**

Write or call the Marriage & Family Life Office
 for more details on the above items

6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131
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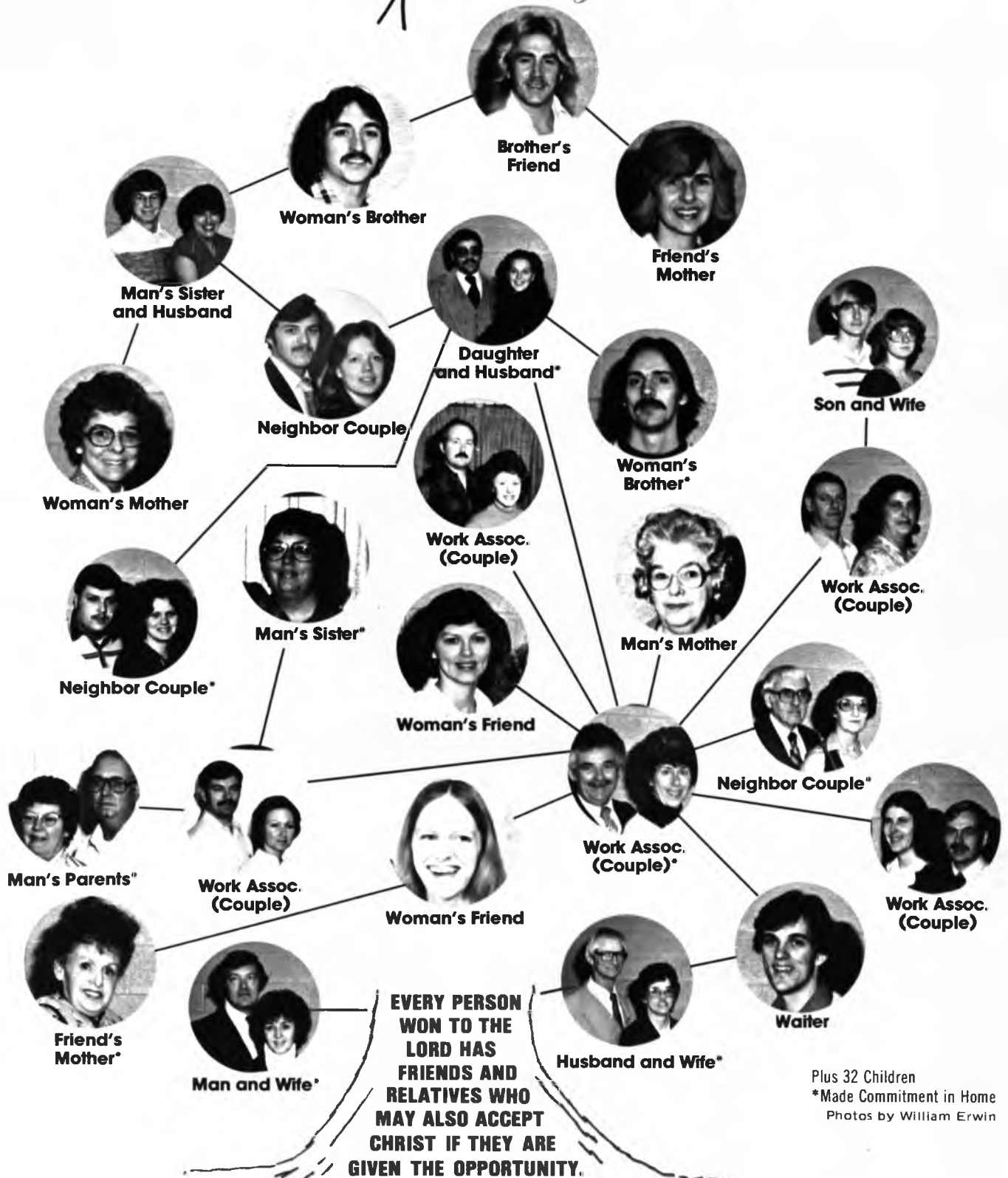
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by Alex Deasley

It is with true joy that we present the first in a series of biblical studies by Dr. Alex Deasley. Dr. Deasley graduated from Cambridge University (A.B. and M.A.) and holds the Ph.D. Degree from Manchester University. He has pastored in England, Scotland, and Canada. He has taught at British Isles Nazarene College, Canadian Nazarene College, and is currently professor of New Testament at Naza-

rene Theological Seminary. He demonstrates a mastery of biblical scholarship and preaching skill. One of the preacher's problems is getting from exegesis to proclamation without dragging all the exegetical baggage into the pulpit on the one hand or merely titillating the topical on the other. These articles will help us all at these points.

—The Editor

A GOSPEL TO BE PROUD OF

Scripture: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:16-17).

I. Background

The text has a note of passion in it, and we are prompted to ask why Paul was driven to express this affirmation so intensely. The answer can be found only in the background of the Epistle, and it is to two aspects of this background that we must look now.

A. The Situation of the Author

Romans was evidently written during the second half of the greatest decade of Paul's ministry: A.D. 50-60. Attempts to date it more precisely have led to no agreement, and are of little help in understanding the Epistle anyway. More important than the date is the author's situation at the time of writing. Fortunately, this is described for us with a fair degree of fullness in 15:14-33, as well as in 1:8-15. From these passages we glean the following information.

1. Paul had just completed years of church planting in the Eastern provinces of the Empire (15:19, 23). His principle had always been to work where the gospel had never been preached before (15:20) and apparently there was no more for him to do in the East.

2. His immediate plans were to pay a visit to Jerusalem in order to hand over the money that had been collected by the Gentile Christians to help their poorer brethren in Judea (15:25-27). This

agrees with the statements in Acts 20:2-3 and 24:17, in which case the Epistle to the Romans was written towards the end of Paul's ministry in Corinth: a conclusion that finds support from the mention of various Corinthian personnel in Romans 16. E.g., Phoebe is said to belong to the church at Cenchreae (16:1), Corinth's eastern port. Gaius (16:23) may be the one mentioned in 1 Cor. 1:14; while Erastus (Rom. 16:23) may be the one mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:20 as having remained at Corinth.

3. Paul was aware that his mission to Jerusalem was dangerous. Apparently, the danger was twofold: first, from "the unbelievers in Judea" (15:31); and second, from the saints in Jerusalem who might spurn the offering he was bringing (15:31). There is no suggestion that these dangers were equal; but there can be no disguising that Paul was apprehensive.

4. The scene of Paul's next missionary thrust would be Spain, and Paul planned to stop off in Rome en route (15:24, 28).

5. Paul's forthcoming visit to Rome had more than one purpose. One explicit reason given is that he might win converts in Rome "as well as among the rest of the Gentiles" (1:13); in other words, he wished to exercise his ministry to the Gentiles in Rome. He also hoped the Romans would give him assistance in his Spanish mission (15:24). However, there seems to have been other reasons too, though these are mentioned in a way that suggests a certain sensitivity about them. For one thing, it is noticeable how anxious Paul is to assure his readers that his failure to visit them thus far has been occasioned by preoccupation rather than neglect (1:9-10, 13; 15:18-23). Had he been accused of not caring about the Roman church? For another, Paul believes the

Roman Christians to be in need of some strengthening spiritual grace (1:11): even though he at once explains that he expects to be helped by their faith also (1:12). It is tempting to conclude that, while he felt he understood their need, not all of them agreed with him. Is this the force of the very emphatic statement in 14:29 that he knows he will be coming to them "in the fulness of the blessing of Christ"?

This much, then, we can learn of the situation of the author.

B. The Setting and Purpose of the Epistle

Is it possible to move beyond the author's situation to that of the recipients? Our information in this regard comes from two sources.

1. The nature of the Epistle. Romans is the longest and most comprehensive theological statement in the extant writings of Paul. For this reason it has sometimes been described as Paul's systematic theology; and when this idea has been combined with the forebodings Paul expresses in 15:29, the Epistle has been labeled by such tags as "Paul's Last Will and Testament."¹ For all its imposing appearance, however, it is doubtful if Romans can reasonably be described as either systematic or comprehensive. Some aspects of Paul's theology are conspicuously absent (e.g., eschatology); and above all, the Epistle has all the marks of a real letter: live readers in a particular situation. The nature of the Epistle as such cannot tell us much about its purpose unless we can find some information regarding the background of the church in Rome which can illuminate the contents of the Epistle.

2. The history of the church in Rome. At least one event which is likely to have had an impact on the Roman church is recorded in Acts 18:2: the expulsion of all Jews from Rome in A.D. 49 by the Emperor Claudius. Those expelled would include Christian Jews such as Aquila and Priscilla, and their departure would have left the young Christian congregation a wholly Gentile organization. It is impossible here to recount the saga of Jewish-Gentile relations in Rome before the arrival of Christianity, or the impact of the banishment of Jews on the young Christian church.² To say the least, it is easy to understand how tensions would arise, especially when the Jews returned to Rome following the death of Claudius in 54. Wolfgang Wiefel argues that they would have found a church quite different from the synagogue-styled church they had known, and possibly questioning what debt if any Christianity owed to Judaism. He therefore concludes that Romans was written to urge the Gentile Christian majority to live together with the Jewish Christians in a single congregation, and not to jettison all things Jewish since, in doing so, they would be eroding the indispensable foundations of their Christian faith.³

Against such a background many details in the Epistle assume a new significance: the long demonstration of the equality of Gentile and Jew in their need of God (1:18—3:20); the insistence on the place of the Law (3:21) and the priority of the Jew in salvation history (3:1-2); the revelation that "all

Israel" will be saved (cc. 9—11); the exhortation to live as one body, each member having a due sense of its own importance (12:3-8). One does not have to be certain of every detail of the background of the Epistle; it is enough to see some which give to the Epistle as a whole a cohesion which it lacks otherwise. Assuming that some such situation as has been indicated lies behind the shape and contents of this particular Epistle, we may turn to interpret our selected passage in the light of it.

II. From Background to Exegesis

The task of exegesis is to determine the meaning the text had for its author and original readers. Two factors enter into that determination in this instance.

A. The Setting of the Text

From a formal point of view, epistles in the Graeco-Roman world began according to a fixed formula: "X to Y greeting." The writers of the New Testament Epistles, and Paul in particular, baptized this formula into Christ, transforming it in the process. How much they transformed it can be seen in the prescript to Romans (1:1-7). The name of the sender, Paul, is qualified by the addition of six verses which give not only a thumbnail sketch of the gospel (vv. 2-5), but a checklist of Paul's qualifications for the apostolic ministry (vv. 1, 5-6). Not until verse 7a does the second member of the prescript appear: "To all who are in Rome," again with Christian additions; while in verse 7b the pagan "greeting"—the third member—is replaced by the Christian "grace," in the name of the Lord Jesus.

However, this is not all. In pagan letters the prescript was frequently followed by a sentence expressing thanksgiving or petition to the gods: usually about the recipient's health. This also was Christianized in the New Testament, and Romans 1:8-15 is a good example. Paul gives thanks not for their physical health, but their spiritual health (1:8); and his petition is not for their material enrichment but their spiritual enrichment (1:11-13). With this he is in sight of his main purpose in visiting them: preaching the gospel in Rome (1:15). Then follow the verses which we are studying.

Now the question has been raised: are verses 16 and 17 also part of the thanksgiving? The question has been answered in opposite ways. On the one hand, it is pointed out that these verses are linked explicitly to verses 8-15. The conjunction *for* provides a logical link; while the use of the term *gospel* in verse 16 ("I am not ashamed of the gospel") resumes the phrase in the previous verse: "I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." On the other hand, in terms of substance verses 16 and 17 are, in effect, a summary of the message of the Epistle. Accordingly many commentators, even if they regard verses 16-17 as being *formally* part of the thanksgiving, nonetheless treat them as an independent unit giving expression to the Epistle's theme.⁴ It seems clear that there is validity in this procedure; and it is therefore exegetically legitimate to treat these verses as a self-contained statement.

B. The Substance of the Text

What, then, does this text say? A casual glance is enough to show that it is a collection of pearls. The central terms of Paul's gospel are cast before us in rich and dazzling profusion: "power," "salvation," "faith," "righteousness." However, they do not lie before us unconnected; there is a certain amount of syntactical string holding them together. Our exegetical task then is to see what Paul meant by these terms and how he linked them together.

1. **Power.** The temptation to be ashamed of the gospel (Mark 8:38) was very real in the Graeco-Roman world; there was impressive competition from other quarters. The Greeks could point to the scintillating argumentation of their philosophers; the Jews could parade their miracle-studded history; while all that the Christians could advance was a battered figure on a Cross (1 Corinthians 1:22-24; 2:1-3). Yet Paul is "not ashamed of the gospel"; for while "the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18).⁵ The factor that makes the difference is that it is the power of God, whose very word is power. The Old Testament background of the term *gospel* lies in such passages as Isaiah 52:7 where the very proclamation of the "good tidings" effects salvation: "Say to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'" But it is a very particular exhibition of divine power which is the ground of Paul's confidence: the power which, for the first time in human history, threw the wheel of death into reverse gear, raising Christ from the tomb (1:4; cf. Eph. 1:19ff.). In face of such a demonstration of might, Paul has lost any lingering temptation that the gospel is something about which he should prepare to be apologetic.

2. **Salvation.** Salvation terminology is not used frequently in Romans, not because the idea is unimportant to Paul but because he uses other terms to express it. What is highly significant in the examples there are is the emphasis on the *future* aspect of salvation. "Much more being justified now by his blood we *shall be saved* through him from the wrath" (5:10). "Much more being reconciled we *shall be saved* by his life" (5:11). "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord you *will be saved*" (10:9). "All Israel *will be saved*" (11:26). "Our salvation is nearer now than when we believed" (13:11). This is the clue to the interpretation of the phrase "unto salvation" in 1:16, repeated in 10:1, 10. Its meaning is "with a view to, or leading to salvation." It is not that Paul denies that the sinner may be accepted with God here and now and be aware of it; justification and assurance are insisted on emphatically (e.g., 5:1; 8:15-16). The point is that for Paul no one is saved finally until he is safe on the Last Day, and justification now guarantees that on that Day *we shall be saved* with a salvation which is final and certain.

But that is not all. Salvation does not mean merely being saved from the penalty of sin at the judgment; it also means being saved from the effects of sin here and now. As Cranfield expresses it: "What Paul is saying here, then, is that the gospel is

God's effective power active in the world of men to bring about deliverance from His wrath in the final judgment and reinstatement in that glory of God which was lost through sin—that is, an eschatological salvation which *reflects its splendour back into the present of those who share it*."⁵ To put it otherwise: to receive salvation is to receive life, to be saved is to live. "Life" becomes a central term in Paul's later exposition in which "newness of life" (6:4) is the focal idea. To quote F. F. Bruce: "'It is he who is righteous (justified) by faith that will live' means, therefore, 'it is he who is righteous (justified) by faith that will be saved.' For Paul, life in the sense of salvation begins with justification but goes beyond it (cf. v. 9f.); it includes sanctification (the subject of Rom. 6—8) and is consummated in final glory (v. 2, viii.30)."⁶

3. **Universality.** A third idea is injected here: that of universality. The gospel brings God's saving power to *everyone* who believes. *Everyone, all* is a characteristic term in Romans appearing at least 17 times in a theologically significant sense (see, e.g., 3:9, 22, 23; 4:16; 5:12, 18; 8:32; 10:4, 11, 12, 13; etc.). The gospel is Good News precisely because it is for everyone. If it were available only for some, it would be bad news for those excluded. This is the point of the explanatory phrase which follows: "both, Jew first and also the Gentile." The word *both* is omitted from many translations (KJV, RSV, NEB), but it is present in the Greek. The truth affirmed by the phrase is not only that all are potentially included, but that the priority of the Jew in God's election does not mean there is no room for the Gentile.

4. **Righteousness.** This term, like the term *power*, is linked logically with the term *gospel* by the conjunction *for*; that is, Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because God's righteousness is revealed in it. The phrase "the righteousness of God" can be taken in at least two ways. On the one hand it can denote God's righteous *action*, that is, the action which God takes to put men right or to save them. This sense has Old Testament precedent in passages where "righteousness" is translated as "salvation" (e.g. Isa. 45:21; 51:5; Ps. 24:5; 31:1; etc.). On the other hand, it can also denote the righteousness God *gives* to those who place their trust in Him: that is, the status and quality of righteousness which come *from* God. It is possible that Paul has both of these ideas in mind in this preliminary, general statement of his message. Nor, of course, must one forget the fundamental idea of "the righteousness of God" as God's righteous character, without which the two senses mentioned above would have neither meaning nor necessity.⁷

5. **Faith.** This righteousness is accessible through faith and only through faith. That is the meaning of the phrase "from faith to faith" (17): salvation is a matter of faith from start to finish. It is likewise underscored by the position of the words *by faith* in the Habakkuk quotation: "He who is righteous *by faith* shall live." By *faith* Paul means simple reliance on God alone for everything, and specifically one's acceptance with Him. It is this which explains Paul's use of Habakkuk 2:4, a use which has been

criticized on the ground that the Hebrew term translated "faith" means "faithfulness." What Habakkuk said was that, in the coming uproar of the Chaldean invasion, it was he who remained faithful to God who would live. This is indeed Habakkuk's meaning, but the root of such faithfulness is faith attitude. As F. F. Bruce says: "The terms of Habakkuk's oracle are sufficiently general to make room for Paul's application of them—an application which, far from doing violence to the prophet's intention, expresses the abiding validity of his message."⁸

Yet this faith must not be misconstrued as a human achievement even though it is undoubtedly a human activity. For in its essence it consists of openness to divine help and is therefore the final confession of human helplessness.

