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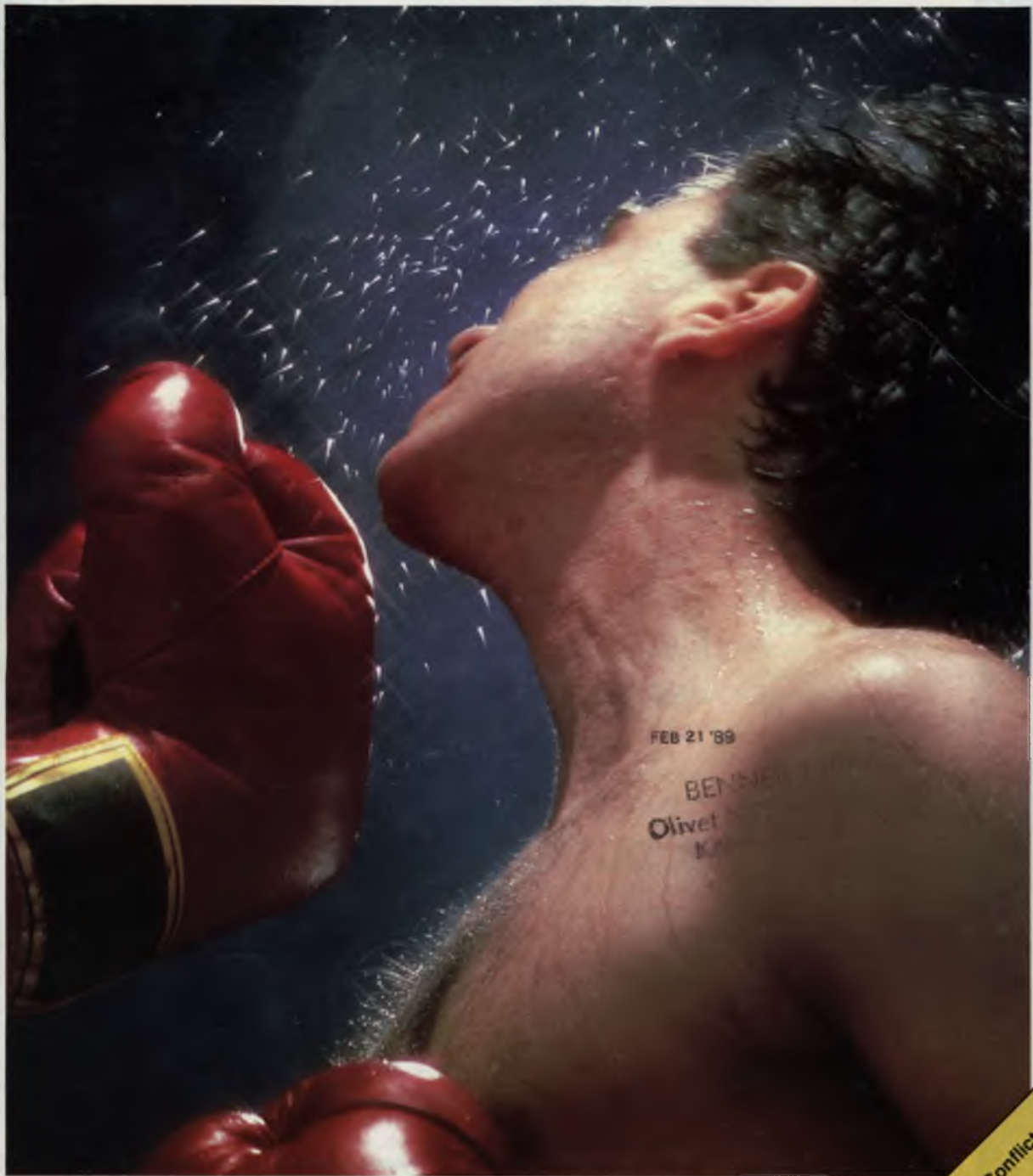
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MARCH, APRIL, MAY 1989

# THE **IPMT** **REACHER'S** **AGAZINE**



## **Conflict Management**

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Anybody can become angry—that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody's power and is not easy.

—Aristotle

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# THE TRUTH IS— THERE'S PLENTY OF CONFLICT TO MANAGE

**T**ruth in advertising. Congress made it a law in the U.S.A. Mendacity in the marketplace made it necessary. One bit of cozenage that pushed the legislation along was the commercial about the glare-proof windshield invented by the folks at Libby-Owens. It seems that the television lights and camera created such a glare in the glare-proof windshield that you could hardly see the smiles of the models sitting in the front seat. No problem. They simply yanked the windshield out and shot the film without it.

Then there was the jam that the Campbell Soup Company got into for putting marbles in the bottom of soup bowls. The idea was that the marbles would force the carrots, potatoes, and corn to the top of the broth. The soup then looked deceptively chock-full of hearty veggies.

These two cases came floating into consciousness again while I was leafing through the "Christian College" issue of the "leading" interdenominational evangelical magazine. On page after page, one college after another trumpeted staggering and swaggering claims. So brazen were the stentoracious bellowings, one got visions of strutting coxcombs rather than the meek Galilean. I pity the faculty and staff members who have to try to produce what those ads promise.

Perhaps the Church needs a truth in advertising rule (or at least a guideline). If we were to observe such a law more carefully, we just might have to be more frank about conflict in the church. We advertise (and even hype) the community, caring, family aspects of the church. But we forget that the family is often the focus of friction. And when the church has a typical family conflict, new converts and naive believers may think that they have become the victims of yet another "bait and switch."

Maybe we should tell them that Chris-

tians are supposed to love enough to confront. Maybe we should tell them early on that good people can disagree and still be Christians. Maybe we should tell them that ignored conflict will not just go away.

We have, with amazing regularity, mislabeled conflict "spiritual problems," "sin," "carnality," or "disloyalty." Somehow believing that real Christians would not be in conflict, we have felt it necessary to vilify those who disagree with us. Far too often we have let emotions dictate how we cope with conflict while, like Macbeth, we "think so brainsickly" about it. Perhaps careful thought can help us more frequently intervene in the conflict cycle before the eventual blowup, after which things will never be the same.

## SIGNS OF MATURITY

But signs of maturity exist among us. We are more ready these days to admit the existence of conflict in the church—and to understand its normalcy and helpful potential, as well as its stark dangers. More persons seem able to respond to issues rather than to persons when debate ambles into a board meeting or a district assembly. Such people have learned that "injustice collecting" is not the way to success. They have learned that you don't have to make a heretical ogre out of someone to justify your disagreement with him.

Another sign of maturity stands to take a bow when we learn to respect those who oppose us; respect them as human beings created in the image of God. I am not calling for naive blindness. There are folks out there with sinful, hateful, even demonic dispositions who will try to harm you. What I am talking about is what my former district superintendent, Arthur Morgan, once tried to teach me. As a young pastor, I had ac-

cepted a new assignment and had walked into my first "church fight." Angry and scared, I was doing my share of "injustice collecting." Dr. Morgan, chewing on a toothpick, calmly and without reproach said to me, "If you can come through this and still have respect for human personality, it just may be the makin' of the pup."


I've noticed another sign of our collective coming of age. Most of the ministers I talk to do not seek and do not even secretly prefer blind loyalty to thoughtful reflection and constructive feedback. It is out of fashion to be the kind of preacher who will "receive" no message but "praise."

The mark of true maturity will be evidenced, I suppose, when we stop speaking of our disagreements with metaphors of war:

"I *shot down* his argument!"  
"He *blew her out of the water*!"  
"We *attacked* his position!"  
"My criticisms were *right on target*!"  
"You disagree? OK, *shoot*!"\*

## STUDYING CONFLICT

The bibliography and most of the articles on conflict management in this issue were supplied by the doctor of ministry students at Nazarene Theological Seminary. These pastors and missionaries each had read some 2,500 pages on leadership, administration, and conflict management, and had spent three weeks in an intensive seminar on these matters. I asked them to share with us some of what they had learned. I hope you like what they have to say—if you don't like it, please don't send me an angry letter. I already have all the conflict I can manage.

—Wesley Tracy 

\*See "Metaphors We Live By," by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *In the World*, J. H. Timmermans and D. R. Hettinga, eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), 355-66.

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THE

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# COMMUNICATION

## THE KEY TO BRINGING RENEWAL OUT OF CONFLICT

by Montford L. Neal  
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**T**he police chief, three firemen, and one glum district superintendent watched the flames devour the abandoned and now condemned church building at the edge of the little Indiana town. The burning spire with its weather-beaten cross crashed into the flaming rafters. Soon the walls with their several colors of peeled paint collapsed, dragging the once-varnished doors into the blaze, which by now had burned the straight-backed pews and the warped mourner's bench, along with the pulpit and the old Sunday School papers that had been stuffed in it decades ago.

The firemen coiled their hoses carefully on the red truck and hurried off to lunch at the Burger Chef. The district superintendent, pondering unhappy thoughts, drove away from this place where once a small congregation of holiness folks had worshiped. They had held revivals there, celebrated singspirations, joined in prayer meetings, put on Easter pageants, and overeaten at many an "all-day service with dinner on the grounds." But that was now long ago and far away. Internal conflict had squeezed the life out of the congregation. They had survived some church fights. But then came the one conflict that would not go away. And now only one rude reminder of the past remained. On the eastward side the old cornerstone peered out above the scorched weeds bearing this mute testimony: "Dedicated to the Glory of God, April, 1936."

Creative conflict management can write a better story, a story of renewal that lasts. Effective communication during times of conflict can be the key to turning conflict into renewal.

### **I. Communication with the Inner Self as a Way to Church Renewal**

The pastor is the key to creative conflict resolution. When the pastor analyzes and evaluates his own deepest motives, thoughts, and needs in relationship to the conflict situation, the first step has been taken toward

bringing renewal out of conflict. In other words the pastor most likely to succeed in conflict management is the pastor who understands his own inner self. This calls for a sort of *intrapersonal* communication. Successful internal communication might come about as the pastor ponders these questions:

1. Is my underlying motive a self-serving one?
2. Am I viewing the problem in its completeness?
3. Do I have ulterior motives?
4. Am I trying to smooth the situation and thereby avoid healthy conflict?
5. Am I spiritually ready to face this conflict?
6. How much pain will I accept in getting a resolution?
7. What events in my past have predisposed my attitudes in this conflict?
8. Have I accepted church renewal as a more desirable outcome than getting my way?
9. What is the source of the emotions I feel in this conflict situation?



Montford L. Neal



After prayerful reflection, a pastor can evaluate his inner understanding of the situation. Jesus is our model in the art of self-understanding. During times of extreme testing and trials, Jesus withdrew for private meditation, prayer, and reflection (cf. Matt. 14:13; Mark 3:13; Luke 22:34-46). Coming to understand one's own predispositions, predictable emotive responses, and deep motivations prepares the pastor to creatively cope with conflict in the church. Indeed, such reflective preparation is as essential for the pastor as spring training is for a baseball team.

Conflict may help the pastor as it raises questions that deserve attention. Will I retain my integrity for ministry? Will I function with an attitude of trust? Will I retain motivation for church work? These questions do not need to be self-defeating. Gaining a healthy self-image during acute problems in the local congregation is a possibility.

But what is the primary task of the pastor in the complex field of conflict management? The pastor, by seeking self-understanding, can relate to the situation with responsible actions and interactions. Self-understanding makes the pastor aware of hidden potentialities. The pastor becomes aware of diversified self-interests in himself and the parishioners. Sometimes this can lead to a vision that others have much to give to the resolution of the conflict. A vision of renewal possibilities is born.

Through personal introspection the pastor can break the chains of pessimism and depression and become aware that things can be changed through creative conflict management. The pastor can achieve church renewal as a distinctive product of a well-managed conflict. The climate is created by the pastor who models strong personal conflict management skills. Under Christ, he sets the pace for the congregation. Consider this checklist.

1. Do I have an attitude of cooperation?
2. Will I participate in open dialogue?
3. Am I committed to a solution?
4. Am I committed to treating my adversaries with dignity?
5. Will I give God the praise for church renewal if it happens?

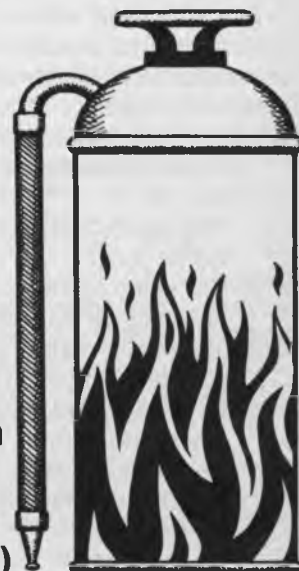
The minister who has prayerfully worked through the two lists of reflective questions is much more likely to become a catalyst for renewal than the pastor who is too busy, too angry, or too insecure to practice *intra-personal* communication in a conflict situation.

## II. Communication with Others as a Way to Church Renewal

The pastor who hopes to become an effective manager of conflict must be able to communicate with others and help others to communicate with one another. He must become the listener who understands, the mediator who facilitates understanding, and the enabler who brings about creative confrontation. Communication involves in-depth listening skills and insightful understanding of others. The pastor can model this by being keenly aware of the congregation's communication patterns.

The pastor who can facilitate interpersonal communi-

**"Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed."  
(Prov. 15:22, NASB)**



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cation is the pastor who creates an atmosphere of reciprocal trust. He esteems the personal worth of every member in the church. He is careful about asserting authority over others. This leads to pastoral distrust. The pastor, ever a learner, engages in learning with the congregation in search for answers to the conflict. Leadership strategy should not smack of manipulation but taste like reciprocal openness that fosters spontaneous feedback, shared ideas, and continued growth. The pastor as communicator seeks for joint problem solving. He avoids the label and the role of expert. Likewise he avoids the roles of dictator or dominating parent, knowing that they build dependency, conspire against growth, and thwart maturity.

Providing an autonomy for reaching conflict renewal is a vital aspect for pastoral modeling. The pastor walks the razor's edge of interdependent relationships—where he is both a helper and receiver in an exchange among equals. He provides a climate for experimentation and not a fixed pattern for conflict management. Making room for innovative creativity, or trial and error, and learning by doing is part of the communicative minister's approach.

## III. Communication with God as a Way to Renewal

The pastor's communication with God is a way to renewal. G. Douglass Lewis, in *Resolving Church Conflicts*, writes:

The story of human life is the story of human conflict, both destructive and creative, both overwhelming and manageable. We need the skills of management and more—we need that which can sustain us, support us, carry us through those times when life is irrational and uncontrollable. Conflict management at its depth should be liturgical.<sup>1</sup>

Church renewal is primarily the work of God. He sometimes performs that work through men and women who handle conflict creatively. Successfully solving church problems can lead to a reawakening of a





sense of mission, a redefinition of goals, and a renewing of the spirit of the congregation.

One effective means of preparing a church for an experience of revitalization is through the spiritual life of the pastor. Spiritual development is essential to renewal in the congregation. The pastor must set the pattern for an enriched spiritual life in the community of faith.

Pastoral guidelines for modeling spiritual life include the following:

1. The pastor is clear about his personal and professional goals.
2. His spiritual life provides a foundation for empowering all his ministry efforts.
3. The pastor should select a variety of materials for strengthening and deepening his spiritual life.
4. He should use meditative Bible readings for renewal and nurture.
5. He should develop the practice of prayer. This includes: praise, adoration, petition, and intercession.
6. He may provide leadership for group prayer services.
7. He should read prayers of great ministers and devotional classics.
8. He ought to explore the discipline of denial (solitude, silence, and fasting).

It is important for the pastor to communicate with God. And it is important that the pastor lead the congregation in communicating with God through worship. Some pastors, rather than denying church conflict and trying to cover it up, have found that a liturgy of worship that helped the people put the conflict before God in corporate worship led toward renewal when destruction seemed inevitable. Here is a liturgy for a worship service of reconciliation.

#### WORSHIP THEME: THROUGH CONFLICT TO RENEWAL

**Scripture:** 2 Cor. 7:8-13

**Hymn of Celebration:** "When We See Christ"<sup>2</sup>

**Hymn of Confession:** "I Am Resolved"<sup>3</sup>

**Responsive Reading for Renewal:**

"Renewal in Worship," Ps. 27:1-5, 8-14<sup>4</sup>

**Prayer of Intercession:**

O Father of mercies. Grant that I may look on the defects of my neighbor as if they were my own, that I may conceal and be grieved for them; and that making thy love to us, O blessed Jesus, the pattern of my love to them, I may above all things endeavor to promote their eternal welfare . . .

Teach me to have compassion for the weakness and frailties of my brethren; to put the best construction on all their actions; to interpret all doubtful things to their advantage, and cheerfully to bear with their real infirmities.

Sanctify the friendship which thou hast granted me for these thy servants . . . that our prayers may be heard for each other while our hearts are united in thy love and graciously unite them therein more and more.<sup>5</sup>

**Responsive Reading:** "Consecration," Rom. 12:1-3, 9-18, 21<sup>6</sup>

*Continued on page 9*

# A THEOLOGY OF CONFLICT

by Garnett Teakell

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**T**his church had a problem, and the evangelist could smell it. When the pastor whispered something about a "conflict," she could not only smell but taste—"church split." She felt obligated to help avoid that sad possibility. In her final sermon she compared the congregation to an orchestra. "If each instrument is tuned to the first violin," she reasoned, "every instrument will also be in tune with all the other instruments of the orchestra. Like-



Garnett Teakell



wise, if each member of this church is in tune with the Holy Spirit, he will also be in tune with *all* the other members."

But we've all been in churches in which everyone, even the visitors, felt the high tension level, yet no one could discern who were the "spiritual" members and who were the "carnal" ones who were causing the conflict. Unless someone invents a foolproof high-tech "testimony-testing computer" that helps us determine the genuineness of each testimony, we have to accept everyone as sincere when he testifies to entire sanctification. So the evangelist's analogy breaks down like an appliance the day after the guarantee runs out. Even if it were possible to imagine a utopian church in which every member was Spirit-filled, conflict would still be as sure as rain every day in the tropics.

Even though a conflict-free church might be every pastor's dream, writers on conflict management question whether that would be as ideal as it seems. Some even affirm that "we need to recover and accept conflict as a necessary part of the church's concern to revitalize and save itself, its ministry, and mankind."<sup>1</sup> Can we as holiness people accept the possibility that church conflict may not be carnal but even contribute positively to the church?

Norman Shawchuck, a foremost authority on managing church conflict, believes that churches tend to respond to conflict in one of two ways: Either they ignore and try to avoid it, or they attribute conflict to a lack of spirituality and try to preach or pray it away.<sup>2</sup> Most holiness churches lurch toward the second tendency. Perhaps that explains why conflicts in our churches can become so devastating, often resulting in church splits or church deaths. To some, the presence of conflict within the fellowship appears to contradict our testimony to perfect love. Therefore, conflict is identified with carnality, and the solution is either to get rid of the carnality with good revival preaching or get rid of the persons manifesting it. Our very theological stance causes us to feel threatened by the presence of conflict in the church.

In another place, Shawchuck affirms that if we develop a sound,

working conflict theology, we increase our chances of becoming effective managers of church conflict.<sup>3</sup> Since the Bible is the Source Book for our theology, we look to it to formulate the points for a theology of conflict.

#### *Conflict and the Doctrine of Creation*

The origins of cosmic conflict hark back to Satan's rebellion against God, whenever that may have occurred. Some biblical interpreters identify the chaos alluded to in Gen. 1:2 as the result of that first conflict between God and His angels and Satan and his followers. At any rate, the Judeo-Christian cosmology glories in the realization that God was able to produce order out of the disorder that the first conflict situation may have caused. The same God who triumphed over that

### **The Incarnation gives us a clue as to how far God is willing to go to repair ruined relationships.**

situation of conflict has the ability to resolve the conflicts in our own situations. His arm is not shortened.

#### *Conflict and the Doctrine of Humankind*

Whether your theological anthropology inclines you toward dividing man into two or three parts (or one of the other variations of that theory), the conclusion seems inescapable that God is ultimately the Source of the infinite number of combinations of factors that make up each personality. No two identical personalities exist. Those subtle variations between one personality and another result in conflicts between persons. That is not in itself evil; Proverbs declares, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (27:17, NIV).

Many writers on the subject of conflict refer to the case of Paul and

Barnabas. That represented a personality difference so great that they could not even stand to work with each other. It does no good to try to explain it away; the words "departed asunder" (Acts 15:39) in the Greek mean "a violent division, forcible separation."<sup>4</sup> In spite of the fact that they did not resolve their conflict in the way we holiness people might have preferred, the missionary enterprise of the Early Church profited by their separation, and later Paul could even admit that John Mark's personality had some qualities that were helpful to him in his ministry (2 Tim. 4:11).

#### *Conflict and the Doctrine of Sin*

The first biblical instance of conflict that affects us directly as humans is the fall of our first parents. How can we read that story and not notice that their temptation represents a conflict between the human and divine wills? Our doctrine of sin helps us recognize that sin is in essence a contest between God's will and our self-will. Human history has been one long object lesson showing the tragic consequences of that universal rulership by self that began in the third chapter of Genesis.

Besides the matter of self-idolatry, interpersonal conflicts also begin due to a person's wanting to have his own way in relationships with his fellow human beings. Selfish motives may taint my relationship with others. Who knows whether there were interpersonal conflicts before the Fall? But what has been said about personality differences probably indicates there were at least personality clashes. But the entrance of sin into the world intensified those differences and added the new element of each person almost always seeking his own welfare before the good of others. And when you get a multitude of little kingdoms vying for limited resources, conflict, sometimes to the death, will surely happen.

#### *Conflict and the Incarnation of Christ*

We know that God's perfect will was set back but not thwarted by humanity's sin. He sent His Son to break down the barriers that prevent both vertical and horizontal relationships, barriers that we had erected to insulate ourselves from the conflict around us. If the Incarnation had

---

## I will refuse to violate the dignity of a person for whom Christ has died.

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no other purpose, it showed us the extent to which God would go to repair ruined relationships. It also showed us that Jesus will be with us in the midst of our conflict situations, no matter how bad they may seem. Further, it reveals that we are obligated to confront each conflict situation in such a way that we show Him to be our attitudinal and methodological model. But some of Jesus' experiences seem to demonstrate that involvement in conflictual situations is not sinful per se. Throughout His public ministry, Jesus was the focal point of continual conflict. Donald E. Bossart goes so far as to say that "Jesus utilized conflict as a means of interpreting and carrying out his mission."<sup>5</sup>

### *Conflict and the Doctrine of Salvation*

Among the themes of soteriology, none surpasses reconciliation in importance. Someone has said that the Cross expresses God's hatred of sin. It shows us that God was not satisfied with merely ignoring the conflictual relationship between Him and humanity but that He confronted it head-on, and He did so without running roughshod over the person's will. Bossart writes concerning reconciliation, "The ultimate goal includes both reconciliation and integration, but one does not get there through the process of cheap grace. One must come through the cross and reconciliation in the resolution of conflict."<sup>6</sup> But just as God respects our will, reconciliation with others opens up the possibility of our respecting their viewpoint rather than always insisting on having our own way. But that does not come easily; just as reconciliation required great sacrifice on God's part, it sometimes requires our giving up some of our rights for the good of the fellowship.

Reconciliation has as its aim the restoration of relationships. That does not occur when one person is the victor and the other has to slink away in disgrace like a dog with its tail between its legs. That means that we don't have to just resign ourselves to sometimes being the loser.

One of the weaknesses of the democratic model that many churches follow is that by the very nature of democracy, a vote guarantees that someone has to be a loser. Acts 15 indicates that the Early Church decided the important issue of requirements for church membership by a process of consensus rather than by taking a vote; their precedent produces more win/win situations, thus avoiding the embarrassment of someone having to be a loser. Ronald Arnett establishes as a goal for Christian conflict management that of seeking ways of resolving conflict that contribute to each person's personal growth; he recognizes the consensus model as one that makes that goal more realizable.<sup>7</sup>

### *Conflict and the Doctrine of Holiness*

Earlier I noted that holiness churches have more problems accepting conflict in their midst than do other ecclesiastical groups because of the difficulty in harmonizing any sort of conflict with our doctrine of perfect love. We fail to use one of our most efficacious resources when we do not refer the conflict situations (which make us ecclesiastical ostriches when we pretend they don't exist) to our doctrine of holiness. Our distinctive doctrine should make us more capable of confronting conflict in our churches, more willing to face conflict than churches that don't emphasize holiness.

We believe that the very essence of heart purity is perfect love, and we have gone to great lengths to qualify our understanding of that word "perfect." But what are the implications of "perfect love" in the midst of a conflict situation? We carefully explain that "perfect" does not mean that we never make mistakes and that we recognize that we are still liable to err due to the limitations of our fallen condition. But when we confront a person or group with ideas contrary to ours, the limitations common to our fallen race many enable us to "deify" our understanding, never admitting that there may be other equally valid viewpoints, or, horrors, that we could

even have mistaken ideas. An awareness of our fallenness will also prevent our pretending that we always understand the motives of the other person; we have an awareness that we only "know in part" (1 Cor. 13:12).

We say that perfect love means that we always have the other person's welfare at heart, and if we are particularly pious, we may even affirm that we put the welfare of others before our own. And yet, even when we know that one of the overwhelming needs of others is a positive self-regard, we sometimes act as though we don't need to consider their feelings of failure and inadequacy when "the other side loses" in a conflict situation.

Perfect love implies that I always treat my brother as a person and never as a thing. But if I assume in some conflict situation that "all is fair in love and war," I reduce the person on the other side to a "thing" that I can manipulate. In conflict situations, an axiom that should reign in holiness circles is that persons are more important than programs, more important than institutions. Thus I will refuse to violate the dignity of that person, knowing that despite our differences, he is a person for whom Christ died.

*Agapē* love means that I will be loving in my behavior even when I don't feel loving. Some behavior may be so obnoxious that the only loving thing I can do is to confront the person. Sometimes only love enables you to confront because you care. In such situations, perfect love demands that I treat others with respect and that I not respond in kind if the person acts in an unloving manner. If all my efforts fail and there is no way to resolve the conflict, *agapē* means that I will be willing to absorb the pain, the anger, the frustration of the person in order to preserve his well-being. In many conflict situations a Christian may have to absorb anger and rejection rather than justify himself.

### *Conflict and the Doctrine of the Church*

We tend to judge conflict in the church according to our doctrine of

the church. One of the "notes" of the church is unity. But if we construe any disagreement over policies, over interpretation of Scripture, or over any of the thousands of other issues that affect the church, as a breaking down of unity, then the church can never really be the church. The church is people, and people by nature don't see eye to eye about everything. Everett Cattell reflects on this important aspect of the church when he says that it is a mistake to say that total unity demands agreement in all matters of faith and practice. In some cases separation may be more loving and in the spirit of Christ and may in fact be a truer expression of unity than forced proximity would be.<sup>8</sup>

Disillusionment sometimes occurs when there is too much discrepancy between what we envision the church should be and what it really is. John Miller highlights this problem when he says,


In our heads we see a kingdom, a heavenly kingdom, the church of Jesus Christ as it is meant to be, and then on Sunday morning we go to church and we see quite an-

other entity, an earthly kingdom, and *earthy* kingdom, and *oy vay*, what a shock!<sup>9</sup>

By analogy, most of us have an ideal image of ourselves, but serious psychological conflict does not arise, hampering our ordinary activities, unless our real self and our ideal self are so far apart that we can't live with the tension. Of course, in the church as in marriage, too much fighting is bad. "But if the battle is productive, and is meant to edify the church rather than injure it, the results will prove to be more beneficial."<sup>10</sup>

### Conclusion

Books like Dick Howard's *So Who's Perfect? A Candid Look at Our Humanness* and W. T. Purkiser's *These Earthen Vessels: The Christian and His Failures, Foibles, and Infirmities* have helped frustrated Christians to own their humanity in relationship to the experience of entire sanctification. They have helped us to become more realistic in our personal expectations. Here's hoping that a theology of conflict will help us to become more realistic about our churches. While conflict

within the Body of Christ may not be God's perfect will for the Church, He may use it to bring out His purposes. That will not likely occur, however, unless we learn to apply the law of love to this sensitive area of church relationships instead of pointing the finger at each other and accusing each other of unspirituality when conflict does happen. 

### NOTES

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2. Norman Shawchuck, *How to Manage Conflict in the Church: Understanding and Managing Conflict* (Irvine, Calif.: Spiritual Growth Resources, 1986), 12.
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5. Donald E. Bossart, *Creative Conflict in Religious Education and Church Administration* (Birmingham, Ala.: Religious Education Press, 1980), 124.
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8. Everett Lewis Cattell, *The Spirit of Holiness* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963; Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1977), 78-79.
9. John M. Miller, *The Contentious Community: Constructive Conflict in the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 29.
10. *Ibid.*, 98-99.

## COMMUNICATION


Continued from page 6

**Sermon:** "God at Work Bringing Renewal out of Conflict" (Cite such examples as the Jerusalem Council, Acts 15:1-35; the Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark incident, vv. 36-41; Peter and Paul at Antioch, Gal. 2:11-14; etc.)

### A Prayer for Holiness of Heart:

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>7</sup>

This liturgy for conflict renewal reminds the pastor and congregation of the drama of human conflict and that which makes it healthy and creative rather than destructive. Communication is essential. The pastor must lead the people in taking the *inward look* (self-examination, self-understanding); the *outward look* (understanding and communicating with one another); and the *upward look* (offering ourselves and releasing the conflict to God). Then comes the *forward look*—living out what we have learned. 

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3. *Ibid.*, No. 372.
4. *Ibid.*, No. 558.
5. From John Wesley's unpublished prayer journal.
6. *Worship in Song*, No. 559.
7. From the "Collect for the Communion Service," *Book of Common Prayer*.

## STOP RUNNING RED LIGHTS

Eight warning signals for any church:

1. Voting patterns indicating opposition
2. Direct protest of policy or decision
3. Change in attendance at meetings
4. Change in revenue
5. A persisting issue of abrasive quality
6. Withdrawal of support
7. Increase of polarization
8. Withdrawal of key persons or groups from community

Charles A. Daily, quoted by David S. Luecke and Samuel Southard in their work, *Pastoral Administration: Integrating Ministry and Management in the Church* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, Publisher, 1986), 146. Used by permission.

# THEORIES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

by Paul E. Turner

*Pastor, The Wesleyan Church, Ottawa, Kans.*

Gently cradling the hot telephone to his ear, Pastor Jerry Simmons was getting another earful. The resolution seemed sensible enough last night to Jerry and the local church board. After all, reducing heating costs during the dead of winter would honor the Lord. And Pastor Simmons' recently concluded series of stewardship sermons elicited encouraging responses from nearly every person in the parish. Now the prospect of conducting Sunday morning worship in the fellowship hall during the cold winter months brought a storm of protest.

Let us explore the styles of two leading conflict management theorists in the hope of giving Pastor Simmons some idea of how to proceed. We will notice the unique way each author approaches the subject. Further, we shall draw tentative conclusions, hoping to resolve the tasks involved in conflict management.

## I. THE CONFLICT STRATEGIES OF SPEED B. LEAS

Speed B. Leas describes a range of conflict strategies in a self-discovery booklet produced by the Alban Institute.<sup>1</sup> Church leaders, whether beginners or experts, can profit from the practicality of this diagnostic instrument.

Consider his six different styles of managing conflict.

### A. Persuasion

From his extensive experience in conflict management, Leas believes

that leaders most often use the strategy of persuasion. Persuasion changes another person's or group's point of view, value, or way of thinking. One person wants to convince another of the correctness of his position. The recipient is expected to change while the initiator makes no change.

Leas suggests the following steps of persuasion: (1) consider each person's needs, (2) present both sides without downgrading the other's position, (3) present your favored viewpoint last, (4) don't interrupt, (5) approach the problem patiently, (6) cover one point at a time, and (7) come back often to key issues to assist the memory.

Persuasion works best when the parties in conflict trust, respect, and appreciate each other, and strive for compatible goals.

### B. Compelling

The compelling style is used to bring pressure, physical or emotional, upon another person or group in an attempt to force them to conform. A contract between two parties may be used to prescribe the boundaries between persons and the one in authority. When a policeman pulls Raymond over to the curb and writes a speeding ticket, the latter submits to authority. Or a pastor applies pressure when he explains to a couple that he will not marry them due to their immaturity.

Compelling almost never works because, potentially, it violates rights and abuses authority. In certain situations, forced short-term solutions may be acceptable; but over a longer time, force destroys lasting relationships. Force often responds to force, creating grounds for more conflict.



Paul E. Turner



### **C. Avoidance/Ignoring/Fleeing/Accommodation**

Leas combines avoidance, ignoring, fleeing, and accommodation to keep the number of styles down to a minimum. Avoiders shun conflict like children avoid spinach. Sometimes they even run away from it as soon as a cloud the size of a man's hand appears.

Hoping the situation will go away, a person may say yes but go away and purposefully forget the issue. An employee flees the conflict when he submits a resignation. When two parties are unwilling to reconcile their conflict and need to occupy the same space, avoidance/accommodation temporarily works. Neither party makes changes, and each hears the other say, "I have given up on you." A serious loss of respect has taken place. No one feels good about himself, and eventually conflict moves higher and demands active resolution.

### **D. Collaboration**

An attractive quality of the collaborative style appears when two offending parties work together for change. John and Bill jointly acknowledge their problem and agree on a process of dealing with it to bring a mutual gain. These two men rearrange their schedules to provide time to carry out the process of collaboration, satisfying both parties. Unwilling to pay the high costs of direct confrontation, they turn to the collaboration approach.

Many managers favor this tactic, emphasizing the positive effects, where John and Bill both gain the benefits of high motivation to keep their joint decision. They both walk away satisfied and can proudly say, "We did it!"

### **E. Bargaining or Negotiation**

When conflicts arise over issues highly prized by two offending parties, an arbitrator may be called to settle the issue through bargaining or negotiation. Each party embraces the hope of achieving a maximum of benefits, but also realizes everything will not go his way. Though the parties may early hold out for unreasonable demands, they later back off and are satisfied with less than their original requests.

Each party shares only helpful in

formation to his side of the case, but both parties understand this action. A third party presents both sides of the conflict, stresses the similarity of positions, and downplays the areas of disagreement.

Trading and compromise are the hallmarks of the work of negotiation. Reducing fear and enhancing trust can keep the power quotient equal.

