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Wesley Tracy (Editor)  
*Olivet Nazarene University*

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THE  
**PREACHER'S  
MAGAZINE**

DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY, 1981-82

DEC 23 '81



<b>CREATIVE MINISTRIES FOR ADULTS</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>FACILITATING GROWING MARRIAGES</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>MINISTRY TO HURTING PARENTS</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>THE KIND OF PASTOR I NEED</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>INSPIRATIONAL PREACHING</b>	<b>48</b>

# suitable for Framing



*"Your resume is great, but can you hype?"*

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# THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

Proclaiming Christian Holiness

Volume 57, Number 2

Dec./Jan./Feb., 1981-82

## IN THIS ISSUE

**Wesley Tracy**  
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Assistant Editor

**Consulting Editors**  
**Bill Sullivan**  
Director of the  
Division of Church Growth  
Church of the Nazarene

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### EDITORIAL

- 3 The Future Isn't What She Used to Be ..... *Wesley Tracy*

### ADULT MINISTRIES

- 8 If I Could Only Understand You ..... *Richard Lee Spindle*  
12 Creative Ministries for Adults ..... *Kenneth S. Rice*  
15 Let My People Go ..... *Noah Funk*  
16 Managing Lay Ministry Effectively ..... *Warren E. Foxworthy*  
18 How Pastors Can Facilitate Growing Marriages ..... *J. Paul Turner*  
22 Women's Ministries Meet Needs ..... *Ruth Gibson*  
25 The Need for Ministry to Single Adults ..... *Harold Ivan Smith*  
27 Ministering to the Rookie Adult ..... *James L. Sankey*  
29 The Developmental Stages of Men ..... *Roy F. Lynn*  
34 Hurting Parents ..... *Wesley Tracy*  
38 Premarital Counseling: A Preventative Tool ..... *Harold Ivan Smith*  
41 A Pastor's Wife Is a Layperson Too ..... *Jameline Johnson*  
43 The Kind of Pastor I Need ..... *Ronald L. Mercer*

### THE CHURCH

- 46 The Body of Christ ..... *Stephen Gunter*

### PREACHING

- 48 Guidelines for Inspirational Preaching ..... *Charles H. Strickland*

### BIBLICAL STUDIES

- 50 The Good News ..... *Alex Deasley*

### CHRISTMAS

- 54 Christmas Is for Everyone ..... *Neil Hightower*

### CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

- 56 Pastoral Transition ..... *D. Martin Butler*

### WESLEYANA

- 57 Not Worth Contending For ..... *Clarence L. Bence*

### THE MINISTER'S MATE

- 59 The Outside of the Cup ..... *Nina Bergman*

### THESE TOO

Suitable for Framing—inside front cover; The Ark Rocker—2; Sermon Outlines—60; The Preacher's Exchange—61; Old Testament Word Studies—62; New Testament Word Studies—63; Today's Books for Today's Preacher—64.

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Cover Photo: *The Bells of Bethlehem. The modern town of Bethlehem viewed through the belfry of the Christian church which stands near the spot of our Lord's birth.*

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# THE ARK ROCKER

## IMPERTINENT THOUGHTS ON LOYALTY

Friend, I nearly exploded the other day. A beclouded ecclesiastical acquaintance asked me about someone whom I knew better than he. "Tell me, Smerdley," said he (very gravely), "is Geschwaet-zopfer loyal?"

Now, he knew as well as I that "Gessy" is an ordained elder with nearly three decades of service under his lengthening belt. And he knew as well as I that some of that service was "put in" uncomplainingly in places of minimal charm. "Gessy's" older daughter, a Ph.D., teaches in a denominational college—always with a purseful of neat invitations to other places at higher salary. The older son leads an inner-city congregation in the denomination with great skill and scant pay. The younger son is a faithful layperson in a congregation suffering a long string of pastoral misfits and drowning in debt because the last one, who had a long history of financial un wisdom and the gift of salesmanship, was allowed to do his "thing" again. The younger daughter attends a denominational school. Surely evidence of shaky loyalty! And my interrogator knew all of this!

"Why do you ask?" says I—partly out of curiosity, partly to lower my temperature.

"Well, I can't give details—confidential, you know—but we've gotten wind that he's not a good team player."

"Maybe you'd at least better tell me what you mean by 'team player,'" I suggest.

"C'mon," he rejoins, "everyone knows what we mean by that."

That did it! I was off and running: "How about Thomas—he'd only believe it if he saw it. How about Peter? He often wasn't sure which game he was in, nor who set the rules. Even after Pentecost! Were the sons of Zebedee good 'team players'? They and Momma Z pushed hard for their own line-up, remember. Philip wouldn't play unless the game was simple. Nathanael's big deal was the coach's hometown. Had to be right. And how about Paul? Does he fit your understanding of 'team player'? He had trouble even playing doubles, let alone getting along with others' rules. What *is* this business about

'team player'? I'm getting it from you guys and hear it at the local church level as well."

"Hey, back off!" he begs. "You've taken heavy artillery to hunt bitsy rabbits. I made no accusations and the question of loyalty is important at whatever level. Shouldn't we have complete confidence in the people we place?"

I backed off, still wanting to lay a bit of church history on him and to ask when he and others, whatever the level, were going to be as careful about competence as they were about loyalty in filling posts. The rest of the conversation was safe because banal. But it buried some tough questions. Try 'em on for size at your level of responsibility.

1. Re: the adage, "Presume innocence till guilt is proven." Does it apply to and in the church? What's the best starting point for our questions about the character of others?

2. Re: "team player." Has a metaphor—and a nonbiblical one at that!—come to shape reality? And has it diverted us from better ones, like "member of the Body," "citizen of the Kingdom," "ambassador for Christ"?

3. Upon what principles ought we to determine the relevant "proportions" of the mix: loyalty, competence, potential? What principles should guide the assessment of what the "team" needs?

4. Re: "freedom in and of the Spirit." Are these but pious shibboleths among us, seen only in a certain openness to emotional demonstration—carefully cultivated—and a refusal to plan very carefully? Do they apply, perhaps, to the individual precisely in his individuality so that the church may have to accept on occasion, an institutionally unwanted wind?

The institutionalizing of Pentecost and its recipients is a risky business. But we could at least begin by believing in our fellow upper-roomers and let the Spirit work with them as He will—to which working we'll adjust rather than presuming to make the Spirit adjust to our perceptions.

"Aha!" I hear you thinking, "Is Smerdly loyal? Count on it! 'Then he has been drinking!' Nope. It's only the third hour of the day."

*The Ark Locker*



by  
Wesley  
Tracy

*Like the Old Gray Mare*



## THE FUTURE ISN'T WHAT SHE USED TO BE

I shouldn't have been surprised. But I'm just not plugged in to the Third Wave life-style. I was in Marin County (California's richest) and hungry. Bypassing, for budgetary reasons, the fine restaurants like The Dock, the Spinnaker, or The Tides, I settled for a quarter-pounder at San Rafael's "Golden Arches."

Near me was a gaggle of giggly junior-high girls. They were slurping shakes and gobbling fries and talking about the exciting adult years that hung carrotlike before them. One girl said, "Well, I think I'm just going to get married and have kids."

"If you do be sure you marry an orthodontist so you won't have to spend all your money on kid's teeth," retorted one of her friends who was drinking her shake through a massive set of braces.

"No," replied the first girl, "I think I'll marry a lawyer *the first time*."

The conversation raced on with no special notice of this informal planning of Third Wave serial monogamy. Is serial monogamy so ingrained in the young that it is a given?

Next day. By now I've found a place where you can buy a meatloaf lunch for about \$5.00 so I move up. In the booth behind me are two fortyish women. Both are more suntanned and slender than any 40-year-old has a right to be. They are sipping white wine and pushing lettuce salads around their plates and calling this lunch. Apparently one of them has a divorce in process. Her friend pulls out some warm words of Third Wave comfort. She tells her, "A lifetime is too long to expect a relationship to last. It looks like people would understand that before they invest 15 or 20 years in a marriage."

Third Wave morality, Third Wave life-style—and you and I will spend the rest of our ministry in a Third Wave society. We are on a societal surfboard of Third Wave change which is swelling in ominous prelude to a crest that will change our familiar coastline forever.

Two great waves of change have already engulfed the choking and confused world of man. The first two waves largely obliterated existing cultures. Whole civilizations disappeared and were replaced by ways of life undreamed of by their precedents.

The Agricultural Revolution was the First Wave.

Before it came, most humans lived in small, generally migratory groups and kept themselves fed by hunting, fishing, gathering, and herding. Then men learned to plant crops (some 10,000 years ago) and the First Wave swept across the world creating farms and villages and a new way of life which was anchored to the soil.

The globe-transforming First Wave took thousands of years to crest and subside. It was still surging rather strongly when the Second Wave of change washed over the Western world. Wave II was the Industrial Revolution. It was quicker than Wave I, flooding much of the earth in a mere 300 years. Its changes were also dramatic. Societies which used to raise rice and wheat now scurry out to operate steel mills, shoe factories, assembly lines, banks, and supermarkets.

The Second Wave still rolls while a still speedier Third Wave of change is shaking the foundation of our society. Long-cherished institutions are being washed away like sand castles at high tide. Alvin Toffler describes it this way:

We grope for words to describe the full power and reach of this extraordinary change. Some speak of a looming Space Age, Information Age, Electronic Era, or Global Village. Zbigniew Brzezinski has told us we face a "technetronic age." Sociologist Daniel Bell describes the coming of a "post-industrial society." Soviet futurists speak of the S.T.R.—the "scientific-technological revolution." I myself have written extensively about the arrival of a "super-industrial society." Yet none of these terms, including my own, is adequate (Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave*, p. 1).

### The Changing Family

No aspect of our lives has been more manipulated by the "waves" than our living arrangements—that is, our family forms. The Agricultural Revolution created large multi-generational households rooted to the soil. Grandparents, children, aunts, uncles, cousins, and in-laws lived under one roof and functioned as a single economic production unit. Various versions of this flourished including the "zadruga" in the Balkans, the "joint family" in India, and the extended in Western Europe.

As the Industrial Revolution swept across First Wave societies strange things began to happen to the extended family. Toffler notes that as economic production shifted from the field to the factory, the family no longer operated as a unit. In order to free workers for the factory, key family functions were farmed out. Education of children was turned over to schools. Special "homes" were created to care for the aged. Treasured practices were sacrificed to the need for mobility. The people had to move to where the jobs were. The multi-generational extended family was ripped apart, the victim of a giant wrecking machine called industrialization because the extended family was anything but mobile. Aged relatives, sick persons, and the large brood of children associated with the soil-bound extended family became clumsy and could not meet the mobility requirements. Thus, weakened by migration to the city by job-hunting young, and therefore left in financial straits, "families stripped themselves of unwanted relatives, became smaller, more mobile and more suited to the needs of the new technosphere" (Toffler, p. 2).

The offspring of this travail was the nuclear family. The Second Wave family made up of father-breadwinner, mother-housekeeper, and a few children, with no encumbering relatives became the standard, approved model in all industrial societies. Note that this is not the biblical family, nor, necessarily, the theologically ideal family. The nuclear family is a whelp of the Industrial Revolution. This family structure became popular because it fit perfectly the needs of a mass production society.

Almost without our knowing it the Third Wave of change, the Technological Revolution, has chewed up and spit out the "family" again. We have been so vigorously pursuing the fantasies of the technological era that we do not even know things have changed—but they have. Before we knew it the nuclear family, our revered Second Wave family style duly baptized and Christianized, went out of style. In the United States, where the Third Wave is most advanced, the majority of citizens already live outside the classical nuclear family!

If we use Toffler's definition of the nuclear family as a working husband, a housekeeping wife, and two children, and look around ask what percentage of our fellow countrymen live in this kind of family we see the answer is an astonishing 7 percent. Ninety-three percent of the population do not fit the ideal Second Wave family model anymore.

Broaden the definition of the nuclear family to include households in which both spouses work or in which there are *fewer* or *more* than two children and we find that about 75 percent of the population is living in a nonnuclear family form.

Twenty percent of the population lives alone. During the 70s the number of persons who simply do not live in any family structure more than tripled.

Another Third Wave innovation is the child-free family. Households are becoming "adult-centered." The Second Wave family was "child-centered." Early 20th Century society had few singles, and not many parents lived very long after the last child left

home. Life expectancy in 1900 was 47. With these circumstances child-rearing was at the heart of family life. Parents hoped to raise the "kids" and see them well married before they took their own place in the rows of marble and granite in the churchyard. By contrast, by 1970 in America only one in three adults lived in a household with children under 18.

In 1960 only 20 percent of women (American) under 30 who had ever married were child-free. By 1975 this figure climbed to 32 percent—a 60 percent



increase. In all probability this figure has vaulted higher since 1975.

The single-parent family is another Third Wave family variation. With separations and divorce breaking the top out of the graphs we see even further debris from broken nuclear families. If you minister anywhere in the United States, then one out of every five or six children in your community is living in a single-parent family. If, however, you minister in a U.S. city, one of every three or four children you might pick up on your Sunday School bus or invite to VBS lives in a single-parent family.

Divorced persons usually remarry. In so doing another Third Wave family form is created—the "aggregate family." An aggregate family comes into being when two divorced couples with children remarry, bringing the children of both marriages (and in a sense the adults as well) into a new expanded type of family. It doesn't seem to work well. Non-resident parents use the children as pawns in personal vendettas, and children pit parent against stepparent against former parent. Nevertheless, 25 percent of American children are members of an aggregate family.

Many social scientists tell us that we are moving out of the age of the nuclear family and into the age of wide diversity in living arrangements. This does not mean the death of the nuclear family. It does mean that it is no longer *the* socially approved



model. It is just *one* of several socially approved models.

### Third Wave Fallout

One of the by-products of the Third Wave society is loneliness. In all industrial societies social isolation is a chronic sickness. The institutions which provide "community" are threatened or crumbling in nearly all technocracies. The home, the church, the school are under siege. Singles, the elderly, workers, even married couples complain of loneliness. Toffler asks:

How many upper-middle-class housewives, driven to distraction by the clanging emptiness of



Camerique

their affluent suburban homes, have gone into the job market to preserve their sanity? How many pets (and carloads of pet food) are bought to break the silence of an empty home? Loneliness supports much of our travel and entertainment business. It contributes to drug use, depression, and declining productivity. And it creates a lucrative "lonely-hearts" industry that purports to help the lonely locate and lasso Mr. or Ms. "Right." The hurt of being alone is, of course, hardly new. But loneliness is now so widespread it has become, paradoxically, a shared experience (Toffler, p. 4).

He adds that if the emergent Third Wave society is not to be icily metallic with a vacuum for a heart, it must attack this problem frontally. It must restore community. Does this give you any ideas about the shape of your church's ministry in the future?

Some predict that loneliness will become so intense that the "lonely hearts" industry will leap from the small print of the newspaper want ads to the television screen. Local cable television services are

expected to run video ads so prospective parties can actually see each other before dating or marrying. Such programs might set new Nielson ratings. How could "Bowling for Dollars" or even "Monday Night Football" compete with such fare?

For the person who is socially isolated by sickness, shyness, or other circumstances, the new technetronics will make possible electronic contact with others who share similar interests. According to Toffler, gardeners, chess players, coin collectors, writers, or soccer fans can be dialed up from anywhere in the country and dialog can be carried on in the privacy of your own living room.

The Third Wave society is fragmented, frightened, and lonesome. Is not this what the gospel and the Church are here to heal? Can we bring wholeness to the fragmented, courage to the fearful, and community to the lonely?

### Two Temptations

I will spend the rest of my ministry in a Third Wave Society. So will you. I suspect that the Third Wave future holds two basic temptations in lurking ambush.

As the storm of Third Wave change howls through the nights of your questioning and the winter of your restlessness you will be tempted, if you are a *pro-*



*gressive* type Christian minister, to preserve Christianity in the world by baptizing as Christian whatever you find thriving in the world, be it divorce, civil revolution, sexual revolution, developmental psychology, psychotherapy, or secularism.

Do not underestimate the power of this temptation. We are products of our times more than our freedom oriented Arminian theology likes to admit. Whatever is popular in the world will soon dress up and come to church. This is not always bad, but it frequently is. Remember that most changes in moral codes of a culture are strictly reflections of changes in what is popular and accepted. What was once sin is now acceptable because it is now popular. There is a difference between meeting the people's needs and riding the flow of popular fads in order to record statistical growth. We must minis-



ter innovatively to the lost and lonely "Third Wavers" but we must not sell out the gospel.

John Dittles of Yale suggests that the God Is Dead theology of 15 years ago is an example of persons so anxious to preserve Christianity that they were willing to baptize as Christian even atheism itself. And, as progressive evangelicals minister in the Third Wave future, this temptation will appear like a subtle siren song come to life. It won't come boldly forward in a recognize-at-one-glance uniform. Rather it will seep into your people's lives through the media and the market place. Then into religious journals and Christian curricula. It may look as gentle as a Star of Bethlehem flower, as healing as Gilead salve, as scientific as an equation, as reasonable as the *Novum Organum* and may even wear a gold cross around its neck by the time it gets to you. But be forewarned that preserving Christianity in the world by baptizing as Christian whatever you find thriving in the world is but to make the five wounds of Christ to bleed again. Then, instead of preserving Christianity, we have crucified the Son of God afresh.

If, on the other hand, you are a *conservative* Christian minister with a touch of rigidity I suspect you will be tempted to greet the Third Wave shoulder blades first. The temptation to clutch the old ways, ideas, forms, and shibboleths may be fierce. The result could be that you would live out of touch with the times and out of touch with current needs. You may flail away solving the problems of yesterday while today's hurts go unhealed.

If you yield to this temptation, you may spend a whole career carrying on ministries which are beside the point, using religious lingo that is a foreign tongue to all but a few "insiders" who share your own cultural slough. The temptation is real for there is security here. You can be this way and still see statistical growth. It will be harder, of course, because you will have to ferret out your new members from a shrinking pool of "your kind of people." If you are industrious you can scrounge them up because the frightening changes of the Third Wave will create lots of scared and fearful neurotics who will rush to the shelter of an authoritarian religion to escape freedom and responsibility. A minister preying on such folk nears what T. S. Eliot calls the final temptation, which is "the greatest treason: to do the right deed for the wrong reason."

The minister who yields to the temptation to reify the past and ignores the changes may become more policeman than minister. Enforcing the rules will become greater than the gospel of grace. The "don'ts" will become raucous and "come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest" a whisper.

Individually such a preacher repeats the crawfish's cycle. In the part of the country where I was raised, the crawfish sheds his shell about the first of June. He is extremely vulnerable to bait hunters during this time. Fishermen know that God has not yet created a small-mouth bass that can resist a soft-shelled crawdad. So the crawfish, after shedding his shell, hides under a rock and grows himself the toughest shell he can. Each year the process is repeated. Each year he builds a bigger and

tougher shell—until one year he builds a shell so big and so tough that when the season comes to change his shell he can't, and his homemade armour becomes his coffin. May God protect us from the crawfish cycle ministry.

### Three Anchors

Whatever the Third Wave may bring, I find three anchors to guide my ministry.

1. The most important fact of history (past or present) is the Incarnation. My first question is, How shall I minister in this Third Wave culture *in light of the Incarnation*? The secret seems to lie in the loving vulnerability of the Incarnated One.

William McElvaney, President of St. Paul Theological Seminary writes:

I have a hunch that in the years ahead there will be many endings to which God will bring new beginnings. I believe that much will be broken down from which much will be re-created. Valleys will be lifted up and mountains made low. And we will see in new ways the ultimate mystery of life and the ultimate taproot of our calling and our ministry; the *paschal mystery* by which the Suffering Lord is the Sovereign Lord, the Vulnerable Lord is the Victorious Lord. The foolishness of the gospel of Jesus Christ calls us into an evitable vortex of vulnerability and victory. The biblical witness and all theology derived from it arise from the paschal mystery of the crucified risen One which gives shape and meaning to the incarnation. Nothing less as our foundation and well-spring will suffice for the test of ministry that lies ahead (*The Circuit Rider*, May, 1981).

2. I find a second anchor in the Bible. The Third Wave glut of changing ideas almost daily starts a new messiah slouching toward Bethlehem. But in the rising tide of new notions these three scripture peaks serve as lighthouses to those adrift on that tide.

(1) Start here. No matter how cute it is packaged, any Third Wave new notion which violates the Ten Commandments is wrong.

(2) Whatever violates the Constitution of the Kingdom—the Sermon on the Mount—in any culture cannot stand and will fade like all fads. Stick with those principles arising from the Sermon on the Mount.

(3) Whatever transgresses the spirit of the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians is sub-Christian and unworthy of the name anchor.

3. The third anchor for the Third Wave is the words of Jesus: "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." And that means the Third Wave world too. The Gospel is not impotent in any age. Therefore we must teach, baptize, and disciple (Matt. 28:19-20) in the Third Wave world, doing whatever it takes to bring this about. The promise of the power of His presence makes even natural cowards like me ready to try.

"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" (Isa. 43:19).



Jean-Claude Lejeune

# ADULT



# MINISTRIES



# IF I COULD ONLY UNDERSTAND YOU

by Richard Lee Spindle\*

**M**any try to dismiss the importance of adult education by resorting to the persistent "old dog" adage. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" they insist. Canine lovers will tell you that this claim is a vile lie, perpetrated and repeated by those who are ignorant of dogs. Zeigler insists that "Adults aren't old dogs. Furthermore, you *can* teach a dog what he wants to be taught if the teacher knows more than the dog, and knows how to handle dogs."<sup>1</sup> Educational psychology has taught us that adults can continue to learn indefinitely—regardless of chronological age.

Adult education has existed from the beginning of time. Churches and synagogues have historically been the center of education. The Hebrews taught children, youth, and adults in the synagogue. The early Christian Church conducted "catechumenal training" mainly for adults. This was probationary training for church membership. Monastic training (fourth to tenth centuries) was primarily for adults. A great thrust of the sixteenth-century Reformation was Martin Luther's Bible training. Although the modern Sunday School movement began in 1780 to teach "ragged children of England," it has evolved as the great Christian educative agency for "well-dressed adults of America" and the world. Would War II have given great impetus to adult education. Adults were forced to learn new skills and research new and uncharted realms of knowledge.

Various indicators seem to point to the fact that we are in the early stages of a great surge in adult education. The phenomenal growth of community colleges in America indicates that adults are responding to a multifaceted and interest-oriented curriculum. The emergence of continuing education programs in business, industry, schools, and the church indicates a belief that adults can continue to learn. Recent statistics of the U.S. Bureau of Census indicate that the world of the immediate future will be a world of adults.

Never before in history has the interest in education been as intense as it presently is. The significance of this statement is amplified by the fact that "adult education is the largest and fastest growing segment of American education."<sup>2</sup>

We live on the eve of an explosion of adult education in our world.

What should be the response of the church?

How should the church plan to meet the challenge of adult education? A first step should probably be

to discover the unique ways in which adults approach a learning situation. How do adults learn? The following are some assumptions and suggestions of which the teacher of adults in the local church should be aware.

## Adults Are Experience-laden

Experience is a most valuable commodity in our society. No adult is without experience.

One is not born with experience.

It is not a gift or endowment.

Wealth or prestige cannot provide it.

Education does not necessarily provide it.

It is something available to all adults, and all adults have varying kinds and amounts.

No two adults have the same experience.

Since each experience is unique and distinctive to the "experiencing" person, it then becomes important and of value to all other persons.

Experience is not necessarily measured or valued by bulk, quantity, or chronology. Despite chronological age, experience may be limited to a few areas and a few people and represent a narrow world view.

Experience is not necessarily valued by the impact or dynamic of any particular experience or set of experiences.

Because it is *your* experience and uniquely from your vantage point or frame of reference, then it has value to *me*. The intensity or degree of its value to me is in proportion to the degree or way in which it meets some felt need of mine or relates to my self-concept. Its value is only potential, however, until you share it with me.

*A program of adult education in the local church should offer opportunity for such sharing of experience.*

## Adults Are Goal-oriented

Unlike children and youth, adults do very little without goal or purpose. Children step over cracks

---

\*Richard Spindle is professor of Religious Education, Mid-America Nazarene College, Olathe, Kans.



in the sidewalk and walk on fences just because it is fun—for no real reason. Teens play ball and swim and incessantly drive cars just for fun. Adults normally act in the light of some goal.

They play golf and jog and go to the health spa for a purpose—a healthy body. They drive a car with a goal—to go to work, to go to church, to go on vacation, to go to the store. They attend certain educational classes because of what these experiences can do to help them reach some goal—mental development, spiritual growth, skill development, etc.

Adults live in and believe in a goal-oriented society. Life is not lived haphazardly or without attention to certain rules, norms, laws, mores, and goals.

For adults to respond to adult education in the local church, clear and specific and reasonable and need-related and interest-related goals should be set and stated and understood and followed.

*Adults find security and meaning in the guidance which goals provide.*

### **Adults Are Problem-centered**

Adults reside in a world of problems and problem-solving. Most adult vocations deal with the explanation of, prevention of, and/or solution of problems of some kind. Jerold Apps suggests that “every person has problems . . . in his work, with his spouse, understanding his children.”<sup>3</sup>

Adults have independence. Such independence means that one has the ability to recognize and solve certain problems.

Adults have responsibilities. Every normal adult is in authority over somebody or something. Such authority and responsibility demands that they spend much time dealing with, coping with real, concrete, “earth” problems.

Because of this problem-centered orientation, *adults are inclined to seek for and respond positively to education or training which will help them better meet and effectively solve their problems.*

### **Adults Are Fixation-prone**

Edward Thorndike, educational psychologist of the early 1900s, disputed with many notable thinkers by saying that adults are not “set” mentally at age 25. He suggested that adults can go on learning and developing indefinitely; however, it is true that there remains a human tendency—especially for adults—to become fixed, set, or habituated in ways or modes of thinking and doing. Adults are influenced by customs and traditions and commonly accepted ideas and actions. The normal human adult response to change is negative.

Adults indicate their tendency toward fixation when they say such things as: “I never did it that way before!” “I have always done it this way!” “I did not know there was any other way to do it!”

Adults find a sense of security in predictability and sameness. Once a successful way of doing something is found, the adult tends to adopt that way and become fixed in it. Change then may become painful to him.

This proneness to fixation, however, need not become a prison. Adults can break free and learn and

adopt new and different ideas and approaches to life.

*Adult Christian education can serve to cause a constructive discontent with the status quo and deliver one from the bondage of fixation and sameness in living.*

### **Adults Are Influenced by Group Awareness**

The adult in our society is quite aware of the group. Our government is a group approach and not an individual or one-man rule. Most of our social institutions—church, school, business, and industry—are group-directed.

The democratic concept touches and influences most all areas of our lives. The adult likes to *be* part of a group. He likes to *feel* part of a group. He is recipient of group pressures and group benefits as well. There is a certain protection and fulfillment in community.

Because of our group-oriented society, adults become somewhat other-directed. They are enabled to move outside themselves and move toward “socialization.”

### **Adults Are Self-conscious**

Self-concept influences adult action. Many adults exist with a grossly unrealistic self-appraisal. Some see themselves with a much too low self-image.

During the adult years—if not before—a person should arrive at a somewhat realistic appraisal of self. Adults need to identify various areas of talent, ability, and expertise. Areas of life that need development also must be identified. Men and women need to formulate a personal philosophy of both life and death. One needs to think through to his very self.

Who am I?

What do I really believe?

Where am I now in my “life-trek”?

Where am I going?

How will I arrive where I aim to go?

Adult education helps us to arrive at a better view of ourselves. *The adult Christian education program should help the individual define himself among the local church group and arrive at a satisfactory and realistic self-image.*

### **Adults Are Culture-clad**

Adults have lived long enough and experienced enough of a culture to begin to live out that culture. Culture-clad customs and ideas and feelings are evident. The longer he lives, the more acculturated the adult becomes.

Men and women become able to identify and live out the proprieties of culture. Such a discovery makes for better social acceptance and adjustment. Despite the reaction of some to the structures of culture, no normal adult functions meaningfully by rejecting all that is culturally acceptable. All adults are touched by acculturation. No adult is exempt from the influence of cultural propriety.

Awareness of cultural propriety and cultural expectation is a forward step in the process of civilization. Cultural concern is an indication of active

involvement in the civilizing process. The attempt to understand and break down various cross-cultural barriers is another step in the civilizing process.

Paul Bergevin, in *A Philosophy for Adult Education*, writes: "The civilizing process is a corporate, social movement involving the whole of society as it moves from barbarianism toward refinement in behavior, tastes, and thought."<sup>4</sup>

Every attempt one makes to understand culture and intelligently relate cultures is a move toward the development of a healthy and realistic world view.

*A healthy local church teaching-learning situation helps adults encounter the various reasons for cultural development and better relate to an ever-expanding world view.*

### **Adults Have Individual Expertise**

Dr. James Williams writes: "No adult is without authority and influence over someone."<sup>5</sup> A parent exerts influence over children. A teacher influences students. A foreman influences other workers. A group member exerts influence over various other group members. This dynamic of exerting influence may occur in an informal group at a social event or over a cup of coffee in one's home. It may occur at a formal group like a Sunday School class.

There is a certain authoritativeness about adulthood. Adults seem to speak with a certain power or expertise because of their experience. They have developed certain skills—communicative skills, social skills, manual skills—to survive in the world.

Each adult is good at something! Few—if any—adults are totally lacking in a skill or an ability. Most adults move from a stance of "many irons in the fire and none of them hot" to a stance of "fewer but hotter irons." Interest, effort, and skill narrow in on a specific area of affinity and ability. Each adult seems to feel the need to become a kind of expert in a particular area. Each adult seems to want to contribute his unique part to better the outlook of the whole of mankind.

*Adult Christian education, rightly done, can make use of those unique areas of individual expertise. It can also help an adult narrow his interests and efforts to certain areas for maximum service.*

### **Adults Are Fun-loving**

The normal adult in our culture loves to have fun. Those who cannot or will not have fun seem to gravitate toward hospital rooms and psychiatrist offices.

There is a certain release and relaxation for adults in fun and humor situations. Such emotional outlets are apparently healthy for the total person. They serve as open "pressure valves" through which much pent-up emotional and psychical strain is released. Adult fun times can be therapeutic!

Another benefit is that adults see each other as equals and very human in occasions of fun and humor. Steve Allen, noted American comedian, suggests: "Humor is a social lubricant that helps us get over some of the bad spots . . . Humor is a humanizing agent."<sup>6</sup>

In an open and informal approach to adult education, one has the opportunity to express and

develop his sense of humor and find release and fulfillment in a fun situation. *The Christian adult education situation should be fun!*

### **Adults Are Service-directed**

Through childhood and youth, your adult students were in the process of continually receiving. They received guidance, protection, and training. They were constantly on the receiving end of much of the activity of life.

Most adults reach a point where they are no longer fulfilled or satisfied to be constantly receiving. They want to produce. They want to contribute. They want to give. They want to minister. They want to serve.

The adult, at some point in his development, looks outside the windows of himself and notices that life is slipping by. He looks back at himself and wonders how much he has done for the betterment of mankind. The Christian adult wonders how much he has done for God. Often he senses an urgency to leave the signet of his life on the clay of passing time.

Good adult Christian education provides more than "inside the four walls thought provocation." *The adult religious education plan should provide for adults to serve God and others.*

### **Adults Are Freedom-focused**

The adult has moved from the total dependence of early childhood and the limitations of youth to an adult independence and freedom. The adult naturally resists that which binds, limits, or militates against personal freedom. He will avoid a situation where there are a lot of restrictions. He will shun situations where someone tries to tell him what he needs to know.

Bergevin reminds us that "if we are to realize our potential, the adult learning process must become a creating, releasing experience rather than a dulling series of passively attended indoctrination exercises."<sup>7</sup>

Today's adults respond to situations free of bondage, limitation, restriction, and red tape. *They will attend adult Christian Sunday School classes where there is a relaxed, informal, creating and releasing atmosphere.*

### **Adults Need to Be Involved**

Adults respond better to situations in which they have been active. They should be involved in planning, implementing, administering, and evaluating the adult Christian education program.

In a sense, this interest in involvement is inclusive of each of the preceding 11 statements. Jerold Apps writes:

The success of any religious education program depends on involvement, not only involvement of participants in various facets of the program, but involvement of volunteers to lead small and large group discussions, teach the more formal classes, coordinate the more informal and less organized learning experiences and to plan and administer the entire program.<sup>8</sup>

Through a program of adult Christian education that seeks involvement of each adult, there is the opportunity to:

1. Share the wealth of one's *experience*.
2. Work toward meaningful *goals*.
3. Solve personal *problems*.
4. Free oneself from numerous *fixations*.
5. Define oneself in a *group*.
6. Arrive at a realistic *self*-appraisal.
7. Learn about and live out *cultural* proprieties.
8. Develop *individual expertise* in some realm.
9. Express and develop a sense of humor and find release in an adult *fun* situation.
10. Serve real human needs.
11. Express oneself in an informal, creative, and *free* way.
12. Find *involvement* to shape and mold one's total being.

Teaching adults does not mean "telling them what you think they ought to know."

Teaching adults does not mean "sit still and listen to me preach."

To teach adults is to guide and direct and enable them to encounter and respond to truth.

The following dynamics have proven effective in adult Christian educative situations.

### Effective Dynamics in Adult Christian Education

**Dialogue.** The teacher of adults should be able to direct adults in dialogue. Research has shown that personality changes result from meaningful dialogue. If adults are viewed as persons who are to be told and taught and talked down to, their image of themselves is threatened. Many will soon withdraw. Adults have much to learn from one another. They become teachers of one another.

Modern communication has challenged much that we believe is important in human relationships. A loss of community occurs with the breakdown of the primary speaking relationships. Some believe that without "face-to-face relations, the cement of community will crumble and dissolve."<sup>9</sup>

Large-scale efforts are being made to channel our unthinking habits and our purchasing decisions and our thought processes by using insights from psychiatry and the social sciences. Many of these efforts to influence man are below the level of awareness—often subliminal and called "the hidden persuaders." Packard says that "we are manipulated more than we realize."<sup>10</sup>

When adults come from the world of manipulation, they resist being talked down to or in any way manipulated. They deeply desire and need interaction and dialogue.

The "dialogical teacher" believes that the hearer is as important as the speaker.

1. He incorporates dialogue into whatever method he uses.
2. He is alert to the meanings his students bring to the moment of learning.
3. He attempts to help his students formulate their own questions and meanings.
4. He recognizes himself as a resource person

who uses his knowledge and skill to bring the student and the gospel together.

5. He is not defensive about the content he presents. He allows for discussion of the pros and cons.

6. He speaks and acts as educator but departs from his teaching plan without undue anxiety. He is not overwhelmed by the pressure to "teach the lesson."<sup>11</sup>

Dialogue means giving the other person time to speak.

Dialogue means getting to know each other as persons.

Dialogue is unafraid of personal encounter.

Dialogue allows for and—at times—invites disagreement with oneself and one's ideas.

Dialogue seeks to give affirmation to others.

The teacher of adults in the local church should develop his abilities to direct dialogue. He should:

1. Enlist and involve class members in active participation.
2. Encourage each to verbalize his thoughts and feelings.
3. Guide class members as they explore uncharted territory.
4. Probe to uncover deeper truth.
5. Verbally recount and reflect what has been said.
6. Reinforce a member's comment.
7. Serve as a resource person and guide class members to appropriate materials and resources to help answer their questions.

**Identification.** There is a twofold need for identification in adult education. *First*, the adult learner needs to identify with a great cause and with a strong personality. The cause of the gospel and the Church of Jesus Christ offers a profound reason for living and dying. The teacher of adults in the local church should be one who has earned the respect and confidence of the adults. *Second*, the adult learner learns more and responds more positively when his teacher makes the learning experience a cooperative endeavor. The teacher of adults needs to enter the learning experience as a fellow learner and creative listener.

The Christian teacher identifies with his students in their questioning, in their probing, and in their pain. He identifies with them when they socialize, when they laugh and joke, and when they want to talk to him as a person.

He spends much time cultivating a listening ear. This time spent in listening helps build good relationships with people. "As we listen to people, we help them break out of their skin-enclosed isolation and enter into the community of experience and discover their potential."<sup>12</sup>

Many teachers find it difficult to be silent. "For most of us, 10 seconds of silence seems like 10 hours of time."<sup>13</sup> Our human tendency is to jump in with chatter and keep the "noise ball" rolling. Most of us are so geared to projecting ourselves and our ideas with persuasion that we forget or resist the significance of silence in teaching.

