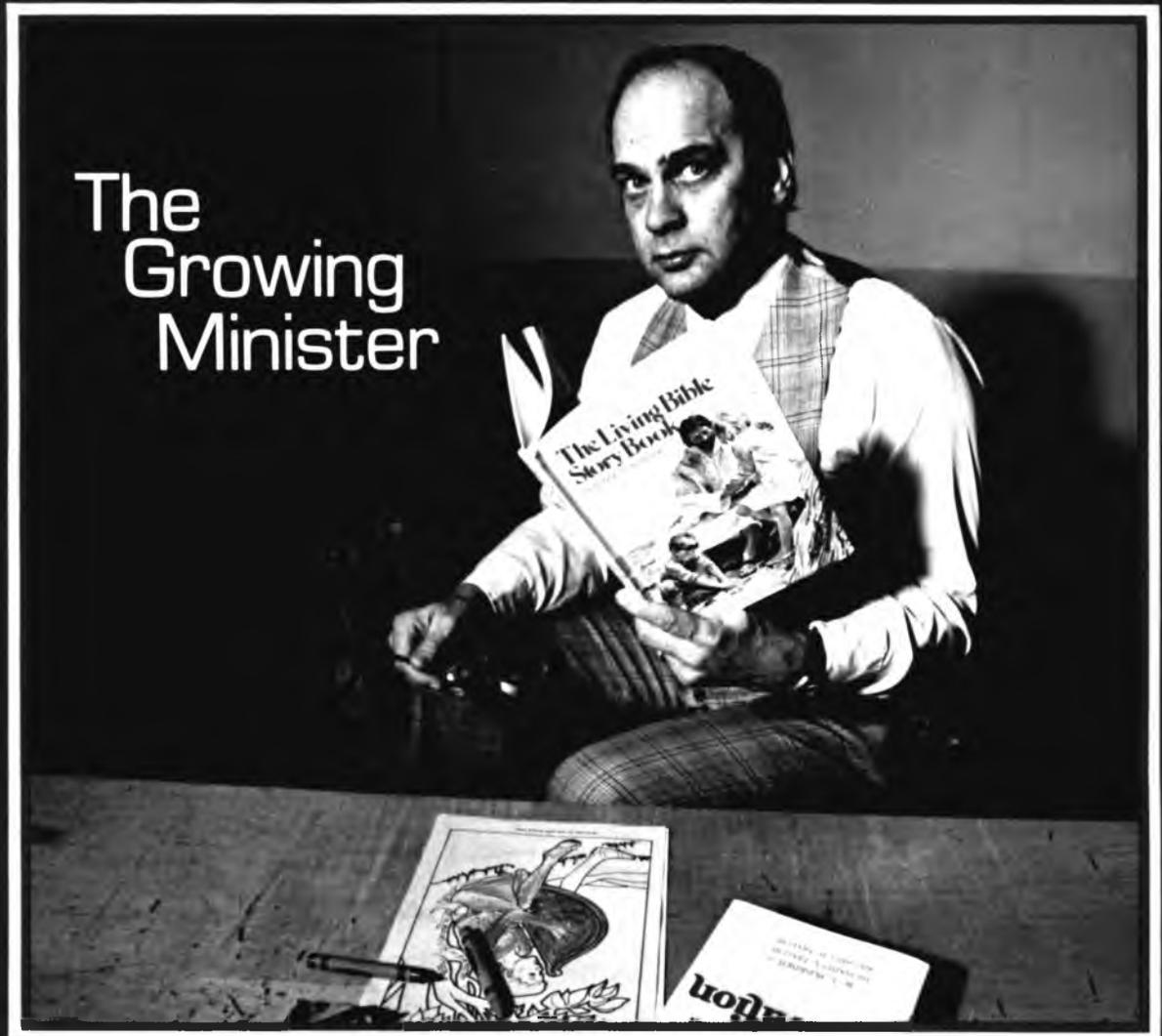


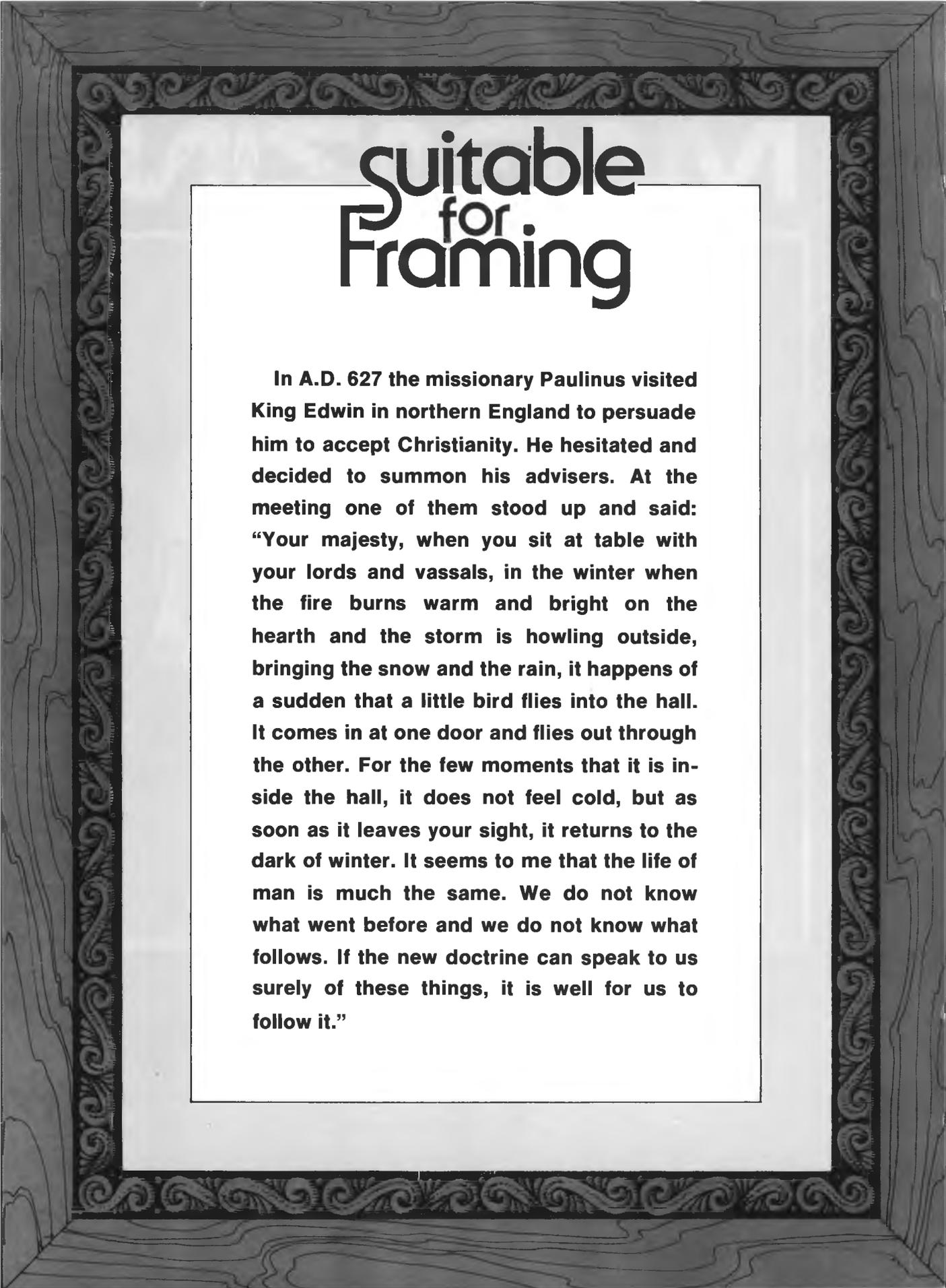
THE

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE



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Minister

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suitable for Framing

In A.D. 627 the missionary Paulinus visited King Edwin in northern England to persuade him to accept Christianity. He hesitated and decided to summon his advisers. At the meeting one of them stood up and said: "Your majesty, when you sit at table with your lords and vassals, in the winter when the fire burns warm and bright on the hearth and the storm is howling outside, bringing the snow and the rain, it happens of a sudden that a little bird flies into the hall. It comes in at one door and flies out through the other. For the few moments that it is inside the hall, it does not feel cold, but as soon as it leaves your sight, it returns to the dark of winter. It seems to me that the life of man is much the same. We do not know what went before and we do not know what follows. If the new doctrine can speak to us surely of these things, it is well for us to follow it."



THE ARK ROCKER

He's not really my father, but I call him "Pop" because he has treated me like a son. He coached me through my first pastorate over 20 years ago. I still go talk to him sometimes when I need encouragement.

During my last visit we sat on the porch of his modest retirement cottage watching October's bright blue weather. The oak leaves were falling now, preceded, as they always are at Pop's, by the orange and yellow leaves from the two maple trees out by the mailbox. I had been doing most of the talking for the past three hours, and I was fed up—mostly with the church. I had aired my gripes with no holds barred. I'd covered such lofty topics as the "leadership vacuum" in the church, church politics, antiquarian church laws, spiritual winter in the pews, and low preachers' salaries. On and on I went. Pop mostly nodded, and chewed a toothpick.

Finally he couldn't stand it anymore. Standing up and pacing back and forth in front of the porch swing, he said, "About 22 years ago I tried to tell you a few things. I guess you forgot 'em." He folded back the cuffs of his rust-colored flannel shirt. "Of course, you were so green then, right out of school with all kinds of answers you couldn't even find questions for."

"What are you talking about, Pop?"

"I'm telling you that it's still okay to like the church, in spite of her imperfections. You're acting as if you have to join the cult of the curled lip in order to be a good member. Tell me, is that in fashion now? Do you have to keep it a secret if you love the church?"

"Pop, what I meant was—"

"And, I'll tell you another thing," he was pointing at me now and I was uncomfortable right down to my Florsheims. "It's okay to be loyal to the church leaders too; in fact, I'll bet it's all right to pray for them now and then, if you don't have anything important to do. You really don't have to celebrate their weaknesses like it was the last day of school.

"Take John Wesley for instance. Seems like everyone is so taken up with what he didn't do that they forget about all the things he did do. Start down that trail and sooner or later you're acting like this young man who sits on the back seat in our church. Told me he had to vote against the pastor to prove he was independent."

"Yeah, Pop, I really think most church leaders are trying to do right. I just—"

"I'm not through yet. Listen, it's all right to keep the church's standards too—even if they aren't the same ones you would come up with if you sat down and made them up from scratch. You don't have to pick the most archaic one, and break it and brag about

it in order to be a good member. Furthermore . . ."

"I think I remember the rest of that speech, Pop. Isn't the next point 'It's okay to lay down your life for the church even if the church people don't give you big raises or even seem to notice your sacrifices?'"

"That's about right."

"And the next point goes something like this—'Who are you to tear down the Church. It's Christ's, not yours.'"

"Close. I'm glad you remembered."

"I guess I need it now like I did then, Pop."

We sat quietly as the autumn sun began to seep behind the evergreens on the ridge. I shook his hand and started to leave.

"There's one more thing, son. You don't have to be a sheep-like follower. It's okay to criticize the church. Sometimes she needs it. But when you grit your teeth, or clench more than one fist, no one has to listen to you. On the other hand, if there are tears in your eyes and your chin quivers when you talk about the needs of the church, people will want to listen."

He then handed me a sack of Roman Beauty apples, fresh picked from the tree at the south end of the garden, and I left. As I drove down State Road 86 I kept saying, "It's still okay to like the church." It really is.

The Ark Locker

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by
Wesley
Tracy



HOW WE ENGINEERED THE DECLINE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL— AND WHAT WE OUGHT NOT TO DO ABOUT IT.

The “me decade” is the moniker so accurately tagged to the 70s. North Americans, especially the young, and much of the rest of the world tried desperately to solve the problems of society during the 60s and early 70s. When the demonstrations and riots failed, the “conquistadors” turned to conquer inner private space. Many turned to esoteric religions imported from the Orient, witchcraft, or American Indian lore. Most of the rest of the people turned openheartedly to the human potential movement. Attention was turned inward as persons tried to get “in touch with their feelings, to actualize the self, to seek their true identity, and discover the true self.” They were so busy “becoming, growing, maturing, and asserting their independence” that little else mattered, except slogans like, “I gotta be me.”

The church, more a product of the times than any of us can comfortably admit, traipsed along eagerly in the footsteps of the inwardly focused human potential movement. Growth groups, Christian life fellowships, and other expressions of a popular relational theology became central. Growth groups, sharing groups, and discipling teams became the focus of excitement in the local church, displacing the previous potentate—evangelism. This eventually meant bad news for the Sunday School—long the church’s most effective evangelism tool. The church’s three tasks have always been: worship, evangelism, and nurture. During the 70s, the focus shifted to nurture—almost to the point of a theological provincialism.

The evidence is all around. White knights like Larry Richards and Lyman Coleman sold us the new inward-focused ecclesiology. Of course, it would never have caught on if it hadn’t found a *koinonian* vacuum to rush into. The result, however, was that in many quarters, Christians were so busy manicuring their souls and refining their relationships, and being “open and honest” that there was no time for outreach and evangelism. Of course, the new ecclesiology proclaimed that, if nurture were properly done, evangelism would take care of itself. The laboratory of the 70s has shown us that this seemingly sensible hypothesis has not worked (yet).

The new ecclesiology engulfed the young—and remember it is usually the young who do the local church’s work of evangelism. But the youth of the 70s were seeking to become “whole persons.” One example I remember vividly. In a service I visited, a young man, home from a Nazarene college for the weekend, was asked to sing the Sunday morning solo. Before he sang he gave his testimony about the great revival they had just had on campus. “I got a lot of spiritual help myself,” he said. “The thing I learned was that I have to be me, regardless of who gets hurt.” At its worst, the new ecclesiology becomes sanctified selfishness.

Recently, I asked 25 seminary students to rank 72 instructional areas. They selected the areas they most wanted to study. *Enabling Christians to achieve their ministry* and *Discipling* ranked at the top; *Evangelism*, 54th.

So the new nurture-oriented ecclesiology crept into the local church practice, captured the imagination of our youth, and has finally, for better or worse, been built into our ecclesiological structure. This started, philosophically, years ago, but entered officially in 1976 (for Nazarenes) with "restructure." The new organization allows for de-emphasis on Sunday School, and, at least obliquely, evangelism, although that is not its aim. Right or wrong, Sunday School does not hold the priority it used to.

WHY DID WE DO THAT TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL?

There are several influences which brought about this phenomenon.

1. The influence of the mood of the times, as mentioned above.

2. Evangelism and Sunday School between 1940 and 1965 were so stressed that nurture, discipling, and follow-up were sorely neglected. If you could have a Sunday School which showed numerical increase, you were hailed, cited, quoted, and invited to speak at zone rallies. Pastors became emotional yo-yos, activated by whether or not the Sunday School attendance was up or down. Further, the effectiveness of a pastor was rated by the *numerical* status of his Sunday School.

Under this kind of duress, all sorts of abuses flourished in trying to keep the Sunday School attendance pumped up. Free bicycles, trips to Hawaii, 300-pound popsicles, block-long banana splits, and other disgraces were trotted out to keep the attendance up. Through all this, we taught our people that Sunday School is all about secondary priorities like competitive number games and steak and bean dinners.

After a while, clear thinking pastors and laymen began to get into ethical tangles about all this, and decided that giving the Sunday School artificial life wasn't for them—even if their careers or professional standing were injured.

Evangelism, of the personal type, was also part of our pendulumlike tendency to go to extremes. The big campaign in the 50s was to get holiness people "out of their seats and into the streets." Soon, in some quarters, the only infallible proof that one was truly sanctified was that he or she could win a stranger to Christ between the tossed salad and the pie rack in the cafeteria line.

3. Sunday School was overloaded. The church had glibly charged the Sunday School with almost the whole Christian education task. The home and other units all but abandoned educational chores.

4. The need for nurture and fellowship and discipling was crucial. So the emphasis swung strongly toward nurture, and many parts of the church

became like the farmer who preferred baking bread to planting wheat and soon ran out of flour.

WHAT WE OUGHT NOT TO DO ABOUT ALL THIS

The task before us now is not to throw away the great advances made in *koinonia* and discipling, and try to return to the good old days. Repeat—we must not stomp out discipling for the sake of Sunday School and evangelism.

Nor is the answer to do whatever may be necessary to keep the Sunday School alive and well just for its own sake or just so we can say our Sunday School is growing. We must do whatever is required to do the church's task in the world. This means a *balance* among worship, evangelism, and nurture. This means that we must restore the outward direction in the ecclesiology of the 80s without destroying the discipling-*koinonia* gains.

This calls for a post-Richards ecclesiology, in which we develop outward focused Sunday Schools which see evangelism and education as two sides of the same coin. An inordinately inward education program tends to make an end out of something which should properly be a means. That is, growth and spiritual maturity must not become mere ends in themselves.

We must realize anew the contributions Sunday School has to make. Consider these:

1. If we deem the Sunday School as indispensable, this indispensability should be reflected in the church structure at all levels.

2. We should review these unique contributions which the Sunday School makes, including these summarized by Win Arn.

a. The Sunday School is a great source of evangelistic outreach to friends and relatives of existing members.

b. The Sunday School provides the opportunity for establishing and developing personal relationships, which, in turn, greatly support the incorporation of new members into the life of the church.

c. The Sunday School provides a unique opportunity to teach Bible knowledge and to study the implications of the Christian life in today's world.

d. The Sunday School is a natural structure to create new classes which appeal to a wide spectrum of new people.

e. The Sunday School provides a system for the church to minister to the entire family and to include every age-group in this ministry.

f. The Sunday School is the most natural organization within the church for training and equipping large numbers of laity for the work to which Christ has called His Church.



How do the minister's being and self-knowledge relate to professional growth?

BEING, SELF-UNDERSTANDING, AND AUTHENTIC MINISTRY

by Paul Benjamin

Director, National Church Growth Center, Washington, D.C.

The word *being* is derived from a root meaning to engrave. When we speak about someone's "being," we are referring to all those qualities and characteristics which identify that particular individual. "Being" may be correctly called "the signature of our soul." It is what we are. Furthermore, it can be enhanced or diminished.

"The first key to greatness," Socrates reminds us, "is to *be* in reality what we appear to be." Jesus expressed the same idea in the Sermon on the Mount. "Beware of false prophets," He said, "who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves" (Matt. 7:15). Some people are very skillful in the art of disguising their true nature. They hide behind a perpetual smokescreen of plausibility. The outside world never gets the chance to peer into their souls.

Our biggest problem in the ministry is keeping our "being" straight. Without God's help, we shall surely fail. We must constantly fight all the forces of evil waging war against our innermost self. If we can be victorious at this deepest level of our existence, then everything else in life will appear in proper perspective. If not, then disaster will come as certainly as the sunrise.

Jesus came preaching in the tradition of the prophets of Israel. He hated hypocrisy. He labeled ritual minus goodness as false arithmetic. He commended the Pharisees for keeping tithes, even of the garden herbs. He denounced them for ignoring justice and mercy and faith. He forcibly drove the religious racketeers out of the temple. As someone

has pointed out, Jesus was not crucified because He beheld the lilies in the field; He was crucified because He beheld the thieves in the temple.

Thomas Aquinas reminds us, "experience can offer no example of a body causing change without itself being changed." Only as we *are* something, is it possible for us to *do* something. Fire kindles fire. The fire we expect to see kindled in the church is the fire which must first burn brightly in our own hearts.

A minister's leadership in the church and community is related primarily to the basic moral fibre of his life. Devoid of that intrinsic power, he is like Samson without his talisman of hair.

Our strength as ministers lies in the mysterious realm of the Christian personality. Either we have the power of God in our lives or we do not. It is not something which can be faked for very long. Neither can it be borrowed. It is like the oil in the lamps of the five wise virgins (Matt. 25:1-13). If our souls are drugged by unrepentant sin, then our leadership will be hazy and uncertain. It can be no other way. The Greeks identified an orator as "a good man speaking well." Centuries ago they recognized the essential link between character and effectiveness.

We increase our being when our hearts are intent on doing the Master's will. We diminish it when we become self-serving and vain. The Lord never set up any roadblocks to greatness. He did point to the road—self-denial and servanthood (Matt. 23:11).

Either we have the power of God in our lives or we do not. It is not something which can be faked for very long. Neither can it be borrowed.

We may summarize "being" as the totality of our personhood. It is a concept which touches us at the deepest level and indicates our true nature. Apart from what others may think we are, our being is the reflection of the true quality of our character. It is related to personality, but goes much deeper. "Being" is our heart unveiled before God.

2. Knowing Who We Are

Western philosophers have long cherished the story of Socrates and his famous visit to the oracle of Delphi. To all who approached this ancient shrine seeking wisdom, the oracle advised, "Know thyself." Socrates set out on a lifelong quest to determine its meaning and influence.

The advice of the Delphic oracle serves as a starting point in our search for true being. Jeremiah warns about the pitfalls in front of us.