To these five cardinal ideas Paul adds this further component: that this saving power of God based on faith and disclosing God's way of righteousness *is now being revealed* (present continuous tense). In the New Testament the terms *reveal*, *revelation* always refer to a divine act of revelation, commonly at the end time (e.g., Rom. 2:5; 8:18-19). The Jew believed that God's saving action to redeem man would take place in the end; but in using the present tense Paul is affirming that it is taking place here and now. As was said above: The eschatological salvation is retrojected back into the present. Kasemann comments aptly: "To this extent Paul's doctrine of justification is simply a precise theological variation of the primitive proclamation of the Kingdom of God as eschatological salvation."⁹

III. From Exegesis to Exposition

The word exposition (which in a literal sense means much the same as exegesis) is used here in its homiletical sense to refer to the "translation" of the meaning of Paul's message to the Romans into a form and key which will make it intelligible and relevant to the 20th-century congregation. The passage under review could be handled homiletically in more than one way; the following may be noted as one possibility.

THE SERMON

Introduction

A natural starting point is Paul's pride in the gospel. The negative form "I am not ashamed" is a figurative way of saying: "I am proud of it." Paul has no inferiority feelings about the gospel. The text supplies the reasons: he is proud of it because of:

I. Its Dynamic Force: "the power of God"

Against those who are content with abstract ideas or mere talk, Paul appeals repeatedly to the power of the gospel to make visible changes in men's lives. See 1 Cor. 1:17-25; 2:1-4; 4:20.

II. Its Saving Intent: "leading to salvation"

As is explained in the exegesis, there are two aspects in mind:

- A. Final Salvation
- B. Full Salvation

III. Its Universal Scope: "to everyone . . . the Jew first and also the Gentile."

IV. Its Redeeming Effect: "in it the righteousness of God is revealed."

This has two aspects, as shown in the exegesis.

- A. God's activity to put men right: "God's way of righting wrong" (NEB)
- B. God's gift of righteousness (both legal and moral) to sinners

It was this perception of righteousness as something God *gives* rather than simply something which God requires which brought peace to the tormented soul of Luther.

V. Its Simplicity of Principle: "from faith to faith."

It is a matter of faith from start to finish. 

*Scripture quotations other than KJV which are not noted are the author's own translation.

1. Gunther Bornkamm: "The Letter to the Romans as Paul's Last Will and Testament" in Karl P. Donfried (ed): *The Romans Debate* (Minneapolis, 1977), 17-31. Also F. F. Bruce: *The Epistle to the Romans* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, Grand Rapids, 1963), 18.

2. A fascinating reconstruction has been written by Wolfgang Wiefel: "The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome and the Origins of Roman Christianity" in Donfried, 100-119.

3. Ibid., 113. A similar view, though based exclusively on the contents of the Epistle, is developed in J. Wood: "The Purpose of Romans," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 45, 1968, 211-19.

4. For example: F. F. Bruce, 77-81; C. K. Barrett: *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper, 1957), 27-31; Matthew Black: *Romans* (London: Oliphants, 1973); C. E. B. Cranfield: *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper, 1957), 27-31; Matthew Black: *Romans* (London: Oliphants, 1973); C. E. B. Cranfield: *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh, Volume I, 1975), 87-102; Ernst Kasemann: *Commentary on Romans* (E. T., Grand Rapids, 1980), 21-32. It may be added that an alternative analysis sees the thanksgiving as ending with verse 12, verses 13-17 being regarded as an independent statement of the theme. See J. L. White: "Introductory Formulae in the Body of the Pauline Letter," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 90, 1971, 91-7.

This proposal has the same effect as those mentioned above on the function of verses 16-17.

5. Ibid., 89 (my emphasis).

6. Ibid., 81.

7. The question is discussed clearly by W. M. Greathouse: *The Epistle to the Romans* (Beacon Bible Commentary: Kansas City, 1968), 41-43. Fuller and more recent treatments will be found in Cranfield, 92-99; and Kasemann, 24-30.

8. Ibid., 80.

9. Ibid., 29.

**"Nothing that we despise in the other man is
entirely absent from ourselves."**

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

(1 Kings 13:30)

Alas, My Brother

by George E. Failing

General Editor, The Wesleyan Church

Not every prophet is true, nor every prophecy to be believed and acted upon. But God continues, in every age, to raise up prophets who speak to His people (and sometimes to the nations). To silence or to ignore true prophecy is to court disaster (see 2 Chron. 36:14-16). Christ will not remain standing at the church door (Rev. 3:20) too long. Unless the church repents, God removes the candlestick and it no longer "lights the world."

The story of "a man of God" (in 1 Kings 13) is a prophecy to our times. "These things," wrote Paul, "are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11). We holiness people, who think we stand, must take heed lest we fall (1 Cor. 10:12). God raised us up for a purpose, and, if that purpose is no longer being fulfilled, God will remove us from our mission or remove from us our opportunity.

The "man of God" (in 1 Kings 13) was sent by God to rebuke King Jeroboam for his flagrant acts of idolatry (very literally) and to foretell the rise of another king, "Josiah by name," who would offer acceptable "incense" and who would burn the bones of false prophets on that altar of sacrilege.

King Jeroboam was enraged. He could not take a word from God. As he put forth his hand to point out the "man of God" to those who should seize him, Jeroboam's "hand dried up," that is, was paralyzed, so he could not "pull it in again to him." What

obvious divine punishment, and what human embarrassment to Jeroboam!

Jeroboam did not repent (perhaps by this time he could not, for men can pass the time of repentance as travelers cross the continental divide). However, the king did ask the man of God to pray for him. "Entreat now the face of the Lord thy God . . . for me, that my hand may be restored again." And that is all that most men want from God—not a new heart but a restored hand!

The man of God prayed that Jeroboam's hand be restored, and it was. The king responded in the fashion of this world: "I will give thee a reward." To which the man of God immediately gave reply, "I will not." (Yet we know those who call themselves "men of God" who love the rewards that go with their ministry. Accepting rewards for what we have done in the Savior's name and by His power, corrupt us. Greater rewards corrupt us even more greatly.)

"An old prophet" (1 Kings 13:11) heard of the event, and his heart was "strangely warmed." Apostate as he was (so the rest of the narrative indicates), he wanted to converse again with someone in current contact with the God of power. So he found the man of God and urged him to "eat bread and drink water" (enjoy hospitality) at his home.

The man of God is stunned when the old prophet assures him, "I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel of the Lord spoke unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine

house, that he may eat bread and drink water. *But he lied unto him*" (v. 18).

The "man of God" would not accept the invitation of King Jeroboam, but falls for the lie of an old ex-prophet (an elder churchman)! As they ate and drank together, the voice of the true God came to the apostate prophet with a declaration of judgment on the disobedient "man of God": "Thy carcase shall not come into the sepulchre of thy fathers." In other words, you will never get home again, to be buried in the family grave.

The "man of God" made no reply. As he was riding his donkey on the journey home, "A lion met him by the way and slew him." When the false prophet heard of the tragic death of the "man of God," he went to recover the body and to bring it back. (The lion had not hurt the donkey nor devoured the man he slew. In fact, when the false prophet found the slain man, he found "the ass, and the lion standing by the carcase." The lion did not attack the man who came to take up the body of the man of God.) And the false prophet "laid the carcase of the man of God in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother!" The only mourner at that grave was the prophet who realized that the death of the man of God only sealed the truth of his message: "The saying which he cried by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel . . . shall surely come to pass." So apostates retain their faith long after they abandon personal obedience.

Suppose—and it's a supposition which we pray earnestly may not come true—that the holiness church abandons its message or compromises it in its pristine purity, we will be smitten and the candlestick will be removed. Who will mourn the passing of the holiness people? Not other evangelical groups; they will not miss us that much, after our hair has been shorn and our strength has gone (as in the case of Samson, who in Hebrews 11:33 is referred to as a man of great faith).

The apostate church that remains will mourn our passing. They will say, "Bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried." Even the ruins of the holiness movement will be as grand as the Parthenon on the Acropolis at Athens. God gave us the mission of the "Nazarites" and laid upon us their vows. To abandon these is to lose all—not necessarily our souls, but most certainly our unique mission.

Will we recall ourselves to our message and our mission (and our discipline as Nazarites)? Will we rebuke one another? Will we save ourselves from the icy fingers that threaten to chill and strangle us? The time is not past, but the hour is late.

For God will not wait indefinitely for disobedient holiness people to humble themselves, confess their sins, forgive one another, and restore themselves in unity. If they do not, even the stones will cry out the truth they no longer "shout from the housetops."



HOME MINISTRY GROUPS

(continued from page 26)

3. The barrier of anonymity is broken as we move from neutral territory (institutional buildings) to personal territory. Suddenly names in the halls at church take the form of hosts and hostesses glad that you are a part of their home that evening.

4. It provides an unparalleled opportunity to invite personal friends over to one's home to meet other friends. In the secularistic, anti-church atmosphere of the younger generation, incarnational teaching and fellowship in one's home holds much promise for winning others to Christ.

5. It accommodates the diversity of our urban, cosmopolitan constituency while continuing to strengthen our bonds as one in Christ. We are at the same time person-oriented while always Christ-centered.

6. Learning happens at a deeper level as facilitated teaching allows for greater cultural ad-

aptation of the lesson material. Yet the same material is covered in all the Home Ministry Groups. The church moves together in its collective consciousness, something missing in a society shaped by emphasis on individual rights and single-issue politics.

7. The overall emphasis, location, and curriculum tells persons we are seeking to be where they are, considerate of their situation, and constantly reaching out to others. It is outward in its focus, relevant and life-changing in its presentation of God's truth for our lives.

8. It strengthens individual understanding of each person as the Holy Spirit meets with each group in His own way. Prayer, discussion, meditation, and research are all submitted to the leadership of the Holy Spirit as the pastoral staff, Home Ministry Group leaders, and all participants seek God's wisdom through this program.

Here's How

How has this plan worked for us? Some predicted people would drop out of midweek ministries altogether. But fortunately that doleful prophecy did not come to pass. Instead we now have three times as many people involved in Home Ministry Groups as participated in our previous program.

Home Ministry Groups have produced new harmonies in our church. Often the chords are different than the familiar programs and rhythms of the past. Some people *still* like only one bar of the entire composition. Yet, as has been true for eternity, the melody, the message is the same. The tempo is different, the chords new, the harmonies more complex and sometimes hard to understand. Yet God is still the Composer, the Conductor. Our spiritual sanity finds expression in our songs of praise for what He is doing in our midst through Home Ministry Groups at Los Angeles First Church of the Nazarene.



JAMES CONE: SPOKESMAN FOR BLACK THEOLOGY

by Albert Truesdale, *Professor of philosophy and Christian ethics, Nazarene Theological Seminary*

Reading James Cone for the first time may provoke a response of anger and frustration. It did in me. As a white, middle-class Christian and American, I resented the inflammatory language that exploded from almost every page of *Black Theology and Black Power*.¹ The following statement can serve as one example: "Black power, even in its most radical expression, is not the antithesis of Christianity, nor is it a heretical idea to be tolerated with painful forbearance. It is, rather, Christ's central message to twentieth-century America."² Such language seems to be programmed for quick dismissal as extravagant and irresponsible. And when he approvingly quotes LeRoi Jones's statement that the black theologian must "aid in the destruction of America as he knows it," the white reader's initial revulsion may be understood.

But there was for me also an inescapable magnetism in Cone's message. One reading became two, and two became three. I was arrested by what he was saying. And somewhere along the way this white Christian's desire to be taught from whatever quarter the word of the Holy Spirit might come, to be aware of when I have either knowingly or unwittingly trespassed against my neighbor, prepared me to seriously consider what my black brother was trying to say to me, and to all white (and black) Christians. Slowly, I remembered that a message doesn't have to be pleasant to be true, that smug self-righteousness is usually a sure route to self-deception, and that the prophetic word must first be received by the church before it can hope to speak prophetically and redemptively to the world.

With this chastening I returned to listen, still apprehensive. How could I disagree with Cone's assertion that Jesus Christ never was and is not now in league with any person or any institution whose privileged status in society is gained, even partially, at the cost of oppressing others? How could one deny that the gospel of Jesus Christ as the "good news" means that not only can a person be reconciled to God, but to himself and to his neighbor as well? How could I deny the error of asserting that one form of human existence, white for example, is more appropriate for fulfilling human potentiality than another? Is this not a direct violation of the Bible's affirmation that all men are created in the image of God?

Furthermore, how could my profession to love what Jesus loves be credible, not only to others but to myself, if at the same time I, a white person, fought to protect a privileged place in American society and in the church, a privilege whose security depends on minimizing the quality of life for millions of others, many of whom are my brothers

and sisters in the Lord? What cowardice and insensitivity am I displaying when I refuse to listen to one who cries out against an injustice that he feels deeply, and injustice that he believes I help perpetuate? What spirit is consonant with the one about whom it was said, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth" (Isa. 42:3)? James Cone is sure that such questions must be faced by the Christian Church in America if it is to follow Jesus Christ.

James Cone, professor of systematic theology at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, is probably the chief representative of a number of black theologians who do what is normally called black theology.³ Other leading black theologians include J. Deotis Roberts, James Gardiner, Albert B. Cleage, Joseph Washington, Walter Yates, and Preston N. Williams.⁴

Although there is notable diversity in the way these theologians state and define black theology, they are all agreed on this one point: for the meaning of the gospel to be properly understood, it must be viewed as unalterably opposed to racism in every form. The liberation of which the gospel speaks must include the command and power to struggle against and overcome the extensive slavery of the human spirit that racism fosters.

As did the prophet Amos, Cone believes that true love for God must be evidenced by an uncompromising pursuit of social justice (Amos 5:4). He believes that the history of God's saving deeds and the language of the biblical literature show that God identifies with the oppressed. For example, it was to the children of Israel enslaved in Egypt and not to the enslaving Pharaoh that Moses the deliverer was sent by God. Cone believes that for the church to do the work of God it must surely identify with those who are oppressed. They must find in the church their staunchest defender. The church, Cone believes, loses its true identity apart from this commitment. To travel with the God of the oppressed, the church will have to renounce the social and political benefits derived from association with the peddlers of racism. "If the church is to remain faithful to its Lord, it must make a decisive break with the structures of this society by launching a vehement attack on the evils of racism in all forms. It must become prophetic, demanding a radical change in the interlocking structures of this society."⁵

What Is Black Power? Simply, black power is the nonnegotiable assertion that black is a fully appropriate form for achieving the rich possibilities of human existence, and that morality demands that all forces that deny this must be fought against.

Black power means that the black person doesn't have to forget his hope for being a person. And he doesn't have to forget his blackness, "act white," in order to become in life what he or she is by God's gift and call. That call is to be a person, living in community with, and assisting others to become persons. Black power means "complete emancipation of black people from white oppression by whatever means black people deem necessary."⁶ Unless the black person insists on this point, if he allows the white person to decide under what conditions blacks may assert their own humanity, he tacitly accepts the racist estimate of him and the problem is simply perpetuated.

How should a black person respond to a world which defines him or her as a nonperson? That he or she is a person is beyond question. But when the black person attempts to relate as a *person*, the world demands that he or she respond as a *thing*.⁷

Why does black power anger whites? Cone thinks it is because the black person's moral insistence that black is an appropriate form of human existence contradicts the white person's estimate of him and challenges the social role given to blacks by whites. Black power directly confronts the myths, the social, economic, and educational benefits derived by whites from the racism that penetrates our society. In fact, Cone says, as the beneficiaries of racism, whites aren't even aware of how extensive and subtle racial oppression is in the United States. Any white who has ever taken the time to listen to a black person describe the many forms that racism takes in our society will know that what he says is true.

White people as well as blacks must see that neither of them can achieve the human wholeness God intends if oppression for blacks is accepted. So black power is concerned with white liberation, with liberation from the moral and religious blindness that keeps us from seeing how true human dignity eludes us so long as we choose to participate in the oppression of another. Cone believes that the kingdom of God expressed in the gospel of Jesus Christ strikes "at the very center of man's desire to define his own existence in the light of his own interests at the price of his brother's enslavement."⁸ In the coming of Christ, Cone insists, provision has been made for human wholeness and now the resurrected Christ calls people to make this provision theirs.