### **F. Support**

The last strategy that Leas presents depends on good communication skills. William owns his problem with Marvin and shares it with Harry. Harry does not assume responsibility but helps William deal with the problem without becoming dependent on the resources of Harry. Harry serves William and Marvin best when he encourages both to function ethically.

Neutral, open-ended questions stimulate talking or trying to reduce tension and stress. Expressions of anger or fear do not disrupt the sharing or hinder the progress already achieved. New ideas generate changes in the person or environment.

A spouse needs support when, for example, he (or she) comes home annoyed at events that took place at the office, and picks a fight with some member of the family. The office conflict stands guilty of disrupting the peace of the home.

A listening ear sometimes disappoints a person in conflict because his side of the issue gains no active support. Herein lies the genius of the theory: Persons are affirmed and encouraged to become responsible for themselves.

## **II. STRATEGIES OF NORMAN SHAWCHUCK**

In his book *How to Manage Conflict in the Church*, Norman Shawchuck describes five styles of conflict management.<sup>2</sup> He favors the collaborating style but acknowledges the appropriateness of other styles in specific situations.

### **A. Avoiding**

Jane and Mary both scheduled activities at the church fellowship hall on the same evening. Jane had scheduled a baby shower, and Mary, a small-group Bible study. Jane decided to take the offensive and challenge Mary about the conflict, thus

placing the responsibility upon Mary. A close friend of the two, Margaret, the secretary who failed to catch the double calendaring, did not enter into the conflict and offered no help to clarify the problem or seek a solution.

Margaret was passive and unassertive and communicated the idea, "I don't care enough to get involved in the situation; it is your problem. Though present when the conflict erupted, Margaret refused to talk about the issue. Ultimately she withdrew and physically left the area of conflict.

Over a period of time, the avoiding style in effect approves of the conflict and allows the parties involved the privilege of having their own way. Withdrawing produces frustration, compliance, and eventually hostility. The conflict rages on.

### **B. Accommodating**

The accommodating style of conflict management is practiced by some people who highly value relationships. When this works, the parties in conflict are encouraged to "forgive and to forget," and the offending parties learn how to make room for each other. Unsatisfactory responses on the part of one person necessitate another person submerging his own interests or those of the organization, or even taking some of the blame. Accommodation says, "Our getting along together is more important than the problem."

Mike willingly sacrifices personal interests, hoping to solve the conflict and preserve a fragile relationship with his boss. Long-term accommodation on the part of Mike tends to vindicate the offending party, who may step up the aggression with more difficult demands. Mike loses self-respect and carries a heavy load of responsibility for his boss's problem.

### **C. Collaborating**

Admitting that conflict is real, the collaborator, whether involved or not, attempts to get all parties together to define the problem and establish a step-by-step solution. Maintaining relationships, the collaborator emphasizes personal and organizational goals. Collaborative conflict management requires open communications and involves assertive yet flexible techniques.

The headline reads, "If we work together, everyone's goals will be achieved." All parties feel good about their sense of personal value and willingly cooperate to form a mutual solution. The various positions hold valid appraisal, while working through the differences in an open atmosphere of trust plays down the differences and enhances commitment. Increased trust and stronger relationships benefit all parties. When it is possible, collaboration is the most preferred style of conflict resolution.

#### D. Compromising

The compromiser regards a little bit of winning better than none at all. Conflicting persons, in regard for the common good, compromise and split the difference. Negotiations spread the winning and the losing around as evenly as possible.

A friend of mine reported his memory of attending a baseball game many years ago. "I parked on the street, and two young boys offered to watch my car. Their price was 25 cents. I gave them a quarter, and as I walked away, I heard them talking about how to divide the money. One of them, a born compromiser, said, 'I know. You take 12 cents, I'll take 12 cents, and we will throw the other penny away.'" Mutually satisfying solutions serve the larger community. Bargaining and negotiation work together when the larger community considers the needs of all concerned.

Long-term use of compromise, however, strains relationships and undermines commitment to the agreed-upon solutions. Old conflicts wear new clothing, and bias weakens an organization.

Shawchuck acknowledges that the term compromise stirs up deep feelings in some parties in conflict. For some Christians, the word compromise evokes sinful duplicity or a lowering of standards. However, when no sin is present, some conflicts require no more than a little compromise to solve the issue quickly and properly.

#### E. Competing

The person who adopts the competing style seeks to win at all costs. One side wins and one side loses,

and winning tastes better than losing. The need for self-esteem may energize the aggressive and domineering competitor. The competitor style communicates, "I know what's best for all concerned. Just trust me." Persuasion, power, and coercion strengthen competition. When the competitor wins, quick decisions are made that may in time prove unpopular and detrimental. Benevolent dictators use the competing style to stay on top of the herd of aspiring leaders. Hostility grows among the other leaders and the followers, and feeds on itself. The competing style may result in halfhearted implementation of solutions that decrease productivity and increase hostility.

### III. INSIGHTS TOWARD CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The theorists we have briefly examined assume the inevitability of conflict, and that it can be managed one way or another depending upon a given situation. Conflict occurs within the context of human needs, perceptions of reality, and desires for achievement. Like a flashing red light on a police cruiser, conflict clamors for attention.

When conflict occurs, we, as pastors, must deal constructively with it. Shawchuck contends that ignored or poorly managed conflict results in sinful behavior. Sin occurs when truth degenerates into dishonesty, love shatters into hatred, or humility collapses into selfishness.<sup>3</sup>

Of the various theories, avoidance requires the least effort and appeals to certain aspects of human natures. Defense mechanisms like reaction or repression whisper in our ears to "just make believe nothing is wrong, and perhaps it will go away." Sunday is coming! Withdrawal does not resolve the conflict, however, and fears of rejection or failure further erode our confidence.

Confrontation and ownership of conflict forms the beginning of resolution. The model of Jesus in John 17 indicates His concern for the building up and protection of the believers. Jesus prayed for their individual and corporate unity (v. 23). Paul's concern for the Philippians was that they stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel (Phil. 1:27). To the

Ephesian believers, Paul appealed for a building up of the body to attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). How can this happen unless conflict is owned and faced?

Understanding how conflict can be beneficial encourages our efforts. David S. Luecke and Samuel Southard in their book, *Pastoral Administration*, give us healthy insights into the administrative task of facing conflict. They believe that conflict is diversity not yet integrated. Organization develops by separating confusing things, deciding how they are interrelated, and then integrating them together again in a new whole.<sup>4</sup>

James M. Burns describes the kind of healthy leadership needed to succeed in conflict resolution. In his book titled *Leadership*, he writes about a transforming leadership that engages the other person in a mutual search, raising both parties to higher levels of motivation. Burns pictures a linking up of power bases to provide mutual support and strength for a moral relationship. Leaders take the initiative and offer assistance in effecting desirable change.<sup>5</sup>

Whatever theory or style of conflict management Pastor Simmons might choose to resolve his problem, he wants to address persons rather than mere issues. By considering each person's values, he can more readily work through the conflict. Our Lord came into the world as the incarnate Son of God to reveal the Father. We too need to reveal the Christ that is in us. We especially need to be Christlike in conflict situations. Only as conflicts are acknowledged and resolved can we encourage our people to join in the incarnational joy of making the Father known.

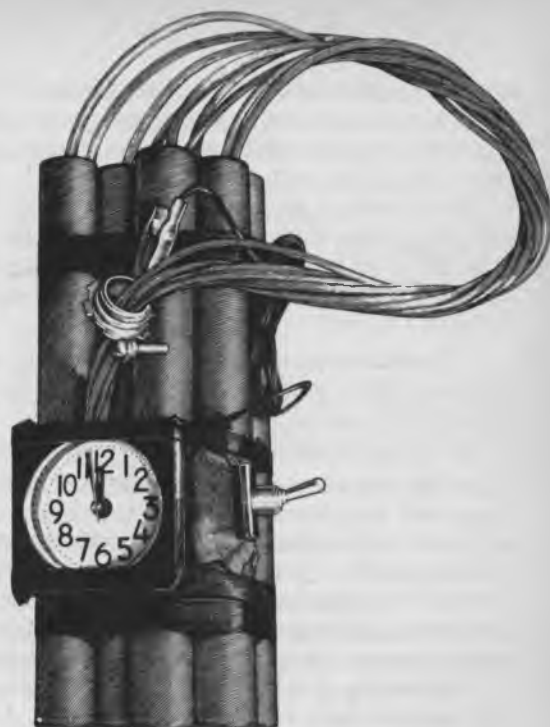
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3. *Ibid.*, 12.
4. David S. Luecke and Samuel Southard, *Pastoral Administration: Integrating Ministry and Management in the Church* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, Publisher, 1986), 151.
5. James M. Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 20.

# STAGES OF CONFLICT

by Sherman R. Reed

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**A** recent study reveals that in the United States 200 pastors per day resign to go to other churches, other ministries, or to leave the ministry. A better understanding of conflict could keep you from becoming one of these statistics. Roy Price, a Kentucky minister, cites a poll conducted by a major denomination that shows that in the typical church a pastoral crisis occurs about every 18 months.<sup>1</sup> Paul D. Robbins, vice-president of *Christianity Today*, noted that more than 25 percent of the ministers who request his magazine to print specific articles call for pieces on conflict and crisis.<sup>2</sup>

As Christian ministers, we may prefer to avoid conflict. However, conflicts will come marching across our candle-lit, hymn-filled living room with amazing regularity. G. Lloyd Rediger, director of the Office of Pastoral Services, Wisconsin Conference of Churches, indicates people produce conflict and people are resources for producing resolution.<sup>3</sup> Another author believes we will go one of four directions when we face a conflict. Those four directions are:

(1) Retreat from the conflict, thinking it will go away.

(2) Skirt the issue, which tends to increase the size of the conflict and make it more difficult to solve.

(3) Focus on side issues, which tends to develop new conflict areas. Or,

(4) Approach the conflict to identify the real issues and work through them.<sup>4</sup>

Conflicts do not exist apart from relationships, and effective leaders demonstrate relationship skills. No relationship can exist long without disruptions to individuals' expectations of one another. Norman Shawchuck thinks that disruptions become the "seedbed" for conflict and come about "because of the constant changes going on, many of which are beyond your control."<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, if we can better understand the nature of conflict, we can enjoy longer and better relationships in our businesses, in our homes, and in our churches. As pastors we can even enjoy meaningfully longer pastorates if we better understand the stages of conflict. Too often, however, we make little effort to understand conflict. Instead, "We shy away from open conflict in the church because we think of it as an end, and not as a means to the end, of moving away from chaos, confusion, and suspicion toward love and reconciliation."<sup>6</sup>

Studies show that once conflict begins, it follows a five-stage progression. Norman Shawchuck, Jerry Robinson, and Roy Clifford believe there are five stages in the conflict cycle. Conflict intervention may be initiated at any stage.

## 1. Tension Development

The first stage is tension development. Like sand in your shoe, tension finds a way to make its presence felt. David Luecke cites eight warning signals that may indicate tension development in a church. They are listed here, ranging from the least serious to the most serious: (1) voting patterns indicating the rise of opposition to the leadership, (2) direct protest of a policy or decision, (3) change in attendance at meetings, (4) a change in reve-



Sherman R. Reed

nue, (5) a persistent issue of abrasive quality, (6) withdrawal of support by some of the power structure, (7) increase in polarization, and (8) withdrawal of key persons or groups from community.<sup>7</sup>

Relationships tend to be cyclic as do the conflict stages. In his book *Harmony in the Home*, James D. Hamilton lists four relationship styles: cooperation, retaliation, domination, and isolation.<sup>8</sup> He has placed these in a helpful format:

Relationships evolve through four stages or styles.

They begin with cooperation, move to retaliation, change to domination, and finally arrive at isolation, the last style before the relationship is terminated.

In the tension development stage, disruption can be resolved. Too often the warning signals are overlooked, ignored, or trivialized. We tend to devotionalize these tensions with Christian exhortations or "praying together." The latter is good; however, the tensions must be openly admitted and managed to avoid confusion and the erosion of trust. Poorly managed tensions result in the blurring of roles and unclear behavior, producing the second stage in the conflict cycle.

## 2. Role Dilemmas

Role dilemmas scream for clarification, and never at the convenient time or place. Three items in this stage are necessary if conflict intervention is to be successful.

- (1) Ask the right questions.
- (2) Increase communication.
- (3) Implement problem-solving and decision-making processes.

Asking questions is an art. Learn to ask "what" questions rather than "why" questions. G. Douglass Lewis, in his book *Resolving Church Conflicts*, writes, "'Why' questions are rarely experienced positively by the receiver. They tend to have a judgmental and accusing quality . . . They put the receiver on the defensive and provoke either a fight or flee response."<sup>9</sup> Haven't we all at some time or another been asked, "Why didn't you take out the trash today?" Remember the emotions you felt?

Yet in a conflict situation, the urge to ask "why" questions, to accuse, to seek an explanation for behavior with which we disagree is almost irresistible. Examples of "what" questions are: "What is the issue?" "What am I doing to cause this tension?" "What is happening here?" "What is he doing?" "What are my motives?" "What can I do to increase communication?"

Another important process of the role dilemma stage is the use of problem-solving and decision-making procedures. You may want to read additional sources to increase your knowledge in these subjects. Here is one model.

- (1) Identify the problem.
- (2) Gather information.
- (3) Develop courses of action.
- (4) Analyze and compare courses of action.
- (5) Make a decision.
- (6) Select a course of action.
- (7) Make a plan that includes who will do what, when, where, how, and why; then implement the plan.

To illustrate this process, Early and Rutledge have designed a diagram of this problem-solving model.

## NINE-STEP PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

### Counterproductive Steps

- ★ Deny the problem.
- ★ Ignore the problem.
- ★ Blame something or oneself for the problem.

### Prior Steps

- ★ Acknowledge there is a problem.
- ★ Decide to attempt a solution.

### I. DEFINE THE PROBLEM

**CONFLICT:** Diagnosis      After diagnosis,  
Define the Problem

- ★ Whose problem is it?
- ★ Who is doing what to whom?
- ★ What are the distortions of perception?
- ★ What are the distortions of communication?
- ★ What is at stake?
- ★ What are the decision-making possibilities?

**NONCONFLICT:** If there is no conflict, Define the

### Problem

II.

### DECIDE ON A METHOD OF ATTACK FOR THE PROBLEM

- ★ Form a committee.
- ★ Call in a consultant.
- ★ Call in a conference with key persons.
- ★ Form an ad hoc group.
- ★ Solve it without outside advice.
- ★ Delegate to another person or group.

If a group is to be used in the problem solving, the problem should be redefined in collaboration with the group.

### III. GENERATE ALTERNATIVES

### IV. TEST ALTERNATIVES FOR REALITY

### V. CHOOSE AN ALTERNATIVE

### VI. PLAN FOR ACTION

### VII. IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

### VIII. EVALUATE

- ★ Evaluate the plan based on the goals of the plan; if plan did not meet goals . . .
- ★ Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan for solving the problem.

### IX. NEXT STEPS

If the problem still exists, or if new problems have surfaced . . .

Model by Leigh C. Early and Pearl B. Rutledge  
Reproduced from

*The 1980 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*  
J. E. Jones and J. W. Pfeiffer, eds.  
San Diego: University Associates, 1980

While difficulties in tension development may be small enough to be embarrassing, in the role dilemma stage they become threatening. Communication dissolves, and people blame one another. Mounting tension gives way to the third stage in the cycle.

### 3. Injustice Collecting

The people are now convinced that conflicts can only worsen. This dangerous stage is characterized by collecting, nurturing, and reciting of injustices. This stage is also called the "blaming" stage. People justify their own positions. They point out the other person's faults and look for reasons to separate. Separation happens because focus shifts from the conflict issue to the other people. Respect between disagreeing parties filters away. There remains no assurance that fairness will prevail.

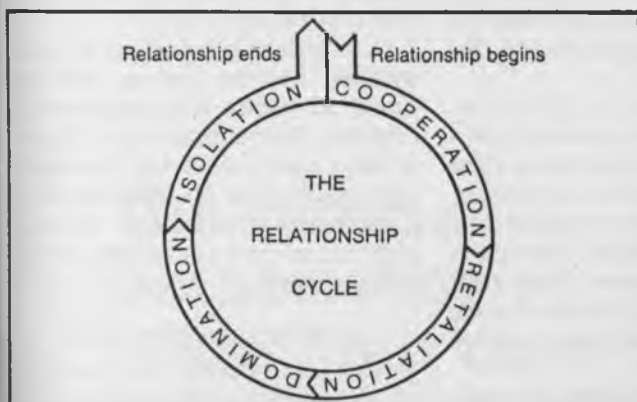
With the other people now being the problem, reason is abandoned, and emotion fuels the faithful toward internal combustion. Intervention at this point can be made by a third party whom both sides trust. Sometimes the conflict can be successfully resolved through such intervention, but even then the fourth stage in the cycle is likely to occur.

### 4. Confrontation

Confrontation is the fourth stage. This stage could be labeled as the "fight or flight" stage. Confrontation may be a managed meeting in which the parties in conflict clarify the issues that caused the tension. Unmanaged or poorly managed confrontation situations can become dreadfully devastating. Alternatives include severing the relationship, struggling to return to the former ways, and negotiating new expectations and commitments. Viable alternatives require adjustments, which is the final stage in the conflict cycle.

### 5. Adjustments

Adjustments are the changes people choose to end confrontation. Such can be conscious choices toward a new adventure. Hopefully, a sense of positive expectancy will characterize the adjustment stage. Examples of poorly managed confrontation adjustments are avoidance, domination, separation, and divorce.



Relationships evolve through four stages or styles. They begin with cooperation, move to retaliation, change to domination, and finally arrive at isolation, the last style before the relationship is terminated.

Adjustments in well-managed confrontations result in renegotiated expectations and commitments to honor the expectations. The results can be restoration of trust, rediscovery of integrity, renewal of friendship, and the resumption of shared Christian service.

Who is responsible to develop trust? The pastor is—if you are the pastor. The layman is—if you are the layman!

### Conclusion

My first remembrances of church are from my childhood on a south-central Indiana farm. The church was one of those community churches donated by one of the families in the area. Of course, someone had to be responsible for the care of the church, so the donor family plus two others families accepted the challenge. This meant recruiting and paying a preacher who pleased everyone. It also meant that services were conducted to meet the social and spiritual needs. I remember the green roof and the white siding on that one-room church centered on a quarter acre of land, on the top of a hill facing a graveled road with a stand of pin oaks behind the building. The church bell could be heard throughout the area and sometimes, with the windows raised in the summer, wind would carry the sounds of the piano and the voices from the small gathering inside to my ears as I played in the yard.

Tension developed among the two or three principal families. No one understood or even heard of a cycle of conflict, but it was there grinding away at the community of faith. Soon the church was filled with bales of hay instead of worshipers. Old tractors and broken-down threshers replaced the cars in the parking lot.

Today, as I return to the place where as a small boy I recited my first verse of memorized Scripture, all of those people are gone. There are no family reunions with dinner on the grounds, no preaching, no singing. There is no church, nor is there a church building. I can only point to the weeded, unkempt quarter acre and say to my children, "Here is where Fairview Church once stood," and choke back the feelings of pain and nostalgia.

Perhaps that church could have been rescued if someone had known more about the stages of the conflict cycle. That little church demonstrated the fact that if left unmanaged at any stage, conflict will move to the next stage, eventuating in separation and pain.

Frequently conflict can be resolved at any stage. Conflict intervention has become a skill with which the effective pastor must have more than a nodding acquaintance. †

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# MINISTRY TO DIFFICULT PEOPLE

by Christine Bigley  
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**M**rs. Bored drooped in her chair, doodling aimlessly. The committee meetings never got anywhere, according to her.

"If you vote that bus plan in," Mr. Money bellowed, "Dora and I are tearing up our pledge card. And I don't mind telling you it has \$5,000 written on it."

Mrs. Bored jerked up straight. Everybody gulped. Mrs. Whiney squirmed and stopped pouting long enough to let her jaw drop. "Well, if we don't do something," she whined, "we won't have anyone left in the Sunday School!"

As everyone gave each other the "Here we go again" look, Mr. Smug sneered, "The Bible says we are to love the people in the fellowship. Those snotty-nosed bus brats from Downer Street are not in this fellowship. Why should we take a bus to go get them?"

Miss Sweet sat up properly and chimed, "God clearly says that to give even a cup of cold water in Jesus' name brings us a reward."

"Well, then let's give those rowdy

kids a cup of cold water," Mr. Tight chuckled. "This church has been here for 40 years, and so has the Downer Street ghetto. We never got worked up about it before—why now? Our most *spiritual* pastor, Rev. Swanson, God rest his soul, never gave Downer Street a second thought. So send them some cold water; I'll buy the paper cups!"

"Pastor Proud just dreamed up this notion," Mr. Money asserted, "so that he could look good for the district superintendent."

Everyone looked at the clock. Several yawned. The noise of gathering up belongings hummed as the convener, Mrs. Stamper, lamented, "I'll entertain a motion to adjourn this meeting of the outreach committee—or whatever it is called. We are not going anywhere with the plan Pastor Proud asked us to approve. I will tell him it is impossible!"

The pastor entered. Mrs. Stamper apprised him of the outcome of the meeting. He put one hand on his hip and shook his index finger. "What kind of Christians are you? I give

you a plan for obeying the Great Commission, and you vent pure, unadulterated selfishness! Christ died for those pitiful children on Downer Street just as much as He died for any of you! We could be reaching out to others even better than First Church of the Redeemer, but you insist on keeping things as they were in the days of Moses! I'm embarrassed to go to district assembly with my report."

How often we have heard similar threats, whines, jokes, and sermons, as pastor and people try to conduct God's business. Names change, plans differ, but the action displayed in this only slightly exaggerated scenario changes about as often as ancient cathedrals change cornerstones.

## What Is Going On Here?

How could Pastor Proud analyze this situation in order to make it a learning experience rather than a mere stalemate? Two factors come to mind. What is the pastor's part in the conflict? What is the congrega-

tion's part? Robert Dale speaks emphatically concerning the pastor realizing two truths: (1) we are all still growing, and (2) the difficult person may reflect our own feared traits.<sup>1</sup> Luecke and Southard list behaviors of task-oriented and support-oriented styles of leadership.<sup>2</sup> Pastor Proud possesses several of those behaviors, as demonstrated in our scenario. Being critical of the committee's work, wanting to impress the superintendent, needing the work to move quickly, and being the first to get things done are all characteristics seen in the account of the outreach committee's meeting. So Pastor Proud should first try to analyze himself and his part in the conflict.

Other committee members demonstrate characteristics of several congregational personalities described by Dale.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Tight is a traditionalist, that is, one who is in love with the past. He may be insecure. Humor frequently masks low self-confidence. Fear of the unknown looms large for the traditionalist, and the past appears as "golden." Mr. Smug may reveal prejudice but probably falls into the traditionalist category. Rationalization allows him to keep the status quo, where comfort lulls a person to sleep.

Mrs. Bored represents the apathetic who get lost because the more vocal members receive the attention. She represents the lonely people, the ones who fill out the talent questionnaires sent to all the members and then waits—and waits. No one ever asks them to do anything, so the Mrs. Boreds of the church may build their lives around other organizations.

Mr. Money uses angry threats to control. Fear may be at the roots, shoving him into the "fight-flight" defense. But his threat may indicate that he likes to get his own way. Possibly he is a traditionalist who feels threatened by the proposal to bus children to the church. Threatened people often counter with their own threats as a way of defending themselves—a survival technique. Even Mrs. Whiney fits the category of hostility. Constant complaint is anger in low gear. The complainer expects a solution based on appeasement. Their complaining pushes others to feel guilty and to find a solution that protects the complainer's ego.

Richard Bollinger discusses several expressions of disguised anger.<sup>4</sup> Joking, one of the expressions, occurs just before the meeting. Loud laughter and pointed references to the leader, even jovial ones, may actually express anger. Mr. Tight may have used joking as disguised anger toward Miss Sweet. Bollinger also describes several stress situations producing hostility: (1) experiences of loss; (2) cumulative pressures; (3) sudden heavy demands; (4) unfulfilled expectations. All of these may have been at work in the meeting described earlier—or in the most recent conflict in your church.

#### What Can Be Done?

After analyzing the situation, where can Pastor Proud find solutions? Amid the sprinkling of writings on leadership and conflict management, I found several formulae for problem solving or steps to follow, but one premise thundered

from all—Improve communications! Improve relationships! Whether the leader is task-oriented or person-oriented, conversing with people provides information to prevent, manage, or resolve conflict.

In learning to work with the people in your congregation, especially "difficult" members, remember this old proverb: "A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner." Dale emphasizes that "difficult members are not an endangered species."<sup>5</sup> He also indicates that working behind the scenes with difficult members spares stress and strain for others in the congregation.

What makes communication such a hang-up for pastors? Stech writes, "Two people cannot talk simultaneously and have an effective conversation."<sup>6</sup> He indicates that effective listening is an active process and is not the same as being quiet. Several authors indicated that many ministers listen poorly. W. M. Stowe related weak listening to the nature of the profession, which is speaking. People ask for advice; the minister tells them. But listen for what is beneath the words. Hear the fear, anguish, hate, hurt, and "recognize when there is blood poisoning beneath the inflammation."<sup>7</sup>

"Active listening," as described by Rickards, "is a genuine attempt to increase the amount of information received during a discussion."<sup>8</sup>

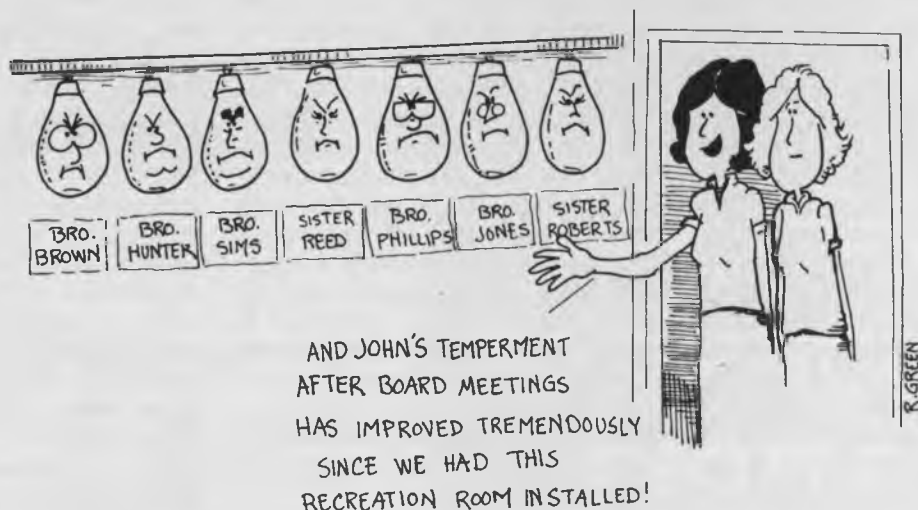
A variety of approaches to more effective listening exist. "So you are saying that . . . ?" "My understanding of . . ." "Let me see if I understand what you are saying . . ." "Correct me if I'm wrong. I hear you saying . . ."

Dale gives an illustration involving

## The difficult person may reflect our own feared traits.

Christine Bigley





a young man, Louis. He always appeared upset in spite of friendly gestures from Pastor Dale. After a while, Pastor Dale made an appointment with Louis. They met and talked. The pastor listened and asked questions. Louis registered surprise that the two shared similar background events—painful ones. A common ground then allowed Pastor Dale to share with Louis the difference Christ made in the interpretation of those events. A friendship was born. The initial problem—anger that the pastor was always happy—was discovered. Listening uncovered the culprit!<sup>9</sup>

In terms of conflict resolution, Shawchuck indicates that progress occurs when you help the person develop personal security. How? Listening. The sooner in the conflict the listening occurs, the better the outcome.<sup>10</sup> In the scenario presented earlier, no one seemed to listen. Pastor Proud gave an assignment to Mrs. Stamper, then returned at the end of the meeting. Could listening have helped?

I like DeVille's model of solving problems with or for a member of the fellowship.<sup>11</sup> His coaching method flows in five steps. The acronym ASRAC along with a model makes it easy to learn.

#### Accept Share Reflect Add Confirm

Most pastors could profit by memorizing this ASRAC formula.

**Accept**—listening without interrupting, criticizing, or getting defensive (remember the purpose).

**Share**—hear the emotions and share with the person; for example, "It must be really frustrating to want to talk with me only to have me rush by you."

**Reflect**—paraphrase the message you are hearing with, "Tell me if I understand your feelings. You would like to talk with me very much, but if you keep getting a busy signal from me, you will give up?" Give some time for clarification here before moving on to the next phase. You may even want to express your understanding in different words.

**Add**—new information or a reminder of old facts will help bring a plan of action. "Thank you for being so honest with me. I sure find that difficult at times. I want to put myself on the record for you—Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings I am available for talking with people. If those times are impossible, leave a list of possible times with the church secretary. I will figure out a way to set aside a mutually agreeable time and get back with you."

**Confirm**—get a commitment to the plan for resolution. "Jane, I have my appointment book with me now. Let's set a time to talk about the things you've been waiting so long to discuss."

#### What Difference Does It Make?

Listening is hard! Listening re-

quires concentration! Ah, but Jane, known previously as Mrs. Bored, now directs the volunteer program of First Loving Care Fellowship Church. Pastor Proud keeps losing the buttons on his shirts. Mr. and Mrs. Money, Fred and Dora, head up the financial drives. Miss Sweet directs the children's department of the Sunday School. The "snotty-nosed" kids from Downer Street form a large teen choir. Many elderly folks in the neighborhood smile because the teens serve them in the church's ministry program. And on it spins, this tale of wonderment. But it could happen—couldn't it?

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# WHAT DO THEY EXPECT?

## Expectations and Evaluation as Tools for Conflict Resolution

by Jim Southard  
*Pastor, Church of the Nazarene  
San Rafael, Calif.*

I can't believe it!" Pastor Bradley plops his Thompson Chain Reference on the kitchen table so hard that his sermon notes on "Love" fall out and slide into a puddle of honey left over from a hurried breakfast. "I have been putting in 60 hours a week for the past two years, and they give me that kind of vote!" Bradley paces around the room. "I didn't promote building that new sanctuary; the board forced that project all along. I spend hour after hour out there, digging holes, pouring the foundation, putting in drainage tile, arguing with inspectors, bawling out plumbers, and look at the vote they give me! What do they expect?"

Pastor Bradley's wife, Joan, listens attentively, supporting as well as she can. But what can she say? He is so shaken that he hasn't even noticed the consoling aroma of her pot roast that fills the room. What more can she possibly do? Problems already exist at home because of the time he spends away. Just last week he missed their daughter's birthday party because it was the only time the inspector would come out. What more can the people expect?

Meanwhile, in another home across town, Mr. Ferris, who serves on the board of trustees in Pastor Bradley's church, talks to his wife about the pastor. "I cannot understand the pastor! What does he expect? Doesn't he know how to pastor a church? He spends all his time on the building!" Mr. Ferris gets more animated as he talks. "I don't think he called on us once, outside of church business, this whole year. He not only spends all his time on the church, he expects us to spend all our time and money on it, too. What about the other needs of the church?" Mrs. Ferris recognizes a rampage when she sees one and disappears into the kitchen.

Mrs. Ross, the town librarian and Sunday School teacher at Pastor Bradley's church, complains to her husband, "I can't imagine what some people expect. It makes me mad. Reverend Bradley works his head off

around the church, and people vote against him like that. They must be carnal—that's all I can say!" Mrs. Ross gazes out the window at the hospital across the street. "His hospital visitation proves what a hard worker and caring pastor we have. The nurses told me that he does a better job of visiting than the hospital chaplains. Mrs. Fillmore went to the hospital on Thursday night for surgery on Friday. Do you know what the pastor did? He not only went to the hospital Thursday night to pray with her, he also arrived at the hospital an hour before the surgery on Friday and then spent the rest of the day with Mr. Fillmore in spite of the fact that Mr. Fillmore was reeking with alcohol. And it's not just the Fillmores—Bradley is there for any and all of our people when they are sick."

The fourth home we visit presents us with a very different scene. Bob and Jane Phillips accepted the Lord as their personal Savior two years ago. They both attend the nearby college and have been married for three years. "I feel so guilty voting against our pastor that I just wanted to give him a hug. But what does he expect? His preaching doesn't feed us anymore. I don't think he



Jim Southard

spends enough time studying." As Bob Phillips speaks, it appears that he might break into tears at any moment. "Something had to be done. I hope he realizes our needs and works harder on his sermons."

Let's visit one more home. Bill and Pauline Anderson have attended the church since it was started by Pastor Bradley 10 years ago. They have a teenage son, Sam. Bill, emotions boiling, quivers with rage as he talks to Pauline. "If Pastor Bradley leaves, we are leaving, too!" He glances at the picture of his teenage son. "Sam goes to church for one reason—Rev. Bradley is the only person he trusts enough to talk to. What do people expect? All our teenagers come to church because of Pastor Bradley. I'm so mad I could spit nails!"

### Expectations

Such stories could be told of 1,000 churches, and a common thread would run through them all. Nobody knows what to expect because no one talked about expectations. The first vehicle to manifest the rising conflict in expectations was the pastoral vote. Paul Cedar, pastor of the 2,000-member Lake Avenue Congregational Church, relates an incident in an article called "Pleasing God and Pleasing People" (*Leadership*, Summer 1984). He recounts an event in which he did not fulfill the expectations of the laity. Pastor Cedar came to his first church with his pregnant wife. They had a lot of trouble finding a place to live. After much searching, the young couple found a mobile home they could afford to rent. No sooner had they made the rent agreement than the vice-chairman of the board confronted the pastor with the accusation that "only carnival people live in mobile homes" and demanded that Pastor Cedar back out of the agreement.

Another incident Pastor Cedar recalls in the same article further illustrates how pastoral and laity expectations can differ. While preaching, Pastor Cedar disclosed that he was having some personal problems. After the service, as he was greeting the congregation, an angry older lady collared him and let him have it. "Pastor, don't you ever mention from the pulpit again that you have problems! Pastors aren't supposed to have problems! You're going to destroy my faith."

The titles of articles on leadership give another clue to the many different expectations of pastoral leadership. For example: "Power and Servanthood: Emerging Notions for Church Leadership," *Encounter* (Winter 1987); "Developing a Christian Mean Streak: Being a Gentle Shepherd, Meek and Mild, May Get You into Trouble," *Leadership* (Spring 1987); and "Wanted: Leaders with a Vision," *Christian Century* (September 23, 1987).