He says,
"The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately wicked:
who can know it?" (17:9).

We must never set out on such a perilous journey alone. God should be our constant helper and companion.

Many ministers meanwhile rush pell-mell through life. They seem to have few clues regarding their true character. Bumped from every angle like "Dodgem" cars at the carnival, they feel everyone else is to blame for their jolts in life. They simply are looking in the wrong place to find the source of their troubles.

How can we know who we really are? It is so easy to be self-deceived. At this point, we must turn to the Scriptures. "The word of God," says Hebrews, "is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, . . . and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (4:12). Only as we know ourselves in the light of God's revelation can we lay bare the true quality of our own heart.

The study of psychology can also be valuable in helping us know who we are. We learned in college about the powerful influence of the subconscious—that submerged area of our individuality so strongly influenced by early childhood experiences.

The influence of the subconscious may be illustrated by our moods. A minister may suffer from low self-esteem stemming from parental disapproval he received as a child. Low self-esteem often leads to depression. A minister may feel down and even be aware of the cause for his glum outlook. Still he finds himself unable to climb out on top at this particular moment. He may even doubt his faith or his devotion to the cause of Christ. Psychology helps him realize the nature of his problem; it is his feelings which are at stake and not his being. Therefore he gains the self-knowledge he needs in order to keep on functioning in his work.

We must teach ourselves to become the best interpreters of our own being. On every hand are those individuals who want to tell us about ourselves. These self-appointed

critics are even more off target because they frequently lack insight regarding who they are. Ministers who are struggling through the wasteland of their own disapproval often allow these unwise counselors to upset them. Learn to resist their unwanted advice with all the power of your personality. Friends may help us, but only we can know for certain who we really are and what we want in life.

To be the best interpreter of ourselves, we must follow the Socratic example. It is a matter of constantly probing and exploring the depths of our being. As Christians, we have the power of God and the Holy Spirit to assist us. If we are dishonest with ourselves, we only contribute to our basic problem. The tendency toward self-deception is enormous, as Jeremiah reminds us. Whatever we do, we must not allow ourselves to be deluded very long. If we can discover ourself first, then we can set out to learn about the rest of life.

3. The Drive for Self-worth

Those who desire self-knowledge should not overlook Immanuel Kant and his observations about man's inclinations. "The predisposition of humanity," Kant says, "can be brought under the general title of self-love . . . that is to say, we judge ourselves happy or unhappy only by making comparison with others." He continues, "Out of this self-love springs the inclination to *acquire worth in the opinion of other*." No profounder insight regarding human nature is found anywhere in philosophy.

Here we have one of the most important keys to self-knowledge. Kant's axiom explains why we seek to present ourselves to others in the best light possible. It helps us understand the striving of human beings at every level of society. Even in the lofty sphere of intellectual pursuit, every scholar wants his ideas accepted in preference to others in the field.

On an unregenerate level, self-striving can become very destructive. It is the source of envy and antagonism in the business and political world. The place for number one is reserved only for my corporation or my party. Therefore, even a close friend may be walked over.

Unfortunately, the drive for self-worth by gaining the approval of others is not absent in ecclesiastical circles. Even in the ministry, the reputation of a fellow minister is often watched with lynx-eyed concern. Some laymen simply cannot believe the degree of jealousy they sometimes see among ministers and missionaries.

If another minister is envious of you, he may automatically detract from everything you do, especially if he thinks your star is rising. It is a kind of self-protectionism for him, believing as he does, that your progress is in some way a detriment to his own self-worth.

Some ministers want to hoard as much self-worth as possible. If you are discussing something very close to your own heart, they have the tendency to tune you out. Be concerned about the minister who soaks up compliments, but never gives any himself. His desire for self-worth may be bordering on the pathological.

In his continuing discussion about our drive for self-worth, Kant makes a very radical statement. He says we can use this predisposition for good, but it cannot be

Even in the ministry, the reputation of a fellow minister is often watched with lynx-eyed concern.

extirpated. In other words, try as we may to root it out, our concern for self-worth is still very much a part of our being.

A growing church, for example, may be tied very closely to a minister's desire for self-worth. His own sense of success and well-being are enhanced through increased attendance, larger offerings, and a new house of worship. Afterwhile, he begins to receive invitations to speak about his methods in evangelism. The constant demand for his platform presence reinforces his own sense of accomplishment.

Another minister may seek to increase his self-worth in a reverse fashion. He heaps scorn upon all those who keep talking about the growth of the church. "I have no desire," he says, "to become a part of this numbers business in the church." Meanwhile, he makes a niche for himself by stressing the teachings of Jesus on cross-bearing and discipleship. He may be striving for self-worth by negating those seeking "success" in another way.

Without the redeeming qualities of the gospel, the process which Kant outlines can become demonic. A minister may come to the place where he resents all other ministers and churches who rival his influence. He constantly detracts from other Christian leaders. Consumed by his jealousy and insecurity, he spirals into a night of false motives and dubious integrity. Those who work with him closely sense his underlying feelings. In order to gain his approval, his associates will even surpass their leader in expressing disdain for his rivals.

In the area of self-knowledge we have been discussing, only the power of Christ coupled with our eternal vigilance can save us from the utter ruination of our souls. Kept within bounds, the drive for self-worth can increase the scope of our ministry.

4. The Jaded Motive

The writer of Ecclesiastes says, "Every labor and every skill which is done is the result of rivalry between a man and his neighbor. This too is vanity and striving after wind" (Eccles. 4:4, NASB).^{*} Suppose a minister is requested to bring a major address at a national convention. Naturally, he wants to do well. Thousands of people will be in the audience, including his relatives and many of his former college classmates. His primary motivation may be to bring enrichment through the Word of God to all those who are present. His secondary motive, however, may be very closely intertwined with his own sense of accomplishment and feelings of self-worth.

This same kind of self-understanding can be applied to most of our ministry. Whether it is the establishment of a college or the growth of a congregation, our own concern for self-worth is usually somewhere in the picture. The tragedy comes when we think everything we do comes from lofty motives, while believing the motives of others are always jaded.

How are we to respond to the charge of mixed motives? Are we paralyzed to act until we can assure ourselves that every single motive is totally noble? Surely not. Jesus did not deny Peter the opportunity to preach on the Day of

Pentecost because he had not worked through all his racial prejudice (cp. Acts 10; Gal. 2:11).

We must seek God's face constantly in our quest for purer motivation. But if our hearts and minds are turned toward the Kingdom, then He can use us. The Lord takes us where we are and uses us if we let Him constantly audit our motives.

I often hear the statement, "We must first evangelize the church before we can evangelize the world." If this refrain implies the church has nothing to say to the world until all of its members are total disciples, then the task of world evangelism must be postponed indefinitely. But if this comment implies that the task of perfecting the saints is parallel with the work of preaching the gospel to the lost, then we can work toward both goals unimpeded.

Evidently the problem of impure motives has been around for a long time in the church. Paul writes about Timothy to the Philippians and says, "I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:20-21, NASB). Because he had dealt with the problem of his own motives, Timothy was obviously in a better position to give help to the mission of Christ in Philippi.

What is the antidote to the poison of selfish interests which can destroy the very wellsprings of our being? The New Testament does not forbid us looking toward our interests, but it does caution us about looking *only* toward our interests (Phil. 2:4). The solution lies in our intense desire to help others while, at the same time, always seeking the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5 f.).

5. Being and Good Actions

One way we find our way through the murky mists of motivation is by a habit pattern of good actions. Jeremiah writes:

I the Lord search the heart,
I try the reins, even
to give every man according
to his ways, and
according to the fruit of his
doings (17:10).

When John the Baptist sent his disciples to question Jesus, He responded simply, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached" (Luke 7:22). Christ made no defense of His personal character, but He does point to His ministry to others.

Was Jesus beguiled by John's disciples into the doctrine of salvation by works: achieving rather than believing? Assuredly, he was not. Rather, we have in this account an amplification of Peter's succinct summary. He "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38).

The good life and the good deed will naturally impinge upon each other. If we establish the habit of seeking the interests of others, our service cannot help but flow back and purify our own hearts. Aristotle taught that "charac-

(Continued on page 55)



date

things to do today

- 1 Pray
- 2 Call George + Betty H.
- 3 Mail car payment ✓
- 4 Hamburger + mail - A+P
- 5 See Mrs. G. at Mercy Hospital
- 6 Decorations for Church Party
- 7 Pick up kids at School 2:45
- 8 Phone Sears
- 9 Send birthday card to Mum
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14

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Webster:

PRIORITY: (1) The quality or state of being prior. (2) Precedence in date or position. (3) A preferential rating. (4) Something meriting prior attention.

THE PASTOR'S PRIORITIES

by Morton Estep*

The matter of priorities is very important to the minister. Of course, his life and style of living and ministry will be contingent upon how he "prioritizes" his time and work schedule—what he thinks is *good, better, and best*.

The problem is that almost everyone has his own ideas about what a minister should do. So off he goes to follow the great men and their formulas for best setting his priorities. Each new book, each new conference, each new church leader gives us the *truth* on how to prioritize ministry.

The problem is that each "bell ringer" rings a different bell and whoever rings the loudest gets the pastor's attention. Also, it seems that many who are telling you how to prioritize your ministry either don't have to do it themselves; or if they ever did, it's from some bygone day that moved at a much slower pace with fewer problems to face.

So now you ask, "What are you going to tell us?" "Give to us the formula that is the perfect plan."

Relax! There is no perfect plan—busted bubble! So what now? The greatest help comes to me in realizing that truth. Helps? Yes! Perfect plan? No!

"What do we do? All this time I have believed that there was a *perfect plan*."

You mean God . . . Home . . . Work . . . Church . . . is not the perfect plan?

Let's try God . . . Church . . . Home . . .

Or: God . . . Others . . . Self . . .

"Come on now, you can't believe I'll continue to read this and

waste my time unless you have some kind of great plan. After all, I'm a 'growing minister' and my time is valuable."

Okay, I'm hurrying!

Here is a great idea! What about coming up with a moving, dynamic, checklist of priorities! With a little refining and going back to the concept of believing in the leadership of the Holy Spirit, then whatever you are doing now is right for you.

Okay, let's make a list. I found a "good" list in *Dynamics of Discipleship*, published by A. R. T. S. Publications, Denver, Colo. Around God's purpose for you comes: Family, Church, Job, World, Recreation. Within these broad listings, almost all our activities could be itemized. The concept is that there would not be a static listing of priorities, but instead a "moving dynamic" with certain functions taking precedence over others at different times. Living out God's will would mean: being honest with God, having a keen sensitivity to circumstances, being willing to pay whatever price necessary to fulfill God's purpose, and depending on the Holy Spirit to reveal the precedence of the priority.

So now we have a plan that doesn't allow any two duties to conflict. The key no longer is some human, higher power telling me what I should be doing but, instead, the personal Holy Spirit giving me guidance as I stay sensitive to Him. John 14:21 says, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves

Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and disclose Myself to him" (NASB).*

What will this do for me? I believe it will lessen tension and cause me to "relax in the Lord." It will give me the assurance that I don't have to carry the weight of false guilt that both church members and the "church hierarchy" may pile on. Much of this is not by design but simply because "they" think "they" know what is best for me and my ministry.

Relying on the Holy Spirit will, or at least should, cause me not to feel I am caught between a "rock and a hard place" as I make decisions on what's right for me today, tomorrow, next week, or next year.

Of course, there will still be times of indecision when I find it difficult to decide; but once the decision is made, I can know it is right for the "now." I will have to live close enough to God to sense the leadership of the Holy Spirit, but this is my privilege. It would be much easier to live with a "static" list of priorities. Then you could judge ministry more easily.

Our suggestion is not aimed at making life easier for the ministers, but to make life better. I believe we can trust pastors to live



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close to God and get His direction on setting priorities.

So what should I do today? Well, if you're going to follow the priorities listings that some of our recent "Preachers' Meeting" speakers recommend, you will have to add some hours to your day.

To answer the prayer "bell," you get up with John Wesley at 4 a.m., spending at least two hours in prayer. Then the study "bell" rings for six hours of study. Next, the calling "bell" sounds for home and hospital visits; the administrative "bell," for commitments; the service "bell" for services. So, off you go, giving them your heart, your hand, and your heel.

What should I do today? Well, it involves more than just today; for I will do today what I have patterned my life to do in the yesterdays. Unless I make a clean-cut decision to change, I will be bogged down in just doing the "same old thing," whatever that is. As many have said, I must first

manage myself before I can properly set priorities.

Maybe we have gone about it in the wrong way. Instead of doing today, maybe we should "put off until tomorrow," and in many cases, it will take care of itself. I certainly can't do everything. Too many "bells" are ringing to answer them all. When all is said and done, why not turn to our pattern, Jesus Christ, and see what He said about "priorities?" Better than that, let's see how He lived out His priority system.

Jesus prioritized His role in: *Luke 4:18-19*, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4:44, "And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee."

Luke 4:43 (RSV),** "But he said to them, 'I must preach the good

news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.'"

Mark 1:38, "And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth."

If we are to be like Jesus, then our first priority must be to preach the gospel.

The Early Church recognized this priority in the early preachers and, suffice to say, the Scriptures bear this out:

Romans 10:14, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

1 Corinthians 1:21, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

2 Timothy 4:2 (RSV), "Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, re-

More about pastoral priorities

THE MOST IMPORTANT PASTORAL SKILLS

by Neil Hightower, *President, Canadian Nazarene College*

A random survey of groups congregated at coffee breaks or mealtimes, at the four Canadian Pastors' Retreats in the fall of 1979, produced some interesting responses. The survey question was: "What do you consider to be the three most important skills or qualities an achieving pastor must have?"

Nine major categories emerged: communication, curiosity, discipline, devotional depth, flexibility, love for people, integrity, soul passion, spirituality. The three skills mentioned the most were: *communication, love for people, discipline.*

By *communication*, these pastoral respondents meant not only verbal instructions or descriptions, but sharing of the person, delegation of assignment and authority, and un-

derstanding of people needs, as well.

By *love for people*, they were including such qualities as empathy, compassion, people relationships, caring, and concern for people as persons, not statistical digits.

By *discipline*, they meant organized living in the expression and impression of themselves to and on other people. Time, study, personal finance, administrative and communicative performance, (in short, the whole person) are included.

Flexibility and *integrity* were skills rated number four and five in this survey. By *flexibility* was meant teachability, adaptability, the ability to relate to the needs of people today, creativity in planning and performance. By *integrity* was

meant genuineness, openness, living without professional "masks," being yourself.

Three other interesting things surfaced in the survey. One was the identification of vivid *curiosity* as an important pastoral skill, with the comment on the part of the respondent: "We need vivid curiosity as the source for creating a pool of ideas."

Another was the spontaneous comment of a pastor's wife. Without a split-second of hesitation, she answered, "a good wife!" I think all of us agreed heartily, though we doubted a wife is a skill, or that she counted for three.

Another comment dealt with obstacles to achievement, in which a pastor listed these as: fear, poor

buke, and exhort, be unailing in patience and in teaching."

Titus 1:3, "But [God] hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour."

Romans 10:17 (RSV), "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ."

The frustration comes, of course, when I realize the demands on me will not allow me to spend the time on the preaching ministry. Each man must choose between doing what God says in the Word or what people expect in the pew.

So what do we do? I can't really say—except that the most important thing is to preach. At least I know what to do first. The rest will just have to get in line. 🐘

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training in personal evangelism, and laziness. "Let's fact it," said this pastor, "many preachers are lazy, or to put it more charitably, do not cultivate drive." As the saying goes, "If you were a self-starter, your boss wouldn't be such a crank."

This personal, unscientific survey strengthens a conviction I find more and more valid as I rub minds and shoulders with holiness shepherds. They are, for the most part, serious, highly motivated leaders who want to fulfill their divine calling with skill and warmth. They are not satisfied to be professionals, nor to just mark time. They consider theirs to be a holy vocation, a calling that demands their finest and faithful performance. 🐘

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE PASTORAL PRIORITY POLL

Here are the results of a pastoral priority poll conducted by the *Preacher's Magazine* staff. Note the remarkable agreement of all these groups as to the five highest and five lowest priorities.

PASTORAL TASK:	Priority Ranking by 20 pastors	Priority Ranking by 40 laymen from 34 states and provinces	Priority Ranking by 42 seminary students
Being pastor and minister to his own family	1	4	2
Personal devotional life	2	1	1
Study and personal growth	3	5	4
Preparing and preaching sermons	4	3	3
Personal soul winning	5	2	5
Calling in the homes of church members and prospects	6	7	6
Hospital calling	7 & 8	6	9
Administration—working closely with the boards and committees	7 & 8	9	8
Pastoral counseling	9	8	7
Seminars and courses aimed at professional growth.	10	10	12
District and denominational meetings	11	11	11
Attending the various social functions of classes and organizations within the church	12	12	10
Community affairs and public relations	13	13	13
Fund Raising	14	14	14

WHAT PASTORS ARE READING

by George Rice*

Reading and study have always been vital to effective ministry. St. Paul in prison, Augustine in a Milan garden, Luther in his monastery tower, and Wesley reading on horseback, all illustrate this truth.

In today's era of unprecedented change, continued reading is probably more necessary than in any time in history. Pastors must study just to be able to communicate in our increasingly sophisticated society. And electronic competition demands continuing competency even in small, rural, or isolated parishes.

Mark Rouch declares that:

All the complex demands of preaching, teaching, teaching, counsel-administration, and family living requires continual giving. A pastor's very survival depends upon a steady course of replenishment.¹

No minister can forever continue in school. Eventually he must become his own teacher, an independent student who reads for continued personal growth and increasingly professional competency. The increasing pressures of pastoral life cannot be used as an excuse for the neglect of reading, nor is the development of needed study patterns an impossible attainment. J. W. Sine observes:

Finding time for reading is no different from finding time for all other so-called nonessential good things to do. It involves the arrangement of old priorities, including TV. It involves developing a reading plan that fits one's needs, abilities, and interests, on a daily, or at least a weekly basis.²

Continued study can become a channel for the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit. As Cyril Barber aptly describes:

A well-balanced reading program will be used to inform, inspire, and instruct, and increase the

effectiveness of the Spirit-filled preacher of the gospel. Good books can help shape our ministry, strengthen our faith, and enrich our lives.³

WHO READS WHAT AND HOW MUCH?

It is not enough just to make reading and study a consistent part of our life-style. Today's ministry demands that reading encompass the broad areas necessary for balanced ministry to all the ages, areas, and needs of home, church, and community. Today's minister must be a competent generalist.

To establish such an essential scope of reading areas is a problem for every minister, as it was for the project from which this article springs. Educational and administrative leaders suggest basic areas, but do not agree on a universal formula. Pastoral libraries and various seminary listings proved valuable. A survey of all books reviewed in *Christianity Today*, over a five-year period, added to a final list of basic areas.

The following 26 needed areas were finally established and included in a questionnaire mailed to selected Nazarene pastors: Administration, Bible Translations, Biography, Christian Education, Commentaries, Counseling, Cults, Devotion, Eschatology, General Bible Studies, Church History, Holiness, Marriage, Literature, Mission, NWMS Reading Books, New Testament Studies, Old Testament



*George Rice is Field Representative for the Nazarene Publishing House



Photo by Crandall Vail

Studies, Personal Growth, Preaching, Psychology, Sermons, Stewardship, Theology, and Worship. An "Other" category was included so that any pastor could write in any specialized area of reading interest.

The three variable factors measured were: educational background, years of experience, and full-time or bivocational ministerial status. Education was divided into ministerial preparation through *Home Study Course*, *Bible College*, *College*, *Seminary*, and *Other* (training beyond seminary).

The Experience Variable

Since years of experience was a chosen variable, the familiar "career crises" years were selected. Pastors were sent the questionnaire who had been ordained in 1977, 1972, 1965, 1960, 1955, 1950, and 1945. Seventy-one percent of these pastors responded to three letters from the writer. There was no appreciable difference in responses of those with differing educational backgrounds.

The compilation of a mailing list pointed up a serious concern. Fourteen percent of those ordained in 1977 were no longer serving as Nazarene pastors or associates just one year later. Dr. Super's "entry crisis" shock was dramatically proven. Similarly, the ordination class of 1972, with eight years' average length of ministry, showed a 41 percent attrition rate in just six years.

A comparison with the denominational statistics as to the size of churches served helped to confirm the writer's assumption that the selected list was representative of all Nazarene pastors.

The study showed that one-third of Nazarene pastors were relative novices, having served an average of just three to four years. Thirteen percent had prepared for ministry by taking the course of study, 12 percent had attended Bible college, 45 percent were college graduates, another 30 percent had gone farther for seminary training.

Holiness proved to be the favorite reading area, then NWMS reading books, commentaries, devotional books, and sermons. Church history, literature, and worship books were the most neglected of the list of 26 areas.

The Education Variable

Forty-five percent of Home Course of Study ministers had read an average of one book unit in all areas during a year, compared with 57 percent for Bible college graduates. Exactly 64 percent for both college and seminary graduates had read a book in each area.