Listening urges us to identify with individual class members. "Listening demands that we enter active-

(continued on page 55)



# CREATIVE MINISTRIES FOR ADULTS



by Kenneth S. Rice

*Director of Adult Ministries, Church of the Nazarene*

I needed to be needed," she told me, "and this job has been my salvation." This widow's job—a full-time "Dollar-a-Year" secretary at one of our fastest growing churches. An innovative pastor challenged a woman who had nothing to do but mourn the death of her husband and she joined the "Dollar-a-Year" staff. Almost every church has prospects for "Dollar-a-Year" secretaries, pastor's research assistants, church librarians, outreach organizations, counseling assistants, etc. They might not be widows, they may be retirees or anyone with time and skills on their hands.

The possibilities of involving laymen in ministries that are significant for them are almost limitless. Perhaps the most significant is the Sunday School.

## Caring Captains

If every adult Sunday School class were organized with a "Caring Captain" over every five individuals in the class, it would make many slumbering adult classes stop snoozing and start moving. These caring captains would be contacting the people in their group every week, building caring relationships which transform

tired lives into lives of happy surprises. At the same time this would be developing additional leadership for adult work. Some of these caring captains could later become teachers of new classes.

Most Nazarene churches need a new class for *single adults* and one for the *just married*. These are two categories of adults we are not reaching because we are not providing Sunday School classes particularly for them. With 40 percent of the adult population in the United States single, we should have at least one singles class in every church. If we don't have the singles in attendance, it is because we haven't planned and prepared for them.

The same is true of those who have *just married*. Their major interest is different than the singles and different from those couples who have children. A Sunday School class particularly for them will help save our own at a time when it is easy for them to drift away, and it can attract many new just-married people.

Also, we should have one or more *elective Sunday School classes* in every Nazarene

## Where Is the Just Married Class



## Marriage Enrichment

church. This will give people some choice as to how they would like to study the Bible and will bring into attendance many who are not coming now. The "Dialog Series" and the "Beacon Small-Group Bible Study Series" provide excellent materials for elective classes.

Another Adult Ministry that provides a creative approach to marriage and family life is *Marriage Enrichment*. This is an experience-centered event for couples who are interested in growing in their relationship. Every good marriage is a growing marriage. Many couples are just existing together because of their commitment. They could be growing together in an exciting relationship with a few new concepts and some simple tools—particularly in the area of communication.

It is amazing how the right kind of talk can make conflicts that are inevitable become points of growth and intimacy. Two people can really become one when they are willing to pay the price for growth. This kind of marital relationship is the only solid foundation for a Christian family life.

We now have enough leader-couples trained so that any Nazarene church could have a Marriage Enrichment Retreat at a minimum of expense. We call it a retreat even though it is held at the church because it is experience-centered rather than a series of lectures that normally comprise a seminar. Leader-couples model exercises in crucial areas of husband and wife relations. Couples actually grow closer together during the twelve to fifteen hours in the retreat.

Dr. David Seamands, at the Asbury College Church, divides the couples interested in attending the retreat into two groups. One group of couples take care of the children of the other group while they are in the retreat at the church on one weekend. Then they reverse the roles the next weekend. In this way the children enjoy being together. The parents attending the retreat are able to use their home as if it were a motel. They can follow through on the exercises introduced at the retreat after they go to their room

in their home. This gives the advantage of a retreat setting without the expense that would make it impossible for some couples to attend.

One pastor improved lay involvement by asking, "If you could do the one thing in the church that you would prefer to do more than anything else, what would it be?" This was asked as he had his people fill out a Christian Service Survey Card toward the end of a morning worship service. He had just preached on the stewardship of life and was asking his people to complete this card and bring it forward to place on the altar as a symbol of a "living sacrifice."

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees indicated he would like to work with boys and girls in club work. As a boy he was an Eagle Scout and had always had a desire to work with boys and girls. Because he was an outstanding businessman he generally received the high vote at the Annual Meeting and was usually asked to be Chairman of the Board of Trustees. When he was given an opportunity to do what he would like to do, he planned, organized, and developed a Caravan program that practically doubled the attendance at prayer meeting on Wednesday night. And, what a blessing he was to the children!

One of the largest Protestant denominations in America today has a "People Away" department in their local churches. This person (or these people) sends materials and writes cards and letters to people away in military service, young people away in college, senior adults that go south for the winter, and others who are absent for various reasons. This could be the salvation of many people who find it easy to drift away from the church when they change their geographical setting. It also provides another creative ministry for the laymen in the church.

We are now in the midst of a "mini baby boom." This provides a maximum opportunity to reach new homes through an interest shown in *cradle roll parents*. An invitation to your "Mother's Club"

**Why Not Let  
Them Have Their  
"Druthers"**

**The Designated  
People Away  
Person**

**Cradle Roll's  
Harpoon**


## Small Group Bible Studies

can be a love harpoon in the heart of a new mother that will draw the family into the church. Because the baby is brought to the church by the parents, ministry to cradle roll parents is now a part of adult ministries. The interest in the baby is a means of opening the door to reach the family. This should be a time of rapid growth in cradle roll work across our denomination. It is another way to involve laymen in a creative ministry. It will work in all sizes of churches since babies are being born in most communities. But so will *small-group Bible studies*. The largest Assembly of God church in the world is in Seoul, Korea. A book titled *Caught in the Web* has been written about the rapid growth of this church through small-group Bible studies. A new Christian is asked to host a Bible study in his home and invite in the people he associated with when he was out in sin. A qualified teacher from the church teaches the Bible study. As soon as people are won to Christ through this Bible study they are asked to become the host of a Bible study in their own home. Nazarene churches have also grown rapidly in Korea through the use of this method. It can be used as a means of reaching adults in other areas. The "Beacon Small-Group Bible Series" has been developed primarily for this purpose. This book-by-book study of the Bible is designed to incorporate the best of pupil-involvement and at the same time provide for an effectively guided Bible study. It can be another wonderful means of utilizing and creatively reach-

## BEST BOOKS ON ADULT MINISTRIES

- One Parent Families; Healing the Hurts*, by Harold Ivan Smith, Beacon Hill Press.
- Teaching Christian Adults*, by Warren N. Wilbert, Baker Book House.
- Teaching Adults . . . for a Change*, by Gene Van Note, Beacon Hill Press.
- How to Teach Adults Without Really Suffering*, compiled by Wesley Tracy, Beacon Hill Press.
- The Senior Adult Years*, by Carroll B. Freeman, Broadman Press.
- Strike the Original Match*, by Charles Swindoll, Multnomah Press.
- Design for Christian Marriage*, by Dwight H. Small, Fleming Revell Publishers.

ing and teaching adults. And now is the time to act!

*U.S. News and World Report* published a projected population shift for the decade from 1979 to 1989. It shows a 1 percent increase in children and teens and a 45 percent increase in adults during this period. Seven percent of the 45 percent will be young adults up to 34 years of age, 18 percent will be adults from 35 to 64 years, and 20 percent will be senior adults over 65 years. One of the most creative things we can do in adult work is to plan ways of involving this rapidly growing senior adult population. People are retiring earlier, living longer, and have time, money, abilities and interests that should be invested in the church. A wise pastor will be planning to mine this gold. What a possibility! 

**45% More Adults  
by 1989**

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3. Quotations cited RSV are from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946, 1952, © 1971, 1973.
4. Quotations not cited with a special designation are from the King James Bible.

# LET MY PEOPLE GO

## Freeing Laymen to Do Pastoral-type Ministry

by Noah Funk

*Pastor, Hillcrest Church of the Nazarene, Kansas City, Missouri*

**T**he children of Israel were in bondage to their taskmasters. God prepared Moses and Aaron to lead them to freedom. An assembly of the elders of Israel was called at which Aaron told them everything the Lord had revealed to Moses. The response of those tired people who had not experienced freedom for generations was immediate and exciting: "When they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshipped."<sup>1</sup>

The news that spread through the Land of Goshen was electrifying! God Himself was "concerned" about their "misery." The thrill of imminent emancipation brought new reasons to live. God's message was being delivered to the capital steps: "Let my people go."<sup>2</sup>

It seems to me that our churches today contain a goodly number of God's people who are being held in bondage. It is a different sort of bondage. Their bondage is to programs that may be perpetuated merely because they have "always" been around. One wonders if these laypeople feel as if they have been spending their energies plugging up holes in ecclesiastical dykes.

Their taskmaster doesn't carry a whip. He carries a clipboard listing all the holes that must be filled to keep the church from flood and failure. These people are so faithful that they have taken on more holes than they have fingers!

These choice laypeople would welcome a Moses or Aaron to champion their cause—to get the message to their pastors: "Let my

people go." Their hearts would leap within them "when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery."

### **Laypeople Can Have a Pastor's Heart Without a Pastor's Calling**

There are several areas in which laypeople should be set free to perform vital ministry. However, the scope of this brief article will deal with only what I call "pastoral-type" ministries. I refer to those warm ministries that reach out with love to those who are hurting. God has endowed some of your people with gifts such as compassion, encouragement, and evangelism. These choice people—once set free—can minister to people as effectively—and in some cases—more effectively than the pastor. These are the people whose hearts march to the same drummer which paces our best pastors. But they have never been permitted to join the march.

My testimony is a case in point. I was a layman—a school teacher—with no inclination to becoming a preacher. I did, however, from the day I received Jesus Christ, have a burning desire to help hurting people. I was especially attracted to those who had not yet met Jesus Christ. The only way I discovered to satisfy that inner burning was to feed it the combustible material of hurting and lost lives. I worked with teens, juniors, adults, held jail services, joined visitation teams. Within two years something strange happened (strange to me then as a new Christian, but I see as quite

common now). I received subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) hints from people I highly respected in the church that in essence told me, "Noah, the only way you are going to really minister is to become a 'Minister!'" Thus here I am—a pastor.

I am reasonably convinced that if I had had a Moses or Aaron around to "lead me to freedom"—to exercise my gifts, I would be a layman today. (After a seminary education and thirteen years in the pastorate, I still feel a bit awkward at "Preachers' Meetings.")

And I am thoroughly convinced that most of our churches have laypeople in them who are frustrated because they have not been set free to minister as their hearts (and their Lord) desires.

### **Pastors Can Free Laypeople to Perform Certain "Pastoral-Type" Ministries**

I was enjoying a cookie and a glass of punch in the kitchen of a family who was hosting a weekly Bible study. A sixteen-year-old girl struck up a conversation that obviously was designed to proceed to a more serious matter if I was ready to listen. I was—and she did—"Pastor, I think I am pregnant."

That's just what I needed! A rookie pastor—my time and talents already stretched to their limit. Now this brand-new believer, this ward-of-the-court lays this on me. Then it hit me! I'm not the only one who can minister to this troubled teen. So after a few words of Christian encouragement, I told her that she needed to share her need with a Christian couple that both she and I could

agree upon. Later I returned with the host couple. The need was openly shared. We had a prayer, and I left the heart-warming scene of a teen in the arms of a loving couple who "ministered" to her through the following months.

As I have applied that principle of meaningful involvement over the years—hand picking the "ministers"—I have never been disappointed. And I have never

failed to see the excitement in the lives of the laypeople whom I have trusted with real "pastoral-type" ministry.

A lot of laypeople seriously desire to make it to heaven with gold and silver and costly stones that will survive the flames as their works are tested.<sup>3</sup> They want to write a paragraph in God's record book, to perform some meaningful ministry that will outlast their

earthly life. We can help some people do so by setting them free to carry on some "pastoral-type" ministry.

### **Pastors Can Share the Rewards of Ministry with Laypeople**

As I see it, one of the most satisfying rewards we as pastors receive this side of heaven is the love of those whom we have helped in some way—especially

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## **Managing Lay Ministry Effectively**

by Warren E. Foxworthy

*Pastor, Elk River Church of the Nazarene, Charleston, West Virginia*

**F**or the first time in my Christian life I really feel as if I am serving God in a way that best suits my talents and gifts." That is one of the most gratifying statements I have heard in my total ministry. That comment was actually the result of a deliberate process which started a few months earlier in the thinking of our church leaders. In evaluating our total church ministries plan we realized that while we were effectively handling the areas of our financial, spiritual, and material resources, there was an area of resources that we were neglecting—human resources.

The management of human resources is a ministry that has been greatly overlooked in many churches. One of the most exciting ministries a church can perform is that of helping individual Christians find their "right place" in the work of the Kingdom.

Perhaps we have been unjustly critical when our laymen did not fill their positions or carry out their responsibilities with the zeal and enthusiasm expected of them. After all, they were probably approached in a way calculated to really challenge them. It may have gone something like this, "Dave, we're in a real bind. We must find someone to take the Junior Boys Class. I've tried five others and they all turned me down so I thought of you. I just knew you would help out for a while. After all, Dave, this is God's work." Poor Dave. He has just accepted a position he didn't want. He was not convinced this was God's will for him. After all, it's good for the church so it has to be good for Dave, right? Wrong!


Now Dave has been roped into a job (not a ministry). He has been told that he was the sixth person chosen out of desperation and has been reminded that this is "God's work." The implication being that to turn down the supervisor would be tantamount to turning down God, himself. And then we have the

nerve to criticize Dave for not gritting his teeth and doing "his" job whether he liked it or not.

Now, it takes a little more time and effort, but it is much more rewarding, to develop a ministry within the church designed to help people find their unique place of service in God's kingdom. As this realization began to dawn on us we began to get excited about aiding our people find true fulfillment in the work of the church. A questionnaire was developed and distributed throughout the congregation. On the questionnaire were listed all areas of ministry within the church framework with a line by each area where people could indicate areas of preference for their individual ministries. After several weeks of collecting completed questionnaires, a master list was compiled. Then area lists were developed and routed to the proper church leaders. Those indicating an interest in music were routed to the Music Committee, those indicating an interest in working in any area of the Sunday School were routed to the Board of Christian Life, and so on.

Church leaders then contacted those who indicated a desire to work in their respective areas whenever positions opened. The line of approach was the same in every interview. The individual was approached with the understanding that he or she had already indicated a desire to work in that general area. The person was then given the job description and asked to prayerfully consider accepting the position based on whether or not they felt it to be God's will for them.

It has taken me some time to fill key positions using this approach, but we are finding that persons who feel they are where God wants them are self-motivated and feel productive while doing their job with a zest which is not possible for a draftee.

We really feel that we are beginning to effectively use our human resources while helping laymen find their "niche" in God's total program. 

those we have introduced to Jesus Christ. One way to really bring revival and excitement to a layperson's life is to share this love with him or her. Here is one way to do it:

Take a layman or a lay couple on a soul-winning call with you. (I personally feel it is an injustice to lead someone to Christ without a layperson along whenever possible.) As you prepare the pre-Christian for the new birth, include the layperson in the process as much as possible (just as the husband can be a real aid to the doctor in the delivery room.) Once the person is "born again," tenderly "hand him over" to the layperson to nurture and disciple. Be sure to have a program like Shaver's *Basic Bible Studies*, ready to put into use.

The layperson's presence at the time of conversion is extremely important. To share in that happy moment will create a bond of love that only "pastors" enjoy.

Once a layperson goes through this birth-nurturing process, he will be more than eager to do it again. Why? Because he has shared in the reward of real ministry. The same can be true of ministering to various kinds of needs.

One of the added benefits of sharing the rewards with laypeople is that of extending your ministry. One of the reasons many of our small- to medium-sized churches plateau in their growth pattern is due to the limited number of people any pastor can minister to in the intimate manner demanded and desired by new converts. Thus if a pastor can "share" this person-to-person ministry with his laypeople who have "pastoral" gifts, he will see his church grow.

### Let the Church Be the Church

A biblically legitimate premise is that every body (local church) is alive. And if it is alive and relatively healthy, it has the necessary facilities (members) to perpetuate life. It should be capable of meeting its own needs by edification, encouragement, fellowship, discipleship, healing, discipline. It should be capable of meeting the needs of the pre-Christian world

immediately surrounding it by witness, appropriate social action, and evangelism.

This body, however, is only alive to the degree that its individual members are set free to perform ministry. Only under those conditions can the church be the church. How do we go about letting the church be the church?

Perhaps the "ideal" way would be to start from scratch. Start without any preconceived programs/ministries for which you must recruit personnel. Instead, start with the personnel you have. Discover their gifts and build your programs/ministries around them. Thus you would have only those programs/ministries for which you had personnel, and you would start no added programs/ministries unless God provided the appropriately endowed personnel. This "ideal" church would be a unique body of believers, most likely not fitting any standard stereotype patterns. For they would build their programs/ministries around its unique conglomeration of God-endowed resources.

You and I, however, do not minister under "ideal" situations. So what can we do in the practical situation in which we find ourselves? First, we must start where we are. Don't scrap all those programs/ministries for which you constantly labor just to find workers. (Neither you nor I want the responsibility for what such action might produce in an established church.)

You could begin with a careful study of spiritual gifts with the aim to prayerfully discover what unique reservoir of gifts your church might have.<sup>4</sup> Then, in keeping with the stated theme of this article, you could take note of those laypeople who have pastoral-type gifts.


Ministries could then be built using those people. Ministries such as an undershepherd program, Circles of Concern, Care programs, etc. These new ministries may not replace your present programs. Perhaps they could effectively support and compliment them, although a continual increase in new ministries without any decrease in non-

productive old ones will soon lead to the old busy-bondage all over again.

Some of you might want to go a step further in freeing your laypeople to perform pastoral-type ministry. If you are sufficiently secure in your present pastorate (and in your ministry in general) and have won the hearts and allegiance of your laypeople, you could do the following: Hand pick those spirit-filled lay leaders in your church who evidence having the heart of a pastor. Take them on an overnight, two day retreat. There you can, so to speak, bare your pastoral soul to them. With prayerful compassion, convince them that they possess some rare gifts that the Lord Jesus gave them to use in meeting real needs. Elevate them to a place of "servanthood" in Jesus' kingdom. Lead them to realize the fact that they have not been redeemed and filled with the Holy Spirit merely to prepare them for heaven; but that they are unique and special people who "are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for [them] to do."<sup>5</sup>

If you can succeed in freeing a handful of laypeople in your church to actually do pastoral-type ministry, you will have done a great deal in letting the church be the church.

It is idle speculation to imagine what would have happened if the ancient Jews had never been sent a Moses or Aaron to proclaim God's liberating message, "Let My people go." But we do not have to speculate to know what happens to laypeople today whose pastoral-type gifts are rarely used or even recognized. Their lives become dull, frustrating, and unfulfilled.

Those lives can be turned around to become exciting, productive, and fulfilling once they hear the clear voice of God saying, "Let My people go." 

### Footnotes

1. Exod. 4:31, NIV.
2. Exod. 5:1, NIV.
3. 1 Cor. 3:10-15, NIV.
4. The Division of Church Growth in the Church of the Nazarene can provide materials for a "Gifts Seminar."
5. Eph. 2:10, NIV.

# HOW PASTORS CAN FACILITATE GROWING MARRIAGES

by J. Paul Turner\*

photo by H. Armstrong Roberts

I do not claim to be an expert on marriage. But having been married for 26 years I am in the process of learning a few things that I would like to share. It has been my experience that we teach best those principles which we are in the process of learning ourselves. And since I am in the process I hope what I have to share will be of some impact upon your life.

When I said my vows to Marilyn back in 1956, marital growth and health was the farthest thing from my mind. To have discussed marital growth would have been as foreign to me as eating caviar. There were no growth words or phrases in my vows. Rather, I heard static words like: estate, institution, establish, station, and wedlock. No one told me I would be a totally different person five years later. It was not conveyed to me that marriage involves two people who are continuously changing. Nor did anyone remind me that I would be living in an environment that was always changing. The implication was that we were to "settle down, find our place (which later became our rut), and live happily ever after." To say "we have settled down" is absurd. It can't be done. Marriage must constantly adapt to meet the needs of two unique people and their changing circumstances.

When a couple makes a commitment to marry—when they say those vows, they say them for good. It is an irrevocable commitment. But among other things it is a commitment to grow and change. **A Christian marriage should be judged more by its growth rather than its endurance.** For if it grows it will produce fruit; and fruit will call forth hunger in

others. If it grows, it will endure. And to endure, couples must leave no stone unturned, and avoid no task, to learn all they can about growing.

Unfortunately, the notion of growth is new to us. We have not done our homework or made adequate commitments to the concept of marital process. If we say the relationship is "for better or for worse," who decides this? Obviously the couple decides. They can make a marriage better or worse. So why let the marriage drift? If it drifts in the right direction, That's beautiful. But what if it drifts poorly? Marriage needs a commitment to growth to prevent it from drifting—to set it on a course of choice.

If only someone could have penetrated my irrational state of mind with premarital counseling to share that my circumstances and environment would inevitably change, and that my marital and spiritual growth would need to be intentional. That I would have to choose to grow was a new thought (for me at least) that came several years later.

Paul has shared the concept of growth with us. "We who believe are carefully joined with Christ as parts of a beautiful growing temple of God. And you are also joined with him and each other by the Holy Spirit" (Eph. 2:21-22, TLB).

**The first step, then, in facilitating growing marriages is to nurture the couple toward a commitment to intentional growth, both maritally and spiritually.** Since I have chosen to be married it is my experience that whenever I activate spiritual growth in my life, my marital growth closely parallels. The two seem inseparable.

## The Tough Work of Seasoning and Preserving

There was a time in my life when I would have been offended if someone suggested I take a course in communication. I thought I knew how to communicate. After all, it is an activity I do every day. It took me a long time to realize that the everyday activity of communicating is a complex science. If you're wanting to know how complex it can be, try keeping tabs, for one day, on the messages you send to see if the intent of each message equals its impact. And that's the problem. We must use a complex science to say what we mean. And since few of us say what we really mean, we miscommunicate. But the trouble with miscommunication is that it rarely gets talked about.

There seems to be a myth about communication among believers. It goes something like this: *Now that I've made my commitment to Christ and have accepted His Holy Spirit—now that He is wholly Lord of my life, I can automatically communicate responsibly.* This myth is too heavy a burden to place on the experience of entire sanctification.

I have known Christian couples whose families of origin were: teasers, pouters, huggers, and yellers. When these ingredients are brought together in one marriage, the potential for heated-up emotion skyrockets. This is where the real work begins in marriage. It's tough work, but whoever said relationships would be easy? This is part of the problem in today's secular marriage. Somehow they think developing relationships is an easy task—it isn't. So they bail out with their no-fault divorce.

Personally, I have not "arrived" when it comes to sending and receiving responsible messages. But I am learning to use the "I message." It's becoming more and more a part of my natural communication. Every time I find myself using the "you message" I also discover that I'm blaming Marilyn for something. The implication of the "you message" is that "it's all your fault." It is a learning experience, a skill-building experience, that teaches me best how to communicate responsibly.

**Therefore, the second step in facilitating growing marriages is to equip that marriage with responsible communication skills.** Couples must be committed to building interpersonal competence as it relates to the messages they send and receive. Paul's instruction to the Colossians in chapter 4, verse 6, holds the key: "Let your conversation be full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone" (NIV).

It is an intense process taught by no greater Teacher than the Holy Spirit, to speak to my wife in a grace-giving way. How often I am prodded to season my responses with the preserving power of salt instead of a style that would destroy and hurt.

The Spirit-filled marriage has inside information on how to learn this skill, because the model for responsible communication is found in the Person of Jesus Christ. And He has not left us helpless in putting practical handles on the Spirit-filled life. "The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have taught you" (John

14:26, NIV). There is no better promise to empower me to build the skill and competence I need to relate to Marilyn in a Christlike manner.

## Avoiding the Twelve-hour Limit

It is an understatement to say that the Apostle Paul had good psychology. He tells us to be angry, yet we are not to sin. We are not to let the sun go down on our anger (Eph. 4:26, NASB). In other words, don't let 12 hours pass without dealing with the issue. Paul knew that the honest emotion of anger perpetuated by fear and misunderstanding could degenerate into carnal anger. And when carnal anger sets in, the emotion of revenge raises its ugly head, thus it becomes a spiritual problem.

Anger is the common emotion in marital conflict and conflict is inevitable in any marriage relationship. I had some hard knocks in learning this. It also took a long time for me to realize that conflict isn't bad in itself. It is what I do with the conflict that makes it bad. It was good and wise counsel when it was suggested to me that I view my conflicts with Marilyn as a friend in disguise. Because there is inside every conflict the real potential for growth.

There was a time in our marriage when we would vent our feelings, suppress them, or even deny them. Denial was the most destructive for us. But a fourth alternative which we learned as a skill was to face the issue and activate some responsible styles of communication. We began to be safe with each other, in conflict, because neither one of us was being defensive nor were we attacking one another. The Holy Spirit through a significant teacher has helped us face our differences rather than retreat from them.

**Here is the third step in facilitating growing marriages. It is to equip couples with a competency to take their conflicts on into the realm of growth. It is that process of viewing conflict as a point of growth.** The Spirit-filled marriage must never waste a conflict. The alternative is that in every issue the couple retreats back to their differences. When this habit is cultivated over the years, the marriage has a closet full of issues that never get resolved. Is it any wonder that some couples reach the point where they have nothing more to say to each other . . . where cold indifference sets in and they pass each other like two silent ships in the night?

## Breaking the Taboo on Tenderness

Only in the last ten years have experts begun to study marriages that are functioning well. Prior to

**\*J. Paul Turner is co-director, along with his wife, Marilyn, of Marriage and Family Life Ministries, Church of the Nazarene.**





this most studies were on the problem or pathological side. But the new and recent studies of well-functioning marriages began to reveal that couples liked each other and said so. Couples that were studied and tested were not afraid to say why they loved each other. They continually affirmed each other. A sense of self-worth was given to where the members thought it was great to be a part of that family.

Dr. David Mace suggests that our culture has a **taboo on tenderness**. And the taboo is very destructive. One spouse who doesn't like something that is said by the other spouse finds it easy to tell him so. There is an expression of negative feelings, but the positive ones are often internalized and left unspoken. So what we must do is to help couples break this taboo on tenderness and begin to affirm each other.

**The fourth step in facilitating growing marriages is a nurturing step. It is to raise the couples' awareness that marital success lies in the valuing attitudes we hold about ourselves, our spouse, and God.** It is a commitment by the couple to build and cultivate self and other esteem.

Looking back on my formative years I am convinced it was the everyday experiences that shaped my self-image, not the traumatic ones. The general attitude in my home contributed more to my self-image than did any single event. I began early to internalize these attitudes and over the years they helped form an opinion of what I think of myself today.

The ultimate gesture of esteem-building was when Jesus Christ invaded history on our behalf. He would have done the same thing had I been the only person on earth. It is a trite statement but a comforting statement to say, "Jesus really thinks a lot of us. He thinks we're special and unique. He loves us and tells us so." **What would it do to the marriages of our church if we truly began to believe about ourselves what God already believes about us?**

To esteem each other is to activate *agape* love—God's love. It's the love that loves when there's nothing there to love. Because at some point in marriage a spouse is going to be hurt by the other in such a way that s/he is not going to be able to love unless equipped with God's grace. If it hasn't happened, it will. Count on being hurt by the person you love the most. The converse is true as well. Marriage involves the propensity and probability of hurt. But only Jesus enables us to forgive. No marriage is going to function adequately unless two people have Jesus Christ in their lives to enable them to forgive. Because He equips us to forgive in a special way—the *agape* way.

We worship a forgetful Jesus. When I stand before the judgment, do you know what Jesus is going to say? "I don't remember any of this!" And what Jesus does for you and me, we're supposed to do for our mates—forgive and forget. We do not have the prerogative to say, "I can't forget what you've done."

Building esteem means loving, and forgetting. When Jesus came into my life He enabled me to do

what is humanly impossible. That's why a Christian marriage has something to offer the secular world that all the humanistic psychologists cannot possibly offer.

### **Accepting Lordship—The Infusion of His Fruit**

**The fifth step in facilitating growing marriages is to provide the opportunity for couples to accept the Holy Spirit into their lives—fully and completely.** The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is the bedrock experience from which couples are empowered to grow, both spiritually and maritally. For "the Spirit of truth (the Helper) lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:17, NIV).

There are three people involved in Christian marriage: husband, wife, and the Lord Jesus Christ. **It is only when two people give their lives to the Lord that they can authentically give themselves to each other.** The marital sickness in our culture is exposed exactly at this point. In other words, "Who is it that's going to be lord of my life and my relationship?"

Lloyd Ogilvie suggests that a great Christian marriage is one characterized by the unrestricted giving of mind, emotion, will, and soul to another . . . as if given to Christ. When two minds are **yielded** to the guidance of Christ, two emotional natures are **surrendered** to express the love of Christ, two wills are **committed** to discern and do the will of Christ, two souls are **galvanized** to seek the kingdom of God together, and two bodies are **given freely** to satisfy and enjoy each other—that's the expression of God's intention for marriage.

When God infuses the couple with His presence He creates an aliveness that makes them dangerous. Because the infusion is the fruit of the Spirit. And God's kind of fruit, within marriage, is first expressed in love. His Word never treats love as though it just happens. Rather it treats love as a decision that is made and a commitment that is followed through on, year after year. The Bible doesn't say, "Husbands, I trust that you'll go on feeling pretty good about your wives." No, it says, "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

A marriage that is under the Lordship of Jesus Christ is a marriage built on commitment. It is based upon *agape* love that gives constant rebirth, revitalization, and resuscitation to the relationship.

This is one of the major reasons why Marriage Enrichment works. Couples are given the opportunity to learn new skills in relating to each other. And the capstone is accepting the opportunity to either reaffirm or actually place their marriage under the Lordship of Christ.

### **Viewing the Five Steps as Assumptions**

To summarize this first section, I have suggested five major steps whereby pastors can facilitate growing marriages. I would like to list them as five major assumptions.

**Assumption One.** Change is inevitable but growth is intentional. Therefore, the couple is committed to intentional growth.

**Assumption Two.** Responsible communication is a skill which must be learned. Therefore, the couple is committed to building interpersonal competence in their communication.

**Assumption Three.** Marital conflict is a point from which to grow rather than an experience from which to retreat. Therefore, the couple is committed to building interpersonal competence in resolving their conflicts.

**Assumption Four.** Marital success lies in the valuing attitudes we hold about ourselves, our spouse, and God. Therefore, the couple is committed to building the esteem of each other.

**Assumption Five.** The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit residing in each spouse is the bedrock experience from which the couple is empowered to grow and succeed in marriage. Therefore, the couple is committed to the Spirit-filled life, thus the abundant marriage.

### Marriage as It Was Meant to Be

It seems that marriage today is becoming free from some of the bonds that have distorted it for many years. Couples are now invited and encouraged to stay together because of a quality of life within them. It should have been like this all along, but it hasn't.

For example, in the past, thousands of couples would stay together, for years, just because there was pressure to do so from their families of origin. For the most part that pressure has been stripped away. Other spouses would stay together "because the kids are still home." Believe it or not, there was a time when society in general put pressure on a marriage to stay together. These are good reasons but they're not good enough.

Since most of the external reasons have been stripped away, the Church has an excellent opportunity to share the real reason. And that is, **we stay together because the Helper, the Holy Spirit, resides in our hearts—we love with His love and not our own—we are just as committed to our mate as the Holy Spirit is committed to us.**

The question is, do we, as the Church, have the resolve to equip and nurture couples in an ongoing basis on how to relate to each other? If we fail, we will have lost the best opportunity to recreate the original basis for marriage as it was meant to be. Romance alone cannot hold it together, neither can secular society, nor will our families of origin. But the Church? I am optimistic. I believe the Church is committed to developing deeper kinds of relationships for those people who choose marriage.

"And why are you an optimist?"

"Well, I've read the last chapter of the Bible. I know how the race is going to end, and the race is fixed. And the more husbands and wives I can help through the race, the more fulfilled I am."

### Where to Begin the Strategy

**First,** take a good long look at your own marriage. Is it growing? Many times my wife and I have used the following inventory to check out our potential for

growth. Type out two identical lists, one for you, and one for your mate:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Common goals and spiritual values,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Commitment to growth,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Communication skills,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Creative use of conflict,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Expressing appreciation/affection,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Agreement of roles,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Cooperation and teamwork,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Sexual fulfillment,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Money management,**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Decision making.**

Score your marriage, not just your part in it, from 0 to 10 in each area. Ten represents the best it could ever be in that area, zero represents the worst.

Consider what your marriage is now in each area, and give yourself a score from 0 to 10. This represents your present level of achievement in terms of marital growth.

Total your score. This gives you the percentage of your estimated growth potential already achieved.

Subtract your total from 100. This is the percentage of your marriage potential ready to be appropriated.

It is in these areas that you will begin to explore each other, and share your different views of where you are in that area. As you listen and understand each other you will activate a growth process in dialogue.

Space will not allow me to comment at length about this inventory. But keep in mind it is not a scientific document. If there are large discrepancies in certain areas, view that as "money in the bank"—you have a lot of room for growth. If there is a compatible score in an area, it reflects companionship growth which is to be commended.

Exchange your inventories and discuss the growth potential of your marriage. Whether you like it or not, your marriage is saying something to your people. Hopefully it conveys a commitment to spiritual and marital growth.

**Second,** schedule an annual Marriage Enrichment retreat for your church. The retreat will cover as a core agenda the five major assumptions summarized in this article: Growth, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Esteem, and Lordship. Attend the weekend yourself along with your mate, and fully participate. **It is a myth to believe your couples will be more open in your absence.** Contrary to what you may have been taught, your couples are anxiously waiting for your marriage to deeply minister to them with all of its joy and life as well as its occasional weakness and failure.

**Third,** discuss at length with your mate the possibility of you both being involved in a specific strategy of marital health. Evaluate thoroughly the balance, in your ministry, between prevention and crisis intervention. Look for ways to bring your prevention ministry more in balance with your crisis marital counseling.

**Fourth,** seriously consider qualifying as a couple for leadership training in the church's Marriage Enrichment ministry. It will greatly assist you in developing an ongoing equipping and nurturing

(continued on page 28)

# WOMEN'S MINISTRIES MEET NEEDS

by Ruth E. Gibson\*

**N**ot! Not another program!" the pastor groaned. "You are right, pastor. No one needs 'just another program.'"

"But as long as there are people . . .

And those people have abilities and needs . . . there will be ministries.

"And women are people with abilities to be used . . .

and needs to be met . . .

So we have Women's Ministries!"

Women's Ministries may be the gold mine of enthusiastic outreach and effective ministry you've been looking for.

We are living in a rapidly changing world. The winds of change are blowing through every sphere of human life. Women, in particular, are feeling the pressure.

Today's women are hearing a thousand different drumbeats. Loudly shouted or discreetly muffled, we are hearing, "Women, awake! Stand, band together! Demand equality now!"

On the other hand, we are hearing, "There is a chain of command. Be quiet, obey, submit!" Many women today are overwhelmed and confused. They wonder, "Who am I supposed to be? What am I supposed to feel? And how am I supposed to succeed?"

Since the church has become conscious of the unique aspirations and emotional needs of women, special women's ministries have developed in our local churches, on our districts, and at the denominational level. Some local churches already have a director with evolving ministries. Many districts also have District Directors of Women's Ministries and have conducted especially designed ladies' retreats.

It is not our aim at the denominational level to load our active pastors with another program; nor is it our plan to have churches engage in activities to get the same, ten, super-busy women coming together out of loyalty.

Our plan is to share our philosophy, to articulate our purpose, to express clearly our overall goals, to list specific objectives, and suggest ways of implementing those goals and objectives, and to encourage churches to plan women's ministries that will suit the particular needs of that church. With the complexity, diversity, and size differences of our churches, it is impossible to design any one program to fit them all. However, with a shared philosophy, purpose, goals, and objectives, ministries to fit each church can be shaped.

## WHAT IS WOMEN'S MINISTRIES?

1. It is the church channeling the energies of women into the building of the kingdom of God;
2. It is the church using the gifts and talents of women in service;

3. It is the church enabling women to live lives in the delicate balance of giving and receiving;
4. It is the church meeting the many and varied needs and interests of women;
5. It is the church challenging women to become all God wants them to be!

Women need to be challenged by some activity that is worthwhile or their energies may be expended in useless ways. As a church, we are continually writing the story, beginning in small ways, and continuing to explore and change as the *needs* of women become known and their *talents* discovered.

Many women's ministries are already in operation in churches of various sizes. And they are as different as the personalities of the churches involved. They range from Bible Studies and Prayer Groups to a Physical Fitness Class that incorporates a "walk to lunch bunch." And this is as it should be, for the rule in planning women's ministries is "every activity should rise out of a need," such as . . .

- (1) the need to reach out into our communities and draw others into our fellowship,
- (2) the need to be engaged in meaningful service to others, and
- (3) the need to be ministered to.