What is the meaning and purpose of black theology? Black theology asks, "What does the Christian gospel have to say to the powerless black men whose existence is threatened daily by the insidious tentacles of white power? Is there a message from Christ to the countless number of blacks whose lives are smothered under white society?"⁹ Black theology analyzes "the black man's condition in the light of God's revelation in Jesus Christ with the purpose of creating a new understanding of black dignity among black people, and providing the necessary soul in that people to destroy white racism."¹⁰ It seeks to apply the "freeing power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to black people who suffer the oppression of white racism."¹¹

For the gospel of Christ to truly become "good news," Cone insists, it must speak directly and meaningfully to the times and situations in which people live. For it to have a major formative impact on black people now and in the years to come, then who Jesus is as liberator must be understood within the context of the burden of racial oppression. A "white gospel" that offers a Jesus who approves of racial oppression, whatever its form, will be rejected by blacks. Black people will quickly recognize that a Christ who exhorts them to "be content with oppression" or who says that "blacks should be treated as though they are white" is but one more servant of racism, and consequently as no messiah at all. Neither position believes that black and human belong together. Albert Cleage puts the matter this way, "Black people cannot build dignity on their knees worshipping a white Christ. We must put down this white Jesus which the white man gave us in slavery and which has been tearing us to pieces. . . . Our rediscovery of the black Messiah is a part of our rediscovery of ourselves. We could not worship a black Jesus until we had thrown off the shackles of self-hate. . . . In recent years the contradiction inherent in the worship of a white Christ by black people oppressed by whites has become increasingly acute."¹²

The yearning to be free from all of sin's oppressions, including racial oppression, Cone thinks, is inspired by Christ. "In Christ, God enters human affairs and takes sides with the oppressed. Their suffering becomes his; their despair, divine despair. Through Christ the poor man is offered freedom now to rebel against that which makes him other than human. . . . When black people begin to hear Jesus' message as contemporaneous with their life situation, they will quickly realize [that Christianity is] a religion of protest against the suffering and affliction of man."¹³

In a recent address on the life of the church in the world, Cone warned his hearers that the church always faces the danger of separating the gospel of Jesus Christ from the hopes, fears, sufferings, and failures of everyday life. When the church succumbs to this temptation it becomes sociologically irrelevant. The gospel, he warned us, is nothing unless it makes an impact on our life in the world, upon the values which govern us. The church does not exist by verbal definition and systematic doctrine, although these are important. Rather, it exists where the gospel of Jesus Christ, his word of liberation for those oppressed by sin in every guise, is given embodiment through its members in the world.

White Christians can shrug off black theology with scorn, a joke, a nervous laugh, a racial stereotype. We can fabricate ways to justify attitudes and policies that depreciate the worth of our black neighbor. The world offers us a whole catalogue of reasons why blacks can't be people and we often are adept at buying and transforming them into Christian ones.

Or we can listen to the prophetic word addressed by black theology to white Christians. We can accept the call to repentance, can engage in the long and difficult task of righting the wrongs, and

(Continued on page 59)

*Dialogs about the Practice of Ministry
Conducted by Mark R. Moore, executive director
of the Department of Education and the Ministry, Church of the Nazarene.*

EVANGELISTS IN DIALOG

Mark Moore: What are the trends you see in evangelism in the 80s?

Calvin Jantz: Strangely enough, we have noticed more and more churches wanting to go back to 10-day, or 2-week revivals. The rationale behind some of those requests is that the first week the church gets revived, and, hopefully, if the revival continued for another week, some real outreach to the community could happen.

P. L. Liddell: Another trend is to go back to the earlier practice of using evangelists as church planters.

Moore: I remember back 30 or 40 years ago that we had a "district evangelist" who was almost a full-time church planter.

Marjorie Jantz: I remember when we started out in the field that we worked very closely with Jarette Aycock, the

Kansas City district superintendent. If we had an open date we called Jarette and he would have us hold a church-planting revival in some town that didn't have a Nazarene church. He would pay us \$125 per week plus food. We were thrilled. We held the first revival in 30 or 40 churches on what is now the Kansas City and Joplin districts.

Moore: I remember as a district superintendent working closely with evangelists.

M. Jantz: That's the way it used to be. Then it got to the place where if an evangelist needed help he turned to pastors or the Department of Evangelism in Kansas City. But they told us in the Evangelism Conference that if we need counsel or advice we should contact our district superintendent. Perhaps this is a trend as well. But it



Mark R. Moore



Calvin and Marjorie Jantz,
Thirty years in evangelism.
Olathe, Kansas.



Michael B. Ross,
Nine years a pastor.
about 2 years in full-time
evangelism,
Bradenton, Florida.



P. L. Liddell,
Ten years as pastor,
21 years an evangelist.
Howell, Michigan.

should include probably close involvement on several levels. In the old days, when we would close a revival, Monday morning we would have a letter in the mail to Jarette Aycock, you know, attendance per night, this many seekers, they gave us this much for offering, the whole details. We wrote our report to him every revival. Sometimes the involvement was painful, but worth it. I mean, if you did something wrong, Dr. Aycock didn't hesitate to tell you.

Moore: So one trend may be the D.S. taking a more personal interest in you as a person and in your ministry.

Michael B. Ross: I don't know if that is a trend or not but I do know that I feel fully accepted and supported by my district superintendent, Robert Spear, and by my local church. They helped me to get to this conference. When I went into evangelism I was told not to expect to be part of the district functions, but my advisers were wrong. I'm included in all the district events.

Liddell: Another trend I see is the eliminating of the "playboy evangelist." That particular type has given the profession a lot of bad press. But pastors and churches will no longer tolerate the religious playboy who sleeps till noon, plays golf all afternoon, prays very little, preaches cute ditties, and stays out all hours of the night. I think that the attitude of people is that, if you are going to



Photos by Susan Downs

preach straight truth, you're going to live straight truth, and I believe there is going to be a growing place for real committed evangelists.

Ross: Another trend I see, which is related to what Calvin said a few minutes ago, is that pastors and laymen alike are more interested in revivals now than they were just a few years ago. You know, not long ago revivals were being regarded as a relic of the past. That's changing now.

Moore: What is the evangelist's job today? How does he or she work with the pastor?

Liddell: I believe that my first responsibility is to preach. I believe I am inclined toward expository preaching and doctrinal preaching, basic gospel truths, repentance, heart purity, holiness, all the doctrinal statements of the Word, our 15 Articles of Faith. These are the things that I think we need to concentrate on. I believe we are going to have to have preachers in evangelism who are known, not for their ability to make people laugh, but for their ability to underscore "thus saith the Lord." So I think an evangelist is going to have to pay the price of being a student of the Word. A student of the Word, and a man of prayer. Pay the price of spending time in prayer, and my idea is not less than a couple of hours a day. I used to, when I was younger, go out

and call a lot. I don't do that now, because it just wears me out. Sometimes a pastor wants me to go to a shut-in or a hospital patient. I do that, on a limited basis.

Moore: So an evangelist should primarily pray, study, and preach?

Liddell: Yes. There are other things as well. There are many opportunities to serve as a pastor to the pastor—when the pastor invites you to do so. It's not the evangelist's role to pry into the preacher's business. Nor is it his role to be a pusher of church politics or gossip.

M. Jantz: It's true that many pastors and their families are very discouraged. They have no one to talk to. Some don't feel free to go to their district superintendent or to a general superintendent. It may be that some feel that any problems they have might be interpreted as weakness.

Liddell: The evangelist shouldn't do a lot of counseling with the laymen—at least I don't. That's the pastor's arena. I need to say this about counseling. I'm not hard-hearted. I don't turn away people with aching hearts. But I am careful to tell people that I will not do anything to violate the privilege of the pastor.

M. Jantz: If we would go in and counsel all the people, and learn all their individual problems, I think we would be limited in our preaching, because we would be preaching from information rather than inspiration.

Ross: I don't want the people or the pastor to tell me all the nitty-gritty details of every problem in the church. But I do want pastors to convey to me why I'm there. What do you need, where are you as a church? Where do you need to go? In general terms, because I think every church is in the Scriptures somewhere. There's an answer. And I'm the man that's responsible to find the answer in the Scriptures.

C. Jantz: Last year, I typed out a letter that I sent to every pastor before we arrived, and a paragraph in this letter went something like this . . . "We want to know how we can serve you while we are with you. You know your people. You know whether you need a revival of holiness or if you have several sinners that are in your church that you want repentance preached. However we can serve you better, we want you to feel free to tell us when we arrive."

Moore: Your response was what?

C. Jantz: Sometimes it was critical. But a lot of pastors really appreciate it. We put in this letter of suggestions an overall picture of ourselves, of our work, and what we believe in. And we added to that something about travel, and entertainment, and the guidelines of the church for finances.

Moore: Let's shift gears now. What is the most rewarding thing about being an evangelist?

C. Jantz: To see souls saved and Christians renewed.

M. Jantz: I think of two: one is to go back to churches and see people who were saved under your ministry 10 years ago now serving as board members, Sunday School teachers, etc. Second, it's very rewarding when you leave a revival with an invitation to come back again.

Liddell: I knew when I left college I should be an evangelist. The most rewarding feeling I have is just knowing I am where I am supposed to be.

Ross: The most rewarding thing for me is to realize the effectiveness of the gospel. Christ has the answer to all human needs. To see Him meet the varied needs of so many people is rewarding.

Moore: What is the toughest part of being an evangelist?

M. Jantz: The biggest hurt is when a change of pastors brings an arbitrary cancellation.

Liddell: The toughest part for me is *loneliness*. I miss my wife. I will not have seen her for five weeks when I get home. It's tough.

Ross: The most difficult thing for me to handle is to see someone reject Christ. Sometimes I just can't understand, especially when they say, "I want to accept Christ. I need to. I hope to." But they don't.

C. Jantz: I think one tough thing is that, sometimes we have a tremendous revival, and you get so acquainted with the people and the pastor there really becomes a close fellowship with that church, and you almost dread for that revival to come to a close. But you have to pack up and leave.

Moore: If you had just one thing to say to the church of the 80s, what would it be?

C. Jantz: I would say, seek sanctification and then pattern your life after the Sermon on the Mount, the 5th chapter of Romans, and the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians. Learn those scriptures, and let those words be printed indelibly on your heart. This is what it takes to maintain a vital Christian life.

Liddell: I think I would like to see some of the ethical content of the holiness message come in, because that is where the practices of it show up. We can enunciate doctrine flawlessly, but if it doesn't show up in our ethics, what good have we done? I would like to see some of that come back. Dr. Williams hardly ever preached without underlining the ethical contents of holiness. Dr. Chapman the same. I would like to see us as Nazarenes take it out of the textbooks, and put it into our lives.

Ross: I want to say to the church, by being an evangelist, that there is no substitute for the preaching of the Word of God. My main concern is that we will turn preaching into another method that will be on a list of other methods. Preaching is not a method. True preaching of Christ from the Bible has no substitute. It is like marriage, or the Eucharist. Nothing replaces them. We must not jeopardize the centrality of preaching.

Moore: Let's talk about the invitation. I guess evangelists have to be specialists at that. What makes a good altar call?

M. Jantz: Your number one object is that you must break down the barrier that many people have built up, towards the altar. To me, the altar should be open for all needs. Many of our people carry heavy burdens. I think they should be allowed to come and pray about this, and not be counted as a seeker. I don't believe in counting seekers. I know the pastors have to for their reports. But many people simply come to pray, they may not want to share with me or their pastor, but they can come and cry and share it with the Lord, and go away feeling like they have solved some of the problems. Maybe this would cut down on the traffic to the counseling room.

Liddell: I've been told by pastors that I'm not where a lot of our evangelists are on this thing. I think that altar calls should be specific. It is a grand place for everybody, but in my work as an evangelist, I feel like when you open the altar, people should know what they are coming for. They should be seekers, not sneakers. When I open the altar, I like to know that this person came to seek entire sanctification. I like to draw the line so that when they step out in that aisle they know and everybody else knows that they are really coming to settle this thing with God. I also feel that not everything is settled at the altar. You can bring people to wood, but that doesn't

necessarily mean you have brought them to Christ. On the other hand, people can meet God without going to the altar. The point is to help people come to grips with divine truth—and sometimes the altar is too easy. When I was a kid, I was my dad's best statistic. He automatically had 52 seekers a year "counting as they came." For me at that time the altar was a cop-out.

C. Jantz: I agree that the point is to bring people face-to-face with God. That may or may not mean an altar experience. Don't misunderstand me, I believe in the altar. I believe it is the best place to meet God, but getting people to the altar is just the beginning of the task.

Ross: I think of primary importance is obedience. Often that includes going to the altar. Usually it does. I'm saying that the most and the least we must ever ask people to do is to obey Christ.

Moore: Tell me what you have been reading lately. Specifically, I'm interested in any books that may have changed your life dramatically.

Liddell: The book that I have read recently that really impressed me is Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*.

Ross: I agree. Bonhoeffer has probably influenced me more than any other person. Obviously my concept of preaching comes directly from him.

C. Jantz: A book by an old evangelist named Brashears was pivotal in our ministry. We made one quote from him a motto for our ministry—"Wherever you have a sanctified person, you have a storm center for revival."

Moore: What about you, Marjorie?

M. Jantz: Well, I read everything I can by Norman Vincent Peale. I really believe there is power in positive thinking. I've also gotten a lot of good out of Glaphr  Gililand's tapes on prayer.

Moore: This is a tired old question, but what about finances? Are the churches doing enough to keep you in the field?

M. Jantz: I would answer it this way, Mark. We have no complaints, because we preach and sing both, and we feel like the churches compensate us adequately most of the time. And if there is any area that I feel that the church is going to have to back off and look at is our travel expense. There are a few churches which have raised everything except the evangelist's offering.

Ross: I've had personal record breaking offerings the last two meetings. But I have some in which I lose money. And that's alright. I accept meetings when I know I won't make expenses. But it does really help to know in advance what the financial arrangements are.

Liddell: Those Christmas checks sure make a difference too. Since I no longer have children living at home, Dr. Moore, I'm doing better financially. But what some people don't realize is that you have to gross \$20,000 per year in order to net \$10,000. Travel, meals, dry cleaning, and related expenses are outrageous.

One of the tough things about finances is the fact that no one has revivals between Thanksgiving and New Years, or during Easter week. Precious few can be scheduled in the summer. But God has been good to me. I have no complaint. We have food and raiment, and I'm not hopelessly in debt.

M. Jantz: People told us when we entered evangelism that we would starve, but we didn't.

Moore: God has been good to us all. May He multiply His blessings on you, your family, and your ministry. Thanks for sharing with the readers of the *Preacher's Magazine*.



CONFRONTATION

in Pastoral Ministry

by Glenn A. Chaffee

In pastoral calling, the minister faces many challenging issues which arise from his responsibility for keeping people in touch with factors related to Christian discipline and accountability for the conduct of their lives. Dealing with these issues often results in confrontation—times when the pastor will challenge attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the people.

This may happen through preaching, counseling, or even administration. Sometimes it happens by design, sometimes without warning.

Basing one's ministry on confrontation is as unwise as steering clear of confrontation altogether. Many issues must be dealt with directly.

In the material that follows, certain factors will be considered that set a climate for confrontation that maximizes the probability of meaningful and productive results. These factors are motive, meaning, and method.

MOTIVE

In the work of the Kingdom, only one motive is justifiable—deep love and concern for the welfare of people. Jesus made it very clear that persons are more important than institutions, traditions, and man-made laws. His ultimate goal in every confrontation was to improve the quality of life of those confronted.

Since performance pressures on pastors tend to be heavy, other motivations may creep in. When those pressures are external, money matters, membership and attendance goals, and the desire to be a successful counselor may become hidden motivators. The pastor may also get under pressure to himself, basing his feelings of usefulness and worthwhileness on the tangible factors that can be counted. Fear of failure may propel the pastor into counterproductive confrontations with individuals, the church board, or the entire congregation.

When the climate for confrontation is set by any

motive other than love, the tone is harsh, inflexible, demeaning, intellectualized, and the result is confusion, inappropriate guilt, and defeat. When love prevails, the tone is compassionate, warm, inspiring, and compelling; and the result is an atmosphere in which an honest appraisal may take place, and tender souls may respond in dignity.

Prayer and honesty in searching oneself and discussing the issues with a trusted colleague will prove useful in clarifying motives.

MEANING

It is easy for the pastor to become myopic—to tacitly assume that everybody understands things the same way he does and then for him to act accordingly. In fact, a pattern of behaviors, and a collection of words often mean very different things to different people.