The average number of books read, from all areas, was 29 for Home Study Course ministers, 36 for Bible college, 40 for College trained ministers, and 46 for seminary graduates. No effort was made to ascertain the quality, comprehension, retention, or application of the books read, though this would comprise a worthy study. The research also purposely omitted any study of the growing areas of electronic aids, such as cassette tapes, video cassettes, and other tools.

Many items of interest are not visible in the mere citing of averages. For example, four Home Study Course graduates read more than two books a week during the year, while six seminary graduates honestly answered that they read fewer than five books during the entire year.

The Bivocational Variable

The bivocational factor proved to be a vital variable. Twenty-three percent of pastors worked full or part time to supplement their salaries.

A second job reduced the reading of Home Study Course pastors by only 19 percent, of Bible College graduates by 37 percent, and of seminary trained men by more than 40 percent. College trained men read, on the average, exactly the same number of books whether they were bivocational or able to give full time to ministry.

COMPETENCIES AND NEEDS

Pastors were asked to name their first, second, and third areas of strength and competence. *Holiness* was the number one selection of most men. *Administration* and *Counseling* were cited as highest areas of competence by both the Home Study Course and the beyond seminary groups. All those who responded were alike in doing significant reading in their self-perceived areas of competency and strength. Perhaps this was one of the reasons for that competency. Surprisingly, a greater percentage of Home Study Course graduates read in their areas of weakness and need than did the most highly trained pastors.

Administration, the practice of operating a local church, was named as the greatest area of need and weakness by all groups. It had been expected that this would be the case with beginning pastors in their period of "career entry" shock. But the conclusions of veteran pastors that this was still an unresolved problem area for them reveals more than a surface lack of techniques.

More than one-half of all pastors predicted that a summary list of the best basic books in each of the 26 areas prepared by college and seminary professors would be "extremely helpful." The same percentage saw great value in an annual listing of the best new books in each area.

The writer's first conclusion from this project is that Nazarene pastors need to read more. The responses of hundreds of men who regularly read a book a week is encouraging. The dozens who read an average of nearly two books per week is challenging. But such readers were the exception.

This study points also to the need for a greater concentration on preparation for the practical aspects of ministerial training in all levels of clerical training.

Denominational publishers may need to intensify efforts to get needed books from all areas into the hands of pastors. Denominational leaders and all educational institutions must challenge and encourage pastors to greater effort in continuing education.

Every minister, however, is ultimately responsible for his own intellectual growth. No one else can

force him or her to read, and no pressures can keep the minister from this part of the task for long if it has the proper priority. Such a perspective of life-long learning will prepare the minister, as Rouch describes, to live that quality of life characterized by openness to oneself, to others, and to the world, which lets learning occur anywhere, anytime, using whatever data may be available and appropriate . . . often with no classroom, no educational institution, no teacher, no formal curriculum or course plan.⁴

Dr. Eugene L. Stowe emphasizes this truth in his challenging guidebook for Nazarene ministers:

There is no graduation from the school of learning for the pastor who serves his Lord with maximum effectiveness . . . Even the most eloquent preacher cannot consistently minister without a carefully constructed study program. There is no time clock to punch at the church, or no daily production accounting to give. Lacking these mechanical motivators, ministers must be self-starters, who rely on a strong sense of commitment to these serious responsibilities of shepherding to keep them consistent with their study habits. ✎

FOOTNOTES

1. Mark Rouch, *Competent Ministry, a Guide to Continuing Education* (Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1974), p. 13.
2. J. W. Sine, "A Time to Read," *Christianity Today*, Vol. XXII, September 8, 1978, p. 12.
3. Cyril Barber, *The Minister's Library* (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979), p. XI (Introduction).
4. Rouch, p. 23.
5. Eugene L. Stowe, *The Ministry of Shepherding* (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, Kansas City, 1976), pp. 70 and 178.

WHAT COULD YOU DO WITH \$200?

About 15 years ago, when a lot of us were getting car allowances for the first time, Dallas Mucci had the notion that a lot of preachers needed a book allowance, more. He wrote about that in the *Preacher's Magazine*.

I dropped a strong hint about same to my church board, but they "dropped" it too.

Mucci's idea is still a good one. And here's another good idea—how about bucking for a periodical allowance? Suppose your church budgeted \$200 for you to spend on needed periodicals. You could subscribe to two or three items in each of the following categories.

A. Since you need to know what's going on in the world you need—

1. A good newspaper (about \$75.00 per year).
2. A good news magazine (about \$30.00 per year).

B. Since you need to know what's going on in your denomination you need—

1. Your official denominational magazine, *Herald of Holiness*, *Wesleyan Advocate*, etc. (less than \$5.00)

2. Your denominational missions magazine.

C. As a minister you need professional resources:

1. *The Preacher's Magazine*
2. Other professional publications, such as *Leadership*, *Pulpit Digest*, *Journal of Pastoral Counseling*, etc.

D. Since you are a lifelong student, you need one or two scholarly journals.

1. The Wesleyan Theological Society Journal should come first.

2. Go to a nearby college or seminary and peruse the journals in the library and take your pick.

E. Since you are a part of the larger church, you need a general Christian periodical or two such as *Christianity Today*, *Eternity*, or even the *Wittenburg Door*.

F. Do you suppose they could raise that periodical budget to \$250? There are still some more publications . . .

—The Editor

WHAT OREGON PASTORS READ AND LIKED DURING THE 1979-80 CHURCH YEAR

- Anderson & James: *The Management of Ministry*
Arn, Dr. Win: *Church Growth Handbook*
Autler, Albert: *Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit*
Baumann, J. Daniel: *An Introduction to Contemporary Preaching*
Baughman, Ray: *The Abundant Life*
Baxter, J. Sidlow: *Christian Holiness Restudied and Restated*
Bellow, Saul: *To Jerusalem and Back*
Bonhoeffer: *Cost of Discipleship*
Bounds, E. M.: *The Ineffable Glory*
Brokke: *Saved by His Life*
Bubna, Don: *Building People*
Buckingham, Jamie: *Coping with Criticism*
Buckingham, Jamie: *Risky Living*
Christianson, Larry: *The Renewed Mind*
Conway, Jim: *Men in Mid-life Crisis*
Coole/Baldwin: *Love, Acceptance, Forgiveness*
Culbertson: *Living Portraits from the Old Testaments*
Day, Richard Elsworth: *Man of Like Passion*
DeHann, M. R.: *The Jew and Palestine in Prophecy*
Denny, Randal: *Do It Again, Lord*
DeVos, Rich: *A Message for Christians*
Dobson, James: *Family Under Fire*
Dobson, James: *Focus on the Family*
Dudley, Carl: *Making the Small Church Grow*
Cunnam, Marie: *Be Your Whole Self*
Engel, James: *How Can I Get Them to Listen?*
Engstrom-Dayton: *The Art of Management for Christian Leaders*
Engstrom, Ted W.: *The Making of a Christian Leader*
Feucht: *Everyone a Minister*
Fisher, Fred: *The Sermon on the Mount*
Foster, Richard: *Celebration of Discipline*
Giblin, Les: *How You Can Have Confidence and Power*
Gothard, Bill: *Basic Church Ministry*
Gowan, Donald: *Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*
Greathouse, Wm.: *From the Apostles to Wesley*
Greene: *Evangelism in the Early Church*
Guideposts Associates, Inc.: *Parting Is Not Forever*
Hoge & Roozen: *Understanding Church Growth and Decline, 1950-1978*
Howard, D. R.: *Rebirth of Our Nation*
Howard, J. Grant: *The Trauma of Transparency*
Hurn, Ray: *Finding Your Ministry*
Hyde: *Dedication and Leadership*
Keller, Phillip: *A Look at the Good Shepherd*
Kilgore: *How Much a Debtor*
Kraft, Charles: *Christianity in Culture*
Kung, H.: *On Being a Christian*
Lewis, C. S.: *The Joyful Christian*
Maltz, Max: *Psycho-cybernetics and Self-fulfillment*
Mavis, W. C.: *Advancing the Small Church*
McGavran, Donald: *Ethnic Realities and the Church*
Menninger: *Whatever Happened to Sin?*
Metz, Donald: *Studies in Biblical Holiness*
Michener, J. A.: *The Source*
Mitchell, Curtis: *Praying Jesus' Way*
Murray, Andrew: *Confession and Forgiveness*
Murray, Andrew: *The Ministry of Intercession*
Murray, Andrew: *The School of Obedience*
Nirenberg, J.: *Getting Through to People*
O'Connor, Elizabeth: *Call to Commitment*
Ogilvie, Lloyd: *Autobiography of God*
Ogilvie, Lloyd: *Drumbeat of Love*
Orr, W. W.: *A Layman's Guide to Understanding the Bible*
Ortlund, Anne: *Up with Worship*
Parker, J. I.: *Knowing God*
Parker/St. Johns: *Prayer Can Change Your Life*
Parrott, Leslie: *Renewing the Spirit of Revival*
Polston, Don: *Living Without Losing*
Purkiser-Taylor-Taylor: *God, Man, and Salvation*
Ritchie, George G.: *Return from Tomorrow*
Roberts, Francis: *My Haste, My Beloved*
Schaeffer, Francis: *Death in the City*
Schaeffer, Francis: *How Should We Then Live?*
Schuller, R.: *Your Church Has Real Possibilities*
Schwartz, David: *The Magic of Big Thinking*
Smith, Bailey: *Real Evangelism*
Smith, Bob: *When All Else Fails—Read the Directions*
Stapleton, Ruth Carter: *The Gift of Inner Healing*
Stedman, Ray: *Birth of the Body*
Stedman, Ray: *Riches in Christ*
Stowe, Eugene: *The Ministry of Shepherding*
Swindall, C. R.: *Hand Me Another Brick*
Taylor, Richard: *Life in the Spirit*
ten Boom, Corrie: *This Day Is the Lord's*
Thielicke, Helmut: *How the World Began*
Towner, Jason: *Jason Loves Jane*
Trobisch: *I Married You*
Tuttle, Robert: *John Wesley—His Life and Theology*
Underwood, Barbara: *Hostage to Heaven*
VonLoemensch, W.: *Luther's Theology of the Cross*
Wagner, C. Peter: *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*
Walker: *Courage for Crisis Living*
Watts, I.: *Discourses on the Love of God*
Webber, Robert: *Common Roots: A Call to Evangelical Maturity*
Welch, Reuben: *We Really Do Need to Listen*
Wiersbe, Warren: *The Best of A. W. Tozer*
Wiley, H. Orton: *The Epistle to the Hebrews*
Williamson, Audrey: *Love Is the Greatest*
Willimon, Wm.: *Worship as Pastoral Care*
Wilson, Carl: *With Christ in the School of Disciple Building*
Wise, Robert: *When There Is No Miracle*
Wiseman, Neil: *Innovative Ideas for Pastors*
Wynkoop, Mildred: *Theology of Love*
Zodiat: *To Love Is to Live*

—Submitted by Floyd L. Schwanz

MINISTERIAL



HALF-LIFE



by Robert D. Hempel

Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Hutchinson, Kansas

"Here lies the mind of John Doe, who at age 30 stopped thinking." or so says the inscription on the gravestone in the Great Books ad. "That is it! I am educated," is another way of saying, "I have stopped learning; I'm on my way to obsolescence."

I have a friend who is an officer in a large data center which had ordered a huge computer. IBM took three years to deliver it. He said that by the time they received it, the computer was almost obsolete. Two newer models gleamed in the catalog, and their "new" computer was a discontinued item before it had its first button pushed.

Doctors, nurses, teachers, and a host of others are aware of how rapidly knowledge is changing and how quickly things become obsolete.

Nuclear scientists talk about "half-life." Occupational "half-life" is based on the assumption that enough new developments, techniques, and knowledge evolve in a short period of time, say 5-15 years, that a person becomes roughly half as competent to do the job for which his or her initial training prepared him or her.

These things are serious enough when they relate to medicine or science, but when they relate to the reaching of our world for Christ, they become catastrophic. True, our message has not changed, as "Jesus

Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever!" Methods do, and must, change, however, if we are to meet our world's needs.

Tools must be sharpened and improved. It used to be that a hammer, a pair of pliers, and a crescent wrench were all that were needed to do many jobs, but today, we have refined and sophisticated our tools until we can do a better job with specialized tools refined for a specific task. Like the carpenter and the mechanic, we must upgrade our tools if we are to keep abreast with the demands of our day.

I have now completed 35 years of full-time ministry. I am more convinced than ever before that continuing education is an ever present need of the "growing minister" who would serve a "growing people!"

My denomination and the Department of Education have become increasingly aware of this need and have been developing a prolific offering of opportunities for continued ministerial education at the district, zone, and general level. Other churches offer varying forms of continuing education. Our educational institutions have sought to make their offerings attractive to the man (or woman), at the grass roots level, who cannot "pull up stakes" and return to the traditional classroom setting. In

most recent years the development of Doctor of Ministry programs which require only limited time to be spent on campus have boomed.

The growing minister can learn from outstanding educators and ministers brought into his area through extension classes and seminars. In a two-year period, our community has offered seminars by Lyle Schaller and Bruce Larson, as well as Robert Schuller's "possibility Principles for Church Growth" film seminar. While there will be some things in every case that are not acceptable, nor usable in your own setting, these things can stimulate your thinking and provoke personal and professional growth.

The multiplicity of cassette tapes available, in most every field of study, offer an ever present opportunity for learning. My denomination's "Ministers Tape Club" has proven an inspiration to me. I have learned that tapes offer a beautiful additive to the current 55 mph speed limit that appears to be with us for the foreseeable future. An otherwise tedious drive can become the occasion for a great learning experience with the automobile as the classroom and with minimal time demands. Mrs. Hempel and I found Dr. Howard Hendricks's lectures to seminary students a delightful companion on a recent late night trip.

The endless list of books and magazines available to today's minister offers an important means of learning. However, their mere presence on a bookshelf will not mean automatic ministerial growth. Quality time—not "Saturday night sermon crisis time"—must be reserved for reading if the greatest benefits are to be received.

Many educational institutions have recognized the need for continuing education for people who cannot return to the traditional campus and ever greater and unique efforts are being made to meet this need. The use of the telephone hookup with the classroom setting has offered the opportunity to participate in unique study with well-known scholars right in one's own city. Along with this, the ever improving educational channels on TV frequently offer worthwhile materials.

Perhaps the most stimulating and rewarding continuing education for me, personally, began when I was nearing my mid-40s. I had graduated from Northwest Nazarene College in the spring before the opening of the Nazarene Theological Seminary the next fall. Having worked my way through college in a day when government grants or loans were unheard of, I considered I already owed too much on my education to incur more debt, and thus moved into full-time work, first as an associate, and then as a senior pastor.

Although I liked to read and did much personal study, and although my work was very rewarding and I enjoyed a good measure of success, yet

I often felt the need for further study. I was ever more frequently being confronted with areas of my ministry with which I felt I could be doing a better job. My reading kept me aware that there were studies that could better equip me.

Leaving the pastorate and returning to school at middle age presented obvious problems. Discussing the matter with some of my fellow ministers, in the city of Spokane, Wash., I found they felt a like need. We decided to explore the possibility of picking up some work at a local religious college on a course-by-course basis, without necessarily working towards a graduate degree. Perhaps

We can make learning a lifelong adventure

the latter idea was defensive—we weren't sure if we could return to the classroom where we would need to keep up with a younger, well-trained student body, achieving the required grade point necessary for degree work.

I chose work in the field of counseling. I soon found that whereas the greater part of the students in my classes were truly much younger and were taking their graduate study right on the heels of their college work which provided them a strong base, yet my years of experience in working

with people gave me some advantages that they obviously did not have. I found, as well, that my motivation for learning the subject was more broadly based than that of many of my younger classmates.

Although, I did not begin with a graduate degree in mind, I found I was enjoying my work. I found I was understanding myself better. It was helping me to better understand and help my people. I began using the things I was learning, almost immediately. My congregation was pleased to have their pastor a "growing minister" and offered their encouragement with little or no criticism. Although working only at one class per term, it soon became apparent that the degree was within reach, and I began to work toward it purposefully. It took six years to accomplish the task, yet it has been rewarding for me personally, for my family, and for my parishioners.

In conclusion, I would propose that the minister who would continue "growing" will probably attempt to participate regularly in various learning opportunities. Many church boards can be encouraged to have an annual budget item for continuing ministerial education. As they reap the fruits of a ministry that is vibrant and growing, they will consider it a great investment!

Let us never succumb to the idea, "I can't afford it," "I don't have the time," "I'm too old," or a hundred and one other lame excuses. We can make learning a lifelong adventure, if we will. We do not have to be victims of ministerial "half-life." 

WHERE IS GOD?

The SS hung two Jewish men and a boy before the assembled inhabitants of the camp. The men died quickly but the death struggle of the boy lasted half an hour. 'Where is God? Where is he?' a man behind me asked. As the boy, after a long time was still in agony on the rope, I heard the man cry again, 'Where is God now?' And I heard a voice within me answer, 'Here He is—He is hanging here on this gallows ...'

—John Shea

AN INVENTORY FOR SELF-EVALUATION

by James Gunn

*Consultant for Professional Leader
Development of the Presbyterian Church
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Sometimes a simple instrument can be helpful in providing new insight or perspective on a particular attitude, situation, or problem.

The following instrument is designed for professional church workers to uncover attitudes toward and perspectives on one's continuing development in the practice of ministry. It is not intended to be exhaustive since it does not deal with many of the factors in church systems which significantly affect motivation for and satisfaction in a growing competence in the tasks and relationships which ministry in the church involves. It will, however, raise to visibility some of the important factors which do influence the degree to which a minister or church educator moves toward or away from a lifetime pattern of growth and a sense of being well and fully used in his various situations of ministry.

The inventory has not been tested with any sample groups so that comparison with professional church workers generally is not possible. Its purpose is to help you "flag" attitudes and situations which significantly affect professional growth. It is a "think piece" only to stimulate your reflection. It naturally assumes certain values (e.g., that growth in skill and competency in the practice of ministry is good) and it implies that certain situations are preferable (e.g., that to have funds available for continuing education is a good thing). Its significance and value is whatever you decide to attach to it after you have taken the inventory. If you score it, your score means whatever you interpret it to mean.

Check the space that comes closest to expressing your attitude, opinion, or judgment. One question has a few blanks to fill in. Directions for scoring follow the instrument.

1. I am conscious of a helpful and creative encouragement (pressure) to continue my growth in professional competence

	<i>Consist- ently</i>	<i>Occa- sionally</i>	<i>Never</i>
from family	_____	_____	_____
from congregation or agency	_____	_____	_____
from district	_____	_____	_____
from colleagues	_____	_____	_____

2. I feel that my personal commitments, values and goals are in comfortable agreement with the commitments, values, and goals.

	<i>75% or better</i>	<i>40% to 75%</i>	<i>40% or less</i>
of my congregation (or church agency)	_____	_____	_____
of my district	_____	_____	_____
of the denomination	_____	_____	_____
of valued colleagues	_____	_____	_____

3. I feel that I am consciously trying to gather learning from and to improve the actual practice of my ministry through experimentation, private reflection, and consulting with colleagues

- _____ most of the time
- _____ every now and then
- _____ hardly ever

4. I feel that out of my experience in ministry I have made a contribution to the theory and practice of ministry generally

- _____ significantly
- _____ on occasion
- _____ probably not
- _____ haven't learned anything worth sharing

5. I feel that my work in ministry where I am now is valued

- _____ by a significant group
- _____ by enough people to make it worthwhile
- _____ by hardly anyone

6. I feel that what I am trying to accomplish in my ministry is adequately understood (whether or not it is valued or appreciated)

- _____ by a significant group
- _____ by enough to keep me going
- _____ by hardly anyone
- _____ not even my family is clear on what I'm trying to accomplish

7. My efforts to change what is expected of me in my ministry and to put into use newly acquired skills have been successful.

- _____ usually
- _____ sometimes
- _____ almost never
- _____ haven't really tried to change my role expectations

8. I feel that I am using myself, my training, my interests, my personality, my skills and competencies fully and effectively in my ministry.

- a great deal of the time
- off and on
- almost never

9. I feel that I am part of a team of colleagues in ministry sharing goals, experiences, frustrations, and accomplishments.

- to a significant degree
- from time to time
- hardly ever

10. I have regular and reliable ways to get useful feedback and evaluation on the different aspects of my ministry.

	Yes	<i>Spasmodically</i>	No
Preaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leading worship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administration and management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Committee and task force work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpersonal relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illness and grief situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moderating or chairing meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuing professional growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilitating and supporting others' work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. I feel that I have clearly identified my strengths, skills, and competencies, and know which ones I want to develop further.