Some recent authors who have offered a range of expectations for Christian leadership include Lyle Schaller, "What Does Your Pastor Do Best?" *Christian Ministry* (March 1984). Schaller lists six characteristics valued by congregations.

1. "Great biblical preaching"
2. "Our minister knows everyone by name."
3. "Our minister excels in funerals."
4. "Our pastor excels in relationships with children and youth."
5. "Hospital visitation"
6. "The motivation of volunteers"

Another author, James Allen Sparks, lists in his book



"Could I speak to your answering machine, Pastor? I'd rather not say this to you directly."

*Potshots at the Preacher* expectations from a national survey: "The minister is self-effacing, morally exemplary, impervious to stress, an effective communicator, a community leader, a problem-solver, a conflict negotiator, a competent theologian, and happily married or reasonably adjusted to celibate life."

A third author, William D. Horton, in his *Expository Times* article "The Pastor's Problem: XXII, Assessment of Ministry," talks about unmentioned expectations. These include fruitful preaching, pastoral work that will build up the church, efficient administration, and ability to master every situation.

The wide range of expectations listed above brings you to the immediate dilemma, "What do they expect?" James Sparks, in his book previously mentioned, gives us some guidelines for coming to an agreement about expectations. He gives us six points to keep in mind.

1. There are differences between clergy and laity understandings of the minister's job description.
2. There needs to be dialogue between clergy and lay leaders about expectations.
3. Make role conflicts visible so that they can be dealt with.
4. As conflict arises, try to communicate more instead of less.
5. Clergy need to take an active stand if role conflict is to be reduced.
6. There needs to be dialog on the goals and purposes of the church.



Richard Hanses, in his article "The Sound of Clashing Expectations" (*Leadership*, Summer 1984), lists some further helps for resolving expectation conflicts.

1. Set important expectations in writing.
2. Consider job descriptions.
3. Don't postpone dealing with clashing expectations.
4. Be willing to suggest equitable trade-offs.

Included in this article is a covenant agreement being proposed by a committee of the Church of the Nazarene, titled "A Covenant of Ministry" (see Table 1). Something along those lines needs to be drawn up between every congregation and its pastor to avoid conflicting expectations.

### Evaluation

To facilitate conflict resolution, a second major step needs to be taken. Develop some type of evaluation to determine if the agreed-upon expectations are being met. Paul Cedar notes, "My most painful experiences have been when I had a problem and no one loved me enough to tell me about it." Yet how often do we tell a pastor when he has a problem? Why not? One, because we have not developed a means to evaluate; and two, we have not scheduled a time to do it. How much easier it would be to bring up a problem if there were a regular forum for it, a time that would also include telling the pastor the things that he does right. Horton, in the article quoted earlier, helps us to get a handle on the real cost to the church and minister. "The lack of any regular assessment of ministry affects both the church and the pastor. The church which fails to maintain, service and assess the work of its pastor fails in the vital area of its stewardship and is bound to suffer long-term consequences." Discussing pastoral cost, he adds, "The pastor, too, suffers from never facing a realistic assessment of his ministry." Self-indicting as that statement is, Horton spells out the cost of the problem to the minister in a heart-wrenching declaration. Many pastors would not have had to resign, he believes, "if their work had been regularly assessed and they had been helped to come to terms with themselves and their situation. Many others would have been saved from the nagging dissatisfaction and sense of unease which have dogged their continuing service to the church."

The problem of no evaluative procedures for minister and churches is a real one, but the way to evaluate has always been a problem. H. Newton Maloney, in his article in *Pastoral Psychology* (Winter 1984) titled "Ministerial Effectiveness: A Review of Recent Research," perhaps answers this criticism best when he says, "There is a transcendent dimension to ministry that makes all objective measures pale in importance. However, there is warrant for making serious efforts to determine effectiveness and to train persons in those dimensions if the church would be faithful to its appointed task in the world."

Who will do this evaluation? What are the criteria for judgment? Some researchers have tried to help us at this point. William Horton's article gives four sources of evaluation that should be made: self-assessment, assessment by the congregation, peer assessment, and external or professional assessment. Any or all of these

could be a helpful evaluation for the church or the pastor. Donald D. Haggerty, Jr., in a *Christian Ministry* (January 1983) article titled "Evaluating Clergy Performance," gives us other helpful tips about the "who" of evaluation. He believes the congregational evaluators must evaluate under the assumption that they are looking at the total church ministry, pastor and church together. The committee should contain lay leaders as well as members at large, and the findings should be written very descriptively.

Fortunately, there have been some evaluative measures already drawn up that could be helpful for a church wanting to get involved in this process. Examples include (1) "Guidelines for a Session Personnel Committee," set up by the United Presbyterian church; (2) "Workbook on Evaluation for the Pastor and Pastor Parish Relational Committee," drawn up by the United Methodist church; and (3) The Wesleyan Church's "Local Church Evaluation Report" (see Table 2).

Expect exciting results if this process is implemented. Maloney says that the greater the similarity of role expectation between pastor and congregation, the greater the church attendance. He further shows that this congruence can be reached as clergy and laity discuss the expectations and evaluations. Haggerty notes, "As lay members of the congregation engage in dialogue (regular pastoral reviews) with the pastor, perceptions of performance can be compared, issues that have been avoided by either or both parties can be raised, and goals can be established that are mutually agreed upon by pastor and church members."

We do have some biblical models for this process. Jesus sends out the 72 workers (Luke 10:1-17). Jesus tells them (vv. 2-16) what He wants them to do. In verse 17, they report to Jesus what they have accomplished—so that they can be evaluated. In verses 18 and 19, Jesus approves of what they have accomplished. The story does not tell us about the expectations of the people He sent out, but I'm sure Jesus worked with those expectations as He works with all our individual differences.

More examples are found in Acts. Acts 6:1-7 tells the story of the daily distribution of food to the widows. The expectation appears to be that food would be distributed to *all* the widows. An evaluation was made that showed that some widows were being overlooked. The job was given to chosen disciples with the expectations understood. The third example comes from Acts 13. The Antioch church sends off Saul and Barnabas with a job to do. The job description is found in verse 2. Throughout chapters 13 and 14 we are told what these two apostles did, and in 14:26-27 we are given the report they gave to their sending church for evaluation. We do not have all the details in these stories; but it is apparent that in all these cases some expectations were established, or there would have been no way for the evaluation, which we see take place.

What do you suppose should be done to bring about the benefits of shared expectations and open evaluations in Pastor Bradley's church? If you were in his place, what would you do first? "Resign," you say. That isn't the only alternative.

Table 1

# A COVENANT OF MINISTRY

**T**he priority of the Church is to reconcile persons to God. In order to accomplish this evangelistic purpose, a unique relationship between a local congregation and its pastor must be developed. This relationship is best described in terms of a covenant. A mutual commitment of trust provides the strength and focus needed to fulfill the Great Commission.

The advancement of God's kingdom on earth is accomplished by:

## Pastors who . . .

- give themselves to prayer and the Word of God as the foundation for their ministry.
- exemplify integrity as a faithful spouse and parent as well as an honorable steward of personal finance.
- provide ways to equip the laity for ministry.
- guard carefully the confidences placed in their trust and regard all people without partiality.
- extend the influence of the local body through the mission of the Church of the Nazarene at the district, regional, and international levels.

## Churches that . . .

- pray for their pastors.
- recognize God's providence in bringing pastors and people together through the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- acknowledge the spiritual leadership of their pastors including the responsibility to speak the truth in love for the edifying of the churches.
- encourage and support their pastors as responsible for the task of extending God's kingdom on earth.
- share in meeting individual and corporate needs requiring pastoral care.

## Together, as pastor and church, we covenant to . . .

- pray continually for God to help make our fellowship and ministry a means of redeeming persons through Jesus Christ.
- strengthen and sustain each other for an effective ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.
- give ourselves in a ministry of love to all persons without regard to ethnic identity or economic status.

- exemplify Christian standards of honesty and integrity in all our relationships.
- strive for the moral and spiritual improvement of our community.

For sustaining the best possible relationships:

## The pastor covenants . . .

- to receive constructive criticism as a means of self-improvement in his leadership role.
- to be supportive to his fellow ministers and his district superintendent.
- to cooperate with the district and general programs of the Church of the Nazarene.
- to be disciplined mentally, spiritually, and physically for effective leadership.
- to surrender all pastoral functions when termination of his pastoral relationship becomes necessary.

## The church covenants . . .

- to respect the pastor's study time and private ministry of prayer.
- to respect the pastor's personal time to nurture personal needs.
- to provide adequate vacations/spiritual retreats and assistance to denominational conferences.
- to provide adequate compensation and professional expenses, retirement, insurance, and housing; and make an annual review of the total financial package.
- to discuss any significant problems related to the church with the pastor.

## Together the pastor and church covenant . . .

- to seek God's vision for present and future ministries.
- to be involved in a redemptive ministry and service to the community in the name of Jesus Christ.
- to promote respect for each other in the congregation.
- to pray and cooperatively move toward a workable solution to any problems in the spirit of Christian understanding and love.
- to terminate, when necessary for effective ministry, the pastoral relationship in the spirit of Christian understanding and love.

Table 2

# LOCAL CHURCH EVALUATION REPORT

Prepared by  
DR. RONALD R. BRANNON

To be completed in the presence of the district superintendent by each member of the congregation (or local board of administration), without consultation with, or influence from, any other person. The results in total or average shall be shared with the pastor.

NAME OF CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PASTOR \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. THE CHURCH BUILDING, PARSONAGE, AND LAWNS

How do you evaluate the attractiveness and usability of your properties?

- 1.1 General appearance of lawns, parking areas, grounds, and shrubs
- 1.2 Exterior paint/appearance of church buildings and parsonage
- 1.3 General housekeeping, maintenance, and attractiveness of church buildings
- 1.4 General care and attractiveness of parsonage
- 1.5 Comparison of properties with immediate community
- 1.6 Usability and adequacy of facilities as related to intended use
- 1.7 Do you *personally* think your church needs to be making definite plans to rebuild, relocate, or provide major improvements? [yes] [no]
- 1.8 Above other plant considerations, what is this church's greatest physical/property need? \_\_\_\_\_

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

### 2. THE LOCAL CHURCH

How do you evaluate the program of the local church in these areas?

- 2.1 Evangelism
- 2.2 Christian education (including Sunday School)
- 2.3 Missions
- 2.4 Stewardship
- 2.5 Worship
- 2.6 Christian community involvement
- 2.7 Fellowship
- 2.8 Willingness to work and serve
- 2.9 Do you *personally* think your church is making meaningful progress toward the accomplishment of its objectives and reason for existence? [yes] [no]
- 2.10 What is this church's greatest strength? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.11 What is this church's greatest weakness? \_\_\_\_\_

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

### 3. THE LOCAL BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

How do you evaluate the function and spirit of the LBA?

- 3.1 Responsibility to meetings
- 3.2 Fairness and objectivity in decision making
- 3.3 Identifying objectives and setting goals
- 3.4 Follow-through on decisions until programs reflect designed change
- 3.5 Cooperation with pastor, while yet exercising creative leadership
- 3.6 Do you *personally* believe the LBA is working as a unified entity, providing clear leadership to the total congregation? [yes] [no]
- 3.7 Would you favor a special meeting of the LBA to establish goals for the various areas of church ministry, along with methods by which to achieve those goals? [yes] [no]

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

### 4. THE PASTOR—THE MAN AND HIS MINISTRY

How do you evaluate the ministry of your pastor in the following areas?

- 4.1 Preaching (content and doctrine)
- 4.2 Preaching (delivery)
- 4.3 Visitation
- 4.4 Programming and administration
- 4.5 Relationships to LBA
- 4.6 Relationships to congregation
- 4.7 Relationships to community
- 4.8 Do you *personally* think your pastor is acceptably communicating the Lord's message and otherwise performing his role as pastor? [yes] [no]

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

### 5. THE CONGREGATION

How do you evaluate the spirit of the congregation in the following areas?

- 5.1 The general attitude toward the LBA and announced goals and objectives
- 5.2 The general attitude toward the minister
- 5.3 The general attitude toward the minister's family
- 5.4 The general attitude toward the possibility of this minister continuing another year(s).
- 5.5 Do you *personally* think that there should be a change of ministers in the next two or three years? [yes] [no]
- 5.6 Are you (and your family) personally satisfied with what you are doing in the church, or are there other avenues of ministry in which you desire to become involved? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.7 Do you have concerns or suggestions regarding the church or your pastor's ministry that this form has not covered? If so, what are they? \_\_\_\_\_

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

THANK YOU

YOUR RESPONSE HELPS TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP THAT CAN MAKE THIS CHURCH A GREATER BLESSING TO MORE PERSONS

# CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN STAFF AND INTERNSHIP SETTINGS

by Donald W. Welch  
*Pastoral Ministries Coordinator  
Church of the Nazarene*

**T**rying to avoid conflict many times propels us further into unresolved pain rather than the pleasure we yearn for through open, communicative, interpersonal relationships. Each of us could tell of a painful confrontation or subtle conflict, resulting in the loss of a friendship or that significant other, or even the change of leadership position. The word *conflict* conjures up different mental images in relation to individual experience. G. Douglass Lewis, in *Resolving Church Conflicts: A Case Approach for Local Congregations* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), says, "Conflict is two or more objects aggressively trying to occupy the same space at the same time." Many times, having survived a conflict, we have to learn how to pick up the pieces and live with the painful aftermath of heated conflict that we would just as soon forget.

To teach conflict management in an internship setting without understanding one's strengths and weaknesses as a conflict manager is as futile as trying to teach someone how to perform brain surgery without ever having attended medical school. It is an impossibility. Therefore, it is good to explore one's personal biases, weaknesses, or lack of skill when trying to teach conflict management in the internship setting, and to investigate the process for handling and implementing appropriate conflict techniques.

Robert D. Dale, in *Pastoral Leadership*, says: "Broadly viewed, there are two types of congregational conflict: conflict over facts and conflicts involving feelings. Most disagreements blend both facts and feelings" (p. 159).

Having now served as a college administrator, associate

pastor at one of our college churches, and senior pastor, I have come to realize that in the various facets of ministry, conflict is as natural to the church as breathing and eating are for physical beings. I'm not saying that all conflict is healthy, but neither am I saying that all conflict should be labeled "bad." In any event, learning to deal with conflict in a productive manner can enable us to be more effective ministers.

This became more apparent to me the day I tried to purchase my first new automobile. I found the ideal car that, I thought, would meet all my needs as a minister: conservative in style (not too flashy), economical (very easy on my car allowance), it was large enough to transport five grown people and, in addition, the *Consumer Guide* qualified it as "dependable."

Driving my old '71 Toyota to the dealership with high hopes of purchasing my first new automobile was a momentous occasion. (My old car had been operating without a reverse gear for over a year.) With a smile and high expectation, I looked forward to the ensuing dialogue between the salesman and myself. I would soon be on my way in my brand-new car, with a reverse gear that worked. Up to that point the salesman and I were really hitting it off, and I sensed that we shared a real appreciation for each other. Having done research into the particulars of this car, I had a fairly good idea as to what I could afford and what I was willing to pay for it. And then the big C happened. The price the salesman quoted over the telephone was not the same as he was quoting on paper. I gently questioned him. After a pause, and almost as smoothly as a pastor summing up his Sunday morning message with a powerful concluding illustration, he drove home his all-inclusive point. It was then I noticed his demeanor changing almost as quickly as Pinocchio's facial transformation when he told a lie. (If Geppetto had been close by at that point, I would have asked him if this salesman was telling the truth or not.)

The salesman's jargon from this point on was unfamiliar and, I thought, could have dissipated the most idealistic car enthusiast. His speech ran with pietistic overtones that made me think of certain times I wished to forget, when I had preached. Was my preaching being lived out in my daily experience? At that moment I began to notice my posture changing from relaxed and casual to stiffened and defensive.

As I questioned my own communicative abilities, I tried to reassure myself that I had taken significant communication courses in college and seminary, and I was no dummy. I had always been able to communicate fairly well with people. Perhaps I had misunderstood this salesman's original commitment over the telephone. Not wanting to judge that salesman



Donald W. Welch

(why, with all of the pictures of his children, his wife, and their pets there on his desk, I could clearly see that he was a good family man), I tried to regain my composure. I wanted desperately to give him the benefit of the doubt, but the more I tried, the more I found myself bristling. Surely this isn't happening, I thought to myself, though I had heard my friends relate similar experiences. I still believed I could overcome this conflict. Or maybe, even yet, I might see this salesman's nose growing, giving away the secret that, yes, he was lying to me all along.

But I was already judging this man and doubted his honesty and integrity. I had been honest with him, and he was using my open, up-front approach against me (at least I thought so). He had attacked me where I was vulnerable, and there had been a deception from the beginning, as far as I could ascertain.

The conversation disintegrated into a nonnegotiable battle. He said that his boss wouldn't come down any further on the price, which was nowhere near the price quoted over the telephone that initially drew me to that particular car dealership. From his point of view we were only in conflict over the sales price; from my perspective we were in emotional conflict over his lack of principle. I ended up leaving the dealership frustrated, angry, and determined not to be caught in such a dilemma again. Unfortunately, I have since found that such situations are all too common in life—two or more people seeing things from totally different viewpoints with (for whatever reason) a lack of ability to effectively manage the conflict.

It is important to gain a self-awareness. Often in the ministry we are trained to be aware of and to understand what makes other people tick without really discovering who we are in relationship to conflict situations. Whether or not we create conflict, ministers find themselves thrust into a myriad of conflict situations that raise the prevailing question: "What do I do with this?"

Norman Shawchuck, in *How to Manage Conflict in the Church*, says, "Each of us has a set of working assumptions about God which influences our thinking and doing. The theology you hold about conflict (your assumptions regarding how God thinks and acts in the midst of conflict) influences the way you will think and act when confronted by a conflict situation." If we view ourselves as weak, vulnerable, broken vessels before an ever-loving God, we will tend to view those with whom we work as vessels of the same standing and will approach conflict with sensitivity and understanding. Such an attitude will enable us to enter into the conflict situation with an understanding that no one wins or loses.

When we sense that we are being taken advantage of or our personal territory is being threatened, we are caught in a win-or-lose conflict. Let's face it, no one likes to lose or be made to look bad in front of family or peers. If this occurs, we naturally look for someone to blame. It's like the little boy who was having trouble staying out of the strawberry patch. His mother, trying to help him, said: "When you feel tempted to get into the strawberry patch, just tell Satan, 'Satan, get thee be-

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## Too often we view conflict as something that leaves two parties at an impasse.

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Too often we view conflict as something that leaves two parties caught in an impasse where the nonnegotiable stance (whether fact or emotion) takes its toll on the prevailing parties. Instead of learning to use the conflict for reaching a deeper understanding and personal maturity, we tend to bristle, become frustrated, and look for a way to avoid working through it. New wisdom and understanding are then lost within the parameters of conflict. It goes without saying that many times it is more profitable to avoid conflict than to become enmeshed in issues that are destructive in nature.

Jesus was involved in conflict. In Matt. 21:12-16 we see that He even initiated conflict. John 8:3-11 tells us that Jesus resolved conflict involving the woman found in adultery. At other times we see that He avoided conflict, as in Luke 4:28-30.

It would be optimistic and idealistic to say that conflict *always* serves as a stepping-stone to greater understanding. More often than not the converse is true. Too often we fantasize that our experiences have really made us into the persons we have become, only to realize that our experiences haven't changed us. We may be lacking the inertia or energy to transfer our head knowledge into our moment-by-moment life experiences. Rather than internalize these learnings, making certain adjustments, and adapting these learnings into our style for relating to other(s) in conflict situations, we naturally bristle, hold tight to our personal convictions, whether or not they are valid. Our conflict approach then leaves us mythed, alone, and less than effective.

This may not be your situation. You may have learned and developed your strategy for healthy conflict management early on, and you may feel gifted in the area of managing conflict. If so, you are probably seeking new insights. The following tools may be helpful in teaching conflict management in an internship setting.

hind me.'" "But then he pushes me into the strawberry patch," responded the little boy. It's too easy to resist taking responsibility for our faults. A natural tendency is to cast blame rather than to analyze and to face our contribution (positive or negative) to the conflict.

Norman Wakefield, in *Solving Problems Before They Become Conflicts*, says that the way in which we face problems and conflicts involves several styles of relating. "Learned behavior" develops from our experiences in childhood. We learn how to solve or avoid problems by watching others handle problems, especially our parents. Our personal approach centers around "goals and relationships." Whatever style we adopt, we are trying to keep our goals and our relationships with people in balance with our feelings and desires. Most of us do not relate in the same style in every situation. We may have several backup styles that Shawchuck elaborates on in his material. He believes that as our experience level grows and expands, we tend to develop different backup styles. We discover different ways to handle problems that may seem similar in nature to conflicts of the past.

This leads me to believe that we are all in the process of discovering who we are. I would imagine that the disciples faced a different level of self-awareness after witnessing the resurrection of Jesus than they had prior to the Crucifixion. They thought they were prepared for what lay ahead, but no one really knows how he will react to a given situation until it happens. We know of only one person who really knew himself well enough to respond appropriately in every situation, and that was Jesus Christ. It may safely be said that the apostles were carnal, impotent, unfilled, and struggling for self-identity before Pentecost. They were conflict-prone before their anointing in the power of the Holy Spirit; but it is equally true that they were conflict-prone following Pentecost.

For instance, the great debate between Paul and Barnabas



over young John Mark illustrates that even sanctified Christians can get caught up in conflict. Paul and Barnabas eventually ended up going their separate ways because a compromise could not be reached. Acts 15:36-40 tells us that conflicts will happen even among Spirit-led people. Acts 15:41 and 16:5 tell us a lot about God, His tolerance of our differences, and His willingness to bless our ministries even when we are in conflict. I think this story of Paul and Barnabas falls under the category of the promise given in 2 Cor. 12:9, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (NKJV). David W. Johnson, in *Human Relations and Your Career* (Prentice-Hall, 1978), 247, says: "It is not the presence of conflict that causes chaos and disaster, but the harmful and ineffective way it is managed. It is the lack of skills in managing conflict that leads to problems. When conflicts are skillfully managed, they are of value." Learning what leads up to conflict and how to handle it is of utmost importance.

Shawchuck says that conflict always involves (1) action, (2) threat, and (3) reaction. The action is the behavior of one party; threat threatens to take, damage, or destroy a "territory" that is claimed by another party; the threatened party reacts in ways intended to protect his claim on the "territory."

I think that one of the more helpful things we can teach our interns is that conflict is very much a part of the ministry. Recently, while meeting with an intern and his mentor, I heard the mentor say: "I never thought Christian people could act this way." To come to an understanding that people will disagree and that it may even lead to conflict will help enable the intern to be a more effective pastor and leader. It is important to learn to manage the conflict, not whether or not we have to face conflict. Conflict is inevitable in the ministry.

Even perfect love, endowed by the Holy Spirit, will not protect us from conflict. There is a difference between managing conflict and perpetuating it for selfish reasons. Neither Paul nor Barnabas intended to become involved in a conflict that eventually led to the severing of their relationship; but neither did they try to resolve the conflict the best way. Where do we read that they prayed together about young John Mark, seeking God's intention for his involvement in the missionary journey? Prayer is essential to managing conflict.

How do we help the young intern to address conflict when that conflict centers on and threatens to usurp the pastor's leadership? When our leadership is threatened, or another person's territory is threatened, the human personality naturally wants to protect that which he worked so hard for or for some reason he holds so dear. The natural tendency is to react emotionally rather than begin to approach the problem logically, dealing only with issues rather than personalities. Shawchuck asserts, "Conflict, however, is not sinful of itself. Sinfulness in conflict results from the way we behave in the conflict, not from disagreement or tensions between us." Paul encourages us to "be angry, and do not sin" (Eph. 4:26, NKJV).

Wherever you have people interacting, there is possibility for conflict. Although conflict may indicate carnality sticking its head out, it does not necessarily mean there is a spiritual problem. It could mean that the conflict is being mismanaged. Many times we are too quick to assess conflict as a spiritual lapse on somebody's part, rather than carefully analyzing the dynamics.

Relationships are dynamic and are always changing; in flux from day to day. Conflict is dynamic, too, and normally takes a cycle of (1) Tension development, where someone is sensing a loss of freedom in the relationship. (2) Role dilemma, where confusions develop as to why the tension developed, and so on. This is the crucial stage where the parties need to sit down and discuss the problems that have arisen. Un-

fortunately, this is also the stage where people are embarrassed to discuss the issues because they seem too trivial. (3) Injustice collecting, where people are convinced that things can only get worse, so they begin an emotional separating process in preparation for an inevitable "battle." They begin collecting injustices and hurts that will be used as "artillery" later. (4) Confrontation is usually the next stage. Shawchuck says that "in unmanaged conflict persons confront each other. In well-managed conflict they confront the issues which caused the tension in the first place." In the church we are more susceptible to conflict because of our investment in and personal relationship with others. It's similar to the intensity of family negotiations involving private space, control, and meaningful identity acceptance, which most of us have faced at one time or another. This usually takes place when the parties are either at the point of renegotiating their relationship, or they move to sever the relationship. (5) Adjustments are the changes people make to end the confrontation.

Shawchuck suggests three steps to conflict management. The first step is to generate valid information about the conflict situation, and to share that information with all of the involved parties. The second step "is to allow the conflict parties to make free and informed choices regarding their

behavior, based upon the information. This involves joint problem-solving and decision-making. Joint decision-making involves two levels: a) Identify areas where there is sufficient agreement between the parties to enable them to collaborate in reaching resolutions and decisions. b) Identify the areas where there is no agreement or room for collaboration, so each party may reach his own decisions. These decisions are

then shared with the other party, and collaborative decisions are made as to how the two parties will live and work together in spite of differences." At this point it should be possible to motivate personal commitment to the agreements reached.

Paul and Barnabas disagreed and neglected to mix prayer and understanding with their disagreement, which eventually led to their going separate ways. They began posturing a win/lose situation, when beginning the initial stages of generating valid and useful information about the conflict. Paul said that John Mark had some good qualities but that he had given up on their last missionary journey. "Yes, he is a good man, but within certain boundaries."

Paul said, "We don't want someone who is going to flake out on us during one of our very important missionary trips." Barnabas agreed but continued to say that he believed in young John Mark and was sure that John Mark had learned from his mistakes.

We see Paul and Barnabas sharing their conflicting views, but I don't believe they entered into stage two, allowing the flow of free and informed choice, coupled with joint problem solving and decision making. They neglected to identify the areas of sufficient agreement that would enable them to collaborate on resolutions. Yes, John Mark made a mistake, but who hasn't? They both knew there were no guarantees that anyone would make it through an entire missionary journey. I think this illustrates the problem that many good-intentioned Christians have when caught in a conflict. They find themselves so absorbed in the emotion of the moment that they are unable to pray genuinely for resolution. At this point most of us tend to do what the Scriptures indicate that Paul and Barnabas did. We confront one another rather than the issues that caused the tension in the first place.

In some instances it would be good for the mentor to suggest an impartial outsider, possibly someone outside the local church who could bring a logical and unbiased approach, to act as mediator.

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**We know of only one person who really knew himself well enough to respond appropriately in every situation.**

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# VALUES TO KEEP EVEN WHEN LOSS SEEMS INEVITABLE

1. Use the situation to learn the humility that has always eluded you.
2. Observe the impact of another person's power, rage, anxiety, and duplicity upon your own life and ask in what way are you the same.
3. Seek the counsel of others to find out how much of this is in you.
4. Listen to criticisms from another person who is hostile to you, without necessarily agreeing with the adversary, for this is a chance to hear what the person really thinks of you and how that person really thinks deep in himself.
5. Learn limitations. Accept the ability of a powerful person to hurt you in some way.
6. Do not lose too much by being anxious about the loss you cannot control.
7. Concentrate on seeing yourself and refrain from a diagnosis of a contender, which is usually distorted when you are under stress.
8. Whatever you see in another person, see it with mercy.
9. Meditate upon how vulnerable and miserable you would be if you raged in the same way.

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David S. Luecke and Samuel Southard, *Pastoral Administration: Integrating Ministry and Management in the Church* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, Publisher, 1986), 138-39. Used by permission.

# USING CONFLICTS TO PRODUCE BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

by CH (COL) Curt Bowers, USA (Ret)  
*Director, Chaplaincy Ministries  
Church of the Nazarene*

**K**ermit Johnson, former chief of chaplains for the U.S. Army, said, "Let's value the richness and diversity of who you are. Let us strive for unity not by superficial niceness and by glossing over differences, but by genuine respect and love for one another." He echoed John's admonition, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar" (1 John 4:20).

Any minister worth his salt will be more than a caretaker of the flock. He will be "carefronting," that is, caring enough to confront. As Myron Augsburg said, "Paul encouraged the Christians to be open and forthright with each other. He knew that open communication which deals with not only substantive issues but also with feelings [that] can easily block good relationships."

As a military chaplain I wore many hats. I was responsible to my Lord first of all, but other accountabilities were to my church, commanding officer, my supervisory chaplain, and my congregation. This tension, although somewhat akin to a pastor's relationship to his district superintendent, church board, and congrega-

tion, made for some real dilemmas when loyalties could be stretched and fragmented. After all, Jesus said a man cannot serve two masters. What about three or four? There is a narrow passage through this potential minefield of conflict where one's sanity, spiritual formation, and effectiveness can be preserved. I believe I'm a better person because of the challenge of working in situations where clashes and misunderstandings could occur around any corner.

A commanding general got tired of listening to long, boring sermons every Sunday in chapel. He felt obligated to worship, but he didn't want to waste his family time or interrupt his work to sit through interminable sermons that had no substance. I was the new division chaplain; he called me into his office and ordered me to tell the chaplains to preach no more than 10-minute messages. The first chaplain to disobey that order was to be fired. What a travesty of authority, I thought, and yet I was caught in the crunch. I had never heard of such an order. It was absurd. It just doesn't happen, but it was happening—to me. It was a no-win situation.

I prayed and talked with chaplains and officers whom I could trust, many of whom had greater wisdom than I. This issue had to be resolved before real ministry could take place. I tried to convince the commanding general that denomina-

tions and chaplains had some strict guidelines about freedom to preach the gospel according to conscience. I also told him that many of the chaplains were threatening to see military lawyers and their denominational leaders. However, he was adamant. The chaplains were also recalcitrant. I was torn between loyalty and love for the commanding general, who determined when and if I got promoted or even would stay in the army, and the chaplains I supervised and loved. Then there was the congregation, who deserved the best preaching, whether 10 or 30 minutes.

My staff and I discussed and probed alternatives, praying fervently. Through prayer and persistent petitioning of God, there came a solution. I asked my assistant division chaplain to survey the congregations and see what they really wanted. The congregations said, "Let the chaplains preach as long as needed, but confine the services to one hour." The "old man," or commanding general, was satisfied with that, and the chaplains worked to make their sermons better! God had helped me take a no-win situation and turn it around for His glory. He also helped me avoid a bitter conflict, and fragmented relationships among the chaplains and top military leaders.

So should we in our churches strive for excellence in relationships. As a rule, it must be cultivated con-



Curt Bowers

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**Conflict comes with leadership.**

sciously and continuously. Never assume that excellence will occur spontaneously. It requires extraordinary effort. Some are content with mediocrity, but I believe we're called to make an impact for Christ by being wounded healers. Once we go through conflict and emerge with a better working environment or our emotional health, we are better able to help others. Some pastors would rather bury their heads in the sand, hoping that the person or the problem will go away, than become enmeshed with thorny problems and sticky situations.

The Lord wants us to bring up issues and problems within our personal relationships before they control or consume us. A friend of mine thrived on debate and conflict. He kept things in turmoil all the time, but you couldn't say you didn't know where he stood on any given issue. If you can't *fight* or *flee*, someone said, you can *flow*. As a supervisory chaplain I had to learn to work through conflict. There are some feisty chaplains just as there are some very strong, opinionated Christians in your church. In order to build *koinonia* and team spirit, pastors need to develop environments in which laymen are enabled, even encouraged, to speak their minds.

It takes practice and prayer to stand up and be counted, especially for those gifted with pleasant and laid-back demeanors. Moses was a meek man, but he wasn't afraid of conflict. No man of God had a more cantankerous lot to contend with than Moses as he dealt with the children of Israel. Conflict comes with leadership. A good chaplain or pastor needs to confront others in positions of authority in a caring, open, diplomatic, and honest manner instead of being a yes-man. If he does this, relationships will be built much stronger, and the kingdom of God will advance. To be loyal and loving enough that if something is wrong in the church or within a person's life, one should be ready to confront in love. However, one needs to make sure the principle is worth falling on one's sword for if you need to confront a supervisor.


In Vietnam, a commanding general said to me, "Chaplain, the troops' morale has to be high; we're involved in some significant operations." That appeared to be so on

the surface, but I needed to give an honest response as I was hearing it from the troops. The "old man" was brand-new and eager to get into battle. The troops were worn-out, tired, dirty, demoralized, and discouraged after trudging through the jungle for months without a break, and I told him so. I could see he was hurt and surprised, but he needed to know the truth.

I've always tried to keep harmony and peace within the family until an issue comes along large enough to do battle over. The Holy Spirit gives wisdom to one who operates under this broad guideline, and will bless their ministry as admonished in 2 Tim. 2:24, "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle." They are not dissipating all their energies on small skirmishes, winning a few battles but losing the war. If one follows this procedure, he'll be more effective in building relationships and friendships.

In the process of aggressive programming and ministry, many are losing friends and alienating people.

There is a time to speak up strongly and a time to wait until tempers are calmer, perspectives clearer. Waiting brought dividends when I was the staff chaplain at Fort Stewart, Ga. The commanding general said on my OER (Officer's Efficiency Report) that the chaplain was a problem solver. I had not seen myself in that role before, but because of the enormous personal and professional problems on that post, and my personal feelings for the dignity and integrity of each chaplain and parishioner under my leadership, I "tried harder." That extra effort freed the chaplains to be pastors to their congregations. Working through turbulent times of confrontation also built a sense of trust among the chaplain team that showed that we valued each other and each other's opinions. Thus a climate was created facilitating a ministry to the work force during the week, enhancing our worship together on Sunday.

Recognizing that people problems and issues don't just dissipate by wishing they would, and confronting them in love, not only gives greater opportunities for real ministry but also bring a greater sense of friendship and fellowship among our congregations. 