Three principles to keep in mind as you plan are:

**THE KEY WORD IS SIMPLICITY.** No vast organization is necessary. Our resolve is to devise a pattern simple enough to give freedom from machinery that would be usable in churches regardless of size. For the larger churches, a council with an executive committee and several project leaders may be practical. But for the smaller churches, one person with vision and enthusiasm may be asked to explore the idea of women's ministries. She may call a meeting of six or eight representative women to:

- (1) brainstorm the needs represented in the women of that congregation;
- (2) look at what has been done in the past to meet those needs;
- (3) list ministries in operation at present and probe their effectiveness; and
- (4) dream and design ways of ministering to their women, and through their women, to their community. Out of this can come that first activity.

**\*Ruth E. Gibson** is director of Women's Ministries, Church of the Nazarene.



**THE GUIDEPOST IS VARIETY.** Women often have needs and interests unique to a particular life situation (widow, single parent with small children, always single lady, working mother, etc.) and to their age or stage of adulthood. Therefore, the door is wide open for a broad spectrum of interests. A varied program will be required to meet needs in every part of a woman's life. She is a complex person with spiritual, emotional, physical, mental, and social needs. Women's Ministries call for a balance of activities so the total woman is ministered to and through. In addition to a kaleidoscope of activities, put your creative genius to work so you avoid the "rut of sameness." Ministries must grow and evolve to fit the changing focus of the women of your church.

**THE ACID TEST IS "DOES IT MEET A NEED?"** Don't plan an activity just to have an activity. Be certain there is a need. Do the research necessary to find the needs of the women of your church. To do this:

- (1) Pray for insight into the needs of the women, all women, from all life-styles and all age-groups.
- (2) Interview and listen.
- (3) Ask women to list their special needs for you—it is amazing how they appreciate being asked.
- (4) Remember the needs of the women of your community as well as your church, for you will want to reach out to them too.

After the ideas have been sifted and some priorities agreed upon, prepare a questionnaire and ask your women to choose the activities that interest them. Give the form to all the women of the church by distributing them through the Sunday School classes. This is the information that will give direction to your planning.

"Needs" do not always mean women need ministering to. One great need is to be "of service" to "feel needed." This is especially true of our older ladies. One significant principle of Women's Ministries is to look at the "service" needs of a congregation and to match these needs to the specific abilities of the women.

The "aim" of Women's Ministries is "to inspire women to be all God wants them to be!" This can be realized as we involve women in useful and worthwhile creative service to God and the church, and as we minister to the unique needs and interests of today's women. This outward flow of service to others is psychologically and spiritually wholesome, and our ministry of meeting needs can be an effective means of drawing those of our community into our fellowship.

## **HERE'S HOW IT WORKS**

### **The Need to Grow Spiritually.**

Following a Bible study discussion in a small prayer cell, Linda shared that she needed help in breaking a habit. Joan opened up, "I know exactly how you feel. I had that same habit." Linda sensed

in Joan's prayer her care and her support. Both of them profited as one ministered and one was ministered to.

### **The Need for Fellowship.**

Fellowship affords the opportunity for knowing each other better. Eleanor hosted an English high tea. She wanted everyone to really feel included.

So the hostesses asked each woman to share with the other women around her table the answer to this question: What person influenced your life the most and how? Every woman felt included. Every woman was somebody. No pressure here. Just arms and hearts wide open to each other. That was better than the frosting on the teacakes.

### **The Need for Physical Fitness.**

To meet this need, Rhoda suggested "The Walk to Lunch Bunch." The restaurant was chosen for lunch on Mondays. They found that "getting in shape" and "smelling the flowers" was not only an exhilarating experience, but that "listening to each other" while walking and eating together was the real bonus. The firmer muscles and pounds dropped helped too.

### **The Need to Learn New Skills.**

Gwen uncovered superior home skills of certain women in her church last summer. These women felt a new *sense of worth* when they opened their homes for demonstrating these arts: making homemade oatmeal bread (what aroma), or designing applique, or dipping chocolates. Everybody won—the learners and the teachers.

### **The Need to Minister to Others.**

To meet this need in her church, Marie set up a "telephone tree" of organized calling. Women found their niche of real service to God. They reached out with special listening to touch new people, hurting people, and shut-ins.

Another group chose to write notes of encouragement to people whose needs were blazoned on the newspaper of their community. To know someone is praying for you when tragedy strikes is a comfort begging description.

Specialized ministries of these kinds are as many as creative minds of God's can imagine.

### **The Needs of Businesswomen.**

The public library conference room was the place Kay found for the downtown businesswomen to brown bag their lunches for a noon Bible study. The discussions soon affirmed that their problems were mutual and the Bible had answers. What an opportunity for outreach, too.

### **The Needs of Young Mothers.**

Beverly challenged Ruth to start a Mother's Club. It took awhile to convince her she had the time, but Beverly was persistent for she felt it was God's will. Bev volunteered to take care of planning the scheduling of the homes for the meetings (Saturday mornings from 10:00-11:30) and the other nitty-gritty details, and Ruth planned and conducted the programs. The first two years it was touch and go, but in August of 1980, the executive committee of young mothers planned the year's program. Quarterly letters were mailed to all mothers with pre-

school children in the church and to the Cradle Roll mothers. Subjects of special interest were used which insured a good attendance. On occasion an outside speaker was engaged, but most of the time the mother's own gifts and talents were used.

Some of the programs were: Nutrition and Your Child, How to Really Love Your Child (special speaker), Building Traditions in the Family, How to Baby-proof Your Home, How to Care for a Sick Child (resource visitor—a nurse), Improving Your Self-Image (special speaker), TV and Your Child, and Discipline Strategies That Work.

The opportunities for meeting a variety of needs were present. We were all reminded of the awesome responsibility to teach our children about God and the need to be the spiritual example we wished our children to follow. Parenting skills were taught and young mothers felt more secure with their children as they shared problems and solutions. Outreach was high on the list of benefits as Cradle Roll mothers fellowshiped with Christian mothers.

### **The Need for Special Outreach into the Community.**

Many groups have succeeded in interesting numbers of community women with Special Events such as:

*Spring Festival with Style Show*

*Fall Craft Demonstrations*

*Christmas Home Tour*

*Anytime Luncheons and Dinners with special speakers.*

In each activity, outreach was the purpose without being openly evident.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Plan Your Own Program.**

Although the basic needs of women everywhere have a similarity, the personality profile of churches will differ and dictate a variety of activities. Therefore, a program that has been a "smash" in a neighboring church may "fall flat" if the need is not there and felt by the women of your church. Also, the leadership abilities of local personnel may change and because of this, the programs that are feasible will vary.

- **Plan for as Large a Segment of Your Women as Possible.**

Make every effort to help each woman discover her personal talent and challenge her to ministry. To do this is to help her find an outlet in life, a way to use her energy, love, gifts, mind—her totality—for God, and in a way that will bring fulfillment. God has in mind an abundant life for every woman.

Try to construct activities that will span a broad spectrum of needs and interests. One way to insure this is to have represented on your council, women from many different life situations and all age-groups. If this is not practical, ask representative women to list their needs for you and plan from this information.

- **Plan for Balance in Your Program So as to Meet the Varied Needs in a Woman's Life.**

In other words, don't meet just a woman's social needs and ignore the spiritual, or vice versa.

**Spiritual Needs**—may be ministered to through retreats, Bible studies, enrichment seminars, prayer groups, prayer partners, etc.

**Mental Needs**—may be covered through activities that stretch the mind such as Bible study, scripture memorization, special interest seminars, special speakers on such subjects as the Development of Home Executive Skills, Priority-setting for the Working Woman, etc.

**Emotional Needs**—may be eased through seminars or special speakers chosen to help women (1) affirm their self-worth, (2) develop the ability to cope with changes or crises, (3) form satisfying and intimate relationships with significant others, (4) learn to FACE spiritual problems, (5) recognize everything that happens in life as an opportunity for growth, etc.

**Physical Needs**—may be served through image improvement classes, seminars on How to Play and Relax, Health Awareness seminars, etc.

**Social Needs**—may be met through fellowship activities. By this means, we may interest women outside the church. There is a social aspect in each of the activities listed. This meets one of the most often voiced needs of women today—loneliness.

- **Don't Expect Everyone to Come to Everything.**

Remember, you do not need a large group for every activity if the small number are having their needs met. It is better if women do not attend just out of loyalty, but that they participate because of a need to minister or a need to be ministered to.

- **Be Willing to Write "Finis" to a Program That Is Not Effective.**

If it doesn't work, try later. If again it is not effective, be strong enough to *drop it!*

### **WOMEN NEED WOMEN**

Dr. James Dobson of the University of Southern California Medical School said one of the major causes of depression in women is the breakdown of relationships *between women*. Women used to be together more, to be more neighborly, and to share skills. But in our contemporary society, women separate themselves with high walls. This makes Women's Ministries even more vital because in this framework we can:

give and receive affirmation,  
reach out and touch,  
have needs met,  
draw others into fellowship,  
learn new skills.

The *needs* are there, in our churches and in our communities;

The *skills* are there, among our own women and those of our neighborhoods;

All that is required is a pastor to catch the vision, present the challenge, appoint a leader (or committee) and allow the seed planted to grow into dynamic women's ministries particularly suited to that church.



# THE NEED FOR MINISTRY TO SINGLE ADULTS

by Harold Ivan Smith\*

One of the most fertile fields for church growth is ministry to single adults. Census figures report almost 45 million single adults in the United States. They are emerging as a full-fledged minority with particular economic, social, and religious needs.

There was once a time when single adults were not anxious to draw attention to themselves. To be adult and single was tragic; some families seemed embarrassed by the unmarried child. The divorced were seen as failures by society, and often as losers by one another. Only the widow-widowers were entitled to special consideration.

A lot has changed. Today's single adults and single-again adults are better able to cope with singleness because of the development of ministry to single adults; the publication of many fine books for single adults; and the wide variety of seminars, retreats, and conferences which focus on resourceful, positive living. The initial movement in this area was nonchurch and was particularly led by business-related motives. The next wave was para-church. Single Christians who were not being nourished in their congregations began seeking out one another and forming informal support groups with some degree of religious emphasis.

Now, the church has become sensitized to the need for ministry to single adults. This recognition, according to Dr. Fred Freed, a psychologist who has ministered to single adults, was motivated by two factors: (1) the recognition that single adults would go *somewhere* for help and some of those places were not acceptable to evangelicals; and (2) divorce among children of ministers and key lay leadership. For some congregations, divorce among a member family was a trauma. Others learned of the dilemma facing single adults when their children spoke.

Today, there are several types of single adult ministries or groups within the Christian community.

1. *The Fundamentalists.* These churches have organized single ministries to *preserve* their single adults. They are in general a reaction to negative singles' life-style (bars, dating bureaus, discos) rather than a response to the distinct needs of single adults. These groups primarily minister to never-marrieds and widows. Their impact upon the divorced is minimal because of rigid interpretations of Jesus' teaching on divorce and in particular, remarriage.

Bible studies are the main ingredient in the program. Some specifically foster a "brother and sister in the Lord" relationship between single adults and discourage dating.

2. *The Pentecostals.* These groups respond simi-

larly to the Fundamentalists. They are designed to react-respond. Their emphasis is on a charismatic answer to the problems of single adults. They provide a great deal of warmth and acceptance.

Because of their growth in recent years, they are somewhat less rigid on the question of divorce and remarriage.

3. *Other Evangelicals.* These are groups in churches which reject the "swinging single life-style" but stop short of an enthusiastic endorsement of singleness. Although against divorce, they are aware of the realities of divorce and are committed to a redemptive ministry which restores the person.

Their activities include Bible studies, seminars, athletic programs, and opportunities for social fellowship.

4. *Liberal Fellowship.* Some churches have organized single adult ministries (although many prefer the designation *programs*) that are quasi-religious. Because of their theological stance they may be "all things to all people." While they would reject the hedonistic aspect of nonreligious groups, they would not exalt a high standard of living in conformity with biblical principles. Some would sponsor dances, discos, wine-tasting parties, etc.

5. *Para-Church Fellowships.* These groups organize around two points: (1) singleness and (b) a desired degree of spiritual emphasis. Most of these groups meet in restaurants or gyms or "Y's on Sunday morning but dismiss in time for participants to attend worship services in their own churches. Some churches have programs "under their wings" with a formal or informal sponsorship.

Many single adults find these groups less "churchy" and find they can invite many single friends who would not be as interested in attending a church.

## WHY DO SINGLE ADULTS ATTEND?

The one common denominator among single adults is mobility. Single adults move from group

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\*Harold Ivan Smith is director of Single Adult Ministries, Church of the Nazarene.



to group, many because of the unsettled or unaccepted status. Some are compulsive joiners and want a wide variety of activities to fill up their schedules. For this reason, groups that sponsor a wide variety of weekday activities attract larger numbers. Also, many single adults attend smaller churches where they are active in teaching Sunday School or singing in the choir. Thus, they are anxious for fellowship activities during the week.

The second common denominator is the communications network that exists among single adults. Word-of-mouth or newsletters carry news of singles events. More aggressive single adults will "scout" the new territory. Some stay awhile, then move on. Some singles groups have a steady turnover of membership.

Many single adults are willing to check out some singles activity "once."

### **WHY DO SINGLE ADULTS MIGRATE?**

Many are not tied down to family responsibilities. They go where the action is. Other single adults give a local congregation every chance but finally conclude there is no place for them. Some begin the migration by "just visiting" another church which has a singles program; others, by attending singles activities although still attending worship services at their primary congregation. As they become more involved and make friends they may feel more comfortable in the secondary fellowship.

A warm fellowship which loves single adults draws single adults. Singles who feel accepted and loved will step over major doctrinal differences to nourish that concern. Singles are highly ecumenical. Simply, we must not forget: because of programs and activities some will attend a church whose theology they cannot accept.

In one research program I conducted in a large California congregation, I was surprised to find a wide diversity of religious backgrounds: from "Bible-toting, Bible-quoting" fundamentalists to charismatic Catholics—to Lutherans—to Southern Baptists and members of the Church of Christ. Many found the doctrinal interpretation too liberal, the style of worship services too enthusiastic and emotional, the size too large, but they never once doubted their acceptance. They knew they were first-class citizens. Additionally, they did not have to explain their single status.

Secondly, the migration is more pronounced among those who have been divorced. Many feel a judgmental attitude in the church. Some cannot remain in a congregation with an ex-spouse. Some find their divorced status tolerable but find rejection for position of leadership or service.

Many find the memories too painful—they want a new beginning. Some feel out of place in congregations whose fellowship patterns rely heavily on married couples.

Some migrate after breaking up with a single adult in another church.

Remarriage offers a significant barrier. There is a migration of individuals out of fundamental churches into middle-of-the-road congregations, especially the community and independent churches.

### **WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS?**

1. *Insensitivity to single adults.* Many churches are so marriage-centered that they are unable to minister to singles. In many congregations, Sunday School classes are "young married adults" rather than "young adults." The socialization is based on couples. Churches which stress "family communion" have to understand there are families of one! Events should not have differential prices for singles than for adults.

For some the single status is traumatic. Jokes, subtle humor, matchmaking—do not affirm or support them. Single adults must not be viewed as handicapped because they do not have a spouse. Nor do we need to launch expeditions to discover "why a pretty young lady like you isn't married?"

Churches must develop person-oriented rather than program-oriented ministries. Single adult programming is not a sophisticated form of junior church. Singles are adults! The thriving program is not *for* singles but *with* singles.

2. *The notion of "a man for every woman."* That idea is not only demographically impossible, but even if it were—not everyone is suited for marriage. Paul made clear some were single because of commitment to the Kingdom. Others are single because of family obligations, or unrealistic expectations of the perfect mate.

3. *Fear of single adults.* Some married people are threatened by single adults of the opposite sex just talking to their mate after church. Some marrieds feel uncomfortable with single adults in a predominantly married adult class. That fear sometimes takes on a facade of spirituality by pointing out all sorts of "soap-operaish" behaviors and "that's how things get started."

### **WHY SHOULD HOLINESS CHURCHES BECOME INVOLVED IN MINISTRY TO SINGLE ADULTS?**

1. The reality is, either we minister to them or someone else will. Many single adults have grown impatient. As they become aware of ministry in other fellowships it creates a hunger for ministry.

2. They are ours. So why should we be hesitant to minister to our own people? We would not consider allowing other denominations or independent churches to minister to our children. Many single adults have cut their teeth in our churches and in our camps and in our colleges. They have every right to expect a loving, redemptive response from us.

3. Our emphasis on forgiveness and personal standards. We expect a high standard in our programs and ministry.

4. Our emphasis upon the Holy Spirit. Single adults quickly learn the inadequacy of their own resources. Programs and seminars on positive single living may be helpful but an overemphasis on self-reliance shortchanges the single adult. The Holy Spirit has come as the Enabler to strengthen the single adult to live a celebrative, redemptive, victorious life.

5. Our emphasis on service. Where would our

(continued on page 28)



# MINISTERING TO THE ROOKIE ADULTS

by James L. Sankey

*Professor of Religious Education, Nazarene Bible College,  
Colorado Springs, Colorado*

**"... You're just a bunch of rookies," barked the raw-boned sergeant. "But in a few weeks I will have made men out of you."**

When you begin to think of ministry to young, single adults (rookie adults if you please) where do you start? You won't find the word "adult" in the Bible, or in many of the older medical dictionaries. It has been called a 20th-century word. From the legal standpoint, a person who is eighteen years of age is now considered an adult. This gives him the right to vote, to marry, to serve in the military, to own property, and to be responsible for any criminal actions against society.

However, just reaching a certain chronological age does not automatically make a person an adult. Maturity is a process, not an overnight event. Many psychologists believe that the period of adolescence extends well into the middle twenties.

Now what about this person in the church? Where does he fit in? When is he accepted as an adult? How long is he in this rookie status before he becomes a full-fledged member of the team?

Where do you start with this age-group? How do you determine their needs? How do you attempt to meet these needs through various approaches of ministry?

A good way to begin is to identify how many rookies you will be ministering to. Of the Senior High age-group in your church, how many will be staying in your church after graduation? How many are going on to college? Your ministerial staff needs to know the plans of each individual going through their "rookie" years of adulthood. In my personal experience the lack of follow-through at this point has undermined the retention of these young people.

Get as much insight into the rookies' particular needs as possible. The fact that they are breaking away from the supervision of their parents; completing old or beginning new phases of their education; and establishing their own life-style may indicate certain needs, but does not reveal particular needs.

Options and priorities must be considered based on the number of rookies you have, the practical considerations of space, finances, and leadership.

Consider the following program goal as you plan your overall approach:

## **1. A separate Sunday School class.**

What happens to the rookie when he leaves the Senior High or Youth class and does not go on to

college? Does he try to hang around with that same group for a while? Is he advised to go into the Young Married Class where he promptly becomes bored with topics that do not concern him? Does he just give up Sunday School altogether? Even one or two of the same age or peer group can become a nucleus for a class that can grow.

## **2. An active social program.**

We want this aspiring adult to know that he is part of the church. It is important to provide opportunity for friendship and fellowship. Intergenerational activities should be one goal to help him become a member of the entire church family.

## **3. Opportunities to participate in athletics.**

Many churches have used this avenue to give young adults a feeling of identity and personal acceptance that they could not gain in other ways. It also provides an outlet of energy and helps to foster a team spirit among the group. If athletics are coordinated with other ministries of the church, they can be one of the most meaningful means of outreach available to you.

## **4. Travel opportunities in groups.**

The majority of our rookies have their own transportation. Along with this, they have a freedom from the relational ties and the financial burdens they may encounter later. This gives them a chance to interact and participate in camping, retreats, conferences, and other types of experiences. Through the local church or through District or General gatherings, a solid foundation may be established in their spiritual lives that could not happen in other programs.

## **5. Home Bible studies.**

This is a good method to reinforce their emerging adulthood with God's Word. This approach gives freedom to share with a group on an informal basis. It will also be a time of bonding relationships that would not occur as easily in a formal setting. It should be used as a complement to structured Sunday School classes and not as a substitute for them.


## **6. Opportunities of service in the church.**

Because they may be considered "footloose and fancy free," you may easily overlook them when you are recruiting for workers. In a smaller church where the rookies may be too few in number to have a going group, this should have even more consid-

eration. Ushering or greeting could be a starting place. Depending upon spiritual growth, maturity, and necessary training, he can fit very well into the teaching ministries of the church. A chance to be included on short-term committees can be a good springboard into other areas of leadership in years ahead. Remember, in the field of athletics the rookie very seldom breaks into the professional ranks overnight. It takes a lot of practice, coaching, endurance, and determination to make the grade. yet the winning team is always scouting, always recruiting, always bringing into its farm club the prospect who has the qualifications and the desire to play. As Christian ministers, staff members, and leaders, you must also be on the alert to identify the potential abilities of the young men and women you have within your areas of responsibility.

## 7. Use every opportunity you have to stay in touch with them.

You should do all you can to initially retain the rookie so that he doesn't become a dropout statistic during these transitional years. Even more important, the constant contact that is maintained will help bring him along to full spiritual maturity.

You should be constantly aware of the importance of this age-group in your church. The baby boom of the fifties and sixties has brought us millions of emerging adults. Just as they crowded the maternity wards and the elementary and high schools, they are now jostling one another in finding their place in the adult world. Let's not miss our chance to also have them overcrowding our churches, on their way to "attaining the full measure of perfection found in Christ" (Eph. 4:12b, NIV). 

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## SINGLE ADULTS

*(continued from page 26)*

denomination be today without the service of singles like Bertha Munro, Thelma Culver, Evelyn Ramsey, Mary Scott, Orpha Speicher—who have given their lives to the service of the Master through service to the church and its institutions.

We are a participant fellowship. Everyone can be involved. There are plenty of opportunities for service.

6. Our emphasis on fellowship. "Shining lights on Sunday nights" means an active fellowship. A variety of experiences for spiritual enrichment and development are offered. These provide the immersion of the single adult into the lifestream of the church.


Realistically, there are those "prodigal sons." There are too many who have expected too much from the church or given up too easily. Many sat back and waited to be served. Some feel aban-

doned; some have tasted of the enemy's opportunities.

We are being called to develop a program that is Christ-centered and which reaches out to individuals and warmly draws them into a loving fellowship. We are being called to minister to those who are "near" and those who are "far away," in Paul's words.

Not every congregation can have a formal single adult ministry—but every congregation can minister to the single adult within the fellowship. Jesus spoke of doing simple things in His name, i.e., "the cup of cold water."

We are not going into ministry to single adults because it is a fad or because First Baptist Church has a program and we'd better start one. We initiate a single adult ministry because there is a need—and the need does not seem to diminish.

Jesus understood singleness—He never married. Therefore, His Church must reach out to those who are single. 

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## GROWING MARRIAGES

*(continued from page 21)*

strategy. **Remember, your primary responsibility to the marriages of your church is to nurture them. It is not to conduct weddings.**

An ongoing marriage-equipping ministry would have as its characteristics an annual retreat. From the participants of this retreat one or more Support Groups are organized to meet during the school months. Closure and disbanding should occur no later than June 1. A new annual retreat is scheduled for early fall with new and different Support Groups organized. The objective is to develop generations of couples ministering to each other—in the Word and in the spirit of 2 Timothy 2:2, "Teach these great truths to faithful men, who will, in turn, pass them on to others" (TLB).


In closing allow me to say it is tough work to facilitate growing marriages. The strategy mentioned here is not just another fad—nor is it just

another seminar. Here are excerpts from a letter we received that keeps Marriage Enrichment from being just another program to fill the church calendar.

"I want to tell you, at a deeper level than I can express, that Marriage Enrichment gave me information that I have been literally dying to receive.

"Our marriage has been 20 years of silence staring me in the face. We never fought, we just exchanged little pleasantries as if there were no issues between us. Marriage Enrichment gave me tools, and it answered questions I've had for years.

"You can't imagine what it's like to have hope again. But after the retreat Satan perched on my shoulder with his lies and accusations. I reminded him that I had just made Jesus Christ the Lord of my marriage. It seems strange now that in all these years it never occurred to me to give God our marriage.

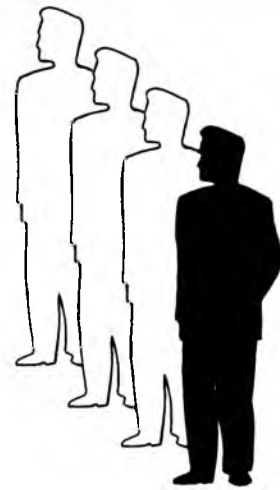
"So with God's help, here we go. It's unexplored territory for both of us, but it's thrilling to think about and to face." 

# THE DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF MEN

**The Better You Understand Men the Better  
You Can Minister to and with Men**

by Roy F. Lynn

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



**T**here are developmental stages in adulthood. They are seen most clearly when comparing older and younger adults. But the wide divergence between older and younger does not happen all at once. There is a logical progression of change throughout adulthood. The stages are as predictable as knowing that a two-year-old will go through the "terrible twos." And knowing that a teen will seek independence.

There is no way, outside death, to avoid going through the developmental stages of adulthood. The positive aspect is that the negative effects can be minimized and the positive ones accentuated. Adult development can be very positive if we follow a threefold process. First, we must accept the male developmental-maturation process as being God-created and ordained. Secondly, we need to understand the process to the best of our ability. This understanding necessarily includes acknowledging where you are in the process. Finally, we need to accept God's provision for dealing with the developmental-maturation process of adulthood.

## **God Created Developmental-Maturity in Adulthood**

The creation hymn gives little insight into the developmental process of children, teens, or adults. God created Adam. God created Eve from Adam's side. It appears that being a person is being an adult, until Cain and Abel are born. Now being a person includes being a baby. It seems as though man and woman are an end in themselves.

Scripture does give some insight into the maturation process of adulthood in later writings. As a young man, Moses was like most young men today. He was overly anxious for justice to prevail. His impetuosity resulted in the death of an Egyptian. Forty years later, responding to God's instructions and maturation in his life, he returned to the same place he had fled and led the Israelites from bondage to freedom. He returned a much wiser man than the youthful murderer who left.

Rehoboam had just been made king. He consulted with two groups of advisers. The "young" men gave him advice that conflicted with that of the "older" men. The difference in advice seems to stem from what we know as maturity. Both pieces of advice were based on acquired knowledge, similar

goals, past experience, and a loyalty to the new king. Rehoboam's decision was on the side of "his" generation. At the very least we can learn from this event that "older" men's advice ought not be ignored by "younger" men. Our most needed lesson is that the difference between the advice given was the maturity of those giving the advice.

Paul speaks of maturity in the Christian faith. He speaks to the Corinthians as "mere infants in Christ" (1 Cor. 3:1, NIV). He pleads with these immature Christians to grow up and mature. He is speaking to adults in chronological age, not children.

While there is little that speaks directly to the issue, there is ample evidence that God intended for man to continue to develop or mature throughout his life. There is no place in Scripture where God says, "You have arrived and no longer need to develop." Only heaven hints of such a condition and mere humans must undergo at least one more developmental process, transformation from corruptible to incorruptible, before this stage is reached.

## **The Developmental-Maturation Process**

Basic to our understanding of the process is the discovery that it is predictable. One reaches stage two after having passed through stage one. Only after stages one and two have been passed does one begin stage three.

While each person proceeds through each stage at his own rate, even the rate of progress is predictable. Each stage of development lasts about ten years. The first five of these are spent in evaluation, synthesis, analysis, and formulation. The last five years of each stage is spent in living out the formulation determined during the first five years.

Each person will come to his own discoveries and formulations in each stage, but there is a pattern that is almost predictable which he will follow. This should not be misunderstood as meaning that one can predict how he or another will come out of a stage and enter another. What this means is that each will follow his own individual character and personality traits. Each of us follows his own set of priorities and this is what makes each of us individuals. The pattern, however, is the same or very similar during each stage of development.

Research in this area has been done by several. One of the contemporary researchers and writers is

# WHAT MIDDLE-AGE

Under the direction of Professor Wesley Tracy, the students in the "Adults in the Church" class at Nazarene Theological Seminary surveyed about 150 churchgoing adults aged 40-55. Here are some of their discoveries.

## I. Ranking Middle-age Problems

Respondents were asked to rank these typical middle-age problems in order of their importance to them personally. They numbered the items in rank order with the biggest problem designated "1" and the smallest or most insignificant problem numbered "14." This chart compares the responses of women and men. The "composite" column includes the scores of all respondents including 19 who did not indicate their sex.

PROBLEM	COMPOSITE	WOMEN	MEN
Earning adequate income	1	1	1
Finding time to do the things you always wanted to do "someday"	2	3	5
Decreasing physical strength, attractiveness, and abilities	3	4	12
Relating to your children	4	2	8
Achieving and maintaining a meaningful religious life	5	5	2
Achieving lifelong goals	6	6	4
Maintaining a meaningful marriage	7	8	6
Planning for retirement	8	9	3
Liking who you are	9	7	11
Job security	10	13	7
Finding satisfaction and fulfillment in your job	11	11	9
Relating to and caring for aging parents	12	12	13
Achieving a satisfying marriage	13	10	10
Adequate sex life	14	14	14

## II. Unmet Needs of Middle-Agers

Respondents rated each of the following need factors on a point scale of 0-4. Need met = 4; Need met much of the time = 3; Need is

sometimes met = 2; Need is seldom or never met = 1; Not recognized as a need = 0. Thus the LOWER the SCORE the GREATER the NEED. This report compares overall scores with male scores and female scores. Some apparent discrepancies are explained by the fact that 19 respondents did not indicate whether they were male or female. Their responses show up in the composite scores but not in the tabulations of male or female responses.

	COMPOSITE		MEN		WOMEN	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
The ability to confront persons with the negative feelings you feel toward them	2.10	1	2.29	1	1.98	1
The need to plan properly for retirement	2.24	2	2.51	2	2.348	8
Need for the ability to express your true feelings to your mate	2.28	3	2.61	7	2.569	20
The need to eat right and maintain an acceptable weight level	2.46	4	2.71	14	2.388	10
Need to be able to reward yourself when you feel good about something you have done	2.47	5, 6	2.60	5, 6	2.338	6
The need for sufficient exercise, recreation, and rest	2.47	5, 6	2.66	10, 11, 12	2.29	4
The need to be part of a venture larger than your own personal and private concerns	2.474	7	2.80	18	2.24	3
The need for some time alone	2.48	8	2.52	3	2.46	13
The need to achieve life-long goals	2.50	9	2.67	13	2.48	14
The need to celebrate your strengths	2.56	10	2.63	8	2.02	2
The need to accept new challenges and not become too set in your ways	2.57	11	2.66	10, 11, 12	2.49	15, 16

Daniel J. Levinson. His research is based on his observations of men from all walks of life over several years. Such is also the case with Roger L. Gould, M.D., who also, along with Levinson, studied biographies of men for several generations. The results of their research is the basis of our understanding for the developmental-maturation process of adulthood.

To speak of a general, human life cycle is to propose that the journey from birth to old age

follows an underlying, universal pattern on which there are endless cultural and individual variations. They may produce alternate routes or detours along the way; they may speed up or slow down the timetable within certain limits; in extreme cases they may stop the developmental process altogether. But as long as the journey continues, it follows the basic sequence.

The process is not a simple, continuous, unchanging flow. There are qualitatively different

	COMPOSITE		MEN		WOMEN	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
The need to face old age and death without undue anxiety	2.58	12	2.88	25	2.38	9
Need for fulfillment in your vocation	2.61	13	2.74	15	2.39	11
The need to be really good at something	2.62	14	2.80	19, 20	2.34	7
Need for a satisfying prayer life	2.63	15	2.60	5, 6	2.73	14
Need to adjust to jolting life changes	2.64	16, 17	2.90	27	2.41	12
The need to be free from guilt of past mistakes	2.64	16, 17	2.79	17	2.50	17
The need to keep growing mentally through studying, thinking, and new experiences	2.65	18	2.59	4	2.56	19
Companionship in marriage	2.66	19	2.66	10, 11, 12	2.55	18
Need for satisfying sex relations	2.69	20	2.92	18	2.49	15, 16
The need to be together with others of similar interests for fun, fellowship, relaxation, and learning	2.70	21	2.85	23	2.65	22
Need for harmonious and productive relationships with your children	2.75	22	2.84	22	2.78	30
Need for adequate income	2.78	23	2.80	19, 20	2.75	28, 29
Need for achievement and recognition	2.80	24	2.86	24	2.30	5
The need to accept your limitations	2.807	25	2.93	29, 30	2.65	21
The need to forget the past mistakes of my mate and live freely in the present	2.803	26	2.90	26	2.73	25, 26

	COMPOSITE		MEN		WOMEN	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Finding satisfaction and the need to be performing some meaningful service	2.82	27	2.76	16	2.79	31
Need for job security	2.830	28	2.93	29, 30	2.74	27
Need to maintain emotional balance	2.834	29	2.98	32	2.66	23
The ability to admit it when you are wrong	2.86	30	2.64	9	3.08	35
The need to like yourself and maintain a positive self-image	2.87	31	3.07	34	2.73	25, 26
The need to be active in church	2.89	32	3.02	33	2.82	32
The need for an optimistic outlook on life	2.95	33	3.10	35	2.75	28, 29
The need for significant friendships beyond the family	2.966	34, 35	3.14	36	2.85	33
The need for a functioning religious faith	2.966	34, 35	2.81	21	3.11	6
The need to be appreciated and loved	3.05	36	3.02	32	3.01	34

### III. Clustering Middle-Age Needs

#### Ranking of the 36 Need Factors by Categories

Clustering the 36 need factors in seven natural categories, the types of needs were seen more clearly. Category "I" is the greatest unmet need, category "VII" the least of the unmet needs of the middle-agers' self-analysis.

	SCORE	RANK
FULFILLMENT AND GROWTH NEEDS	2.609	I
SELF-ESTEEM NEEDS	2.611	II
BASIC HUMAN NEEDS	2.632	III
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY NEEDS	2.634	IV
LIFE ADJUSTMENT NEEDS	2.648	V
LOVE AND BELONGINGNESS NEEDS	2.806	VI
RELIGIOUS NEEDS	2.832	VII

seasons (stages) each having its own distinctive character. Every season is different from those that precede and follow it, though it also has much in common with them.

Every season (stage) has its own time; it is important in its own right and needs to be understood in its own terms. No season is better or more important than any other. Each has its necessary place and contributes its special character to the whole. It is an organic part of the

total cycle, linking past and future and containing both within itself.<sup>1</sup>

Though there are some differences of opinion between the researchers concerning elements of the process and events which occur at certain times, there is more or less common agreement on what has preceded this part of our discussion. Levinson and Gould differ on what happens in each stage and somewhat concerning when the stages occur. What follows is a synthesis of both researchers. Because

of the limitation of space only the most needed concepts will be discussed here. The reader may gain a more in-depth understanding by reading the original writings: Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, and Gould, *Transformations, Growth and Change in Adult Life*.

### **Stage One: Early Adult—Transition/Leaving Our Parent's World**

Around the age 16 or 17 the teen begins to shed childhood in a conscious way. When something is shed, it must be replaced and he replaces his childhood with the beginning of adulthood. It is during this period that man sheds what Gould calls a major false assumption: "I'll belong to my parents and believe in their world." Man also begins, according to Levinson, to center his life in one or two of several options. The major components of a man's life are occupation, love relationships, marriage and family, relation to self or self-concept, use of solitude, roles in various social contexts, and ethnicity or religion. Those options which are central are clustered around the nucleus and the least important components are on the fringe.

During this time a man analyzes and evaluates all his past life, including the significant adult models he has seen, and begins to determine how he wants to live his adult life. The process takes about five years. It begins as early as age 16 or as late as age 22 according to Levinson. Gould contends that this period is completed by age 22. He modifies or terminates existing relationships with important persons or groups. Most of these modifications or terminations are based on how the man feels about himself and the various relationships. It is important to note that most of these decisions are very tentative. Man, at this age, does not want to lock himself into a permanent responsibility. Even when a man marries at this age, it is with reservations so he can get out later should he change his mind or feelings. At the conclusion of this stage the man is said to have entered early adulthood.

### **Stage Two: Entering the Adult World/I'm Nobody's Baby Now**

The preadult world is characterized by shedding such concepts as: a) If I get any more independent, it will be a disaster; b) I can see the world only through my parent's assumptions; c) Only my parents can guarantee my safety; d) My parents must be my only family; e) I don't own my own body. Stage two is characterized by shedding such concepts as: a) Rewards will come automatically if we do what we're supposed to do; b) There's only one right way to do things; c) My loved ones can do for me what I haven't been able to do for myself; d) Rationality, commitment, and effort will always prevail over all other forces.