- to a satisfactory degree
- somewhat
- hardly at all

12. I have specific professional career and personal growth goals I want to accomplish in the next few years.

- Yes
- Possibly
- No
- Haven't thought about it

13. I have begun to develop a plan for achieving my goals in ministry for the next few years.

- Concrete plans
- Considering some possibility
- No definite plans

14. In the last three years I have participated in specific learning or training events which were for the purpose of improving the practice of some aspects of my ministry.

- 5 or more events
- 2 to 4 events
- 1 event
- None

15. List the events counted in No. 14, above, and indicate the particular skill, competence, area of knowledge, or professional problem with which the event dealt.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____

Can you see any pattern or focus in your professional development emerging from the events you chose to participate in during the last three years?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No—haphazard

16. My congregation's (or agency's) budget provides adequate funds for my participation in some form of continuing education each year.

- Yes
- Not actually, but funds available
- No

17. My district has policies and programs which encourage me to continue to acquire new skills and competencies.

- Yes
- Some talk about it
- No

18. I have available to me when I need it adequate information on study and training events and programs in the area of continuing education for ministry.

- Adequate
- Occasionally
- Seldom

19. I feel that I take or make significant blocks of time for my continued professional growth.

- Usually
- Sometimes
- Too busy just coping to have any time for special study or training
- Time is provided in my call, but I don't take it.

SCORING:

Most questions and subquestions have a series of three (3) spaces, one of which you will have checked. Give yourself 10 if your check is in the top or left-hand space; 5 if in the middle; and, 0 if in the bottom or right hand space. If a question has four (4) spaces and your check is in the fourth, subtract 5.

Highest possible score is 380.



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*Perhaps the staff person a growing pastor needs most is
a research associate. Here's how to get one for free.*

NEEDED: A RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

by Culver H. Nelson

The average preacher does a lot of information-gathering, and is generally well read and widely knowledgeable. My problem has been how to get at this information when I need it. How does one make a minister's study truly a "study"—that is, a real resource center where he or she can lay hands on what is needed?

In the face of these problems, I concluded long ago that my needs called for a research associate. The trouble is our church *budget* did not. I used to envy the "big city preachers" whose book prefaces always thanked some person or persons who had given "invaluable time and assistance in preparing these sermons [or whatever] for publication."

And then I concluded: in every congregation, not just the big ones, there is someone eager to volunteer time and energy toward this end, someone who would really enjoy working with the minister in this way.

Nearly two decades ago, I found this person in my congregation: a recently retired university librarian. She had exactly the skills I was looking for; she had time on her hands; she knew how to put together an information system, and, more important, make it retrievable.

I confess that our first year together was a tough one. She didn't know what I wanted. More to the point, I didn't know what I needed. Eventually we hammered out a system that has been enormously helpful. In the bargain, so she has told me again and again, "These have been some of the most satisfying years of my life."

First, we put together a filing system, several systems really. It began with a general file (now some five legal-sized drawers) stocked with magazine clippings, book references, anecdotal material, and

the like. The filing method is that of the Dewey decimal system. This coordinates with my own library and every other library. More valuable still, it gathers like materials in the same approximate location. In this system, retrieval is significantly increased over an alphabetically organized system.

There is a second file, reserved exclusively for sermon preparation, with a folder for each Sunday in the upcoming year. Another section is for "beyond the year ahead"—an inventory of ideas, suggestions, sermon topics, and titles.

The summer, or a good part of it, I spend developing sermon themes for each Sunday of the coming year. Rather consistently, I follow the Christian calendar and seasons. This has meant better balanced preaching; it tends to cover the full range of the gospel; it pretty well touches everyone in the congregation at least some of the time.

This presermon file means I am constantly "remembering the future." Whenever I open a book, read a magazine, share in an event of some significance, I am filling this file as well. Only rarely have I come to the week of preparing a sermon when my first problem was not what materials to eliminate. There is never a last-minute search and seizure.

There are two additional files: one for suggested teaching ideas and materials, another for my writing. Every pastor does a lot of teaching. Each of us does a good share of writing: parish paper, denominational publication, whatever. I have the added incentive of preparing a regular column for our local newspaper and its church page.

Now this is not a complicated system, but it *must* be kept up to date. That is, it must be constantly fed and kept in order.

Filling the Files

This is where a volunteer research associate comes in. Mine is a person who loves to read. Each week she goes through several books, perhaps 20 magazines, an assortment of miscellaneous materials.

And I, like most ministers, read several books a week and a number of magazines and journals. My own study is enlarged by hers, for she calls to my attention books that should be read and others I need not bother with. She clips magazine articles which I read and then file or dispose of.

When I am engaged in a certain emphasis—whether in preaching, teaching, or writing—she will ferret out for me resources that I might otherwise neglect or not know of at all.

Like the filing system, our working together must be kept up to date. I meet with her once a week for about two hours. We share materials and ideas, go over future areas of concern, discuss recent events, and keep the files in order.

Lest anyone suppose my own time in study and research is shortened through having such an associate, or that she ghost-writes sermons or teaching materials, it's just not so. If anything, I've worked even harder at being well informed and a knowledgeable 20th-century minister.

But the work has been straight to the point, with increased orderliness and selectivity, and much less

of the trivial or irrelevant. And I have been able to make of my study a "study"—a resource center in which I am comfortably at home.

For others who may want to seek out a volunteer research associate, I share a few suggestions. Whether the church is large or small, there will be someone who is ready, and probably eager, to serve in this way. There are obvious advantages to recruiting a retired librarian, schoolteacher, or newspaper or media person. But a colleague of mine, with whom I shared this idea, found a person (whom we once euphemistically called a housewife) who simply wanted something to do that would stretch her mind and keep her intellectually alive.

Of course, the two persons, minister and volunteer, must have both intellectual compatibility and spiritual rapport from the outset. Even so, time must be allowed to develop a creative working relationship.

I've found it necessary to have precisely stated purposes, agreed-on procedures, and a clear understanding of the role of each. My associate does not do my work for me; she does facilitate the work so that I can do a better job. And I repeat the importance of keeping everything up to date, which demands faithfulness to a weekly conference. 

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Cartoon by Master s Agency

THE VIEW FROM THE HOSPITAL BED

by Jim Cummins, *Pastor, Central Church of the Nazarene, Orlando, Florida*

As I thanked Erv and Evelyn for the small red book, little did I realize how important it would be to me. For the next year the Lord was to use *My Daily Meditation*, by John Henry Jowett, to prepare me for what the following year held. For a year, two major themes kept jumping out at me: God's sovereignty, and my commitment. It seemed as if I read about them every day.

As I read I also dealt with those two themes in my mind and practical living. I was growing in my personal commitment and my understanding of God's sovereignty.

About a year after the beginning of my encounter with John Henry Jowett, I was in the hospital for the removal of a small lump, and the chances of anything other than a routine two-day hospital stay were remote. The surgeon had said it looked "clean" when he removed it.

I was dressed in my levis and tennis shoes ready to go home. I did not understand the long delay. Little did I know that the doctors were in the nurses' station flipping coins to see who had to come in and break the news to me.

Finally, our family doctor came in, leaned against the wall and said, "Jim, I have some bad news. The lump we removed was malignant."

My mind immediately flashed in a three-word sequence—Ma-

lignant! Cancer! Death! Almost immediately I remembered my year's training—God is in control of everything and I am committed to Him. My mind was eased, I was relaxed and I waited for the next sentence.

"We will start in the morning to see how far it has spread and what kind it is."

Judy and I discussed how to tell the children. As we told our four children, there were tears shed, and a lot of questions to answer, but amid it all we knew that God was in control. We all knew the possibilities and hid none of them, but shared freely with each other. From the 8-year old to the 14-year old, we felt a calm and a peace about the whole situation. God was in control.

That evening after all the company had gone and the lights were low, I began to reflect over the events of the day. What would I have changed had I known this was coming? My level of commitment? No, for God had assured me that it was up to date. What a relaxed feeling to live in a totally committed state!

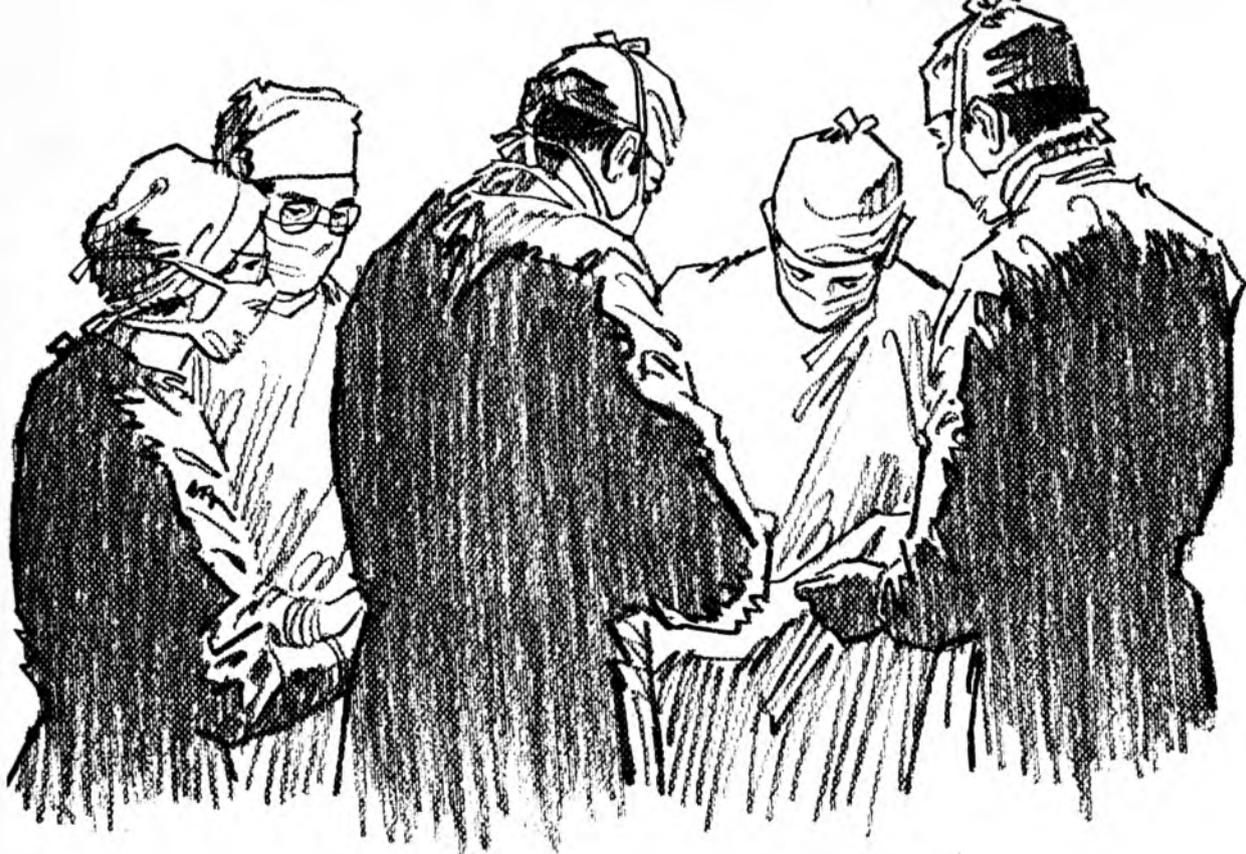
My family? Only to have spent more quality time with them. For the past nine years, I had taken off on Saturdays to spend with my family. I probably could have squeezed out a few more half-days off to have taken in an afternoon in the park or a special ball game at the professional field.

What about my priorities? For years I had struggled with these. Finally, I had a workable set. God first, Jim Cummins second, family third, church fourth, and community fifth. I knew God would be first. But myself second, I struggled. Finally, after several months, through scriptures God began to point out that I must minister from the overflow of my life. If I was not physically, spiritually, and emotionally sound I could not be at my best for family, church, or community. I must put myself second in order to minister to my fullest potential.

There were scriptures in abundance to assure me that my family was third. How could I expect to operate a church if I could not guide my family? The church being fourth seemed a long way down on the list. But just as a woodsman sharpens his ax so must time be spent with God and self and family. The church would not suffer, but rather benefit from that priority.

The community would be the last, but I must give it proper importance to lift up Jesus Christ.

What would I change? Probably nothing! It was a good feeling to know that God was in control. Just to know that everything was clear. I had shared at the bedside of hundreds of my parishioners. Now I must put into practice what I had told them. "Relax in the Lord!" I pulled up the sheets around my neck and did just that!



The doctors were flipping coins to see who had to break the news to me.

The new dawn brought new light in the sky and new light in my own life. As I read my usual Bible readings plus a chapter from the Psalms and Proverbs, chapter 18 and verse 24 of Proverbs grabbed me. "But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother" (TLB).^{*} I underlined it, circled it, and put a star by it. It was new for the day.

As the day began, so did the countless tests: blood from the arm, a shot between each toe and cuts in the top of the feet, X-rays, scans, and more blood work. What lessons I was going to learn over the next three months! I had only *thought* my most valuable lessons were learned in seminary and my doctoral program. The most valuable lessons I was to learn would be learned from a hospital bed.

The first lesson I learned from the bed was: *Commitment can be a growing thing.* There is a time for a commitment to a job, a spouse, a church, and to Christ. There is also a great need to con-

tinue the growth of the commitment. Commitment that does not grow soon becomes stale and loses its vitality. Then it becomes apathy.

Had the doctors not had a commitment to continue learning to know more about cancer, they probably would have suggested "blood letting" or some "garlic around the neck." But they had been building their commitment to mankind. They had read. They had researched. They had prayed. My commitment to my flock must "continue to grow."

Lesson number two was: *Commitment takes over when human eyes are closed.* I had found that no new commitments had to be made when the verdict had been given. That same level of commitment took over during the days following the second surgery. For several days, no food entered my mouth and no prayers came out. In and out of a conscious state, my commitment was still strong even though I could not verbalize it.

Lesson three was: *For teamwork to work, the team must understand the purpose.* The nurses' aide did not understand how important she was. Without her, the atomic-powered, million-dollar Gallium scan machine in my room would have done me no good at all. I went back and told her. She was impressed and excited. She was really needed. The man in the pew, the child at home, the wife, the secretary, the staff member, the teacher, do they all know the purpose and feel a part of the team? For teamwork, they must all know.

As I reflect back across the weeks in the hospital, the six weeks of radiation treatments, the days of recuperation, I am thankful for lessons I learned. The growing minister learns from any situation, any person, or anything. And some of the greatest lessons may be learned when we are helpless.



^{*}From the *The Living Bible*, © 1971 by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

PREACHER, TAKE HEART

by W. E. McCumber

*A voice says, "Cry!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the
flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower
fades,
when the breath of the Lord
blows upon it;
surely the people is grass.
The grass withers, the flower
fades;
but the word of our God will
stand for ever.*

(Isaiah 40:6-8, RSV)*

The preacher, more than anyone else, and before anyone else, needs to hear the word of the Lord. For he also is one of the people, one with the people, as undeserving of mercy, as deserving of wrath, as all of them. What God has to say is addressed first of all to him, and only then to them.

In that awareness, let us hear what God is saying in Isaiah 40:6-8 to those of us who are called to the task of preaching. I do not know of any passage in the Old Testament with which a preacher can so readily identify. To begin with, the passage contains

I. A mood of urgency: "A voice says, 'Cry!'"

"Cry" here is equivalent to "preach." In the face of the evil and anguish and judgment by which the nation is overwhelmed, the prophet has an inward burning urgency to preach, a compulsion to cry aloud some warning

and healing word in order that men might hear, repent, and escape destruction.

Every true preacher knows well this mood, when a voice within, God's voice he believes, commands him to speak. And the mood is urgent because the times are desperate. Moral problems, defiant of solution, are threatening doom to the people. Something needs to be said—but what? The mood of urgency is countered by

II. A sense of inadequacy: "What shall I cry?"

Let us hear the force of the pronoun: "What shall I cry?" When the brainiest and most influential leaders of the nation have pondered the appalling conditions, have proffered their wisest suggestions, who am I that I should address the confusion and calamity? The preacher who is gripped with an urgency to speak knows well, too, this enervating sense of personal inadequacy.

The adverb weighs as heavily on the soul as does the pronoun. "What shall I cry?" Has not every possible word been spoken? Have not the choicest philosophies, psychologies, and theologues been set forth as hopeful panaceas, only to fail? What can the preacher, out of his own limited and crippled thinking, possibly say that has not already been stated and will not be utterly wasted?

To be sure, there is hope for us. Not in the words of men, but in a message from God. The voice that says "Cry" gives what is to be cried. The prophet's inadequacy is countered by

III. A message of permanency.

God speaks first to remind us of man's transient nature. "All flesh is grass." Like the grass of the field, man is "here today, gone tomorrow!" Springing up in life, clothed with beauty and marked with value, he will soon—

all too soon—be cut down to death. And to compound the frustration, it is the decree and action of God, himself, that brings men to their graves: "The grass withers, the flower fades, *when the breath of the Lord blows upon it*; surely the people is grass."

This is the grim fact that is pressed upon us at the dawn of each new day—we are closer now to death than we have ever been before.

Is this all? In this bewildering flux of death and decay, does nothing endure, can nothing redeem? The answer is yes: "The word of our God will stand forever."

The Word of God, deathless and imperishable, effectual and unailing, stands in sharp contrast to the fragile and fleeting beauty, power, and glory of man and his vaunted institutions. And this certainly means that if we are to escape sin, if we are to survive death, we must be allied with and grounded upon the sure Word of God!

Come to the New Testament. Come to the First Epistle of Peter. He writes to men who, like ourselves, had known an environment filled with crime, disease, ignorance, warfare, and enslavement. He writes to men who, like ourselves, had been caught like helpless flies in the web of sin, guilt, and death. And he says to them, "You were redeemed," "you have been born anew," "you have purified your souls." What transforming force brought about this change? ". . . through the living and abiding word of God; for 'All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord abides forever.' That word is the good news which was preached to you" (1:23-25, RSV).

The word of God that stands forever is the gospel—the good news that Christ died for our sins



W. E. McCumber
is the editor of
the *HERALD*
OF HOLINESS

PROFESSIONAL BIBLE READING IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH

by C. D. Acheson, *Pastor, Central Church of the Nazarene, Miami, Florida*

I don't know what took me so long—but I'm getting ahead of myself, let me start this way.

I moved to my very first full-time pastorate in 1962. I soon found it just as thrilling as I had expected it to be to dig into God's Word for the message He would have me deliver to my people. Subject material seemed endless and how I enjoyed my study time. Even more enjoyable was my preaching time. Delivering the message was and is most satisfying and fulfilling. However, after some time had passed, that initial thrill seemed to fade somewhat as I settled into a routine of searching for sermon texts and material. A while later the routine became very hard work, and the hard work became frustration. Now don't get me wrong—I did enjoy sermon preparation. However, looking back, perhaps "panic" would be a more accurate description of my feelings. The real frustration came in searching for a scripture that would "jell" into a sermon. The "panic" came when Saturday came and the sermon hadn't.

I was not aware, at the time, of how my devotional life was affected by this frustration. In retrospect, I now see that when I turned to the Word to find personal help and inspiration, subconsciously my mind would begin to whirl . . . "Just how can this scripture become a sermon?" It was not long until the joy of reading God's Word seemed to abate and become a chore. I was merely reading the Bible as a professional sermon-maker.

Something was wrong. Why was it difficult? Why did I feel guilty? Why didn't I want to read the Bible? Weren't preachers, of all people, supposed to look forward with anticipation to enthusiastic de-

vouring of the Word? Well, I had to be honest—I didn't!

Then, one day it happened! I made my discovery! It was an unusual day, one in which I really didn't have much to do. Call it what you will . . . a whim, perhaps, but I decided to start right then and there and read the Bible through. With a great amount of effort, I shut out of my mind studying, preaching, calling, and "administrivia" and began to read with no particular time in mind to stop.

Oh, what discoveries I made! Why, there were all the stories I had known from childhood! They were again speaking to me just as they had done those many years before. In my mind the pictures of Noah and the ark, Abraham and Isaac, Moses and the tablets, Samson and the lion, David and Goliath, and many more began to form, as I remembered pictures I had seen in my now frayed and misplaced Bible story book. All these stories began to take on new, but familiar, meaning to me. They spoke to me. I found myself devouring the Word with enthusiasm. After all, I wasn't on a sermon search—I was rediscovering the Bible for myself! It had been so long since it had really spoken to me. My life was being changed through personal, non-professional encounter with the Word.

I made another discovery, one that every preacher makes when he discovers the Bible for himself. I found that since I have allowed God's Word to speak to me personally, my preaching has taken on a new depth and meaning. No more routine, no more forced reading, and less "panic."

What a difference when you realize that a steady diet of mere professional Bible reading on sermon search-and-seizure missions can be hazardous to your spiritual health.



and rose again for our justification. In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has struck a blow at evil that can liberate man from sin's bondage and pluck him from death's grasp. Forgiveness, new life, peace with God and one another, climaxed by everlasting glory—this is the word of God through Jesus Christ to our wretched human situation. This is the message for the preacher and the people—the gospel!