**In the process of aggressive programming and ministry, many are losing friends and alienating people.**



# BEST BOOKS ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

**STRENGTH IN SERVANT LEADERSHIP**, by Paul A. Cedar. Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987, 173 pages (PA 084-993-0863; \$8.99).

The author is senior pastor of Lake Avenue Congregational Church in Pasadena, Calif. The fact that he sometimes quotes from or refers to the well-known book *Servant Leadership*, by Robert Greenleaf, might cause one to think Cedar was trying to evangelize Greenleaf's book, but in fact he does not. He does say that whereas it is now in vogue to talk about a servant leadership style that is more collegial, less domineering, he is not talking about that but about becoming a servant as Jesus was (p. 85).

At the beginning Cedar introduces three characters, the minister of a large church, a young business executive, and a widowed mother, and traces them throughout the book, showing how the exercise of true servant leadership liber-

ated them from frustrating situations. These, along with a few other references, might lead one to think that the author was addressing a wider audience. However, his constant dependence upon the shepherd motif leaves the stronger impression that his intended audience is pastors and others involved in Christian ministry.

His synthesis statement at the beginning of the first chapter affirms that "Scripture teaches us clearly that there is one leadership 'style' which is uniquely Christian. It has been given to us by the Lord of the Church. He has modeled this leadership style and commanded us to do likewise" (p. 15).

The methodology of the author is to demonstrate the characteristics of this ideal model of leadership (Jesus himself) through a series of expositions of scriptures from the Gospels and Epistles illustrating the principles of servant leadership. The author does not pretend that the expositions are exegetical, and

they do not really provide much new insight on the passages. In one example (in which the author unfortunately twice in one paragraph transfers Paul's famous love chapter to *Second Corinthians* 13) he merely substitutes the words "servant leader" for the word "love" in some of the passage's affirmations (p. 47).

The author himself summarizes the book in eight principles for effective servant leaders:

1. All Christians need to understand the principles of servant leadership.
2. Servant leadership begins with our attitude.
3. Love is essential for servant leadership.
4. Biblical models teach us how to be servant leaders.
5. The role of the Good Shepherd helps us understand what it means to be a servant leader.
6. Servant leaders must know how to be servant followers.



7. Servant leaders are accountable to God.
8. Servant leaders must lead by choice. The chapters of the book are the author's efforts to back up these principles biblically.

The book would have some appeal to Wesleyan readers, although the author probably is not of Wesleyan tendencies in most senses.

My greatest disagreement with the book is a quite incidental statement in which the author seems to take sides in the education versus practice dichotomy. He states, "He modeled servant ministry for them constantly. They did not learn theological truth in a musty classroom setting. They learned it in the crucible of life" (p. 77). The only musty classrooms I have been in have been since I have been a missionary in Central America; but that is because any type of room is likely to be musty there! Cedar's book would be particularly helpful to a pastor who has not read much in the area of leadership and administration.

—Garnett Teakell

**PASTOR'S HANDBOOK ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS: KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP**, by Jard DeVille. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986, 243 pages, paperback (PA080-102-9619; \$8.95).

If you do not wish to get hooked on a book, do not start reading this one. I started the book thinking *Handbook* in the title meant "dull." Intrigue set in by chapter 2.

An important point caught my attention—inclusion of the element of free choice while discussing personality patterns. Other people cannot simply "push my button" and see a predictable reaction. I choose whether to stay in the rut of past reactions. Even with that as a given, we still see people in *patterns* of behavior. Several chapters (4–9) deal with the strengths of each of four patterns. Leadership necessitates not only utilizing your own strengths and natural abilities but also learning and using some of the strengths of others. He labels his four personality patterns as controller, entertainer, comprehender, and supporter. Each has strengths, but these strengths become weaknesses when carried to an extreme. The comprehender needs to quit (at some point) gathering facts and make a decision (strength of controller). The entertainer needs to quit giving advice long enough to listen to the other person for data (strength of comprehender).

DeVille writes in an easy-to-read style.

He uses short chapters with realistic illustrations. He presents simple but stimulating ideas (steps for how to go about it) and diagrams of the concepts. The chapters tie in with one another; for example, in the chapter "The Principle of Conflict Management" he refers the reader to foundation material in chapters 7 and 8 on member coaching. His previous books provide background; for instance, the chapter on "Local Evangelism" utilizes principles from *Psychology of Witnessing*.

DeVille challenges the reader to be the best possible leader. Becoming skillful in handling interpersonal relationships provides a catalyst "as you teach them—above all—to love each other as Christ loves them." As John Wesley, for his day and time, led wisely, so you must lead. Wesley died, leaving a legacy of "a worn suit of clothes, a spavined old nag, a battered Bible—and the Methodist Church!" (in preface). I recommend adding this book to your library and the contents to your mind and heart.

—Christine Bigley

**BECOMING THE FAMILY OF GOD**, by Keith Huttenlocker. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986, 143 pages, paper (PA031-075-2116; \$6.95).

Huttenlocker's most recent book is an exciting companion for *Be-Attitudes for the Church* (Warner Press, 1971). Drawing from conflict managing skills gained over three decades of pastoral leadership, the author provides clear insights for relationships within the family of God.

The author uses the analogy of a congregation as a large family in which each member arrives with "baggage" (fears, unsolved problems, etc.), and leaves the baggage where he pleases. Huttenlocker declares, "Sue took hers to the woman's circle meeting. Frank took his to the choir rehearsal, and Ted piled his on the pastor's desk."

The book carefully describes how the pastor and layperson can handle baggage successfully. This can be seen in the following helpful hints: (1) celebrate key events in the life of the church, (2) utilize traditional ceremonies of the church, (3) provide wholesome humor, and (4) participate in Christian recreation.

The reader will be captivated by the author's warmth of expression on how to deal with persons having inferiority problems. He stresses time-honored, biblical examples on how a pastor can successfully cope with those causing frustrations due to their lack of concern for authority. Succinctly stated and hu-

morously illustrated, the author provides the reader with realistic cases on how to better understand members having emotional problems.

Pastors will be especially interested in chapter 11, "The Family at Worship." A model from Mark 2 is suggested, and other helpful information on preaching is included. As the pastor works with "fragile and unsuitable baggage," he must be a model teacher, not the master; active preacher, not agitator; advocate, not adversary; and a catalyst leader, not a commander.

This book is a valuable resource for both pastor and layperson who seek for positive and creative relationships in the church.

—Montford Lee Neal

**LEARNING TO LEAD**, by Fred Smith. Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1986, 182 pages, hardback (PA091-746-3080; \$10.99).

"Then another temptation is to start an argument with my wife. I don't feel good, so why should anybody else?" Fred Smith is describing a blocking emotion he calls "blue funk." He indicates everyone has those moods occasionally. Time and energy are frittered away if you stay in that mood long. He shares with the reader some of the helps he has learned, for example, reading quotes saved for such occasions. Humor is found sprinkled appropriately throughout the book.

"What are the most important things to know about leadership and management?" The answer to this question, if a young pastor were to ask, would be the contents of this book. The author is not a pastor but grew up in a parsonage. Putting that together with his 30 years of leadership in business and the reader gets a practical, interesting, and succinct answer.

Initially, brevity came across as "no other way to see it" but later seemed less strictured. The many lists with short explanations will make it easy to use this book for quick review. There are a number of gems to mull over periodically.

I found it hard to put the book down to do other necessary chores. By the end of the book, the reader will be aware that the author is a "people person." In chapter 9 he deals with the fine line between motivating and manipulating people. He indicates that a leader motivates, keeping in focus that the aim of the Church is to help develop mature Christians.

"Yes, you lead by serving, but the major expression of your service is your  
Continued on page 52

# MEDITATIONS ON SURRENDER

by J. Grant Swank, Jr.  
Pastor, Walpole, Mass.  
Church of the Nazarene

Text: Matt. 26:1-25

Read the text in its entirety. Return then to individual segments as set forth below, providing the meditational comments to each segment. At the close of each segment, have the congregation or soloist sing the hymn indicated.



## **BETRAYAL:** Matt. 26:1-2

In verse 2, Jesus states that it is "the Son of *man*" who is to be "betrayed to be crucified." This is the ultimate in man's inhumanity to (the Son of) Man. The Fall reaches its climax when the offspring murder the Parent, when the creature kills the Creator. As the world is stunned in recalling the Holocaust and other similarly cruel atrocities, it should be stupefied when remembering Calvary.

Yet the present-tense, frightening dimension is the warning of Heb. 6:4-6, which states that the ongoing betrayers "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to

an open shame." Therefore, as a surrealist painting of Salvador Dali, we view the betrayal spilling over time. That is, it is even going on now somewhere with someone. God help that one!

This is the scriptural caution concerning the Judas trap. There are always those who, once having known Jesus, cut Him off. They fall into the trap set by Satan, thus losing their step and their destinies for goodness' sake. This may even occur while one appears indeed quite religious, as Judas appeared.

*'Tis too much proved—that with  
devotion's visage  
And pious action we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.*

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*,  
act 3, scene 1, lines 47-49

Hymn: "I Would Be True"



## **LOYALTIES:** Matt. 26:3-5

In verse 3, we read that the mob set out to do in the Master. The mob included "the chief priests, and the

scribes, and the elders." Included was the unstated: Judas Iscariot.

Is it not rather foolish of the mob to set up such an elaborate net by which to take the Lord? Why so many? He was but a carpenter, penniless, without militia, carrying no weaponry. Yet in their paranoia, they concluded that numbers counted. They were going to make certain that statistics bolstered their cause.

About our gregarious selves, why is it that we hug the mobs too often while forgetting Jesus? We would rather be found in the company of the multitudes than standing alongside Jesus—alone. So it is that we too are locked in to the cover-up of verse 4: seeking subtly to forsake Jesus so as not to be found out on "the feast day" (v. 5) in public. It is the old game of keeping private so as not to have to go public.

Yet has not this same Jesus warned us of the end result when playing the numbers game, going for the religious lottery that banks against Jesus: "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (7:13-14, RSV).

Hymn: "Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?"

Nazarene

## Update

UPDATE EDITOR, MARK D. MARVIN, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

## THE PASTOR AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The Bible, beginning with the account of Adam and Eve and their relationship with God and each other, is a record of tension and conflict. All human relationships, including those of believers, experience some tendency to brokenness and tension. This may take the form of disagreements, misunderstandings, or narrow desires. Some conflict may reveal or result in sin or an unchristian spirit—although it need not.

Conflict is a normal part of human history. All persons and organizations—even the church—experience conflict. A careful study of Scripture, especially the relationships of Peter, Paul, and Barnabas, reveals that conflict is not limited to those who choose to live outside of God's will. The Book of Acts is a history of conflict in the Early Church (see Acts 15:2, 7, and 39).



by General Superintendent  
John A. Knight

It is erroneous to assume that the New Testament apostles and missionaries could have avoided conflict if they had been "spiritual enough." Even Jesus himself was involved in conflict (see Matt. 21:12-16; John 8:3-11). If Jesus could not live in this world without conflict, we need not think we will be immune in our churches and ministry. There will be periodic conflict over values, goals, and/or methods.

The pastor should keep three things in mind in dealing with conflict:

1. *Conflict is not necessarily a spiritual problem.* Of itself, conflict is not sinful. Sinfulness in conflict is not to be equated with disagreements or tensions between people. Rather, sin manifests itself in behavior, attitudes, and relationships toward God, others, and things. We make a serious mistake if we judge our parishioners to be guilty of sin because they are in a situation of conflict. Leave them to God who alone can judge motives.
2. *The fact that we are sometimes the object or center of conflict is no reason to assume that our actions or attitudes are necessarily right.* It is immature to adopt a martyr complex and to conclude that because there is conflict and we are suffering, we thereby are more spiritual than those who appear to be the source of conflict. Conflict may be occasioned by our bad judgment.
3. *Learn to manage conflict.* It has the possibility of positive results and can become an occasion for strengthening the unity and spirit of our parishioners. God is able to make all things, even conflict, "work together" for His glory and our good (Rom. 8:28).

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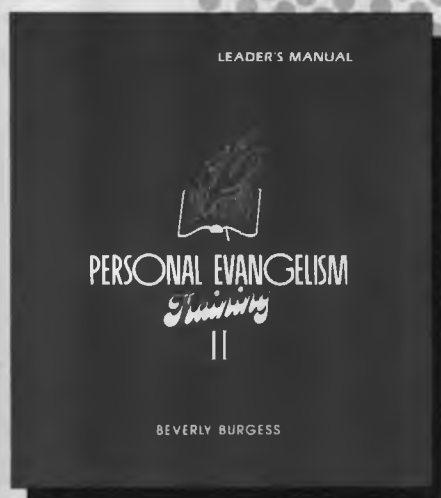
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(Monthly slates published in the first issue of the "Herald of Holiness" each month)

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 TUCKER, RALPH W. (R) R.R. 1, Box 55, Woodbine, IA 51579  
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 VARCE, PAUL H. 621 Second Ave. N.W., Waverly, IA 50677

## W

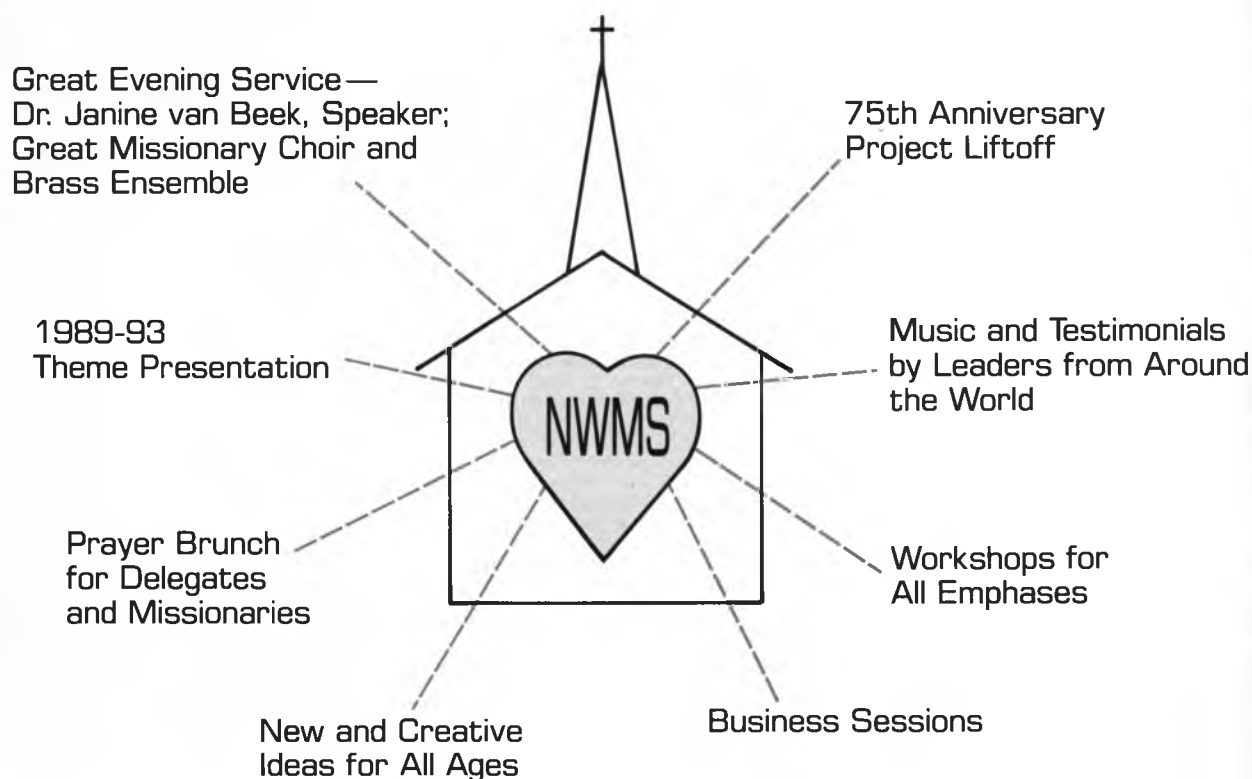
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 WARD, LLOYD & GERTRUDE. 1001 Averly St., Fort Myers, FL 33907  
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 WATKINS, JOSEPH E., JR. (R) 30692-A Independence, Redlands, CA 92374  
 WATSON, LOY. 2018 Country Club, Enid, OK 73701  
 WEBB, SHARON. (R) P.O. Box 61, Waco, TX 76798  
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 WELCH, W. B. (C) 5328 Edith St., Charleston Heights, SC 29405  
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 WRIGHT, E. GUY. (C) 1531 Cranbrook Dr., Charleston, WV 25311  
 WYLIE, CHARLES R. (C) P.O. Box 298, Aubrey, TX 76227  
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- YATES, GREG. (C) 505 E. Alabama, Casey, IL 62420  
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*Share your faith with others*

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**OFFERING FOR WORLD EVANGELISM**

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE



## What is more important?

### A Credit Card or a Nazarene College Experience?

A well-known credit card promotion advises,  
 "Don't leave home without it!"

Credit cards may be a mixed blessing,  
 but College Students do leave home!

*Leave home? Yes, they do!*

- Getting out on their own — independence.
- Making new friends, who influence them greatly.
- Selecting choices with permanent results  
*not baby teeth but molars and wisdom teeth.*
- Making spiritual commitments.

### Who replaces home and family?

#### A. The Secular College

- ✓ What do the profs teach?
- ✓ Who are in the circle of friends?
- ✓ Who helps make the critical lifetime choices?
- ✓ How are values and spiritual commitments influenced?

#### B. A Nazarene College?

- ✓ A prof who teaches what he or she is!
- ✓ Quality education from quality people!
- ✓ Dozens of friends who share Christian values!
- ✓ A campus full of positive Christian influences!

*Leave home without it? Don't take chances!*

### Check on a College in the Nazarene Network:

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# THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE

Coming to you each quarter from Pastoral Ministries, Wilbur Brannon, Director

LEADERSHIP • INSPIRATION • FULFILLMENT • ENRICHMENT

## FINDING THE WAY

I found myself this week praying with E. Stanley Jones, "O God, in very fact, I am finding out how not to live. I am running into ways that leave me frustrated and exhausted and hurt. Help me to find the Way. For in finding the Way I shall find you. And I would find you. Amen."

If it isn't a disturbing phone call, a desk piled with unfinished work, or a power struggle in the church, it's a crisis in the parsonage! Before we know it we are entangled in a web of petty, time-consuming tasks that disorient our focus from our primary goals.

On the back of my "business" card, I carry a reminder: "Whom do you serve supremely?" Very often as I open my pocket secretary my eyes come upon that critical question, and my entire life readjusts to what my business really is! If I miss Him, I lose my way!

We lose our way more than we want to openly admit. It is hard to confess any sort of failure, even to oneself. However, confession is the way to victory and joy. Complete honesty is the only way to keep open communication with the Lord.

Many casualties in the church have happened because a person was hiding from the truth about himself. We are saved from deceiving ourselves as we make our home with Christ. He is faithful to keep us sensitive to spiritual forces that would invade the sanctuary of our conscience and thus destroy our lives.

My supreme desire as a minister of Jesus Christ is to know Him more clearly, love Him more dearly, and serve Him more nearly. Dr. A. Milton Smith was my beloved district superintendent for several years. Often he would be heard saying to a pastor who was living up to his potential: "You're on the way!" I would like those words to describe my having found the way and having found the Way I found Him! ☐

## A FORMULA FOR ADVANCEMENT

Success in any venture—whether life in general, a project, or a cause is usually based on simple principles. The church has had the greatest impact when inspired by total commitment to the risen Lord.

As a church we are growing at an amazing rate where the standard expectation is a simple threefold statement: "Each Christian win one, each church start one, and each pastor train one (other person to pastor)." That is not really difficult if the love of Christ compels us, if indeed it has *captured* us!

What if we succeeded in getting some new ones in? Do the "old timers" view them as a threat? What if two or three families would form a nucleus for a "new work." It could bring new life to the existing church and energize the new group to share their experiment with new friends.

It's a new day for pastors. We have not known we had the freedom to start new works before. Now is our opportunity. It's the wave of the future, and those who are in it are enjoying a new lease on life in their ministries. A former associate of mine left a large church to start one from zero! Many others are doing it, too. Seminarians and ministerial college graduates are joining the movement.

Don't be left out. It may be the very thing that will bring revival to your church. It is happening in other places. ☐



**WILBUR W. BRANNON**  
Pastoral Ministries  
Director

## INTERACTIVE VIDEO FOR COURSE OF STUDY

Pastoral Ministries continues to develop a video format for exam courses in the Course of Study. Recent releases include: *Exploring the New Testament*, by C. S. Cowles; *Exploring our Christian Faith*, by H. L. Hendrix; *Alive in Christ*, by Don Dunnington; and *Church History in Plain Language*, by Gerard Reed. General Superintendent William M. Greathouse has consented to do the course of *Exploring Christian Holiness*, Vol. II.

The concept is to provide sixteen 15-minute segments of on-screen presentation by the instructor. He will guide the students through the material that accompanies the tape. The format is also designed so that a facilitator can interact with a small group of students in response to the presentation.

Students will benefit from the group process; but even if done alone, students will have the aid of visual and written materials for better understanding and practical outcomes. ☐

## MINISTERIAL STUDIES BOARD SEMINAR PLANNED FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Whether you are a long- or short-term Ministerial Studies Board secretary or chairman, cutting down on needless paper work is of interest. When was the last time you asked: "Why do I have to fill out all these forms; how can I cut through the red tape; how can I save time in record keeping; why are there so many out-of-print books; and who do I contact when I have problems?" These questions represent some of the frustrations faced while helping students prepare for ministry.

A seminar is scheduled for June 26, 1989, at 7:30 A.M. at General Assembly '89 to answer your questions and to give you opportunity to "voice" your view of the Course of Study. At the miniseminar you will receive breakfast hosted by Pastoral Ministries and will participate in a 45-minute seminar helping you expedite communications between your district and the general church. Then, a 45-minute question-and-answer period will follow giving you opportunity to share your observations, concerns, and needs.

This is an especially good time to hear how other districts tackle problems and about more efficient ways to set up student records. Since one of the more difficult assignments a secretary or chairman has is evaluating transcripts, we will thoroughly explain the process.

Come prepared to interact and learn from your colleagues. Watch your mail for the registration form. ☐

## HANDBOOK ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES

The *Handbook on Ministerial Studies* has been revised and is now available at the Publishing House. You may secure a copy of the *Handbook* by writing: Nazarene Publishing House, P.O. Box 419527, Kansas City, MO 64141. ☐

## COURSE OF STUDY UPDATE

*Ordering Your Private World*, by Gordon McDonald, is the replacement optional reading book for *Transition and Newness*, Deacon-Compassionate Ministries, Level IV, 344d.

*Sing with Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Hymnology*, by Harry Eskew and Hugh T. McElrath, is the replacement required reading book for *Fundamentals of Music*, Deacon-Music Ministries, Level IV, 444b.

### Correction:

In the DJF 1988-89 UPDATE we stated that *Pastoral Leadership*, by Robert D. Dale, was the replacement required reading book for *Strategy for Leadership*, Deacon-Music Ministries, Level II, 424b. The replacement is actually *Basics of Music*, by Michael Zinn and Robert Hogenon. ☐





## FROM THE "HEARTLINE" COORDINATOR

In a recent edition of *The Heartbeat* (official newsletter of the CoNET "Heartline"), Coordinator Kent Hughes wrote an excellent article on isolation and the pastoral family. I believe every pastor can identify with the issues raised in this piece.

### ISOLATION AND THE PASTORAL FAMILY

One particular topic that frequently comes up on the "Heartline" is the isolation of the pastoral family. The problem revolves around the unwritten rule that the pastor and his wife cannot be close to other people in the church for fear of "showing favorites." As a son of a parsonage couple I know the dangers of "showing favorites" in a congregation. Yet as a professional therapist, I see the application of this policy as a serious threat to the stability of the pastor and his wife and a hindrance to the effectiveness of their ministry.

Created in the image of God, we have within us deep longings for relationships. In Gen. 1:28, God said to Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." Obedience to this command eventuates in relationships. Built into the core of who we are is the longing and need for relationships, manifested early in life between parents and children.

During the early years of a child's life, if involvement with the parent is denied, a gap is created that must later be filled in some other manner. If involvement and relationship are provided, the child's longings are fulfilled.

This dynamic of relationship occurs throughout our lives, manifesting itself later in friendships, courtships, and marriage relationships. We continue to need human relationships on an intimate level because we are created in the image of God.

The marital relationship, when healthy, meets our deepest longings

for involvement to a certain degree. But even in healthy marriages, both partners need meaningful relationships outside the home. The husband needs to have a close, healthy relationship with a male friend, and the wife needs the same with another female.

These "significant others" in our lives share our burdens and satisfy our longings for relationship beyond the marital bonds. My concern, arising from calls we receive, is our tendency to inhibit the freedom of pastoral couples to meet these needs. For example, the pastor's wife feels she cannot develop an intimate friendship with another woman. She does not feel free to find someone in her church or community with whom she can bare her soul; someone who will allow her both to weep and rejoice and still accept her. In other words, she feels she cannot have a best friend. She restricts herself to the sharing of all her problems, fears, and joys with her husband. Yet her pastor-husband throws himself into the work of the church so that he needs the support of a strong wife. (That is another area of concern that needs to be addressed at another time.)

So the pastor's wife is forced to repress her longings and project a self-sufficient image of one who is "always willing to help." Many times her need for that intimate relationship is not met. As a result, she becomes depressed, burned out, or even resentful of being in the pastorate.

Similar feelings of emptiness obviously exist for the pastor, since he often is unable to develop that "significant other" that we all need. It is through such relationships in our lives that God teaches, edifies, and encourages us in our daily walk. Our pastoral families cannot be exempted from this.

Though pastors must be sensitive to relationships within their churches so as not to "show favorites," they must also have freedom to develop the relationships so vital to their own well-being, both inside and outside the church and/or denomination.

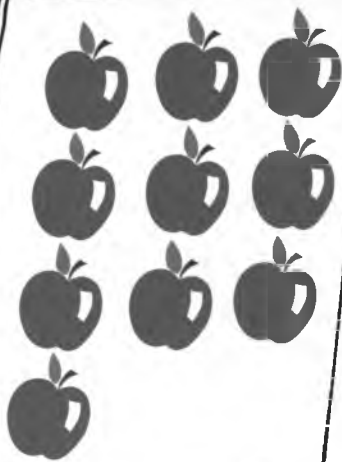
To the pastor, these outside relationships mean there is someone else to help bear this burden; a needed outlet from the tremendous pressures of pastoring; less likelihood of burnout; and increased effectiveness as a husband, father, and pastor of his congregation.

To the pastor's wife, an outside relationship means someone to share her hurts; someone with whom she does not have to appear superstrong regardless of how she feels; someone who understands a woman's feelings even better than her husband can; and increased effectiveness as a wife, and mother, and a blessing to her church.

Giving support to you, our clergy couples, means being sensitive to your needs. Sometimes your need may be for someone else to simply be aware that you have a need. In turn, healthy communication can open up and healing can take place. □

# TITHING

## It's Elementary



God gives you 10 apples. You can use 9/10 of them. How many do you give back to God?

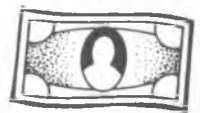
$$\frac{10}{10} \text{ (from God)} - \frac{9}{10} \text{ (You use)} = \text{TITHE}$$

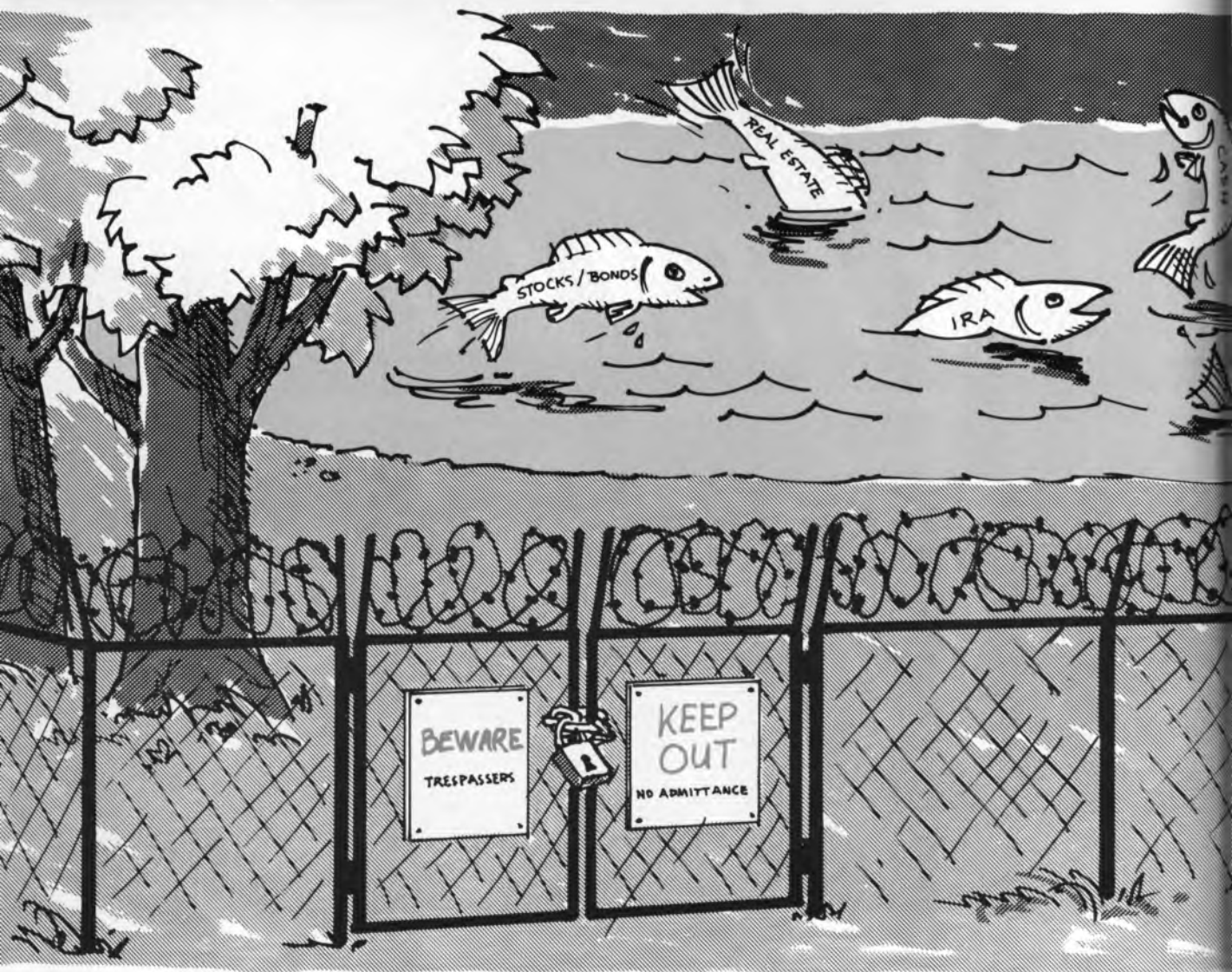
(Back to God)



God entrusts you with \$10.00. You can use 9/10 for your needs. God asks for 1/10 back as your tithe.

How much money is God's tithe?





**T**here's a largely untapped financial reservoir in the estates of retired Nazarenes, as well as with many of those yet to retire.

In most cases it represents the family home or farm plus assets, the income from which is intended to supplement Social Security and pensions.

These assets have been preserved, as it were, "behind lock and key!" Life Income Gifts Services offers a key to unlock some of these treasures for Kingdom work when the dedicated owners are called to their eternal home.

Why not invite our representative to present an estate planning seminar in your church?

- Stop by our booth in Indianapolis and pick up a revised brochure on how the program works.
- You'll also want to pick up our *NEW* "Asset Location Folder" for your personal use.

#### **LIFE INCOME GIFTS SERVICES**

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6401 The Paseo  
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save all you can,  
give all you can."**

**ound financial advice  
om one of the foremost  
aders in our tradition.**



## **Now you can accomplish all three with one act of stewardship.**

When you make a deposit with the General Church Loan Fund your money earns you interest as you save for the future. At the same time, you give needy churches the extra financial help they need to build God's kingdom.

You choose the deposit terms that suit you: one year at 6%; two years at 7%; or five years at 8%.

So let GCLF help you earn, save, and give  
all you can,  
**THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW.**



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DISTRICT

CHURCH

I am enclosing a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_

to be deposited \_\_\_\_\_ year(s) at \_\_\_\_\_%.

\_\_\_\_\_ Send interest semiannually

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SIGNATURE



# WORLD

## Mission

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

# INTERNATIONALIZATION



### IT'S NOT A BAD WORD!

**I**nternationalization. It's not a bad word; it's a big word! I realize that every time I write it: INTERNATIONALIZATION. It takes a long time to get it written, and it takes considerable effort to keep from getting confused in the writing process. It's a big word, indeed!

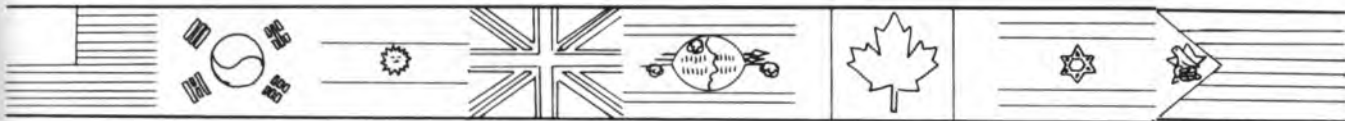
It is also a heavy word. It carries a lot of content. And that makes it something of a frightening word, because we are not sure what all it is carrying. But, I maintain, it is not a bad word.

It is a word to which Nazarenes gave special attention and meaning in the 1976 General Assembly. The delegates of that assembly focused special light on the word—light that has not gone out between that day and this.

Three phrases have been especially associated with the word with respect to the function of Nazarene churches around the world: *self-propagation*, *self-government*, and *self-support*. Internationalization was intended to convey that wherever Churches of the Nazarene exist, there are certain rights and responsibilities that belong to any and all. That is true whether the church is in Missouri or Mozambique, Quebec or Colombia, Georgia or Germany, Arizona or Australia, New Jersey or Japan. Within their distinct theology and commission,







Nazarenes self-propagate, self-govern, and seek to self-support.