These concepts are part of the second major false assumption (Gould), "Doing things my parents' way, with willpower and perseverance, will bring results. But if I become too frustrated, confused, or tired or am simply unable to cope, they will step in and show me the right way." With the shedding of these major

false assumptions the person is actually beginning to say and believe just the opposite of what the statement says. The opposite position is the one identified by the component parts. When a man sheds the idea that he will always belong to his parents and believe in their world, he then is free to believe being independent is not a disaster.

During the years 22 to 28, the young man explores the possibilities of adult living, keeping his options open. He also, at the same time, is seeking to create a stable life structure that will identify him in the eyes of others as an adult at last.

### **Stage Three: Age 30 Transition/Opening Up to What's Inside**

The major false assumption that is shed in Stage Three is "Life is simple and controllable. There are no significant coexisting contradictory forces within me." The component parts of this false assumption are: a) What I know intellectually, I know emotionally; b) I am not like my parents in ways I don't want to be; c) I can see the reality of those close to me quite clearly; d) Threats to my security aren't real.

It is during this 5 years that man works on the flaws and limitations of his first 10 years as an adult (preadulthood and early adulthood). This transition is usually more smooth than the preadult transition. There is some personal experience on which to draw which makes it so. It is during this time that a man may readjust his priorities set in the first transition. A man has probably placed occupation high on his priority list and has received a sense of self-worth from his occupation. A woman, on the other hand, has probably received her self-worth from her marriage relationship and her family. At the age 30 transition there may be a minor adjustment so that the man begins to put more thought on his marriage relationship and his family.

This transition is the final part of the "novice" phase of early adulthood. Early adulthood will be terminated at the conclusion of the settling-down period which follows. This transition period then becomes very important. Along with the first 10 years of adulthood it will determine how a man's life will be lived in his second adult life structure.

### **Stage Four: Settling Down**

There is not a correlation between Gould and Levinson in this time. Levinson divides the stages into five-year segments. Gould places the midlife transition here and contends that it lasts for 10 years.

According to Levinson this stage occurs between 33 and 40, give or take two years. It is during this time a man invests himself in his number one priorities as never before. He seeks to realize goals and aspirations he determined way back in his first transition period into early adulthood. This stage is marked with two major tasks. Man does his best to carve out a place for himself in society. He seeks to be the best he can be in his chosen occupation or profession.

Secondly, he seeks advancement. He is not satisfied to stay at the same level but wants badly to

Nazarene

# Update

UPDATE Editor, Susan Downs

## CELEBRATING HOLINESS ADULT MINISTRIES

In the first year of this quinquennium of "Celebrating Christian Holiness" we observed the "Year of the Minister." It is appropriate that we should acknowledge that "the Head of the Church calls some to the more official and public work of the ministry" (*Manual*, Paragraph 400). PALCON II sharpened the focus on "Celebrating the Holiness Ministry" particularly as it relates to preaching scriptural holiness. This emphasis is vitally important.

Now we are well into the "Year of the Layman." This emphasis is equally important. We have a great army of dedicated laymen. It is high time that the spotlight of appropriate recognition was focused on them.

*Manual* Paragraph 400 also states, "... we recognize and insist that *all* believers have committed unto them a dispensation of the gospel which they are to *minister* unto all men, ..." (italics mine). The ministry of the laity is a New Testament concept. The Early Church set apart deacons to perform important ministries. The Samaritan revival was spearheaded by Philip, a ministering layman.

And from the very beginning the church has practiced "equal rights" in ministry. Lydia, a successful businesswoman, was one of the first converts to Christianity in Philippi. She opened her home to the preachers in the ministry of Christian hospitality. Later, when Paul came to Caesarea he found that Philip had four unmarried daughters who possessed the gift of prophecy. The Church of the Nazarene has traditionally offered both men and women the opportunities of ministry without

prejudice or penalty. Every layman is invited to join in "Celebrating Holiness Adult Ministries."

The word "holiness" in this theme has special significance. Ours is a holiness church. Our ministers are holiness preachers. Our laymen are to be holiness people. The covenant which thousands of them signed last September commits them to holy living. Without this subjective sanctity, ministry will be little more than "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." We ministers must lead our laymen into the clear experience of entire sanctification and then give them guidance in living the life of Christian holiness.

The specifics of holy living are spelled out in the General and Special Rules of our church which are documented by Scriptures. These are both positive and negative. They give a basic understanding of Christian ethics. Some have the mistaken idea that they have to do only with personal piety. Nothing could be farther from the truth. For example, they speak of such ministries as "pressing upon the attention of the unsaved the claims of the gospel, inviting them to the house of the Lord, and trying to compass their salvation" and "seeking to do good to the bodies and souls of men; feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and ministering to the needy. . . ."

These are open to all. They are just as meaningful as the ministries of music and teaching. There are no age barriers. Teenagers and golden agers may both participate. And the possibilities are unlimited. Take the ministry to the aged for example. Thanks to modern medicine, more and more are living longer and longer. Nursing homes are filled with old people who are lonely. Many rarely if ever are visited by relatives or friends. A number of our churches have started outreach Sunday School classes in these homes. Only heaven will reveal how many of these dear people have been brought to the Lord through such ministries. Even though we do not count outreach attendance in our "in house" statistics, we must not neglect this adult ministry.

Ten years ago I wrote an editorial in the *Preacher's Magazine* on the subject "The Resource of the Retired." In this last decade that resource has multiplied many times over. Thank God for NIROGAs and other special activities for our retirees. But they want to minister as well as be ministered to. Let's challenge them to become "unpaid assistants" and join the growing army of committed Nazarene laymen who are "Celebrating Holiness Adult Ministries."



By General Superintendent  
Eugene L. Stowe



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## MURPHY'S FUNDAMENTAL LAWS

1	If anything can go wrong, invariably it will.	By making something absolutely clear, someone will become confused.	10
2	Nothing is ever as simple as it first seems.	Every clarification breeds new questions.	11
3	Everything you decide to do costs more than first estimated.	You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time and that is sufficient.	12
4	Every activity takes more time than you have.	Persons disagreeing with your facts are always emotional and employ faulty reasoning.	13
5	By trying to please everybody, somebody will be displeased.	Enough research will tend to support your conclusions.	14
6	It is a fundamental law of nature that nothing ever quite works out.	The greater the importance of decisions to be made the larger must be the committee assigned to make them.	15
7	It is easier to make a commitment or to get involved in something than to get out of it.	The more urgent the need for decision the less apparent becomes the identity of the decision-maker.	16
8	Whatever you set out to do, something else must be done first.	The more complex the idea or technology the more simple-minded is the opposition.	17
9	If you improve or tinker with something long enough, eventually it will break or malfunction.	Each profession talks to itself in its own unique language. Apparently there is no Rosetta stone.	18

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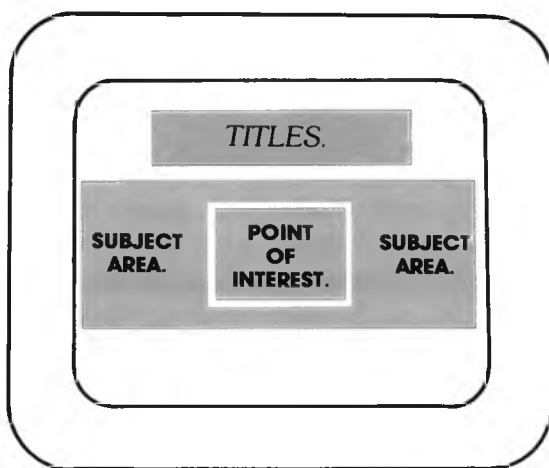
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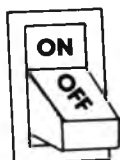
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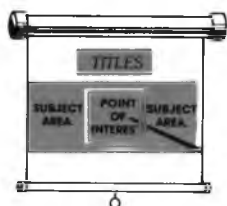
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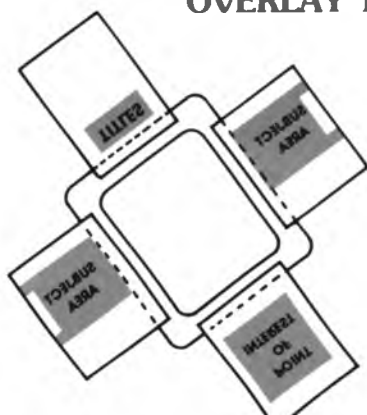
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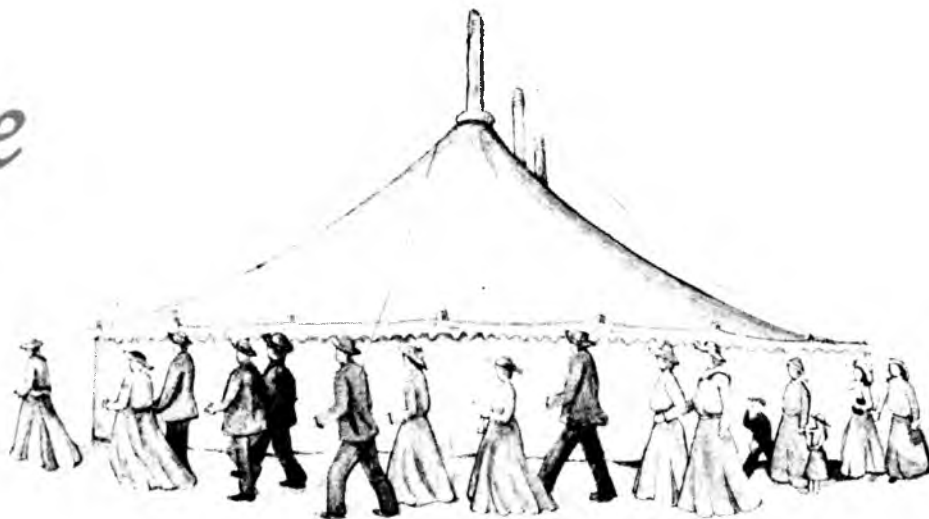
*will be*

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*as*

*good*

*as its archives*



The director of our General Church of the Nazarene Archives, Steven Cooley, is attempting to locate materials related to the history of our denomination and its precedent religious bodies. The denominational archives is a part of the General Secretary's office which has been mandated by the General Assembly to collect, preserve, and make available for use the historic resources of the Church of the Nazarene. This office has been collecting historic materials for almost 50 years and presently has approximately 800 cubic feet of historic resources available for the church. These include photographs, sermons, manuscripts, correspondence, diaries, audio tape recordings, and movie film. The collections span between the dates of 1882 and the most recent issue of the *Herald of Holiness*. We are particularly interested in materials from 1930 to 1960 at the present time.

Anyone who can help fill any gaps in our church's historic collections would be greatly appreciated. The need is most urgent at present due to the Church History project for this period assigned to Dr. W. T. Purkiser. This project will update Dr. Timothy Smith's acclaimed history of our church, *Called unto Holiness*.

If you can help, please contact Steve Cooley by writing to the Church of the Nazarene Archives, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. Or call at (816) 333-7000. □

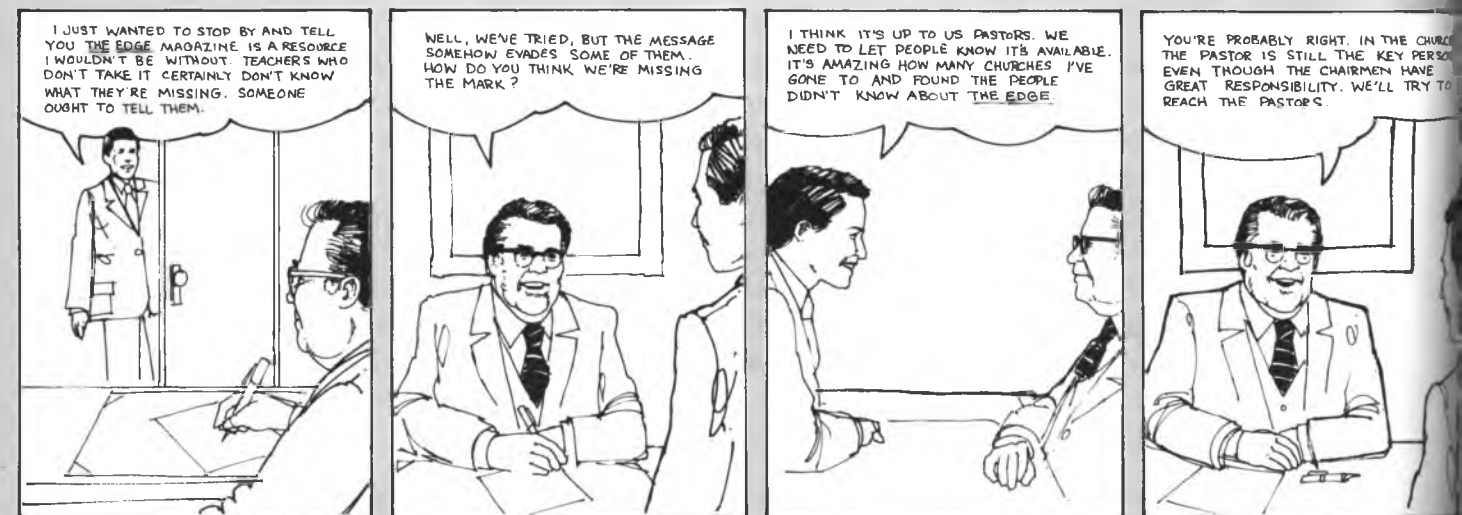
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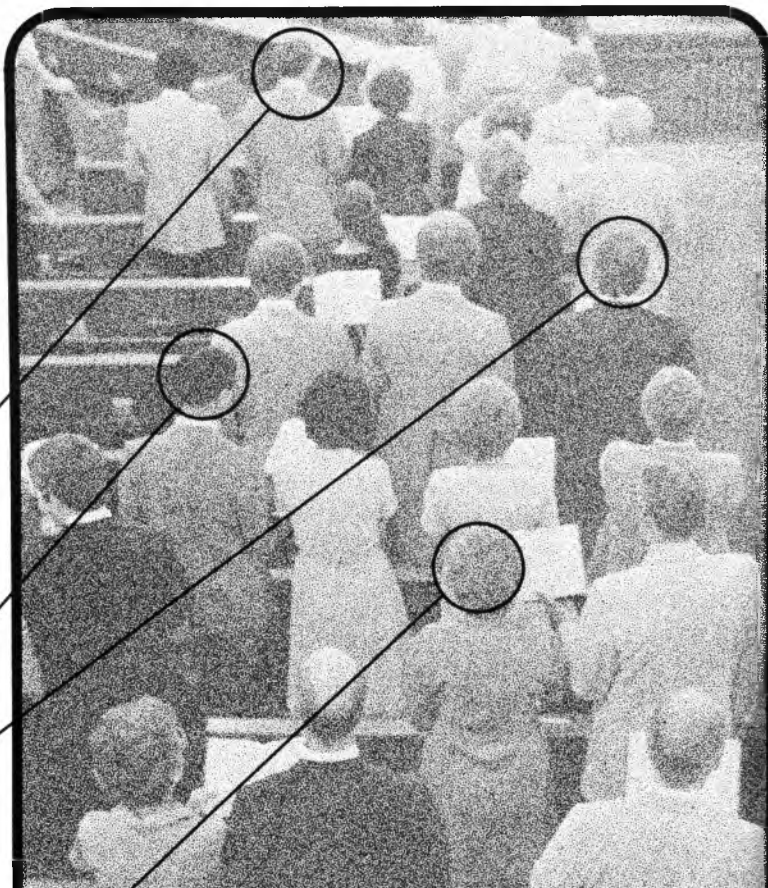
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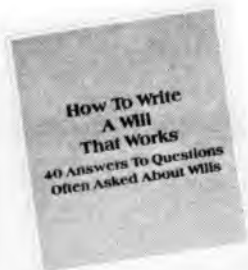
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Casa Robles videos, featuring Nazarene missionary retirement center, can be rented from NPH for \$5.00 or purchased from NWMS for \$20.00 ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " VHS or  $\frac{1}{2}$ " Beta II) or \$30.00 ( $\frac{3}{4}$ " U-Matic).

## MINISTERS TAPE CLUB

For more information on NWMS-related tapes, write Ministers Tape Club, NPH.

## "MISSION UPDATE—1980s" SLIDE SET

"Mission Update" slide/tape set can be rented from NPH for \$5.00

## NWMS FOCUS "PASTOR'S PAGE"

"Pastor's Page" is a new standing feature of NWMS FOCUS (formerly Council Tidings).

## PRAYER MOBILIZATION LINE

Prayer Mobilization Line is current prayer requests for missions. Call 816-444-0588.

**NAZARENE WORLD MISSION SOCIETY**

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Photo by Susan Downs

# Pastor's Remembrance Plan

## New Designs for 1982!

A systematic method for recognizing those special occasions of your members and for contacting prospects. Requires an investment of just pennies per member and only minutes of time each week. *Yet the benefits are many.*

And NOW with the addition of FULL-COLOR designs, these greeting folders take on a new dimension of beauty. Meaningful selections of prose, scripture, and prayerettes express the interest and love of a pastor's heart. Includes space for a personal message if desired.

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**G-823** Convalescence

**G-824** Bereavement

**G-825** Birthday (children's)

Package of 10 (identical cards)

**\$2.25**

**NOTE:** Suggested quantities for a church of 150 in attendance: 100 R-125; 100 R-126; 150 Birthday; 50 each of Anniversary, Illness, and Bereavement.

### RECORD SUPPLIES

**R-124** INSTRUCTION SHEET. Outlines the procedures for the Pastor's Remembrance Plan. 8 1/2 x 11". **FREE**

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**R-126** CHURCH RECORD DATA SHEET. Four sections (days) per sheet for entering birth-days, anniversaries, and other information on that date. 8" x 11".

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**Thousands of pastors have, and with great success.**

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**G-825**



**G-822**



**G-823**



**G-821**



**G-824**



# Equipping Seminars

## for Church Planters, Sponsors

### **JANUARY • FEBRUARY • MARCH**

Seminars will be held in the Southern states with emphasis upon the local church as sponsor of new churches or the resurrection of dying churches. One day will be spent on the church planter himself. Contact your district superintendent for the location of the seminar nearest you.

### **APRIL •**

The Pittsburgh District Church Sponsors Conference, April 19-21, will focus on the local church as the sponsoring agency and on the church planter. Contact District Superintendent Jerry Lambert for details.

### **MAY • JUNE • JULY • AUGUST • SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER**

Two-day seminars on church sponsorship and church planting will feature specific applications to the host area. Contact your own district superintendent for the seminar nearest you.

### **NOVEMBER •**

The Sunbelt Summit on the Great Commission, November 1-4 in Fort Worth, Tex., will be sponsored by a consortium of nine districts who are uniting together to focus on fulfillment of the Great Commission. Church Extension Ministries will be responsible for two one-half-day segments that will give follow-up and practical handles for sponsoring new churches and sponsoring the resurrection of plateaued or dying churches. Contact District Superintendent Ralph West (Louisiana District), chairman, or Rev. Hugh Smith, Arlington, Tex., First Church, coordinator.







Citation of  
MERIT  
*New Church Planting*

During the anniversary 1988-89, No. 1 Award for those persons  
*Manchester* congregation  
and *Neale C. McLain* pastor in  
the *New England* district  
actively sponsored, supported, and established the planting of  
*Williamstadic*

and are hereby presented Citation of Merit.

The pastor and congregation are to be commended for  
having initiated, supported, and developed this new congregation through  
the inspiring spirit of full and total organization which took  
place during the annals of 1988-89.



*Bill Taylor*

*Secretary of the Board*

*Neale C. McLain*

*Pastor*

# **An Award of Unusual Distinction . . . Presented to Over 60 Nazarene Pastors in 1981**

**The Citation of Merit is awarded to pastors and their congregations who have successfully planted a new church and guided it to full organization. In so doing, they have made a lasting contribution to the life of the church and to the lives of all those who will be reached with the love of Christ through this expanded ministry down through the years.**

**This new award of unusual distinction was originated to honor the church sponsors of the 1980-85 quinquennium. Each congregation that sponsors a new church during the quinquennium will receive a handsome citation plaque as shown on the facing page. Each pastor will receive the identical citation enclosed in a custom-designed display folder as illustrated for his permanent reminder of his creative service to a grateful church. Over 60 Nazarene pastors received this citation during its initial year of presentation.**

**The citations are presented annually at district assembly through the courtesy of Church Extension Ministries and upon recommendation of the district. One of these citations could be yours in the Diamond Jubilee Year of the Church (1983) if you start now with a local Mission Action Committee and a commitment to the harvest.**



Will you be building  
again this year?

**OF COURSE YOU WILL!**

You will be building in the lives of your people, helping them first of all to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, for it is He who builds His Church.

You will be doing all that is in your power to be a "tool" in God's hands as He builds with human lives His eternal Church.

And some of you will be faced with the opportunity to build a building here on earth to house the growth that God is giving you.

If you are one of those pastors who must supervise a physical building program this year, the Church Building Sourcebook is what you need.

This compendium of building advice was compiled by Nazarene architects, engineers, and builders with you in mind. It can help you save thousands of dollars and come out of your building program with a facility that will be a useful tool in the further evangelization of your community. The Church Building Sourcebook is available from the Nazarene Publishing House. For more information contact the Association of Nazarene Building Professionals at 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO, 64131.





## **1982 DISTRICT CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE**

### **FEBRUARY**

Alaska  
Canada Central  
Canada West  
Central Florida  
Central Ohio  
Dallas  
Houston  
Indianapolis  
Kansas  
Kansas City  
Louisiana  
Minnesota  
Mississippi  
North Florida  
Northeast Oklahoma  
Northeastern Indiana  
Northern California  
Northwest Indiana  
Northwestern Illinois  
Northwestern Ohio  
Rocky Mountain  
Sacramento  
San Antonio  
Southeast Oklahoma  
Southern California  
Southern Florida  
Southwest Oklahoma  
Southwestern Ohio  
Upstate New York  
Washington Pacific  
West Texas  
West Virginia

### **MARCH**

Alabama  
Central California  
Chicago Central  
Colorado  
Dakota  
East Tennessee  
Eastern Kentucky  
Kentucky  
New York  
North Carolina  
South Carolina  
Southwest Indiana  
Tennessee  
Virginia  
Wisconsin

### **APRIL**

Eastern Michigan  
Iowa  
Missouri  
New Mexico  
North Arkansas  
Northwest Oklahoma  
South Arkansas

### **SEPTEMBER**

Nebraska  
New England

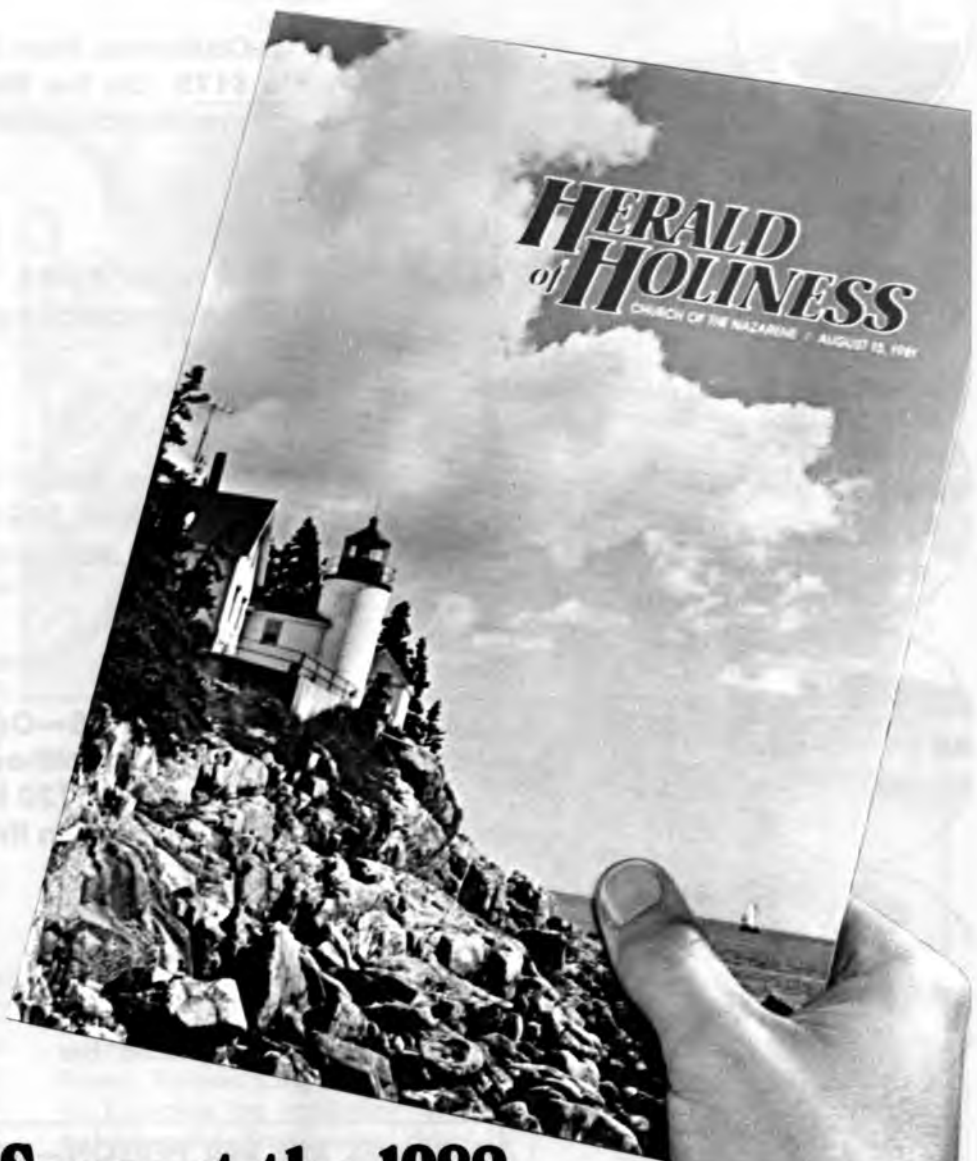
### **OCTOBER**

Akron  
Arizona  
Canada Atlantic  
Illinois  
Intermountain  
Joplin  
Maine  
Michigan  
North Central Ohio  
Northwest  
Oregon Pacific  
Philadelphia  
Washington

### **NOVEMBER**

Canada Pacific  
Georgia  
Hawaii  
Los Angeles  
Pittsburgh

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## ADIRONDACKS

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## HAWAII

To be announced. Tentative date—June, 1983.

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which pays

**\$500**

a month

in the event of total disability

This plan is designed to pay a monthly benefit to partially replace income lost during periods of total disability due to any nonexcluded accident, injury, sickness, or pregnancy which extends beyond the qualifying period.

You are eligible to apply if you are a Nazarene minister or a district-credentialed layman who is working 30 hours or more as the paid employee of a Nazarene church or church agency, or you are a full-time evangelist or song evangelist in the Church of the Nazarene. Long-Term Disability Income Protection is available for qualified individuals through age 64 who are affiliated with a United States or Canadian district participating in the Pensions and Benefits Fund. Application must be accompanied by satisfactory proof of insurability along with the premium due.

The monthly benefit is \$500 and is not reduced by any other benefits that the insured might be receiving through Social Security or through the "Basic" Pension Plan.

The duration of benefits ceases at age 65. Benefits will not accrue after the disabled person's 65th birthday.

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which is excluded from coverage may be used wholly or partially to satisfy the qualifying period. You may choose from either a one-month or a three-month qualifying period. The premium must be paid during the qualifying period. However, it will be waived after the benefits begin.

The definition of disability is as follows: You are considered to be totally disabled if as a result of any nonexcluded accident, injury, sickness, or pregnancy you are under the regular care and attendance of a licensed physician and are completely unable to engage in your regular occupation or employment. This definition applies to the first 36 months of the period of total disability. After



the first 36 months of a period of total disability, you must be completely unable to engage in any and every gainful occupation or employment for which you are or become reasonably fitted by education, training, or experience.

You may apply for this coverage by following these steps: (a) Secure an application from Pensions and Benefits Services, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. (b) Complete the application form and return it to Pensions and Benefits Services. (c) Estimate the approximate premium due for the balance of the year ending next January 30, and include it with your application. (Checks should be made payable to:

General Board, Church of the Nazarene.) (d) After approval by the insurance company, any refund will be returned with your Certificate of Insurance. The annual premium will be billed to your last known address and is due February 1 of each year.

Your coverage will be effective the first of the month following notification by the insurance company of the acceptance of your application. A Certificate of Insurance will be sent to you.

All claims should immediately be placed with Pensions and Benefits Services. For your convenience, arrangements have been made for prompt payment of claims.

Your Long-Term Disability Income Protection coverage will terminate at age 65 or otherwise 31 days after failure to fulfill the qualifications for eligibility and the notification of the termination has been mailed to your last known address. Failure to make the required premium contributions will cancel the insurance.

This is only a partial description of the provisions and definitions of Master Policy 23,000-5, held by the General Board of the Church of the Nazarene and underwritten by the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company.

Please direct your questions to Pensions and Benefits Services, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131; phone (816) 333-7000. •

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of the

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# Women's Ministries

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AND THROUGH...

WOMEN!

Women's Ministries

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Former Church \_\_\_\_\_

New Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Church \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

New Position: Pastor ( ) ; Evangelist ( ) ; Other \_\_\_\_\_

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Check *Herald of Holiness* ( ) ; *World Mission* ( ) ; *Preacher's Magazine* ( ) ;

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(state/province) \_\_\_\_\_

Church name \_\_\_\_\_

**BILL TO:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**TEXT:** THEY NEVER STOPPED TEACHING

Church name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

Enrollment estimate \_\_\_\_\_ Beginning date \_\_\_\_\_ Number sessions \_\_\_\_\_

Class to be held ☐ NYI hour ☐ Wednesday night \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Send Report Blank, Registration Material to: \_\_\_\_\_

# THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

The Editorial Team 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.

Serving without pay, the editorial board, pictured here, helped us put together this issue on "Adult Ministries."



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

- Preaching from Matthew
- The Small Church



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ESSELBURN, BUD (THE KING'S MESSENGERS). (C) S.R. 60 N. Rte. 1, Warsaw, OH 43844  
ESTERLINE, JOHN W. (C) 4400 Keith Way, Bakersfield, CA 93309  
●EVERLETH, LEE. (C) 300 Aurora St., Marietta, OH 45750  
EVERMAN, WAYNE. (C) P.O. Box 377, Stanton, KY 40380

## F

- FELTER, JASON H. (C) c/o NPH\*  
FILES, GLORIA; & ADAMS, DOROTHY. (C) c/o NPH\*  
FINE, LARRY. (R) 16013 W. 151st Terr., Olathe, KS 66061  
FINNEY, CHARLES & ISOBEL. (C) Rte. 2, Box 219B, Monticello, FL 32344  
FISHER, WILLIAM. (C) c/o NPH\*  
FLORENCE, ERNEST E. (C) P.O. Box 458, Hillsboro, OH 45133  
●FORD, JAMES & RUTH. Children's Workers, 11 N. Lake Dr., Clearwater, FL 33515  
FORMAN, JAMES A. (C) Box 844, Bethany, OK 73008  
FORTNER, ROBERT E. (C) Box 322, Carmi, IL 62821  
●FRASER, DAVID. (C) 11108 N.W. 113th, Yukon, OK 73099  
FREEMAN, MARY ANN. (C) Box 44, Ellisville, IL 61431  
FRODGE, HAROLD C. (C) Rte. 1, Geff, IL 62842  
FULLER, JAMES O. (R) 902 Adel Rd., Nashville, GA 31639

## G

- GADBOW, C. D. 1207 S. Second St., Marshalltown, IA 50158  
GALLOWAY, GEORGE. 9880 Avondale Ln., Traverse City, MI 49684  
GARDNER, GEORGE. (C) Box 9, Olathe, KS 66061  
GAWTHORP, WAYLAND. (C) Box 115, Mount Erie, IL 62446  
●GILLESPIE, SHERMAN & ELSIE. (R) 305 E. Highland, Muncie, IN 47303 (full-time)  
GLAZE, HAROLD & MARILYN. (C) P.O. Box A, Calamine, AR 72418  
●GLENDENNING, PAUL & BOBBIE. (C) c/o NPH\*  
GOODMAN, WILLIAM A. (C) Rte. 3, Box 269, Bemidji, MN 56601  
GORMAN, HUGH. (C) Box 3154, Melfort, Saskatchewan, Canada S0E 1A0  
●GORMANS, THE SINGING (CHARLES & ANN). (C) 12104 Linkwood Ct., Louisville, KY 40229  
GRACE, GEORGE. (C) 909 W. Ninth, Coffeyville, KS 67337  
GRAHAM, NAPOLEON B. (C) P.O. Box 5431 (1101 Cedarcrest Ave.), Bakersfield, CA 93308  
GRAVATT, HAROLD F. Box 932, Mattoon, IL 61938  
GRAY, BOB & BECKY. (R) 916 Auburn, Chariton, IA 50049  
●GRAY, DAVID & REBECCA. (R) c/o First Church of the Nazarene, 815 Michigan St., Hammond, IN 46320  
●GREEN, JAMES & ROSEMARY. (C) Box 385, Canton, IL 61520  
GRIMES, BILLY. (C) Rte. 2, Jacksonville, TX 75766  
●GRINDLEY, GERALD & JANICE. (C) 539 E. Mason St., Owosso, MI 48867  
GROVES, C. WILLIAM. (R) 2558 Stoney Way, Grove City, OH 43123 (full-time)

## H

- HAIL, D. F. (R) 3077 Kemp Rd., Dayton, OH 45431 (full time)  
●HAINES, GARY. (C) c/o NPH\*  
HALL, CARL. (C) Box 7086, Clearwater, FL 33518  
HANCE, RAY. 7705 N.W. 20th St., Bethany, OK 73008  
HANCOCK, BOYD. (C) c/o NPH\*  
●HANSON, BRIAN & CHERYL. c/o NPH\*  
HARPER, A. F. 210 E. 113th Terr., Kansas City, MO 64114  
HARRISON, J. MARVIN. Box 13201, San Antonio, TX 78213  
HARRISON, ROBERT. (C) 7301 Mantle Dr., Oklahoma City, OK 73132  
HARROLD, JOHN W. 903 Lincoln Highway, Rochelle, IL 61068  
HAYES, ALVIN. (R) 1121 Westerfield Pl., Olathe, KS 66061  
HAYES, CECIL G. 18459 Nunda Rd., Howard, OH 43028  
●HAYNES, CHARLES & MYRT. (C) 2733 Spring Place Rd., Cleveland, TN 37311  
●HEASLEY, J. E. & FERN. (C) 6611 N.W. 29th St., Bethany, OK 73008  
●HEDGE, PAUL & SHIRLEY. (R) 919 W. 1st St., Morehead, KY 40351  
HENDERSON, LATTIE V. (R) 3006 Liberty Rd., Greensboro, NC 27406

(C) Commissioned (R) Registered ♦Preacher & Song Evangelist ♦Song Evangelist  
\*Nazarene Publishing House, Box 527, Kansas City, MO 64141.