In the light of this word, with its proven power for salvation, the mood of urgency which grips the preacher is not betrayed or destroyed by his inadequacy. He is a frail reed, an earthen vessel, but the message and its power are God's. He is the living channel, but the mighty stream of lifesaving water is poured out upon him and through him by God. In the worst of times, with this best of news, he can labor undaunted, knowing that the success of his

enterprise is not measured by the ability of the one who bears the message, but is assured by the authority of the One who creates and speaks the message.

*A voice says, Cry!
What shall I cry?
The word of our God!*

Amen.



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THE UGLY CLERGYMAN

by W. R. Watson, *Pastor,*
First Church of the Nazarene,
Muncie, Indiana

Not all ministers are "beautiful people."

As a group, we are endowed with a normal amount of physical attractiveness, social grace, and mental ability. Yet sometimes we men of the cloth form distorted mental pictures of our fellow clergymen—pictures that appear pretty grotesque.

Pete Predecessor

One of these rather weird acquaintances of us all is Pete Predecessor. He is unbelievably disorganized. When he moves to a new assignment, he leaves behind woefully inadequate records. He reported to the district that he had a hundred and eleventy-seven members, but when you arrive to take his place you can find only 59 bodies and three or four spirits. Furthermore, he sometimes makes you wonder if he really moved on. His spirit, and sometimes his body, seem to maintain a pretty strong contact with the congregation.

Sam Successor

Then, there's Sam Successor. You know him, don't you? He's the guy who comes to take your



place when either the Lord or the church sends you on to greener pastures.

He graciously puts you on his newsletter mailing list so you can keep abreast of what's happening. You find that in no time at all he has the church growing by leaps and bounds, when you struggled and sweat blood for years but couldn't "turn a tap." It seems like in just a few weeks he's won a dozen new families to the church. (He must be letting down the standards to grow that rapidly!)

Though you skimmed and stretched to make ends meet, the Board votes to build him a new parsonage and raises his salary \$30.00 a week.

Besides all this, he has the audacity to tamper with the perfect church machinery you had organized. He's leading the church in an entirely different direction than the one near and dear to your heart.

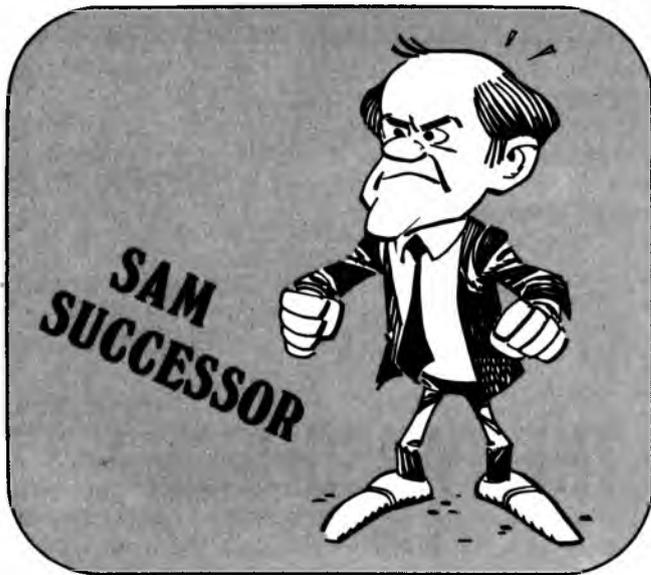
Archie Rival

Another ugly clergyman is Archie Rival. He pastors a neighboring church on the other side of town or over at Podunk Center. He's your competitor.

Good ol' Arch is pitted against you in all kinds of contests: Sunday School, subscription drives, membership gains, evangelistic outreach, and a dozen other things. He's determined to build his church in any way he can—and he'll even take some of your members if he gets a chance. He calls at the same hospitals you do, canvasses along the same streets, even runs his busses in your neighborhood. And you wonder if he knows the meaning of the word "ethics."

Admittedly, there's a bit of exaggeration in these descriptions. But too often some of these twisted mental pictures live and breed in our minds. Maybe, just maybe, part of their ugliness is directly proportional to the amount of our imagination.

Is there anything familiar to you about the men described above? There should be, because in some ways they resemble the guy who looks back at you from the mirror every morning. Each of us fills the role of all three of these personalities, at one time or another. Remembering this will make us more considerate and tolerant of one another.



You can improve the way you see your fellow ministers, make life more pleasant for yourself, and improve your own image by practicing the following "don'ts":

1. Don't live under a cloud of suspicion of others. It's a miserable and gloomy existence to go through life doubting the intentions of your collaborators. Most of them have good intentions. Their mistakes are usually of the head and not the heart. Most of the time there are no sinister motives behind their actions.

Don't be like the schoolteacher who noticed one little boy coloring everything in black. The boy drew black horses, black cows, and black barns. Disturbed about what was going on in his mind, she called a meeting of the little boy's parents, the principal of the school, and a psychiatrist. They finally got to the root of the problem—the only crayon he had was black.

2. Don't become defensive about your own ministry. Some people are so touchy they walk around like an accident looking for a place to happen. They are easily irritated. By dwelling on negative thoughts they become so oversensitive that a slight provocation can trigger a violent reaction. Defensiveness is a door to jealousy.

3. Don't become retaliatory when you are mistreated. Jesus taught His disciples to turn the other cheek, and we preach an experience that gives perfect love.

Most of us would not even consider overt retaliation. Yet there are subtle, hidden ways of striking back.

4. Don't make a federal case out of a local issue. The more you dwell on a particular problem or misunderstanding, the larger it seems to get. It feeds on attention, so starve it to death by dismissing it from your mind.

There are also some positive things you can do to improve your ministerial relationships. Do:

1. View the church as broader than your local congregation. Avoid the pitfall of thinking you have established the boundaries of the Kingdom.

Remember Elijah?

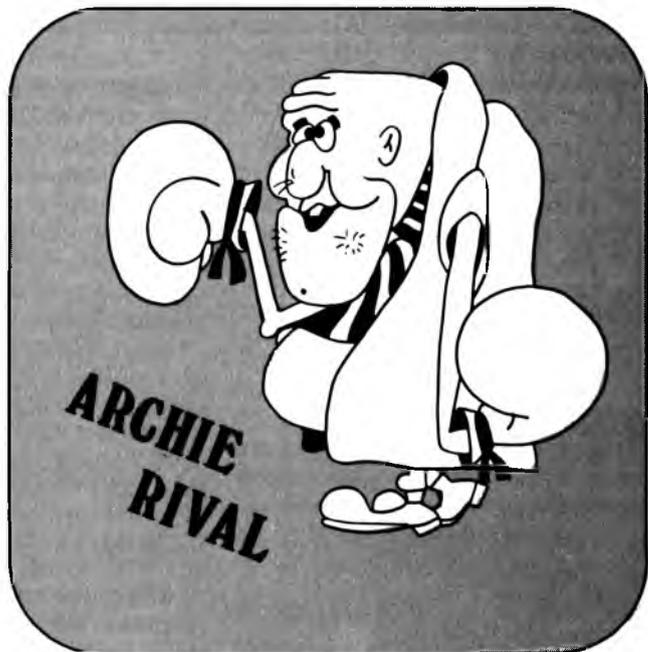
After he sulked under the juniper tree for a while, he holed up in a cave—convinced he was the only godly man left alive. God had to use some spectacular methods to show him there were at least 7,000 other men of God who hadn't bowed to Baal.

Keep out of Elijah's cave—and lead your people in Spirit-anointed cooperation with "those of like precious faith."

2. Practice the Golden Rule. It has never become outdated. It is still our Lord's command. And it is still the best way to improve human relationships.

When you put yourself in another person's place, you are less likely to want to "put him in his place." Remember—we are all a composite of Peter Predecessor, Sam Successor, and Archie Rival. So let's see others the way we'd like them to see us.

3. Communicate with your co-workers. It will help you avoid misunderstandings. Isolation builds walls of suspicion and mistrust. Most of us have to be known to be appreciated. And you can't get to know a person without open communication.



4. Keep reminding yourself that, as the apostle Paul said, "one plants, another waters, but God gives the increase." You are part of a team. Your calling is not to compete but to complement. Personalities differ, abilities are varied, methods are subject to modification, but we are working for a common purpose under the same Leader. And the glory is His, not ours.

Your fellow clergyman is not really ugly; he is merely human. That means he has imperfections and faults. But, then, so do you. So look beyond the surface blemishes; see him, through the eyes of Jesus, as your teammate in the greatest business in the world. Reuben Welch summed it up well in the title of his book: "We really do need each other." 

WEIGHT LOSS

AND

SELF-IMAGE IN THE PARSONAGE

Sometimes to **grow**,

a minister must **shrink**

by H. L. Hendrix, *Pastor, Mountain View Church of the Nazarene, Longmont, Colorado*

I was seated in a large auditorium with a layman friend waiting for a high school Baccalaureate to begin. On the platform sat an assortment of city, school, and ministerial dignitaries. My friend leaned over and whispered, "I can always tell who the minister is in a meeting like this."

"Oh, how's that?" I responded. "He's always the one with the paunch." Did you ever try to laugh and suck in your stomach at the same time? Several years have come and gone since then, and I have found his observation to be accurate more times than not.

It is no secret that the weight problem is epidemic. This fact can be easily proved by the number of books, magazine articles, commercial enterprises, and health clubs that have sprung up. There is big money in weight control. Pick up any magazine in your local supermarket. There you will find the latest, "new, fantastic, quick loss, high protein, low cholesterol, and still eat all you want" diet. The media is crowded with one magic formula after another to fight the never-ending battle of the bulge.

I am convinced that there are few places in society where the

problem is more widespread (no pun intended) than in the church parsonage. Now, granted, there are other qualities in the ministry that are of far greater importance than that of weight. However, it is something with which each member of the parsonage family must contend, and for more than one reason. Frequently where there is a weight problem, there is close behind a self-image problem. There are some physical features over which we have no control, but for most of us, weight is something that, at least theoretically, we can determine.

Weight control is a particular problem for the Christian ministry for a number of reasons.

There is the demand for entertainment.

It seems that, if we are not entertaining in our home, we are being entertained elsewhere. We are expected to attend all of the class parties, all the church dinners, and all the prayer breakfasts. This past year I made a special effort to record the year's activities on film. During our New Year's Eve watch night service, we had a showing of over 300 slides of the major fellowship events. To our surprise, every one

of them centered around a major eating event.

Irregular schedules and busy evenings play an important role.

Far too often the heavy schedule does not permit careful food planning. We grab a quick Big Mac, fries, and shake for lunch. We find very little time for deliberate and disciplined exercise. We can't afford a membership at the health spa or country club, and so here we are.

Another factor in fat in the parsonage is that of finances.

It is expensive to eat right. Some of the "correct eating plans" that are popular could very well put you in the poorhouse. Thus hot dogs, fried chicken, burritos, tacos, and hamburgers have too often become main staples. Greasy and high-carbohydrate foods are the most economical.

There are four particular reasons for the pastor to come to grips with his weight problem.

1. For Health's Sake. Although the amount of physical stress a pastor is involved in may vary considerably from man to man, the mental and emotional stress is there with which we must cope. Today's ministry practically de-



mands a healthy constitution. A medical doctor once told me that for every pound of weight added, there is an additional mile of capillaries through which the heart must pump blood. With pressure and stress working on us we don't need to tax our bodies with excess baggage.

2. For Your Wife's Sake. If the problem is great for the pastor, it is enormous for the pastor's wife. It is a greater problem because it is much more difficult for a woman to lose weight than the man. It takes her much longer than him to lose a pound. She needs your encouragement, your discipline, most of all your companionship in this journey.

3. For Our Ministry's Sake. We can sugarcoat it, or disguise it in hazy terminology, but it is still inconsistent to preach on the disciplines of the Christian life when we ourselves are undisciplined in this basic area of life. Let's remember, our people are fighting the same battles we are. They need, not only our spiritual leadership, but they deserve our physical example as well.

4. For Our Self-image's Sake. The advent of the three-piece vested suit was a life saver for many of us. I have always been

able to disguise my weight by dressing carefully. Though others may have been fooled, I was always aware of my chronic "spare tire" condition.

At 34 years of age I found myself about 40 pounds overweight. My wife, about the same. We had attempted many, many of the above mentioned "fantastic" diets, and in the process we had lost hundreds of pounds; unfortunately, they were the same ones over and over again. Then we hit upon a plan that worked for us even in the midst of a busy, active pastor's home. I call it the *3-M Weight Control Plan*.

I. MOTIVATION—Whether it's church growth, personal evangelism, or pulpit ministry, the springboard to success is simply wanting it badly enough. The same applies to weight control. Our problem was that internal motivation was lacking, so we added external motivation. We made an agreement with another church couple. We set the amount of weight that Leta and I wanted to lose within two months. The other couple did the same. Ours was 35 pounds, 20 for me and 15 for Leta. If one couple failed to reach that goal, they would treat the successful couple to a mini-vacation at a resort hotel in a nearby city. We simply could not afford to lose. That was our motivation.

II. METHODOLOGY—The stage had been set, the challenge made public, but now to work. I am a believer in the bottom line approach to most things and in weight control, it is simply this: *In order to lose weight you must burn up more calories than you consume.* You can either increase activity, thus burn more calories; or you can consume less calories; or you can do both. We decided on the latter. By both increased physical activity and reduced intake we could maximize our weight loss in the time allotted. For increased exercise we began jogging. As a rule you can burn about 100 calories per mile whether you walk, jog, or run. Leta started at one-fourth of a mile, I started with a mile and we began to *slowly* build our dis-

tance. We also began a modified "weight watchers" diet that eventually evolved into two basic no-nos: no sugar and no fried foods. I am convinced that if most of the parsonage families with weight problems would do these three things they could consistently maintain their desired weight. Again, (1) increased physical exercise, (2) no sugar, and (3) no fried foods.

III. MATHEMATICS—I have developed a term that we use a lot around the house. It's "Weight Maintenance Economics." That is, simple mental bookkeeping on your program. On an average we burn about 15 calories per day per pound. Thus a man of 150 pounds needs approximately 2,250 calories a day to maintain his weight. It takes about 3,500 calories to produce a pound of fat. If a man of 150 pounds consumes 1,750 calories a day he can mathematically lose a pound in one weekend and that's without any additional exercise. If he would jog two miles a day (about 20-25 minutes) he can lose that pound in about four days. When you have the urge to splurge, reduce the cost to Economics: A quick stop at the drive-in for a quarter pounder with cheese, large fries, and a chocolate shake will net you about 1,200 calories, while a carefully chosen soup and salad bar with vinegar and oil dressing is only about 300-400.

Leta and I have enjoyed our pilgrimage together. It has reinforced our self-image and it has inspired many others in our congregation to lose weight. They needed our example.

When I entered college I stood 5'8", had a medium bone structure, and weighed 144 pounds.

When I entered seminary I stood 5'8", had a medium bone structure and weighed 165 pounds.

When I entered my first post-seminary pastorate I stood the same, possessed the same bone structure and weighed 170.

At age 34 I was still 5'8" with medium bone structure, but I weighed in at 184 pounds.

Today I have the same bone structure, I weigh 144, but I stand a lot taller.

Make the Advent Season Count

by John R. Brokhoff

Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, Georgia

THE MEANING OF ADVENT

Advent, a season of four Sundays, begins on the Sunday closest to November 30. The observance of Advent originated in France during the fourth century. The duration of the season varied from four to seven weeks until the bishop of Rome in the sixth century set the season at four weeks. In ancient times Advent was strictly observed. Every Christian was required to attend church services and fast daily.

The word "Advent" consists of two Latin words, *ad venire*, meaning "to come to." Advent's message is that God in Christ is coming to the world. This coming may be—

A past experience. God did come in Christ at Christmas. The prophets' promise was fulfilled in the Babe.

A present experience. God may come to you this Christmas in terms of rebirth either for the first time, or a renewed birth in deeper dimensions of reality.

A future experience. Christ will return unpredictably at the end of the world. "He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead."

THE MESSAGE OF ADVENT

Since Advent promises the sure coming of the Lord, its message is, "Prepare." The Lord is coming whether the world is ready or not. For those unprepared, His coming means judgment. For those ready for His coming, it means salvation.

How does Advent suggest that we prepare?

Repentance. Forsake the sins of the world for a godly way of life.

Prayer. Pray for the coming of Christ, for He shall save.

Patience. His coming may be delayed. Watch and wait, for His coming may be sudden.

THE MOOD OF ADVENT

Expressed in color. The mood of Advent is expressed in the liturgical color of violet. It depicts a feeling of quiet dignity, royalty, and repentance. Violet was the traditional color of a king's robe. The coming Christ is King of Kings. Advent, like Lent, is a time for solemn and sober thought about sins leading to repentance. It denotes a quiet time for watching, waiting, and praying for Christ to come again either personally or universally. An alternate color for Advent is blue, the color of hope.

Solemnity and sobriety. Traditionally Advent is a penitential season, originally known as the "Winter Lent." This mood of sobriety is expressed not only in the liturgical color, violet, but in the music of Advent hymns like "O Come, Emmanuel." During Advent, choirs may omit processions or have "silent processions." Weddings in this season are discouraged. Christmas carols and decorations are not used until Christmas eve.

Joy in hope. Advent stresses not so much fulfillment as anticipation of fulfillment: the Lord is coming! Christians have great expectations of Christ's coming again. As a family looks forward to a son returning from a war and as a bride anticipates her wedding day, so a Christian looks forward with joy to Christ's coming. Yet this is a joy of hope amid solemnity. It is the quiet joy of anticipation and not the joy of celebration of a past event. This type of joy is expressed in the Advent hymns "Joy to the world, the Lord is come(ing)" and "O Come, Emmanuel . . . Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel."

Of all the seasons, Advent is the most difficult to observe because of the competition with the commercial world. The world celebrates Christmas dur-

ing Advent rather than on Christmas. Even some churches fall prey to this misplaced celebration by putting Christmas decorations in the church, singing carols at Advent services, conducting candle-light services, and arranging Christmas parties during the weeks before Christmas.

Increasingly the church is beginning to observe Advent seriously as a vital and necessary time of preparation for a meaningful, spiritual Christmas. This observance is expressed in various ways:

- Use of an Advent wreath in the church and homes.
- Use of an Advent calendar for children in the home.
- Discouragement of weddings and pre-Christmas parties.
- Use of Advent hymns, prayers, and anthems throughout Advent.
- Silent processions during Advent.
- Special midweek Advent services.
- Use of Advent symbols: Messianic rose, Tau cross, etc.
- Preparation of Chrismons for decorating the Christmas tree.

PREACHING GOALS FOR ADVENT

During the four weeks of Advent a preacher has much to preach about and many worthy reasons to preach. His objectives during the season may be:

To counteract the commercialism of Christmas through a strict and thorough observance of Advent.

To prepare the people for a meaningful Christmas by motivating them to prepare spiritually through repentance.

To stimulate Bible reading in home and church.

To stir up renewed interest, faith, and zeal, and to call for a deeper, renewed commitment to Christ and the church.

To think through the meaning of history in relation to the second coming of Christ.

To give an understanding and appreciation of the hope for the Christian of Old Testament prophecy.

To prepare people spiritually for the second coming of Christ that they might be in a constant state of preparedness for His coming.

To give a knowledge and appreciation of the ministry of John the Baptist as one who teaches the necessity of spiritual preparation for the coming of the Christ.

THE THEOLOGY OF ADVENT

A preacher cannot preach according to the Advent season unless his theology is properly related both to the beginning and the ending of Christ, the Incarnation and the Parousia. Advent has significance only in relation to the two. If he cannot sincerely accept the theology of Advent, he will either be silent or insincere.

The coming of Christ is the culmination of a historical process coming down through the history of Israel. This is the climax of the plan of salvation. The Old Testament is a record of God's preparing the world for the coming of His Son. "In the fulness of time, God sent forth his Son." Since Advent is the Old Testament period of the church year, the emphasis is upon the preparatory work of God through prophets, priests, kings, and acts of history for the coming of the Messiah.

The Child born in a manger in Bethlehem was none other than the Son of God, the promised Messiah. Because "the word became flesh," Advent, as the time of preparation for the Messiah, makes sense. This held Child is "very God of very God." In Him, God invaded human history. He was the Christ-event, the Word-event. If this is not true, then there is not meaning or message to Advent.

Advent deals also with the second coming of Christ. If this has already occurred, as some believe, in the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, then Advent has lost much of its message for today's people. If there is no Second Coming, the Advent passages dealing with watching, waiting, praying, and preparing for the return of Christ have no preaching value.

A firm conviction in the coming again of Christ can mean much to our homiletical efforts. Because it is possible for Him to be born again in our hearts at Christmas, it is urgent that we strictly observe Advent and be spiritually prepared for His advent.

A sincere acceptance of the second coming of Christ leads a preacher to discuss the meaning of history as culminating in Christ, the obliteration of evil, and the final victory of the forces of God. 