The 1976 General Assembly was not the first time Nazarenes discussed or faced such issues. In 1914 Dr. H. F. Reynolds, one of our earliest world leaders, spoke specifically of common responsibility using the same terms: self-support and self-government. And our history has impressive stories to tell as these rights and responsibilities have been granted and accepted.

That there are new challenges to be faced in 1989 for such to be carried out, no one can deny. This is a year when "nationalism" will be heavy in the vocabulary of the world. This will be a year when we are made increasingly aware of the different levels of economic adequacy (or inadequacy) and educational enlightenment in which world peoples carry on their activities and business.

Are "rights" really the same for us all? Can "responsibilities" be expected to function in equivalent frameworks? Should a "First World" Church of the Nazarene not have extra authority in the decision-making processes in the light of quantitative differences? Should a Third world Church of the Nazarene be expected to pay even proportionate budgets in a global mission endeavor, considering their own quantitative handicaps? In considering internationalization, Nazarenes have answered no and yes, respectively, to those two questions. The First World church will share authority as one of its responsibilities. The Third World church will share responsibility as well as rights. Rights and responsibilities cannot be separated. Self-propagation, self-government, self-support, within our distinct theology and mission, are sacred purposes and privileges for Nazarenes anywhere and everywhere.

What makes all this palatable is the affirmation that Nazarenes are not

simply a denominational worldwide alliance of nationally affiliated churches. We are an international fellowship of related family members, people who share in a great redemption and who are giving ourselves to a great task. We are out to tell an unsaved world of the marvelous potentials of the holiness of God translated into the routine of life—anywhere!

In this understanding and inter-related family, we acknowledge that a Nazarene layman who cannot write his own name, living in poverty in a poor Los Angeles neighborhood, will have a different level of performance and expression than the educated Nazarene layman living in Tokyo, who travels the world in his business. But we view both of these as *our family*, and in the context of each's opportunities, we look for the fruit of the Spirit and expect to see valid redemptive witness in each. And we help each one, wherever and however we can. We are family.

Furthermore, internationalization does not mean a focus of attention on any one world culture, Eastern or Western, First World or Third World. We well know that no world culture has the answer our globe needs. Internationalization focuses us on *His* culture. There alone is the ultimate answer for any continent or race of people.

Proper internationalization reference, therefore, moves us away from focus on how we differ and

draws attention to the things we have in common: a holiness (holistic) mission to a broken and hurting world. It moves us away from an us-them mentality in reference to our church's operation. We think less in terms of foreign and home mission, and more in terms of mission to my world wherever it is—at my doorstep or across the globe.

Finally, proper internationalization rejoices instead of panicking at the realization that almost one-third of this year's General Assembly delegates will be from countries outside North America, where the historic roots of our church are associated. This evidences our health! This sets up no potential coalition of polarized agendas with nationalistic ulterior motives or special privilege demands. We are holier than that. We come together and merge past all the cultural and language barriers into the body of a world family under the compulsion of His likeness and assignment. There we affirm our identity and find the cues for our decisions. We are His family, on His mission, to His world.

1989 needs this kind of fresh exhibition of His gracefulness. 1989 will see Nazarenes coming to new terms of impact in this world. In 1989 we will prove that internationalization, though a *heavy* word, is not a *bad* word but a *good* one, born in the heart and vocabulary of God.

**ROBERT H. SCOTT, D.D.**

Director, World Mission Division





## When We Care Enough . . .

When we care enough  
to share the joy and  
commitment of ministry,  
it becomes a heartfelt privilege  
to honor the trust of those  
who have preceded us in this calling,  
and it will always be our comfort  
to know that we are protected  
by that same trust.



**Board of Pensions and Benefits USA**

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Kansas City, MO 64131

# CHURCH GROWTH CONFERENCE

at the 1989 General Assembly

Wednesday evening, June 21

Thursday, June 22

Westin Hotel  
Indianapolis

*"Helps for Preachers and Lay Leaders  
in the Nineties"*

Be part of a tremendous inspirational gathering of church growth pastors and laypersons from around the world. Wednesday evening, we celebrate the Lordship of Jesus Christ and affirm our commitment to see the Great Commission fulfilled.

Dr. Donald McGavran, the father of the church growth movement, will set the tone for our days together as he and C. Peter Wagner bring video greetings and challenges. Hear our preachers and laymen articulate the vision of worldwide evangelism through church planting and effective discipleship.

On Thursday, listen in on two symposiums where five laypersons and five pastors convene panel discussions concerning "How to Deploy Laity in Ministry" and "Effective Evangelism Strategies." Following each panel's presentation, each conference attendee may participate in seminars directly relating this information to their local church's size. Additional special interest group seminars will also be provided.



## INFLUENCE BEYOND THE MILITARY



**R**ecently, 40 churches with a combined 6,539 members became part of the International Church of the Nazarene because a young American soldier passed out a tract. This incredible happening began, according to our church in Nigeria, when several of their young men served with the Nigerian military with the allied forces during World War II. An American serviceman stationed in North Africa gave a tract to a Nigerian soldier, who was a Christian and member of one of the established churches in his part of the country. He was impressed by what he read in the tract. On the back of it, he noted the name of a church, the Church of the Nazarene. He had never heard of it. But based on what he read in the tract, this was the kind of church he wanted to be a part of. Furthermore, he knew of others who were looking for the kind of experience this tract spoke of. So based on the scriptural teaching of this tract, they formed a church. When they tried to decide what to call themselves, they remembered the name on the back of the tract. On an Easter Sunday over 40 years later, in a five-hour service, the Nigerian Church of the Nazarene was publicly declared part of the International Church of the Nazarene.

This is only the most recent manifestation of the dynamic and faithful ministry our servicemembers and chaplains have given over the years. Someone once paraphrased Ecclesiastes 11:1, "Cast your bread upon the waters, and it shall come back to you—*battered!*"

If one took the time to research, he would find several more churches on foreign shores that

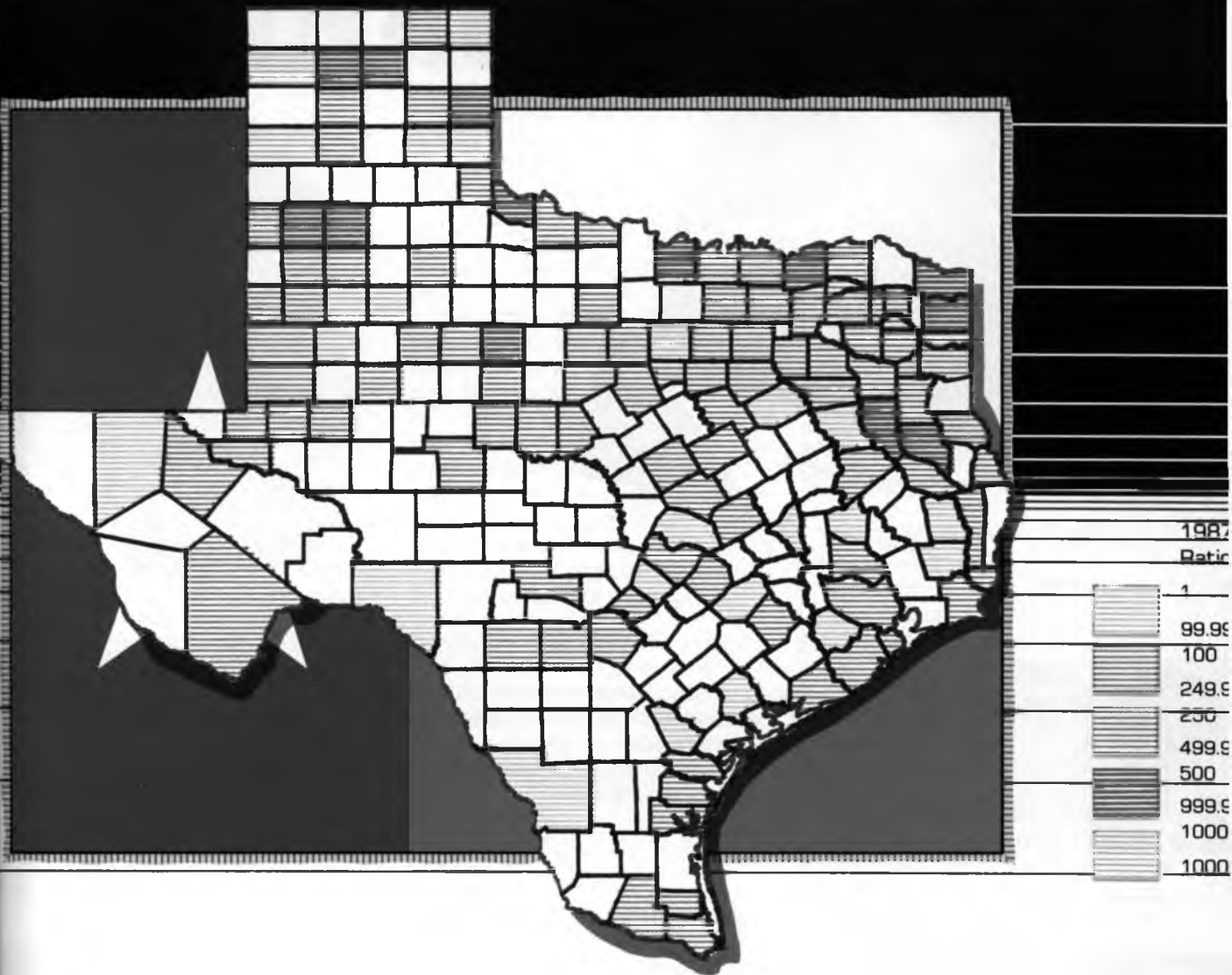
were brought into existence, at least indirectly, by Nazarene servicemembers and chaplains. Many of these are still in existence today, as servicemembers continue to support our churches overseas. Our churches in Guam and Okinawa are predominately military. Such places as Japan, the Philippines, Bermuda, Panama, the Azores, Italy, Germany, Nova Scotia, Puerto Rico, Alaska, and Hawaii have Nazarene churches located there largely because of the faithfulness and devotion of our Nazarene lay missionaries in military uniforms.

Our servicemembers and chaplains are outposts to the world. Many have become a port of entry through which new converts can flow into the body and life of our church. They have had a profound impact on our American churches as well. Many U.S. churches would have a hard time surviving without the support of Nazarene servicemembers. In many places where our Nazarenes in uniform have gone, the cross of Christ has been lifted and new churches have been planted. Pastors, we need to rekindle missionary zeal and evangelistic fervor of young servicemembers now going into military service that they might be worthy ambassadors for Christ and good representatives of the Church of the Nazarene wherever they go.

For ideas on how to minister to your servicemembers, contact Chaplaincy Ministries for your free copy of *Ministry to the Military*. Also inquire about the *Servicemembers' Readiness Packet*, available through Nazarene Publishing House.

**Chaplaincy Ministries**  
6401 The Paseo  
Kansas City, MO 64131

## Nazarenes per 100,000 TEXAS



There are more Nazarene members in Texas than in 46 other states or than in any country other than the United States. Yet there are still areas in Texas where more work can be done. Many counties have no Church of the Nazarene. Several counties throughout the state are underreached. Even the "best" county (Donley) has reached less than 1 in 10 people. Although the church has had significant impact in Texas, there are still areas with great potential for ministry.

Studies like this one, performed by the Church Growth Research Center, help districts focus on new areas of outreach. Similar studies can be done for individual counties and/or cities, helping local churches target their ministry areas.

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### CHURCH GROWTH RESEARCH CENTER

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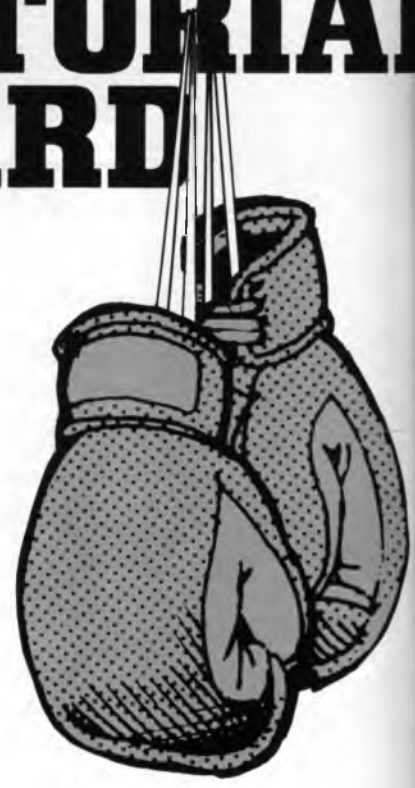
MARCH, APRIL, MAY 1989

THE **PREACHER'S**  
**MAGAZINE**



*Facing Conflict*

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Editor  
the Preacher's Magazine

**CONFLICT.** Who among us hasn't experienced it? And what pastor hasn't, at one time or another, identified with our friend on the cover? Conflict comes with the calling. Some pastors seem to thrive on it; it just seems to follow others. But as long as we deal with souls for eternity's sake, we'll have to face conflicts, dealing with them redemptively.



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Recently, a group of 12 people gathered in Kansas City to discuss this aspect of ministry. Serving voluntarily, they became the editorial board for this issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*, its contents the results of their discussions on **FACING CONFLICTS.**



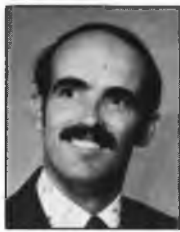
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## **FRIENDSHIP:** **Matt. 26:6-7**

The world is cold and heartless. Yet when one comes upon Jesus, he finds One who reached out in love, particularly to the unclean. That is why it was not surprising to locate Jesus in the house of "Simon the leper," nor to note Jesus being anointed by "a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment."

Both the leper and the woman were other than first-class citizens then. Socially, they were considered worth little. Yet it was to this two-some that Jesus made himself a friend. We often read this passage too quickly and miss the social impact of Jesus' spirituality. His message was to mend; so He sought out those who were ripped apart. And that is exactly where Jesus is today—seeking out those who have been beaten down, forgotten, cut up with prejudice of one sort or another, those who think they don't stand a chance. If the church, therefore, desires to keep in good company, it will locate itself right there in that sort of circumstance, finding Jesus sitting in the midst.

*Friendship, of itself a holy tie,  
Is made more sacred by adversity.*  
John Dryden,

*The Hind and the Panther, 3*

Hymn: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"



## **SURRENDER:** **Matt. 26:8-13**

The disciples sounded oh, so pious when confronting Jesus about wasting the precious anointment that had been poured over his body by the woman in Simon's house.

How religious, how spiritual! "This . . . might have been sold for much, and given to the poor."

How easy it is to talk the religious language, even when we are not into the holy walk ourselves. Words come quickly and impress so readily. We must be careful, however, as to the words we use, for our Lord tells us that by our words we will be commended or condemned in the judgment (12:36-37)—even by words sounding religious while void of righteousness.

Jesus' reply is guiding and revealing: "Ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always." In other words, God always comes first—always. Others come second, and then ourselves come third. The reason is this: Ongoing, sincere care for others always follows once one has cared enough to put God foremost in his life. Care for others before caring for God is nothing other than an illusion of generosity; it has no ground in reality. Then let us not fool ourselves with highfalutin pomposities that expose the true vacuum of our souls.

*We give Thee but Thine own,  
Whate'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is Thine alone,  
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.*

—William W. How

Hymn: "I Surrender All"



## **PRIORITIES:** **Matt. 26:14-16**

When Judas went to hold hands with the chief priests, he gave away his yielding to the temptation to climb up the power ladder. He delighted in being "with the boys." He wanted desperately to be one of them, to be accepted by the religious brokers of his city; they held sway. Judas liked that kind of club; he felt secure with those kinds of players.

I once met a man who was friendly to me to my face when not surrounded by the fellows at work or in the neighborhood. He could be exceptionally chummy, open with

laughs and given over to taking up my time. But one Saturday there was a wedding held in my church. This young man attended the ceremony; but so did many of his cronies from work and the community. After the proceedings I could not help but get the swat. He ignored me totally. Why? Because his "real friends" were looking on; he would not be found dead falling around with me in their sight!

Watch out for that sort of thing. "Try the spirits" (1 John 4:1); pray for discernment. Keep your friendship priorities straight. Make close friends with those who genuinely love the Lord; the social hurts are fewer that way. Surely, you still will be around for those who tend to use a friendship; that is, you will be around—wisely so—ready to lead them, when they are ready, to the Cross. But in the meantime, there is no real reason to be slaughtered in the heart.

Hymn: "More Love to Thee"



## **TIMING:** **Matt. 26:17-19**

Jesus did things tidily. He was not one for inefficiency. That is a lesson a lot of us within the church could put into practice more than we do. How often do we slough off with the Sunday School lesson, show up late for Bible study, wander about the halls during a church service, or just sleep in rather than going to a commitment? And when given an assignment in the church, how frequently do we let it go till the last minute or simply forget it entirely?

It was Passover. So Jesus set himself to put things in order. He did this, for He was on the mission of the Father. Jesus also knew that that mission included the fact that His "time" was "at hand" to die. Just as the Son was most efficient about caring for the Father's plan, so He knew that the Father was most efficient about seeing through the plan of redemption. It was a matter of matching up the timing, seeing that the cues were followed to the letter.

# I am the Resurrection and the Life

How interesting then that Judas thought that *he* was calling the shots. "I will deliver him unto you," he bragged to the chief priests who were bloodthirsty for Jesus' neck (v. 15). Judas was the great "I" who was going to do the delivering of the Son of Man? Not on your life. It was Jesus who willingly laid down His own life; Judas could not wrest it from Him. So it was the truth when Jesus said plainly: "My time [not Judas' timing] is at hand."

May we learn the timing of God; this is best taken in when we surrender all time to the Giver of time. Then we never make the mistake of thinking the joke laid upon the human ego, that is, that we are in control of anything.

Was it not Jesus who told His own that without Him we are indeed nothing (John 15:5)? Then so be it. We are only something when we are nothing before His everything, totally abandoned to it.

Hymn: "I'll Live for Him"



## JUDGMENT: Matt. 26:20-25

In verse 20 we read that Jesus sat down with the disciples. Through all

the intrigue of the packed days in this last week prior to the Resurrection, Jesus yearned for companions. So He still does, for that is the nub of the Incarnation. The Creator wants to be friends with His creation; it is that simple. Therefore, even in the face of Golgotha, Jesus put himself down at the table with the Twelve, breaking bread with them.

Jesus sat down with the woman at the well. He sat in the living room with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. He sat in the house of Simon the leper. The question for us is this: Do we have time to sit down with Jesus? Do we take the time to chat with Him, to learn from Him, to look into His grace and mercy shining from His loving eyes?

Naturally, this costs us something. That is why Jesus exposed the hypocrisy at the table by having to state forthrightly that there was a betrayer at the meal. Immediately everyone became sad. So it is that we live with life's sorrowful intrigue: witnessing about us the ongoing betrayers who still profess a religion while not possessing the power thereof.

"Lord, is it I?"

That echoes throughout our own companies. We still hear that question wafting through the halls of religion. Do we speak it?

"He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me." In our socializing with the likes of Jesus, let us make certain that we are the real people; otherwise, we

will be found out as unsound and tawdry. Such tragedies of soul to realize those who are so near and yet so far. They dip their very hands into the same dish with Jesus, but their souls are not with Him. "Woe," they hear then. "Woe."

Presently Judas could not stand the personal misery within his own heart. So he blurted out, "Master, is it I?" Judas was so used to the religious lingo that he still called Him "Master" while setting out to snare Him for silver's sake. How easy it is to parrot the language even while plowing the fields of self-gain.

"Thou hast said," Jesus replied softly. Don't you think it was softly? We are not told that in the Word; but would you think the caring Lord would bellow out the judgment upon that wasted Judas? I don't think so. I believe Jesus pushed back the tears as He pronounced those three words of truth. And I believe also that Judas pushed back his tears as he longed to look into Jesus' face but could not bring his swirling head to do so.

With those three words, however, Jesus reminds us all that we carve our own destinies. Note that Jesus did not say, "I have said," but "Thou hast said." With us it is the same. He looks upon our souls and repeats that threesome concerning our own question: "Master, is it I?" "Thou hast said."

Hymn: "O Jesus, I Have Promised"



# THE CHALLENGE OF THE CROSS

## A Meditation for Holy Week

by G. Franklin Allee  
*Richland, Wash.*

*As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross (Matt. 27:32, NIV).*

The holy day schedule of the Jewish year turned out to be a day of senseless madness in Jerusalem. The early morning stillness was shattered by rioting. Clamorous demands were laid upon the representative of the Roman government; top leaders of the Jews urged the mob to call for the execution of one of their own countrymen—the kindest and truest individual ever to walk the earth.

Though strongly protesting, the governor had finally given in to their turbulent petitions. And now the innocent victim of greed and envy staggered along the cobblestone street to the Damascus Gate and the skull-faced hill called Golgotha. The weight of the huge wooden cross bears down on His bruised and tortured body. Then, when He cannot take another step, His destiny is linked with that of another Jew, vigorous and broad-shouldered Simon, from the North African Greek city of Cyrene. He had come into Jerusalem to share in the Passover festival. But God has other plans for Simon.

With the great spear that would later be thrust into the Savior's stilled heart pointed at his own breast, Simon lifted the cross from Jesus' bleeding shoulders and placed it on his own.



Oh, Simon! What a privilege was yours that troubled day, though at the time you were not aware of its everlasting significance. And so many other crossbearers through the following ages have little realized the divinity of the tasks that were theirs—bearing crosses for Jesus Christ; picking them up where He could not go; carrying them where His carrying ended; representing

Him when it meant bearing the brunt of His enemies' hatred; honoring Him when others defamed His holy name.

Without doubt, something significant happened in and to the soul of Simon that day. Shuddering as he watched the soldiers drive their merciless nails through Jesus' hands and feet, hearing His prayer for their forgiveness, feeling the angry trembling of the earth under his feet as the Creator's life ebbed away, the man from Cyrene evidently became a believer—and may have been among those who saw and worshiped Jesus after His resurrection.

Simon may not have been a man of wealth; but from the day he bore the cross for Jesus, he had something more lasting than gold with which to endow his sons—a living faith in the Savior.

That a father should be identified through his sons was most unusual in the world of the Hebrews. The opposite was the rule, this the exception. Yet the Gospel writer Mark, writing at a much later date, not only pointed out that Simon was from Cyrene, a colony of Greek philosophers, but that he was the father of two illustrious Christian sons, Rufus and Alexander (Mark 15:21). Rufus (a Greek name) and his mother, possibly a widow by that time, are affectionately mentioned in Paul's letter to the Roman church

*Continued on page 58*





Floyd Filson is insightful in saying that "the Christian faith is essentially a resurrection faith,"<sup>1</sup> and that "Christian theology is essentially resurrection theology."<sup>2</sup> It is the "miracle of all miracles," as Thomas Kepler says, for the Christ who entered into the world by the miracle of virgin conception exited the world by another stupendous miracle—that of resurrection from the dead.

Karl Barth appropriately called Christ's resurrection the "validating" event, meaning that it supports the truth of other events such as Christ's birth of a virgin, His being divine as well as human, His teachings, even the select things He said about himself and that others said about Him, His atoning death, His present office as the one mediator between God and us, and His intention of returning in Kingly power and glory.

Paul E. Little says, "Both friends and enemies of the Christian faith have recognized the resurrection of Christ as the foundation stone of the faith."<sup>3</sup> Philip Schaff also suggests how basic this doctrine is: "The resurrection of Christ is therefore emphatically a test question on which depends the truth or falsehood of the Christian religion. It is either the greatest miracle or the greatest delusion which history records."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, popular writer Josh McDowell says, "I have come to the conclusion that the resurrection of Christ is one

of the most wicked, vicious, heartless hoaxes ever foisted upon the minds of men or it is the most fantastic fact of history."<sup>5</sup> He also says, "The resurrection of Jesus Christ and Christianity stand or fall together."<sup>6</sup>

C. S. Lewis said that "to preach Christianity [in New Testament times] meant to preach the Resurrection."<sup>7</sup> Also, "The Resurrection is the central theme of every Christian sermon reported in Acts."<sup>8</sup> Peter's Pentecost sermon most particularly has to do with Christ's resurrection, 13 verses (as Luke records it) being on that subject, whereas only 2 verses are on the Crucifixion. Likewise other sermons in Acts have this as their themes (see 3:15; 4:10; 5:30-32; 10:40; 13:30-34; 26:23).

In those times of new beginning, the Resurrection figured more or less in every sermon, usually more. Certain "Epicurean and Stoic philosophers" summed up what Paul preached even to them, at Mars Hill in Athens, and said that "Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection" (Acts 17:18, NIV). And "when they heard about the resurrection of the dead [for we will rise because Christ did], some of them sneered, but others said, 'We want to hear you again on this subject'" (v. 32, NIV). Some "believed" (v. 34), even there where philosophy reigned, although the Resurrection has to do with what is quite above the sphere in which human reason does its work.

Indeed, James Stewart is correct in saying that not even a line of the New Testament would have been written had it not been for the faith

of the early Christians in Christ's resurrection from the dead.

Three major views have been held on the matter of the reality of Christ's resurrection: outright denial (as in modernism), a spiritual resurrection only (as in Emil Brunner), and the physical resurrection view (as in the classical and evangelical understanding).

*Outright Denial in Modernism.* One of the major types of view regarding Christ's resurrection is its outright denial in modernism in general. Modernists, including the 18th- and 19th-century German rationalists and the English deists, and 20th-century American modernistic theologians, have simply denied the Resurrection. John Toland (1670-1722), the English deist, could not accept the Resurrection because it is "contrary to reason."<sup>9</sup> David Hume (1711-76), the Scottish skeptic, was loathe to accept any teaching that could not be supported by reason, and certainly the Resurrection is one of those Christian teachings.<sup>10</sup>

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), sometimes called the father of modern theology, opposed the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Schleiermacher says that the "right impression of Christ can be, and has been, present in its fullness without a knowledge of these facts"<sup>11</sup>—in which "facts" he included the Resurrection.

Such scholars as these have tended to affirm, in the Christian faith, only what is supportable by reason, and to deny whatever is miraculous, being also in recent generations overly respecting of what is scientifically verifiable. They have not taught the inspiredness of Scripture, nor its authority, so it has not mattered to them that Christ's resurrection is indeed taught in the Bible.

# the Resurrection of Christ

They have tended to apply to the Christian faith their views about biological and religious evolution, and science generally, and have taught that in man's advanced state such matters as Christ's resurrection are not believable.

Rudolph Bultmann was not a modernist as such. He believed profoundly in the Incarnation, for example, which modernists as such would deny. And when he denied a teaching, it was not because it was uncongenial to reason, as for the modernists. It was often because miracle was involved, however, and on that score he is bedfellow with modernists. The existential Bultmann is similar to the modernists in making outright denials of the Resurrection. He viewed it as an unnecessary encrustation on the Christian faith. He bluntly says, "A historical fact which involves a resurrection from the dead is utterly inconceivable."<sup>12</sup> The "Easter faith" of the disciples, for Bultmann, was an attempt to overcome the scandal of the Cross. Therefore Bultmann concludes that the Resurrection "has been obscured in the tradition by legend and is not of basic importance."<sup>13</sup>

*It Happened Spiritually Only.* A second major type of view regarding the reality of Christ's resurrection is the view that it happened in a spiritual sense, but that there was no historical, physical resurrection of Christ. With the special exception of Karl Barth, as will be noted shortly, this is the kind of direction on the Resurrection that neoorthodox the-

ology has taken. Perhaps pre-eminent among such theologians is Emil Brunner.

Brunner affirms the Resurrection and shows how significant it is in the New Testament, but he says that it did not take place historically, that it was not a physical resurrection. He says that Luke believed it was a physical resurrection, since he depicts the resurrected Christ as eating fish. But he says that Paul and other New Testament writers did not believe in that kind of resurrection, but in a spiritual one only. In support of his views he says that Christ only appeared to believers according to the New Testament accounts, and that therefore He only rose spiritually, to faith. He says that you had to believe in the Resurrection by faith, and that thus only believers could have had any concourse with Him after the Crucifixion. It is real, for Brunner. It is significant. It is foundational to the Christian faith of the earliest disciples and also to our faith. But it did not happen historically, on the plane of ordinary history.<sup>14</sup>

*The Physical Resurrection View.* This is the classical understanding that Christ was raised bodily and that it of course took place on the plane of actual history. This is the view held by Christians in general through the centuries. Previous to the rather recent Brunner-type view, this is what the Resurrection meant. It was occasionally denied, and regularly denied by the modernists beginning with the early-19th-century Schleiermacher as noted earlier. But

when it was affirmed, this is the understanding that was being promoted: Not that it did occur but it did not occur as Brunner indicates, but simply that it did occur.

Preeminently among recent or present-day theologians, Karl Barth (1886-1968) taught in this way. Early in his publishing career, Barth denied Christ's physical resurrection as well as His virgin birth. But by the mid-1930s, Barth was affirming both of these doctrines vigorously. Barth wrote a whole book on the Bible's most special resurrection-of-Christ chapter, 1 Corinthians 15, teaching the physical, historical resurrection of Jesus Christ in a sustained way.<sup>15</sup>

Supportable of its being a bodily resurrection is that it is witnessed to in Scripture, and they witnessed only to fact, not theory, even as witnesses in courts do today. Peter, in that Pentecost sermon, the first Christian sermon ever preached, declared, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact" (Acts 2:32, NIV). Actually, a person was not a witness to a theory or to an idea, but to such matters as what the eyes had seen. Thus it does not necessarily detract from its being a fact that such versions as the RSV and NEB do not use that word "fact" in translating this verse, but only state respectively that "of that we all are witnesses" and "as we can all bear witness." Nor does the Greek have in it a word for "fact," but only *ou pantes hēmeis esmen martures*, literally, "of which all we are witnesses." Yet the NIV rendering is permissible, since the biblical people witnessed only to fact. Although the Resurrection is not specifically mentioned in 1 John 1:1-3, that passage supports their witnessing to fact. There we read, "That which . . . we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which . . . our hands have touched . . . we proclaim to you" (NIV). This passage also indicates that, back there, to spiritualize something like the Resurrection would have been quite foreign to them. That view is an ethereal, Platonic deprecating of facticity matters. It views what is ideational as of greater reality than a facticity matter. Such a view is basic to the denials of Christ's bodily resurrection as we find them in Brunner.

Supportive also of the bodily Res-



by J. Kenneth Grider

*Professor of Theology  
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urrection are various things connected with the post-Resurrection appearances of Christ according to Luke's Gospel. In Luke 24 we read that "the women . . . found the stone rolled away from the tomb" (vv. 1-2, NIV). If it had been a spiritual resurrection, such as that would not have been needful; He could have exited the tomb with the stone in place. Also, "when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus" (v. 3, NIV). Again, had it been a spiritual resurrection to be believed in by faith, as Brunner and others have said, the body would have still been there. And of course the enemies of Christ and His early followers would have denied the Resurrection claims as unfounded because His body was still in the tomb—which they did not do, as we know. Actually, if they could have found the body at all, they would no doubt have used it to disprove the Resurrection. For no one in those days was thinking about a spiritual resurrection to the eyes of faith. The claim that He was raised was a claim that He had been raised bodily, and the opposition knew that very well.

When "two men in clothes that gleamed" (v. 4, NIV), no doubt angels, told the women, "He is not here; he has risen!" and recalled that He had told them in Galilee that "the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again" (vv. 6-7, NIV), they were talking about a bodily resurrection even as Christ had been. And if it was a spiritual resurrection only, why would the time of it have been specified as on "the third day"? When the two Marys and Joanna (v. 10) had told "the eleven" and others what had happened, the women becoming the first proclaimers of the Resurrection, Peter "ran to the tomb" and found that it had been a literal resurrection, seeing "the strips of linen lying by themselves" (v. 12, NIV).

Then there is the matter of His actually eating, after the Resurrection, according to this chapter of Luke. After His meeting with "Cleopas" (v. 18) and some other person on the Emmaus road, and after it is only implied that He later ate with them (vv.

29-30), He actually did eat according to Luke's account. After Jesus asked, "Do you have anything here to eat?" there we read, "They gave [Jesus] a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence" (vv. 41-43, NIV; see also Acts 1:4).

Also "Look at my hands and my feet" (v. 39, NIV), He said to "the Eleven" (v. 33, NIV) and others. So they could actually look steadily at Him.

It also seems to be a literal, physical resurrection, since Paul describes it as he does in Acts 13. Paul says, "And when they had carried out all that the scriptures said about him, they took him down from the gibbet and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead; and there was a period of many days during which he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem" (13:29-31, NEB). The Resurrection was physical, of a bodily sort, partly because the things that they had "carried out" would have been literal things, including this: "they took him down from the gibbet and laid him in a tomb." They took His physical body down from the gibbet, the Cross, and literally laid His physical body in a real tomb. So when "God raised him from the dead," it would have been literal also. Besides, there had been "a period of many days during which he [Christ] appeared to" people. Again, these would have been literal days. And if He "appeared" to them, it means that they saw Him with their eyes, and not as Brunner says, simply with their eyes of faith.

The factuality of Christ's resurrection is also seen in Luke's account of Christ's appearances to the Eleven and those with them (24:36 ff.). Jesus attempted to assure this frightened assemblage of His bodily presence by the announcement: "Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself!" He continues, "Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have" (v. 39, NIV), He continues. So they could "touch" Him because He had "flesh and bones." Seeing that they were, in His words, "troubled" (v. 38), and that they could hardly believe it, He

asked if there was any food around, and ate. "Do you have anything here to eat?" (v. 41, NIV), He asked. Then we read, "They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence" (vv. 42-43, NIV). This "eating" is especially the one thing Emil Brunner says is inconsistent with his own view that there had only been a spiritual resurrection. On the basis of this evidence, Brunner (as mentioned earlier) says that Luke believed in the bodily resurrection of Christ, but that Paul did not. The eating, of course, does indicate that He had risen bodily. But much else in this Lukan account, and in others, indicates the same thing, as has been noted.

It is also in Luke where we read that "the eleven" apostles and others said, "The Lord is risen indeed" (vv. 33-34). Barth was aware of this kind of translation with "indeed" in it, and said that this word suggests that it was a bodily resurrection. The Greek word for the KJV "indeed" is *ontōs*, an adverb meaning "really, certainly, in truth."<sup>16</sup> The NIV (after NEB) renders *ontōs* with "It is true!": "It is true! The Lord has risen." The NASB more expressly translates *ontōs* as suggesting a bodily resurrection: "The Lord has really risen." The word *ontōs*, whether rendered "indeed," or as what is "true," or as "really," suggests that the Resurrection did not happen in a simply spiritual way, but in a real, bodily sense.