By way of illustration, a young father once explained that he took his six-month-old child out of church and spanked it to see to it that his child learned to behave in church. It would be difficult to fault his motive, but what about the child? Why was he fussy? Was he trying to disrupt the service? Were his intentions evil? Most unlikely. He was probably hungry, needed something, or was just plain uncomfortable.

While the father thought he was teaching the child to behave in church, the child was actually learning that it was wrong to be hungry, or wrong to feel uncomfortable, or wrong to be frustrated under intolerable conditions. Sincerely, the pastor may believe he is pointing the way to spiritual growth and productive insight when in fact he is being misunderstood and seen as judgmental, meddling, uncaring, rigid, and callous.

If one is going to challenge the behavior, attitudes, or beliefs of another, the context must be clearly understood so that the meaning to those confronted will be what was intended and expected.

METHOD

Probably every pastor at one time or another has fantasized himself in the position of Nathan confronting King David with the finger of judgment and the words, "Thou art the man!" Some have even tried it. But these are not the authoritarian days of the Old Testament. In our culture we are all taught the value of thinking for ourselves and evaluating all of the information we receive. Few will tolerate being told what to do, but most will consider carefully when matters are identified as important for their well-being.

Here, Jesus is our Example. Peter had denied Him, but Jesus didn't force the issue as an outside authority. He focused upon love and Peter's relationship to Him, speaking the words in the intensity of the moment that forced Peter to come to grips with himself and face the internal issues of loyalty, honesty, and obedience. Peter reconfirmed his commitment, not out of guilt or fear, but because he wanted to continue in relationship with Jesus—the most powerful motivation of all.

At this point the temptation arises to discuss confrontive techniques. But research has shown that technique is relatively unimportant in determining outcomes. What really matters is the **quality of the relationship** between the confronter and the confronted, and the manner in which the challenge is expressed. After many years of research, three

factors identified by Carl Rogers and his associates seem to be of great importance in determining outcomes:

1. Congruence: The confronter is what he appears to be. His words match his effect. He has no hidden agenda, and he does not attempt to induce guilt or fear as a means of challenge. It is all up front and genuine.

2. Empathic understanding: This refers to the confronter's coming to know how the other person feels, achieving a deep sense of his reality at the moment. This is not to be confused with sympathy which tends to be condescending and demeaning. Empathy reinforces our essential brotherhood and promotes strong, enduring, and productive relationships.

3. Unconditional positive regard: Jesus emphasized our need to have this kind of love for one another. It is the opposite of being judgmental. Manipulation cannot exist in its presence. It tends to release people from binding fear, and create an atmosphere of trust in which one may examine himself and contemplate change.

Confrontive interaction is an intensely emotional experience, and not a mere intellectual exercise. The quality of that intensity and the outcomes that result from its resolution will not depend on the technique that produced it, but upon the strength and meaning of the relationships that provide the context. Method has more to do with the building of relationships than with the means for precipitating confrontation. That always seems to take care of itself.

CONCLUSION

Confrontive interactions between the leader and the led are inevitable. A proper climate must be developed in order that the result will be positive in terms of the building of relationships, personal growth for pastor and people, and the intensifying of the Spirit of Christ in the midst.

The pastor must be very sensitive to his motives, only a deep concern for the welfare of his people will suffice. He must be sensitive to the mood and understanding of the people in order to insure accurate transmission and reception of the message.

The pastor must be committed to total candor and honesty, to knowing what the people are feeling, how they are experiencing life at the moment, and to an unconditional acceptance in love of all of them, even as Jesus is open to all men everywhere.

Finally, the pastor should never consider himself to have come to know and understand "all truth." Sometimes the tables are turned and the confronter becomes the confronted. When such times come, it is imperative that the pastor acknowledge it and respond honestly to his new insights. This presents a great opportunity for him to lead by example. You can be sure that people will respond to the words and spirit of the one who has shown them the way. Apart from the effects of the people, when a pastor responds positively to his personal experience of confrontation, he too will grow and be better able to order his life effectively.



"Your sermons really made my husband think, Dr. Widgely—so he has stopped coming to church."

Cartoon by George Shane

Good Communication Is Person-centered

by Neil Hightower

President, Canadian Nazarene College

A layman visited a great city church in Ohio a few years ago. Following the service, he congratulated the preacher on the service and the sermon.

"But," said the manufacturer, "if you were one of my salesmen, I'd fire you.

"You got my attention by your appearance, voice, and manner. Your prayer, reading, and logical discourse aroused my interest. You warmed my heart with a desire for what you preached; and then you stopped without asking me to do something about it!

"In business," he continued, "the important thing is to get the customer to sign on the dotted line."

Granted the preacher is more than a salesman, and the church is more than a business; but the principles of good communication are the same in any field. We must preach for a verdict in the minds of our hearers, else we will never accomplish much.

We may not always seek a verdict in an altar-call conclusion, but we will always insist in our discourse that people take a stand, intellectually and volitionally.

In order to engage the will of the individual we must realize that our hearers are receiving us

through a built-in "filter" in their minds. This filter is constructed from their past experience, their present emotional and physical state, along with their ideals and goals. We must work our way through the filter.

We break through the filter at the level of the "felt need" of persons. This is reason enough for a pastor to visit periodically in the homes of his people—to discover the social and emotional tones of his people. He will be a more effective communicator of the Word if he does this.

When we hear a speech or a sermon, we make not only conscious assumptions which everyone else makes, but some conscious assumptions which only we can make, because of our personal experience.

The same is true when we read something. Any linguistic or literary act is quite complicated. This concept of "assumptions" came to me recently as I was reading an interview of William Hugh Kenner, professor of English at Johns Hopkins University. Kenner said: "I think people who talk about putting things in plain language should be aware that: there is no plain language."*


He went on to advise that technical or philosophical subjects

will be more readily communicated if we use as many verbs as possible, without overpowering the nouns. (Ought not theological discourse and doctrinal preaching heed this advice?)

William Kenner illustrates the weakness by quoting an engineering journal: "Roofs, beams, and posts are mutually interdependent, with mutually critical relationships."*

Kenner's revision is clearer: "Beams will hold up a roof, and posts will hold up beams. But posts clutter up your floor space. If you move the posts too far apart, the roof falls down."*

How we interpret meanings and people will determine whether or not we communicate effectively. Our use of simple, colorful action words will provide clarity. It will also signify that we care more for people than profundity.

Good communication, like history, is more than putting a name between two dates. It is valuing the proclaimed Word as the transforming vehicle of God's grace. It is considering the worth and esteem of our hearers, and seeking to motivate them to act upon things that matter most. 

*Robert Kanigel, *Johns Hopkins Magazine* (Baltimore: University Press, November, 1977), pp. 10-20.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR OR PASTOR'S ASSOCIATE?

by Roy F. Lynn

Associate Minister, First Church of the Nazarene, Bakersfield, California.

The pastor recommended, the church board voted, and the new associate began his approved year of service. What appears as a "happily ever after" beginning is camouflaging some intriguing questions.

- To what degree is the associate a pastor's associate?
- To what degree is the associate a minister doing the work of ministry, incidental of the working relationship to other ministers?

Two prominent "senior pastors" recently epitomized each of the above implied positions. One pastor stated emphatically "I consider my associates as an extension of my ministry." The other maintained, "my associates are ministers in their own rights. I would not have one who could not perform his function exclusive of my detailed direction."

An analysis of working relationships shows the difference between these two philosophies. In the first instance it is normal for the senior pastor and the associate to have frequent meetings. The senior pastor usually has the authoritative stance in these meetings. It is as if he is standing and giving directions to the associate who is seated, without a desk or other object to protect him psychologically. The senior pastor, according to this philosophy, spends most of his administrative talent determining the direction and speed of movement of all the ministries of the congregation. Since the associate is "an extension," he is obliged to carry out the desires of the senior pastor to his satisfaction.

A miscarriage of this philosophy is seen in the case of a certain associate who felt it was his responsibility to bring the senior pastor's topcoat to him when the people had left the morning worship service. Actually, he had the right attitude, for when one is an extension of another his usefulness is measured by how well he pleases his "boss."

The second relationship may also be characterized by frequent meetings, but they will be times of shared insights. The associate or the senior pastor may give suggestions to the other. It is as if both are seated in chairs, facing each other, with no desk or other psychological barrier between them. Ideas flow freely and are analyzed for both positive and negative aspects. Conclusions are generally reached by consensus and thus are actively supported by both parties. The associate's usefulness is determined by how well he carries out his responsibility. It is also determined by whether or not the senior pastor is free to carry out his responsibility without undue concern about the associate.

According to Acts 6:1-6; 8:1-25, it is possible for both philosophies to coexist. Actually, both must be present for the working relationship to be most effective. Philip was a ministerial associate to the disciples. He had been ordained as a deacon to care for areas of ministry referred to as "serve tables." The purpose of his function was to give the "preachers" more time to preach. In this respect he was more an extension of the disciples' ministry than a minister in his own right. Though he was ordained as a deacon, not the same as being ordained as a preacher, he also did the work of an evangelist. He taught the people of Samaria. Had he been ordained as a "preacher" we would call his speaking "preaching." His teaching was so effective that "multitudes with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip" (Acts 8:6). In this sense, Philip was a minister in his own right doing the work of ministry.

In the first instance, Philip was the pastor's associate. In the second he was obviously an associate pastor. Jesus spoke of the difference as recorded in John 10:7-21. He identified the "hireling" as one who did only what the employer required. When times were not easy (the wolves came) the "pastor's associate" looked for greener pastures and left the congregation (sheep) to fend for themselves. Jesus identified the shepherd as the pastor or associate pastor who stays through the difficult times and helps the lambs grow up.

In our government the choice is up to both the senior pastor and the ministerial associate which philosophy, or combination of philosophies, is most appropriate. There are times when the associate must be allowed to be a minister in his own right. But there are times when he must subject himself to the authority of the senior pastor and in fact become the pastor's associate. The difficulty is in ascertaining the degree to which one is to be allowed to be a minister in his own right and the degree to which one is forced to be an extension of another. This decision needs to be made prior to allowing the church board to vote on one's election as a ministerial associate.

The senior pastor's bias can be found by asking appropriate questions during the interview. During one interview a ministerial associate asked the senior pastor to review briefly the terms of service of the last three associates. It became clear that only one of the three had satisfied the senior pastor. Two associates were "let go" by the recommendation of the pastor to the church board because they "made a mistake in judgment that was clearly opposed to my desires." It became more and more

(continued on page 63)

John Wesley's "Bible Christianity"

by R. Larry Shelton, *Director, School of Religion, Seattle Pacific University*

The basis of Wesley's evangelistic motivation and message is the Bible. He sees the intent of Scripture to be the bearing of the message of redemption and the providing of information for salvation and Christian living. The distinguishing mark of a Methodist, he says, is that "we believe the written Word of God to be the only and sufficient rule both of Christian faith and practice."¹ Through the power of the Holy Spirit, "Scripture is thus the means to this end, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."² This is what Wesley means when he describes the Methodists as "resolved to be Bible-Christians at all events; and, wherever they were, to preach with all their might plain, old Bible Christianity."³ For him, "Bible Christianity" means preaching salvation by faith and endeavoring to live what one preaches. Scripture as interpreted by the primitive Church and the Anglican Communion is the "whole and sole rule" for the "Bible-Christian."⁴

In order to use the Bible to become a "Bible-Christian," Wesley suggests:

Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: only God is here. In His presence I open, I read His book; for this end, to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does anything appear dark and intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights . . . Thou hast said, "If any be willing to do Thy will, he shall know." I am willing to do, let me know Thy will.⁵

One must, therefore, approach the Bible prayerfully and in an attitude of obedient submission in order to have the supernatural persuasiveness of one who preaches as if he had just been with God and who lives in a way which confirms the proclamation.

Not only the power for preaching, but the content of preaching comes from the Bible. He says, "My ground is the Bible. Yea, I am a Bible bigot. I follow it in all things, both great and small."⁶ All Christian teaching is to be judged by its conformity to biblical teaching. He counsels:

Receive nothing untried, nothing till it is weighed in the balance of the sanctuary: Believe nothing they say, unless it is clearly confirmed by passages of holy writ . . . And, in particular, reject, with the utmost abhorrence, whatsoever is described as the way of salvation, that is either different from, or short of, the way our Lord has marked out in the foregoing discourse.⁷

One of the reasons why the Puritans appealed to him so much was that they were "mighty in the Scriptures," and appealed to them for all truth. Furthermore, in his refusal to allow any norm for truth other than Scripture, he was in line with the Reformers.⁸ His break with the Moravians was related to their tendency to allow experience to supercede biblical criteria.

It must be noted, however, that Wesley's emphasis on Scripture as the basis for truth does not contradict his use of reason and experience as criteria for truth. He did not see Scripture, reason, and experience as contradictory.

Sound reason and reliable experience would certainly be in conformity to the truth of Scripture. Furthermore, his emphasis on "plain, old Bible Christianity" did not negate the necessity for careful exegetical and hermeneutical procedures. He diligently studied various biblical scholars, particularly Bengel, and followed the basic principles of hermeneutics practiced by the Fathers and Reformers, and he was in the mainstream of classical Christian hermeneutics.⁹

For John Wesley, then, "Bible Christianity" derives its motivation for evangelism and the content of its proclamation from biblical truth. The dynamic work of the Holy Spirit in inspiring and illuminating Scripture brings a vitality to Wesley which cannot be duplicated by nonspiritual means. For contemporary Wesleyanism, "Bible Christianity" should derive its proclamation from Scripture rather than popular, and often unbiblical, terminology and philosophical presuppositions. Interpretations of Scripture and doctrinal formulations should reflect the historical understandings of the Church from the primitive Church to the present. And the life-style of discipleship should reflect the "desire and design to be downright Bible Christians."¹⁰

1. *Works*, Baker Book House, VIII, p. 340.

2. *Works*, I, *Journals*, p. 279.

3. *Works*, VIII, p. 349.

4. *Works*, VII, pp. 348, 350.

5. *Works*, V, *Sermons* I, Preface, p. 3.

6. *Journal*, Curnock ed., Vol. V, p. 169, 5th June, 1766.

7. *Works*, V, *Sermons* I, p. 421.

8. A. S. Wood, *The Burning Heart*, p. 210.

9. Wood, pp. 215-18; R. Larry Shelton, "John Wesley's Approach to Scripture in Historical Perspective," *WTS Journal*, Vol. 16, Spring, 1981.

10. *Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 348.

THE MINISTER'S WIFE*

by Kathleen D. Bailey

"NOW what do I do?"

Many a young woman cries these words when her husband is called into the ministry. While he scribbles down sermon ideas and digs into the *Manual*, she flounders in this new role.

Whatever her gifts, she should be "keeper of the home." This involves more than just doing housework. A home-keeper needs to shoulder the everyday worries and cares. With her husband on a flexible schedule, she may be tempted to use him as baby-sitter, chauffeur, or chef. But instead of adding menial work to his life, she should take some away. She can fill the gas tank and learn to change a washer, freeing her man to his God-called work.

As part of this home-keeping, she may protect him from interruptions. Even Spirit-led sermons don't write themselves. If she can handle the less-than-urgent matters, or refer them to someone else, she will be more precious than gold.

The keeper of the home must make the home a warm place. She makes the home a place where her family can relax and find acceptance—a haven for husband and children.

The keeper of the home protects her children. Parishioners can have ugly problems. But the wise shepherdess tries to shield her children from as much of the unpleasantness as possible.

Tongue control is mandatory. She should not gossip before her children—or anyone else. If a problem must be discussed, she can talk to her pastor-husband in the bedroom or study. If someone hurts her, only her husband should know. She lives out Isaiah 30:15: "In quietness and confidence is thy strength."

Quietness and confidence should also be her response to criticism of her mate. Lashing back can only make things worse. She'll hurt his ministry, perhaps beyond repair, if she fails to take criticism with quiet acceptance.

Since retaliation is not an option, what can she do? She can pray. Indeed, she must. And not only when his ministry falls under attack. If the pastor's wife is not a woman of prayer, then she's nothing more than a housekeeper. Fervent altar prayer of Wednesday nights is fine; but may she also intercede at home, on her knees, or over her sink.

The pastor's wife should be doctrinally sound.

This is of utmost importance when she counsels at the altar. She can't help a seeker find entire sanctification if she doesn't believe in it, or understand it. She will hinder her husband's ministry if she has no use for his theology.

Much has been written about the shepherdess overextending herself. She need not be involved in every program of the church, but should assist where her particular talents fit. If she works only in the ministries to which the Lord directs her, she should have enough strength left to make a home for the pastor and to engage in prayer.

God calls some parsonage wives to use their skills in secular jobs. This can be a ministry, or a tragedy. One pastor's wife taught special education in a local school. She learned the open-classroom concept, successfully applying it to Sunday School at her church. Another pastor's wife teaches nursing in a city hospital. The Christian students lobbied to get her as freshman advisor. Soon, most of the freshman class made decisions for Christ. It's a rare woman who can handle both secular and parsonage work; but when God calls her, she shows remarkable fruit.