From Pulpit Digest, used by permission.



INTEGRITY

by D. P. Brooks

The television was turned on in my motel room that Sunday morning when a religious program came on. My first impulse was turn it off and spare myself the agony of hearing a preacher butcher the Scriptures. But I restrained myself and hoped that just once the preacher would bring a sound biblical sermon to the millions of people in his audience.

The preacher announced as his Bible text the parable of the Good Samaritan. I asked myself, how can a preacher misinterpret that parable? Surely he will bring a word from God to this vast audience.

The preacher began something like this, "Now you will notice that the text says the man involved in the robbery was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jerusalem is up on the mountain where the Temple was, where God and religion were. Therefore Jerusalem stands for religion. Jericho was a resort center, a sort of sin city. Therefore, Jericho represents the sinful world. So the first mistake of the man who got robbed was that he went down from God and religion into Sin City."

I quickly turned off the television set, aghast at such distortion of Jesus' teaching. Here was a passage so plain that "a way-faring man though a fool should

not err therein." Yet a preacher with an international audience had turned it into a crossword puzzle.

Jesus gave us a message as plain as day in this parable, showing how we ought to relate to persons in need. But this preacher had so allegorized and spiritualized the passage that it could be made to mean just about anything he wanted. No matter how true his statements may have been, he had twisted a passage of scripture to say what he wanted instead of what Jesus clearly intended.

As a denominational worker for almost 30 years I have done a lot of listening to preachers. I have exulted in some splendid preaching and cringed as preachers fractured all the rules of biblical interpretation. Perhaps that gives me the right to say a kind word.

What's wrong with allegorizing and spiritualizing?

In making Jerusalem stand for God, religion, and righteousness, and Jericho stand for Sin City, the preacher was allegorizing. We have some allegories in the Bible, and they need to be interpreted as just that. But a parable is not an allegory. The parable usually makes one main point. To press other details into some allegorical pattern is dishonest.

William Hersey Davis, my New Testament professor in seminary

used to say, "Boys, the Bible is hard enough at the best. For goodness' sake, don't make it harder by allegorizing and spiritualizing."

Every gospel preacher ought to know a little church history. Christianity almost perished from the earth for many centuries. The church became a pagan monolith that was the greatest roadblock in the way of true Christianity. Clearly this was due to the loss of the Bible. The Bible was lost through allegorizing and spiritualizing interpretations.

If one word or letter can stand for God, another for the Virgin Mary, another for the church, and so on, the straightforward message of the book is lost. Then interpreters start looking for the magic key to unlock a mystery. The church laid out a hard-and-fast set of doctrines and organizational patterns. The Bible was then used to prove that these were true and ordained of God. By proof-texting, allegorizing, and spiritualizing, the priests and hierarchy could prove that the doctrines were supported by the Bible.

The Protestant Reformation broke on the world when Martin Luther and other Bible scholars rejected the allegorizing methods, at least in part, and began to listen to the plain message of the

Nazarene

UPDATE

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

A Growing Minister

Growth is the first law of life. Although physical growth stops before we finish our second decade, we should continue to grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually the rest of our days. As a minister of Jesus Christ I must consciously discipline myself for growth—in spiritual understanding, in preaching ability, and in professional competence.

Society in general has in recent years become aware of the need for adult education, and all sorts of programs have mushroomed. Parents and grandparents are returning to college to complete their degrees, and some are matriculating for graduate or professional education in a new field.

The church has also become alerted to this need, and new opportunities for ministerial development are being offered by the general church, by our colleges and the seminary, by districts and even local churches.

The late General Superintendent James B. Chapman used to say "a preacher first dies of mental dry rot." How tragic to see a man in the prime of his life, possessed of physical strength and personal charm, still thrashing through the same old straw of his college and seminary days!

I can justify my existence as a minister only if I am consciously feeding my mind and spirit for the development of my effectiveness as a servant of Jesus Christ. Books are my first and most important staple of fare.

1) *The Bible*. My friend Robert Scott shared with me a plan I myself have used in a limited way but intend to follow more closely in the future. He reads the Bible through every year in a different version—the *New American Standard*, the *Revised Standard*, the *New English*, the *New International*,



By General Superintendent
William M. Greathouse

the *Jerusalem Bible*, etc.—marking passages and using many as preaching portions or texts. What a way to keep growing!

2) *Books about the Bible and the Christian faith*. Taking for granted that spiritual development is primary and that preaching is our first and most important task, I must purchase and read books that enrich my biblical and theological understanding. John Wesley referred to himself as "a man of one Book," but he insisted that if a preacher knows only the Bible he does not even know it. Right now I am personally working through Ernst Käsemann's *Commentary on Romans*. My practice for years has been to subscribe to several key religious and theological journals, from which I read selectively, giving attention to book reviews. These reviews often direct me to volumes I then purchase for in-depth reading. The reviews I only read give me at least a casual understanding of current trends and ideas. Incidentally, several of the most stimulating books I have read in recent years are from the pens of our own Nazarene authors.

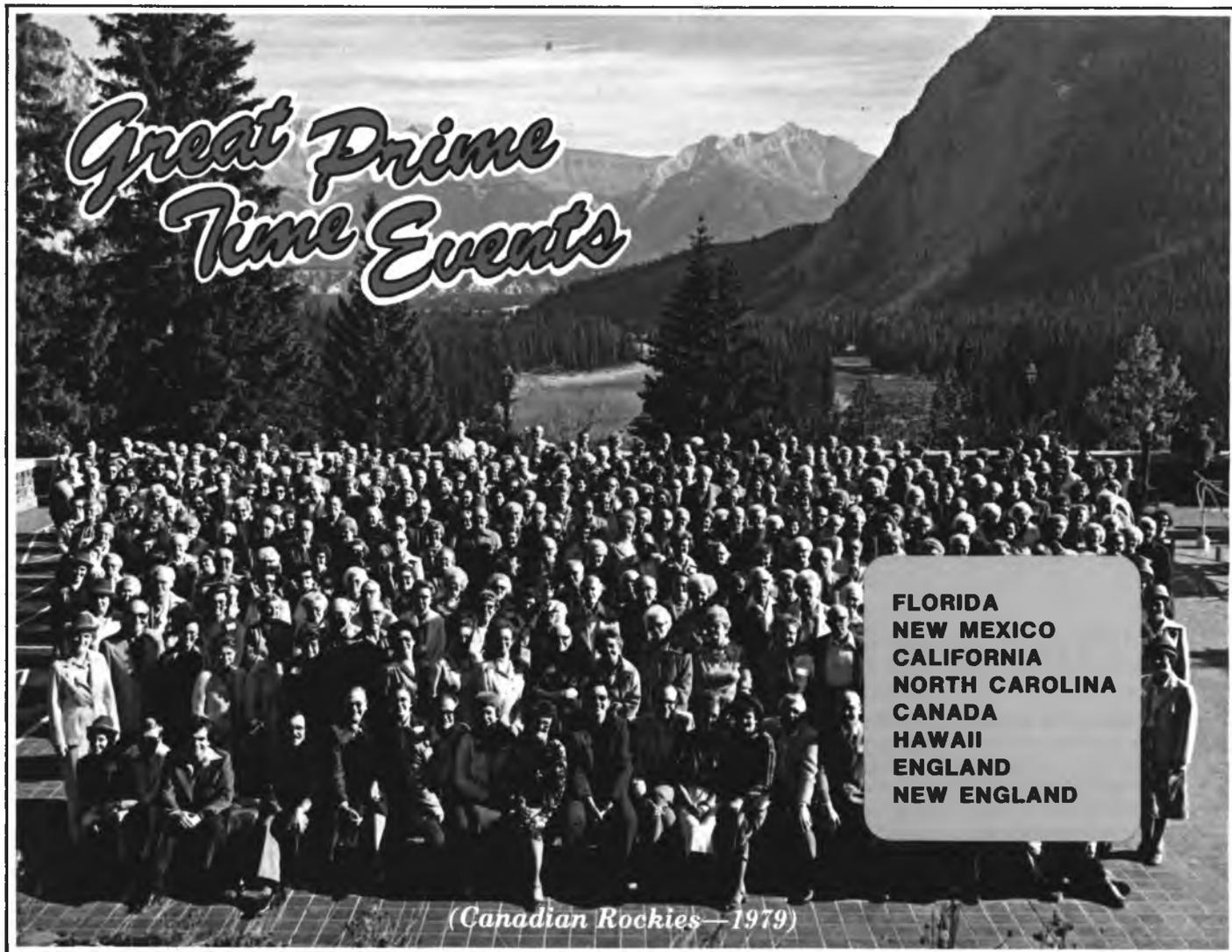
3) *Books on professional ministry*. Personally, I read books on preaching (right now George E. Sweazey's *Preaching the Good News*), evangelism, pastoral counseling and care, leadership and management, etcetera, to try to sharpen my professional competence.

As I try to bring this article to a conclusion, I realize I have simply touched the topic of ministerial growth. I should remind you of the importance of keeping your tape recorder at your side as you drive and of taking advantage of the offerings of the Ministers Tape Club and other tape club services. I remind you of PALCON II, which will offer you an unprecedented opportunity for refurbishing your holiness preaching. And don't overlook the various seminars for the first time offered through the Department of Education and the Ministry in the new pastoral development center at Kansas City as well as the continuing education opportunities at our colleges and NTS and on your district.

God has put within each of us the impulse to grow. The Comforter who dwells in our hearts is the Spirit of Truth ever seeking to guide us into new and deeper fellowship and understanding. Those who hear us preach are increasingly intelligent, hungry to hear solid Bible preaching and to see in us both true spirituality and disciplined competence. Recognizing this, the church is committed to helping us grow and develop to our fullest capacity. What will our response be?

If we give attention to the *depth* of our ministry, God will give attention to its *breadth*.

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Our editorial staff, and the "Growing Minister" team are pictured below.

Our next issue will accent STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF MICAH.



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The Department of Communications, led by Executive Director Mr. Paul Skiles, is now producing a viable Nazarene television program which provides the church a new ray of light to penetrate the spiritual darkness of our generation.

The Quadrennial Address of the Board of General Superintendents, June 23, 1980.

Viable because: Its first special "FAMILY: HANDLE WITH CARE" addressed the most crucial problem of our culture. TV is one of the major contributing factors in communication breakdown in families, and is a major factor in the rising divorce rate among Christian couples.

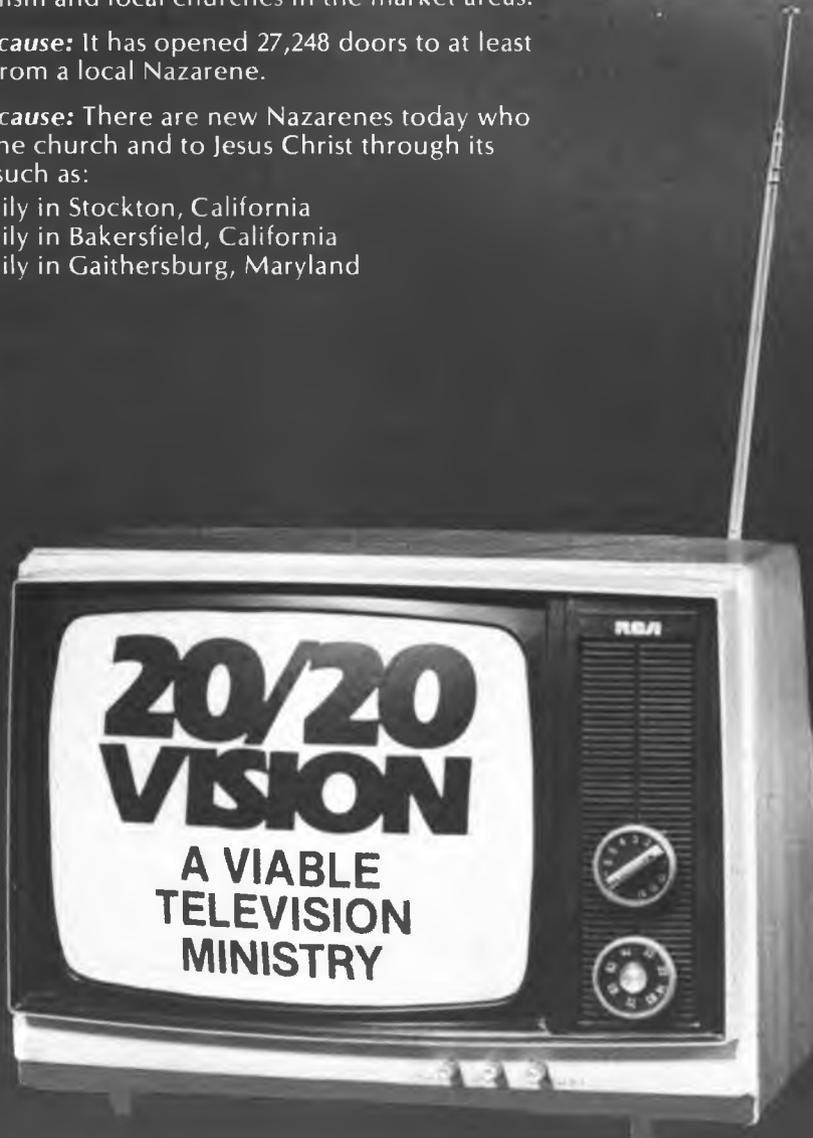
A Department of Youth Ministries resolution on strong language about TV to the 1980 General Assembly.

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THE PARSONAGE OR A HOUSING ALLOWANCE . . .

Which Is Better?

by Manfred Holck, Jr.*

Neither may be better. It all depends. But, given the choice, here are the reasons why:

A case for the parsonage:

1. In a parsonage, the congregation is landlord, the pastor tenant. That way clergy families avoid the hassle of leaky plumbing, stopped-up sinks, roof repairs, and mortgage payments. That's the "landlord's" problem.

2. When marketable, adequate housing is not available to buy (and difficult to sell, if owned), such as in rural, urban, small, or very high-priced neighborhoods, it's best to stay put in the parsonage.

3. Those who live in parsonages can move easily and quickly. Those who own their own homes can move quickly, too, but selling a home is not always easy or quick. (It's no fun to carry two mortgage payments!) In the parsonage, it's quick, easy, and convenient to move—for both pastor and congregation.

4. Homeowners don't always sell at a profit. In a parsonage, no one worries about a potential loss—or a gain.

5. Some clergy families prefer to live in an elegant, comfortable, and convenient parsonage (if that's what it is). A parsonage is usually far more expensive than anything the pastor could afford to buy to equal as a home.

6. Pastors in parsonages don't need to finance the purchase of a home whether they can afford to or not. Most cannot.

7. Congregations with parsonages don't have to decide between their first choice candidate who can't afford to buy and their second choice who can. They have a place for the first choice.

8. Parsonages in most places are generally not subject to local real estate taxes. Costs are less that way.

9. Some clergy families simply don't want to be bothered with home ownership. In a parsonage, they don't have to be.

10. A parsonage can probably always be rented out if the pastor wants to buy. But for pastors who prefer the church-owned home, a congregation with a parsonage has the place for them.

A case for the housing allowance:

1. With a housing allowance, the clergy family can generally live anywhere they want in any kind of home they choose—within their financial limits, of course.

2. Monthly mortgage payments (mostly interest, but some principal) reduce debt, build up equity. "Renters" get no equity, nor can they cash in on appreciation of the property when they move.

3. Clergy families can do what they want with their own home—paint it pink, hang out the wash, add a room, replace the drapes, throw out the carpets. There is no "committee" to discuss, deliberate, review, or decide anything!

4. Home ownership is permanent, usually; renting is not.

5. Home owners pay real estate taxes; renters don't, at least not directly. Usually those who pay taxes have more say in how their tax dollars are used for schools, crime prevention, a new city hall, and the like.

6. In the past, owning a home has been one of the most effective investments as a hedge against inflation; renting has not, it never will be.

7. At death, disability, retirement, home owning clergy can stay put. Those in a parsonage must go someplace else. The added trauma of moving can be avoided this way.

8. Homeowners generally have an income tax advantage over renters. Interest and real estate taxes are deductible for home owners, not for renters.

9. Pastors pay no income tax on their housing allowance to the extent it is used to provide a home. Clergy in parsonages don't pay tax on the fair rental value of the parsonage either. But there's more room for maximizing the exclusion with a housing allowance. Besides, there's that double tax benefit on interest and real estate taxes available to home-owning clergy.

10. With an allowance, compensation planning may be more flexible, easier to compare, simpler to budget.

So take your pick, either way that suits you best. But one is not necessarily better than the other. It's your circumstance that decides the better choice.



*Manfred Holck, Jr., is the editor/publisher of the *Clergy Journal* magazine. He is an ordained Lutheran minister and also a Certified Public Accountant.



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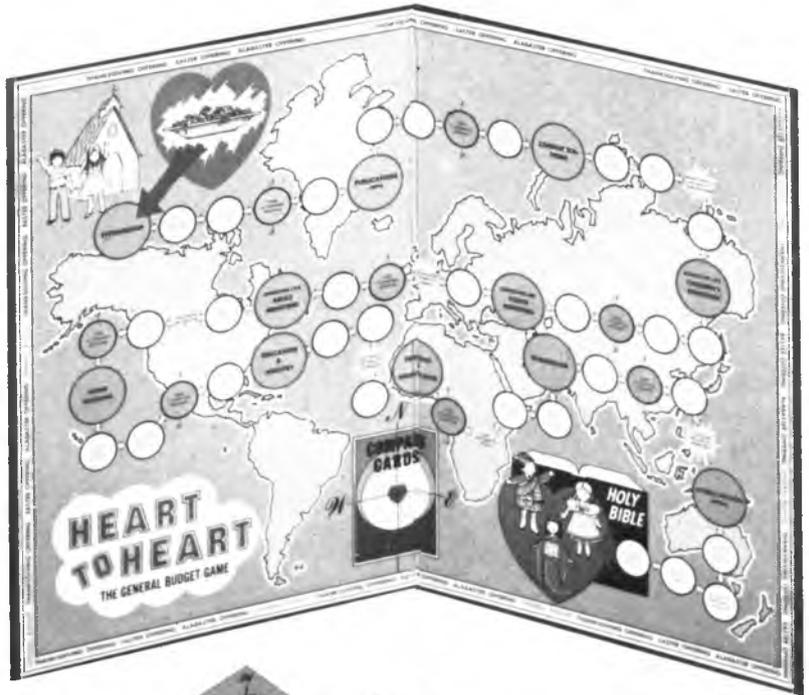
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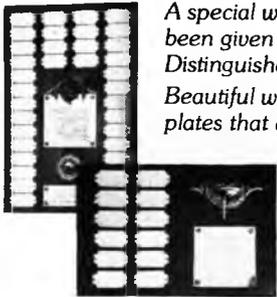
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Hymn Improvisation for Piano Teachers

January 19-23, 1981, by Evonne Neuenschwander, Piano Instructor

The objective of this course is to give piano teachers a theoretically correct, practical, step-by-step approach to teaching students how to play hymns properly. 3 CEU Credits.

Youth Ministry . . . Dealing with Family Enrichment

February 9-13, 1981, by Norm Shoemaker and Mike Pitts

This seminar is to train youth ministers and lay workers to effectively communicate with teen families. It will cover techniques of counseling teens and parents, and programming concepts for family enrichment. 3 CEU Credits.

Training Lay Persons for Their Ministry

February 19-21, 1981, by Dr. James Garlow, Minister of Lay Development at Bethany First Church of the Nazarene

The purpose of this seminar is to acquaint lay persons with the opportunities and training for their ministry available within the local church. 3 CEU Credits.

Small-Group Bible Studies

March 2-6, 1981, by Marion K. Rich, Pastor's Wife

The purpose is to discover the dynamics of a successful small-group fellowship, to assist in getting started in this ministry, and to share features of the new Beacon Small-Group Bible Studies. 3 CEU Credits.

Personal Evangelism Directors Conference

March 9-13, 1981, by Rev. Dwight Neuenschwander, Coordinator

Available for all levels of Personal Evangelism directors and persons who have had training and are involved in Nazarenes in Action Personal Evangelism methodology. 3 CEU Credits.

The Pastor and Sunday School Growth

March 16-18, 1981, by Dr. Win Arn

The aim of this seminar is to assist pastors and district leaders in taking a new look at the various opportunities of Sunday School growth. Limited enrollment. 1½ CEU Credits.

Developing a Secular Campus Ministry

March 23-27, 1981, by Dave Best and Mike Estep

This seminar is for persons interested in developing a secular campus ministry. It will deal with practical information, such as organization, materials, personnel, and budget needed. 3 CEU Credits.

BY... ENRICH YOUR LIFE



Ministry to Divorced Persons

April 6-10, 1981, by Harold Ivan Smith, Coordinator

This seminar will study ways of ministering to the divorced. Also, attention will be given to ministry to single parents. 3 CEU Credits.