To understand that Christ was raised bodily and to understand that the Resurrection was historical are almost the same thing, looked at from different angles. Surely all who believe in the bodily Resurrection also believe that it was a historical event; and all who believe that it was a historical event believe that it was a literal, bodily resurrection. It is simply that questioners of the classical teaching approach the matter from different angles.

To say that it was historical, as Karl Barth does, as Jurgen Moltmann does, as all evangelicals do, is to say that it actually did take place in a certain year of the reign of a given Roman emperor. To say that it was historical is to emphasize that

*Continued on page 47*

## *DEFENSIVE AND OFFENSIVE FINANCIAL STRATEGIES FOR THE MINISTER*

by Rev. Don Walter  
*Administrative Assistant  
Board of Pensions and Benefits USA  
Church of the Nazarene*

**F**ive key questions should be considered among the basic elements of financial planning for a minister. These questions represent sound defensive financial planning, and good offensive planning as well. The questions require consideration of some unpleasant possibilities. However, good strategy must include options for many contingencies. One consolation is that all of these difficulties could not happen at the same time. To not consider them could leave one or one's family in critical financial condition.

### **1. "What if I die too soon?"**

This question is related to the minister's responsibility to make provision for the needs of his family in the event of premature death. As a breadwinner for the family, there definitely is a financial dimension to being a spouse and parent. The premature death of such a breadwinner would present financial challenges for the family. Part of a good financial plan will include provision for replacing lost income. This part of one's plan is usually cared for by life insurance, which is meant to replace not a life but rather the lost income.

The logical question then is "How much life insurance do I need to replace the loss of income for my family?" A general answer is "Probably more than you think." For instance, if an insurance policy paid a death benefit of \$100,000, that benefit amount, if invested at 7 percent *after taxes*, would yield \$7,000 annually for an indefinite period of time. If the principal were also to be used, the investment would yield \$14,237 a year for 10 years or \$9,439 a year for 20 years. Remember, the primary purpose is to replace lost earnings, so projecting replacement of earnings beyond one's anticipated earning years may not be necessary.

One area sometimes forgotten is the Social Security survivors benefit paid for covered workers. Ministers who pay Social Security taxes are covered. Under the provision, a worker's surviving spouse and minor children are paid a monthly benefit based on the worker's average indexed monthly earnings. This payment will average around 40 percent of the worker's covered compensation. It reduces the amount of lost earnings needing to be replaced by life insurance. Information is available from your Social Security office.

### **2. "What if I live too long?"**

This issue is that of outliving one's financial resources. It requires looking at retirement needs with the idea that one or both spouses may live as much as 30 or 40 years after retirement and beyond earning an income. Outliving one's financial resources would be tragic.

What sources are there for providing retirement income? Statistics released by the Department of Health and Human Services indicated that for all persons over age 65, 38 percent of income is from Social Security, 26 percent is from investments, 17 percent is from earnings, and 16 percent is from private pensions. The remaining 3 percent is from miscellaneous sources.

The twin resources of Social Security and a defined benefit pension are sometimes the extent of retirement planning by ministers. Such a limitation ignores the reality that those two only comprise 54 percent of the average income needed. Other resources must be considered.

One of the best resources for ministers is still the tax-sheltered annuity program as structured under Section

403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code. The provision allows ministers, as employees of nonprofit organizations, to have a portion of their current income deferred tax-free to a retirement plan. The deferred funds are allowed to accumulate interest tax-free as well. If administered by the minister's denomination, funds can be withdrawn as tax-free housing allowance. The important thing is that a minister start making contributions early so that the interest has a chance to compound and accumulate. Even small amounts contributed early and regularly can yield big dividends for retirement income if left to compound.

### 3. "What if I become disabled?"

Every sound financial plan should recognize the possibility of earned income ceasing while expenses continue. This is what happens in the event of disability. Because disability represents lost income but continuing expenses, it is often financially more of a hardship than death. However, more people insure against lost income from premature death than from disability.

There are three primary sources for extended income in the event of disability. One is the Social Security disability benefit for covered workers who meet the disability qualifications. Another is private disability insurance. Such insurance is relatively inexpensive for what it provides. There is also the disability benefit of one's private pension plan. Other sources may include personal savings and accumulated funds in a tax-sheltered annuity plan.

The probability of being disabled is not a pleasant thought. However, it is a possibility that should be included in financial planning.

### 4. "What if I get sick?"

With escalating costs of health care in the nation today, no financial plan would be complete without coverage for large expenses in the event of an illness. Very few persons have the personal resources to pay for treatment of severe or prolonged illness without significant financial setback. Yet such illness cannot be ignored; treatment must be undertaken.

Health insurance is a necessary and significant part of protecting one's financial well-being. A family without health insurance today is very vulnerable to significant financial risk. Even if only minimal coverage can be afforded, it should be obtained. Good financial planning is as much protecting one's resources as it is multiplying them. Health insurance is defensive financial planning.

### 5. "What happens if I get paid?"

This question deals with compensation structuring and how best to receive the money the local church has set aside in its budget for pastoral support. It makes a difference how the money gets from the church to the minister. *How* the church pays the minister can be just as significant as how *much* the church pays the minister in determining how much discretionary income the minister really has.

Over the years, tax laws have become more complex in defining what money received from an employer is and is not taxable. Ministerial employees have not been exempted from these details. Here are a few consid-

erations for a minister, church board, and salary committee.

First, a minister should maximize the provisions of the tax law that allow for a tax-free housing allowance. The tax code specifically states, "In the case of a minister of the gospel, gross income does not include (1) the rental value of a home furnished to him as part of his compensation; or (2) the rental allowance paid to him as part of his compensation, to the extent used by him to rent or provide a home." Furthermore, IRS regulations define the costs of "providing a home" to include all expenses other than food or maid service. Therefore, any such expenses incurred by a minister in a parsonage or renting or purchasing his own home could be paid for with a tax-free housing allowance and would not be subject to income tax to the extent that they meet the limitations of IRS regulations. It may be as simple as the church board declaring a portion of the salary already being paid as housing allowance and then making certain the money is spent within IRS guidelines.

A minister should also be certain all of his professional and business expenses are reimbursed dollar-for-dollar by his church employer. This would include church-related professional expenses for travel, entertainment, books, periodicals, gifts required because of one's role as a minister, and dues to professional organizations. These are expenses of ministry, not expenses of the minister personally. As such they should be a part of local church ministry expenses.

It is important that expenses be reimbursed according to IRS guidelines. This requires that receipts, mileage statements, travel logs, and other material documentation be turned in to the church employer. Only the amount documented should be paid. If the church is simply giving the minister an "allowance" and not requiring an accounting of how the money is spent, those funds are just extra salary in the eyes of the IRS. The minister must then show them as income on his tax return and then try to deduct them if possible. Under the latest tax-law changes, it is impossible to deduct 100 percent of all such expenses. Therefore the minister who is not being properly reimbursed is paying taxes on local church ministry expenses. Understanding this, a minister would be better off to have his salary reduced in order to have his expenses reimbursed, rather than to pay for those expenses with taxable "salary" and not be able to deduct them completely.

Another important element of compensation structuring is making certain your church employer is making payment for all allowable tax-free employee benefits directly to the benefit provider. This would include premiums for health insurance, group term life insurance for up to \$50,000 coverage, disability insurance, accident insurance, and tax-sheltered annuity contributions. If the church is simply giving the minister the money to pay for these benefits himself, they may not be fully tax-free.

Sound financial planning needs both an offensive strategy and a defensive strategy. Protecting oneself against financial catastrophe is defensive financial planning. Preparing for retirement and proper compensation structuring are offensive financial strategies. In order to be a winner at financial planning, one needs both a good offense and a good defense.





# IN THE WESLEYAN SPIRIT

## A Study in Wesleyan Spirituality

by R. Duane Thompson

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**W**hat if we were searching for a holy man or woman? Where would we find one? We might search in churches or the universities and colleges where religion is taught. Would we not be seeking a pastor or spiritual leader? Would it be remotely possible to discover our holy person in a common place in a common task? Could she be some woman doing the dishes or changing diapers? Could he be a workman at a factory or a contractor on top of his building?

The quest for the holy man has taken explorers to caves in the mountains, to high cliffs, to deep grottoes in medieval castles, and indeed, to some of the most implausible places throughout the earth. Sometimes the search was richly rewarded. But more often, the traveler was totally disappointed. In the case

of Augustine, a fifth-century saint, the failure to find God in some other person or place led to his awareness of a deeper source of experience:

*I was wandering like a lost sheep, searching outside myself for that which was within. I ran through all the streets and squares of this great city, the world, searching for Thee, O God, and I found Thee not because I sought Thee wrongly. Thou wert within me and I sought Thee without.*

Apparently the search for the saints, and indeed for God himself, can be misplaced. Let us attempt to discover how Wesley would describe a "saint," that is to say, a spiritual person.

Wesleyan spirituality underscores life, balance, and generosity. For Wesley, the Christian walk was never conceived, experienced, or

promoted as a state of being; it was always a dynamic reality. Life comprises both crises and processes, producing inward and outward holiness. Crisis is always servant to the process of the Christian way. It is not a static, plateauing crisis of a merely positional holiness that remains the same for eternity. The Wesleyan blending of crisis and process makes Christian growth more like a marathon than running in place or even the 100-yard dash.

Wesley's theology is alive. It is rooted in the Bible and in tradition. It is rooted in the ultimate reality of God and His communication with us. But that communication is *alive*, not mechanical or embalmed. By emphasizing the Christian walk as daily and experiential, by stressing its motion, by underscoring growth and by keeping religion practical, Wesley was able to breathe life into theology and give it a fresh twist.

Wesley also approached religion with a refreshing delicate balance. As in any balanced approach, issues are many-sided and often not easily resolved. Such a balance is always held gingerly, for it is held as a living tension and is easily lost. Wesley never encouraged extremism in his search for the balance of all factors of human life and experience. Wesley was able to hold the generating vision in proper balance along with the details that it produced, without letting it get lost in legalistic adherence to details.



R. Duane Thompson

The inner and the outer were held together as requiring each other. Inner religion demands public expression, and public expression demands a deep inner reality. Christians are those who experience God. The intention must always issue into action, and action must have the appropriate motive. The "inner life" is critical. No amount of display, slick performance, or administrative skills will replace the deep life of experience and devotion to God. No rational profundities, no proofs of the existence of God or the devil will take the place of a warm heart in the presence of God. This is why looking at spirituality as the cultivation of "the art and discipline of presence to the Sacred" (Adrian Van Kaam) is fundamental to Wesleyans, as to all Christians who believe that God can be experienced in this life. Indeed, often in our haste to emphasize this fundamental truth, we proceed to denigrate education and human planning and skill.

One must exercise appropriate dominion over the outer life with its social impact. Communion with God is not simply an end in itself; social and ethical righteousness, with power to transform the social setting, is a natural and necessary component. The emphasis on worship ranges all the way from the most intimate private devotional life to formal liturgy of the church. Here Wesley's remarkable balance demanded rigorous smaller societies of religious discipline and individual growth, and it was open to cooperation with and membership in the existing religious structures.

One of Wesley's major efforts was to balance extraordinary levels of spiritual discipline and growth with a non-self-conscious sanctity. Any view faces difficulties producing spiritual athleticism and degrees of spiritual development without also producing elitism and snobbery. But it is precisely this that Wesley attempts, and to some significant extent achieves, even though Wesley's followers may not always have been as successful as he in maintaining this.

Wesley never said that there exists such extraordinary human ability that results in sinless perfection. Rather, God's conquest of sin and His sphere of victory over it in this world. The degree of spiritual

achievement is always fully dependent upon divine grace and power. Consequently, there is always the need for God's presence, and all humans isolated from Him (in any sense in which this is possible) are shut up in sin and shut out from holiness—indeed, from any level of Christian experience.

Wesley's view was neither anti-intellectual nor solely intellectual. It embraced both emotions and volition, but it was not emotionalism, sensationalism, or pure voluntarism. It was the balanced whole person Wesley attempted to keep in mind as he ministered.

Wesley sought to be contemporary without rejecting ancient principles. He was a man of one Book, yet he read many books. He feasted upon the Scriptures and constantly brought biblical values to bear on modern issues. He analyzed history in light of the Bible's impact upon it. But he refused to move backward into some ancient haven; he was a reformer who took the application of biblical principles to the present very seriously. He applied the living Word to the living situation.

The Wesleyan spirit is not just the product of John Wesley's theological and biblical scholarship; it is equally the offspring of Charles Wesley's lyrics and music. And while these works were primarily didactic and related to ministry, they contain an element of the poetic and artistic that not only adds to the message but also enlarges it as well. A poetic and musical spirit is delightfully different from one that is purely theological.

Wesleyanism rejects a strangling and shrunken spirituality, although it can be experienced and promoted. It rejects sectarianism in reaching out toward a universal vision and an ecumenical spirit. In the most profound sense, it is a theology of generosity, abundance, warmth, and joy.

Some scholars insist that if Wesley were alive today, he would have a television ministry. He wrote theology in a popular vein. He intended to be heard by the masses, not just by the theologians.

One day after class, a devoutly Catholic student told me, "When I came to take this class, I thought of myself simply as a Roman Catholic.

I thought that another narrow view of religion would be presented in this program. What I have discovered is that I am really more interested in calling myself a Christian than I am in calling myself a Catholic."

This is the vision to which Wesley would have subscribed. It is not a rejection of who we are, but a transcendence of isolated Christianity through a vision of the power and joy of Christian triumph over any and all circumstances. It is not longing for perfection in the far-off future. It is a realization of Christ's intrusion into the present with this proclamation: "All power is given unto me . . . and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the [age]" (Matt. 28:18, 20).

Wesley's concern for truth did not create gulfs between himself and others. He preached the truth as he read it from God's Word and as he experienced it. But his openness to others made him think of the world basically as a parish of which he was the pastor, rather than as a battlefield in which he was slaying the opposition.

But how does Wesleyan spirituality fit into the larger picture of historic Christianity? Wesley never intended to develop a view of spirituality for the elect; his was a spirituality for everyone. Thus he is not just a man for some special so-called Wesleyan movement, but a saint with generous benefits to all Christians. Wesley's living theology invites openness to theological effort, his balance embraces a wholeness of the person and a reach extending to the whole world, and his generosity overflows and eliminates, rather than erects, boundaries.

Wesley was not just concerned with a display of sainthood, for he realized that we are all in the process of becoming saints. And in that process of saint making, it is as important to help others in their spiritual growth as it is to describe their spiritual level or to recognize a saint.

Does such a vision of Wesleyan spirituality have relevance for the busy pastor? Definitely. Wesley would have seen everything from the vantage point of the "Pastor of the World Parish." And a living, balanced, and generous spirit will make it easier for all of us to discover and help create saints in the world. ✠

# MONDAY MORNING DEVOTIONS

by Reuben Welch

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## For Monday, March 6

### ALL YOUR ANXIETY

*Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Phil. 4:6, RSV).*

This is a hard word—for a Monday or any other day. Who of us does not know anxiety? It is the midnight stalker, the early morning attacker, our familiar enemy who climbs through the window of memory, armed with dread, guilt, and fear. Paul himself knew about anxiety, and his windows didn't even have screens. Remember his anxiety about Epaphroditus (2:25-28) and his conflicts with his opponents in Corinth (2 Cor. 2:4-12; 7:5)?

It is good to know that "Have no anxiety" is in the present tense and really means, "Don't keep on being anxious." Anxious feelings come unbidden. We do not need to feel guilty for them. The Lord knows we don't need guilt piled on top of anxiety! But neither do we need to hold on to them. We really can release our anxieties into the care of our caring Lord.

I learned the words of this song a long time ago:

*All your anxiety, all your care,  
Bring to the mercy seat—leave it there.*

*Never a burden He cannot bear,  
Never a friend like Jesus!\**

This friend is our Lord, the coming One who is near to us. He opens for us another option. We are not locked in. We can give thanks and we can pray to One who hears and responds.

\*"All Your Anxiety," by Edward Henry Joy. Copyright Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, Ltd., King's Cross, London.

## For Monday, March 13

### A WORD ABOUT PRAYER

*Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Phil. 4:6, RSV).*

I doubt that Philippians 4 is heavy on your mind as you get ready for Palm Sunday and Holy Week. But God has a word about prayer for us at precisely this season of our lives and of our ministries.

Jesus our King comes into the citadel of our hearts the way He came to Jerusalem, gentle and humble. He dies for us and rises again in glory. His awesome humility and death are not just to forgive our sins but to redeem the whole of our lives and the whole of our human existence. That means that nothing is outside the range of His redeeming death and resurrection.

All our anxieties and all our cares are included. So Paul could say, "in every-

thing by prayer and supplication." Can he really mean "everything"? That is an awful word. It plumbs the depths of our hurts, the dark caves of our fears, and the black holes of our guilty failures. "Everything" is also a wonderful word. It ascends the heights of our healings, our deliverances, and our forgiveness.

Everything, then, about ourselves, our families, and our ministries can be the subject of open, earnest prayer to God. Don't hold anything back; tell everything to our gentle King.

## For Monday, March 20

### WITH THANKSGIVING

*Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Phil. 4:6, RSV).*

How can it be that no matter where we work in the Scripture, there is a word that meets us, whatever the season of the year of our lives? It is because at the center all things converge. And Christ is the Center, the One to whom all Scripture bears witness.

The "everything" of this week includes Holy Week; our remembrance of the Last Supper, Gethsemane, Calvary, and the Resurrection. One word for the Last Supper is Eucharist, thanksgiving. Our earnest praying is mixed with thanksgiving for His precious body broken for our sins, for His blood poured out for us in new covenant commitment, for His utter obedience and self-giving

Reuben Welch



on the Cross, for His descent into the black hole of Hades, and for the Father's power that raised Him from the dead and exalted Him in glory.

The "thanksgiving" in verse 6 this week is thanksgiving for Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection on our behalf. We always talk about the meaning of the Cross and Resurrection during Holy Week. This time, let's thank Him in the midst of our prayers and supplications; thank Him that He loved us enough to die for us and rise again.

*Hallelujah for the Blood! Sing for joy, all ye nations,*

*And rejoice that the work of redemption is done.*

*Here is pardon free for all, and a perfect salvation*

*Through the sin-cleansing blood of the Crucified One.*

MRS. C. H. MORRIS

## For Monday, March 27

### THE GUARDING PEACE OF GOD

*And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7, RSV).*

Remember that first Easter evening when Jesus came through the bolted door of the Upper Room, and through the shut-tight doors of their fear and confusion, saying to them, "Peace be with you"? Again He said it, "Peace be with you," and eight days later, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19, 21, 26, RSV).

The gift of the Resurrection is Monday morning peace. Go ahead and receive it. His risen, living person in the presence of His Spirit guarantees His promise, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27, RSV).

Whatever Easter truth you preached yesterday, it includes the peace of God in your heart today. That peace, Paul says, is the guard and protector of a safe inner environment where love and joy can grow. There is peace for your hearts; there is peace for our minds.

I wish we had been told that our earnest prayers with thanksgiving would release us from the causes of our anxieties. But we are not promised answers, we are promised peace. I think that is really what we most need today.

"O risen Lord Jesus, we receive Your gift of peace. We welcome You through the doors of our weariness, our hurts, and our confusion. We see nail-pierced hands reaching out to us, and we hear Your familiar, loved voice, 'Peace be with you.'"

## For Monday, April 3

### LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN TO GOD

*Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Phil. 4:6, RSV).*

"Let your requests be made known to God." That means, "Tell God all your heart just as though He did not know!" Bible people trusted utterly in the great knowledge of God. They knew Him as Creator and Upholder, Lord and Giver of life, who has little need of instruction from us (Rom. 11:33-36). They also frankly and openly informed this God of all their thoughts and feelings as though without their telling He would never know.

Some of us have smiled at the "Lord, You know that . . ." prayers. We are amused at those who inform God of events in the news or things seen along the roadside. Truth is, God knows all about such things. And the truth is, we need to tell Him all about such things. In fact, He has given us His Spirit to help us tell Him the things He already knows (Rom. 8:23)!

So, what is on your heart today? If you could ask God for something you really want or something you really need, what would you say? If out of the depths you could groan your deepest pain, how would you articulate your cry? If your heart were hungry to say a profound "Thank You" for something precious, what words would you sing?

The Word has given us a wondrous welcome. The door is open; the Father is listening. Tell Him all your heart. "Let your requests be made known to God." He answers with His peace.

## For Monday, April 10

### A MIND FOR TRUTH

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true . . . think about these things (Phil. 4:8, RSV).*

This list of good things to think about looks like the list any decent Philippian mother or teacher would teach children. In one way it is, because there aren't many virtues that are distinctly "Christian." The good old ways we are to live and think are about the same for us all because we've all been created by the same God.

Yet, in a more important way, the list of virtues is different for us. Jesus has come to embody them and live them out. And He has given us His Holy Spirit to enable us to embody them and live them out.

It is one thing to say, "Think about . . . whatever is true." It is another thing to

hear Jesus say, "I am . . . the truth" (John 14:6) and to open our hearts and lives to Him and to His Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth. We do more than try to think about true things instead of false ones—and actually, that is an awesome task! We submit our false and deceptive selves to Jesus. His true Spirit works to cleanse our minds and hearts, making us increasingly transparent before Him, before our families, and before our people.

"Lord, our world is full of lies. How are we to discern the truth and speak the truth? 'Oh send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me . . . Lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation; for thee I wait all the day long'" (Ps. 43:3; 25:5, RSV).

## For Monday, April 17

### A TIME FOR REVERENCE

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable . . . think about these things (Phil. 4:8, RSV).*

What is honorable is "worthy of reverence" (Amp.). If God is our Creator, if He has come to us in the person of Jesus, and if His brooding, order-bringing Spirit (Gen. 1:2) is really present and at work in the world, it is not a good day to mull over the failures and mistakes or to hold on to the petty conversations and disagreements that were a part of yesterday. It is rather a good day for elevating our thoughts to the contemplation of what is honorable, what is worthy of reverence.

God is worthy of reverence. Let us open our hearts to Him and reflect on the honor of His name and the wonder of His grace and love. "Thou art worthy, O Lord" (Rev. 4:11).

The persons around us, persons He has created and redeemed, are worthy of reverence. C. S. Lewis has written that if we could see how beautiful the persons around us will be in heaven, we would bow down before them in awe and wonder. Now and then we see in them something beautiful, something good expressed in an act or a gesture that reflects the character and beauty of God. Hold on to it. Treasure it. It is a beautiful gift of God.

We are filled with "awesome wonder" when we consider the worlds our Father's hands have made. So let us stop and smell the roses, then look up to the sky and give thanks for God's good earth.

"O Spirit of God, brood over the disorder of our minds, reverse our usual ways of thinking, and make this Monday one of thoughtful reflection on what is honorable—and so renew us."

## For Monday, April 24

### THE RIGHT THING

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just . . . think about these things* (Phil. 4:8, RSV).

What is just is what is right, right with God and right with man. It is as simple as that.

Our world is so messed up we don't even know what is right anymore. We are so used to operating by the system and the policies, by what looks good and is most advantageous, that we seldom consider the subversive, alternate question: "Why not do what is right?"

Monday is hardly ever a good day for us to think about such things. But not so for Jesus. He thought about them all the time, and we know of no one else who lived his whole life just doing the right thing. That's all He ever did—the right thing.

It is good that we are talking about this during Pentecost season. Apart from the Spirit of Jesus we can't even really know what is right, let alone do it.

Let me ask some questions. Have you been hurt? Are you at odds or in conflict with someone in your family or in your church? Any hard decisions or tense encounters coming up?

Consider this: Lay down your ego and your role, don't defend or enforce policy, don't compromise to make anyone or anything look good; don't preserve your reputation or influence. Ask the hard, personal question, "What is the right thing to do?" God will help you know it, and He will help you start to do it now.

## For Monday, May 1

### PURITY OF HEART IS TO WILL ONE THING

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure . . . think about these things* (Phil. 4:8, RSV).

Kierkegaard's famous phrase, the title of today's devotion, reminds us that pure doesn't mean only sexual purity; nor, thank God, does it mean motivational or behavioral perfection. What pure *does* mean is unmixed, sincere, without guile or cover-up.

That's why pure does indeed mean sexual and moral purity, a heart and life with nothing to hide. That's why "the pure in heart . . . see God" (Matt. 5:8); their hearts and minds are not closed off from Him by hypocrisy or dishonesty.

"Purity" is both a holy and a hard word. We profoundly desire it, but who can find it? How can we ever "will one thing"? Surely not by ourselves nor of ourselves. It is not incidental that next Wednesday is Ascension Day, the day we celebrate the triumph of our Lord through His death and resurrection over the powers of impurity, guile, and deceit. He has descended to the depths and knows the depths of our hearts. He has ascended to the heights, enthroned at the right hand of the Father, and can cleanse our hearts by His outpoured Holy Spirit.

On this Monday, then, we are given courage to go ahead and contemplate purity of heart and thought and behavior. We need not fear, for His Spirit enables us to open our whole selves to His intimate, powerful, and cleansing presence.

## For Monday, May 8

### LOVELY AND GRACIOUS

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious . . . think about these things* (Phil. 4:8, RSV).

I worry about the degrading process I see at work in our culture. So much in it is rude and crude and lewd. One sad and destructive by-product of our TV and movie industries is their separation of beauty and goodness. A God-given something in us wants what is beautiful to be good. Lovely faces ought to express lovely characters. Good looks ought to go with good lives. But in the world displayed before us through the media, it is not so. Thank God, in the world of the Kingdom, it can be so.

My own Pentecost devotion is this: To be sure, the Holy Spirit comes to cleanse and empower our hearts, but He also comes to be the Conservator of what is lovely and gracious. He is the beautiful Spirit of God, the Creator and Preserver of beauty and goodness, charm and loveliness. He is the Source of all that is worthy to be loved. The Spirit is the gracious Spirit, the attractive, appealing, praiseworthy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus. These very words bring to my mind the line of the chorus, "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me."

I know we want to come casual, talk flat out, and get real. I hope such common sayings don't reflect a loss of love of the good, the beautiful, the lovely, and the gracious. So my Pentecost prayer is, "Beautiful, lovely, gracious, praiseworthy Spirit of God, descend upon my heart. Make me more like my gracious, lovely Savior."

## For Monday, May 15

### ANYTHING GOOD OUT THERE?

*If there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things* (Phil. 4:8, RSV).

Is there anything good out there we can plug into, anything excellent out in the big, wide world worthy enough to let our weight down on? Sometimes we wonder!

But Paul opens his eyes and his arms to the culture of his century and says, "Whatever is excellent out there (and there is excellence), whatever is praiseworthy out there (and there is praiseworthiness), think about them." What ordinary folks have held to be good cannot and need not be ignored by the people of God. Whatever has merit, wherever it is found, has merit for us.

We know that our moral values are not based on the virtues of the world. But we believe in the Creation and the Incarnation. That means that we see in the world's moral values, skewed as they are, the tarnished reflection of the image of God and the veiled revelation of the grace of God. And we can say yes to them.

It isn't that we are blind to the world's evil; sometimes that is all we can see! It is rather that our eyes have been opened by the Pentecostal Spirit to see in all that is "out there" the good working of our redeeming God. Through the discerning Spirit of truth we can affirm the excellence of those who are not excellent persons, and can validate what is praiseworthy even in a fallen world.

God is Creator and Redeemer of us all; therefore all things are ours, and we "are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:23).

## For Monday, May 22

### WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

*If there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things* (Phil. 4:8, RSV).

When Paul says we are to think about what is true and good and lovely, he uses a radical word that means "take account of" (Amp.) or "reckon." We reckon with the weather, with taxes, and with the law of gravity. If we are wise, we reckon with death. That is, we take them into account in the way we order our lives; we give them weight in our decisions.

Where does this meet you this Monday? We can't write off these verses by saying, "Of course we are not to meditate on what is false, ugly, and repugnant!" On the other hand, Paul says far more than for us to take up the



wholesome thoughts and positive proverbs of the local Rotary Club or the self-help psychologists.

He appeals for a Spirit-born, discerning moral judgment in a world of dis-values, unrealities, and deceptions. Living in that world, we are to pay attention to, give weight to, base our decision on what is good and right and true and lovely. We are called to pursue truth, consider what is honorable, think justice, seek purity, and respond to what is lovely and gracious.

John Bunyan, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, tells of an old man bent over like the rim of a wagon wheel, wearing himself out with a muckrake, turning over trash and filth, looking for some gold. Meanwhile a bright angel on celestial wings is hovering over him with a crown of gold ready to place on his head if he will only straighten up.

## For Monday, May 29

### THINKING AND DOING

*What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you (Phil. 4:9, RSV).*


This verse moves us in a different direction. Paul holds up true values and says, "Think about these things." Now he holds up what he has taught and how he has lived and says, "Do these things." It always comes down to that, doesn't it? Truth always comes down to practical and common action, and at that level we always live more by imitation than by insight.

We are accustomed, I think, to a little more show of humility than Paul seems to show here. He forthrightly points to his own life as an example for them. But

the call to ministry for him, and for us, carries with it the task of living out the gospel as well as proclaiming it. And actually the two are inseparable.

As we know, early Christians had no New Testament. If they wanted to know how to live out the gospel, they looked to their living exemplars, the ones who preached it.

I wonder how different we are. Do you laymen really read the Bible in such a way that their lives are rearranged by it? For that matter, when we ourselves, for all our training, really want to know what life in Christ is like, we look more often at person than at pages. And I can think of some of those persons right now! So can you. Thank God for them!

"Lord, You know we can't say with pride, 'Look at me.' But give us grace to live so that we can say, 'Follow me as I follow Christ'" (see 1 Cor. 11:1). 

## THE RESURRECTION

*Continued from page 39*


there were many witnesses to it who saw the empty tomb, who proclaimed it to others, who wrote Gospels that included much mention of it.

To say that it was not historical, but that it still happened, is to say that it took place on a special spiritual plane, and not on the plane of ordinary happenings. To say that it happened but that it was not historical is to spiritualize it, to say something metaphysical. It is to say that what is really important is what is back of what is physical. To take that kind of position is to deprecate physicality in favor of noumenal reality that is supposed to be what is actually real. To take that kind of position is to take a Platonic type of view in which what is ideational and ethereal is what is real, while physicality and factuality are only shadows of what is really real. To take that kind of view is to be an idealist of some sort, metaphysically.

To take that kind of view gets one off base in a fundamental way from what is scriptural. In Scripture, physicality is not deprecated, as was noted early in this study of Christian doctrine. Scripture teaches that the one God created the whole universe, and that it is good. It teaches

that history is real, that God is Lord over history. It teaches that time is real and that God, who is Lord of history, is taking the world and man, in real time, to a somewhen, that is, Christ's second coming; and to a somewhere, heaven. Scripture teaches that miracles actually occur in the natural sphere, that the Deity actually became enfleshed as the God-man, Jesus Christ, at a specific time in an emperor's reign (which is how time was measured then). It teaches that there are two sacraments, both of which employ physical emblems: water, and bread and wine. It teaches that Jesus instituted baptism partly by being baptized by John the Baptist in a real river. It teaches that, in a historical event, Christ instituted the Lord's Supper at a given time and place. It teaches that Christ was crucified on a physical cross, that He literally died physically, and that He was literally raised from the dead at a given time and place.

The importance of the Resurrection's being both a bodily change and what happened in history is pointed up by a conversation several years ago between theologians Karl Barth and Paul Tillich. Tillich had just visited the Holy Land, and told Barth, back in Europe, that he had

seen a sign that read, "Jesus Christ was raised here"—and that he did not need the "here." To this Barth replied, "I need the 'here!'" 

### NOTES

1. Floyd Filson, *Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 49.
2. Ibid.
3. Paul E. Little, *Know Why You Believe* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 23.
4. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 1:173.
5. Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (San Bernardino, Calif.: Campus Crusade, 1972), 185.
6. Ibid.
7. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: MacMillan, 1947), 171.
8. Ibid., 171-72.
9. John Toland, *Christianity Not Mysterious* (1696; reprint, New York: Garland Publishing, 1978), 151.
10. See, e.g., David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1921), 121.
11. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1928), 418.
12. Rudolf Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), 1:39.
13. Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), 1:45.
14. All this can be found in various books by Emil Brunner, especially including *The Mediator* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1947).
15. See Karl Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead*, trans. H. J. Stenning (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1933).
16. Wm. F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, "ontōs," in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957, 1979).

# WHAT ABOUT APPLAUSE IN WORSHIP?

by Rob L. Staples

*Professor of Theology  
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Let's give God a handclap," implores Tulsa's junior televangelist, and his studio audience happily complies. Take your pick of several big-time TV "ministries," and you will likely hear uproarious applause each time the preacher makes a point that pleases his hearers. In California's Crystal Cathedral, applause rises to a crescendo after every choir number, special song, or celebrity interview. In a glass church, of course, clapping hands is certainly less destructive than throwing stones! And throwing stones, dear reader, is what you may think I am doing in this article. But please refrain from stoning me—at least until you have read what I have to say.

I do not wish to condemn all religious television programs for their applause content. After all, for many of them, that's "show biz," and without applause show business would be out of business! What I am concerned about is the way some holiness churches have picked up on this practice. I suspect that it is more common among us now, at least in some congregations, than it has ever been before.

But if it is a problem, it is not the first time the church has faced it. I was not around in 1928 (I just missed it, being born the following year). But many present-day Nazarenes might be surprised to learn that the 1928 General Assembly, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, unanimously passed the following resolution:

"We as a people are a happy, joyous crowd. We believe in preserving a spirit of liberty and emotional demonstration. But our very joyousness may at times open the way for unwarranted and even unwholesome demonstration. *Lest we should dissipate a spirit of reverence* and be judged to be *light and frivolous* in our worship, we wish to offer the following: Be it resolved, That the General Assembly expresses itself as looking with disfavor upon certain expressions of approval which have been employed in our services of worship and evangelism, *particularly clapping of hands*, stamping of feet, etc., and hereby request that this action be announced in each service until it becomes practically effective" (*italics mine*).