All ministers' wives should show the fruit of hospitality. For one, this may mean china, crystal, and candles, while another feels more comfortable with oilcloth and hot dogs. Whatever her temperament, she's a woman who opens her home to others when the need arises. To open her home, and yet guard its privacy, demands a balancing act. The perfect balance is achieved only with God's help.

If the pastor's wife is strong in crisis, she'll be of infinite value to her mate and to the Lord's work. This is not strength as the modern world sees it, steamrolling through to get your own way. Rather, her toughness is the kind others lean upon. It has a lot of tenderness mixed in.

Hospitable . . . strong . . . prayerful . . . discreet . . . all of these are virtues of the ideal minister's mate. "I can't be like that," cries the prospective pastor's wife. But the qualities we have discussed are no more than those of any ideal Christian woman. They are available for all, and she doesn't have to achieve them by herself. She can do all things through Christ—who strengthens her.

*This essay won the 1980 Charlotte Gunter DeLong Award at Nazarene Bible College.

MUSIC AND THE WORSHIP OF GOD

by Donald Hustad

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Perhaps nothing would be more appropriate than to make a few comments about "Music and the Worship of God." As a basis for our thinking, I read the scripture passage which is the starting point for more liturgical theologians.

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the skirt of his robe filled the temple. About him were attendant seraphim, and each had six wings; one pair covered his face and one pair his feet, and one pair was spread in flight. They were calling ceaselessly to one another,

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts:
the whole earth is full of his glory.
And, as each one called, the threshold shook to its foundations, while the house was filled with smoke. Then I cried,

Woe is me! I am lost,
for I am a man of unclean lips
and I dwell among a people of unclean lips;
yet with these eyes I have seen the King,
the Lord of Hosts.

Then one of the seraphim flew to me carrying in his hand a glowing coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. He touched my mouth with it and said,

See, this has touched your lips;
your iniquity is removed,
and your sin is wiped away.

Then I heard the Lord saying, Whom shall I send?
Who will go for me? And I answered, Here am I;
send me.

(Isaiah 6:1-9, NEB)

It should be apparent that the central figure of worship is not the worshiper, but the God who is worshiped; God who is the perfection of holiness (as proclaimed by the angelic song we know as the Tersanctus—"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts"); God who is the perfection of power (for "the threshold shook to its foundations"); the God who remains finally somewhat inscrutable and incomprehensible to finite minds (as suggested by that image, "The house was filled with smoke").

They tell us that our modern word *worship* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *woerth-scipe*, signifying the "ascription of worth." Every man has his god; in every man's heart there is an altar. The Christian worships the true and living God, as revealed in the Scriptures and supremely in Jesus the Christ, because He alone is worthy to be worshiped. His holiness qualifies Him to forgive us and to make us holy. His power enables Him to regenerate and transform. And the mystery which must surround Him both inspires our awe and demands our faith. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. This is the very word of the Lord" (Isaiah 55:9, 8, NEB).

For our few moments together today, we will think of music and worship in three ways: as dialogue, as incarnation, and as offering, or sacrifice.

Dialogue

In the simplest and broadest terms, worship has been defined as "any proper response to God's self-revelation." In this holy conversation, it is God who makes the first move, who says the first word. Follow the dialogue then in Isaiah, chapter six.

God says: "I am that I am—all holy, all powerful, yet mysterious."

Man responds: "Woe is me! I am lost—a sinner!" God quickly replies to our confession: "Be forgiven; be cleansed; be healed."

While we are yet wondering at His grace, His voice continues: "I need you." Is it possible that the transcendent God needs the "man of unclean lips" to do His work in the world? Yes, it is wonderfully true, and our only logical answer can be: "Here am I, Lord. Send me."

This, then, is the dialogue which should take place in every worship service. But I fear that we frequently forget who is talking to whom. Sometimes it appears that the minister and the choir are engaged in antiphony, or perhaps the congregation and the preacher. When Kierkegaard speaks of worship as a drama, he insists that the congregation is the actors and that God is the audience. The minister and the choir, he says, are "prompters"—those offstage individuals who remind us when we forget our lines!

When the minister preaches, he brings us word from God and at the same time reminds us what our response should be in the dialogue. When he prays, he does so vicariously on our behalf—speaking to God for us—and at the same time encouraging us to whisper our own prayer.

The choir's anthem is not planned for our pleasure alone. The singers express praise of God for themselves and for us too. Hopefully, if the well of our hearts only seems to have gone dry, they will prime the pump, and our personal adoration will flow Godward again.

Furthermore, the most significant music in worship is not that of the choir or even of our favorite gospel soloist, but that which we sing for ourselves. For when we join in the congregational hymns, we are, in Calvin's words, "the church's first choir." It is then that the human-divine dialogue can be most direct and powerful.

Incarnation

When we suggest that "worship is incarnation," we are trying to say that worship is not alone something we do. A worshiper is something that we become, with our whole being. The British Baptist cleric Stephen Winward has said:

Both as revelation and response, worship should involve the whole personality of man, the body and senses as well as thoughts and words, movement and action as well as listening and understanding.¹

As I look back on my early spiritual pilgrimage, I am afraid that I developed the idea that true worship is largely cerebral and propositional. Today's young people have reminded us—after we got over the shock of "choreography" in church—that the body is not intrinsically evil, despite the fact that this Platonistic heresy has crept into our evangelical thinking. Some of us should have remembered our heritage of the camp meeting, for there was great significance in kneeling at the wooden altar, in lifting the hands in prayer, and even in the occasional holy "dance before the Lord," always ecstatic and, I believe, usually reverent.

The admonition to "present our bodies as living sacrifices" certainly includes the use of the lungs, the tongue, and the vocal chords in singing the hymns in church. Somehow, about 40 percent of churchgoers seem to have picked up the idea that "singing in church is for singers." The truth is that "singing is for believers." The relevant question is not, "Do you have a voice?" but "Do you have a song?"

There is a close relationship between today's emphasis on man's corpus, his body, and his psyche, his emotional self. It is here that we musicians make our greatest contribution to worship. For music has been called the "language of the emotions." Its communication transcends that of words alone, for it helps to reveal the numinous, the transcendent. It aids us in our attempts to express the inexpressible.

In my younger days, I was sometimes irked by the well-wisher who wanted to thank me for the singing of the Moody Chorale, saying, "The music was a blessing." Invariably, I wanted to conduct a theological inquisition by asking "What did God say to you?" or "What did you say to God?" The great Marian Anderson was once asked to delineate in words the meaning of a song. Her reply was: "If I could have said it in words, I would not have sung it!" For too long we have downgraded the importance of emotion, even ecstasy in worship. As the apostle Paul said, "I will pray . . . I will sing with the spirit,"² and that praying and singing is, at least occasionally, more emotional than rational. As an old mountaineer once said, "Some things are better felt than told!"

At the same time, we must not belittle the second half of Paul's comment on his personal liturgical practice. "I will pray . . . sing with the spirit, and . . . with the understanding also." [Hymns, anthems, and solos have words, as well as melody, rhythm, and harmony, and it is proper for the individual worshiper to judge the theology of the "youth musical" as well as that of the sermon. God may be speaking to you through the words and ideas of the hymnal as well as those of the Sunday School quarterly.

Yes, worship should involve and transform the mind, as well as the body and the emotions. It may be that we church musicians often underestimate the potential of the tool within our control. For when words and music are happily married, the idea is coupled with emotion. It is then that we may expect the Holy Spirit to speak in power, and to effect an action of the human will.

This then is the ultimate in the process of incarnation in worship. This is worship that springs from our innermost being. This is "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."³ Worship is finally submission. It is best expressed on the bended knee, with words "Here am I; send me."

I think we all agree that each minister of God should have his own personal heart-searching and confession before entering the pulpit on Sunday morning. My suggestion for myself and other ministers of music is that we read God's thundering words as spoken by Amos in chapter 5, verses 21 to 23 (NEB).

I hate, I spurn your pilgrim-feasts; I will not delight in your sacred ceremonies. When you present your sacrifices and offerings I will not accept them, nor look on the buffaloes of your shared-offerings. Spare me the sound of your songs; I cannot endure the music of your lutes.

Some of us may guess that Amos is speaking as a music critic and that he was condemning the ancient prototype of the southern quartet "all-night sing" or the rock-gospel musical. Chances are, this was the well-rehearsed traditional song of the levitical priests, every one a talented, trained and dedicated professional. Culturally, the music was probably related to the best cantata performance of the First Methodist Church. The problem was not musicological, but spiritual. The voices were singing—gloriously, perhaps—but the hearts of the singers were mute and cold. We need only to add the next sentence of Amos's challenge:

Spare me the sound of your songs; I cannot endure the music of your lutes. But let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (vv. 23-24).

Offering

For our last image of worship, we reach back to the oldest biblical concept, one which is missed by many modern churchgoers, even by so-called evangelicals. For too many people, worship is simply "getting a blessing." Fundamentally, worship is an offering—giving, more than getting.

The Old Testament is replete with references to music in worship as a "sacrifice." Psalm 27:6 reads, "Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." Heb. 13:15 (NEB) makes it clear that this sacrifice in worship is appropriate in our day of the new covenant: "Through Jesus, then, let us continually offer up to God the sacrifice of praise, that is the tribute of lips which acknowledge his name . . ."

It is only fair to remind ourselves that the question of acceptability goes back to the very first sacrifices of Cain and Abel. In Hebrew cultic practice, animals chosen for sacrifice were required to be the best of the lot, without blemish or disease. In Paul's call to Christian consecration, he says that the "offering of self should be 'a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for his acceptance.'"⁴

Obviously, the questions of quality and acceptance should be considered in connection with our "sacrifice of praise." Through his creative lifetime, Johann Sebastian Bach labored with great diligence to produce a stream of musical masterpieces, each of them inscribed with the words *In nomine Jesu*—"in the name of Jesus." The American Guild of Organists urges its members to strive for excellence under the motto *Solio Deo gloria*—"To God alone be praise." Today's church musicians give themselves to years of study of their art, that they may properly lead God's people in worship. Our choir members gather regularly for long and painstaking rehearsal in order that they may offer a worthy "sacrifice of joy" to God.

Of course, there is no room for either pride or

scorn in our striving for excellence. To be sure, God's ears are not tickled by the tunes of His servant Bach. Nor is He displeased with the simple songs of the mountaineer strumming his dulcimer. But for each of us the demand is the same. Our sacrifice in worship must be our best, involving body, emotions, mind, and will in a total response to God's self-revelation.

The word *sacrifice* itself denotes something that is costly. I am often reminded of the story of King David's worship of God conducted on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, told in 2 Samuel 24. I read from verse 20:

When Araunah looked down and saw the king and his servants coming over towards him he went out, prostrated himself low before the king and said, "Why has your majesty come to visit his servant?" David answered, "To buy the threshing floor from you to build an altar to the Lord. . . ." Araunah answered, David, "I beg your majesty to take it and sacrifice what you think fit. I have here the oxen for a whole-offering, and their harness and the threshing-sledges for the fuel."

Araunah gave it all to the king for his own use and said to him, "May the Lord your God accept you." But the king said to Araunah, "No, I will buy it from you; I will not offer to the Lord my God offerings that have cost me nothing" (NEB).

I think it is fair to ask the people of God—the leaders in worship as well as the whole congregation—What has it cost you to offer to God your "sacrifice of praise"?

There are times in human experience when all the human and divine requirements are met, and music seems supernaturally to bring us into the very presence of God. Such a time was the dedication of Solomon's temple:

Now when the priests came out of the Holy Place . . . , all the levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and their kinsmen, clothed in fine linen, stood with cymbals, lutes, and harps, to the east of the altar, together with a hundred and twenty priests who blew trumpets. Now the trumpeters and the singers joined in unison to sound forth praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and the song was raised with trumpets, cymbals, and musical instruments, in praise of the Lord, because 'he is good, for his love endures for ever'; and the house was filled with the cloud of the glory of the Lord. The priests could not continue to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God (2 Chron. 5:11-14, NEB).

It is sobering and humbling to realize that this can happen in conducting a ministry of music. Some of us have experienced it once or twice in our lifetime. And our prayer is, "Do it again, Lord. Do it again!"



Endnotes

1. S. F. Winward, *The Reformation of Our Worship* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1965, American Edition), p. 7. The outline of this article has been borrowed from Mr. Winward's book.

2. 1 Cor. 14:15.

3. Eph. 5:19.

4. Rom. 12:1, NEB.

SHOULD A PASTOR BE A CELEBRITY?

by Paul S. Rees

Our media-blessed and media-cursed society caters to the "cult of personality." The same psychological dynamics that can make a father-figure out of an Eric Severeid or a fun-god out of a Johnny Carson can make a demigod out of a preacher. In spite of all protests of humility, some preachers' behavior suggests nothing of what Paul said at Lystra: "We also are men, of like nature with you."

Consider the strong words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

Every cult of personality that emphasizes the distinguished qualities, virtues, and talents of another person, even though these be of an altogether spiritual nature, is worldly and has no place in the Christian community; indeed it poisons the Christian community.

Even the advice, "Be yourself in pulpit and parish," needs to be examined. Which self should a preacher be? His ego-warped self? His vocational self? Or his Christ-possessed self? "Don't try to be more than you are," says one counselor to preachers. Understood as he intended it, this advice has value. Still, it is open to question. Perhaps you should leave out the "try" and let the Holy Spirit make you *more* than you actually are.

The evangelical community is being inundated with a shower of exhortations to "Be human! Be human!" But unless I have misread it, the accent of the New Testament is: "Be Christian! Be Christian!" That exhortation goes for clergy and laity alike.

To be sure, all pretending to some kind of sainthood is nonsense. But the gospel does normalize our humanity. To be less than Christian is to be less than human. Depravity is our snag, not humanity.

The best advice for the preacher who is concerned with image-projection is to be *authentic*. If a younger minister has chosen a senior minister as a model, let him avoid mere imitation. Slavish imitation breeds artificiality. More than that, this kind of imitation runs the risk of reproducing not just the strengths, but also the weaknesses, of the man chosen as a model.

The good and growing preacher will cast a shadow of *empathy*. Of course a preacher should be very familiar with his text and his theme. But more is required. He should strive to develop rapport with his listeners. Some will be missed, of course. In a typical church there is too much variety to expect a net of compassion to

encircle every person in the congregation. But most of them will have their moments. "He is reading my mind!" "He has thought about my problem!" "He knows I have found that passage of Scripture hard to understand!" When that kind of image is being created, the preaching is what it should be.

Something else belongs to this kind of preaching. Let's call it *clarity*. Do listeners esteem their preacher as a clear thinker and a lucid speaker? Or do they regard him as a preacher who thinks loosely and speaks obscurely? Except in rare moments and for a worthy reason, technical theological jargon should be forgotten. If special language is necessary to make a point, then let simple words get the job done. A pastor should work at clarity. And for the glory of God!

One pastor chose to lead the life of a rhetorical recluse. His church members said of him: "He is invisible all week and incomprehensible on Sunday."

For shame!

All of us preachers are image-makers occasionally. Taking stock of what we are projecting is a healthy exercise.

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THE IDEA MART

Laymen's Revival

Format: The guest speakers were all laymen. They are active members in their local Church of the Nazarene. We feel Nazarene laymen have valuable spiritual knowledge and experience to share with the laymen in our local Church of the Nazarene.

Guest Speaker: Our objective was to have several speakers from a broad range of occupations to share their faith. We invited two of our local laymen—one a foreman for a sheet-metal company, and the other an accountant for an oil company. Other guest speakers included a pathologist and former missionary doctor, a judge in a county juvenile court, a vice-president of a shoe company, and a superintendent of a city school system. Each speaker was given a small honorarium except the local men. One refused any stipend. We gave our local laymen a new Bible. All guest speakers readily accepted our invitation.

Promotion: Promotion included a news release and ad in the local weekly paper, and a letter to selected community members. The letters were personal invitations to these people to attend the service in which their peers would be speaking.

Preparation: Cottage prayer meetings were organized according to Sunday School classes. There were unexpected, positive results from these meetings.

Messages: The speakers were asked to pray for the leadership of the Holy Spirit in selecting their subjects. The topics covered a broad range including the Second Coming, the Church, the Family, Personal Testimonies, Tithing, Music, and Holiness. All speakers requested that the pastor conduct the altar calls.

Music: The music was conducted and arranged by Jim Winfrey, a layman on the Collinsville church staff. Numbers were presented by a brass ensemble comprised of youth from the local church, the local choir, and local soloists.

Response: The response to the altar calls was outstanding. Our people achieved some solid victories during these precious times.

Attendance: The attendance at all services was excellent, perhaps the best of any revival meeting held in our church.

Cooperation: The cooperation by the guest speakers was excellent, and the acceptance by the congregation of all areas before, during, and after the meeting were far beyond expectation.