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**HILDIE, D. W.** 3323 Belaire Ave., Cheyenne, WY 82001 (full-time)

**HILL, RON & CHARLENE.** (R) 6797 State Rte. 46 N.E., Cortland, OH 44410

**HILL, HOWARD** (C) Joyland Trailer Park, 2261 Gulf to Bay, Lot 319, Clearwater, FL 33515

**HISE, RON.** (R) 2035 Hancock De Motte IN 46310

**HOECKLE, WESLEY W.** (C) 642 Vakey St Corpus Christi TX 78404

**HOLCOMB, T. E.** 600 E. Tidwell, Apt. 321, Houston, TX 77022

**HOLLOWELL, JERRY.** (R) P.O. Box 2, Paris, TX 75460

**HOOTS, BOB.** (C) 309 Adair St Columbia KY 42728

◆**HORNE, ROGER & BECKY.** (R) P.O. Box 17496 Nashville TN 37217

**HOWARD, RICHARD.** (C) 7901 N.W. 28th Terr Bethany OK 73008

**HUBBARD, MRS. JEFFIE.** Children's Evangelistic Ministries (R) 3213 W. Ave. "T," Temple, TX 76501

**HUBARTT, LEONARD.** (C) 1155 Henry St. Huntington, IN 46750

**HUGHES, MRS. JOYCE.** (C) Rte 1 Box 231 Dover TN 37058

**I**

**INGLAND, WILMA JEAN** (C) 322 Meadow Ave. Charleroi, PA 15022

**ISENBERG, DON** Chalk Artist & Evangelist, 610 Deseret Friendswood TX 77546

**J**

◆**JACKSON, CHUCK & MARY.** (C) 8300 N. Palafox, Pensacola, FL 32504

◆**JACKSON, PAUL & TRISH.** (C) Box 739, Meade, KS 67864

**JAMES, R. ODIS.** 353 Winter Dr. St James, MO 65559

◆**JAMES, RANDY & MARY JANE.** (R) c/o NPH\* (full-time)

◆**JANTZ, CALVIN & MARJORIE** (C) c/o NPH\*

**JAYMES, RICHARD W.** (R) 617 W. Gambier, Mount Vernon, OH 43050

◆**JOHNSON, RON.** (C) 3208 Eighth St E. Lewiston, ID 83501

**JONES, FRED D.** (R) 804 Elissa Dr. Nashville, TN 37217

**JONES, TERRY L.** 2002 Judy Ln., Pasadena, TX 77502

**K**

**KELLY, ARTHUR E.** (R) 511 Dogwood St. Columbia SC 29205

**KELLY, C. M.** Rte 2 Box 1235 Santee SC 29142

**KELLY, R. B.** 4706 N Donald, Bethany OK 73008

**KING, RUFUS J.** (R) Rte. 2, Kenneipp Lane, Mount Carmel, IL 62863

**KNIGHT, JOHN L.** 4000 N. Thompkins Ave. Bethany OK 73008

**KOHR, CHARLES A.** (C) Rte 2 Box 360 Brookville, PA 15825

**KRATZER, RAYMOND C.** 4305 Snow Mountain Rd Yakima WA 98908

**L**

**LAING, GERALD D.** (C) 11436 East St., Indian Lane, Vicksburg, MI 49097

**LAKE, GEORGE.** 1306 N Rickey Rd. Shawnee OK 74801

◆**LASSELL, RAY & JAN.** (C) 4745 N. 1000 E., Brownsburg, IN 46112

◆**LAWHORN, MILES & FAMILY.** (R) P.O. Box 17008, Nashville, TN 37217 (full-time)

**LAWSON, WAYNE T.** (C) Rte 2 Box 2255 Grandview WA 98930

◆**LAXSON, WALLY & GINGER** (C) Rte 3 Box 118, Athens AL 35611

◆**LECKRONE, LARRY D.** (C) 1308 Highgrove Grandview, MO 64030

◆**LECRONE, JON & BETH.** (R) P.O. Box 1006, Clovis, CA 93612

**LEE, C. ROSS.** 1945 E. Broad St. New Castle IN 47362

**LEONARD, J. C.** (R) Rte. 9, Bloomfield, IA 52437

**LESTER, FRED.** (C) 16601 W 143rd Terr Olathe, KS 66062

**LIDDELL, P. O.** (C) 3530 W Allen Rd. Howell MI 48843

**LOWN, A. J.** c/o NPH\*

**LUTHI, RON.** 14020 Tomahawk Dr., Olathe, KS 66061

**LYKINS, C. EARL.** 59059 Lower Dr., Goshen, IN 46526

**M**

**MACALLEN, LAWRENCE J. AND MARY E.** (C) 41808 W Rambler Ave. Elyria, OH 44035

**MANLEY, STEPHEN.** (C) c/o NPH\*

◆**MANN, L. THURL & MARY KAY.** (C) Rte 1 Box 112 Elwood IN 46036

**MANN, M. L. P.O.** Box 1411, Prescott AZ 86301

◆**MARKS, GARY & MARCIA.** (R) P.O. Box 314 Rittman OH 44270

**MARLIN, BEN F.** P.O. Box 6310, Hollywood, FL 33021

◆**MARTIN, W. DALE.** (R) Box 110235, Nashville, TN 37211 (full-time)

**MATTER, DAN & ANN.** (R) 2617 Carew St. Fort Wayne, IN 46805

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**McDONALD, CHARLIE.** (C) P.O. Box 1135 West Monroe, LA 71291

**McDOWELL, DORIS M.** (R) 367 Cliff Dr., No. 2 Pasadena, CA 91107

**McKAIN, LARRY.** (R) 3850 Hammond, Waterloo, IA 50702 (full-time)

**McKINNEY, ROY T.** (C) 2319 Wakulla Way, Orlando FL 32809

◆**McKINNON, JUANITA.** (C) Box 126, Institute WV 25112

**McWHIRTER, G. STUART.** (C) Box 458 Corydon, IN 47112

**MEEK, WESLEY, SR.** (C) 5713 S. Shartel, Oklahoma City, OK 73109

**MEHAFFEY, JOHN A.** (C) 106 Bridge St. (Rear), Logan, WV 25601

**MELVIN, DOLORES.** (C) Rte 1, Greenup KY 41144

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**MEULMAN, JOSEPH.** 1221 S. Grove Rd., Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**MEYER, BOB & BARBARA.** (R) (Dynamics of Spiritual Growth) 155 Longview Ct. St. Marys OH 45885

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**MILLER, MRS. PAULINE.** (C) 307 S. Delaware St. Mount Gilead, OH 43338

**MILLHUFF, CHUCK.** (C) Box 801, Olathe, KS 66061

◆**MINGLEDORFF, WALTER.** (C) c/o NPH\* (Full-time)

**MINK, NELSON G.** 1017 Gallatly St., Wenatchee, WA 98801

**MIRACLE, WALTER.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 441, Bourbonnais, IL 60914

**MITCHELL, GARNETT J.** (C) P.O. Box 97 A, Jonesboro, IL 62952

**MONTGOMERY, CLYDE.** 2517 N. 12th St., Terre Haute, IN 47804

**MOORE, NORMAN.** (C) 36320 Woodbriar, Yucaipa, CA 92399

**MOORMAN, GAIL CARL.** (R) 1949 E. Stroop Rd., Ketterling, OH 45429

**MORRELL, ELLIS L.** (R) 6661 Stoneman Dr., North Highlands, 95660 (full-time)

**MORRIS, CLYDE H.** (C) 101 Bryant Lake Rd., Cross Lanes WV 25313

◆**MOYER, BRANCE.** (R) 7206 Glen Tr., San Antonio, TX 78239

◆**MULLEN, DeVERNE.** (C) 67 Wilstead Newmarket Ont Canada

◆**MYERS, HAROLD & MRS.** (C) 575 Ferris N.W. Grand Rapids MI 49504

**N**

◆**NEFF, LARRY & PAT.** (C) 625 N. Water St., Owosso, MI 48867

**NEUSCHWANGER, ALBERT.** 3111 Kassler Pl. Westminster CO 80030

**NEWTON, DANIEL.** (R) Rte 1 Box 411 E. Fairland IN 46126

**NORTON, JOE.** 700 N.W. Ave G Hamlin TX 79520

**O**

◆**ORNER MINISTRIES.** (C) 5631 Bellefontaine Rd. Dayton OH 45424

**OVERTON, WM. D.** (C) Family Evangelist & Chalk Artist 798 Lake Ave., Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097

**OYLER, DON.** (C) 144 W. Walnut. Liberal, KS 67901

**P**

**PALMER, JAMES E.** (R) 8139 Madison Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46227

◆**PARR, PAUL G. & DOROTHY.** (C) Rte 1, Box 167A, White town IN 46075

◆**PASSMORE EVANGELISTIC PARTY, THE A. A.** (C) c/o NPH\*

**PATTERSON, DORMAN.** (R) 101 Lemans Dr., Apt. 2, Boardman, OH 44512 (full-time)

**PERDUE, NELSON.** (C) 3732 E. Rte 245, Cable, OH 43009

◆**PESTANA, GEORGE C.** (R) Illustrated Sermons, 1020 Bradbourne Ave., Space 78, Duarte, CA 91010

**PFEIFER, DON.** (C) P.O. Box 165, Waverly, OH 45690

**PHILLIPS, W. D.** (C) 1372 Cardwell Square S., Columbus, OH 43229

◆**PIERCE, BOYCE & CATHERINE.** (C) Rte 4, Danville, IL 61832

**PITTENGER, TWYLA.** (R) 413 N. Bowman St., Mansfield, OH 44903

◆**PITTS, PAUL.** (C) 521 Meadowbrook Ln. Olathe, KS 66061

**POINTER, LLOYD B.** (R) Rte 2, 711 N. First St. Fruitland, ID 83619

◆**PORTER, JOHN & PATSY.** (C) c/o NPH\*

**POTTER, LYLE & LOIS.** 1601 S. Garey, Pomona, CA 91766

**POTTS, TROY C.** 2952 Cameo, Dallas, TX 75234

◆**POWELL, FRANK.** (C) 16807 N.E. Fourth Plain Rd., Vancouver, WA 98662

**Q**

◆**QUALLS, PAUL M. & MAE.** (C) 5441 Lake Jessamine Dr., Orlando, FL 32809

**R**

◆**RAKER, W. C. & MARY.** (C) Box 106 Lewiston, IL 61542

**READER, GEORGE H. D.** Box 396 Chrisman IL 61924

◆**REAZIN, LAURENCE V. & LEONE.** (C) Rte 12, Box 280 Ol. Tyler, TX 75708

**REDD, GARY.** (C) Rte. 2, Box 190, Newton, TX 75966

**REED, DOROTHY.** (C) Box 814, Hannibal, MO 63401

**RHAME, JOHN D.** 1712 Good Hope, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

**RICHARDS, LARRY & PHYLLIS (COULTER).** (R) 2479 Madison Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46225

◆**RICHARDSON, PAUL E.** (C) 421 S. Grand Ave., Bourbonnais, IL 60914

**RIST, LEONARD.** (C) 3544 Brookgrove Dr., Grove City, OH 43123

**ROBERTS, SAM.** (C) 2118 Choctimar Tr., Fort Wayne, IN 46808

**ROBERTSON, JAMES H.** (C) 2014 Green Apple Ln., Arlington, TX 76014

**ROBINSON, TED L.** (C) c/o NPH\*

**RODGERS, CLYDE B.** 505 Lester Ave., Nashville, TN 37210

**ROSS, MICHAEL B.** (C) P.O. Box 1742, Bradenton, FL 33506

**ROTH, RON.** (C) 16625 W. 144th, Olathe, KS 66062

**S**

**SANDERS, DON.** (C) 1905 Parkwood Dr., Olathe, KS 66062

**SCARLETT, DON.** (R) P.O. Box 549, Ravenna, OH 44266

**SCHMELZENBACH, ELMER.** 1416 Mary, Oklahoma City, OK 73127

**SCHOONOVER, MODIE.** (C) 1508 Glenview, Adrian, MI 49221

**SCHRIBER, GEORGE.** (C) 8642 Cherry Ln., P.O. Box 456, Alta Loma, CA 91701

**SCHULTZ, ERNEST & ELVA.** 1241 Lakeshore Dr., Rte. 2, Cleveland, WI 53015

◆**SEMRAN, KIM & CINDY.** (R) 1152 N. Macomb, Apt. 15, Monroe, MI 48161 (full-time)

**SEXTON, ARNOLD (DOC) & GARNETT.** (C) 1114 Highland Ave., Ashland, KY 41101

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**SLATER, GLEN & VERA.** 320 S. 22nd St., Independence, KS 67301

**SMITH, CHARLES HASTINGS.** (C) Box 937, Bethany, OK 73008

**SMITH, DANIEL C.** (R) 535 S. Spruce, Tulare, CA 93274 (full-time)

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**SNOW, DONALD E.** 58 Baylis S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49507

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**SPEICHER, DARWIN.** (R) 4810 Tacomic, Sacramento, CA 95842 (full-time)

**SPROWLS, EARL.** (C) 7021 Ranch Rd., Lakeland, FL 33801

**STAFFORD, DANIEL.** (C) Box 11, Bethany, OK 73008

◆**STANTON, TED & DONNA.** (R) 2795 Galleon Pl., Sarasota, FL 33580

**STARNES, SAM LEE.** (C) 448 S. Prairie, Bradley, IL 60915

◆**STEELE, KEN & JUDY.** (R) 5836 Taggart Dr., Hixson, TN 37343 (full-time)

STEVENS, GEORGE E. (C) 4021 Pebble Dr. S.E., Roanoke, VA 24014  
 STEWART, PAUL J. P.O. Box 1344, Jasper, AL 35501  
 ♦STOCKER, W. G. (C) 1421 14th Ave. N.W., Rochester, MN 55901  
 ♦STONE EVANGELISTIC TEAM, PAUL. (R) 522 Rusk St., Spooner, WI 54801  
 STOUT, PHILLIP R. (R) c/o NPH (full-time)  
 STREET, DAVID. (C) Rte 1, Ramsey, IN 47166  
 STRICKLAND, RICHARD L. (C) 4723 Cullen Ave., Springfield, OH 45503  
 SUTTON, VEL & ARLENE. (R) 1808 Ave. "B," Kearney, NE 68847  
 SWANSON, ROBERT L. (C) Box 274, Bethany, OK 73008  
 ♦SWEENEY, ROGER & EULETA. (C) Rte 1, Sharon Grove, KY 42280

**T**  
 TAYLOR, CLIFF. (R) E. 619 32nd Ave., Spokane, WA 99203  
 TAYLOR, EMMETT E. (C) 1221 N.W. 82nd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73114  
 TAYLOR, MENDELL. 1716 N. Glade, Bethany, OK 73008  
 TAYLOR, ROBERT W. (C) 4501 Croftshire Dr., Dayton, OH 45440  
 ♦TEASDALE, ELLIS & RUTH. 58333 Ironwood Dr., Elkhart, IN 46514  
 THOMAS, J. MELTON. (C) 3619 Skyline Dr., Nampa, ID 83651  
 THOMAS, W. FRED. 521 Ideal St., Milan, MI 48160  
 ♦THORNTON, REV. & MRS. WALLACE O. & FAMILY. (C) Rte. 2, Milton, KY 40045  
 TINK, FLETCHER. 407 S. Hamilton, Watertown, NY 13601

TOEPFER, PAUL. (C) Box 146, Petersburg, TX 79250  
 TOSTI, TONY. 8001 N.E. 89th Ave., Vancouver, WA 98662  
 TRIPP, HOWARD. (C) c/o NPH\*  
 ♦TRISSEL, PAUL & MARY. (C) P.O. Box 2431, Leesburg, FL 32748  
 ♦TUCKER, BILL & JEANETTE. (C) c/o NPH  
 TUCKER, RALPH. (C) 1905 Council Rd., Oklahoma City, OK 73127

**V**  
 VANDERPOOL, WILFORD M. (C) 9204 N. Olive Ln., Sun Lakes, AZ 85224  
 VARCE, PAUL. (R) 621 Second Ave. N.W., Waverly, IA 50677  
 VARIAN, BILL. (C) 502 N. Forest Ave., Bradley, IL 60915

**W**  
 WADE, E. BRUCE. (C) 3029 Sharpview Ln., Dallas, TX 75228  
 WADE, KENNETH W. (C) 4224 Arch Ln., Woodburn, IN 46797  
 WALKER, LAWRENCE. (C) 114 Eighth St. N.E., New Philadelphia, OH 44663  
 WALLACE, J. C. (R) 1425 Edgewater Beach, Lakeland, FL 33801 (full-time)  
 WANKEL, PAUL. (R) Rte 2, Box 629, Many, LA 71449  
 ♦WARD, LLOYD & GERTRUDE. Preacher & Chalk Artist. 1001 Averly St., Fort Myers, FL 33901  
 ♦WELCH, DARLENE. (R) 1209 Larue Ave., Louisville, KY 40213  
 WELCH, DAVID. (R) 319 Northbrook, Danville, IL 61832 (full-time)  
 WELLS, KENNETH & LILY. Box 1043, Whitefish, MI 59937

WELLS, LINARD. (C) P.O. Box 1527, Grand Prairie, TX 75050  
 ♦WEST, EDDY. (C) 1845 W. Orchid Ln., Phoenix, AZ 85021  
 WEST, EDNA. 130 S. Front St., Apt. No 1512, Sunbury, PA 17801  
 ♦WHITE, JANIE, & SON LIGHT. (C) 219 Mizell St., Duncanville, TX 75116  
 WHITED, CURTIS. 307 N. Blake, Olathe, KS 66061  
 ♦WHITLATCH, CRAIG. (R) 208 Terrace Dr., Oskaloosa, IA 52577 (full-time)  
 WILKINS, CHESTER. (C) P.O. Box 3232, Bartlesville, OK 74003  
 ♦WILKINSON TRIO. (R) 2840 18th St., Columbus, IN 47201 (full-time)  
 WILLIAMS, G. W. (C) 310 N. O'Brien, Seymour, IN 47274  
 WILLIAMS, LARRY D. (C) Box 6287, Longview, TX 75604  
 ♦WILLIAMS, LAWRENCE. (C) 6715 NW 30th Terr., Bethany, OK 73008  
 ♦WISEHART, LENNY & JOY. (C) c/o NPH\*  
 WOODWARD, ARCHIE. (C) 4109 Woodland Dr., Howell, MI 48843  
 WOODWARD, S. OREN & FAYE. (C) c/o NPH\*  
 WOOLMAN, J. L. 1025 S.W. 62nd, Oklahoma City, OK 73139  
 WYLIE, CHARLES. (C) Box 162, Winfield, KS 67156  
 WYRICK, DENNIS. (C) 603 Reed Dr., Frankfort, KY 40601

**Y**  
 ♦YATES, BEN J. (C) P.O. Box 266, Springboro, PA 16343

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move up in the company. Pastors may want a better church more during this time than any other which has preceded. His sense of self-worth comes from his evaluation of how well he is doing and his perspective of "how he thinks others think he is doing."

#### **Stage Five: Mid-life Transition/Mid-life Decade**

This is probably the most critical of the transition periods in a man's life. It corresponds closely to menopause for a woman as far as significance is concerned. There is not another transition period for a man that will be as important as this one.

According to Gould the major false assumption that needs to be shed is: There is no evil or death in the world. The sinister has been destroyed. The component parts of this assumption are: a) The illusion of safety can last forever; b) Death can't happen to me or my loved ones; c) It is impossible to live without a protector (woman); d) There is not life beyond this family; e) I am an innocent.

During this mid-life transition a man takes a long hard look at his priorities. While there was a possible minor change during the age 30 transition, there can be a major change now. A man determines which of his goals and aspirations have been met and uses this period of his life to set new goals and aspirations, and to reaffirm previously set ones. One writer, neither Gould nor Levinson, had indicated that this is the prime time for a man to be unfaithful to his wife. He bases his conclusion on the idea that man needs to seek to assure himself that his first commitment to marriage was the one he should have made. While Christians would reject such a view, it seems that our society is living out this view.

The children in the home are teenagers by this time, and if there is going to be a difference in opinion of freedom for the teenager, the discipline, the home rules, or guidelines all seem to be points of conflict. Unless a strong marriage relationship has been developed prior to this time it stands a good chance to be terminated because of the other consuming conflicts. Most adults have lost one or more parents or close family members by this time. This event reminds the person of his own mortality. This causes some to say with the songwriter, "Is that all there is?"

The major components of a man's life have been reduced to four in number by this time: occupation, marriage and family, friendship and peer relationships, ethnicity and religion. All the other components are still within these four but there has been a consolidation. When a man seeks to rearrange these priorities there is not as much to work with. The options are fewer. He feels a little helpless and probably needs more attention from his marriage partner and friends if he is to keep an even keel.

#### **Stage Six: Building a New Life Structure/Beyond Mid-Life**

Gould says that in Stage Six "The life of inner-directedness finally prevails: I own myself." Contemporary psychologists would use terms such as "authentic" to describe this stage of a man's life. For

Gould this is the final stage. There are no more false assumptions to be shed. Full adulthood has been achieved. This is valid in terms of Gould's premise—adulthood is shedding of invalid childhood assumptions.

There is a sense in which Levinson agrees with the adage that "life begins at 40." This stage of a man's life (age 45 to 50) is one in which the best word for most men to use is "satisfactoriness." They are satisfied with how their life has turned out. It seems to be suitable to themselves and to their close friends. There is a degree of satisfaction with the priorities which have been set again in the previous transition period. This time the priorities were set with some degree of confidence because of an increased acquired knowledge and experience.

Levinson contends that there is probably a "marker event" near the beginning of this stage. Such a "marker event" may be a change in occupation, a new lease on life in the previous occupation, or it may be a negative occurrence such as a divorce or extramarital affair. He differs with the previous author mentioned in that he does not believe the negative "marker event" is a necessity.

#### **Stages Seven to Ten**

Stage Seven: Age 50 Transition (50—55)

Stage Eight: Culmination of Middle Adulthood (55—60)

Stage Nine: Late Adult Transition (60—65)

Stage Ten: Late Adulthood (65—+)

It is an acknowledgment of a lack of adequate research that forces us to only briefly describe these four stages together. Both Gould and Levinson acknowledge this inadequacy. Levinson is confident that the pattern established will be continued. He believes that the age 50 transition will be much like the age 30 transition in consequence. Minor adjustments will be made but there will be a growing belief that not much more can be done. By this time, however, the home nest will probably be empty, except for the grandchildren. The late adult transition will be much the same as all others: a period when the previous life is evaluated, analyzed, and then synthesized into a new structure.

The two stages of middle adulthood and late adulthood, like all others before, will be periods of settling down and living according to the priorities set in the immediately preceding transition period.

#### **God's Provision for Dealing with Developmental-Maturation**

It only makes sense. God created the developmental process and so He provides a way to deal with it. The apostle Paul said, "I have learned to be content in whatever condition I find myself" (author's paraphrase). God has promised never to give us more than we can bear, but to provide a way of escape if needed. Placing oneself in the hands of God and resting there is the prescription. In whatever stage one finds himself, God is still the same. He will give the knowledge or power to deal with that stage or He will enable a man to learn to live with it and delight himself in the privilege.

*(continued on page 42)*

# HURTING PARENTS

## Thoughts About Understanding and Ministering to Parents Whose Children Have Gone Wrong

by Wesley Tracy

**T**hey didn't know how bad they could hurt—those foolhardy folk who tried to raise children during the 60s and 70s. Many of them soon found out though, when the child they nurtured through diaper rash, chicken pox, Algebra I, the first date, and driver's training suddenly dropped out of church, out of the family, and into the drug scene or some other aspect of the counterculture.

For those parents nothing will ever be the same again. And they are out there in our congregations. For the most part they silently live their own version of the life of quiet desperation. They muddle along, take a lot of Maalox, work hard, take expensive vacations (but diversion doesn't divert the pain), and blend in. But anyone who gets within a heart-throb of them discovers a basic sadness, a current of continuous hurt, and in many cases a cautious faith where once a rambunctious one romped. The pattern too frequently involves peripheral involvement with the church—you see, they've been that route. Full of faith they tried Sunday School, VBS, family prayer, youth camp, revivals, etc., but all that didn't work for them. They thought it was working but the storms of adolescence and the insanity of social change broke through these defenses like a tank snapping a birch sapling. Now the last thought every night and the first thought every morning is "I wonder what's happening to my child, wherever he or she is?"

Like learning to live with a limp they have adjusted, but the brightest star in their sky has gone out. All they have left are cinders and memories and only the slightest hope.

Photo by Paul M. Schrock



Several varieties of hurting parents populate our pews and communities. All hurting parents ask "why?" But some know a lot more of the answer than others. I know of one case where a father, in a drunken rage, threw his teenage son down the stairs. One of the boy's eyes was put out in the fall. Another man threw his kid out of the house for playing catch with a friend on Sunday afternoon. A mother disowned her 16-year-old daughter who turned up pregnant and put her out of the house, assuring her she never wanted to see her again—she didn't—even though she later changed her mind. Such parents do have an inkling as to the "why?"

But there are thousands of parents who did not abuse their children. Instead, they raised them in the fear and admonition of the Lord—and the youngsters still went wrong. It is this group of hurting parents that I am concerned with in this article. Those parents who made tragic mistakes and drove their children away need prayer and healing. But those who raised their children right and still lost them need special ministry too.

I do not say that such parents made no parenting mistakes. You can't be a perfect parent any more than you can be a perfect preacher, a perfect carpenter, or a perfect baseball player. But many puzzled and pain-filled parents look back and have a hard time finding much they would change if they had the chance to do the childrearing number over again.

**S**everal facts and feelings raise themselves on one elbow, beckon for our attention in our effort to understand the experience of today's hurting parents. Let's listen to a few.

### 1. Clubbed by Holy Bludgeons

At church the hurting parent has come to expect regular beatings about the head with certain "holy bludgeons." The one that they get worked over with the most frequently is "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). The cruelest thing about this cat-o'-nine-tails is that it has to be yanked out of context to be wielded. The King James translation is an unfortunate one. Even the most conservative commentaries show that this verse is talking about vocations not salvation. Educators hail this wise word from Solomon as an educational revolution. Its meaning is "Train a child in a vocation to which he is suited and it will be a source of satisfaction to him all his life." This was revolutionary, for in ancient

times you did what your father did. If he were a tentmaker, you were a tentmaker, if he were a shepherd, you were a shepherd, if he were a priest, you were a priest—whether you were suited to it or not.

Of course, a proper understanding of this verse does not take away the importance of early religious training, and the use God may make of that training in the ultimate salvation of our children. It does not say that parents made no mistakes in this area, but it does disarm those flailers who wish to club unfortunate parents with Proverbs 22:6.

## 2. Victimized by Behavioristic Assumptions

Our current era is plagued by the popular assumption that behaviorism is true. That is, man is a passive lump upon which the environment acts. Thus persons become whatever their environment shapes them to be. This harmonizes well with Calvinism, but Arminianism insists that man is more than a passive lump. Man is active and generative. He is doubtless affected by his environment but he is not controlled by it. Locke Bowman in his book *Teaching Today* reminds us that this is the most basic question in Christian education. He writes that the central controversy resides in how we answer these True-False statements:

1. Human beings are functioning organisms, subject to forces from the *outside* that cause them to behave as they do.

2. Human beings are uniquely persons with *inner* potential, each one with a dynamic self-concept that results in individual patterns of growth.

The fallacy of the first statement Bowman observes is that “the logical outcome of such a view, however, is to conclude that we are, in the end, lumps to be shaped. We are slates upon which outside forces write out the programs.” To charge parents with full responsibility for their teenagers’ decisions is to mark the fallacious, antibiblical, anti-Wesleyan statement “one” above “True.”

Some stimulus-response behaviorists believe that the human being is a passive lump *entirely* shaped by his environment. Control the environment and behavior is precisely predictable. This leaves no room whatsoever for free moral agency or God’s grace. Translated into parenting it means a formula something like this:

*Four parts family prayer, 5 parts Sunday School, 3 parts good parental modeling, a pinch of VBS, a dash of youth revival, a sprinkling of summer camps, and a “Living Bible” for the 12th birthday = a model Christian youth.*

Of course, we *know* this isn’t true—but we act like it is true just the same. Behavioristic predictability is fallible. The human and situational factors may be just right. Yet the planned and predicted responses of faith, love, and obedience may simply not happen. Such factors as the distorting power of sin and the freedom of the individual immediately reduce *predictability* to a mere *probability* at best. And the Christian educator or parent who thinks he or she can *control* the responses and choices of others is in for grievous disappointment. Even God will not transgress a person’s freedom of choice, so why

should parents think they can abrogate this human privilege?

Much of the Christian writing on parenting rests on behavioristic assumptions. Even Margie Lewis’s helpful book, *The Hurting Parent* lurches into the ditches of behavioristic assumptions about every other chapter. It seems to me that the most frequent picture of wayward youths in the book is that of passive lumps “caused” and “shaped” by environmental (usually parental) forces. Strangely enough, parental freedom is assumed. Her searches for “whys” usually assume parental causes—and she finds plenty. The Bible has much to say about parental responsibility, but also about individual responsibility. The searches for “whys” must include the free choices of the young people themselves.

The point of all this is that many people point a finger and say, What did you do wrong? Certainly the parents ask themselves that question. The answer may be: “nothing” or “not much, but my youngster made a lot of bad choices.”

## 3. What Did We Do Wrong?

What did we do wrong? is the first ghost to haunt the hurting parent. Some may, through denial or anger, delay it, but sooner or later the parents of the errant child have to face this. Sometimes mistakes can be pinpointed. More frequently small mistakes are blown up in the imagination to provide a *reason* for the child’s downfall. Still denying freedom to the adolescent—a freedom God intended—we seek to blame ourselves. You see, it becomes easier to take the blame yourself than to say “I have a terrible kid.”

A subtle twist of this question frequently evolves. “What did *we* do wrong?” becomes “What did *you* do wrong?” With this husband and wife begin to blame each other for the child’s failure. An 18-year-old may be able to vote, drink, bear arms—anything but be responsible for his or her own actions, in our minds. Thus, Mom and Dad blame each other instead of their offspring. More than a double handful of marriages have disintegrated over such strain.

Hurting parents may need help coping with this question. If there is real guilt it should be faced, accepted, and presented to Christ. If false guilt runs amuck the parent needs help disarming it. If the fact that we cannot control other’s choices needs to be reinforced this should be done. The biblical and natural parental responsibilities must be faced.

## 4. Frequently the Church Doesn’t Help

If you get close to a hurting parent he (or she) may pour out his (or her) heart. But they have learned not to do that very often because it makes the listener nervous. The Christian friend doesn’t know what to say and can’t fix things so he may avoid you if you talk about your pain. It’s analogous to the experience of a friend of mine who was going through a divorce, not of her own choosing. Church friends of long standing stopped talking to her on a meaningful level. They just didn’t know how to handle it. So she drifted away from the church



permanently. Something like that frequently happens when a teen in a family turns delinquent—no one knows what to say.

A friend of mine whose son dropped out of church to go on a two-year drinking rebellion called the youth pastor for help. He discovered what we have known for a long time. The church is usually geared to ministering to mainstream kids, but not to those with acute problems. Finally, the youth minister phoned the young man and placed before him a real challenge—he invited him to help fold church newsletters.

Sometimes even pastors shy away from the hurting parent. It's easier to just go along running the program rather than meeting the real ministry challenges. I remember a family I pastored. Cancer struck the grandmother. I called, I prayed. The family, however, expected more of than I could deliver. They wanted 72-year-old mother healed and healthy again. Unless I deliberately put the dying woman on my schedule I found myself "neglecting" to call—because I couldn't "fix things." Hurting parents have indicated that something like that happens when a child really goes wrong. One man told me that his new pastor had called on him. He was extremely pleased. He said he had been a member of that church for 14 years and had never had a pastoral call. I knew that during much of that period he and his wife had endured a veritable ordeal over problem children.

Frequently then, hurting parents are left alone to struggle through. There is a need for ministry, for psychic and spiritual strength of both husband and wife is so drained that there is little left to minister to one another.

### 5. Isn't This Embarrassing?

At first the parents of the wayward child go through a period of embarrassment and shame. They may try to hide the problem. Then, to their own detriment, they may begin to withdraw from church and friends. But soon they get beyond embarrassment or shame. They see that their own embarrassment is of little consequence. Soon they voice the reckless prayer of the Syro-phenician woman who interrupted Jesus' vacation and rankled the disciples' nerves with her persistent prayer, "My daughter is filled with a devil." Nothing else seemed to matter.

### 6. Nothing Else Matters

When one sees his or her child disappear into a sea of outbroken sin nothing but rescuing the child matters much—not the building fund, not the class picnic, not even choir practice or whose turn it is to work in the nursery.

As I write this the little boy in Italy is still in the 100-foot well. How long he can last no one knows. Some say he is already dead. Can you imagine someone going up to his mother and asking her to help make nut cups for the church banquet, or asking her how much she will pledge for a new parsonage? Her answer would be, "Leave me alone; my son has fallen into a well!"



*"Somewhere along the way we failed him."*

The feelings, at least for a while, of a hurting parent are not much different from that. You ask him (or her) to teach a class, serve as usher, type bulletins or be in charge of the games at the Sunday School picnic and in his heart he is saying, "Leave me alone; my son/daughter has fallen into a well!" It is the Syro-phenician woman's prayer again. Even when Jesus called her a dog (to teach a lesson on the stupidity of prejudice) it did not shame her. She kept on praying because her daughter was full of the devil.

So, pastor, do not be surprised when the hurting parent shows only secondary interest in church programs. To them nothing other than their lost son or daughter really matters. I am not saying they are right, I am just telling what I believe to be the truth. Middleagers have a natural load-shedding tendency anyway. They naturally turn to "fewer but hotter irons" in life's fire. Then, when the things they have invested in heavily turn out to be ineffective in saving their own children, do not be surprised if enthusiasm is in black and white instead of living color.

### 7. A Cautious Faith

The failure of the church program and practices to save their own children tends to weaken the faith of some hurting parents. First, there is a gradual diminishing of hope. One father described it this way. "When my daughter got into one pretty bad deal I said at least she hasn't done this. Then she did it. I said at least she's not doing that—and then she did that. It went on and on until I ran out of 'at leasts.' Now, you name it—she's done it."

Second, there is a diminishing faith in the ability or willingness of the church to help. The church can



help the mainstreamers, but conscientious parents don't want your long-haired, hippie-type kid around their children anyway. So when the parents really need the church, the church is least able to help.

A third step toward a cautious faith comes if parents begin to question God or become angry with God. If God really cared wouldn't He work a miracle for my child—the child I dedicated to Him and “trained up in the way he should go”? Parents need the help of a patient pastor to show them that their son's or daughter's choices plant no question marks on God's character.

This ordeal does produce for some a stronger faith. The fluff is blown off their faith. Folk religion, myth, and superfluous institutional trappings evaporate. A core of solidified faith in a God who can meet them at their point of deepest need, and give strength they did not dream of results. Many hurting parents do not get this far, however. They give up and sink into discouragement and, eventually, disbelief.

“You're not singing,” said a father to his wife during a worship service. Their 22-year-old daughter was in a drug rehabilitation center. The mother replied, “I don't believe that song anymore.”

### **What Can a Pastor Do?**

What can a pastor do to help hurting parents? I don't know all the answers, but here are some suggestions:

#### **1. Listen.**

Listen and don't be afraid to say, “I don't know how to fix it, but let's try.” Just being there from time to time will help. This does not mean that some parents may not expect more than you can give. Sometimes that comes with the territory. Listen, care, be available whenever possible. Don't club them, but confront in love when it is needed. Help them deal with guilt, real or false.

#### **2. Pray.**

Pray for and with hurting parents. Use the example of the Syro-phenician woman, who persisted even though the people closest to Jesus tried to run her off, and even through it seemed Jesus was going to ignore her.

#### **3. Be Patient.**

Guide them like a shepherd. Remember that the hurting parent has experienced a trauma probably not exceeded by divorce or death.

#### **4. One-on-one ministries using the pastoral staff and lay leaders.**

Using the pastoral staff and lay leaders, arrange one-on-one ministry to the atypical youth and their parents. One-on-one ministry, not the mainstream program, will be effective for kids who have dropped out of the family and into a life of sin.

#### **5. Arrange Support Groups.**

The pastor of a large church cannot possibly do one-on-one ministries with all the hurting parents in the congregation. Therefore, support groups such as common interest clubs, circles of concern, or other small-group arrangements can multiply ministry.

Here's what I mean. For three years I was a member of a six-couple support group. During those three years five of the six couples had serious child-parent problems. One afternoon I heard on the radio newscast that the youngster of one of our couples was in trouble. I didn't contact any other group member, but at 7:30 P.M. my wife and I went to the hurting home. We were the last couple to make contact. Four of the five other couples went directly to the home and the other couple phoned.

That support group ministered, amplifying the ministry of the church and of the pastor. Such groups can share meaningfully. They won't know all the answers, but the sharing and praying can work miracles. A district superintendent told me that when he shared with his preachers the problem he was having with one of his children, it set many of the ministers free to share their own problems and find healing and understanding. At a retreat on a midwest district a weeping man said, “The main thing I got out of this retreat is that I found out I'm not the only one who has ‘kid-problems.’” A college professor told me, “The devil made me feel like I was the only one who had failed as a parent.”

Yes, your hurting parents feel like that too. One of the toughest things about being a hurting parent is the awful loneliness.

#### **6. Teach the Calvary Kind of Love.**

Stress to parents the importance of nonjudgmental love—the love that was modeled on Calvary. This love accepts children as valuable persons even though it cannot approve their life-style. It is a love that follows a wayward child like “the hound of heaven.”

#### **7. Help Hurting Parents Find a Ministry.**

Hurting parents will be tied up in their own pain for a long time, but sooner or later, with a good pastor's help, they will see how 2 Corinthians 1:2-4 applies to them. In this passage Paul praises “the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble.” Help hurting parents utilize the lesson in the legend of the thornbird made popular by the novel of the same name.

There is a legend about a bird that sings just once in its life. It sings more sweetly than any other creature on earth. From the moment it leaves its nest it searches for a thorn tree, and does not rest until it has found one.