This resolution was signed by A. K. Bracken, J. Glenn Gould, E. P. Ellyson, J. B. Chapman, Edwin E. Hale, N. B. Herrell, J. G. Morrison, J. Walter Hall, and Charles A. McConnell. In that group there were (or from it there were to come) three general superintendents, four college presidents, two theology professors, several pastors (two of whom pastored college churches), two district superintendents, four editors of church periodicals, and one fairly prolific songwriter. While those statistics do not necessarily prove the wisdom of the resolution, they do show that it was not authored by a negligible bunch of nitpicking nincompoops!

What did that General Assembly mean by "clapping of hands"? The resolution must have referred to either (1) applause, or (2) the clapping of hands in rhythm to the music as songs were sung. The latter was perhaps more prominent in the religious environment of that day, particularly due to the rise of Pentecostal styles of worship. But a survey of articles published in the *Herald of Holiness* in the decade or so preceding 1928 (on themes such as worship, church music, fanaticism, and spirituality), written by some of the men who signed the resolution, showed that both kinds of "hand clapping" would have fallen under the Assembly's official censure.



Rob L. Staples

## Some thoughts on show biz, calf worship, and chicken coop psychology

Now I will not criticize the clapping of hands in rhythm to music, even though I have no taste for it and will usually keep my hands still if I happen to be in a service where others are doing it. But it is probably a more authentic form of praise than is the practice of applauding during a sermon or after a special song or choir number. It is *applause*, then, that I hold to be detrimental to excellence in Christian worship.

But why? What is wrong with it? Why was the church opposed to hand clapping 60 years ago? And even if it was considered bad in 1928, does this mean it is still bad in 1988? Does the Bible give us any guidance? Is there any scriptural precedent for applause as an act of worship?

Since there is no mention of applauding or hand clapping in the New Testament, we may conclude that the practice was unknown in the Early Church. The nine references to hand clapping in the Old Testament give precious little endorsement of its use in worship. In Ezek. 25:6 it is God's enemies who clap their hands. In Lam. 2:15 it is scoffers who do it. Elihu castigates Job for clapping his hands and talking too much (Job 34:37). In a poetic hyperbole in Job 27:23 it is an "east wind" that claps its hands and "hisses" in derision (NIV, RSV). In Nah. 3:19 the people clap their hands at the fall of the cruel king of Assyria, while in 2 Kings 11:12 the people clap their hands and shout, "Long live the king!" (many versions) at the coronation of a monarch who was soft on calf worship!

That leaves only three Old Testament references to hand clapping as an act of praise to God. But in two of those, the writers, again in poetic hyperbole, speak not of *people* but of "rivers" (Ps. 98:8, various) and "trees" (Isa. 55:12) clapping their hands! That leaves only one reference that speaks of people clapping hands in praise, and even there it is not specifically a worshiping congregation but "the nations" (NEB, NIV) that are to do so (Ps. 47:1). Conclusion: "Giving God a handclap," apparently unknown in the New Testament, has ambiguous and extremely scant sanction in the Old Testament.

But does that necessarily make it unacceptable today? Certainly traditions develop over time, and some religious traditions are useful and good even if they do not have biblical precedent. Might that be the case with applause in worship? In quest of an answer, let's examine the meaning of applause.

Applause is a symbolic action, signaling one's approval of what he has seen or heard. It is a ritual. We mortals are ritual creatures; we are always acting out things. Consider *greetings*, for example: Practically all cultures have some customary ritual for greeting people. It may be a handshake, a bow, or a nod of the head.

Whatever the ritual of greeting, it is an acting out of our wish to signal the ideas of friendship, peace, or welcome. Or take *praying*: When we kneel, or bow the head, we signal the ideas of reverence and humility. Such rituals, or symbolic actions, are culturally conditioned. They send specific signals because the culture has invested such rituals with the meanings they have come to have.

But the meanings are not bestowed on the rituals arbitrarily. The human imagination perceives an inherent fitness in the ritual, which makes it appropriate for the message the ritual conveys. For example, a handshake has an innate fitness as a greeting that a punch in the nose does not! People do not shake hands to communicate hostility or hate. Baseball players do not normally signal their jubilation at winning the World Series by kneeling or bowing their heads! The fitness is just not there.

Now what signal are we sending when we engage in the ritual of applause? What message are we communicating? Almost without exception in Western culture (and certainly in American culture) applause is an expression of *praise for the performer, appreciation for the performance, or agreement with what the performer has said or done*. This is true whether the performer be a rock musician, a concert pianist, an opera soloist, a football player making a touchdown, a baseball player hitting a home run, or a basketball player making a slam dunk. Whether for a speaker having delivered a stirring commencement address, or a politician having made a rousing campaign speech, our applause means we are praising the performer for a good performance.

But the worship of God is not a *performance*! We do not enter God's house to be entertained. When in the gathered congregation the Word is read and preached, sacraments administered, hymns sung, prayers made, and offerings given, these actions are not mere performances. They are acts of praise and worship of the holy God. Of course we are deeply appreciative of the human agent who helps us to worship—the one who sings to God's glory, or preaches the Word, or renders a beautiful offertory—and there are many ways for us to express that appreciation. But when such acts are treated as human performances (the signal we send by applause, living in a culture that has so invested the ritual), worship has become "light and frivolous," and we have "dissipated a spirit of reverence," the very thing our 1928 forebears warned us against.

I am not suggesting that applause is *always* improper at church functions. It might be appropriate at many events where performances are given, such as a re-

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# GROWING A CHURCH

by Jim Stocks

*Pastor, Lake Houston Church of the Nazarene  
Houston*

**F**rom 500 to 5 in morning worship! That was the shock we faced in starting a church. In 1986 my wife, Judi, a lay family, and I began the Lake Houston Church of the Nazarene. Gone were the music programs and ministries we were used to. Gone were our friends, the staff, the secretary, and, most of all, the copy machine!

Over 100 people attended our "grand opening." Twenty of those stayed to help us grow a church. One year later, we organized with 58 members, a record charter membership for a church on our district. Six months later, we averaged over 90 in morning worship and Sunday School.

Two hundred miles to the west, in Georgetown, six families joined Rev. and Mrs. Rick Power, launching Georgetown First Church with 48 members, 24 who joined by profession of faith. Two years later, they averaged over 200 in morning worship, and 150 in Sunday School.

Both churches were self-supporting within 18 months of their starts, and both have all debts and budgets paid up-to-date.

Church planting is a unique experience. The pressures are great, but you learn a lot along the way. Here are some "dos" and "don'ts" Rick and I have learned about church planting.

1. **DO accentuate the excitement of church planting.** Discouragement can quickly develop in a new church. The first few weeks are exciting. But some people become disheartened if growth is not evident within a couple of months. Many new starts fail because results are not immediate, and their core people return to the mother church.

There must be a sustained excitement for a new church to succeed. Georgetown First focused on the miracles God was doing, opening doors of opportunity and providing needed space for growth. This excitement produced an atmosphere of sustained motivation. Celebrating each newcomer, each new victory, kept the church from becoming dismayed about its early smallness.

Lake Houston people were constantly reminded that they were the start of something that would last for de-

cadres. They were made aware that they were setting precedents and policies that would become traditions for years to come. Being able to influence the church's future direction motivated them to persevere and build the best church possible for the kingdom of God.

2. **DO set goals and develop plans of action to accomplish them.** Let the congregation decide what they would like to see accomplished. Let them be responsible for developing the plans to fulfill their ambitions. Goals should be easy to remember, measurable, and within reach. Both Lake Houston and Georgetown First set goals that were attainable, yet challenging.

Lake Houston accepted two major goals from its beginning. Within its first 24 months, we wanted (1) to be self-supporting, and (2) to average 75 in morning worship. Within 14 months the first goal was reached, the second within 16 months.

Georgetown First wanted to be self-supporting within two years. They reached their goal after 20 months. Both churches have set equally challenging goals for the next two years.

Goals and plans give the church a sense of direction, a framework in which to function, and a means to evaluate progress. They also help alleviate tension between leaders and those who help carry out the plans. With stated goals and plans for action, everyone knows

Jim Stocks





Rick Power



where they are going, how to get there, and when they should expect to arrive. This creates unity of purpose and singleness of mind.

3. **DO be financially disciplined.** Some feel that a new church is not expected to be financially responsible. While it is difficult for a small group to operate a fully organized program, the new church should accept responsibility for most of its debts. The district and the mother church may help lighten its burden in its deficient areas, but the new church must be financially autonomous as quickly as possible. Otherwise, an unhealthy dependence on outside funds may arise, stifling growth and development. Financial independence was a major goal for both our churches.

4. **DO choose leaders carefully.** Leadership is critical in a new church. Church planters must select leaders cautiously. Dictatorial and possessive church officers cause chaos. They are difficult to dislodge without emotional and spiritual stress, and could doom the church in its infancy.

Before approaching someone about a leadership position, ask, "Is this person teachable?" If one is willing to learn, he has met a major qualification for leadership. The best leaders search for ways to improve and to involve others in their areas of responsibility. They welcome new methods and are willing to delegate tasks to see programs successfully completed. I avoid those who do not exhibit this quality.

5. **DO encourage fellowship.** The fellowship of the church is the key to growth, the catalyst that keeps people excited and makes the new church attractive to newcomers. Georgetown First adopted a policy of high visibility in their rural community. Active in local organizations, they refused to isolate themselves just because they were small. That policy has paid off in rapid growth. Neighborhood ministries have incorporated friends into the life of the church through fellowship and nurture. "This continues to be a major force for us," says Rev. Power.

Lake Houston spreads the gospel through friendliness, remembering names, and follow-up. These things do not come naturally to most people, so we have developed a simple, highly organized system to incorporate these elements into the regular church activities. Before they ever enter the sanctuary, newcomers will have already decided if they will enjoy the church and its people enough to return. Their first 60 seconds inside the church are the most crucial. Therefore, our foyer is a beehive before each service. Within those critical 60 seconds, each person has been welcomed and has shaken hands with several people. Each person is offered coffee, and newcomers are introduced to several other people. Names are easily remembered because we all wear name tags. Each visitor then receives from 8 to 10 contacts from church members during the week following their initial visits. Several families have said they chose to attend our church because of these contacts. They felt wanted and needed at our church—and they are!

Assimilation is another key to our fast growth. There are a lot of lonely people in the world. We needed a simple way to make them feel they belonged with us. So each Sunday evening we have a church potluck. Eating

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## BEST BOOKS

Continued from page 31

leadership." His view of servant leadership gives a much-needed balance to the concept of chauffeuring others around. Marshall Shelley quotes the author in the foreword of the book, "A leader is not a person who can do the work better than his followers; he is a person who can get his followers to do the work better than he can."

This book, the fifth in Word's Leadership Series, should benefit the established minister and the novice.

—Christine Bigley

**DISCIPLESHIP: HELPING OTHER CHRISTIANS GROW**, by Allen Hadidian. Chicago: Moody Press, 1987, 159 pages (PA080-243-3626; \$6.95).

Allen Hadidian is pastor-teacher of Heights Evangelical Free Church in La Habra, Calif. The book is the methodology that he has used successfully in discipleship experiences; scattered throughout the chapters are personal anecdotes illustrating his points, taken mainly from his own efforts to disciple.

The contents are how-to oriented rather than content oriented. Although the author begins by showing the values of discipleship and its importance in Jesus' ministry, the emphasis is on how to choose disciples, the indispensable characteristics of a discipler, and the dos and don'ts for planning sessions that will build up disciples in such a way that they in turn will become disciplers. But if a reader were looking for materials to use in discipling sessions themselves, this would not be the book to buy. However, the chapter on the one-on-one meeting does contain eight goals and 36 objectives for a total discipling program that could serve as idea generators for the discipler.

Hadidian's preference is one-on-one discipling, with a disciple of one's own sex. He sees great value in the disciple's being able to see the discipler in a variety of contexts besides the formal session so that he may see how one's religious experience works in everyday life. In that respect, it is true that Jesus is the Model Discipler, and that may very well be why the disciples were so prepared to carry on His ministry after the Ascension; but the family situation of most disciplers today would make it impractical to follow Jesus' example slavishly. While emphasizing the one-on-one relationship, Hadidian does not ignore small-group discipleship and applies the principles for a one-on-one relationship

to the small-group situation in the last two chapters.

The topics for the chapters derive from a phrase-by-phrase analysis of the author's definition of discipleship, which is: "Discipling others is the process by which a Christian with a life worth emulating commits himself for an extended period of time to a few individuals who have been won to Christ, the purpose being to aid and guide their growth to maturity and equip them to reproduce themselves in a third spiritual generation" (p. 45). The only aspect of the definition whose treatment seemed inadequate was the last phrase on disciples reproducing themselves in a third generation; that was because the author fell into the trap of showing how soon the population of the whole earth could be disciplined if there were exponential as opposed to only linear growth. While such statistics look good on paper, they simply do not square with reality considering the contemporary situation of the world, nor with Jesus' prophecy concerning the last times in Matthew 24.

There is a curious paradox in the book. On the one hand the author emphasizes the importance of the discipler being a godly example to his disciples. On the other hand there are repeated negations that anyone can be perfect in this life, which, along with other incidental statements by the author, betray a Calvinistic bias. Despite that bias, the book has much of value, especially for someone who has not already read much in the abundant literature on the subject.

—Garnett Teakell

**PREACHING ABOUT CONFLICT IN THE LOCAL CHURCH**, by William H. Willimon. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987, 114 pages, paperback (PA066-424-081X; \$8.95).

This is one in a series of five books in a "Preaching About . . ." series designed to aid preachers to relate the gospel to problems of the congregation. William Willimon confronts the dilemma of using the pulpit as a place to address issues of conflict within the congregation. He suggests ways of using the biblical text to explore issues of conflict. For the pastor, Willimon advises that the Monday morning question of "What should I preach?" be refocused to a pastoral question of "How should I preach?"

The author includes sample sermons for certain subjects and even presents two sermon starters with different approaches from the same text. His challenge to the pastor is to listen to his motive, listen to God's people, and to listen to the text. Far too often the pastor may be guilty of using the pulpit to deliver a sermon without considering the impor-

tant reflective questions. Willimon presents an excellent case to support his idea that the most effective approach to ministerial leadership and the resolution of conflict in the local church begins with the pulpit.

The reader will discover the book most helpful as Willimon comments on the three kinds of conflict one may find in a local church and the five styles ministers utilize in dealing with those conflicts. The author identifies four steps for assessing potential conflicts, then discusses some pastoral strategies in dealing with congregational conflict.

One may ask the question, "Should there be conflicts within the church?" Willimon states, "The person who is perplexed that people behave so nicely at his or her book club but seem to fight like cats and dogs at church need not be so baffled." He adds, "The dispute over the placement of furniture in the church parlor is really a dispute over our relationship to God; that may be why this seemingly petty fight becomes so vicious" (p. 92). In the church we do deal with our deepest needs and ultimate questions.

The importance of preaching is never trivialized in this book. Willimon does write that preaching is difficult and that it requires a diverse collection of skills of biblical interpretation, along with communication, organization, delivery, and intellect.

Most pastors will find this book helpful. Because the church is judged by the character of the people who comprise the church, "our response to conflict is part of our witness to the world that Jesus Christ makes possible a people who are able to live with one another in hope and peace" (p. 44). The pastor must lead his congregation into this reality in a generation in which leadership is under suspicion, motives are in question, values are changing, and slick, professional television announcers are becoming the model by which the pastor's public performance is judged. The book is well written, easy to read, informative, and relevant.

—Sherman R. Reed

**SKILLFUL SHEPHERDS: AN INTRODUCTION TO PASTORAL THEOLOGY**, by Derek J. Tidball. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986, 356 pages (PA031-044-6317; \$13.95).

Derek J. Tidball writes from a wealth of pastoral experience and academic background. A former director of studies at London Bible College and presently a pastor in Plymouth, England, Tidball has a wealth of experience that informs his pastoral theology.

Tidball begins with the question, "What is pastoral theology?" Using the

analogy of a deep-sea diver in the grasp of an octopus, he gives six post-World War II factors that have been influential in shaping pastoral ministry.

Tidball builds the foundation for his pastoral theology on the Bible. Building an Old Testament foundation for the ministry of God in leaders, Tidball treats Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and others to exemplify biblical foundations for ministry. The author uses five

chapters unraveling the strands of pastoral theology found in the New Testament writings.

Beginning with the early centuries of Christianity and concluding with 20th-century times, Tidball sketches important leaders. He discusses the leadership of Bishop Ambrose, Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, and others.

Tidball concludes his work with some

basic theological discussion on belief, forgiveness, suffering, unity, and ministry. The meaning of pastor, teacher, prophet, and priest is discussed in what Tidball calls "a functional map."

This book is certainly not light reading, but one that could be recommended for persons seriously interested in the theological and historical foundations of pastoral ministry.

—Montford Lee Neal

# MORE RESOURCES ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

## AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADAMS, Arthur M. *Effective Leadership for Today's Church*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978.

A valuable resource on church polity and policies. Issues are discussed that are essential to good pastoral leadership, such as: involving others in ministry, pastoral authority, and effective functioning in church business meetings. This will be best suited for the beginning pastor. A seasoned pastor will find most of the materials introductory to church leadership and not stimulating for personal growth in leadership style.

ASH, Mary Kay. *On People Management*. New York: Warner Communications Co., 1964, 155-70.

This section reveals how to recognize when a real problem exists and how to take action to solve it. It also deals with creating a stress-free environment for workers.

AUGSBURGER, David. *Caring Enough to Confront*. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1981.

Augsburger has given caring persons a tool to work with. He illustrates his theme on interrelationships of caring and confronting with a diagram and easy-to-understand illustrations. He adequately discusses anger, trust, change, prejudice, blame, guilt, loyalty, and conscience. A must for anyone who cares about developing good relationships.

AUGSBURGER, David W. *The Love Fight: Caring Enough to Confront*. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1973.

The author says there are five options in conflict situations: (1) I win, you lose; (2) I want out, I'll withdraw; (3) I'll give in for good relations; (4) I'll meet you halfway, or (5) I can care and confront. All five have their rightful places, but moving on to care-confront openness as soon as possible is important. There are two aims of genuine relationship: confrontation with truth, and affirmation with love. Every chapter is an exercise in learning to understand your own feelings toward others in times of conflict, and to express those feelings in constructive ways.

BELL, A. Donald. *How to Get Along with People in the Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.

The author sees the pastor as an active arbitrator. He believes a pastor can lead his people out of conflicts and disagreements "if leaders and followers will talk about them [conflicts], seek outside help, look for divine guidance, and keep a loving spirit." Bell's Rog-erian bent is evident in his material.

BERGERON, Jean-Louis, et al. *Los Aspectos Humanos de la Organización*. Translated by Gaëtan Morin. San Jose, Costa Rica: ICAP, 1983.

Chapter 9 deals with intergroup conflict. According to the authors, the main sources of intergroup conflict in organizations are scarcity of resources, tendencies toward autonomy, and identification with subobjectives. Emphasis is upon preventing conflict rather than utilizing it.

BRAMSON, Robert M. *Coping with Difficult People*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1981.

Bramson identifies seven characteristics that people possess that make them difficult to cope with, and he gives helpful suggestions on how to cope with them. One important aspect of the book is the section that identifies thinking styles. The reader is invited to find his strengths and weaknesses in coping. Adequate case studies and real situations are used to clarify the process of developing a good coping style. The illustrations are taken from a work environment and in a Christian context. The reader should avoid oversimplifications of the problem(s) as is often generalized by some writers dealing with conflict management.

BYRUM, Russell R. *Problems of the Local Church*. Anderson, Ind.: Gospel Trumpet Co., 1927.

Byrum's book was at one time a highly regarded manual for church polity, organizational functions, and guidance within the Church of God. His suggestions for church organization and conflict management are underscored with biblical references.

A weakness of this book is that the charts for outlining organizational structure, terminology, legal information, and church polity are not updated for today's church.

Ironically, the author, over 60 years ago, designed some sophisticated ideas of polity and church organization for a reformatio- n- al movement that claims to be simply organized.

CHALVIN, Dominique, and François EYSSETTE. *Cómo Resolver los Pequeños Conflictos en el Trabajo*. Translated by Luis Corrons. Bilbao, Spain: Ediciones Deusto, S.A., 1985.

The authors give a helpful list of 30 types of conflict in the work context (pp. 18-20). Their formula for resolving conflicts is: (1) Clarify the objectives of the organization and detail the manner in which each individual will be evaluated; (2) cause each individual to participate in the formation of new objectives; (3) form new policies in the light of that participation.

CLARK, Mary Franzen. *Hiding, Hurting, Healing, Restoration for Today's Woman*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1985.

The author, a psychotherapist, deals with women's damaging reactions to conflict in the church, the home, and on the job. She believes that if women can name the hurts, recognize them for what they are, and not be ashamed of what is happening to them, they can begin to move toward healing—mental, physical, and spiritual.

de REUCK, Anthony, and Julie KNIGHT, eds. *Conflict in Society*. A Ciba Foundation Volume. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1966.

This volume goes into a history of conflict and resolution styles, role of conflict, internal conflict and overt aggression, conflict in formal organizations, conflict in cities, objective appraisal of conflict, conflict management as a learning process, regulation of conflict, the role of law in conflict resolution, conflict as a function of change, and other subheadings. It appears to be a good resource.

DITTES, James. *The Church in the Way*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.

A good source for beginning pastors. It has helpful suggestions for pastors who meet the stubborn resistance of the faithful. The author's motif that the apparently steadfast obstructions of the church in the way can, when viewed rightly through the disciplines of psychotherapy, be the church on the way, is a great insight to pastors. However, all human skills must be subject to earnest biblical insight and meaningful prayer.

FRYDINGER, Tom and Adrienne. *The Blended Family*. Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, a division of Zondervan, 1984.

According to experts, most second and third marriages dissolve because of disagreements about the children. The Frydingers write from personal experience, as well as from the experiences of his counseling clients. They discuss specific conflicts in a family with stepparents and stepchildren and offer many workable suggestions.

GETZ, Gene A. *Building Up One Another*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1973.

This practical book helps Christians develop good interpersonal relationships and, therefore, deals with management of conflict by positive action and Christian growth. Specific chapters related to disunity are 4, 9, and 10, where Getz discusses four practical steps for developing unity in the church, restoration from sin, and steps for bearing with one another in love.

HAMPTON, David R., Charles E. SUMMER, and Ross A. WEBBER. *Manual de Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos*. Translated by Susana Esqueda de Cruz. Mexico City: Editorial Trillas, 1982.

Chapters 10 and 11 deal with the causes and administration of conflict primarily in the work context. The primary contribution of the book for Spanish readers is that it contains the translations of several relevant articles on the subject from other periodicals.

KOLB, David A., et al. *Organizational Psychology: An Experimental Approach to Organizational Behavior*. 4th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1984.

Chapter 8 deals with managing conflict among groups and lays stress on the importance of avoiding intergroup conflict by emphasizing total organizational effectiveness, giving awards on the basis of help that groups give each other, frequently rotating members among groups, and avoiding win/lose situations.

LEAS, Speed B. *Leadership and Conflict*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1982.

This book was written to assist persons who consider themselves to have leadership skills and responsibilities in organized community, business, or religious settings.

It delineates a systematic approach to handling the policies and conflicts of leadership in voluntary organizations. It provides a defensive management strategy that invites the attacker to join in a common search to identify possible solutions to the problem(s). A practical guide for the experienced conflict manager.

LEAS, Speed, and Paul KETTLAUS. *Church Fights*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1937.

The authors have written for the functionally heterogeneous membership and programmatically pluralistic congregation. This book will be the least helpful for those congregations that seek to provide personal salvation in the form of decisions and a strong charismatic leadership.

Leaders are provided concepts, experiences, processes, and tools for inventiveness and creativity as possible results from conflicts.

Included in the appendixes are resourceful materials on where and how professional consultants may be found.

LEWIS, G. Douglass. *Resolving Church Conflicts: A Case Approach for Local Congregations*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981.

A case study approach to help the reader understand how conflicts emerge and how to successfully resolve them without a win/lose situation. It addresses the conflicts caused in the church from reversal of its key assumption about the nature of love, self-giving, and prohibition against anger, hate, and hostility. There are issues addressed directly and creatively that challenge the church to deal with conflict differently. An excellent resource for pastors looking for information on how to deal effectively with churches having unresolved conflicts.

LIKERT, R., and J. LIKERT. *New Ways of Managing Conflict*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1976.

This book goes into a new resource for conflict management, relation of conflict strategies to society's values and organizational theories, readiness for improving conflict management, inadequacies in prevailing methods for coping with conflict, applications of the new system, and power, influence, and motivation in conflict management.

LINDGREN, Alvin J., and Norman SHAWCHUCK. *Management for Your Church*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1977.

The authors discuss a practical theology in which a church can work effectively in evangelism and missions. Chapters 7—9 are especially helpful in dealing with problem analysis, decision making, and the role of pastor/manager. The components of the system's problem-solving approaches are clearly shown. Also, definitions, concepts, case studies, and helpful charts are included in the section on problem analysis.

LUFT, Joseph. *Group Processes: An Introduction to Group Dynamics*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1970, 31-33.

Very briefly, the author deals with conflict. He lists five levels of dealing with it: (1) eliminating the opposition, (2) subjugating the opposition, (3) forming an alliance to overpower the opposition, (4) reaching a compromise with the other side, and (5) integrating opposing ideas toward new solutions. This book is a secular treatment of human interaction, with only a brief mention of conflict.

LUTZER, Erwin. *Managing Your Emotions*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1983.

This book deals with feelings of anger, fear, rejection, and bitterness. Lutzer also relates how God heals emotional wounds.

MCDONOUGH, Reginald M. *Working with Volunteer Leaders in the Church*. Nashville: Broadman, 1976.

The author focuses on how to improve the quantity and quality of output by the church's volunteer leaders. He operates from a basic assumption that every Christian has a latent desire to use his talents in Christian service. He emphasizes that the pastor, staff, and congregation should work as a team in developing important participation in the ministry of the local congregation.

McSWAIN, Larry, and William TREADWELL. *Conflict Ministry in the Church*. Nashville: Broadman, 1980.

The authors provide a practical guide for dealing with conflict in the church. They have drawn examples and information from human relations sources and combined them with biblical insights and the experience of other Christian leaders to offer an exceptional text on strategies for churches in resolving conflicts. This book is helpful to those persons having some experience in conflict management.

MAXWELL, John C. *Be All You Can Be*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1987, 97-168.

This is a very practical and positive approach in dealing with conflict and with difficult people. His positive statements and personal illustrations make the book easy to read.

MILLER, Sherod, et al. *Couple Communications—Talking Together and Working Together—A Workbook*. Minneapolis: International Communications Program, 1979.

These two works are text and workbook to enhance communication and expression between people and conflicting situations.

MYERS, Michele Toleda, and Gail E. MYERS. *Administración Mediante de la Comunicación*. Translated by Elsa María Acuña. Mexico City: Libros McGraw-Hill de Mexico, S.A. de C.V., 1983.

The emphasis is upon the positive results of conflict and is broad in its scope from intrapersonal to organizational conflict. The best strategy for managing conflict is win/win or an integrative approach rather than compromise or the imposition of force from above. The laboratory manual contains case studies.

NOUWEN, Henri J. M. *The Wounded Healer*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1972.

Nouwen assures the reader that even though he is often wounded by loneliness, isolation, and pain that affect mankind, he can help others anyway. He challenges the reader to question his relevance and effectiveness and to become in every circumstance of life a "wounded healer."

While this book does not deal directly with conflict management in a church setting, it is an invaluable source of strength for the clergyman needing encouragement to serve mankind with a renewed spirit.

PECK, M. Scott. *A Different Drum*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987, 86-135.

These pages yield a most interesting model for developing genuine community with a group and the stages of conflict and resolutions a group encounters in achieving real community.

PERRY, Lloyd M., and Gilbert A. PETERSON *Churches in Crisis*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1981.

The authors discuss questions and answers for churches in crisis. It addresses church members, pastors, and lay leaders and their roles in creating calm during crises. The book provides helpful hints on how to handle various disputes, such as doctrinal or financial, by using case studies from three congregations as a teaching/learning tool. One weakness is that the methodology of problem solving is highly sophisticated, since it is designed to use a third party. Some congregations will not allow an expert consultant or third party to function in the problem solving.

PRINZING, Fred W. *Handling Church Tensions Creatively*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987.

Prinzing advises that diversity is the spice of life in many institutional settings, but it creates chaos and tension in the church. Using tension creatively is the key to successful conflict management. Through the ministries of conflict managers, the church can begin to listen better to one another and deepen its life together.

Prinzing explores the friction common in churches, tensions between power and authority, structure and spontaneity, uniformity and diversity, home and world mission. Prinzing's method will help a church turn conflict into renewal for the congregation.

RICKARDS, Tudor. *Problem Solving Through Creative Analysis*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Halsted Press, 1974.

This book goes into techniques and restructuring of techniques,

decision aids, redefinitional procedures, group techniques, brainstorming, group synectics-type subroutines, and case studies. Should be helpful in looking at prevention of major conflicts.

RUSH, Myron D. *Richer Relationships*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1983.

This is a "how to" book on being a conflict solver and a friend winner. Rush traces the deterioration characteristic of all types of relationships.

SCHALLER, Lyle E. *Getting Things Done*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986, 116-30.

This chapter on Allies, Coalitions, and Meetings presents valuable information from one of Schaller's case studies dealing with conflict.

SCHEIN, Edgar H. *Process Consultation: Its Role in Organization Development*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1969.

Schein highlights some day-to-day activities of the consultant as he works with a client system in the context of an organization development program. The concept of "process consultation" is introduced and explained in detail. One weakness is its limitations for use by many small congregations.

SHAWCHUCK, Norman. *How to Manage Conflict in the Church: Understanding and Managing Conflict*. 2 vols. Irvine, Calif.: Spiritual Growth Resources, 1986.

These are excellent volumes on understanding, managing, and intervention of conflict in the church. When the reader is finished with these volumes, he will also gain an awareness of his own conflict management style.

SHELLEY, Marshall. *Well-Intentioned Dragons: Ministering to Problem People in the Church*. Carol Stream, Ill.: Christianity Today.

Only the names and places have been changed in this account of the struggle for control over a congregation. Several aspects of power struggles are delineated. The personal tension of the pastor and his errors in judgment are clearly stated. Also, Shelley shows what can be learned from a church fight.

SUGDEN, Howard F., and Warren W. WIERSBE. *Confident Pastoral Leadership*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1973.

The authors provide biblical answers to some difficult pastoral questions in chapter 13. They urge the reader to use common sense and biblical principles. Practical solutions to perplexing problems.

ULSCHAK, Francis L., Leslie NATHANSON, and Peter G. GILLAM. *Small Group Problem Solving: An Aid to Organizational Effectiveness*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1981.

Chapter 4 deals with the group session and discusses the positive aspects of conflict in a group. Among their suggestions for handling conflict constructively are (1) point out similarities in different opinions; (2) point out advantages of different opinions; (3) have people role-play opposing opinions in order to understand what is being said; (4) promote discussion of conflict among participants in order to resolve conflict; and (5) use the spectrum policy when looking at ideas.

## Pontius' Puddle



WALLACE, John. *Control in Conflict*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982.

A simple introduction to conflict management in the local church. Written with the small-to-moderate-size church in mind. Illustrations are given on how the author solved conflict during 35 years of pastoring. An inherent weakness is its lack of a methodology that could serve the reader in dealing with church conflicts.

WALTON, Richard E. *Conciliación de Conflictos Interpersonales: Confrontaciones y Consultoría de Mediadores*. Translated by Angel Gaos. Bogotá: Fondo Educativo Interamericano, S.A., 1973.

The theme of this book is mediation of labor conflicts, but some of the principles, which are quite general, are applicable to other conflict situations.

———. *Interpersonal Peacemaking: Confrontation and Third-Party Consultation*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1969.

Walton focuses on the process by which the consultant uses himself to aid in the resolution of conflict. He notes that "a third-party consultation can, in many ways, help increase the likelihood of constructive outcomes from conflict." Church polity would have much to do with the acceptance of this approach.

WILLIAMS, J. Clifton, and Marta Calás de BIRRIEL. *Conducta Organizacional*. Cincinnati: South-Western Publishing Co., 1984.

Chapter 11 sees a positive value from conflict, demonstrating that an excess of harmony, peace, and tranquility may result in a reduction of productivity. They quote a study that reports that groups with high levels of conflict were able to improve decision-making abilities 73 percent more than groups characterized by low levels of conflicts.

## ARTICLES/MAGAZINES/PERIODICALS

BENWARE, Paul. "Mind Your Own Business." *Moody Monthly*, September 1984, 24-27.

Based on the teachings of Christ and His apostles, this article deals with church discipline. Benware carefully outlines actions requiring discipline as well as the process of rendering discipline, according to Scripture. He stresses proper attitudes, which are only produced through prayer and study of God's Word.

BOLLINGER, Richard A. "Hostility in Church: Phenomenon and Response." *Pastoral Psychology*, March 1967.

Makes use of observations in psychotherapy groups to suggest some ways of detecting possible anger and hostility in various church groups. Gives case illustrations and helpful hints on diffusing potential conflict situations.

BUNHAM, Mary, Westy EGMONT, Richard HOGSTROM, Gordon MacDONALD, and Paul TOMS. "Leadership Forum: Conflict: Facing It in Yourself and in Your Church." *Leadership Magazine* 1, no. 2: 23-36.

This forum discussed that the corporate church often does not see its own power to make and destroy its servants. According to the discussion in this forum, it is clear that conflict in the church is not a win/lose situation. Sources of conflict should be understood head-on. Also, through prayer and love, sinfulness can be confronted and dealt with redemptively. An excellent article for group discussion and critique.

CHAMBLISS, Hugh O. "Ten Commandments for Good Human Relations." *Church Administration* 29 (April 1987): 35-37.

Basing his commandments on his own 45 years of experience in ministry, the writer centers them around 10 key words: appreciation, respect, integrity, information, presence, timing, consistency, emotion, compromise, and care.

HALL, Robert K. "A Strategy for Facing Difficult People." *Leadership* 6, no. 1 (Winter 1985): 5-8.

Hall gives a detailed account of how he managed conflict in one of his mission congregations. A problem with one layman caused considerable conflict. Hall developed a seven-point strategy to cope with the situation. A good article that clearly shows how a pastor can redeem a discouraging situation.

LEADERSHIP MAGAZINE 1, no. 2, Spring 1980.

This entire volume deals with conflict and crises in the church. An excellent resource.