Multiple Staff Ministries

April 20-24, 1981, by E. Dee Freeborn

A workable pattern of the multiple staff ministry will be developed. Attention will be given to principles of leadership, personal disciplines and priorities, motivation, personnel management policies, methods by which the church staff is administered, employment procedures, job descriptions, the role of senior pastor in bringing about harmonious and productive staff relationships, and analysis of the roles and problems of the associate. 3 CEU Credits.

Marriage Enrichment Leader-Couple Training

April 27-30, 1981, by J. Paul and Marilyn Turner

Training for Nazarene couples interested in leading a discipling/equipping ministry for marriages in the local church. LIMIT: 10 couples. 3 CEU Credits.

Bivocational Pastors

June 1-5, 1981, by Dr. Raymond Hurn, Coordinator

The purpose is to affirm the bivocational worker and give a tour of Headquarters and the Nazarene Publishing House. To offer some church growth training. 3 CEU Credits.

The Minister Prepares to Lead

June 22-26, 1981, by Dr. Kenneth O. Gangel

This seminar is designed to help the minister understand himself, his interpersonal relationships, motivation, and implications of the Christian administrative style. 3 CEU Credits.

Hymn Improvisation for Church Pianists

June 15-19, 1981, by Evonne Neuenschwander, Piano Instructor

To provide a step-by-step instruction for playing worship and gospel hymns properly. To provide specific concepts and illustrations to improve hymn playing skills, and/or to better understand the principles of hymn improvisation. 3 CEU Credits.

Seminar fees are \$125 per person (double occupancy) for a 1-day seminar. This includes room, meals (except evening meal), breaks, registration, & materials. Two-day seminars are \$70.

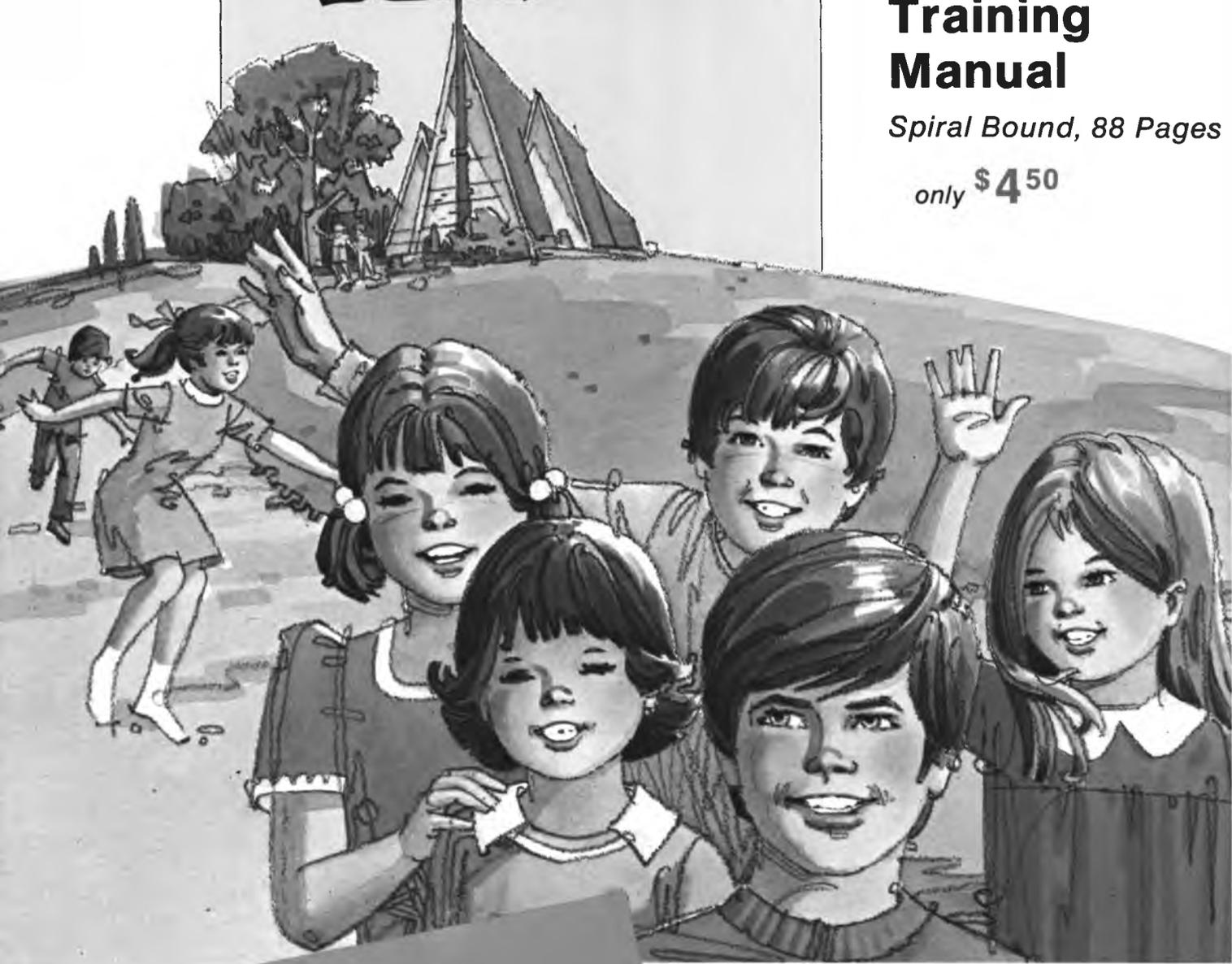
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G-815

Received our check and are so happy and blessed for the raise the church has given us. It will be a boost in our financial needs. P.T., Ohio

Thank you so much for the extra in my pension check! I know I really need to thank all the wonderful pastors and faithful lay people who pay their P+B Budget. G.E., California

Thank you so much for the increase on my pension check. It is so good to be with a church that you know cares. B.R., Oklahoma

Thank you more than I can ever tell for the wonderful increase in my monthly check. E.H.

Kindly accept our thankful appreciation for the increase in our pension check and express to all our thanks. I have lived to see it come up from \$2.00 to \$5.00 for each year of service. F.W., Oklahoma

We appreciate so much this generous raise and want to thank you and the Department and the General Board. You may be sure that this helps a great deal in keeping our budget in balance. R.K., Washington

This represents quite a supplement to our income. Please accept our gratitude and convey our gratitude to the General Board. E.S., Florida

THANKS

Because of your church's faithful support of the Pensions Budget, the "Basic" Pension formula was increased April 1, 1980 from \$4.50 to \$5.00 per month for each year of service credit. Since that time your Department of Pensions has received hundreds of "thank you's" from our retired ministers and widows of ministers.

Because it is pastors like you who lead churches to pay the Pensions Budget in full each year, thereby making the increase possible, we thought you should receive the "THANKS."

Just want to express a big "thanks" for the increase on our benevolence check. It is so much appreciated. G.D., Minnesota

Wish to say many, many times, I thank you, thank you. I don't think it could have come at a more opportune time. B.W.

Thank you so much for the increase in the pension benefits. I sincerely appreciate what my church is doing for me. L.P.

Your letter and the pension check came to hand in the mail yesterday and I am sure we all said, "Wonderful." I surely did not expect more than "thank you" to you and the people of God and our Lord that made it possible. L.S.

Thank you much for my April pension check, and I appreciate the increase given me. I am truly grateful. L.E.

The raise in my ministerial benefits is deeply appreciated. Thank you seems so very small, but it is sincerely meant from the depths of my heart! D.W.

How we appreciate our church and each consideration given us and thank you for the added benefits. B.W.

The word "thanks" does not seem to be quite adequate to express how we feel, yet there is no other word that tells it any better... so THANKS AGAIN! S.H., Pennsylvania

How thoughtful and generous of you and the church! In the early years of ministerial benevolence we struggled to meet the budget. Quite young then, I had a deep down feeling that these benefits would never come back to me. How short sighted on my part. How farsighted on the part of our church leaders! Thank you. H.S., Pennsylvania

We want to express our appreciation to you and the church for the fine increase in our pension check this month. The fight against inflation for those fixed incomes seems pretty hopeless, but this surely helps. L.M. California

IMPROVEMENTS HIGHLIGHTED

The "Basic" Pension Plan Document went into effect April 1, 1980.

District-licensed laymen now included in "Basic" Pension program

POLICY SUMMARY



Pensions
General Board
Church of the Nazarene
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, Mo 64131

DEPARTMENT OF PENSIONS

HISTORY

An organized endeavor to assist local congregations of the Church of the Nazarene on participating United States and Canadian districts to provide financial assistance for retired ministers and widows was first established in 1919. This organization was known as the General Board of Ministerial Relief. In 1923 that board became a part of the General Board and was known as the Department of Ministerial Relief. The name of the department was changed to the Department of Ministerial Benevolence in 1940. The "Basic" Pension program was ratified and a new budget formula was voted acceptance by the district assemblies during 1970. The first monthly "Basic" Pension benefit began April 1, 1971. As a result of action by the 1972 General Assembly, the name of the department became the Department of Pensions and Benevolence. In 1980, the Board of Pensions and the General Board approved a codification of the Pension Plan known as the "Basic" Pension Plan Document, which went into effect April 1, 1980.

FINANCES

The services of the Department are made possible through the Pensions Budget received from local churches on participating U.S. and Canadian districts. The amount of budget accepted by each local church is determined by a formula approved by the General Assembly and allocated by the District Assembly.

Department funds are also bolstered by gifts, donations, gift annuities, wills, and legacies.

Capital funds of the Department are invested by the Investment Committee of the General Board.

EXCITING FUTURE BENEFITS

The programs and services of your Department of Pensions are continually being reviewed and improved. The *Herald of Holiness* and the center insert supplement of the *Preacher's Magazine*, called "Update," release information concerning these new developments and improvements as they materialize.

PLAN DOCUMENT

The brochure you are reading contains a summary of the provisions of the "Basic" Pension Plan Document and a description of other group benefits available. The Plan Document shall govern the approval and payment of the "Basic" Pension and is available upon request. The Plan Document is subject to change by the approval of the Board of Pensions and General Board.

"Basic" Pension ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Ordained Ministers. Ordained ministers in the Church of the Nazarene who have reached age 65 and have been voted retirement relation by their district assembly may be eligible for a Pension if all other qualifications under the Plan are satisfied.

Licensed Ministers. Licensed ministers with service equivalent to that of ordained ministers may be granted a Pension upon the same conditions required for ordained ministers.

Laymen Serving in Full-time Ministry. This plan extends to those laymen with district credentials who earn their full livelihood from the ministry, but subject to the following limitations:

(a) Only those laymen having recognized district credentials or recognized district roles as:

- Commissioned Minister of Christian Education
- Commissioned Song Evangelist
- Commissioned Minister of Music
- Consecrated Deaconess
- Commissioned Minister of Youth

and whose ministry is performed in the area specified by such district credentials may become eligible.

Service as a Licensed Director of Christian Education or Licensed Deaconess may be recognized if this service was equivalent to that performed by one holding a permanent credential.

(b) Only those who have earned their full livelihood in the performance of their respective ministry as employees of a local church or district for a minimum of years equivalent to that service required for a pension under this plan may become eligible.

(c) Eligibility is also conditioned upon the establishment of a means by which "retired" status may be granted by a district Board of Orders and Relations to such laymen.

Widows or Widowers. A widow or widower may be eligible to receive a pension under this plan at age 62 or thereafter, equal to 60 percent of the amount for which his or her spouse was eligible. The marriage to the participant by a widow or widower of a participant's second or subsequent marriage must have occurred not less than one year prior to the death of his or her spouse who was a participant in this plan.

YEAR OF FULL-TIME SERVICE

"Year of Service" means each year of full-time active ministerial service credited to a participant as shown in district journals for service as a district-licensed or ordained minister or as a district-licensed layman serving in the full-time ministry, with a district participating in payment of the U.S. and Canadian Pensions Budget. (If a church fails to pay the Pensions Budget in full, without legitimate reason, the pastor may be assessed a pension credit penalty.)

Full-time associate ministers who are district-licensed or ordained receive a year of service credit when earning their full livelihood from such a ministry.

In the event that two participants shall be serving as copastors, such participants shall receive credit for one year

Pension is now 100 percent nonforfeitable.

April 1, 1980 the pension formula increased to \$5.00 per month for each year of service credit.

of service in the aggregate for each year of active ministerial service which shall be divided between such participants as they may elect in any application for any benefits under the plan.

Any year of service covered by a church institutional pension is not eligible to be counted as a year of service for "Basic" Pension.

The years of service of ordained and licensed ministers of any denominational or group of churches merging with the Church of the Nazarene shall be counted on the same basis as service rendered to the Church of the Nazarene, based upon the service records of such merging denomination or group of churches.

NONFORFEITABILITY

A participant's pension shall be one hundred percent (100%) nonforfeitable upon completion of a minimum of 10 years of service, without regard to whether the applicant is a member of the Church of the Nazarene when such applicant would otherwise commence to receive a pension under this plan.

DETERMINATION

The amount of "Basic" Pension is determined by:

- (a) Years of service credit received in the Church of the Nazarene upon U.S. and Canadian districts participating in the Pensions Budget. (If a church fails to pay the Pensions Budget in full, without legitimate reason, the pastor may be assessed a pension credit penalty.)
- (b) The current formula authorized by the Board of Pensions to use in computing the pension payment.
- (c) Financial capability of the Pension Fund.

FORMULA

The formula for "Basic" Pension is \$5.00 per month for each year of service—minimum of 10 years; maximum of 40 years.

$$\text{Years of Service} \times \text{Current Rate} = \text{Monthly Pension}$$

SCALE OF "BASIC" PENSION

ELDERS		WIDOWS	
Years of Service	Monthly Benefit	Years of Service	Monthly Benefit
10	\$ 50.00	10	\$ 30.00
11	55.00	11	33.00
12	60.00	12	36.00
13	65.00	13	39.00
14	70.00	14	42.00
15	75.00	15	45.00
16	80.00	16	48.00
17	85.00	17	51.00
18	90.00	18	54.00
19	95.00	19	57.00

20	100.00	20	60.00
21	105.00	21	63.00
22	110.00	22	66.00
23	115.00	23	69.00
24	120.00	24	72.00
25	125.00	25	75.00
26	130.00	26	78.00
27	135.00	27	81.00
28	140.00	28	84.00
29	145.00	29	87.00
30	150.00	30	90.00
31	155.00	31	93.00
32	160.00	32	96.00
33	165.00	33	99.00
34	170.00	34	102.00
35	175.00	35	105.00
36	180.00	36	108.00
37	185.00	37	111.00
38	190.00	38	114.00
39	195.00	39	117.00
40 or more	200.00	40 or more	120.00

APPLICATION

An application may be secured by writing to Dean Wessels, Executive Director, Department of Pensions, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

BEGINNING DATE

For a qualified participant at age 65, the "Basic" Pension may begin as soon as the first of the month following the district assembly which granted retired relationship to such participant. However, "Basic" Pension can only begin after proper application and approval. If an applicant does not make application until later, the pension is not retroactive to the time of receiving retirement status but may begin on the first of the month following the approval of the application.

Normally participants take retired relationship at the time of their district assembly. However, those participants attaining age 65 between assemblies and choosing to retire before the next district assembly may do so under the following conditions:

- (a) The participant, having an active credential, indicates in writing to the District Advisory Board and to the Department of Pensions that request for retired relationship will be made at the next district assembly.
- (b) The district superintendent and Advisory Board state in writing to the Department of Pensions that they will recommend to their Board of Orders and Relations at the next district assembly that the participant be granted retired relationship.
- (c) Should the retired relationship not be granted at the first district assembly following the granting of the "Basic" Pension, the pension will be suspended until all qualifications have been met.

Eligible participants may begin receiving "Basic" Pension at age 70 regardless of ministerial assignment.

SERVICE AFTER RETIREMENT

After meeting eligibility requirements for "Basic" Pension, a retired participant or widow may continue to serve in a temporary capacity, EXCEPT:

- (a) Serve as the designated pastor of a Church of the Nazarene. (However, they may serve as a "supply minister.")
- (b) Receive an evangelist's commission or list a slate in the *Herald of Holiness*.
- (c) Serve as a full-time assistant or associate pastor or any other full-time Nazarene church-related employment.

DISABILITY "BASIC" PENSION

A participant who is disabled may qualify for the "Basic" Pension with as few as five years of service credit. In addition to the actual years of service credited, eligible participants may be granted one-half year of service credit for each year from their attained age at the time their recognized disability began up to age 65.

Participants who are disabled may be granted "Basic" Pension during an assembly year under the following conditions:

- (a) If under age 65, disability must be determined by the Social Security Administration or the Canadian equivalent. If age 65 or over, disability must be certified by two medical doctors duly licensed to practice in the state of the applicant's residence. One of these certifications is to be from a specialist in the area of the applicant's stated disability.
- (b) The participant indicates in writing to the District Advisory Board and to the Department of Pensions that request will be made for retired relationship at the next district assembly.
- (c) The district superintendent and Advisory Board state in writing that they will recommend to their Board of Orders and Relations at the next district assembly that the disabled participant be granted retired relationship.
- (d) Should the retired relationship not be granted at the first district assembly following the granting of the "Basic" Pension due to disability, the pension will be suspended until all qualifications have been met.

SCALE OF DISABILITY "BASIC" PENSION

Years of Service	Monthly Benefit
5	\$25.00
6	30.00
7	35.00
8	40.00
9	45.00
10 and above	Same as "Basic" Pension Scale

MONTHLY BENEVOLENCE ASSISTANCE

For participants not meeting the qualifications for the "Basic" Pension, there is a limited amount of Monthly Benevolence Assistance that can be granted, under certain circumstances. Additional information and application forms will be sent upon request by contacting the Department of Pensions, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

Additional Group Benefits

Emergency Medical Assistance

Grants for medical emergencies may be provided to active or retired participants or to their immediate families. Applications for such grants must originate with the District Advisory Board and the district superintendent and must be approved by the Board of General Superintendents and the Department of Pensions.

The department expects all participants to carry basic hospitalization insurance for themselves and their families. Those persons age 65 and over are expected to participate in Medicare, Plan B if they are eligible. The Department of Pensions assists in paying expenses beyond the amount which is covered by insurance and/or Medicare.

NORMAL CHILDBIRTH IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE A MEDICAL EMERGENCY.

The amount granted shall be determined as follows: The net balance of medical expenses (including only doctor, nurse, medicines, and hospital care) less insurance reimbursement shall be the consideration for emergency assistance.

- (a) If the husband and wife have a total annual income of \$10,000 or more, the deductible shall be the first \$200 of the net balance, and the department may grant up to 80 percent of the remaining balance.
- (b) If the husband and wife have a total annual income of \$5,000 or more but less than \$10,000, the deductible shall be the first \$100 of the net balance, and the department may grant up to 80 percent of the remaining balance.
- (c) If the husband and wife have a total annual income of \$5,000 or less, the deductible shall be the first \$50.00 of the net balance, and the department may grant up to 80 percent of the remaining balance.
- (d) If one receives "Basic" Pension or Monthly Benevolence Assistance, the individual will not be required to assume any deductible. In such a case, the department may grant up to 80 percent of the total net medical cost.

The Nazarene Supplemental Retirement program now pays 10 1/2 percent per year on all funds deposited after January 1, 1980.

The regular medical emergency grants from the department may not exceed \$750 per family in any 12-month period.

In cases of extreme medical costs, when a family has had more than \$1,500 out-of-pocket expenses in a 12-month period, the department may grant \$750 for the first \$1,500 (the maximum amount allowable for regular assistance) and 50 percent of the amount over \$1,500. However, the maximum emergency grant, including both regular and extreme medical emergencies, may not exceed \$1,500 in any 12-month period.

Temporary Monthly Disability Assistance

This benevolence is for an active participant who has become disabled and who has been certified to receive a monthly disability benefit from the Social Security Administration. Recipients must wait several months to receive Social Security Disability. Therefore, the Temporary Monthly Disability Assistance is designed to give the disabled participant a lift for no more than five months while waiting to receive the Social Security benefit.

This monthly benevolence may begin in the period when the local church income has ceased and while waiting for the certified Social Security Disability benefit. The amount of the monthly assistance will be equal to the monthly amount certified by the Social Security Administration. This is in addition to any "Basic" Pension the disabled participant might be receiving.

Funeral Assistance

Funeral assistance shall be made available for the participant or immediate family in case of need. Those already protected by any group life insurance program of the Department of Pensions are not eligible for funeral assistance benefits. A maximum of \$750 is allowable and may be granted upon request.

Nazarene Supplemental Retirement Program

MINISTERS AND ALL CHURCH EMPLOYEES

The Nazarene Supplemental Retirement Program was devised to provide a means by which ministers and all other church employees could supplement retirement income through investment. Income from this plan will not reduce Social Security or "Basic" Pension benefits.

All employees of the Church of the Nazarene at the local, district, educational institution, or general level are eligible for enrollment in the Nazarene Supplemental Retirement Program. However, only the employer may enroll an individual in this plan.