Then flying among the savage branches it impales itself upon the longest, sharpest spine. And, dying, it rises above its own agony to out-carol the lark and the nightingale. *One superlative song*, its life is the price. But when the thornbird sings the world stills to listen, and God in His heaven smiles. For the *best* is only bought at the cost of great pain . . . or—so goes the legend.

While this does not exactly mirror the life of Christian service it does bring to mind the fact that there is some probability that

the most noble song you will ever sing,  
the most redemptive service you may ever give,  
the most helpful hand you will ever lend,  
will somehow be related to your deepest suffering.



**Premarital counseling will be overlooked unless the pastor and congregation insist that it not be.**

# **PREMARITAL COUNSELING: A PREVENTATIVE TOOL**

by Harold Ivan Smith

**O**ne of the most effective means to reduce divorce is for the Church to strengthen its commitment to premarital counseling. Much of what we term "premarital" is in fact preceremonial and is far more concerned with who stands where, etc.

By *Manual* statement Nazarenes are committed to counseling those we marry.

The institution of marriage was ordained by God in the time of man's innocence . . . Our people should cherish this sacred estate as becomes Christians, and should enter it only after earnest prayer for divine direction, and when assured that the contemplated union is in accordance with scriptural requirements.

We live in an era of confusion between two similar but nonsynonymous terms: Christian wedding and church wedding. Any one can have a church wedding; many congregations and ministers will oblige for a fee. However, a Christian wedding is for *two* Christians who wish to enter into a covenant relationship with Jesus Christ.

A Christian wedding requires premarital counseling. In research at the University of Oklahoma, Justine Knight discovered that in a sample of divorced Nazarenes, two-thirds (66%) had had *no* premarital counseling.<sup>1</sup> Someone obviously ignored the *Manual* statement:

Ministers of the Church of the Nazarene are instructed to give due care to matters pertaining to solemnizing marriages. They shall seek, *in every manner possible*, to convey to their congregations the sacredness of Christian marriage. They shall provide premarital counseling in every instance possible before performing a marriage ceremony.

Obviously, there is a breakdown in what we *ought* to be doing ("in every manner possible/in every instance possible"), and what we are in fact doing.

We plan for vacations, for retirement, and for

careers as well as major purchases. Surely, two people planning to spend their lives together should be willing to spend some time in preparing for marriage and not just for the wedding.

We are doing more preceremonial counseling than premarital counseling. If all couples were composed of Christians, those with strong Christian family backgrounds, we might be excused. But there are particular marriages that will require more than a perfunctory one-hour counseling session:

- those from broken or unstable homes
- the psychologically unstable
- the new Christian
- those with multi-previous (or short) engagements
- those on the rebound from another relationship

There may be submerged factors (or hidden agendas and expectations) which potentially threaten the relationship that need to be recognized and discussed. While the issue may not be fully resolved *before* the wedding, the identification of the issue is a positive help.

What's happening in your local church? What is your policy as a pastor in counseling those who wish

- to be married for the first time?
- to be married for the second time?
- to be married but are not church members?
- to be married but are not Christians?

The latter sounds strange but there are those who still wish to be married by a minister as if there is some magical power. This is not unlike those who wish to have their babies baptized but do not want to be involved with the Christian responsibilities of parenting.

Knight identified several factors which contributed to the death of the marriage:

- (1) financial immaturity;
- (2) emotional immaturity;
- (3) spiritual immaturity.

A person can be "spiritual" and still be financially or emotionally immature. That reality becomes a sandpaper which will mar the finish of the spiritual state.

What can we say to two individuals who want to start out on an economic level that has taken their parents twenty-five years to attain, particularly when such will require heavy credit debts? How are young couples to develop the discipline necessary to responsibly use plastic money? This is a generation conditioned to buy now and pay later. Besides, with inflation, you're saving money, right?

Most congregations place the responsibility for counseling on the pastor—as part of his job, "to marry and to bury." He marries as an official of the state and as a representative of the church, although the overlap of those has never been fully studied. However, the body of believers has largely been relegated to a spectator status: to attend, to provide facilities for the wedding (and perhaps the reception), and to provide gifts for the wedding (and often for a prenuptial shower). Yet, the Church must ask if its responsibilities are discharged by a gift and a card from Hallmark for the "shower." What should be more important to us than the creation of new homes?

We encourage prayer meetings before a revival and we pray for the salvation of a family and we may even fast. But should the Body also not be equally willing to commit itself to special prayer for the creation of a new family through the Christian wedding? Can't we do more than tip our hat at society and Amy Vanderbuilt?

### WHERE CAN WE BEGIN?

First, weddings, particularly those involving children as flower girls, ring bearers, provide an excellent opportunity for teaching/exploring in Sunday School and junior church.<sup>2</sup> What is the significance of a wedding? of marriage? of the ritual and traditions? Vacation Bible School or children's camps provide other opportunities. We have considered this necessary for Santa Claus and other non-Christian aspects of Christmas—so with the wedding.

This would also diffuse the myth that equates premarital counseling with a much narrower precereemonial counseling. With a matter as important as the family, we cannot begin too early to teach a Christian perspective. Being in a wedding makes a tremendous impact upon a child; we need to build on that foundation to make sure the child has some hint of the Christian understanding.

Secondly, group counseling during the junior high years provides an opportunity for that exposure via "A Preparation for Marriage" course. The senior high years are probably too late to begin this instruction; attitudes are formed and crystallized much earlier. The trip down the center aisle in a wedding should be as well-thought and planned as the other significant moments at the altar: salvation or church membership.

If we really believe God is at work through the wedding in creating a new home, we should celebrate His activity in our lives through a meaningful

expression of worship. Is the Christian wedding a proclamation that in a world hostile to marriage—two Christians should commit themselves to each other? Yes, the wedding can even be a witness—a declaration of "This is what we believe" or "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15).

The wedding can be joyful and celebrative and yet a genuine time of worship celebrating God's involvement in our lives. H. Smith asks in "Life Beyond the Aisle":

Can a church willfully oversee the marriage of two individuals who fail to see God in the wedding chemistry? . . . in its procedures leading to marriage, South Park Church in Chicago notes: 'In any worship service, the participants must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ if they are to lead the congregation in a meaningful worship of our Lord and Savior. It is the Deacon's primary concern that the two persons who in this special way, lead the congregation in worship at a wedding service, have a personal walk with Jesus Christ.'<sup>3</sup>

Wednesday nights also provide an opportunity to explore this subject particularly for parents who will at some point (hopefully) become involved in some of the decision making. This is especially valuable when two families in the local church are "joined" through the marriage of their children. The church must help implement Genesis 1:26, and encourage brides and grooms to put their parents into perspective as they establish their new home.

Premarital counseling must be more than a one-shot "chat" or the recommendation of "some good books." It cannot be taken for granted that the couple will read "chapter six" when they get time—whatever the subject of that chapter. With the hundreds of logistical details to be managed, premarital counseling will be overlooked unless the pastor and congregation insist that it not be overlooked.

Remember, people are informed in the invitation of the church's involvement in the wedding. Where does the wedding take place? For some, this may be the first contact with the church. What kind of impression do you want to make?

If the church's commitment to premarital counseling is nonnegotiable, the couple and their families accept the instruction as valuable and worth crowding into an already packed schedule. And if they accommodate the counseling, the pastor has some responsibility to make it worthwhile.

But some pastors feel the pressure:

—"If I don't marry them, someone else will . . ."

—"If I marry them I can at least keep my foot in the door . . ."

—"I'm not a counselor . . ."

Every pastor who assumes the responsibility of performing the ceremony must be equally committed to the responsibility of counseling those he marries. And a church board needs to be concerned about its collective witness to a world that takes the wedding at best spiritually casual. What takes place in your sanctuary (and how it takes place) is a statement on what you view as important.

Either we're creating homes and thereby undergirding the future of the local church (and the nation) or we're tipping our hats at society!

If we took in members like we marry people, the church would be in chaos. Can you imagine a pastor saying

- "If I don't take them into membership, someone else will."
- "If I take them into membership I can at least get my foot in the door . . ."
- "I'm not a counselor . . ."

Church boards need not become bogged down in rule-making, such as "four sessions or no ceremony in our sanctuary," but there is a need for the board to support the pastor who has developed a policy and consistently follows it.

Christians have every right to enjoy weddings *after* we have done our best to help establish that home on a solid foundation.

The need is particularly acute in marriages of students in Christian colleges. It is easy to assume that they will receive counseling at the college (via a Marriage and Family course) or through their advisor. However, what if the college assumes the local church will provide the counseling? When hundreds of miles separate the student couple and the minister who will perform the ceremony, and the time pressure is involved (particularly with marriages that take place during school vacations), counseling may be avoided or postponed or perfunctorily attended.

This is also a problem when a couple desires that a former pastor "return" to perform the ceremony. He may assume that the local pastor will conduct the counseling. However, if he comes in at the last minute for the wedding—when will there be time for any sort of meaningful counseling?

The church wedding, in your church, performed by a minister is an endorsement; a significant religious or spiritual moment. The counterfeit may be difficult to spot. Too many ministers have "crossed their fingers" on a ceremony hoping some way "it will work out."

Sometimes, a couple needs time to mature and a loving church must say, "Not now! Perhaps in a few months when you have had time to grow . . ." We must speak the truth in love, not judgment. Some couples and their parents may initially respond angrily. But in time, if the difficulty can be resolved, the church can enthusiastically respond "yes" to such a marriage.

In the eighties we must not neglect our congregational responsibilities in insisting on adequate premarital counseling. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The testimony of thousands of divorced individuals would affirm the decision for more counseling.

The church's part in identifying needs within a relationship can be significant, especially during the engagement period when couples view marriage not so much as a lifetime commitment as love conquering all. Through personal counseling sessions, marriage workshops and seminars and topical Bible studies, the church can be instrumental in instructing couples on how to perceive needs and how to meet them head on . . . Discussion of these and other questions concerning personal likes and dislikes, ideals, goals, and attitudes *before marriage* can avoid the "I didn't bargain for this" syndrome when the realities of overdue bills, snoring, and stretch marks set in.

By giving practical, Christ-centered direction to this kind of frank, open discussion, a church . . . prepares the groundwork for marital growth.<sup>4</sup>

If the couple is aware of potential problems and is aware of how concerned the local church is in the success

of their marriage, they will have a loving community in which to grow a marriage.

Two recommendations. There is benefit in the premarital session to having the couple read aloud the portion of the *Manual* dealing with marriage (34/34.1). Then you will want to ask if they understand what they have read. Actually, this has a root in Phillip's witness to the Ethiopian eunuch who did not understand what he was reading (Acts 8:26-40).

You might ask, "Can you think of any reason that I should marry you?" Or you might say, "As a minister, I have promised to stand by this *Manual*. And I want to be faithful to my promise. You've read aloud the section on marriage. What can you tell me that helps me know that I am acting in good favor?"

For example, they might respond, "Well, we've prayed and really feel this is the Lord's will for us," or "We know the Lord as Savior and want His best for our life."

Secondly, we must commit the body of believers to praying for the wedding, for the couple, and for their families. If we believe it is important to have cottage prayer meetings or times of special prayer opportunities for revivals (when new families are being reached) then should we not schedule times of special prayer for families being created?

Lately, Christian wedding announcements have added a distinctive Christian emphasis, such as "Believing that marriage is ordained by God," or "Because God has brought our children together, Mr. and Mrs. . . ." Usually near the bottom is a statement, "If unable to attend, your prayerful thoughts will be appreciated," etc.

Perhaps the first couple who started that trend meant exactly that, but for so many these are just "form" words.

What would happen if the body of believers gathered a half-hour before the ceremony for a time of prayer? What would Amy Vanderbilt have to say about that? What if the Wednesday night prayer meeting before the wedding provided for a special season of prayer for that gathering of the church body? Could there be a host of believers in the church who would covet to pray particularly for the couple? Could there be a time in the next scheduled worship service following the wedding to pray for the couple just married? It would be tied in since many leave a basket of flowers in the church.

The *Manual* says, "In every manner possible," and that requires our faithful stewardship. Too often, the only mention of prayer for the couple has been humorous, "My Lord, they are going to need prayer if they make it . . ."

It is not insignificant that the Lord began His public ministry at a marriage in Cana. Has He been "limited" in most weddings today?

Admittedly, it will not be easy to take a position in this area. But there may be those couples who will return to thank you.

Dr. Daniel Griffin noted, "People ostensibly have trouble relating to each other in marriage because of a dearth of premarital counseling and training . . . Marriages often fail because God was not consulted in the initial decision to marry" and so seldom *during* the marriage.<sup>5</sup>



#### Footnotes

1. Justine Anne Knight, "Divorce and Levels of Religious Participation in the Church of the Nazarene," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1979.

2. Daniel Lee Griffin, "Developing a Ministry to Divorced or Separated Persons Who Attend the First Baptist Church of Winston-Salem, North Carolina," unpublished D.Min. project, Southern Baptist Seminary, 1978 p. 136.

3. Harold Smith, "Life Beyond the Aisle," *United Evangelical Action* (Fall, 1980), p. 19.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

5. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

# A PASTOR'S WIFE IS A LAYPERSON TOO!

by Jamieline Johnson

Overland Park, Kansas

**H**ave you met the pastor's wife?" : . . "Call the pastor's wife, she will know the meeting time!" . . . "Since you are the pastor's wife, you know more people than anyone else; so the board has nominated you as chairman of the hostess committee." . . . "As pastor's wife, you probably have a greater concern for missions; would you allow your name to be on the ballot for missionary president?" . . . and to the prospective pastor: "Does your wife play the piano, or organ, and sing? Can she teach? Our pastor's wife has always taught our young adult class!" . . . I have heard statements like these countless times in my fifteen years as a minister's wife.

Many pastor's wives *are* gifted musicians. Many *are* equipped for teaching. Many minister's wives *do* have a genuine interest in missions. Because of our relationship to the pastor, we may know more people, or be more aware of the church calendar. As if an extra appendage of the pastor, we are often introduced as "the pastor's wife." Our possibilities for ministry are multiple, and thus it is not uncommon for the congregation, and for us, to have unreal expectations of our place in the church.

However, just because I am married to a minister, I do not want to be set above the laity. Neither do I want to consider myself, or to be considered, as "super-human," more capable or better equipped than others. I am just a woman who has responded to God's call to be His child. God made me a unique individual, with gifts to develop and use to their full potential for His service. God placed me in His family as a part of His body, to be ministered to, as well as to minister.

## AS A COMMITTED CHRISTIAN

Although there are various ministries to which God calls His children, one call is basic for all Chris-

tians—total commitment to Christ. This is the point at which we all begin. By keeping this fact in mind, we can hold in proper perspective our responsibility and involvement in the church. This must be our only motivation for service or else we will be busy for the glory of ourselves and not for the glory of God.

There was the time I accepted God's forgiving love and turned the control of my life over to Him. However, there is a continual committing to Him of every area of life. When I accepted His saving and sanctifying grace, I was not fully aware of all that life would hold. I am still not! Included in this commitment is being a pastor's wife. My husband has a divine call, and I am committed to go "whither he goest." This does not mean the church gets two employees for the price of one. (*Note to husband:* You have the responsibility to protect your wife at this point. The initial board interview is an ideal time for you or her to share her interests, making it clear she will serve according to her gifts and God's leading.) For every Christian a day-by-day communication with God is vital, committing to Him each new opportunity. I do not say yes because I am the pastor's wife. Through a committed life to Christ, I have the privilege just as any other layperson to seek God's direction, then answer yes or no accordingly.

I will grow with, and as a part of, the laity. God's command to love Him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength is no different because I am married to a clergyman. In response to God's love, I am committed to Him, not because I am a pastor's wife, but because I am a Christian.

## WITH VARIED GIFTS

God, in His all-knowing power, planned for each person to be a unique individual with varying gifts.

He did not create a society of clones to inhabit His world. However, in reference to the pastor's wife, this fact seems to be forgotten—not only by the laity, but frequently by the pastor, and his wife. We often try to fulfill a preconceived idea of being a pastor's wife. In so doing, we stifle the potential God has placed within each of us.

Paul's letters to the churches in Corinth and Ephesus describe the various gifts God bestows to His children (1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11, 12). Peter admonished, "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 3:10, NASB). We are included with the laity in these promises of receiving various gifts. God did not have only one pattern for a pastor's wife. There are as many patterns as there are pastors' wives. We, too, have been given a variety of gifts, with the responsibility to discover, develop, and use each one. Just as the church can be instrumental in guiding other laymen in the discovery of gifts and in providing avenues of utilization, it must provide the same opportunity for its pastor's wife.

We should involve ourselves in ministries that fit God's gifts to us rather than in ministries just because we are pastors' wives. It is also important to note that spiritual gifts are not doled out all at one time. Frequently God reveals to us another gift as we experiment and attempt something new! As we discover, develop, and use the gifts God has given us, rather than forcing ourselves to play an unnatural role, we will not only develop as part of the Body of Christ, but we will be instrumental in helping the laymen to use their gifts more effectively.

### IN THE MINISTERING BODY

God's purpose in giving a variety of gifts to His committed children is to develop a well-rounded church—His Body. Just as each part of the human body has a purpose and is dependent on every other part, thus also is each part of His Body. As a pastor's wife I am part of that Body, neither more

important nor less important than any other layman. Whatever part He has designed me to be, I am responsible to fulfill.

As Paul compares Christ's Body with the human body, he tells us that all members will suffer when one member suffers and that all members will rejoice when one member is honored (1 Cor. 12:12-27). This pictures the interrelatedness between the laity and the pastor's wife. When our people show appreciation to us in a special way, it also builds them up. We should accept their love and appreciation, and, in return, give them love and appreciation. Our gifts are used to minister to them, and their gifts, in turn, minister to us.

Paul did not just speak of honor; he says we suffer together. It is not uncommon for the laity to come to us when they hurt. We minister to them as we suffer with them. But remember, we are part of the same Body. We need to also be ministered unto when we suffer. However, there has been a myth that laymen should not know when we hurt. By not being open, we have kept others from using a gift to minister to us. (*Note to pastor:* Your wife needs your ministry to her just as the rest of the laymen. Remember, she is a part of the laity!) Paul tells us in Ephesians that the proper working of each individual part causes the Body to grow, being built up in love. It is as we minister and are ministered unto with love that we as pastors' wives develop and grow as a part of the Christian fellowship.

I do the things I do because of what it means to be a committed Christian, with gifts from God to be used as a part of His Body—not because I am the wife of a pastor. I do not serve the Lord because my husband is a minister. I serve the Lord for He is my God. This means I participate in the life of the church just as every committed Christian should. With my God-given gifts I find my proper place within the Body as a working and worshipping member. By following God's plan for His church, I can serve better than trying to be what I am not. Because I participate in the life of the church as a Christian woman, I am a layperson too!



## STAGES OF MEN (continued from page 33)

Cecil R. Paul has written an excellent book to help pastors as they relate to these concepts. *Passages of a Pastor: Coping with Yourself and God's People* is not a book to read in one sitting. It contains many valuable tools to aid you in understanding yourself and others. It is bound like a book but should be used like a workbook. If your interest in this subject is limited, this would be the one book this author would recommend. If your interest is great, then you might be interested in reading both of the research related volumes. Other books for continued reading are also listed below.

#### For Further Reading:

Cecil R. Paul, *Passages of a Pastor: Coping with*

*Yourself and God's People*, Zondervan Corporation 1981.

Daniel J. Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life* Random House, 1978.

Roger L. Gould, M.D., *Transformations: Growth and Change in Adult Life*, Simon and Schuster 1978.

#### Continued Reading:

Jim Conway, *Men in Midlife Crisis*, David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1980.

Gan Sheehy, *Passages: Predictable Crisis of Adult Life*, E. P. Dutton Company, 1980.



1. Daniel J. Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, New York, Ballantine Books, a division of Random House, Inc. Copyright 1978, pp. 6-7.

A layman shares ideas about—

# THE KIND OF PASTOR I NEED\*

by Ronald L. Mercer

*President, Xerox Corporation of Canada*

*\*This address was given in a chapel service at Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri.*

I am pleased to be here today because it gives me an opportunity to partially repay the debt which I feel to the Church of the Nazarene. I was brought up on a farm, and I am sure that I would not be where I am today if it had not been for the call of God on the life of a young pastor from Bethany Nazarene College, who took his Model T Ford, and drove out to that barren short-grass country of western Oklahoma to start a rural church.

It was in that church that my mother first heard the message of Christian holiness. She had some time before accepting Christ, but found it difficult to cope with being a farm wife and mother. The pressures and struggles of life caused her to have reactions which were foreign to that which she professed within her heart. She lived an up-and-down life until that young pastor came and shared with her the glorious message of holiness. She knelt at a rough wooden altar there in that little church and received the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

I know that if it had not been for that young man I would not be where I am today. I look at my peers from high school, college, and even my business associates who have not had the privilege that I was accorded, and I see how difficult their lives have become, and the bitter terrible darkness through which they now stagger as they see their lives

ripped apart by divorce, by alcoholism, by drugs in their family, and I stand in awe asking how could I have been so fortunate to have heard the preaching of someone who knew what it meant to preach holiness.

That's why Galatians 2:20 has meant so much to me in recent years, and I can hardly quote it without my eyes filling with tears when I think about what it means to be crucified with Christ. And yet to be alive in this world and to know that the life which I live now I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

I have often been tempted to state transient executive on my income-tax return because in my 20-year romance with Xerox Corporation we have lived in nine different houses in eight different cities. Let me tell you, as you move from culture to culture and from geographic area to geographic area, it's tough on you and on your family.

One of the things I have literally hammered into the minds of my children is the importance of belonging to a church that will provide you with that common thread, that common bond, knowing that whatever city we move into across the country there will be a local church with believers who will warmly and openly welcome us into their fellowship and provide us with that common bond of community which makes those disruptions much, much easier. I am satisfied that it is because of that common bond which we have felt with our fellow Nazarenes all across this country and into Canada that my children

have a warm place in their heart for the Church of the Nazarene.

One of the highlights of my life was in our church in Toronto, when I saw our pastor baptize my two teenagers, 16 and 15. I saw those kids declare their faith in Jesus Christ. I heard my son, who was going through difficult times with intense peer pressure, say, "It is not good enough to be born in a Christian home, and to have Christian parents. I have come to realize that I must make a decision to follow Christ. And I have made that decision."

That doesn't mean there can be no more problems, but I am just as sure as I am standing here this morning, that if we provide him with the help and the nurture he needs, God will give him the grace to take him through these difficult years. It has been because of a relationship with a loving, caring church, who thinks enough of its pastors to provide them with the kind of training you are receiving here at Nazarene Theological Seminary, that we have a wonderful and unique opportunity to serve Christ and to be supported by excellent pastors.

I do appreciate the seminary. I suppose that if my mother had had her way I would have been here, because she always thought that God was going to call me into the ministry, and she had me convinced of that too. And I was ready. In some respects I was always eager and waiting, but the call never came. It nevertheless kept me close to this institution and makes me proud of a church that recognizes that these times demand more and better training for pastors. We, laymen, present



to you a frightening and unique challenge. You need all the grounding, training, and experience you can get in order to be successful.

In the 1960s, Dr. Oscar J. Reed asked me to speak to a class at Bethany Nazarene College. The topic he chose for me was "My Dream for My Future Pastor." I kept those notes and I looked them up when I was asked to speak here. I was eager to read those notes and find out if my dream for my future pastor had changed with the passing years. I was quite surprised to find out that it had not changed, in fact, the kind of pastor that I would like to have now is the kind I do have now.

My pastor is Charles Muxworthy, who pastors the Toronto Immanuel Church. What kind of a pastor is he? Well, first of all, the thing that would describe him and should describe any pastor is, "a man awed by his responsibility as God's servant." He is eager to share God's limitless love particularly with those who make up his congregation. That understanding of God's compassionate love permeates every fiber of his being, it manifests itself in hundreds of ways that are visible to us in the congregation week after week.

It touches his words. It touches his actions. It motivates him. It reflects itself in a deep commitment which enables him to provide the kind of leadership which promotes the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the congregation. His sensitivity to the Holy Spirit makes it easy for him to be the kind of leader God intended. He is responsive to the direction of the Spirit.

It allows the flock to mature in Christian grace as we are guided and corrected by His Spirit. It manifests itself in the Wednesday prayer meetings when I often with small groups the pastor speaks to us from the Word of God, and I see him so touched and moved by the power of God that the tears of compassion roll down his cheeks. I often go away from those meetings thinking, That's the kind of pastor I must have. I must have a pastor who

cares for my soul enough that he is burdened for me.

He is also very much aware of the world around him. He looks at current events. He is able to be conversant with every member. He relates to their world.

I remember a pastor coming to serve in a rural church in a farming community. He was brought up in a major city back East. He didn't have the dimmest idea of which end of a cow gave milk. He said to me, "Do you know what one of my men said? He was talking about one of his cows, and he talked about her like he really loved her. Did you ever hear a thing so foolish?"

And I thought, Oh brother, if you don't begin to understand how these farmers think, they do view their cattle almost as part of their family. That's their life's blood. I don't have to tell you that that poor young man's tenure was very brief. The reason was that he made no attempt to understand how farmers think and feel and how they respond to the pressures around them. Thus he was seen as a mere professional preoccupied with his own agenda, and not a leader who "cared."

But that's not the kind of pastor I have. He understands and cares about us. He also understands the differences between *principles* and *patterns*. That's important to me. That gives him the opportunity to speak from the pulpit about those unchanging principles of God's Word which are just as relevant today as they were when the ancient scribes penned them. It also keeps his ministry from becoming distracted by those who create confusion because they want to measure God in the things we do and don't do.

It has not been that many years ago when a layman would not feel comfortable speaking to a group like this with a wedding ring on his hand. I don't know how that happened. I have a hunch, but I want to tell you that I believe wearing a wedding ring is a pattern.

The circle of men with whom I associate are not Nazarenes, and for the most part are not even Christians. But in that circle the

ones who wear wedding rings are ones who are making a statement and saying, "I am not available. I have made a commitment to one woman for life." Many of my business contacts who are not divorced but who seem to wish they were have taken off their wedding rings and seem to be saying, "Well, I'd just like to be available in case some unusual circumstance comes around."

Now, I don't think a wedding ring is always important. Maybe it is. If I took this ring off I would be no less faithful to my wife than I am with it on. But it says something to the circle of friends whom I am trying to influence, and so far for me it is important.

My pastor does not expect me to immediately, overnight, fit right into the Canadian mold. He knows that Nazarenes, particularly given this transient age, come from different backgrounds, different geographical areas, different homes, different pastors, and different churches. We have enormous opportunity to be divided. And if he weren't sensitive at that point, he could get off on all kinds of tangents that could split that congregation right down the middle.

We all bring into that church a part of that which we gather in our journeys, but my pastor focuses on those areas which unite us and bring us together. In so doing he is able to move right past all those nitpicking kinds of things that could divide us, and he helps us to be unified as a congregation around a common bond of faith.

As Reuben Welch says, "We really do need each other." The extent to which we focus on those things which unite us, we won't have time to look at those things which divide us. The more I think about that the more I am convinced that being united is really a biblical principle which ought to go through the church just as it has gone through business.

When you sit in training courses that teach you how to run an organization by promoting unity within an organization, they always tell you that you never solve all the differences. What you should do is look at those things

which unite the group, and those things which are strengths, and focus attention on those areas. Don't worry about all the rest. If the group becomes captivated in reaching the objective which the leader sets for them, they won't be bogged down by all the things that divide them. My pastor understands that very well.

He also knows the role which the church plays in my life. He knows that as a businessman I am often subject to kinds of problems that I don't really know how to handle. There are decisions which literally have no good answer. Some of them are so gray that it's very difficult to distinguish where the gray ends and the black begins, or where the white begins. He knows that struggling through some of those kinds of issues creates a need within me.

As I carry out my responsibilities, I am around people who give little or no thought to God in their lives. And yet recognizing my responsibility to live out Christian holiness in my world creates a constant drain on my spirit. When I come to church, I have a need to be restored and filled and to feel the grace of God coming into my life, cleansing me, and convicting me about the situations in which I have not represented the cause of Christ in the way that I really should have.

I have a motto on my desk that is a simple little plastic thing but it means a great deal to me. All it says is, "Lord, help me at the end of this day to be able to say there is nothing I cannot share with You, nothing for which I cannot give thanks." That little motto keeps me very honest.

Not long ago I was flying from Omaha back to New York City at the end of a very long day. I was tired and eager to get home. When I got on the plane I discovered that my pattern of arriving almost at flight time had gotten me into difficulty with the only seat left being in the smoking section. For an aggressive nonsmoker, that's the red rag in front of the bull.

I said to the stewardess, "Look, I understand the rules and I know you have to provide me a seat in the nonsmoking section. If you

can't, I'll get off this plane." She said "Okay, okay," and came back later and ushered me to a seat in the nonsmoking section.

After we had taken off somebody else sat down beside me. It was the Holy Spirit. He said, "How would you like to share your faith with this woman?" I said, "But I was right, she was trying to force something on me that is both illegal and inappropriate, and not consistent with the airline's own rules. I didn't use any profanity. I wasn't rude." And the more I talked the deeper the hole I dug. When I went up and apologized to her, it was very difficult.

But my pastor maintains the kind of environment in our church that allows me to do that, allows the Holy Spirit to say to me, "You blew it." It didn't mean I had backslidden or gone away from the Lord, but it meant that I had failed in a situation where I had a unique opportunity to demonstrate Christ's love and His patience and the commitment that I had made to Him in my life, and I blew it. The process of asking for her forgiveness did something for me, it helped me grow. Let me tell you something, I haven't done that since. In fact, I've even ridden in the smoking section since that time.

I appreciate my pastor's understanding of those kinds of issues, and the fact that he creates the kind of atmosphere that makes it easy for me to not hold those things back, not be defensive, not try to rationalize, but to come with an open heart and say, "Lord, I really am yours. And if there are areas where I have failed I want You to open up my heart to Your Holy Spirit and give me the grace to climb above those areas so that I can become the kind of man You want me to be."

I suppose the one thing that makes my pastor very special to me is that he makes himself vulnerable by admitting to me and to his congregation that he and his family face the same kinds of problems and pressures and temptations that we face. He has a son the same age as mine and so I understand some of his struggles.

He is willing to discuss his journey with us, and it helps us see him not only as our leader and our spiritual guide, but also as another of God's chosen people struggling with the same kinds of problems that we struggle with and trying to provide the kind of creative leadership that will make the church all that it should be. He exemplifies my idea of a leader who both loves and cares while leading the flock and is one to whom I can go and speak because I don't see him way up there at some spiritual level which I could never hope to attain. I have an identity with him, he is my brother in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He doesn't feel threatened by laymen, he surrounds himself with laymen who have a wide range of experiences and he uses every one of them, from the new teenager who just became a Christian, to the person who just transferred in last week. He gets them involved in the church and he feels comfortable in that role because he knows who he is and what he is called to. He is not threatened by any of us.

I think the reason is that my pastor knows there is a growing conviction in our world that the incredible problems facing us will not be solved by big powers and big actions, but by people. People like you and me, as we are motivated by the Holy Spirit to fulfill our world, to share our faith, to touch and change lives, and to share the discovery of values which make life worth living and give it meaning and joy.

I think our pastor has discovered what John Henry Jowett said when he talked about the life in Christ. He said, "This life is in His Son. The springs are nowhere else to be found. Not in elaborate theologies or in ethical ideas but to have the Son is to have life." My pastor has discovered that. That's the kind of pastor I have. That's the kind of pastor I always hope to have, and I will have if I am the kind of layman who makes him better, because one of the responsibilities I have as a layman is to help my pastor become the finest pastor it is possible for him to be.



## The Church: A Biblical—Theological Definition, Part II.

# THE BODY OF CHRIST

by Stephen Gunter, *Professor of Church History, Bethany Nazarene College, Bethany, Oklahoma*

**W**hen the apostle Paul used the metaphor “body of Christ” as a description of the Church, he coined a phrase that was unique. Oscar Seitz is of the opinion, “Never has Christian fellowship been pictured more graphically than when Paul wrote, ‘... we who are many are one body. . . .’” Seitz is correct in observing that Paul was describing something “so rare among men that it must be termed ‘supernatural,’ a special creation by God himself . . . .”<sup>1</sup>

Although it is a rather limited metaphor in the sense that it is distinctively Pauline, the “body of Christ” concept “forcefully suggests itself as the most mature result” of New Testament thinking about the Church. In spite of its distinctive Pauline form, this metaphor has unmistakable kinship with other images and statements in the rest of the New Testament. One might compare it with the Johannine figure of the vine and the branches (John 15: 1-8); with the spiritual house built on Christ as the cornerstone, where the holy priesthood offers its spiritual sacrifices through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:4f.; Heb. 13:15); or even the Church as the Bride of the Lamb (Rev. 12:2, 9; 22:17; 19:8).

Beyond the surface comparison, all of these metaphors have a single commonality. They all attempt to express the inner bond of the New Testament “people of God” with Christ, this people’s relation to God through Christ, the union of its members through Christ, and its “striving and journeying toward Christ as its goal.” The New Testament Church remains the “people of God,” but it is a people of God “newly constituted in Christ and

in relation to Christ.”<sup>2</sup> Hence we see the basis for Paul’s metaphor, “the body of Christ.”

It is readily discerned that the Body of Christ is not a single expression with an unchanging meaning. Paul’s thought remains extremely “flexible and elastic.” In one context the Body has one meaning, in another context it has another. At times the “members” signifies one thing, other times it denotes another idea. This variety of usage by the apostle is a warning against producing a single conclusive definition of the image, then trying to force that meaning into every passage.<sup>3</sup>

Along this same line of inquiry Ernest Best reminds us that the majority of commentators find in the phrase only a reference to Christ’s crucifixion, “The primary reference is to the death of Christ.”<sup>4</sup> Although it is correct to note that the truth is distorted by changing Paul’s words in Romans 7:4 to read, “You have died to the law through the Church,” it would violate Paul’s thought in this passage to disjoin the Church from this Body. Minear is correct when he notes that for Paul, “death and life are primary categories for ecclesiology, and the death and life of Christ were the primary clues to the fundamental choice: either a living death (Rom. 7:24) or a dying life (Rom. 7:4).”<sup>5</sup> The Church is continually coming into existence at the point where that choice is seen and made.

From the foregoing it is obvious that our investigation of the image “body of Christ” will be confined to the Pauline letters, because in them alone is the Church explicitly described as the Body of

Christ. Other writings make scattered and indirect allusions to this mode of thought,<sup>6</sup> but the decisive passages are those in the Pauline corpus, especially Romans 5—8.

In these chapters the apostle pictures Adam and Christ as the inclusive representatives of the humanities in whose solidarity every man must live.<sup>7</sup> Those who live in solidarity with the first Adam constitute one body; those in solidarity with the second Adam constitute another. The two bodies are the only two solidarities open to men. The two are universals and yet they are mutually exclusive. The first solidarity is embraced in the term “the body of death” (Rom. 7:24); the opposing solidarity is variously described as “life through the one man Jesus Christ” (5:17), “union with him in a resurrection like his” (6:5), “eternal life in Christ Jesus” (6:23), those who are “in the spirit” (8:9), or “those whose spirits are alive because they are in Christ and Christ is in them” (8:10).<sup>8</sup>

In all of this discussion of the two solidarities Paul makes use of both the singular and the plural—body and bodies. Whenever the unities and solidarities are of central importance, whenever Paul is considering the mutually exclusive universals (his dominant angle of vision), the singular “body” is used (cf. Rom. 6:6; 7:24; 8:13, 23). In the few instances that he takes the standpoint of an individual person whose “struggle of decision is giving an unalienable particularity to his own existence, then the distributive plural is more appropriate”<sup>9</sup> (cf. Rom. 8:11).

Thus the term “body” enabled Paul to convey in almost “shorthand fashion”: (1) the universal solidarity of all persons in one man, be it the first or second Adam; (2) the particular selfhood of each person with his separate decisions; (3) the various acts by which a man can be transformed from one solidarity to another; and (4) the overarching promise and hope of a single consummation for the whole creation. Minear further brings this into perspective with a summary chart of the implications of the two solidarities, Christ and Adam.<sup>10</sup>

IN ADAM	IN CHRIST
All die.	All shall be made alive.
Death rules.	All reign in life.
All sin.	All receive gift of righteousness.
Sin rules.	Grace rules.
Men's bodies are instruments of wickedness.	Men's bodies become instruments of righteousness.
The law of sin and death enslaves men.	The law of the Spirit frees men.