LEE, George F. "Why Conflict Arises in a Church." *Church Administration* 29 (February 1987): 35-36.

Stating that conflict within a church is inevitable, the writer lists several sources for it and suggests that all conflict is potentially dangerous, while at the same time it offers potential growth and correction.

NAME WITHHELD. "Pastoring a Wounded Church." *The Preacher's Magazine*, DJF 1983-84, 37-38.

A new pastor attempts to move into a congregation that has lost half of its members to a new independent church only four miles away. He discusses the church's hurts and the remedies they found for healing.

NEWBOLD, Robert T. "Conflict in the Black Church." *Christianity Today*, Spring 1980.

This article addresses the basic elements of conflict, disregarding polity, denomination, size, and color. The Black church often considers conflict an agent of the devil. This concept has hindered the Black church from dealing meaningfully with conflict. The author relates that the Black church has failed to manage conflict because its leadership and followers have not always had the courage to deal with it. Four steps to a better system are listed and described.

REDIGER, Lloyd R. "Conflict Resolution—Part I." *The Clergy Journal* 63, no. 9 (August 1987): 35-36, 38.

Rediger relates that "the conflicts in which the pastor is expected to help have a wide range—so wide that these would strain the capabilities of experienced conflict managers," thus proving that no pastor can expect to solve all areas of conflict. Therefore, it is vital that he learn how to work with problems that are usually understood in pastoral care, such as marital, church struggles, and so on. He earmarks three sources of conflict: animal, civilized, and esoteric.

He suggests seven helpful steps to successful conflict management in the church. The steps are expressed clearly, and caution is given to some of the weaknesses of each technique.

ROBERTSON, John. "Six Principles of People-Helpers." *Discipleship Journal*, May 1, 1987.

Robertson writes from his experience as a missionary to France. He gives six things that help a person in any culture get along with his coworkers. Suggestions include: character is more important than gifts; godliness is better than being right; give others the benefit of the doubt; love is more important than communication skills.

SCHALLER, Lyle E. "How to Undermine a Church." *The Parish Prayer*, April 1984.

———. "Where Have All the Volunteers Gone?" *The Parish Prayer*, November 1982.

———. "Workers and Leaders." *The Parish Prayer*, April 1982.

VICKERS, CH (MAJ) Robert. "The Military Chaplaincy: A Study in Role Conflict." *Military Chaplain's Review*, Spring 1986.

An excellent presentation on several conflicts the military chaplain faces in his role as a clergyman and a chaplain.

## TAPES

SHAWCHUCK, Norman. "How to Manage Conflict in the Church." Spiritual Growth Resource, Irvine, Calif., 1986.

SWINDOLL, Charles. "Opposition—The Challenge to Leadership." *Focus*, vol. 1, no. 12.



## Growing a Church

*Continued from page 51*

together has a way of melting away the barriers between church members and newcomers. When newcomers come to our "Chowdown," they usually stay with our church. It's amazing what sharing a meal will do for assimilation.

6. **DO be prayerful, patient, and persistent.** A concerned mother in a distant town asked Rick to call on her son. Visiting the man, Rick found him hostile. Rather than moving on to more fertile ground, Rev. Power visited him regularly. He was patient in the face of unkindness. And he prayed.

One day, crisis came into the man's life. Rick visited him and presented the gospel, as he had for the past four months. This time the man accepted Christ. Before long, he was bringing his friends and neighbors to church. "That turned our church around," Rick says. "Prayer, patience, and persistence will be honored by God for the building of His Church. He must be given time to work."

7. **DON'T organize too early.** Well-meaning district leaders often pressure church planters to "organize as quickly as possible." The assumption is, the sooner a church is organized, the sooner it will "feel" like a church.

Organization is important, but not until the church has exceeded a "critical mass." There should be enough people and ministries to give the group a degree of competence and credibility. A minimum regular attendance of 50 gets the group past being a large Sunday School to making a viable church.

Our churches' attendance and enthusiasm jumped because we waited to organize until we had sufficient memberships to organize credible churches. The extra time we took had given them opportunity to know each other and to develop a sense of belonging and ownership.

8. **DON'T buy if you can rent.** There is a common overeagerness to own land and build as soon as possible. There are definite advantages to owning property, but the disadvantages are greater.

Rick's church may have bought land too early. "At the time," he says, "the size and location of our lot fit our needs. And we could afford it. Now, with our church beyond the 200 mark, the site may not be best for us after all. But the Texas land market is poor, and we may have problems selling what we have to purchase a larger tract. This could affect our momentum and our growth."

In Houston, the current market is favorable for leases. Renting made business sense. We are presently in an office building where we have options for more space as we need it. Because we rent, our church is not under the financial strain that many endure because of capital investments. This has allowed for expansion of our ministries and programs, the things that attract people.

While property ownership is a congregation's ultimate goal, newly planted churches need to establish themselves before assuming heavy debts that hamper their ministry ability.

9. **DON'T forget Uncle Sam.** I never realized how much red tape was involved in incorporating a church! I hadn't thought much about registering it as a nonprofit organization with the IRS and various state agencies. It is important to do this as quickly as possible, however. With the government's increasing scrutiny of churches,

it is imperative to plant them correctly. Failure to do so could bring fines, loss of nonprofit status, and taxation. Once operational, these are difficult to reverse. Thoroughly investigate these procedures from state to state.

10. **DON'T ignore your family.** This is probably both Rick's and my biggest battle. Church planters feel a great responsibility to make their new churches succeed. In the beginning, most jobs—from janitor to preacher—are the pastor's. It's easy to get caught up in the tasks of the church, placing family on the back burner. My wife once said she wished she was a newcomer to our church. Then I would realize that she existed. She was right. The difficult thing has been trying to correct the situation. It's not easy.

Paying attention to yourself is just as important, though sometimes a day off hardly seems worth it. It requires willpower, but put duties aside for a while. They'll wait until later. An emotionally and physically drained church planter will become spiritually weak, discouraged, disillusioned, and burned out. Nothing will destroy momentum and motivation like a pastor who can no longer cope with stress. Resolve to give yourself time away from the work.

Rick and I both left large, strong congregations to plant churches. And we each felt a sense of loss. Many times I would have traded my wife for a good Xerox copier! But it is much easier to go from 500 to 5 when God, the 5, and you are growing a church. In fact, it can be fun!

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## APPLAUSE IN WORSHIP

*Continued from page 49*

ligious drama, or an after-dinner speech in the fellowship hall, or maybe even at the children's Christmas program. In the latter instance, however, I wonder if we are blurring in the children's minds the distinction between human performance and divine worship. But here I am only arguing that in most Western cultures applause is, *by its very nature as a ritual*, more of a hindrance than a help to the true worship of God.

Some will object, saying, "If we can get so excited at a sports event, and clap our hands until they are raw, why shouldn't we honor God with the same fervency?" My answer is that I most certainly *do not* wish to praise God in the self-same manner that I praise an athlete. God is holy. That means He is different, different from all things earthly and secular. My praise to Him should be different, reserved for Him alone.

I do not sing the Doxology or the Gloria Patri when I am watching a hockey game or observing the antics of a circus clown. Granted, there are some who might feel that those songs of praise aren't even appropriate *in church*, because they are too "formal" or "liturgical" for true spiritual worship. Such persons might look favorably upon applause as a means of worship because it is spontaneous and freely given. But just how "free" is it when everybody is doing it and one risks appearing ungrateful by sitting on his hands? Most of us have been in situations where just one or two persons began to applaud, and as a reflex action everybody joined in whether they had enjoyed the performance or not. The same psychology works in chicken coops! But if it is freedom and spontaneity that is desired, what's wrong with old-fashioned expressions like "Amen" or "Praise the Lord"? Come to think of it, I never hear *those* words at a ball game!

## THE CHALLENGE

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(15:13), "Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too" (NIV).

Simon's other son, who bore a Latin name, was identified as a Jew in Acts 19:33-34. He was delegated to present the defense before the rioting Ephesians.

And so it has been across the centuries. History, with rare exceptions, supports the premise that sincere crossbearers leave their children a heritage of faith that has greater value than worldly wealth. Many ministers, missionaries, and devoted laymen will witness to the fact that it was while passing through their severest trials and carrying heavy burdens for the cause of Christ that the faith of their children found its firmest footing. Witnessing their parents' solid faith when they were passing through severe trials has strengthened their own. And could it be that our Heavenly Father bestows His special favor on the families of those who sacrifice in order to bring honor to His Son? Or is it possible that the crossbearer's children—and their children's children—have a little extra claim on the watchful care of God's angels? I believe they do. Simon's children were used of the Lord. What more could a Christian father ask?

Simon's was an unpleasant, disagreeable task. But in doing it, he won an earthly immortality he would never otherwise have had. His name and what he did that fateful day are recorded in three out of the four Gospels.

Even though not every crossbearer's name is listed among earth's immortals, every one who truly accepts the responsibility of representing Jesus Christ through life has, in fact, already received heaven's immortality, the life that is forever.

While it is a priceless privilege to bear a cross for Christ, for the Christian it is *not* entirely optional. It is part and parcel of the life we have in Him, an evidence of the depth of commitment. To develop within oneself the true spirit of the Savior is the greatest challenge a believer can know and, incidentally, offers the highest award. However, this is an

## SEVEN WORDS TO THE CROSS

### A Good Friday Observance

by John A. Payton

Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, San Luis Obispo, Calif.

In looking for a different approach to our church's annual Good Friday service, I overheard a comment about the seven words to the Cross. I researched Robertson's *Harmony of the Gospels* and identified eight words. I combined the words of the people and the priests recorded in Mark 15:29-32. Later I learned from a local priest that sometimes Bishop Sheen had separated the words of the bystanders regarding Christ's cry of "Eloi," and either the soldier's or bystander's comment when offering wine to Christ.

In an attempt to identify these words (as the words *from* the Cross are identified as the word "forgiveness," "hope," etc.), *blasphemeō*, the Greek for the KJV word "railed," or the NIV "hurled insults," started a chain of words beginning with the letter *B*. Finally, the "seven words" developed into an interesting and profitable pattern of thought for the skeleton of the service.

In brief, the words are as follows:

1. The words of **blasphemy** (Mark 15:29-32) by the people and the priests, though spoken viciously in denial of Deity (especially by the priests), spoke the truth: Saviors do not save themselves, they *spend* themselves.

2. The words of **blindness** (Luke 23:36-37) were spoken by soldiers ignorant of God's promises and plan

of salvation, who simply saw Jesus as another troublemaker or nuisance.

3. The words of **bitterness** (Mark 27:44) were spoken by either one of both of the terrorists crucified with Christ.

4. The words of **brokenness** (Luke 23:39-43) revealed either a difference in the terrorists or, more likely, a change in one, reminding us that God will not refuse "a broken and a contrite heart" (Ps. 51:17).

5. Words of **bewilderment**, spoken by the bystanders who were mistaken and bewildered by the Lord's cry of "Eloi" (Mark 15:33-35), while the "wait and see" attitude (Mark 15:36) spoken either by a soldier or a bystander after offering Christ fluids to delay dehydration were

6. Words of **biding time**. (How many times do we try to delay faith to see which way the wind is blowing?)

7. A fitting **benediction** was spoken by the centurion: "Truly this man was [and is] the Son of God" (Mark 15:37-39)!

These words were read and briefly explained, interspersed with congregational singing or related songs. Communion was served and finally an opportunity was given for worshipers to speak what they would want to say to the Cross, ending with a song of praise by all.

achievement that cannot be obtained without becoming a sincere crossbearer for our Lord—witnessing for His honor, following His example in seeking the lost, sympathizing with those who suffer, comforting the sorrowing, carrying the burdens of His *cause*. The spirit of Jesus is for all who honestly share His interests.

Although I have often followed the Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrows) to the place where He was crucified and the tomb from which He arose, each time sensing the Savior's presence, it has been when the cares and burdens of His cause have

pressed heaviest, and my shoulders sagged a bit beneath the weight of my own cross, that I have had the most precious realization of the comforting touch of His hand.

While there is a price crossbearers are often called upon to pay—embarrassment or loss of employment, friends, or family—a reward, eternal and forever, is assured. This is promised in God's Word, and it cannot fail. We can rest in this certainty: All who have sincerely borne the cross for Him here will share Christ's crown as His heirs for ever and ever, and ever and ever.

# WHO'S STAYING INFORMED ABOUT MISSIONS IN YOUR CHURCH?

by Nina Gunter

*General Director, Nazarene World Mission Society*

One of the greatest factors in the development of missionary interest is the systematic study of missions," states Andrew Murray in his book *Key to the Missionary Problem*.

The study of missions helps to create missions awareness in the local church. Dr. Mary Scott, former missionary to China, has said, "We can only care about what we know." It is logical that the most informed church will be the most responsive church in praying, giving, answering God's call to missions, and transmitting the mission message and vision to the next generation.

A survey was conducted by Herbert Jackson of the Missionary Research Library of New York. It included responses from large and small churches of several denominations and was an effort to indicate the relationship of exposure to their missionary call. The statistics ranged as follows:

Other Fellowships	.9%
Sunday School Curriculum	1.1%
Sunday School Teacher	1.1%
Student Fellowships	1.7%
Youth	3.7%
Seminary/College	
Professors	5.7%
Pastor	7.0%
Reading About Missions	10.5%
Family Talking About	
Missions	18.5%
Missionary Speaker	20.0%
Missionary Study Lessons	21.7%

Failure to be informed about world missions through systematic

study often invokes such questions as: "Why world missions?" "Why send missionaries?" "Why give to missions?"


Since the knowledge of world missions for most of us does not come through actual observation and experience, it is important that there be a system for receiving world mission information. The person responsible for presenting that information is challenged to exercise wisdom and creativity when giving lessons or holding missions rallies. He must teach as if everything is at stake. Because it is. Being alive to varied communication and presentation methods is a necessity, as well as saturating one's efforts and concerns with prayer.

An effective presenter will involve the congregation. It has been said that for every 1 person participating in the leadership of a service, there will be 10 in the audience. Billy Graham Crusade evaluations reveal that for every 1 person in the choir, there are 4 in the audience. The goal of a person in charge of mission education should not be to have people sit quietly while he talks, but to have their minds actively engaged by the subject. Participation invites interest, attendance, and the opportunity of internalizing, and it effects change. Encourage participation, not observation. Think about this adaptation of Bruce W. Theilemann's famous statement, "Surely the mission education presenter's greatest sin is to put people to sleep with the greatest story ever told."

Sometimes intentions can and will go awry, and mission education suffers. However, can we discount the value of the study of missions because mistakes have been made in presentation methods or because the church is large and we have not developed an appropriate mission study design?

The study of missions is a difficult assignment today. More emphasis and attention has been placed on entertainment and less on the disciplines of the church and the individual Christian's responsibility to his world. The purpose of missions study is communication, not performance. We must remember that the church is not an entertainment center, but that God has called His Church to "Go and make disciples" (Matt. 28:19, NIV). The church that best does this is the church that knows who they are, where they are, and what their needs and biblical responsibilities are.

What is the purpose of missions study? It is to present information consistent with the biblical basis of the Great Commission and to interface that truth with the needs and victories of missions. We study that which develops us in the faith, that which effects change in our thinking and behavior, that which eternally effects change in the lives of those who have not yet really heard the gospel.

Who's staying informed about missions in your church? 

# SERMON OUTLINES



## REPENT AND BELIEVE

Sermon outline by H. F. Reynolds, taken from handwritten notes from the Nazarene archives.

**Scripture:** Mark 1:15—Jesus' words  
Gal. 4:4—The time is fulfilled!  
Matt. 6:6—The kingdom of God is at hand!

### I. Repent Ye

#### A. What is repentance?

1. To feel such sorrow for sin as leads one to turn from it and seek forgiveness (Paul—2 Cor. 7:10)
2. Repentance is always accompanied by forsaking of sins (Isa. 55:8).
3. Confessing of sins (prodigal son)
4. Making restitution (Zacchaeus)

#### B. "Ye"—a personal matter

"Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23).

1. I don't know that I need to repent—nothing to repent of.
  - a. For your wickedness—Acts 8:22
  - b. For the forgiveness of sin—Acts 2:38
  - c. That your sins may be blotted out—Acts 3:19
  - d. What sins? Against God—Acts 20:21

2. Don't know I have any sins. I am trying to be *about* right! Let's see if we have any real need of repentance/any sin.

a. Sin is transgression of the law. Violation of a known rule or duty, or disobedience to a divine command. The act of a moral agent in violation . . .

b. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

c. All unrighteousness is sin.

d. The Ten Commandments—Exod. 20:1-17

#### e. The Two Commandments—Matt. 22:36-40

(1) "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

#### f. NOW the end of the commandment is LOVE out of a PURE HEART (see 1 Tim. 1:5).

(1) If there be any other commandment . . . Rom. 13:8-9

(2) All the law—Gal. 5:14; 2:10

#### C. What is sin?

1. Transgression; unbelief; to know and not do; all unrighteousness

2. Disobedience to the divine command

#### D. Oh, my hearers, who of you can stand up NOW and tell God you haven't broken one of His commandments?

1. You have broken one. Yes!
  - a. Sins of omission and commission
  - b. Guilty, condemned, lost—NOW

2. How many have you broken? How much guilt, condemnation, lost?

#### E. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4, 20)

1. Death of soul—Rom. 6:23; 5:12

2. A second death—Rev. 20:12, 15, 10

3. May be a professor of religion, but if you have broken any of these commandments, or one of them, and haven't repented, you are dead spiritually; and if you die, you will have the second death of the soul! (Ezek. 18:24).

#### F. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified . . . for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20).

1. The law kills or brings to light that violators are condemned, guilty, lost (Rom. 7:9-10, 14).

a. "Who shall deliver me?" "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:24, 25).

## II. And Believe the Gospel

### A. Gospel—"glad tidings"

Especially concerning Christ and His salvation

### B. Jesus—Because He shall save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21)

1. How many sins? Luke 1:67-75; 4:16-19; 1 John 1:9; Isa. 55:7, "abundantly"; 44:22, "as a thick cloud"; 45:22, "look"

2. God so loved that whosoever believeth on him should not perish—John 3:16; has everlasting life—John 3:36.

3. He that believeth NOT; the wrath of God abideth on him.

### C. What is to believe?

1. More than assent of mind

2. Heart faith—Rom. 10:10

3. Believing what God says

a. He says He gave His Son.

b. He says if I believe on Him I should not perish.

c. He says if I believe on Him I have everlasting life

d. He says if I confess my sins He is faithful and just to forgive . . . 1 John 1:9.

### D. When? Now! Now! (2 Cor. 6:2)

1. "I do not feel . . .

a. Look at your facts:

—You have sinned.

—Look at commandments

—How many have you broken? One?

—The soul that sins shall die.

—The wrath of God abideth.

—You are dead spiritually.

ILLUSTRATION: Suspended sword: NOW

b. Repent

—Forsake

—Confess

—Restore

c. Believe God *now*. Trust Him NOW. To pardon! To cleanse!

### E. Who? A command to all—"Ye"

1. No evading—Acts 17:30 (Now—all men everywhere)

2. Shall all likewise perish—Luke 13:1-5



## Pontius' Puddle

IT'S A RARE PRIVILEGE TO STAND BEFORE A CONGREGATION WAITING EAGERLY TO HEAR GOD'S WORD PREACHED!

SIGH, AT LEAST IT'S RARE IN MY CHURCH.

FIDGET  
ZZZ  
SIGH  
YAW-WN

© Joel Kauffman

### III. And NOW What Will We Do with Our Text—

- A. A command to REPENT
- B. A command to BELIEVE
- C. A command to OBEY now
  - 1. The kingdom of God is at hand —NOW.

**Conclusion:** *O unsaved one*, come to God tonight. Repent and believe! He says, "Turn." *O believer*—will you return to God? Repent and believe for restoration!

### CALLED TO BE SAINTS

Rom. 1:8-16

**Introduction:** Rom. 1:7—Beloved of God, called to be saints.

**Saint:** A holy or godly person, one who is so by profession, covenant, and conversation (Cruden).

#### I. Saints in the church at Rome

- A. Called of Christ (v. 6)
- B. Beloved of God (v. 7)
- C. Separated unto Holiness (v. 7)  
(Called to be saints)

#### II. Saints are to be:

- A. Distinguished from a Sinful Society
- B. Distinguished from Former Selves
- C. Filled with the Spirit of Holiness
- D. True Witnesses of a Holy God and Savior

#### III. Saints need continued ministry

- A. Faith That Is Radiant (v. 8)
- B. Established in Spiritual Grace (v. 11)
- C. Live Fruitful Lives (v. 13)
- D. Partake of the Power of the Gospel (v. 16)
- E. Perfecting of the Saints (Eph. 4:12)

—Jonathan T. Gassett

## THE PREACHER'S EXCHANGE

**WANTED:** Back issues of *The Preacher's Magazine*, from 1950 through 1986. Contact William Thompson, 9 York Dr., Shore Rd., Belfast BT15 3LY, NORTHERN IRELAND

**WANTED:** *50 Years of Nazarene Missions*, Vols. 1, 2, and 3, by M. Taylor; *A History of the Church of the Nazarene*, by James B. Chapman; *In the Steps of John Wesley: The Church of the Nazarene in Britain*, by Jack Ford; and *Nazarene Theology in Perspective*, by William Greathouse. Contact John E. Burge, Kerk van de Nazarener, POB 4170 Flora, Paramaribo, SURINAME

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# SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS



## "WHERE IS GOD?"

The prisoners in the concentration camp were assembled to witness an execution. Huddling in silence, they watched as the Nazi guards led a 10-year-old boy to the gallows. They expected a clean execution. They would hang the boy, he would die. But it wasn't that easy. Twisting at the end of the rope, the boy fought against death with all his might. Arms flailing, legs kicking desperately, the boy struggled as time seemed suspended, prolonging his agony.

A plaintive voice cried out from somewhere in the assembled crowd, "Where is God?" The only answer was the sound of the frantic beating of the boy's arms and legs, kicking and clawing the empty air around him.

Again, the voice cried out, "Where is God?" Still, the only answer was the boy's rasping, as his struggles grew weaker.

Finally, death rescued the boy. And once more, the voice, choked with despair, asked, "Where is God?"

This time, over the creaking of the rope swaying with the weight of its gruesome burden, another voice answered, "God is there, hanging on the gallows."

### Source

Elie Wiesel, related by Evan Drake Howard, "Were You There?" *Pulpit Digest*, March-April, 1985

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

The mystery of the Crucifixion. It was in the unjust suffering and death of Jesus Christ—God made flesh—that sinful man is redeemed.

### Supporting Scriptures

Isa. 53:7-8; Matt. 27:45-50

—Submitted by  
Steve Rodeheaver

## FEATHERS OR FUR?

A long time ago, when the world was young, the birds and the beasts were engaged in a bitter war. The

bat, not wanting to be on the losing side, whichever that might be, tried to be on both sides. Whenever the birds won a battle, he would fly with them, telling everyone he was a bird. When the beasts won, he would walk around, assuring everyone that he was a beast.

It didn't take long for the bat's hypocrisy to be discovered. He was rejected by both the birds and the beasts. From that day on, the bat has had to go into hiding. To this day, he lives in dark caves, only daring to come out at night.

### Source

Aesop's Fables

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Some Christians, like the bat, are torn between two allegiances—one to the ecclesiastical world, and one to the "beasts." But we are required to be "birds" all the time, not only when we're with other birds, but also when there's nothing but beasts around. For some of us, it's too easy to walk like a beast when there are no birds around to see us.

As with the birds and beasts, there is a sharp line dividing the holy and the unholy. We have to decide to live wholly on one side; we cannot straddle the fence and get by with it any more than the bat could.

### Supporting Scriptures

Lev. 10:10; Deut. 13:4; Rom. 6:16

—Submitted by  
Wayne Evans

## "KEEP PLAYING!"

The concert hall was teeming with elegance—debonair gentlemen in tuxedos escorted refined ladies in evening dress, glittering from head to toe with diamonds and fine jewelry. They had come to hear the great composer/pianist Ignacy Jan Paderewski in concert.

Almost swallowed up by the crush of socialites, a small, fidgety nine-year-old squirmed impatiently. His mother had brought him, hoping that hearing the virtuoso would in-

spire him to take his own piano lessons more seriously. But so far, the youngster was uninspired—and stifled. If there was one place he didn't want to be, it was a concert hall filled with stuffy adults who seemed afraid he would soil them if he came too close!

As he was furtively looking around for an escape route, he saw it. There, glowing under the footlights, stood an ebony grand piano. In an instant, as his mother's attention was diverted, he scaled the stage and was at the keyboard. Confidently, he began pounding out the one piece he had committed to memory—"Chopsticks."

For a moment, the milling ceased. Then the crowd became indignant. Somebody backstage shouted, "Git that kid outta here!" as stagehands dropped everything to apprehend the miscreant.

Emerging from his dressing room, Paderewski quickly sized up the situation. Striding to the piano, he leaned over the aspiring concert artist and whispered, "Keep playing!" As the boy continued hammering out "Chopsticks," Paderewski's fingers deftly flew over the keys, intricately weaving a countermelody to the boy's simple tune. As he played, the great pianist kept whispering to the boy, "Don't stop. Just keep playing!"

### Source

Charles Swindoll, *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*, 1983, Multnomah Press.

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

When our service to the Lord seems as trite and insignificant as "Chopsticks" in a concert hall, our Master fills in the gaps in our efforts with His sufficiency. He makes our work beautiful and eternally significant.

### Supporting Scriptures

1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:9

—Submitted by  
Kendall Hughes

## IT ALL COMES BACK

Patricia West had a rare blood type. She was constantly being asked to donate blood by her local blood bank.

Patricia eventually moved from her home state of Florida to Michigan. There she underwent simple surgery. But while in surgery, she began to hemorrhage. A call went out for blood, but none was to be found. In all of Michigan, there was no blood of Patricia's type to be found.

A desperate call was sent to the National Rare Donor Registry. Soon they responded that they had found the needed blood—in Florida. The only compatible blood available was Patricia's own that she had donated several months before.

Patricia West lives today because she gave her own blood. Her willingness to give her blood to save others literally saved her own life.

### Source

"Plan Ahead," by C. W. Bass, *Pulpit Digest*, March-April, 1985

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

What we freely give often comes back to us.

### Supporting Scriptures

Prov. 6:6-8; 14:22; Eccles. 11:1

—Submitted by

Graham MacCallum

## PARTNERS

A small boy tried to lift a heavy stone. Despite his huffing and puffing, he couldn't budge it. His father, watching nearby, finally asked him, "Are you using all your strength?"

"Yes, I am," the boy cried, exasperated.

"No, you're not," the father replied. "You haven't asked me to help you."

### Source

Church newsletter

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

We draw our spiritual strength from God. We can only draw on that strength when we ask Him, through prayer, to help us. With His help, we can triumph over previously immovable obstacles.

### Supporting Scriptures

Luke 11:9-13; Rom. 8:26-27

—Submitted by

Mark Mohnkern

## "SHOW ME!"

A police officer brought a 13-year-old girl into the police station in the wee morning hours. She had been physically abused by her stepfather. The police chaplain talked with her while the officers processed her case and waited for Human Services to come take custody of her.

The girl related how her stepfather hated her, favoring his own daughters. She was either neglected or beaten for minor disagreements. Her mother hadn't shown her love for several years. Finally, she sobbed, "Nobody loves me!"

In an effort to comfort her and offer some ray of hope and worth, the chaplain replied, "But don't you know that God loves you?"

Holding out her battered, bruised arms, she retorted, "Show me!"

### Source

A. D. McDowell, pastor of St. Matthew Presbyterian Church, Grandview, Mo.

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

The world needs God's love. We must do more than talk a good game; we must show His love to those who need it. *Also*, God did more than talk about His love for mankind. He backed it up by proving His love for us.

### Supporting Scriptures

John 21:15-19; Col. 3:1-17; *also* John 3:16; Phil. 2:5-8

—Submitted by

Phil Lindsley

## TO DIE LIKE WHEAT

Chemists tell us what happens to a kernel of wheat when it dies. It is remarkably similar to what happens to the Christian who dies out to self:

1. It **softens**. *Our spirits become tender as we take on the compassion and spirit of Jesus Christ.*

2. It **enlarges**. *We develop an expanding capacity for the things of God, an enlarged vision for service, and an enlarged circle of concern.*

3. The **starch turns to sugar**. *The starch is taken out of our lives, and we are absorbed by the sweetness of our Lord.*

4. It **bursts open**. *We no longer turn inward toward ourselves. We are compelled to thrust out toward others and toward Christ.*

5. It establishes a **root system**. *We become rooted in the things of God. We extend deeper into our devotions, prayer, and Bible study.*

6. It develops **green sprouts**. *We begin to bear fruit as we continue to grow in grace and spiritual maturity.*

### Source

Dr. John A. Knight, in a chapel address at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Entire sanctification—dying to one's own selfish will

### Supporting Scriptures

Mark 8:34; John 15:1-11

—Submitted by

Don Weston

## THE GREAT DIVIDE

Divide Creek is in the Canadian Rockies. At one point in its course, the stream is dissected by a large boulder. Water that flows on the west side rushes into Kicking Horse River and eventually reaches the Pacific. Water that flows on the east side pours into the Bow River, which courses into the Saskatchewan River, into Lake Winnipeg, on to the Nelson River, Hudson Bay, and finally finds its way into the Atlantic.

Once the water divides at the rock, its destiny is set. There is no turning back.

### Source

Sales bulletin from Dallas Discount Book Supply

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Jesus is the Rock that divides the destinies of men and women.

### Supporting Scriptures

John 3:18; John 5:24

—Submitted by

James E. Parker, Jr.

## GIVING LIFE DIRECTION

Lost in Wonderland, Alice asked the Cheshire Cat, "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat.

"I don't much care where," replied Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the cat.

### Source

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), *Alice in Wonderland*

### Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Our lives need direction. If we are to reach our destination, we must first have our eyes fixed on a goal.

### Supporting Scriptures

1 Cor. 9:24-25; Phil. 3:12-14

—Submitted by

Eddie Estep



# THE ARK ROCKER

Encouragement to  
a young pastor

Dearest Tommy,

I am sorry to hear that you have been struggling so in your first pastorate. Your brokenhearted epistle arrived only a month ago today, and upon reading it a fortnight ago, I decided to answer it immediately. Please indulge me if my tone is fatherly. I wish only to share with you some of the wealth of experience and wisdom that the Lord has given to me (due, of course, to no great merit of my own).

I well remember my own first pastorate: a membership of 216, an average attendance of 8 (counting me and my family). We worked and slaved, and eventually made some headway: district duties performed well, favors done for godly persons of influence, the help of family friends, and a persistent but balanced letter writing campaign finally (praise be to God!) raised me out of that hole and awarded me a church of respectable size and income. It was certainly no Crystal Cathedral, but it was a middle-class, suburban congregation that was kind enough to provide me with the sorts of amenities that a servant of Christ might reasonably expect. Since then I have been able (by the mercies of Jesus) to improve my position, the comfort of my family (especially my dear helpmeet, Tippy), and, I dare say, the contentedness of the sheep in my flock.

In my current pastoral assignment, I have witnessed a long string of miracles—miracles that make evident to any but the most dogged secular humanist that God is alive and well in His kingdom. Of course, none of these successes would have been possible without the steadfast prayer of our faithful saints and the ferine strategies of church growth experts. When I first arrived here in Goldwater, the situation was not really bad. My reputation was strong enough even 14 years ago that I was receiving only offers of churches of the, shall we say, less problematic sort. But compared to the smooth-running machine that now hums in our ears, Goldwater First

Church was once a rather untidy assembly of naive believers, socio-economically middle to lower middle class, lacking in complete cultural (and to some extent racial) uniformity.

When I first surveyed the statistics, I recognized immediately that First Church needed new blood, and we set out to draw some. We checked the obituary columns in the newspaper and utilized other similar data to determine when the kind of people First Church needed were being ripened by life's tragedies for personal evangelism. Our first major miracle was the conversions of Biff and Buffy Seville. They had just lost their lovely daughter and, plunged into grief, they were able to be gently plucked from their lives of sin by a finely honed personal evangelism team. I mean, Tommy, these people were young, good-looking, and worth hundreds of thousands of dollars! They were so grateful that they became our best givers and, although they have since fallen away from the Lord, they provided us with easy access to their business associates, their neighbors, members of their clubs, et al. Tommy, my hair still stands on end when I think back over the incredible gains that were made in every aspect of our church's life just because we were there to show the precious love of Jesus to somebody who was hurting and upwardly mobile.

Goldwater First Church is far from perfect, but we pay our budgets! In fact, our missions giving has been so impressive that other churches are beginning to emulate our program. We have achieved a congregation that is 100 percent white (I trust that you understand that this is not a racist remark), is middle to upper middle class, and is made up of persons who drive as far as 63 miles to church three times a week! Tommy, we have a bank vice president on our church board! One of our most faithful givers owns a prosperous string of formal attire rentals and three paint stores. We have 4 C.P.A.'s, 2 Ph.D.'s, a C.E.O., and 27 M.Ed.'s. And these are not just

attenders, not just pew warmers, not just names on a roll; these people write checks like Jesus was coming tomorrow! In short, we are people who like the same things, want the same things, and (by God's grace) *get* the same things! There are no surprises in this church.

Let me tell you about the new building that is going up on our property. I'll not burden you with a lot of statistics, but I do want to tell you about the steeple that will adorn our sanctuary a year from now. We are located, as you know, quite close to the city's main thoroughfare and not much farther from Goldwater's chief business district. It is obvious that the Lord has blessed us with a unique opportunity to be a lighthouse of good news to all who pass near us. Therefore, we have made the commitment to invest nearly \$1 million in what we call the "Blessed Alabaster Box of Empowered Love" that will be visible for miles above every surrounding structure. This steeple (and that word is not adequate to describe the tower we have designed) will stand hundreds of feet high. At its summit will be a golden cross. And from the topmost point of this cross will issue the sparkling water of a fountain, illuminated by the sun during the day and by red spotlights during the night. This incomparable structure alone will be a glorious passive testimony to the wonder-working power of Jesus, the humble Carpenter from Nazareth. I feel certain that this constant witness to holiness will go far toward filling every theater seat in our new church. Let us pray that no motorist will be able to be untouched by this sacrifice of praise.

Well, Tommy, hang in there. If all else fails, just remember that God is good.

Yours, knowing the gospel makes a difference,

*The Ark Rocker*

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