—Tommy Loving
Collinsville, Oklahoma

Prayerline

With "Ma Bell's" help, your church can become a 24-hour center of outreach, encouragement, and evangelism! If you have a telephone answering system which is programmable (i.e., uses a single leaderless cassette tape for both outgoing and incoming messages), or if your system will accommodate a 60-second loop, you can establish a 24-hour "Prayerline" using your present telephone service.

I use an Answerex Model A-100.* Each Monday morning I take half an hour to record a series of identical messages for the week with the following format:

"Thank you for calling *Prayerline*. This is a ministry of the First Church of the Nazarene, Melrose, Massachusetts."

I then give a one-minute biblically based devotional:

"This is *Prayerline*, a ministry of the First Church of the Nazarene in Melrose. If you have a prayer request, please state it briefly after the tone. If you wish personal counsel or prayer, call back during regular office hours or dial (parsonage phone.)"

(tone)

(20 seconds pause for caller's message)

(tone)

"Sorry, your message time is over. Thank you for calling *Prayerline*."

(tone)

The total time for each call averages between 1½ and 2 minutes, so I can record 15 to 20 messages per one side of a C-60 cassette.

*Answerex, Inc., 11620 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 580, Los Angeles, CA 90025

—William L. Poteet

Children's Church Plan Book

Our Children's Church Plan Book is a three-ring notebook that has dividers for each month of the year. This plan book is left on the pulpit in the children's church area at all times. A schedule of the service is made each Sunday. This record helps us to know what songs were used. One can know immediately the people involved on a particular Sunday. Records of the attendance is kept in the upper righthand corner. The offering is recorded in the upper lefthand corner.

—Martha Hindmand,
Roxana, Illinois

Receiving Members

Candidates, accompanied by 'sponsors' (board member or God's 'link' in salvation or membership) come forward during appropriate song to seats chosen.

Presentation by church secretary.

Reading of *Manual*: Page 32: paragraphs 21, 22, 23.

Ritual: Minister: "It is our joy and privilege at this time to welcome and receive ———, who earnestly desire to acknowledge Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and to enter into the fellowship of His church. Although witness and assurance has been given of their faith and experience and the leading of God in their lives, we would together call to mind the sacred nature of the church with its privileges and obligations.

"We remind ourselves that a member of a Christian church is one who is pledged to love and serve Jesus in word and deed, in the sanctuary and home, in daily work and in life's recreation and leisure too. We believe that true fellowship consecrates both reason and conscience to the obedience of church rules and guidelines; that fellowship will reveal itself in loyalty to public worship and the sacraments of the church, and in affectionate and courteous kindness to fellow members without respect of person. It is a privilege and practical obligation to revere and respect the pastor and to be jealous of the honour and reputation of the church in the sight of the world."

Reception: *Manual*, page 274, Paragraph 801.

Questions and covenants.

"Forasmuch as our brothers and sisters have expressed their desire to be accepted into the fellowship of the ———, Church of the Nazarene, and have approved themselves in willingness to conform to the doctrines and standards of the church, I extend to them the right hand of fellowship in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"Mr. and Mrs. ———, we rejoice in the good hand of God upon your lives, and the promise of your family's future, and warmly welcome you into this local fellowship and the worldwide Church of the Nazarene. 'He which hath begun a good work in you will surely perfect it unto the day of Christ.'

"Mrs. ———, we are thankful for your warmth of spirit and zeal for the Lord: it is our privilege to welcome you with the same warmth and sincerity into Nazarene fellowship, in this church and internationally.

"A *Teenager*: It is good to know the next vital period of your life will be spent in the caring and society of this church. May God make you wholly His and guide your future for His glory and your highest good. I welcome you into the church that loves and prays for you, a worldwide church.

"A *young couple*: It is a moving occasion when husband and wife are united in faith and fellowship. We welcome you, ———, with hearts and hands into closer fellowship in the sacred ties of membership.

"A *mother and daughter*: As God has welcomed you into His grace and fold, we extend to you the right hand of fellowship into a church you already serve in many ways. In the spirit of love, courage, and a sound mind, may you go forward knowing that His strength is made perfect in weakness."

Welcome by one of the officers or lay leaders of the church.

Token gifts by pastor's wife (booklet, hymnbook?).

Pastor: "Will the congregation please stand in token that we welcome our friends into our hearts and fellowship, and covenant to give them an encouraging example, love, and kindness; and to watch over them in prayerful, practical concern."

Hymn and Benediction.

—Albert Lown
West Yorks, England

Try a Community Club

Are you looking for a way to draw boys and girls into your church? Try organizing a community club. The

purpose of the club is to provide wholesome, character-building activities in a spiritual atmosphere.

Once the club has been established, the church can begin ministering to the unchurched children and their families. A bus route can be started from the membership of the club. Bible-study groups can be organized, friendship evangelism efforts undertaken, and other evangelistic efforts made.

Community club meetings are held in the home of one of the lay families of the church. If personnel permits, several of these clubs can be run at one time in various parts of the community.

A week before the first club meeting, attractive flyers should be left at each home within a reasonable distance of the meeting place. The day before the first meeting, reminder announcements should be taken door-to-door. The flyers should highlight the features of the one-hour club meeting. Possible activities are: Bible stories, crafts, singing, Bible adventure, games, puppet shows, and refreshments.

All pertinent information such as date, time, and place should be clearly stated. It should also be stated that the club is sponsored by your local church.

A message to parents could be written on the back of the flyer, such as:


"This year the Church of the Nazarene in your community is offering a

Community Club for your children, ages 6 to 12. This club gives children opportunity for Bible study, which is the basis for true and righteous living. In addition, it offers wholesome activities for enthusiastic children, helping them demonstrate what they have learned concerning Christ and His teachings. We are looking forward to your child attending—right here in your own community at the home of one of your neighbors."

A registration form should be kept on each child who attends. This should contain such information as name, address, phone, parents' names, brothers and sisters and their names and ages. A place should be provided for checking whether or not the child attends Sunday School regularly. This information is then used in follow-up.

Usually club should last for one week, one hour only per day. Each afternoon a Bible story with an evangelistic emphasis should be given. It is usually good to include singing and some games. Each day there could be some special feature such as a filmstrip, clown, ventriloquist, or puppets.

One church which organized community clubs had good success; 48 boys and girls were enrolled in one club—24 of these children were prospects who did not attend Sunday School regularly. Many of them were won for Christ and the church.

—Betty B. Robertson
Arvada, Colorado 

THE PREACHER'S EXCHANGE

FOR SALE:

Complete set of *Systematic Theology*—Wiley, \$25.00 (marked). *Hebrews* (signed by Dr. Wiley), \$15.00 (marked). *Evangelism*, M. Taylor, \$10.00. Other various books, write for list. John K. Abney, Rte. 10, Eau Clair Drive, Maryville, TN 37801.

200 and more books and Bibles by retired preacher. Send for list. 12-volume *Lange's Commentaries*, new, \$150 plus postage and insurance. Or will trade even for the *Preacher's Magazines* listed below, if complete. S. Ellsworth Nothstine, P.O. Box 308, Jefferson, SC 29718.

WANTED:

Nazarene *Preacher's Magazines* from 1980 to 1960. Must be reasonably priced. S. Ellsworth Noth-

stine, P.O. Box 308, Jefferson, SC 29718.

Complete set of the "International Critical Commentary" Series, published by T & T Clark. Robert C. Trainor, 52 S. Circular Rd., Tullamarine, Victoria, 3043 Australia.

Copies of "Quiet Talks" on various subjects by S. D. Gordon. Send subject and price to Rev. D. E. Cassidy, P.O. Box 5, Westfield, IN 46074.

John Fletcher's *Checks to Antinomianism*—any or all volumes. Also Wesley's New Testament with notes. Contact Stephen Hand, (617) 473-3842, 5 Allen Rd., Milford, MA 01757.

1,000 Biblical Illustrations, by Charles Little, published by Baker Book House, 1972. Lindsay Enderby, 4200 S.E. Jennings Ave., Portland, OR 97222.

by C. S. Cowles

Professor of Preaching,
Northwest Nazarene College



THE MINISTRY OF SETTING PEOPLE FREE: PHILEMON

To discover a special restaurant, an exotic cove along the seashore, or a captivating book is to be "surprised by joy." Such was the feeling I experienced recently when Paul's shortest and humblest letter opened its treasures to me. Tucked between the weighty Pastorals and the lofty Letter to the Hebrews, Philemon is easy to overlook. Nevertheless, it is a "diamond in the rough," rich in preaching possibilities.

Paul's self-designation as "a prisoner of Christ Jesus" (vv. 1, 9)* offers intriguing possibilities on the theme "Prisons and Palaces."

First, Prison Experiences Are Plentiful. There are *natural* prisons with which we have to cope by the accidents of birth, heritage, deprivations, and physical limitations. And there are *circumstantial* prisons imposed upon us by the contrary strokes of fate. Even though Paul was a totally committed Christian, he found himself locked up in a prison, not of his choosing.

Second, Prison Experiences Are Painful. "I would to God, that . . . you . . . might become such as I am," says Paul before King Agrippa, "except for these chains" (Acts 26:29). To confine such a one as Paul to the four tight walls of a prison was a particularly painful trial.

Third, Prison Experiences Can Be Productive. The walls of Rome's dungeons were stout enough to keep Paul in, but not thick enough to keep Jesus out. Neither were Rome's chains strong enough to prevent his spirit from soaring to "heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). Richard Wurmbrand, though incarcerated in Communist Rumanian prisons for over 14 years for Christ's sake, could nevertheless write in his book *In God's Underground*:

The prison years did not seem too long for me, for I discovered, alone in my cell, that beyond belief and love there is a delight in God: a deep and extraordinary ecstasy of happiness that is like nothing in this world. And when I came out of jail I was like someone who comes down from a mountaintop where he has seen for miles around the peace and beauty of the countryside, and now returns to the plain (p. 4).

Finally, Prison Experiences May Be Purposeful. Accustomed to unceasing evangelistic activity, what could Paul possibly do confined and isolated in a prison cell? Nothing! Nothing, that is, except pray, think, and write. Yet subsequent church history clearly underscores the fact that Paul succeeded in contributing perhaps as much to the expansion of the gospel through his prison efforts as by all of his

productivity outside of prison. Striking contemporary examples of this would be Corrie ten Boom, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Joni Eareckson.

"The Ministry of Refreshment" is an uplifting topic suggested by v. 7b: "The hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother."

1) Philemon was *hospitable* (v. 2). He offered his house for Christian worship and fellowship.

2) Philemon *loved Jesus* (v. 5). Undoubtedly, this was the ultimate compliment.

3) Philemon *loved people* (v. 5b). This is the most authentic way in which love for Jesus is exhibited.

4) Philemon *served people* (v. 6). He was busy with "every good thing" which is "love in action." There is something more basic than giftedness: it is goodness—that selfless ministry of servanthood love in which human needs are met.

5) Philemon *refreshed people* (v. 7). There is something ennobling, enervating, and energizing about the person who, like his Master, does not seek to be served, but rather to serve (Mark 10:45).

The way Paul speaks of Onesimus, former slave fugitive and now Christian brother (v. 16), offers a superlative opportunity to preach on "Love That Makes a Difference."

First, Paul speaks of Onesimus as "*my child*" (v. 10). When the apostle was instrumental in someone becoming a child of God, at once that person was adopted into his spiritual family. There is no real evangelism apart from in-depth relationships!

Second, Paul describes Onesimus as "*my heart*" (v. 12). Christian love means that our hearts get involved in the lives of others in the faith.

Third, Paul identifies Onesimus as "*me*" (v. 17). "Accept him as you would me." This is the ultimate expression of love. "As you treat him," says Paul, "so you do me. What hurts him causes me to suffer, and what lifts him enables me to rejoice."

The most striking sermon to suggest itself, in my judgment, could be entitled "Setting People Free." Paul felt strongly that Philemon ought not only to receive Onesimus without recrimination, but also to set him free—an unheard-of gesture toward a fugitive slave in the Roman world. Paul gives us a remarkable demonstration of the "power of positive persuasion" in the way he broaches this request with Philemon.

First, Paul carefully sets the stage. Though the letter is personal, it is not private. It is addressed not only to Philemon, but to Apphia, probably Philemon's wife. And to Archipus who was undoubtedly Philemon's pastor. And to "the church in your house" (v. 1). And to the church at Colossae

(Col. 4:7-9, 16). *Talk about group pressure!* Where could Philemon go among his Christian brethren in the Lycaean valley without having many ask: "What did you ever do about Paul's request regarding Onesimus?"

Second, Paul devotes himself to affirming Philemon (vv. 3-7). There is a legitimate place for brothers in the Lord to brag on each other, affirm one another, in a ministry of positive encouragement. Paul had the grace to speak of people—not so much on the basis of what they were, but on the grounds of what they were becoming by the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Third, Paul's request is respectfully given (vv. 8-22). He could exert his apostolic authority over Philemon as one of his own sons in the faith, but he chooses rather, "for love's sake," to appeal to him (vv. 8-10). Motivation impelled by the exercise of authority is not nearly as effective as that inspired "for love's sake."

What ever happened to Onesimus? The New Testament gives us no clue.

I was doing some research on the apostolic fathers recently, when I came upon the letters of Ignatius, written around A.D. 110. Sentenced to die for his faith, he had appealed to Caesar. He wrote seven letters to seven seacoast churches where his prison ship was likely to visit on its way to Rome, inviting the brethren to come and visit him.

Imagine my surprise when I read the letter addressed to the bishop of the church at Ephesus whose name was—Onesimus! Could it be the same person? I pursued this question with growing excitement in the canons of church history scholarship. My research convinced me, along with a growing number of today's New Testament scholars, that this was the one and same Onesimus. Philemon had given Onesimus his freedom. He had returned to his ministry of "usefulness" (v. 11) at the side of the apostle Paul. And, in time, he so proved himself as an effective minister of the gospel that he was elected as bishop of the church at Ephesus which, during that period, was the leadership center of the Christian Church.

Onesimus was charged with responsibility for the Church during a most difficult period of rising Roman persecution from without and the threat of a growing Gnostic heresy within. Who would be better able to hold the Church steady through this rocky period than Onesimus?

When I put the whole picture together, I began to see that *while Paul was instrumental in Onesimus's salvation, Onesimus was later instrumental in saving Paul's churches!* I further discovered that Onesimus was the first to collect the scattered letters of Paul and incorporate them into one volume. This enabled me to also see that *while Paul set Onesimus free for ministry, Onesimus later set Paul free for the ages!* We never can tell what might happen when we go out of our way, just a little bit, to set someone free!

Building Interesting Sermons

"A boring preacher is an affront to the gospel, a discredit to his profession, and a sore trial to his

people." That indictment stings. Yet it has the ring of truth.

Rarely will parishioners express themselves forthrightly about our sermons in a negative way, but their comments after the service are instructive:

"You always manage to find something to say."

"If I'd known you were going to be good today, I would have brought a friend."

"I don't care what they say, I like your sermons."

"Did you know there are 243 panes of glass in the stained glass windows?"

"I couldn't help but notice, as you were preaching, that your new haircut makes you look younger."

"Your sermons have been such a blessing to my husband since he lost his mind."

"They really shouldn't make you preach so often."

Our Problem

Making our preaching interesting is at once our most important objective, and also our greatest difficulty. It is vitally necessary in that we must gain the attention of our listeners if they are to ever hear what we say. And yet it is agonizingly frustrating to be under this kind of pressure two and three times a week!

After all: how do we penetrate the consciousness of a congregation whose minds have grown jaded and whose emotions have been spent on one spectacular after another via the mass media? And how can we create interest in something which we ourselves do not find all that interesting? We too are drained of inspiration by the multiplex demands laid upon us from so many different directions. Just finding something to say becomes a weighty burden when we have to face the "judgment bar" twice every Lord's day. And then to know that we have to package it in such a way as to gain a hearing makes the task almost impossible!

Our Potential

On the other side of the coin, however, there are some things going for us. People need people. And no amount of vicarious experience mediated by the media can take the place of that peculiar chemistry which is set in motion wherever "two or three" are gathered together. There is an inbuilt interest that human beings always have in each other which can help us as we seek to gain the attention of our people in the preaching of the Word. Every service is a new event, a fresh experience, and full of wonder and expectancy. People really are interested in what we might have to say, because they know we care about them.

Our Possibilities

Resources abound toward helping us build more interesting sermons.

1) *Human need.* People are always interested in what speaks to their immediately felt concerns. To address the fundamental issues of survival, security, self-esteem, and self-actualization always gains a hearing. Everyone has a sensitive nerve somewhere. To touch it in a gentle and positive manner is calculated to drawing the listener's attention to the sermon.

(Continued on page 59)

SERMON OUTLINES



QUARRELING—IS IT A SIN?

Text: Col. 3:12-15.