There can be little doubt that this entire context is an address to the Church. Romans 7:4 states, “Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another (ἐτέρω) to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God.” In this verse there are two features that are very important for our discussion: the character of the community which Paul addressed and the character of

the transition from one realm to the other. Regarding the character of the community, the term “brethren” is referring to the Church. The “you” is referring to all believers.<sup>11</sup> Of the believer’s transition, three specific things are said. They have died to the law. They belong to the risen Christ. Their new function is to bear fruit for God. These three are fundamental to the Church as the “body of Christ.”

Two primary figures connected with Paul’s use of the image of the Body must not be forgotten—that of the “head” of the Body and that of the “members” of the Body. As the apostle uses them, they are independent figures and not necessarily derivative uses from the idea of the physical body. Although these terms are often so used, and such is a very logical usage, Paul oscillates among various ways of using the metaphor in such a way as to defy and narrow definition of the analogy. At times the stress is on the subjection of the Body to the Head, sometimes on the responsibility of the members to one another, sometimes on the unity of the Body, and at other times on growth by receiving life and nourishment from the Head.<sup>12</sup>

The image of Christ as the Head of the Church is closely related to the image of the Church as the Body of Christ, though not entirely a logical derivative of it. The metaphor appears three times in Ephesians (1:22; 4:15; 5:23) and three times in Colossians (1:18; 2:10; 2:19). Here Christ’s headship of the cosmos is directly connected with His headship of the Church. Indeed, it may be based upon it in the sense that Christ’s redeeming work makes Him Head of the entire universe.

In the context of these passages in Ephesians and Colossians, three relationships of the Church to Christ are suggested: (1) Christ is the authority over the Church. The Church is not autonomous, it is subject to Christ as Lord, through the Spirit ((Eph. 5:24). The Church must listen for and discern the voice of the Lord above all other voices; His will must be regnant. In this sense the headship of Christ is equivalent to His lordship over the Church. Christ expresses Himself through the Church as His instrument.

(2) The Church finds her goal in Christ. Christ, who has incorporated into himself all the purposes of God for the world, is the total ideal toward which the Church directs her efforts. It is to “grow up in every way into him who is the head” (Eph. 4:14), and is to “hold fast to the head, from whom the whole body . . . grows with a growth that is from God” (Col. 2:19). This metaphor signifies not only that the Church sets Christ in His character and person as her distant goal, to be reached eschatologically, but that Christ the Head is working in and with the Church now to bring her to His goals. Hence is He said to “nourish and cherish” her (Eph. 5:29) and to “cleanse and sanctify” her with the purpose of presenting her to himself in “ultimate eschatological splendor” as “without spot or wrinkle,” “holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27).

(3) The final implication of the headship relation is that of the unity of the Church with Christ in

(continued on page 58)

# GUIDELINES FOR INSPIRATIONAL PREACHING

by Charles H. Strickland\*

**F**rom the pews of our American churches comes the disquieted cry of laymen for the return of biblical preaching. It seems significant that a caring and biblically based pastoral ministry is number one on the list for growing churches. No generation has ever offered greater challenge to the Christian pulpit than the confused and frustrated present one.

What is preaching? Dr. Andrew W. Blackwood defines it as "divine truth voiced by a chosen personality to meet human needs." Austin Phelps calls preaching "an oral address to the popular mind upon religious truth contained in the Scriptures and elaborately treated with a view to persuasion." Elizabeth Achtemeier in her book *Creative Preaching* defines preaching as "the fashioning of a sermon into such an artistic and effective whole that the Word of God, spoken through the text, is allowed to create that reality of which it speaks within the individual and corporate lives of the gathered congregation."

It is considered that three principles are involved in the development of a good preacher: (1) First is the mastery of the techniques of sermon making. The material available in this area is so abundant that any minister through self-study can learn the techniques of making the sermon inspiring and meaningful. (2) Second is the deep spirituality of the preacher. The minister really preaches what he actually is, and there can never be a substitute for a close walk with God. (3) Third is a faith in the gospel we proclaim. This comes from experience and creates a ministry with strong convictions in the basics of faith and doctrine.

Let us consider some guidelines for inspirational preaching.

## INSPIRATIONAL PREACHING EMPLOYS STIMULATING LANGUAGE

Words are the tools a preacher uses to interpret and inform, to witness and inspire. Special attention should be given to a mastery and proper usage of language. English is the richest language in the world with a vocabulary of 800,000 words. The average college graduate is familiar with about 100,000 words. The average person uses only about 2,000. We are told that approximately 500 words do

nearly two-thirds of the average daily work. These 500 words contain, however, nearly 14,700 definitions, so we can see the problem of understandable communication.

Preaching could be more inspirational by upgrading the use of language. Some suggestions for good language usage would include the following:

1. Use specific, accurate terms.
2. Be simple—define terms which may not be easily understood in the message. Avoid double meanings.
3. Use suggestion terms which stir the hearer's imagination. (The Lord is my shepherd, etc.)
4. Use language that is natural and informal.

## INSPIRATIONAL PREACHING ACCENTUATES THE CENTRALITIES

There is abundant evidence that a great deal of modern Protestant preaching is on marginal issues. This type of preaching is, of course, easier and some feel more interesting. It also appeals to those who are tempted to say something *new* instead of something *true*. It must be admitted that doctrinal preaching is not easy, but it must also be observed that doctrinal preaching on the great biblical themes points the way to life-changing experiences through the grace of our Lord. This type of ministry brings comfort and sustains faith in the midst of life's troubles. An honest survey of the spiritual needs of the people and their deep frustrations challenges any Spirit-anointed preacher to keep to the great centralities of Christian experience and practice. Use the big themes—ride the high tides of biblical revelation—and you will discover a warm



\*Charles H. Strickland is General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene.

and rewarding response from persons seeking to find God's will for their lives.

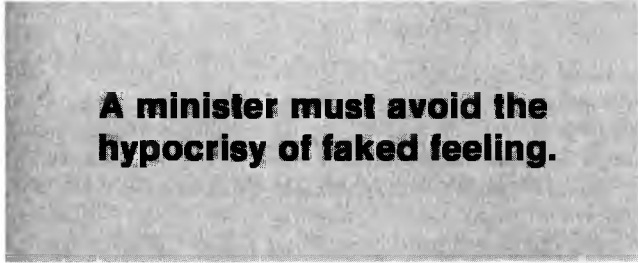
To accomplish this, attention must be given to sound exegesis. The elements of exegesis involve a careful examination of the passage of scripture under consideration, a faithfulness to the literary and historical context, and a keen observation and interpretation of the text in the light of the biblical revelation as a whole.

## INSPIRATIONAL PREACHING EMPLOYS ILLUSTRATIONS SKILLFULLY

Illustrations are like windows in a building; they are designed to allow light to enter. A structure made entirely of windows cannot be too functional. A sermon composed of a series of stories cannot feed the flock of God. We, therefore, acknowledge a danger in the unskillful employment of illustrations in the message. They must not be a distraction, or too long, or too elaborate; nor must they be too complicated. Illustrations should make clear what is being said in the message.

A study of the ministry of Jesus reveals a skillful use of several sources of illustration.

1. *The literary parallel.* Naaman and Elijah are used in the sermon at Nazareth. John the Baptist is illustrated by reference in the Book of Kings to the defiance of Elijah against Jezebel and Ahab. The minister will find splendid literary illustrations



**A minister must avoid the hypocrisy of faked feeling.**

from the incidents and stories found in his general reading.

2. *The literary quotation.* Jesus used many Old Testament phrases and sayings to illustrate His thoughts and teachings. To the modern preacher today there is a great treasury of Christian writings and poetry which provide an endless stream of illustrative materials. Some of the greatest illustrations may be found in the Bible itself.

3. *Historical events.* The parable of the pounds in Luke 19 and the parable of the marriage of the king's son have a parallel in historical events of the times. History provides a rich source of illustration.

In addition to the sources just described, the preacher will glean many good illustrations from the natural world as well as his own life experiences.

## INSPIRATIONAL PREACHING INVOLVES THE EMOTIONS

Two extremes are experienced with regard to emotions in preaching. One is to attempt to preach entirely on the emotional level; the other is to employ no emotion—a protest against an emotional approach. It is true that most congregations reject

the insincere emotional approach of pious phraseology, special “ministerial tone,” “tear-jerking stories,” etc. It must, however, be remembered that true emotion is the center of volition in impacting a crowd, and a minister must communicate feeling on a nonverbal as well as verbal level.

The emotional well-being of the preacher is of great importance. A sermon, to be inspiring and effective, must be presented in a warmly human manner, and the preacher must communicate a spirit of love and concern which supports the message. A minister must avoid the hypocrisy of faked feeling. Some preaching fails because it lacks genuine passion. Abraham Lincoln was invited to hear a certain preacher. Following the service he was asked his opinion on the sermon. He is said to have replied, “I do not believe what he preached, but he convinced me that he believes it.”

How does a minister maintain the constant glow as he faces the responsibilities of the pulpit ministry? (1) Prayer is the chief way. There can be no substitute for a personal prayer life. (2) I would suggest also the deepening of one's faith in preaching which comes through experience. (3) I must also mention care in handling the Word of God. (4) Possibly greatest of all, is the experiencing of the sublime anointing of the Holy Spirit. A heart warmed by the Spirit will warm other hearts.

## INSPIRATIONAL PREACHING IS PERSUASIVE

Persuasive preaching has relevance—it applies to human problems. It also produces an involvement on the part of the hearer. The intent of persuasive preaching is to produce a verdict and a decision for Christ. This intention must be present from the start.

Let us consider some preparation factors which make the sermon more persuasive:

1. The invisible presence of the intended hearers. Imagine the congregation sitting before you as you *prepare* the message.

2. A knowledge of the needs of the congregation. This can only be obtained through contact with the people.

3. A sympathy for the people.

Consider also some factors in the public service which facilitate making the message persuasive.

(a) The preacher must be distinctly heard and clearly understood. Good sound systems are a must in large congregations.

(b) The sermon appeal must be individualized. Each person should hear the sermon as a personal message.

(c) Opportunity should be given to respond.

(d) The minister should seek and follow the guidance, inspiration, and conviction of the Holy Spirit.

(e) The sermon should awaken feelings of some touch of passion. Lord Chesterfield advised his son, “Whenever you would persuade or prevail, address yourself to the passions—if you can once engage people's pride, love, pity, ambition on your side, you need not fear what their reason can do against you.”



# THE GOOD NEWS

by Alex Deasley

*Professor of New Testament, Nazarene Theological Seminary*

*Scripture: Romans 3:21-26 (RSV)*

## INTRODUCTION

The tale told in the Epistle to the Romans to this point is sorry and depressing indeed. Ranging across the full spectrum of human life, it fails to find goodness anywhere. Whether in the graphic description of the moral depravity of the Gentile, or in the piercing analysis of the best ethical attainment of the Gentile and the Jew, the result is the same: "none is righteous, not one" (3:10.\* "Every mouth is stopped; the whole world is guilty before God" (3:19).

Just here, however, at the pit of human failure, a contrasting note is injected: "But now" (3:21). The "now" is not logical but temporal, referring to "the present time" (literally, "the now time," verse 26). This "present time" is distinguished from previous or past time because in it a righteousness of God of a different kind "has been manifested" (verse 21). As we shall see (and as 1:17 would lead us to expect) this new kind of righteousness is manifested in the gospel. In other words, since Calvary mankind is living in the "now-time" of salvation, and the "Bad News" of condemnation has found its answer in the "Good News" of the gospel. What that is we shall discover as we explore the passage before us, a passage which constitutes something of a turning point in the developing argument of the Epistle.

## I. BACKGROUND

We may begin with several general observations about the passage.

1. First, there is a striking intensity in the *mood* of these verses. The staccato syntax—the drifting participle in verse 24, the absence of finite verbs, and the piled-up prepositional phrases in verses 25-26—though ironed out in most English translations, gives the impression that the passage has been forged under intense pressure. Yet another index of this stylistic compression is the fact that, in the original, verses 21-26 constitute a single sentence, the kind of sentence in which the built-up pressure of thought forces out another and yet another phrase. However, as Cranfield observes, the real

power of the passage lies in the content even more than in the style: "for it proclaims the fact that one decisive, once for all, redemptive act of God, the revelation both of the righteousness which is from God and also of the wrath of God against human sin, the once for all revelation which is the basis of the continuing revelation of the righteousness (1.17) and of the wrath (1.18) of God in the preaching of the gospel, has now taken place."<sup>1</sup> The import of this will be drawn out below more fully; but enough has been said to indicate why this passage should display a certain explosive character.

2. Second, there is a marked individuality in the *language* of these verses. Especially is this so in verses 24-26 in which Paul employs expressions used by him elsewhere either rarely or not at all. Thus "propitiation" (verse 25) appears only here in his writings as does "passing over"; "sins" (Greek *hamartema*, verse 25) only at 1 Cor. 6:18 besides here; "forbearance" (verse 25) only elsewhere at Rom. 2:4; "put forward" (verse 25) only here in that sense; "blood" is used by Paul elsewhere only where he is quoting or using traditional early Christian language (as at Rom. 5:9; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:25, 27; Eph. 1:7; 2:13). This suggests that in these verses Paul is drawing upon phrases and expressions used in early Christian worship, perhaps in this instance, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.<sup>2</sup>

3. Third, there is a singular breadth in the *idea* of the passage. There can be little doubt about what the central idea is: it is the righteousness of God, an idea which, in its various forms ("righteousness," "justify") occurs no fewer than seven times within the space of six verses. Indeed, verse 26 declares explicitly that the purpose of Christ's death is "to show God's righteousness." What must be clearly understood is that the "righteousness—justify" idea has a wide field of meaning, and the single Greek term which underlies it does not always have the same meaning,<sup>3</sup> and indeed, can carry more than one shade of meaning in a single context. What this spectrum of shades is in this passage we shall attempt to discover as the exegesis proceeds.



## II. FROM BACKGROUND TO EXEGESIS

The theme of the present passage, then, is God's righteousness, and the opening verse implies that this has been and is now disclosed in a new way. Romans 3:21 thus harks back to 1:17. There the reason Paul gives for being proud of the gospel is that "in it the righteousness of God is revealed," a statement which (as we saw) means that in the gospel we see God's way of putting men right, an idea which quickly passes over into that of giving them His gift of righteousness. However, 1:18—3:20 shows a very different process at work in which man has either abandoned himself to wickedness (1:18-32), or has depended on his native goodness to commend him to God (2:1—3:20). But the latter is no more acceptable to God than the former; indeed every reference to righteousness in the latter section underscores the futility of human efforts at self-redemption (2:5, 13; 3:5, 10, 20). "No human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law" (3:20).

It is precisely at this point when the hopelessness of man's efforts at self-commendation stand exposed in their shallowness and feebleness that Paul returns to the "Good News": "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law" (3:21). In the Greek text the point is made more emphatically by the omission of the definite article before "righteousness": "But now a righteousness of God has been revealed," that is a new kind of righteousness. It is this new kind of righteousness of which the gospel consists, and Paul proceeds to set forth its chief features. We may list them as follows.

### A. *It Is in Contrast to the Righteousness Which Is Based on Law-Observance* (verse 21)

Three points are made regarding the relationship of this new kind of righteousness to the old variety.

1. First, it is "apart from law." Although in some translations the noun is definite (e.g., KJV, which renders: "without *the* law"), in the original it is indefinite. The meaning is therefore: "apart from a legal type of obedience." The preceding verse gives the sense when it says that no one will be justified "by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin" (verse 20). Verse 28 expresses the same point: "For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law." This indicates clearly that by the phrase "apart from law" Paul means "on another basis than law-observance."

In short, whereas in the past men have sought to assure themselves of God's favor by strenuous and feverish efforts to live up to the demands of the law, now that has been changed. A new way of righteousness—God's way of righteousness—has now been revealed. This makes it clear that in this verse the phrase "the righteousness of God" means primarily "God's way of putting men right." Of course, God's way of putting men right shows also the kind of righteousness He possesses as well as the kind of righteousness He imparts, but the shade of meaning that is uppermost in this verse is that which denotes God's active righteousness or His activity to put sinners right, i.e., to save them.

2. Second, this new way of righteousness has but recently been revealed: "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested" (verse 21). The verb (in the perfect tense) means "has been and is now manifested," referring to a past event whose effects still continue. In a word, God has done something in the recent past which indicates that there is now in operation a new way in which sinners may be put right with Him. What that something was is made plain in the later references to the redemption effected through Christ's blood (verses 24-25). Calvary is the event in mind.

This contains within itself a truth which will be developed explicitly later but which in any case is fatal to any human pretension at self-redemption: namely, that Calvary was not man's doing, but God's doing. Before ever man could do anything to save himself, God did something first. There is something prior to any and every response of man, even and including the response of faith, and that is the saving deed of the Cross. As Cranfield says, this "points to the decisiveness for faith of the gospel events in their objectiveness as events which took place at a particular time in the past and are quite independent of, and distinct from the response of men to them."<sup>4</sup>

3. Third, although the new way of righteousness is "apart from law," "the law and the prophets bear witness to it." "The law and the prophets" here refers to the Old Testament, which Paul holds attests the new way of righteousness. So in saying that the new way of righteousness is "apart from law" he does not mean to say it is in contradiction to the Old Testament.

Paul does not define what he means by the term "bear witness" and there is no other instance of his use of it to refer to the relationship between the Old Covenant and the New. However, we can infer his meaning readily from passages in this Epistle such as 4:1-25; 9:25-33; 10:6-13. What he says there is that, in essence, the basis of salvation has never been human effort but always submission in faith to God's grace. There is therefore no *fundamental* discontinuity between the Old Testament and the New, even though in the latter the new way of salvation has been effected with a finality and a clarity that was never true of the old.

What this amounts to is that in this passage (as well as elsewhere), Paul uses the word "law" in two senses. Sometimes he uses it to refer to the Old Testament as a whole or the first division of it (21b), that is, to the Old Testament in its character as the declaration of the law or will of God; this use is favorable. At other times he uses the term to denote that same entity used (or misused) by misguided sinners who conceitedly employ the Old Testament as a rule book whose perfect observance in their own energy and effort they may use to commend themselves to God. This is an unfavorable use, and marks the difference between living lawfully (not merely in conformity with the letter of the law but with its spirit) and living "law-ishly" (in terms of the letter only). In the former sense the new way of the

righteousness is attested by the law; in the latter it is "apart from law."

#### B. *It Is Based on Faith and Faith Alone* (verse 22a)

The former point leads irresistibly to the second. If the new way of righteousness is not based on human deeds it must be based on something else, and that something else is faith in the divine deed of the Cross. The point is made emphatically. First, the subject is repeated together with the (untranslatable) adversative particle from verse 21: "(but) the righteousness of God." Second, the root "faith" is mentioned twice: "through *faith* . . . for all who *believe*." Third, the object of faith is specified: "faith in Jesus Christ" (KJV and kindred versions which render "of Jesus Christ" preserve the literality of the original at the expense of making the meaning plain). Fourth—and a point which will be elaborated forthwith—this new way of righteousness is for all.

The centrality of faith in Paul's gospel has already been seen in 1:17, but it emerges again and again: not surprisingly, since it is the divinely provided drawbridge into the citadel of eternal safety. "It can hardly be better defined," says Barrett, "than as the opposite of man's self-confident or self-despairing attempt to establish a proper relationship between himself and God by legal (that is, by moral or religious) means. Instead of concentrating his hope upon himself—he directs it towards God, and in particular towards a creative act of God's grace."<sup>5</sup>

#### C. *It Is Made Freely and Universally Available Through the Redemption Effected by Christ* (verses 22b-24)

Paul's account of the new way of righteousness thus far has been sketchy and confined to basic principles. Now he begins to fill the form with content. If, as Paul has argued, the sinner cannot save himself by his own efforts but only by faith in God, then is there a traceable "mechanism" by which this takes place? It is in reply to this and related questions that these verses are directed. Two points in particular receive stress, points which must be answered convincingly if the new way of righteousness is to maintain credibility. These are as follows.

1. In Scope, the New Way of Righteousness Is Universal (22b-24a). The note of universality has already been sounded in verse 22a: "for *all* who believe." This is now repeated, necessarily so, for having proved the universality of sin (3:9 ff.) Paul must now prove that the power to redeem is likewise universal. Hence he writes: "there is no distinction" (22b). Verse 23 likewise affirms the universality of sin: "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." But the real point of emphasis rests in verse 24, although this is obscured by the grammar, for the dependent participle ("being justified") is really the main verb in terms of the thought. The RSV captures the meaning: "Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace." In other words God's power to put them right (or justify them) is co-extensive with the power of sin to put them wrong. Moreover, this happens "by God's grace as a gift" (24a). The earlier chapters of the Epistle have shown that man cannot earn or merit God's salvation. If ever he is to receive it he must receive it for nothing; and this is exactly what Paul declares to be the case.

2. In Effect, the New Way of Righteousness Is Liberating (24b). In an important sense the entire paragraph (3: 21-26) represents a series of concentric circles moving progressively toward the center of the answer to the question: How is salvation brought about? Already we have reviewed several of these answers: "apart from law" (verse 21); "through faith" (verse 22); "by grace" (verse 24a). Now we come to another (with more to follow): "through

redemption" (verse 24b). The word *redemption*, largely a dead metaphor in current English, was in common use in the Roman world to denote such transactions as the emancipation of slaves. The new way of righteousness is no fake or pretence but involves liberation from the power of sin. But there is another overtone to the word *redemption*. Not only does it denote liberation, but in certain contexts it denotes "liberation at a price"; and the fact that the redemption effected by Christ is at once described in terms of "propitiation" and "blood" suggests that it bears this meaning here.<sup>6</sup> Salvation brings freedom, but at what a price to God!

#### D. *Its Purpose Is to Vindicate God's Righteous Character While Making Sinners Righteous* (verses 25-26)

These verses have given rise to much debate, which there is no space to go into here. In terms of sentence structure they constitute a single relative clause in which the main element ("whom God set forth," etc.) is followed by three explanatory word-groups designed to give the reason for the action described in the relative clause. There is a certain emphasis about the last of these, if only because it is the only one which constitutes a clause. For that reason it seems to express the overriding intent of the verses, and if we can clarify that purpose we may be enabled to interpret the earlier phrases more accurately.

Verse 26 is translated thus in NIV (referring to God's action in setting forth Christ on the Cross): "He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies the man who has faith in Jesus." It is possible that the word "and" should be taken not connectively but intensively: "so as to be just *even* while justifying," etc.<sup>7</sup>

Now the point which emerges from this statement, however it be translated, is that it is a *problem* for God to put right those who are wrong, to accept those whose sins make them unacceptable. That this is so is written clearly across the pages of the Old Testament. "Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked" (Exod. 23:7, KJV). For God to justify the ungodly has the appearance of condoning ungodliness, and when God approves sin, where is righteousness? At the same time, unless God accepts the sinner, the sinner's case is hopeless. What is needed is some way in which God may be "just even while justifying" the sinner. Now it is Paul's claim that exactly such a solution has been found in the gospel: a solution which saves the sinner without approving sin. More precisely, the solution has been found in Christ Jesus whom God has set forth for that very purpose. How does Paul understand this?

1. On the one hand Christ, in His sacrificial death, embodies God's condemnation of sin. This is the meaning of the two sacrificial terms used here: "propitiation" and "blood." The former has disappeared from most modern translations, being replaced by such substitutes as "expiation" (RSV), "sacrifice of atonement" (NIV), etc. "Propitiation" has been objected to on the ground that it implies the appeasement of the irrational anger of God which is a sub-Christian notion. That is no doubt true, but overlooks the fact that there is such a thing as the righteous anger of God against sin: a reality which Paul has been describing as the chief threat to man's eternal salvation since 1:18. And unless that righteous condemnation is removed righteously, there can be no righteousness for the sinner. But that condemnation has been accepted by Christ "in his blood." Again, "blood" is a sacrificial term denoting life laid down in death as the penalty for sin. Thus, in the death of Christ sin in its wickedness is acknowledged and condemned by God in the acceptance of its due penalty by His Son on the Cross.

2. On the other hand Christ, in that same sacrificial death, embodies the forgiving love of God. For the death which He dies is not something imposed on Him by God, nor something chosen by Him apart from the Father's will. The initiative throughout is God's, who put Christ forward as a propitiation. The propitiation required by His righteous condemnation of sin He provides out of His gracious love of the sinner. This indeed is to propound a "paradox of propitiation," but only a paradox can enable God to be "just even while justifying the ungodly."

Cranfield's measured words gather together all of the requisite elements in Paul's thought at this point when he says: "We take it that what Paul's statement that God purposed Christ as a propitiatory victim means is that God, because in His mercy He willed to forgive sinful men and, being truly merciful, willed to forgive them righteously, that is, without in any way condoning their sin, purposed to direct against His own very Self in the person of His Son the full weight of that righteous wrath which they deserved."<sup>8</sup> To put it otherwise: what we have in the Cross is neither the holy justice of God alone, nor the forgiving love of God alone, but—in the words of Psalmist and prophets—righteousness and peace kissing each other (Ps. 85:10, the work of "a righteous God and a Savior" (Isa. 45:21). It is only as these are conjoined, only as sin is condemned in the selfsame act in which it is forgiven, that the sinner can be saved with a salvation which saves his soul without destroying his conscience.

P. T. Forsyth has expressed the point with piercing eloquence: "None can pity our human case to saving purpose but a God who treats it with more holy grace even than heart pity, and who is stronger to save our conscience even than He is quick to heal our wounds. Our suffering can only be finally dealt with by Him who is more concerned about our sin; who is strong enough to resist pity till grief has done its gracious work even in His Son; and who can endure not only to see the world's suffering go on for its moral ends, but to take its agony upon His own heart and feel it as even the victims do not, for the holy purpose, final blessing and the far victory of His love. And this is what we have in the atoning cross of Christ. On the world scale we have it there alone. And the grace of the cross is as central to our human compassion as its judgment is to our public righteousness. The greatest human need is not only holy love, but *holy love*."<sup>9</sup>

After Calvary there can be no doubting God's character and purpose. Prior to then it might have been imagined that God was indifferent toward sin, since He did not exact its penalty. Far from indifference, however, it showed His forbearance. But that forbearance was grounded in His age-long intention to deal with sin decisively at the Cross "where heaven's love and heaven's justice meet." Since then there can be no doubt that God is both just and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus. Such is the essence of the new way of righteousness.

### III. FROM EXEGESIS TO EXPOSITION

The passage we have reviewed has been described as "the heart of the gospel preached by Paul."<sup>10</sup> In the light of this we seek to direct our study from desk to pulpit.

#### A. Paul's Points of Emphasis

In this summary statement of the gospel what are the points he underscores as being central to the faithful proclamation of the Good News?

1. The futility of human works, moral and religious, to commend us to God. The new way of righteousness is "apart from law." We may remember that, if there is a rooted attachment to legalism in human nature, there is

also a point at which, under the Spirit's guidance, men become weary of self-effort. Matthew 11:28-30 was addressed to such as these.

2. Faith in Christ as the alternative to human effort.

3. Acceptance with God received as a gift purchased by Christ Jesus. The corollary of the truth that salvation is "apart from law" is that it is "by His grace as a gift."

4. The proclamation of the Bad News along with the Good News. This point is exhibited in numerous ways in verses 25-26.

(a) It is shown in that while God's grace is free it is not cheap. The grace which saves is the grace of the Cross.

(b) It is shown in that while God saves, it is through Christ as a propitiation, by His blood.

(c) It is shown in that while God forgives the sinner, it is in a way that simultaneously condemns the sin, so that God "might be just even while justifying him who believes in Jesus."

What this amounts to is that the Cross is proclaimed not simply as the symbol of the forgiving and redeeming love of God, but also as the symbol of the forgiving and redeeming love of God, but also as the symbol of the divine condemnation of sin. James Denney tells of a fisherman friend (a convert of D. L. Moody's) who once lost his bait without catching anything because the barb had been broken from the hook. "It was my friend himself who made the application of this, when he said that this was exactly what happened when people preached the love of God to men but left out of their gospel the essential truth that it is Christ on the Cross, the substitute for sinners, in whom that love is revealed. In other words, the condemnation of our sins in Christ upon His Cross is the barb on the hook. If you leave that out of your gospel, I do not deny that your bait will be taken; men are pleased rather than not to think that God regards them with goodwill; your bait will be taken but you will not catch men. You will not create in sinful human hearts that attitude to Christ which created the New Testament. You will not annihilate pride, and make Christ the Alpha and the Omega in man's redemption."<sup>11</sup>

We may well ask ourselves whether the Pauline emphases are present in our preaching—and in the Pauline proportions.

#### B. A Possible Presentation

We may well ask how such a paragraph as Romans 3:21-26, so profound in its theological penetration, so compact in its expression, and so comprehensive in its scope, can be fashioned for pulpit use. Two suggestions may be offered.

1. There is enough material to provide a doctrinal series on "The New Way of Righteousness" or "The Doctrine of the Atonement." Some of the exegetical sections above singly or in combination suggest lines on which several sermons might be developed.

2. Since Paul uses this passage to give an overview of God's way of putting men right, a single sermon would be possible, though the successive elements would receive only brief treatment. Possibilities for outlining are infinite, but the following suggestions may be offered. In keeping with the general theme and title "The Good News," these divisions may do justice to the emphases of the passages:

I. The Good News of Righteousness Through Faith (verses 21-22a)

II. The Good News of Righteous Through Grace (verses 22b-24)

III. The Good News of Righteousness Through Holy Love (verses 25-26)

(Footnotes on page 61)

# CHRISTMAS IS FOR EVERYONE

by Neil Hightower, *President, Canadian Nazarene College*

**Scriptures:** "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Christmas did not happen to give parents something to do in December, or department stores a sales theme, or the Salvation Army a reason for collecting food and clothing, or churches a plot for a pantomime.

Christmas is not bound by one set of traditions, nor one class of people, but is for everyone, because Christ, the center Person of Christmas, is for everyone. The angels sang, "which shall be to all people." They also sang, "unto you this day," signifying that it is personal as well as universal. Jesus, as a son of Abraham, was a Jew; but as a son of Adam, he was a man for the whole world.

Christmas is for everyone, and especially for children. Perhaps they keep it better and enjoy it more because they have an abundance of spiritual imagination. Like the little boy who wrote, "Dear Santa: I think you should send my grandma a big present, because she knew you when you were a little boy."

Or the reply of the four year-old girl when told by her grandmother that she didn't have television when she was a little girl: "What did your mother send you away from when you were bad?"

Christmas is more than a warm feeling, or a philosophical turn of mind. It is a warm feeling but transcends it. It is God breaking into human helplessness with the Light, and with a Voice . . . the eternal Word.

Christmas doesn't come to you because you are good, but because you believe in the Christ of God, who is full of grace and truth. Christmas is not a perpetual manger scene, but celebrates the grace that Christ gives, "the power to become the sons of God," according to John 1:12. Christ, the full one, is able to fill us. Even unbelievers will celebrate Christmas in spite of themselves, for it is both a faith and a judgment.

What is the irreducible essence of Christmas? What is the essential lyric of the angelic choir?

**CHRISTMAS IS GOD INVESTING HIMSELF WITH HUMAN EXPERIENCE**

A. Jesus is the Infinite Word turning His voice to the finite sphere of earth. He is the uncreated, unending God. John 1:1 testifies that "the Word was God," and verse 18 says that He was "the only begotten Son." He is of the same essence or sub-

stance as God the Father, eternally generated as the Son.

B. Jesus is the Incarnated Word translating the thoughts of God into the readable expression of the human race. Why did Jesus Christ become flesh?

1. That He might obey the law of God in the nature that had broken the law.
2. That He might die—bearing the curse of the law in our stead.
3. That He might have experiential sympathy with the race of man.

Jesus was made flesh from the body of the Virgin Mary, through the generation of the Holy Spirit. The Virgin Birth of our Lord is still the "battleground" of faith and unbelief. The Son of God did not acquire personhood by the Incarnation. He exists from all eternity. But He did acquire humanity. He was not an "appearance" but a real, flesh-and-blood Man.

C. Jesus is the Involved Word. He tabernacled, or pitched His tent, in the moving stream of humanity. He was irresistibly drawn to the plight of the common man. He had compassion on them, because He saw them as sheep without a shepherd. He took up their cause against a tradition-bound, insensitive leader-class.

Christmas is supremely the season to demonstrate our involvement in the cry of humanity. Earl Dettman, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a true example of this. For the past 18 years he has been taking two weeks of his annual vacation each December, to distribute 40,000 toys to needy children.

This unusual vacation activity dates back to December, 1957, when Dettman was hospitalized from a recurrence of a leg wound received in the Korean War. He was too broke to buy any presents for his two small children; but a group called "Santa Anonymous" brightened their holiday with gifts. Earl vowed that when he got well, he would help the group. He is a truck driver, and every year he moves a mountain of toys to 20,000 children.

D. Jesus is the Incomparable Word. John says in our text, "we beheld his glory." The glow of the eternal was upon His life. The perfume of heaven saturated His ministry. The apostle moves on to declare in verse 16 that from Him we have received "grace for grace."

How intriguing is that phrase! Literally it is "grace follows grace." One freight train of grace is followed by another. It is as if we were watching a "Berlin Airlift" in spiritual things.

Every measure of grace equips the believer for receiving a fuller measure. From the eternal fullness of the river of grace all of us may drink without diminishing one drop of its supply. In grace, there is never a low tide!

# IF I COULD ONLY UNDERSTAND YOU

(continued from page 11)

ly into another person's thinking and try to understand just what is going on within him."<sup>14</sup> The listener skilled in the art of reply becomes a sounding board, an echo chamber, and through the experience of being listened to, the troubled person often discovers himself anew.<sup>15</sup>

Identify with your class members as a person. Let them feel the equality of the ground on which you both stand. Don't yield to the old "master-servant" idea!

Identify with your class members as a fellow learner. Let them feel that you both are involved in a cooperative and continuing quest for truth.

Identify with your class members as a genuinely interested listener. It is one thing to *hear* the sound of their voices as they talk. It is another thing to earnestly *listen* for meaning and significance in what they say. Poor listeners can destroy adult learning situations!

**Service.** "Teachers of adults in the local church, you are actually involved in a cycle of service!"

You are not an authoritarian!

You are not a dictatorial teller of stories!

You are not a computer programmed with all the answers!

You are—first and foremost—a servant!

You are a guide!

You are a learning leader!

Your task is: to *minister to real human needs* by sharing with others in *finding* and *responding to truth*.

The so-called one-hour's performance on Sunday morning is—at most—only one-fourth of your total responsibility. Further, it may *not* even *be* the most important part. A teacher's cycle of service is a servanthood ministry. It involves the following:

## 1. Learning About Your Class Members

Know them as individuals.

Know their talents, abilities, and strong points.

Know their weaknesses, dislikes, and quirks.

Know something about their family backgrounds.

Know—above all—their *needs*!

## 2. Pursuing Continual personal Improvement

Focus on individual needs when you read the lesson.

Focus on individual needs in Bible reading and prayer.

Prepare and share in the teacher training session. Use creative approaches in sharing the truth in the classroom.

## 3. Leading Your Class in Sharing in Order to Understand and Respond to Truth

Keep the class session relaxed, informal, open.

Allow freedom of expression to a degree.

Refrain from posing as the authority.

Do not aim to get a consensus.

Focalize on the "kernel of truth" for the day. Don't feel bound and pressured to cover the lesson.

Repeat the kernel of truth several times in various ways.

Give direction in actualizing or living out the truth.

Regularly ask for accountability.

You must lead by example! You model the role!

## 4. Serving Them During the Week

Personal calls in members' homes cannot be measured by human value standards.

Stop by to check on the baby's cold.

Phone to congratulate Johnny for making the scholastic honor roll at school.

Write a note to express appreciation for one's Wednesday night testimony.

Share lunch together during a busy workweek.

Schedule coffee times together.

Schedule recreation outings.

Provide regular, varied fellowship times for the whole class.

Serve them more intently in crisis times: loss, new baby, marriages, illness, important decisions, death.

Promote a servant spirit among your members.

Show that all are workers together with God!

Yours is not meant to be the *linear concept* that views the teacher as making a visit or two per week, performing for an hour on Sunday morning, and then resting on his laurels. Rather, yours is the *cyclical concept* of learning the individual needs of your class members, preparing to meet those needs through continuing personal improvement, leading your class in sharing in order to understand and respond to the truth, and then serving your class during the days of the week. It is in the contacts made between Sundays that you come again face-to-face with individual human needs. Here the beautiful and exciting cycle of service begins to roll again.

As the teacher of adults continually persists in giving himself to this kind of service, human needs are met, personal problems are solved, spiritual growth is fostered, and maturing Christians evolve who, in turn, give themselves in service to others.

From *How to Teach Adults Without Really Suffering*. Wesley Tracy, ed. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1975).