Introduction: *Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, "Avoid evil of every kind, including: Quarreling, returning evil for evil, gossiping, slandering, spreading surmises injurious to the good names of others."

This is a part of the "Living Out" of the sanctified life.

I. What Is Quarreling?

- A. To complain.
- B. To lament.
- C. Marked by anger or deep resentment.
- D. To find fault.
- E. At the base of a quarrel is usually self-pity.
- F. A quarrel can be Action or Attitude.
"A quarrel is any action or attitude towards our fellowman that is not Christlike."

II. What Is Sin?

- A. Breaking a known law of God.
- B. Love God first.
- C. Love neighbor as ourself.
- D. Quarreling is sin!

III. How Does It Affect Our Life?

- A. Stunts Spiritual Growth
- B. It takes your eyes off of Jesus and priorities.
- C. Progressive sanctification is slowed.
- D. Tears friendships apart.
- E. Makes you grow old.

IV. Where Does Jesus Fit In?

- A. Our security is in Him.
- B. We must forgive as He forgave us.
- C. We must have a clear understanding of who Jesus is and what He has done.
- D. We follow His love.
 - 1. Accept His forgiveness
 - 2. Be filled with the Spirit.
 - 3. Love as He loved.

Closing hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

—Jim Cummins
Orlando, Florida

QUARRELING— HOW TO AVOID IT!

Text: Col. 3:12-15

Introduction: Quarreling Is a Sin!

Any action or attitude toward our fellowman that is not Christlike.

I. To avoid quarreling we must:

- A. Be saved.
 - B. Be sanctified.
 - C. Walk in the Spirit which includes:
- ### II. Clothe yourself with:
- A. Compassion.
 - B. Kindness.
 - C. Humility.
 - D. Gentleness
 - E. Patience.
 - F. Bear with each other.
 - G. Forgive whatever grievances you have against one another.
 - H. Forgive as the Lord forgave—completely, forgetting.
- ### III. Put on love
- A. This binds them together.
 - B. This is the bond of completeness.
- ### IV. Peace of Christ rule in your hearts.
- ### V. Be thankful.
- A. Let the Word of God dwell in you.
 - B. You must teach with wisdom.
 - C. Sing—hymns, psalms, spiritual songs.
 - D. Live with gratitude in your hearts to God.
 - E. Whatever you do—word or deed—do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.
 - F. Giving thanks to God the Father.

III. Put on love

- A. This binds them together.
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- E. Whatever you do—word or deed—do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.
- F. Giving thanks to God the Father.

Conclusion: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Sing: "We Are One in the Bond of Love"

—Jim Cummins

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

Text: 1 Thess. 5:16-23

Introduction: Practically all religious people believe in some form or theory of sanctification. There are six theories of this experience.

1. Justification and sanctification are experienced simultaneously. Those who hold to this theory are often heard to say, "I got it all when I was converted."

2. Sanctification is attained by growth in grace.

3. Sanctification takes place at the time of death.

4. Sanctification takes place after death in purgatory.

5. Sanctification is imputed.

6. Sanctification is an experience subsequent to regeneration, and conditional upon entire consecration and faith, and is the privilege of every believer.

In our lesson we have three fundamental facts about entire sanctification. There are facts that should ever be emphasized in our preaching.

I. Entire Sanctification Is a Second Work of Grace

We do not need to go outside the letters of Paul to the Thessalonian Christians to discover this fact.

A. The church was in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 1:1)

B. The church manifested works of faith. (1 Thess. 1:3)

C. The members of the church followed the Lord, and they had real joy. (1 Thess. 1:6)

D. The membership had received the Word of God. (1 Thess. 2:12)

E. The members loved each other. (1 Thess. 4:9-10)

F. The members of this church were not in darkness. (1 Thess. 5:4)

Now Paul prayed most earnestly and sincerely for these people to be sanctified wholly. If they were already in possession of this experience, the prayer of the apostle was mockery.

II. Entire Sanctification Is a Divine Work of Grace

The apostle Paul prayed, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (v. 23).

A. God is the Originating Cause of our sanctification (Jude 1). Holiness was God's choice for us before the morning stars sang together. (Eph. 5:25-27)

B. Jesus is the Meritorious Cause of our sanctification. (Heb. 12:13; Eph. 5:25-27)

C. The Holy Spirit is the Efficient Cause of our sanctification. (Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13)

D. The Bible is the Instrumental Cause of our sanctification. (John 17:17)

E. Faith is the Conditional Cause of our sanctification. (Acts 26:18)

III. Entire Sanctification Is a Complete Work of Grace

The apostle says, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 23).

There are three realms mentioned in this passage. All of our activities, whether they be spiritual or natural, are performed in these three realms.

A. There is then the sanctified spirit.

1. This means a sanctified conscience (Hebrews 9:14).

2. It also means a sanctified will. There are two departments to the will.

a. The power of choice.

b. The power of determination.

3. There are sanctified motives. Our motives may be pure, but our methods may be faulty.

4. A sanctified spirit means a pure heart—a heart purified by the incoming Spirit (Acts 2:4).

5. A sanctified spirit will manifest the quality of the Spirit of Jesus (Romans 8:9).

B. A sanctified soul. The soul is the seat of our affections and understanding. This is the realm of imaginations, emotions, and taste. Hence, a sanctified soul means:

1. Sanctified affections.

2. Sanctified thoughts.

3. Sanctified tastes.

C. The body.

1. A sanctified body is controlled by the inward Spirit of God.

2. The sanctified body is fully dedicated to God and His service (Romans 12:1).

3. The sanctified body means a sanctified tongue.

4. A sanctified body means sanctified eyes.

5. A sanctified body means sanctified hands to work for God.

6. A sanctified body means sanctified ears to hear the voice of God.


Conclusion: What an experience! It is a privilege, a present necessity, and a present enjoyment.

—W. B. Walker

Bethany, Okla. 

BLACK THEOLOGY

(Continued from page 40)

we can work for the full human dignity of every person, regardless of color. Black theology should be the concern of white Christians too. 

Endnotes

1. James Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1969).

2. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

3. Joseph Washington describes black theology as a theology of freedom. Sometimes it is described as more appropriately a "quest for black theology." Black theology, says J. Deotis Roberts, attempts to show blacks how they can be their true black selves and Christians at the same time. See also *Black Theology II: Essays on the Formation and Outreach of Contemporary Black Theology*, Bruce and Jones, eds. (Bucknell U. Press, 1978).

4. J. Deotis Roberts, *Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971).

James J. Gardiner, S.A., and J. Deotis Roberts, Sr., *Quest for a Black Theology* (Philadelphia: A Pilgrim Press Book, 1971). This book is a collection of essays on black theology by Gardiner, Roberts, Cleage, Joseph Washington, Jr., Walter Yates, Preston N. Williams, and Joseph A. Johnson, Jr.

Albert Cleage, *The Black Messiah* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969). This book was of immense importance in bringing black theology to expression. Cleage is often referred to as the "prophet of the black nation." He is an exponent of the "Black Messiah" as an archsymbol of the black religious revolution. He is an advocate of "separatism" in the form of religious nationalism. He has given up on integration as a solution to race relations.

Emmanuel L. McCall, compiler, *The Black Christian Experience* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1972).

James Cone, *Liberation: A Black Theology of Liberation*. (New York: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1970).

James Cone and Gayrand S. Wilmore, *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-79* (Mary Knoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1980).

5. Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, p. 2.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

12. Cleage, *Black Messiah*, pp. 3-7.

13. Cone, *Black Theology*, pp. 36-37.

SETTING PEOPLE FREE

(Continued from page 57)

2) *The Bible*. People are preeminently interested in what the Bible has to say. The Scriptures offer more than a textual launching pad for a topical sermon: they are infinitely resourceful in terms of providing the "meat and potatoes" for the message itself. Expository preaching, moving systematically through large portions of the Bible, continues to be one of the best strategies for maintaining and building interest.

Good expository preaching is always more than a running commentary. It must relate the truth of the Bible to where people live. As one Scottish preacher put it: "My preaching begins in Jerusalem and ends in Aberdeen, or it begins in Aberdeen and ends in Jerusalem." Meeting the needs of people can more effectively be achieved through series expository preaching than by any other method.

3) *Stories*. There is one aspect of childhood which we never outgrow: that is, our interest in stories. Jesus utilized this method of preaching and teaching to full advantage. And so will we, if we are wise.

4) *Current Events*. There is a reason why the nightly news program on television consistently outdraws all others: that is because people are very interested in what is going on in the world about them. Commenting on national and international situations was one of the key ways by which the Old Testament prophets proclaimed the Word of the Lord. We can do the same with profit.

5) *Humor*. Maintaining interest throughout a sermon is not only a matter of content, but of style. Too much of the same produces weariness of mind and heart. There is nothing like a touch of humor to lighten and liven up a good message. It offers an emotional release and a mental break which enables the listener to once again direct his attention to the sermon with renewed interest.

6) *Sharing*. People are always interested in what is going on in their preacher's life—providing he doesn't overdo it. Paul said, "Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me" (2 Cor. 12:9). It is helpful for the people to discover that their pastor is human too. And then they can relate when he moves from the confession of weakness to rejoicing in Christ's power.

*All Scripture from NASB.



OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES



by Charles Isbell

The most troubling aspect of the entire Exodus narrative is the plague sequence (7:8—11:10) with its startling assertions that Yahweh the God of Israel brought one horrible disaster after another upon Egypt, hardened the heart of Pharaoh so that he could not perceive the truth, and ultimately exacted an enormous toll of human life. In this article, I shall attempt to answer some basic questions raised for the Christian minister by the story of the plagues.

In terms of the structure of the plague sequence, 5:2 must be identified as a key introductory verse, even though it is separated from the plague section per se. In 5:2 is the response of the Pharaoh to the first appearance of Moses and Aaron before him with their request that the people of Israel be set free to worship their own God.

His response sets the stage for what follows. "Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice and send Israel away? I have never known of Yahweh." Now as we learned in the last article, the "know" formula used in the two following sections is designed to answer this question of the Pharaoh.

For example, 7:17 states that when the water of the Nile River is turned into blood, "you [the Pharaoh] will *know* that I am Yahweh." The point that this and similar references are making is clear. Pharaoh can come to know the answer to his own question (Who is Yahweh?) by observing the activities of Yahweh in his country. Who is Yahweh? Yahweh is the one responsible for the plagues. This is quite clear from the text of the story.

But what modern readers fail to remember is the identity of the

Pharaoh. And so the question is often raised as to how God could harden the heart of a free moral agent in such a way as to prevent him from any possibility of obeying God and coming to the truth. We need to ask, "Who was Pharaoh?" And the answer to this question paves the way for a proper interpretation of the plagues.

In the first place, the Pharaoh was believed to be a god, not a human being. And the issue at stake in the narrative is not *how* God could harden a man's heart but rather *if* Yahweh was powerful enough to control and manipulate the Pharaoh for the purpose of freeing his people. In dramatic terms, the story is presenting a struggle between two gods (Yahweh and Pharaoh); for us to ask questions on the basis of our own understanding that the Pharaoh was not really a god is quite beside the point.

In a war between two gods, there are no rules. Pharaoh was being presented to the world and to the helpless Israelites as a god in the flesh. This kind of claim had to be met and countered in terms that could not be misunderstood. Yahweh's *willingness* to become involved so intimately with his people and his *ability* to control the Pharaoh are the crucial descriptions which emerge from the narrative.

A related issue pertains to the structure of the plagues as they unfold in the heightening drama of the narrative. Four main cycles are apparent.

The first of these (plagues one and two) portray the "magic" of Aaron rather evenly matched by the magic of the Egyptians.

The second cycle (plagues three through eight) demonstrates the power of Yahweh over

the forces of *nature*. In ancient Egyptian theology, many kinds of animals were considered sacred and virtually divine.

There are many eerie and strange things about the world of nature that are difficult to explain; the Egyptians gave a theological answer and deified many of the forces of nature. This enabled them to structure a response to nature and live within the boundaries that it set up in a seemingly arbitrary fashion. But clearly the plagues of gnats, flies, animal pestilence, boils, hail, and locusts demonstrate the Lordship of Yahweh over anything belonging to the world of nature.

Plague nine (darkness) represents a third cycle in the plague sequence, this time an attempt to demonstrate the power of Yahweh over the sun. In Egyptian theology, the most well-known and widely worshipped deity was the god Ra, the sun-god! The ancient priests of Egypt taught that Ra had been the first Pharaoh of Egypt; every Pharaoh thereafter was a son of the sun.

Thus for Yahweh to control the life-giving rays of the divine Ra (the sun) is clear testimony to His power over forces not only on earth but even in the heavens. To bring darkness to *Egypt* (the land of the sun) was as awesome a display of power as any Egyptian could imagine.

Cycle four is plague ten, the death of the firstborn. Two things are noteworthy. First, the claim of Yahweh to possession of Israel was expressed in terms of a father-son relationship. In 4:22-23, the message sent from Yahweh to the Pharaoh is, "Israel is my firstborn son . . . if you refuse to let him go, I will slay your firstborn son."

(continued on page 63)



NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

John 2:8

Governor of the Feast (2:8-9)

This is one word in the Greek, *architriklinos* (found only here in the New Testament). The prefix *archi* come from *archon*, "ruler" or "chief." G. Abbott-Smith says that *archi* is a prefix "denoting high office and dignity" (*Lexicon*, p. 62). He also notes that *triklinos* means "a room with three couches," on which the guests reclined as they ate. So the *architriklinos* was "the superintendent of a banquet, whose duty it was to arrange the tables and food." The word may be translated "headwaiter" (NASB) or, perhaps better, "master of the banquet" (NIV).

Miracles (2:11)

The Greek word is *semeion*. In the King James Version it is translated "sign" 52 times, "miracle" 22 times, "wonder" 3 times, and "token" once—for a total of 78 times. In John's Gospel it is translated "miracle" 13 times and "sign" 4 times.

Unfortunately, this obscures the true meaning of *semeion*, which is "sign." The three Synoptic Gospels describe Jesus' miracles mostly as *dynameis*—literally "powers," but usually and properly translated (in KJV) as "mighty works." John, on the other hand, is concerned to show that Jesus' miracles—of which he relates only seven—had spiritual significance.

For instance, feeding the 5,000 illustrated the fact that He was the Bread of Life (John 6:35), and raising Lazarus underscored the truth that He was the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25). So John regularly refers to Jesus' miracles as "signs." Here he says that the turning of the water into wine was "the first of his miraculous signs" (NIV). It caused His disciples to believe in Him.

Again (3:3)

The Greek word is *anōthen*, the first and basic meaning of which is "from above." Josephus (first century) clearly uses it in the sense of "again" or "anew." Which does it mean here?

J. H. Bernard writes:

"*Anōthen*, in the Synoptists (generally) and always in the other passages where it occurs in John, means 'from above' . . . ; so also in James 1:17; 3:15, 17. This is its meaning here, the point being not that spiritual birth is a *repetition*, but that it is being born into a higher life" (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, I, 102).

B. F. Westcott has a rather long "Additional Note" in which he traces the rendering of *anōthen* in the church fathers and ancient versions (as well as more recent ones). He concludes:

"There seems then to be no reason to doubt that the sense given by the Vulgate and A.V. is right, though the notion is not that mere repetition (*again*), but of analogous process (*anew*)" (*The Gospel According to St. John*, p. 63).

Among recent commentators, William Hendriksen favors "from above" (*New Testament Commentary: John*, I, 132). In Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Buechsel comes out in favor of "from above" (TDNT, I, 378).

We have always been impressed with the fact that Nicodemus clearly understood Jesus to mean "again" (see v. 4) and that Jesus did not respond, "That isn't what I meant." But we would agree heartily with the conclusion given in Arndt and Gingrich's *Lexicon* that the whole expression "is purposely ambiguous and means both *born from above*

and *born again*" (p. 77). There are many cases where we must take an either/or position; but in very many other instances the both/and approach is richer and more rewarding. The New Birth is a birth from above, by the Holy Spirit.

Wind and Spirit (3:8)

Both these English words in this verse translate the same Greek word: *Pneuma*. It has three meanings: breath (cf. "pneumonia"), wind (cf. "pneumatic"), and spirit—for both the human spirit and the Holy Spirit. The verb "blows" (*pnei*) is from the same root.

A Master (3:10)

The Greek clearly says "the teacher" (NASB), and so "Israel's teacher" (NIV). Nicodemus ranked as "the teacher of Israel." Yet he was ignorant of spiritual birth.

Which Is in Heaven (3:13)

This clause in the King James Version is not found in any Greek manuscript earlier than the ninth century. We now have two papyrus manuscripts of John's Gospel from close to A.D. 200—only about a hundred years after that Gospel was written (probably about A.D. 95). Also, both our great Greek manuscripts from the fourth century do not have it. It seems obvious that no reasonable-minded person would argue that this clause was in John's Gospel as originally written, when it is not in the third and fourth century manuscripts that we have.