## Notes

1. Earl F. Zeigler, *Christian Education of Adults* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 31.

2. Roy B. Zuck and Gene A. Getz, eds., *Adult Education in the Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), p. 10.

3. Jerold W. Apps, *How to Improve Adult Education in Your Church* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972), p. 74.

4. Paul Bergevin, *A Philosophy for Adult Education* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1967), p. 8.

5. James Williams, *Guiding Adults* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1969), p. 7.

6. Lyle Schaller, *The Change Agent* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), pp. 137-38. (Schaller quotes Steve Allen at this point.)

7. Bergevin, *Philosophy*, p. 5.

8. Apps, *Adult Education*, p. 99.

9. Paul Johnson, *Psychology of Religion* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), p. 285.

10. Vance Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1957), p. 3.

11. Reuel Howe, *The Miracle of Dialogue* (Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1963), pp. 136-41.

12. John Drakeford, *The Awesome Power of the Listening Ear* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1967), p. 15.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

# PASTORAL TRANSITION

by D. Martin Butler

Have you considered moving lately? If you haven't, you probably will sooner or later, for that's the way it is in the ministry—God calls and we're off and going across town, across the country, or around the world.

But, what of the churches we are leaving? Most of us have invested countless hours into the life and ministry of that charge which has been ours for the past few years. The question becomes, "How may I best conserve that ministry and smooth out the transition between me and my successor?" I learned a lot when I changed pastorates recently about how to leave information for the next man. The man I followed was quite an organizer and was very efficient in this area of leaving data behind him.

When he found out I was coming to the church to shepherd those whom he had loved and served for several years, he sent me a letter commending the church to me and assuring me of a good ministry ahead. Enclosed with the letter was a copy of the church directory and the operating policies of the church. He also sent me the names of the board

members and other leaders in the church. I could not believe it when I opened that large manila envelope and found all of that information. Why, I knew more about the church I was going to after reading that material than I knew about the one I was leaving—well, almost!

When I arrived at the church a few weeks later, I found he had left a four-page letter lying on the desk. That letter put me six months ahead in my ministry. He told me, for instance, who to contact in the community for printing advertisements, with what businesses the church had charge accounts, and where to send for information about the district hospitalization program. He indicated where things could be found in the files, which evangelists were slated for the church, and the time when the zone preachers' meetings were held. He left a brief paragraph about each family. Oh, not the gossipy kind of news that would destroy a confidence, but information that was helpful in regard to the husband's occupation, names of the children, the wife's vocation, and to whom they were related. (Sometimes it is good to know in advance that

sister so-and-so is a third cousin on her mother's side to brother so-and-so.)

As if that were not enough, he prompted the people to organize a reception for the parsonage family. He made arrangements for people to help us unload our furniture. At his suggestion, they provided our first meal and, since it was in the Blue Grass State, it turned out to be Kentucky fried chicken and biscuits and gravy!

Besides all this, he had been praying for us in the worship services. On his last Sunday, he knelt at the altar and prayed God's rich blessings upon us and the church in our new ministry together.

Now, I know that we cannot always do all of these things. In large churches it would be impossible to leave a synopsis of each family, but it could be done for the key families. Sometimes we do not know who our successor will be or when he will arrive, but we can still leave information that will assist him when he does come.

When you move, think of your successor. Who knows, maybe the man you follow will do the same for you.





by Clarence L. Bence

*Professor of Church History, United Wesleyan College*

WESLEYANA

## NOT WORTH CONTENDING FOR

In his "Brief Thoughts on Christian Perfection," written in 1767, Wesley observed, "I do not contend for the term sinless perfection, though I do not object against it."<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he went even further and stated, "*Sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself."<sup>2</sup>

Wesley did in fact believe in sinless perfection. He was convinced that a person who had experienced full salvation was delivered from *all* sin. However, this was the case only if one understood Wesley's definition of sin, and it differed sharply from the understanding of many of his contemporaries.

For Wesley, all sin (in its proper sense) was either actual or original. Actual sin was an intentional act of disobedience against the known will of God—a willful transgression of a law of love for God and neighbor. Original sin was not an act, but rather a condition of the soul resulting from Adam and Eve's rebellion in the garden. Their loss of righteousness and holiness became the human condition of all persons and as a consequence all have been born lacking intimate fellowship with God and are inclined toward sin.

Wesley was convinced that God's grace in Jesus Christ

brought not only forgiveness for these sins, but also deliverance. By the power of the Holy Spirit, those that were born of God were granted the great privilege of freedom from willful sin. And by the power of sanctifying grace, believers could experience *full* salvation, cleansing from original

**Wesley was less concerned with using precise terms than he was for understanding the concept of holiness.**

sin and a restoration to spiritual fellowship with God in perfect love.

Such a bold declaration of salvation deeply offended many of Wesley's contemporaries, primarily because they did not share his definition of sin. They took a broader view and included involuntary transgressions as sins. For them, anything that did not measure up to the absolute perfection of God was falling short of the mark and therefore a sin. Wesley could not agree. While he ac-

knowledgeed these unintentional shortcomings to be contrary to God's perfect will and thus in need of the atoning work of Christ, he would not call them sins, since they were not willful actions. Instead he termed them "sins, improperly so called."<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, he refused to identify sin with human nature. He criticized those who spoke of "a sinful body" for being both biblically and theologically incorrect. For Wesley, sin was not a product of human nature (God's good creation) but rather the work of the devil, causing individuals to do that which is contrary to their true nature as God had designed.

Thus, sin was an inhuman act, a violation of God's creational intention. To place the blame for sinful acts on "being human" would be the ultimate cop-out and an insult to God's ability to save from Satan's power. Wesley confidently proclaimed that salvation from *all* sin was the heart of the gospel and to equate sin with any unconscious or existential aspect of humanity was to make void the power of redemption in Christ.

From a Wesleyan perspective, it is incorrect to say "Sin is sin is sin . . ." True, God does not judge right and wrong on the size of the offense; but it is important



to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary sins, between existential and original sin, if one would properly explain our doctrine of entire sanctification.

Wesley recognized the complexity of the issue and the misunderstandings that might easily arise. Rather than force his terminology and definitions on others . . . and risk making enemies of fellow believers, he dropped the phrase *sinless* perfection, pointing out that "it is not worth while to contend for a term."<sup>4</sup>

As his theological descendants, we could learn from the wisdom of this man. He was less concerned with using correct phrases and terms than he was with understanding the concept of holiness and pursuing it as the passion of his life. When others expressed the great truth of deliverance from sin, but said it in different words, Wesley was not dismayed, so long as purity from sin in this life was their message.

Wesley could even speak in

conciliatory tones to Count Zinzendorf, who differed radically with him on the nature of perfection. In a conversation with the Moravian leader, Wesley said, "You concede that the believer is holy in his heart and life, that he loves God with his whole heart and serves him with his whole strength. I ask no more. I'm interested in no other sort of perfection or holiness."<sup>5</sup>

I suspect that many holiness advocates *would* ask for much more. They would not be content until all the right words were there; all the shibboleths of our tradition were carefully spelled out. And—heaven forbid—should some individual who seeks to love God and neighbor with a perfect heart refuse to express that desire in terms of entire sanctification, baptism with the Holy Spirit, cleansing of inbred sin, or Christian perfection, that person might find himself criticized or even ostracized by the very ones who share his zeal for holiness but

can see it only in their own words and concepts.

Perfect love of God and neighbor is worth contending for! Our commitment to purity of heart is at the very core of the Wesleyan message, and we dare not surrender ourselves to a "sinning Christianity" in the name of tolerance and Christian brotherhood. But Wesley is right. Some *terms* are not worth contending for. A rose by other names is still a rose. And wherever we hear messengers of God calling believers forward to a transformed life and a deeper relationship with God, we must applaud and encourage them, until we all attain "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

#### Notes

1. *The Works of John Wesley* (Jackson Edition) XI, 446.
2. *Ibid.* 396.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.* 442.
5. Albert Outler, *John Wesley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964) 367.

## THE BODY OF CHRIST

(continued from page 47)

life. The Head and Body are by nature inseparable, and if the unity is broken by the defection of the Body life dies.

The final figure connected with Paul's metaphor of the Body of Christ is that of the interrelationship of the members of the Body. In a human organism, the severance of a limb means a crippling of the body, but for the member it means death! The first important aspect of the relationship among members then is unity. This should be self-evident, so evident that Paul cries out as he beholds the divisions of the Corinthian church, "Can Christ be divided?" Because we are members of Christ we are members of one another (Rom. 12:5). To be in Christ is to be in the Church, and to be in the Church is to be united in Christ. Paul's insistence in 1 Corinthians 12 on the Spirit's distribution of gifts to the members, and the necessity of their integration into the wholeness of the Body by love, carries the heart of this metaphor to its zenith.

Besides unity, membership in the Body of Christ requires mutual responsibility one for another. Members ought to "have the same care for one another," says Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:25. They which are spiritual should restore a man overtaken in any trespass (Gal. 6:1). Jesus urges going to the erring brother and seeking to be reconciled with him (Matt.

5:23-25; 18:15-22). This mutual responsibility is not only in spiritual affairs; it extends to material things. Spiritual teachers are to be supported materially by the members who receive the benefit (1 Cor. 9:13-14; Gal. 6:6). Those who have this world's goods should help the needy to food and clothing (Jas. 2:14-17; Rom. 12:20; Matt. 25:34-36). In fact, a brother should be ready to lay down his life for a brother (1 John 3:16).

In conclusion, may we note that the fellowship in Christ of which we often speak so familiarly has a much deeper meaning than is often grasped. It is not the easy fellowship of the companionship of friends, or even the close-knit family. This interrelationship of the members of the Body of Christ is much more than this. We will take a closer look at this concept in the final chapter.

#### Notes

1. Seitz, *One Body*, p. 94.
2. Schnackenburg, *The Church in the New Testament*, pp. 165-66.
3. Minear, *Images*, pp. 173-74.
4. Ernest Best, *The Body of Christ* (London: SPCK, 1955), pp. 52-53.
5. Minear, *Images*, pp. 178-79.
6. Cf. Mark 14:22 and parallels; John 2:19-21; Heb. 10:5, 10; 13:3, 11-12; 1 Pet. 2:24.
7. Cf. G. A. F. Knight, *A Christian Theology of the Old Testament* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959), pp. 28 ff.
8. Minear, *Images*, pp. 174-76.
9. Minear, *Images*, p. 177.
10. Minear, *Images*, pp. 176-77.
11. Cf. Minear, *Images*, pp. 165 ff.
12. This entire last section is a condensation from H. S. Bender, *My People*, pp. 24-41.

# THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP

by Nina Bergman

I tried to act calm, even ladylike. But my clammy hands and quavering voice gave me away.

"Troubled?" John asked.

My still rather new husband was puzzled by my sudden lack of bravado. What could be so awful about accepting the pastorate of a church? After all, was not that the point of attending seminary?

"John," I sniffed, "you are finishing your theological education. I left college almost before opening a book to marry you. I have absolutely no training on being a pastor's wife." The tears started to invade. "Next Sunday," I wailed, "you are to fill a pulpit and I still don't know what a pastor's wife even is."

John did not seem very alarmed. After some words of assurance, punctuated by kisses, he left. Somewhat comforted I began to plan. Books, I reasoned, contain information pertaining to practically everything. The seminary library surely held volumes to enable me in my forthcoming role.

The Chicago wind devastated my hair, whipped at my clothes, but was powerless to disturb my determined spirit. To the library and learning I charged.

After three days of intensive cramming, I knew everything there was to know about being a minister's wife; how she was to cook, pour tea, speak, decorate and clean the parsonage, smile, raise the children, and dress. From these many books emerged a gracious lady . . . sweet, saintly, and impeccably arrayed. I pictured her in navy blue, a dignified, upright navy blue. I felt secure, I owned a navy blue suit.

Sunday came, bright and packed with promises. Since the church we were to serve stood in a small town 85 miles from Chicago, we decided to hang our clothes in the car, change shortly before our destination, and arrive wrinkle free.

The Illinois countryside matched our high mood.

Morning sun in autumn does magical things to trees already ablaze with gold and scarlet. Even the barns and dry corn stalks dazzled. Five miles from the church John stopped at a service station. He handed me the garment bag. I almost skipped to the ladies room.

I freshened and carefully slipped the navy blue suit from the padded hanger. I congratulated myself on how quickly and efficiently I was using my newly gained knowledge. I donned the suit, completing the pious picture with navy blue everything; even the appropriate hat, handbag, and gloves.

But alas!

Back in our apartment lay my lovely navy blue heels. Into that Sunday morning worship service, the very first of my husband's career, I walked wearing the proper navy blue suit, hat, handbag, gloves . . . and dirty, aged saddle oxfords.

"Oh, Lord," I pled, somehow blaming Him, "I feel so dumb in these dreadful shoes." Dropping to a seat I tried hiding my feet. How I wished for the rapture. "You know that I studied those books; You know I want to be a fitting pastor's wife. And now, Lord, on this first Sunday I've already blown it!"

Pointedly, as always, God used his Word to school His pouting child.

"You cleanse the outside of the cup . . . but inside . . . first cleanse the inside of the cup and of the plate, that the outside also may be clean" (Matt. 23:25, 26, RSV).

Have I gone about this all backwards? Does even a minister's wife need to start on the inside?

Into the cup of my being I looked and saw the scum of self-serving. In beginning understanding I bowed.

"Please Lord, cleanse this cup, teach me, and yes, please clothe me in Your love, grace, and goodness. You are more, Lord, much more than navy blue!"



# SERMON OUTLINES



## THREE PILLARS OF FAITH

**Text:** Matthew 6:1-18

**Introduction:** A person should examine his life to see if he has constructed three pillars that are vital for a person to grow.

### I. Pillar of Giving (vv. 1-4)

A. It is built on the foundation of the tithe.

B. Growth takes place when one moves to generosity. Jesus gave . . . fed 5,000 hungry families.

### II. Pillar of Praying (vv. 5-15)

A. We have a tendency to crowd this vital time out.

B. We need to let Jesus' model prayer shape our prayer life. Jesus prayed . . . in the garden (John 17).

### III. Pillar of Fasting (vv. 16-18)

A. We need fasting when earnest and serious about a particular concern or person.

B. We need fasting when we are at a crucial decision point. Jesus fasted . . . 40 days and nights before He began His public ministry.

**Conclusion:** Do you really want to grow? Then construction of these three pillars of faith is essential. You will be amazed at what takes place!

—Paul Carruthers

## COMMISSIONED

**Text:** Mark 6:7—"And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits."

**Proposition:** Go ye therefore and teach all nations!

**Introduction:** The clarion call has been given. The scope is clear—all nations. The task—teach and baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The fields are white unto the harvest. The laborers are few. God's message remains the same and thrusts forth those who will hear His Word.

### I. What Are God's Requirements?

1. Availability—"Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:8).
2. Hearing the call and obeying it.
3. Dedicated vessel.
4. Anointed and endued with divine power (Acts 2:1-4).

## II. What Are the Tools for the Task?

1. The Word of God vibrant in your soul.
2. Material necessities. (The laborer is worthy of his hire.)
3. Faith to believe God for all your needs and the needs of those to whom you minister.
4. An anointed, God-given message.
5. Seek to have divine power to cast out "unclean spirits" and to heal the sick in Jesus' name.

## III. Strategy for the Task

1. Disciples were sent by twos.
2. They were given power to preach and teach.
3. They saw people delivered from demons and unclean spirits.
4. They saw people changed by the mighty power of God.
5. They anointed with oil and many were healed.
6. They saw many filled with the Spirit.

**Conclusion:** These same results will follow those who have been commissioned by God today.

1. Wait in His presence until you hear His voice and then obey His command to you.
2. The message is the same—"Go ye therefore and preach to every creature."
3. Stay humble before Him. Seek daily the anointing He gives for the tasks you have been assigned to do.
4. Expect great things from Him.

—Estella Hare

Elkins, West Virginia

## THE UTMOST SALVATION

**Scripture:** Hebrews 7:23-28

**Text:** "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

**Introduction:** Many remedies have been given by man to suffering humanity. Uttermost salvation offered by the Lord is the only hope for perishing humanity. I would like to call your attention to three things:

### I. The Extent of Uttermost Salvation

1. According to the scholars, this text means to be "saved altogether,

always, perfectly, nothing wanting, beyond given limits, and to the farthest point."

2. Scripturally speaking, this salvation means the following things:

(a) It is deliverance from the penalty of sin (1 Thess. 1:10; Rom. 6:23; Rev. 14:10).

(b) Full salvation also delivers from the pollution of sin (Titus 3:5; Isa. 1:18; Rom. 6:6).

(c) Truly it is the deliverance of the inbeing of sin (1 John 1:7). Yes, the old man can be completely cleansed from the soul.

## II. Why Is the Lord Able to Deliver from All Sin?

1. He is able because He made a perfect, complete atonement for sin (Heb. 9:22; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

2. The Lord is able because He personally struggled with our common foe (Heb. 4:15). Jesus can fully sympathize with us in our sorrow, and our struggle, because He was tempted in all points like ourselves.

3. The Master is able because he has grace and power to sustain His people in every test of life (2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 3:30; Judg. 1:24).

4. He is able because He ever sitteth on the mediatorial throne of God. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us" (v. 25).

## III. To Whom Is This Salvation Given?

1. How may we come to Christ? It means to come to the Master personally. Jesus says, "I am the way the truth, and the life" (John 14:6; see also Acts 4:12; John 12:32).

Men may try to humanize God, make man God, extinguish the Holy Spirit, and rob the Atonement of its power, but no man can afford to deny the divinity of Christ and enjoy an uttermost salvation. Truly Christ is the station through which we must pass to reach heaven's depot.

2. Who may come?

(a) The poor may come with all their poverty (Matt. 11:28-29).

(b) The rich may come with their millions.

(c) The distressed may come (Acts 10:43; 1 John 5:1).

(d) The vile and sinful may come (Luke 12:8; Rev. 22:17).

(e) The true believer may come

with his carnal heart (1 John 1:7; Matt. 5:8).

**Conclusion:** Charles Wesley wrote:

*Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee,  
Leave, ah, leave me not alone;  
Still support and comfort me!  
All my trust on Thee is stayed;  
All my help from Thee I bring.  
Cover my defenseless head,  
With the shadow of Thy wing.*

—W. B. Walker  
Bethany, Okla.

### GOD'S CARE

**Text:** Psalm 121 (verse 2)  
MY help cometh from the Lord.

**LIFT UP** your heads (verse 1)

The hills speak of God's

BEAUTY

BOUNTY

BENEVOLENCE

BRIGHTNESS

**LEARN** to lean (verses 3-4)

**LET LOOSE** in His keeping power  
(verse 5)

**LOVE** Him for His preserving presence  
(verses 7-8)

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.  
Walpole, Mass.

### HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

**Text:** Acts 4:12: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

**Come to Jesus**

Acts 2:21; 15:11

Matthew 18:11

Luke 9:56

John 10:9

Romans 10:13

**Confess Your Sins to Jesus**

1 John 1:9

Romans 3:23

**Cast Your Soul upon His Mercy**

Titus 3:5

Hebrews 4:16

1 Peter 1:3

**Comfort Yourself in His Salvation**

Romans 8:16

1 John 3:24

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.

### LOVELY HOLINESS

**Text:** 1 Corinthians 13

**LONG-SUFFERING** (v. 4)

**LIKABLE** ("kind") (v. 4)

**LEANS** for others (no envy) (v. 4)

**LOWLY** ("not puffed up") (v. 4)

**LEVEL-HEADED** ("not . . . unseemly") (v. 5)

**LOW-PRESSURE POINTS** ("not easily provoked") (v. 5)

**LOVELY** ("no evil") (v. 5)

**LOOKS** for truth (v. 6)

**LOFTY** ("believeth . . . hopeth all things") (v. 7)

**LIKE** Christ ("beareth all things") (v. 7)

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.

## THE GOOD NEWS

(continued from page 53)

### Notes

1. C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (The International Critical Commentary, Edinburgh: T and T Clark, Vol. I, 1975), 199.

2. For fuller discussion and references see Eduard Loshe, *The Formation of the New Testament* (E.T. by M. Eugene Boring, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), 40.

3. In technical jargon, it is a polymorphous concept. Cf. A. C. Thiselton: "The meaning of a word of this type cannot be given in generalizing terms, but only as different meanings apply by way of example in different contexts" (I. H. Marshall [ed.], *New Testament Interpretation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977, 94). The specific example of righteousness is discussed on 98-100. A still more thorough discussion of the same issue is found in Thiselton's more recent work, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 415-22.

4. Op. cit. 201.

5. C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Harper's New Testament Commentaries, New York: Harper and Row, 1957, 74).

6. Barrett writes, "The word can mean simply 'deliverance,' 'liberation'; the act, that is, by which God finally sets men free from bondage to evil powers and to corruption; but the connection with blood and death suggests that it has not completely lost its original sense of 'ransoming,' emancipation by the payment of a price; compare Mark 10:45; 1 Pet. 1:18f." (Op. cit. 76).

7. So F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, London: The Tyndale Press, 1963), 108, note 1.

8. Op. cit. 217.

9. P. T. Forsyth, *The Cruciality of the Cross* (London: Independent Press, 1957), 82.

10. Cranfield, op. cit. 199.

11. James Denney: *Studies in Theology* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908; reprinted Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 127-29.

\*All scripture quotations are the author's own translation.

## PREACHER'S EXCHANGE

### WANTED:

The L. S. M. Nazarene Theological College is in need of college-level textbooks for their ThB. program. There is no duty charged on books sent as gifts for education, if the parcel is so marked. Contact L. S. M. Nazarene Theological College, P.O. Box 15, Acornhoek, 1360 E. Transvaal, Republic of South Africa.

1932 and 1908 *Manuals* of the Church of the Nazarene. Also wanting books on the subject of holiness. Send list and asking price. Rev. Larry Stover, 1213 12th St., Silvis, IL 61282.

Old *Preacher's Magazine's* from 1926 to 1955. July, 1964, magazine and July, 1968, magazine. Please send address and cost to: Max L. Downs, P.O. Box 1092, Hartsville, SC 29550.

The *Preacher's Magazines* from 1927 to 1960. Must be reasonably priced as I am retired. S. Ellsworth Nothstine, 204-G Park Ridge Circle, Winston-Salem, NC 27104.

### FOR SALE:

*Lange's Commentary*, 12 vols., newest ed., \$175; *20 Centuries of Great Preaching*, new condition,

\$150; *The Works of John Wesley*, 14 vols., new, \$80. S. Ellsworth Nothstine, 204-G Park Ridge Circle, Winston-Salem, NC 27104.

I am disposing of my library and have many antiquarian books. Will be glad to send listings and prices. Have six books by Phillips Brooks; *Sermons Preached in English Churches*; fifteen of Louis Albert Banks's books, including *Hidden Wells of Comfort*; twelve of S. D. Gordon's books; and several of G. Campbell Morgan, including *The Teaching of Christ*. Gertrude M. Knight, 2813 Kay St., Ceres, CA 95307. (209) 537-2106

# OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Charles Isbell



In this and the next article on Exodus, I shall examine a total of six key words.

1. "War." The Hebrew root *lhm* occurs only five times, three times as a verb, to *fight* (= to make war) and twice as a noun, *war*. 1:10 introduces both the noun and the verb together: "Come, we must deal shrewdly with them," intones the Pharaoh, "or they will become even more numerous and, if *war* breaks out, will join our enemies, *fight* against us and leave the country." The word *war* does not occur again in the narrative until section "G." 13:17 opens the section with the opinion of the Israelite God that a *war* would cause the people to "change their minds and return to Egypt."

Which ruler was correct? Again, it must be remembered that part of the Pharaoh's worry was that someone else would constitute the major fighting force against Egypt. The Israelites would simply join forces with this major power and together defeat the Egyptian forces. Thus the issue of *war* is not resolved in narrative until the final scene in section "G." In 14:14, the promise of Moses to the people is that they need not fear the approaching Egyptians because "Yahweh will *fight* for you."

Even the Egyptians recognize the truth of Moses' words, and are led to remark to each other, "Let's get away from the Israelites! Yahweh is *fighting* for them" (14:25). The proud warriors who had entered this final scene as pursuers (note 14:4, 8, 9, 23) exit hastily as fleers (note 14:25, 27). The fear of the Pharaoh from the beginning, seemingly so paranoid as expressed about a group in his country who had given no indication of anything but exemplary citizenship, now proves to have been correct after all. There was indeed a *war*. Started by the Pharaoh. Ended by Yahweh.

2. The Hebrew root *ys'* appears only three times in the Exodus narrative. In 2:17, it describes the action

of Moses as follows: "Moses arose and *delivered* them" (the daughters of Jethro at the well). But note the hollow ring of the word in this context. Moses, as we observed in the last article, was at this time well away from the real arena where oppression was taking place. He had fled to avoid the struggle of his own people for liberty. How ironic that he could be so brave against some country shepherds harassing helpless girls but so fearful of the real bully back in Egypt.

Again the final section employs our key root in a summary and meaningful fashion. In 14:13, "the *deliverance* of Yahweh" is promised to the people as if to assure them that Moses' feeble efforts of deliverance would now be exceeded by a greater Deliverer.

Yahweh would now step into the picture, taking the role played earlier by Moses. The difference would be radical. 14:30 nails the idea down. "That day the Lord (= Yahweh) *saved* Israel," the NIV renders it. In keeping with its earlier translations of the root used here, *ys'*, it would be both more accurate and more dramatic to say, "Yahweh *delivered* Israel." This time, the Deliverer and His deliverance were major league in every way. The real bully was beaten.

3. The third root to be considered here is Hebrew *kbd*. Unfortunately, the range of meanings of which *kbd* is capable in Hebrew yields a variety of English words. In 5:9, the Pharaoh responds to the initial demands of Moses and Aaron by ordering, "Make the work *harder*." This could also be rendered, "Make the work *heavier*." Again, such an edict is part of the problem facing the Hebrews.

The root *kbd* does not occur in section "D," but reappears in section "E" several times. Here it often refers to the *hardening* of the Pharaoh's heart, either by Yahweh or by his own choice (i.e., 7:14; 8:15, 32; 9:7, 34; 10:1; and cf. my discussion of this motif in article five). *Kbd* also

serves in this section to describe the increasing of the plagues of flies (8:24), hail (9:18), and locusts (10:14). 9:3 forecasts the cattle diseases soon to come as "a very heavy plague."

The NIV (and other English versions) make it difficult to trace the Hebrew root *kbd* by their choice of English equivalents. In 8:24 *kbd* is translated into English as *dense*, in 9:3 *terrible*, in 9:18 *worst*, and in 10:14 *in great numbers*. In each case however, even in English the *idea* of increase, density, heaviness, hardening, etc., should be apparent.

*Kbd* is used as a very clever pun by the narrator in section "G." In order to locate the root in translation, an explanation is in order. Hebrew also used *kbd* to describe things like riches or honor; being heavy (with goods) was wealth. Wealthy persons often receive honor, etc. Thus in 14:4, 17, 18, the narrator uses a phrase which the NIV translates "gain glory." It is a form of the root *kbd*, however, and it must be related to *kbd* in the earlier sections.

As we noted, *kbd* generally meant a problem of some sort, first for Israel (5:9) and later for Egypt (in section "E"). Now in the concluding section, *kbd* describes the final resolution of all problems involving *kbd*. Yahweh is "heavied," or glorified, or honored.

Yet a final ironic twist to the story also employs *kbd*, this time in a highly unusual way. In 14:25, when the Egyptian army found itself trapped in the bed of the sea, "they had difficulty driving." Now the word *difficulty* is a noun formed from the verbal root *kbd*, and it occurs only here in the entire Hebrew Bible. It is obviously a word created artificially by the artist to hammer home a point. Difficulty indeed! These chariots drove "with heaviness." The one who had caused *heavier* and *heavier* slavery for Israel (5:9) now finds his own troops on the verge of defeat as a result of the *heaviness* of their chariot wheels. God certainly deserved glory. And He got it at the sea (14:4, 17, 18).



# NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

## John 19:3—21:17

### And Came to Him (19:3)

This clause (not in KJV) is found in the earliest Greek manuscripts. The Greek *erchonto pros auton* can be taken as inchoative imperfect: "they began to come up to Him" (NASB). But it is better to take it as the more common repetitive imperfect: "went up to him again and again" (NIV). The best commentators (Westcott, Morris, Brown, etc.) favor the second one.

### Crucify . . . Release (19:10)

The oldest and best Greek manuscripts have these in reverse order (see RSV, NASB, NIV).

### Coat (19:23)

The Greek has *chiton*, which means the "undergarment" (NIV) or "tunic" (NASB).

### Ghost (19:30)

The Greek says, "gave up his spirit" (NIV)—*pneuma*. Today "ghost" is used for the spirit of a person already dead.

### Preparation (19:1)

See discussion at Mark 15:42.

### Hundred Pound (19:39)

The Greek says: "100 *litras*," (see discussion at 12:3). Since the *litra* was only 12 ounces (see NASB margin), one hundred *litras* would be "seventy-five pounds" (NIV).

### Napkin (20:7)

See discussion of *soudarion* at Luke 19:20. Arndt and Gingrich suggest that it may have been a "facecloth" (NASB) "for wiping perspiration, corresponding somewhat to our handkerchief" (p. 759). But perhaps here "burial cloth" fits best.

### Touch Me Not (20:17)

The verb *hapto*, in the middle

voice, means "touch, take hold of, hold someone or something" (AG, p. 102). Jesus was telling Mary not to hold on to Him in the flesh—as she clung to Him—but to let Him go so that He could come in the person of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Then He could be with all believers everywhere all the time. The correct translation here is, "Stop clinging to Me" (NASB) or "Do not hold on to me" (NIV).

### Shut (20:19, 26)

The verb *kleio* means "shut, lock, bar" (AG, p. 434) and it is in the perfect passive participle here—"locked tight." The context, "for fear of the Jews," shows that here it means "locked" (NIV)—that is, with a bar down across the inside.

### Girt . . . Naked (21:7)

The KJV says: "He girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked)." Obviously "girt" is not a contemporary English word (see discussion at 13:4-5). And "fisher's coat" is *ependytes* (only here in NT) which simply means an "outer garment" or "coat."

What about "naked"? The Greek word is *gymnos*, from which we get "gymnasium." It did sometimes mean "naked, stripped, bare." But Arndt and Gingrich note that often it was used by Greek writers in the sense: "without an outer garment, without which a decent person did not appear in public" (p. 167). So the best translation here is: "he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work)" (NASB) or "he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off)" (NIV).

### Dine (21:12)

The verb *aristao* properly means "eat breakfast" (AG, p. 106). "Come

and dine" (KJV) is hardly what one would say at about six o'clock in the morning! Rather Jesus said, "Come and have breakfast" (NASB, NIV).

### Love (21:15-17)

Putting it into contemporary English, we have Jesus asking Peter three times, "Do you love Me?" and Peter answering each time, "You know that I love You" (NASB). But two different verbs are used (see NASB margin). Twice Jesus asked, *Agapas me*, and Peter answered, *Philo se*. But the third time Jesus dropped down to Peter's lower word and said, *Phileis me*. Again Peter answered, *Philo se*.

What is the difference? Many commentators find no difference—just a slight literary variation. But we tend to agree with B. F. Westcott when he writes that Peter "lays claim only to the feeling of natural love (*philo se, amo te*, v. 15), of which he could be sure. He does not venture to say that he has attained to that higher love (*agapan*) which was to be the spring of the Christian life" (*Gospel according to St. John*, Greek Text, p. 367).

He goes on to say: "When the Lord puts the question 'the third time,' He adopts the word which St. Peter had used. Just as the idea of comparison was given up before ('more than these,' v. 15), so now the idea of the loftiest love is given up. It is as if the Lord would test the truth of the feeling which St. Peter claimed" (p. 368). William Hendriksen also makes this distinction in his excellent commentary on John.

This difference is brought out in the NIV by using "truly love" for *agapao* and just "love" for *phileo*. The point, then, is that Peter was hurt because the third time Jesus even questioned the apostle's affection and friendship.





# TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

## Whitehead's View of Reality

By Charles Hartshorne and Creighton Peden (The Pilgrim Press, New York. Paperback, 106 pp., \$6.95).

There is a lot of talk of process theology these days. If you are interested in learning more about this growing theology, here is a book offering a very helpful introductory guide to the thought and philosophy of its major personality. This book is for those interested in gaining a basic grasp of the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, upon whom process theology is based.

The book is made up of two essays. The first, by Charles Hartshorne, is a presentation of Whitehead within the context of the history of speculative philosophy. Hartshorne presents the antecedents to Whitehead's thought with which he both finds agreement and disagreement. It is Hartshorne's conviction that Whitehead will bring people into closer contact with reality than other works of contemporary philosophers. This results from his understanding that Whitehead as a philosopher is second in genius to none, unless it be Plato. And so Hartshorne's admonition: "To make no use of genius of this order is hardly wise; for it is indeed a rarity" (p. 24).

The second essay, by Creighton Peden, is an excellent introductory exposition of Whitehead's philosophy. The intention here is to offer a beginning tool in studying Whitehead's writing, especially his major work, *Process and Reality*. Peden concentrates on Whitehead's terminology and his method, especially as it relates to his view of reality, of religion, and of his doctrine of God.

For Peden, the value of Whitehead's method for the Christian religion is in its call for Christians to take seriously today the responsibility to understand as much as possible about existence in order to address the needs of modern men and women. Perhaps the greatest need for the Church is for her to go beyond her own limits of understanding and to enter into dialogue with the findings of philosophy and the sciences.

Peden argues that "the great problem today is that religion and science must learn to live together" (p. 84). This is due to the fact that the sciences have permeated our lives so much that Christianity can ill afford to ignore their insights. We must not divide our lives and our world up into segments and compartmentalize. The value of Whitehead, then, is that instead of being defensive in relation to the sciences, the Christian religion is here offered a tool whereby it can reinterpret its own insights in order to meet humanity's emotional needs while not clashing with intellectual growth (cf. p. 95).

—Michael Ray Dotson

## The Psalms: Structure, Content and Message

By Claus Westermann, Trans. Ralph D. Gebrke (Minn., Augsburg Publishing House, 136 pp., paperback, \$5.50).

Books by Claus Westermann, former professor of O.T. at Heidelberg University in Germany, are always worthy of study. In this brief book Westermann surveys the significance, origin, and collection of the psalms. While serious questions can be raised regarding his views as to authorship and dates of some of the psalms, no doubts should prevail as to his understanding of their function in Israel's life.

The psalms arose out of the worship of Israel, but this does not mean that they were first sung at the Temple. The psalms originated in events in the lives of individuals or in the life of the nation. "They took place in harvest fields or on battlefields, in the wilderness or in homes, on sickbeds or in the streets, in marketplaces or at village gates." All of these places were connected, in the minds of the Israelites, with the sanctuary. Worship had "its power and significance precisely because it shone forth from the sanctuary upon the entire country, all of which of course belonged to God." Later on, these hymns were given a normative liturgical form and used basically in the Temple worship.

Westermann classifies and surveys

the psalms in such a fashion as to help the reader gain an overview of their thoughts.

Pastors will find this study very useful in organizing a series of messages on Psalms. Also, Westermann has the happy ability of elucidating concisely the theological affirmations of the Scriptures.

—Willard H. Taylor

## A Minister's Opportunities

by Ralph G. Turnbull (Baker Publishing Co., \$8.95, 289 pp.).

In his book *A Minister's opportunities*, Dr. Turnbull skillfully weaves the golden threads of opportunity and responsibility into a pattern to delight and challenge the minds and hearts of those whom God has called to the Christian ministry. He stresses the absolute necessity of spending hours in reading and study, in prayer and meditation, on a regular basis, to make the most of these God-given opportunities.

Drawing from a wide range of both sacred and secular literature, Dr. Turnbull whets the reader's appetite for learning by giving brief glimpses of a multitude of famous and successful ministers, authors, statesmen, and poets, along with many quotations from their works.

His consideration of topics such as The Stewardship of Time, The Satisfaction of Study, and The Worth of a Library offer practical helps, while others such as The Devotion of the Heart, The Standard of Excellence, and The Gospel in the Space Age offer inspiration and motivation for the glorious task.

A quotation from Silas Kessler included in Dr. Turnbull's book seems to typify his attitude toward the ministry: "Being a minister today is the most exciting, challenging work in the world. It is exhausting. It can be frustrating. It is filled with harassments and distraction. But I wouldn't swap places with any other man, and there is no other work in which I could be half so happy." An excellent attitude and an excellent book, I would say.

—John W. Hadlock



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A. Elwood Sanner  
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