Should Not Perish (3:15)

This clause in the KJV is genuine in verse 16. But it was imported into verse 15 from verse 16 by late copyists.





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.

How Churches Grow in an Urban World

By Francis M. Dubose (Broadman Press, 181 pp., hardback, \$5.95).

Building a great church is different in the big city than the small town. I have had experience in both places and Francis Dubose helped me to see that cities aren't so bad—in fact there are some advantages to building a church in the big city rather than the small town or rural setting.

Quoting Dr. Dubose on Paul's plan: "His pattern of ministry was to enter a city, preach and minister, gather converts, form a church with its own indigenous leaders, and move on."

On the openness of urban people: "People in village areas are much more bound to their traditional religion and the caste system . . . upon moving to urban centers, people are much more open to new ideologies . . . secular culture therefore does not rule out God but rather becomes the social context in which true evangelism can thrive, liberated from the shackles of tradition, religious or otherwise."

On healthy church growth: "There should be influential growth as well as organic growth, spiritual growth as well as numerical growth, multiplication growth as well as enlargement growth."

The discussion on the 12 types of urban churches is very interesting; the cathedral, downtown "Old First," the uptown church, the people's church, the university church, the large, medium, small neighborhood church, the storefront church, the black church, the ethnic church, and the suburban church.

Dr. Dubose takes the opposite side in the debate with Dr. Peter Wagner concerning the "Homogeneous Unit Principle." He presents strong arguments from scripture, present day situations, and logic to prove his point. Both views need to be heard!

How Churches Grow in an Urban World should be read by pastors in our cities but not with the thought to get "10 new ways to see my church grow." It won't give you a new promotional idea but it will give you a new appreciation of the complex makeup of urban centers and some fresh thoughts on how to reach urban people for Christ and the Kingdom.

—Jim Diehl

God Speaks Today, A Study of 1 Corinthians

By Jerry Vines (Zondervan Publishing House, 1979, \$7.95).

The minister who reads *God Speaks Today* is in for a treat. The book contains 33 brightly titled sermons based on 1 Corinthians. They are filled with vivid illustrations and uniquely worded outlines. They can easily be adapted to other sermons and are the kinds of things ministers search for. There must be at least one thousand illustrations in the book. Some are traditional but many are new. If you like good illustrations, sermon titles that grab attention, or catchy outlines, this book is for you.

Dr. Vines is a Southern Baptist and his sermons are consistent with his theological understandings: eternal security, imputed righteousness, natural/carnal/spiritual man, verbal inspiration of the Bible. He indicates that

those who claim to possess salvation but whose lives are grossly evil were most likely never saved, although he does hint at apostasy in rare cases.

His treatment of the tongues issue is typical of most subjects he deals with in the book: It is tastefully done but not too scholarly or original. For the preacher searching for fresh sermon outlines or new illustrations, this book is worth the price. It can add rays of light to some of the heavy sermons that need "windows."

—James T. Christy

God's Healing Community

By Frank B. Stanger (Abingdon, 1978. 139 pp., paperback, \$4.95).

Frank Stanger has done an excellent work in presenting the theme of healing. Stanger, himself, has been healed. At a very important time in his life and ministry, healing became a "front and center" subject which changed his life and ministry.

God's Healing Community is good reading. It is not heavy, but is exciting. Stanger's book is filled with usable illustrations and excellent quotes from well-known individuals such as E. Stanley Jones, Albert Day, Henry Drummond, Leslie Weatherhead, and Paul Tournier. His bibliography is extensive.

Stanger treats the subject of healing very openly and honestly. He openly confronts all the objections that fill our minds.

One of the more helpful areas of this book is the number of useful sermon outlines which a minister may use.

—Earl Lee

OT WORD STUDIES

(continued from page 60)

Again, the issue is whether Yahweh is powerful enough to accomplish what is thus promised. Can He in fact dominate the firstborn son of the Pharaoh as the Pharaoh was dominating (enslaving) the Israelites? If so, there was hope for redemption. If not, . . .

But not only must this claim of Yahweh be understood, the claim of the Pharaoh about himself must also be born in mind. According to Egyptian theology, a primeval deity named Osiris had ruled Egypt long, long ago, but was slain in cosmic battle by the evil Seth, ending his rule. Osiris's sister Isis was unable to restore him to life and rulership, but his son Horus did succeed in giving a measure of life. As a result, Osiris

became the ruler of the realm of the dead; Horus became the ruler of the realm of life on earth.

This ancient myth was used to explain the living Pharaoh. Every Pharaoh was acclaimed as Horus incarnate, the son of Osiris. The inevitable death that even the divine Pharaoh faced was merely the moment when he was translated into Osiris. He ceased to rule the living and began to rule in the realm of the dead. His son, accordingly, became Horus incarnate and began his rule over the living.

It is this myth that furnishes the background for the killing of the firstborn of the Pharaoh. Merely to kill the Pharaoh meant nothing. He would simply be promoted to another realm of leadership and his son would take his place on earth.

In fact, killing the Pharaoh would only hasten the cycle to-

ward which life was oriented. *But to kill the son destroyed the channel through which the sentence of death was transmuted for the Pharaoh on earth.* And it demonstrated the power of Yahweh over yet another set of Egyptian deities.

As Douglas Fox has so aptly remarked, the plagues leave no doubt about the only real power of the universe. "Powers other than Yahweh's are allowed to operate in the world, and they may deceive many into thinking them supreme. But in Yahweh's time he humbles them all, for his alone is the final strength to give life or death, light or darkness, to create or to destroy."¹ And, it might be added, His alone is the power capable of getting us safely out of Egypt!

1. "The Ninth Plague: An Exegetical Note," JAAR XLV/2 Supplement (June, 1977), p. 498.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

(continued from page 47)

clear through discussion that this senior pastor wanted more of a "pastor's associate" than he did an "associate pastor."

Other questions that may be appropriate could be:

1. In the area of service being considered, how much authority have you, as senior pastor, used and how has this authority been expressed? . . . Since this will become my area of responsibility, how much authority will I be allowed to have and how much will you retain? (The second question is meaningful within the context of the first.)

2. Would you describe some of the things former associates have done and your reaction to those things. Describe at least one negative thing, in your opinion, without identifying the person involved.

Senior pastors, too, should ascertain the degree to which a prospective associate can operate as an associate pastor and to what degree he will need to be a pastor's associate, needing specific guidance. Senior pastors might ask questions such as the following:

1. Given nearly unlimited freedom to develop ministry in the area of service in question, what process would you use to develop that ministry?

2. How would you determine short-range and long-term goals?

3. How would you determine appropriate methods of reaching those goals?

4. How would you satisfy me and yourself that this ministry was effective and beneficial in our congregation?

The answers to these questions and others of your own design will give the ministerial associate and the senior pastor a clue to the working relationship desired by each. It is then up to the two, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to decide if this expected working relationship should be consummated.

Ministerial associates who desire to be more "associate

pastor" than "pastor's associate" should consider meeting the requirements of such a function. Acts 6:3 says we should be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" (NIV). It is our responsibility to leave no doubt about whether or not we are walking in all the light given to us by the Holy Spirit. We must actively seek out that light as given to us in the written Word. We must also appropriately use the knowledge gained in our educational institutions. Our success as associate pastors does not rest on our outgoing personalities or in our ability to create an exciting program. Our success rests on our willingness to be subject to the Holy Spirit and our ability to use our knowledge in intelligent ways.

Senior pastors would be well advised to give renewed consideration to the concept of helping his associates become more effective as associate pastors. When a ministerial associate is given directed freedom to perform ministry, to "equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12), you receive the advantage of having another creative, Spirit-filled mind at work in your congregation. Since the primary reason for having an associate in the first place is more effective ministry, this advantage should be given careful consideration.

Recent surveys indicate that ministerial associates have very short terms of service. (Some say 18 months and others 22 months average.) Associates, like senior pastors, need a healthy respect for the ministry they perform. When they are given the freedom to minister, within locally mandated boundaries, they take more pride in their work. This develops self-worth and evolves into a more satisfied associate. A satisfied associate is more likely to stay on through the battle than one who doubts his worth or the value of his contribution.

In one sense of the word, an associate will always be the pastor's associate. The best of working relationships will allow him the freedom to also be an associate pastor, performing ministry as a minister in his own right. The Holy Spirit will give guidance to both the senior pastor and the ministerial associate the degree to which each will be allowed in a given situation.

Lear Leers Again

Norman Lear and others of his ilk are howling like wounded beagles. Lear is one of the 300 or so people who control television. The corps of 300 has used the public airways to promote all sorts of liberal causes, especially the "normalcy of adulterous life-styles." The prime time "heroes" almost without exception are pictured again and again in bed or bathtub with girl friends or mistresses. These purveyors of amorality can't stand the "new right." Norman Lear in particular has become as narrow-minded as Archie Bunker and wants to drive the "moral majority" into the sea. Why? Because they are trying to *influence people*. He is organizing a coalition of various vigilantes, including a cadre of liberal Christians, in order to launch a "search and destroy" mission against the rightists. Poor Norman, the pot, is screaming that the kettle is black. Just can't tolerate any viewpoint but his own.

Identify with That Sinner

Ever since Malcom Boyd told us that a Christian could best help an alcoholic friend by getting drunk with him we have been on an "identify with" binge. Sometimes this turns into a "cheap grace" substitute for evangelism.

Perhaps it is time to hear H. B. Huey's thoughts on this theme: "You do not save a drowning person by 'identifying' with him. You save him by becoming involved with him where he is. You do not thrash around in the water to assure him that you are not a better swimmer than he is. Nor do you go under a couple of times to give him confidence that you understand his problem and that you accept him as he is. No! Because you understand his situation so thoroughly, your only thought is to get him out of the water. The only way you can help him is through involvement, not identification" (*Yesterday's Prophets for Today's World*, Broadman, 1980, p. 171).

Take a Message to Mary

At age 72, Adam Clarke was on a preaching tour—even though the Conference had retired him. He wrote a letter to his wife, Mary, in which he said, "I shall pocket and seal up all my causes of complaint; join myself even to the forlorn hope, at the front of the storming party, and mount the breach for the God of armies in the defense of his people!"

About four months later he was buried in London. That's what it took to get him to cancel his preaching slate.

She Loves Me Not

"When the church's motors begin to sputter, don't blame theology: Most of our churches honor the Bible as the Word of God. And don't blame the system of government: Most of our churches have adequate standing rules. Blame the lack of love! The major reason for dissension and controversy in the Body of Christ is simply that we don't love one another."

—Sherwood Wirt

Dream On

I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord, and across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonged to me, the other to the Lord. When the last scene of my life flashed before us I looked back at the

footsteps in the sand. I noticed that many times along the path of my life there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life. I questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, You said that once I decided to follow You, You would walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why in the times when I needed you most, You would leave." The Lord replied, "My precious child, I would never leave you during your times of trial and suffering. When you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you." —Unknown

Short Takes

"The source of all wars, the source of all evil, lies in us. No outside protection will be sufficient if the enemy cowering at the bottom of our hearts is authorized to live."

—Pierre LeComte

"God never gives vision to the cowards, and for the all-sufficient reason that they could not receive it. Courage makes the soul receptive."

—J. H. Jowett

"All ministers and others who study to use fine expressions in their prayers, rather complimenting than praying to God, rank high among the hypocrites."

—Adam Clarke

"Do you know the difference between an individual responsibility and a corporate responsibility? No individual has the right to impose his personal decision upon a corporate body. If you can't make that distinction, you can't lead."

—Malcom Cronks

"If we preach Jesus Christ the Saviour, in the majesty of His goodness and His pity, I prophesy a listening world. And what more does a preacher want?"

—James Bloch

"Unless the spirit of Christ is the inspiration of the minister's life, he will not have much appreciation for the value of people."

—D. Shelby Corlett

"Life's not a paragraph and death I think is no parenthesis."

—E. E. Cummins

"When the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free and was never free again."

—Edith Hamilton

"The trouble with many of us is that we would rather be ruined by praise than saved by criticism."

—Norman Vincent Peale

"No one plans to waste his life; it just happens."

—George M. Bowman

During a thunderstorm the belltower of the Greenfield Church in Harmony, Minnesota, was struck by lightning, setting off the automatic chimes. Appropriately, the melody was "How Great Thou Art!"

—The Lutheran

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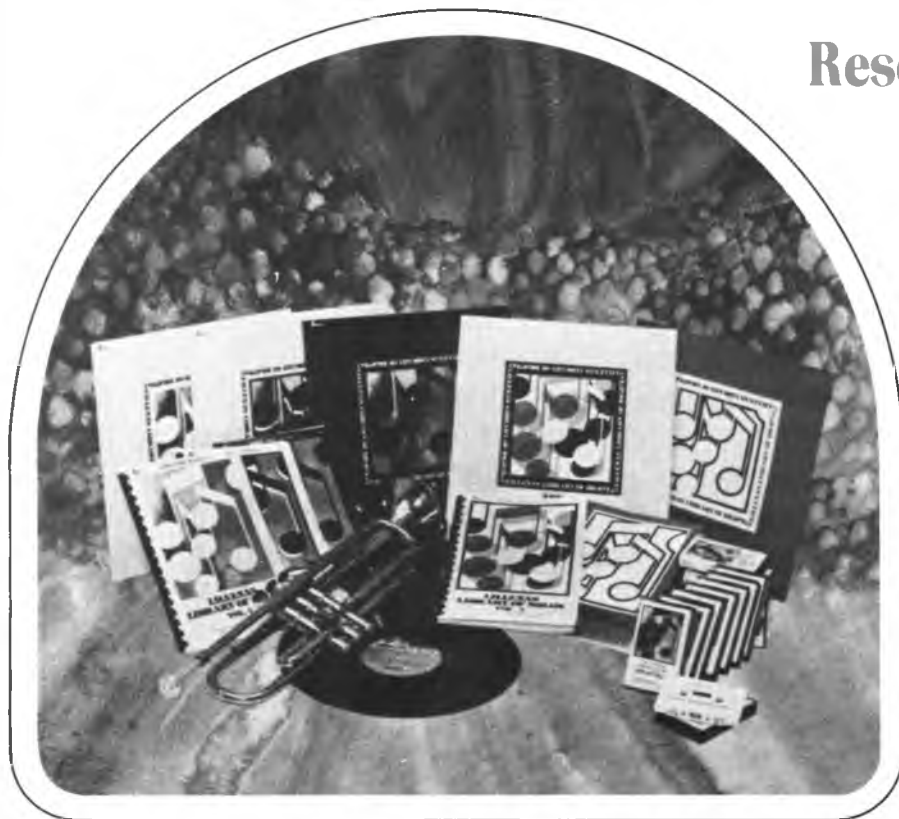
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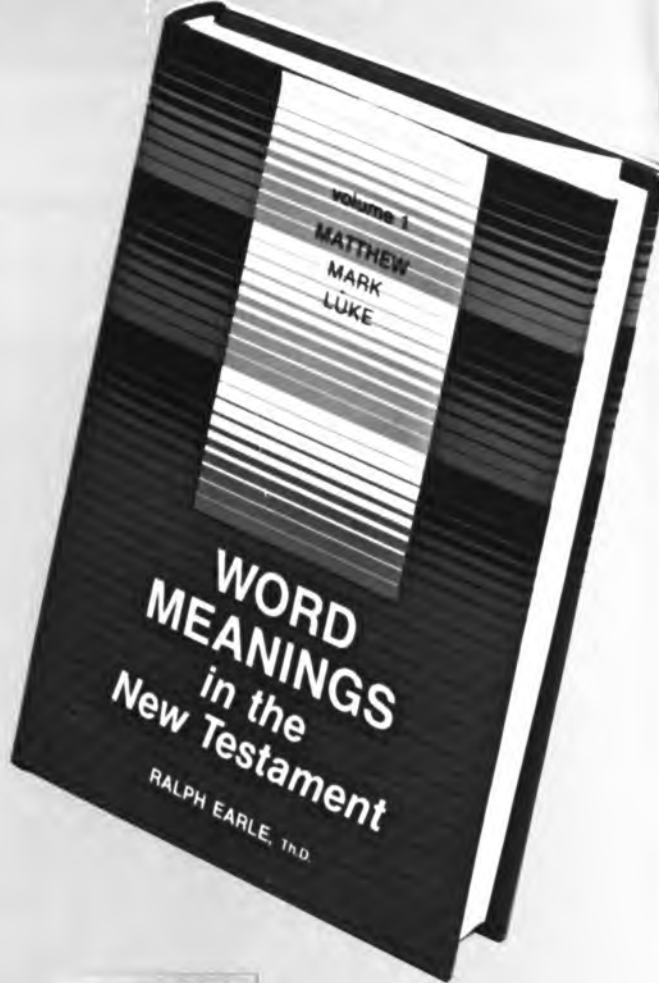
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