The Nazarene Supplemental Retirement Program is highly adaptable as a fringe benefit. For example, when the pastor is provided a parsonage, and thus is not able to build up equity in a home of his own, the tax-sheltered annuity may be used to great advantage.

Once enrollment is effected, invested funds and interest are sheltered from current federal income tax. Up to 20 percent of one's annual income may be sheltered from taxes in this manner. No federal income tax will be levied on either deposited funds or interest earned until funds are withdrawn. If withdrawal is effected in retirement, there may be no income tax liability as a result of double (over age 65) personal exemption and generally lower income. There is no penalty for early withdrawal, except for the likelihood of greater income tax liability.

Unlike other annuities, the Nazarene Supplemental Retirement Program involves no annuity cost, so interest is earned on every penny deposited. Funds deposited after January 1, 1980, are currently earning 10.5 percent interest per annum, compounded annually (funds deposited prior to that date earn interest at a rate of 9 percent per annum).

EVANGELISTS

Nazarene evangelists (including district-licensed and ordained evangelists and lay song evangelists) are also included in the Nazarene Supplemental Retirement program through the KEOGH (HR-10) Plan. All provisions are identical to those stated above except that the evangelist may enroll himself in the plan. The amount of annual contribution may not exceed 15 percent of his net taxable income from self-employment; further this amount cannot exceed \$7,500 per year. (An exception to the 15 percent limit would be: if his net earnings from self-employment are less than \$5,000, if his adjusted gross income is less than \$15,000, and if he has no common-law employee, then his annual contribution may be \$750, but in no case more than his net earnings.) In computing the maximum deposit allowed by law, current deposits made by him or on his behalf to other tax-sheltered annuity plans owned by him must be combined with the contributions made to this plan. Excess contributions are not sheltered from current income taxes and are subject to a penalty. Also, the law requires a 6 percent penalty for early withdrawal of funds before age 59½.

LIFE INSURANCE

Minister's Basic Group Term Life Insurance

Basic Group Term Life Insurance is a basic coverage that protects the beneficiary of an enrolled district-licensed or ordained minister from the financial hardship encountered upon the minister's death. Premiums for this coverage are paid by the Department of Pensions as a service to enrolled ministers on U.S. and Canadian districts participating in the Pensions Budget.

All ordained ministers are eligible for \$1,500 coverage

New limits and improved rates went into effect October 1, 1980, for the Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance programs.

and all district-licensed ministers are eligible for \$1,000 coverage. The policy includes an equal amount for Accidental Death and Dismemberment.

Ministers who are enrolled in the Basic Group Term Life Insurance and who hold membership on districts which pay at least 90 percent of their Pensions Budget receive double coverage (i.e., \$3,000 if ordained or \$2,000 if licensed) during the next assembly year. Insured ministers serving for the full assembly year on a district which has not paid at least 90 percent of its assigned Pensions Budget will not receive the benefit of double coverage for the next assembly year.

Minister's Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance

Any minister who is enrolled in the Basic Group Term Life Insurance is eligible and may enroll in the Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance. Through this supplemental plan, the minister may provide life insurance coverage for himself and his dependents at a very low cost.

Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance is purchased in units. Each unit of personal insurance provides \$5,000 coverage. Each unit of dependent insurance provides \$1,000 coverage on the minister's spouse, \$500 coverage on each dependent child 6 months but less than 19 years of age, and \$100 coverage on each child 14 days but less than 6 months of age. The minister must purchase at least as many units of personal insurance as he does of dependent insurance. The cost of each unit and the maximum number of units which each minister is eligible to purchase is based on the minister's age.

The policy includes special provisions for Accidental Death or Dismemberment.

Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance has been specially designed so that if the local church makes the premium payment on up to \$50,000 coverage, the minister will not be required to report the amount of that premium as income for federal income tax purposes.

LAY CHURCH EMPLOYEE'S SUPPLEMENTAL GROUP TERM LIFE INSURANCE

The coverage available to ministers under the Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance Plan has been extended to all lay employees of Nazarene churches or church-related institutions subject to the following conditions. The applicant must:

- (1) Be employed full time in a paid position (at least 30 hours per week) at the time of application and for the continuance of coverage.
- (2) Proof of insurability, using the required simple health statement, must be submitted and approved by the insurance company before coverage is effective.

The coverage for lay employees under the Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance Plan is exactly parallel with that provided for the minister.

For additional information and application for any of the life insurance plans, please contact the Department of Pensions, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

An important part of the services provided by the Department of Pensions for Nazarene ministers is the information supplied to churches and ministers.

The department has taken an active role in encouraging church boards to assist their pastors with full Social Security tax reimbursement. Information is also distributed to ministers regarding changes in Social Security laws which apply to them.

Each year the department sends a booklet prepared by a ministerial tax expert to assist the minister in preparing his federal income tax return. The booklet deals with the best methods of handling car expenses, housing allowance, travel, and other business expenses of the minister, in relation to federal income tax.

Many associate ministers and more and more pastors are receiving a housing allowance rather than a parsonage. Because of the complexities involved, a special booklet covering this subject is available upon request from the Department of Pensions.

Your Department of Pensions stands ready to answer additional questions about these and other matters, including ministerial compensation (salary and benefits) and the services offered by the department. Write for more information about any of these items.

The purpose of this "Policy Summary" brochure is to highlight various benefits and provisions of financial assistance available from the Church of the Nazarene, Department of Pensions. This brochure necessarily cannot reproduce the exact language for all of the provisions of the pension and retirement programs, or for the means of financial assistance provided by the church through this department. Such provisions shall control in case of any discrepancy between them and this brochure.

For Further Information, Write:

Dean Wessels, Executive Director
Department of Pensions
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131

EVANGELIST'S DIRECTORY

VISUAL ART DEPARTMENT, NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

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

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

Note: Names with no classification (R or C) are receiving ministerial pension but are actively engaged in the field of evangelism
*An adequate budget for evangelism at the beginning of each church year is imperative for each congregation.
A revival savings account is useful in building toward adequate support for the evangelist.*

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

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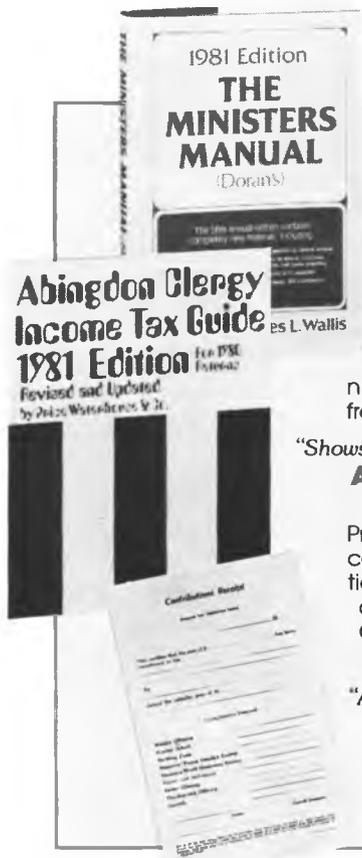
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Bible. Once they opened their minds to the plain truth of Scripture, they were liberated from the dead weight of tradition and false doctrine that had stifled Christianity for almost a thousand years.

Any pastor who starts proof-texting, spiritualizing, or allegorizing passages that were never intended to be taken thus needs to take a hard look at the bitter fruit of that form of interpretation in the past. It enabled a church to take the best, most intelligent, and most dedicated people of the time and murder them. They were strangled, drowned, burned at the stake, broken on the wheel, banished, and put in dungeons. What were their crimes? They interpreted the Bible according to the dictates of their consciences instead of rubber stamping the doctrines of a corrupt church.

The church effectively silenced the Scriptures for centuries so that they could not speak their word of judgment against a corrupt church and degraded society. If the Bible could mean only what the church said it meant, then no one could speak contrary to church doctrine and practice. How could anyone disapprove the church's official line unless the plain meaning of Scripture could be taken without the allegorizing fog?

Spiritualizing is another snare. The spiritualizing preacher reads a text and promptly departs from it. He may say some true and timely things to the congregation, but they are not rooted in the Bible passage he read. If he did not mean to give an honest exegesis and interpretation of the text, why did he not find another text that does say what was needed?

We degrade the authority of the Bible when we use a text in such a flippant way. Unless a Bible passage has a close and integral relation to what the preacher is going to say, why read it? The text then becomes a mere accessory to the sermon. We exalt Scripture when we use it reverently, meaningfully, honestly. Re-

fusing to respect a passage enough to give its proper meaning degrades the Bible.

A fairly large body of consensus exists among Bible scholars about the basic requirements for responsible interpretation. Here are a few that doubtless would find broad acceptance. While following them will not end all differences and solve all problems, it will greatly lessen the field of difference and give a basis for responsible dialogue.

1. Determine the exact meaning of the text. The first question we should ask is: What did the writer say? This involves going back to the original language in which the text was written. Scholarly sources enable any serious student to get the root meanings of the Hebrew or Greek words in the text. Until this step has been taken, the preacher has no right to pretend to interpret the Scripture.

2. What literary form did the writer use? Did he write poetry or prose? Is it straightforward prose; or is it a parable, an analogy, a prayer, a sermon, a prophecy, or a vision? We pervert the Scriptures when we take passages that obviously were not meant to be taken literally and interpret them as straightforward prose. Similarly, we cannot interpret literally what is clearly symbolical without losing integrity and credibility.

3. The context of the passage must be allowed to throw light on the text. Proof-texting is unworthy of a minister of the gospel. Most passages have to be set in the context of the book and the particular part of the book in which they occur. All must be set in the context of the entire Bible.

4. The historical and cultural setting must be recognized. Who was speaking? To whom? And what did it mean as originally spoken or written? Many verses in the Bible are not presented as truth of God. Job's friends delivered speeches in which they made many false assertions. God condemned them and their views. Not only the Word of God, but

also the words of men appear in the Bible—some of the men's words recorded are false and devilish. Only one who wants to make the Bible say what he wants it to say would fail to take account of the meaning the passage had in the original setting.

5. Every Christian interpreter must interpret the Bible in the light of Christ. He is God's supreme Word to us, the clearest revelation of the character and intent of our Creator. Therefore, any interpretation that is contrary to the spirit of Christ must be rejected. If the church had held to that principle during the Dark Ages, the ages would not have been so dark. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Romans 8:9).

6. The final question to be asked of a Bible passage is this: What does it mean now? Until we have determined the exact statement of the passage and the original meaning when spoken, we are not qualified to interpret the present meaning of the passage.

The preacher has the awesome responsibility of speaking for God. Some passages in the Bible are so clear that we cannot misunderstand them. Other passages are so obscure that no one can say for sure what they mean. Would a preacher present a disrupted and uncertain interpretation as if it were a clear teaching of the Bible? I hear this over and over; and it grieves me deeply because it reveals a lack of integrity. It misrepresents God and misleads those in the audience who do not know that the preacher is saying more than the Scriptures clearly say.

Preachers who fail to deal honestly and reverently with the Scriptures have a problem of credibility and of integrity. Thank God for pastors who have enough integrity to deal honestly with the Scriptures. All honor to those men who respect the integrity of the Bible, who interpret it honestly as a word from God, who refuse to claim more than a passage will bear. 

HUMANITY AND FULL SALVATION

by T. A. Noble

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Confused preachers make confused congregations. In no area is this more true than in the relationship between humanity and holiness. Widespread misunderstanding of the biblical doctrine of man has led to a widespread confusion about Christian holiness.

At the popular level, the widespread confusion shows itself in three ways.

First, there is the notion that holiness dehumanizes. Sanctification is largely identified with asceticism or self-denial of some sort and with a cold, joyless lifestyle. Or it is identified with sanctimoniousness or piousness. Either way the result of this dehumanizing view is an aversion to holiness.

Second, there is the notion that since "the flesh" or "the carnal nature" is crucified or destroyed in the crisis experience of entire sanctification, there ought not to be any further temptation. This notion results in either severe disillusionment or a continuing hypocrisy.

Third, there is the notion that once a child of God has passed through the crisis of entire sanctification there will be no more worry or anger or depression; no more fear, or irritation, or laziness; no more disagreements or conflicts. The sin problem having been dealt with once and for all, the Christian has no more emotional or personality problems, no more ethical choices or struggles. All these matters are taken care of automatically. Once again, this notion, like the previous one, results in either severe disillusionment or continuing hypocrisy.

These simplistic notions, long-standing and widespread in popular ideas about Christian holiness, produce untold damage in the spiritual experience of numerous young Christians. They are the source of innumerable pastoral counseling headaches.

Undoubtedly, part of the problem lies in communication. Correcting misconceptions verbally is rarely enough to dispel them. They persist. But their very persistence suggests that these misconceptions exist not just in the minds of the naive, but stem from a failure to clarify theologically the relationship between humanity and holiness, or "full salvation."

It is possible that a failure to think through this relationship at the highest level of scholarly and theological thinking is being reflected in the crude misunderstandings at the popular level. If so, what is required is a more integrated total theological perspective in which the doctrine of Christian holiness and our understanding of man (or humanity) may be seen in their relationships to Christian theology as a whole, and not in distorting isolation.

In other words, if these doctrines are only related to each other, they will be distorted. Isolated from the total organic whole of Christian faith and doctrine, they will be the basis for what Dr. Wynkoop calls "theological provincialism." And such distortion is serious: it causes spiritual damage. Rather, these doctrines must be understood biblically, and they must be understood in the context of Christian dogmatics as a whole.

And yet this is not the whole story. The problem is not only one of theological clarification. The other side of it *is* a problem in communication. The relationship between humanity and holiness can only be communicated effectively by illustration and example. That is to say, doctrine must be translated in the pulpit into recognizable concrete human situations. The preacher needs to develop an observant ear for life situations with which the listener can identify. Only in this way can doctrine be related meaningfully to life.

The prior task, however, is theological clarification, and that is the object of this article. And yet clarification and communication cannot be divorced.

We shall begin with the biblical understanding of man.

I. What Is "Humanity"?

A. Man Is a Unity

Our concept of man or "humanity" has long been led astray by the Greek view of man as a dual being composed of two separate substances, soul and body. To the Greeks the soul was inherently immortal, and salvation for the soul was deliverance from its bodily imprisonment. The Old Testament view of man is quite different.

In contrast to the false "spiritualism" of Greece, Hebrew thought is thoroughly materialistic! The life of the body is affirmed as the good creation of God. Man is not so much an embodied soul as an ensouled body. Body and soul are no longer *parts* of man: rather each refers to the man as a whole. Body is the whole man in

his physical dimension: soul is the whole man as an organism and in his "spiritual" dimension, that is to say, his "relational" dimension.

In biblical thought, therefore, man is a psychosomatic unity. His emotional impulses and feelings are attributed in the Old Testament metaphorically and really to the *lēbh* (heart), the *kabhēth* (liver), the *kilyah* (kidneys), and the *me'iyim* (bowels). The blood is also closely related to life or *nepshesh* (soul). The *lēbh* is the seat of the will and the intellect (i.e., the mind) as well as the emotions. When a man is "moved" he is "moved in every way, as the Authorized Version reminds us with its literal translation: "bowels of compassion!"

In the New Testament a clearer distinction is made between the outward and inward man, and the concepts of *nous* (mind) and *synesis* (conscience) are added, but the inward and outward man cannot be separated. The Christian hope is not so much the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting for the whole man. Spirit, soul, and body are not separable parts, but different aspects. Man is a psychosomatic unity.

Here some lines of cross reference may be drawn to the view of man taken in modern psychology. A man is emotionally "moved" when he is physically "moved" and vice versa. His whole "motivation" is based in, but not reducible to, his basic physiological drives; hunger, sex, aggression, and so on. The visceral organs (heart, stomach, intestines, etc.) linked through the autonomic nervous system with the hypothalamus in the brain, form the basis for his conscious rational behaviour.

B. "Flesh" Means "Humanity"

This realistic, concrete view of man is expressed supremely in the Old Testament concept of *basar* (flesh). Characteristically, where we speak abstractly of "humanity," the Hebrew equivalent is emphatically concrete: "*flesh*." And it is this Hebrew view of man which is implied in the New Testament word for flesh, "*sarx*." All

that *sarx* implies is to be understood when John unequivocally proclaims that the Word who was God, became flesh. The Son of God assumed our humanity, becoming fully man in both physical and intellectual dimensions.

Paul also shares this basic use of *sarx*. The flesh is *all* that is human, both physical and *mental*. But Paul adds a new twist to *sarx* when he writes of it as an object of faith. It is not that *sarx* itself (basic humanity) is evil: what is wrong is to place one's confidence in it, to trust in human merit, or human descent. That is confidence "in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3). Paul takes this one stage farther when he writes in a few passages of *sarx* almost as a power in opposition to the *pneuma* (spirit) (Rom. 8:5 ff.; Gal. 4:23; 5:15 ff.).

Yet even here, while the flesh may include sensual desires (Gal. 5:19), it equally includes "spiritual" pride (Phil. 3:4 ff.). Bondage to the flesh finds expression in the legalism of the Pharisee just as much as in the sensuality of the pagan.

To speak of man as "flesh" is to speak of him in his finitude and creatureliness. Therefore, being in the flesh is sinful, not because the physical flesh is inherently sinful, but because it so happens that all flesh (i.e., all *men*) trust in the flesh.

Man happens to be fallen: that is to say, he trusts in himself, and so seeks autonomy and independence from his Creator. He tries to deny his creatureliness and dependence. The sinfulness of all flesh (i.e., all *men*) consists in the fact that they trust in the flesh (i.e., trust in themselves), refusing to acknowledge their Creator.

To say, therefore, that the flesh is "sinful" is correct when one remembers that "flesh" means "man"—that the Hebrew concept includes all of man, physical and spiritual. But it does *not* mean that the *physical* flesh is sinful in the moral sense. The physical flesh with its basic physiological drives (hunger, sex, aggression, etc.) is amoral. If the natural desires of the flesh—hunger, sex, aggression, and so on—are per-

verted, it is not because they are wrong in themselves, but in the sense that they are misdirected.

C. Man Is a Fallen Creature

And yet, while the physical flesh of man cannot be regarded as sinful, or evil, in the moral sense, it is nevertheless "fallen." For the Fall, while it is an ethical matter at its heart, also extends to the physical results of that ethical choice. By rebelling against the Creator who had created him out of nothing, man called in question his continued being and existence. In the day that he sinned, he began to die.

Here we must remember again that man is a psychosomatic unity. It is quite untrue therefore to biblical thought to speak of man as partially fallen as if somehow he could be morally fallen but physically perfect. Such a misconception stems from the erroneous Greek dualism between soul and body. Both traditional Calvinism and Wesleyan-Arminianism, and more importantly, the Fathers, were quite clear that man as a whole is fallen.¹

In the physical dimension, therefore, the Fall means death. Cut off from the Creator and Source of life, man is falling into decay and disintegration. The Fall is not simply a moral matter. It affects man physically (Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 5:12) and through man the whole physical creation, so that the whole creation groans in travail waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

At the same time we groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:22-23). Decay and disintegration, sickness and senility, death and physical corruption are the lot of fallen man.

II. Full Salvation

A. Salvation and Sanctification

It is in relation to this biblical understanding of man that we must think of Christian holiness. One of the synonyms for "entire sanctification," the phrase "full salvation," reminds us that "salvation" and "sanctification" cannot be divorced.

To speak of conversion as being “saved” and the later fullness of the Spirit as “sanctification” is frankly confusing and misleading. As John Wesley so clearly directs us in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, the distinction is rather between “initial sanctification” at the new birth and the later “entire sanctification.”² Or, we may say, between “initial salvation” and the later “full salvation.”

When we think of this later work as “full salvation” we see that our understanding of it must be related to salvation as a whole.

To see it truly, we must see it in the context of the whole scope and panorama of biblical salvation. And the biblical concept of salvation follows on from what we have said about the biblical understanding of man.

B. Salvation Is for the Whole Man

As man is a psychosomatic unity, so salvation is nothing less than salvation of the whole man. It is not just the *soul* of man which is saved, in the Greek sense of the word: it is the soul of man in the Hebrew sense. And for Hebrew thought the soul can have no real existence apart from the body. It is the whole man who is saved.

Salvation, therefore, has two dimensions: it is salvation from sin—and it is also salvation from death. It is both spiritual and physical.

C. Salvation Comes at the End

That brings us to a second point about salvation. The biblical concept of salvation is thoroughly eschatological. For the prophets, it was at the Eschaton, the End of the Age, in the Last Day, that God would usher in His salvation and establish His kingdom among men. Then the Age to Come, the Age of the Spirit, would dawn. For Judaism, this establishing of the Kingdom at the End would include the resurrection of all flesh, the just to their rewards, and the unjust to their punishment. Salvation, for the Hebrew mind, implied resurrection, restoration for the whole man, since the whole man must be saved.

D. The End Has Come Already

In the New Testament the picture is more complex, for the teaching of Jesus is that the kingdom of God is *already* present in Him. One of the great advances of biblical study in the 20th century has been the recovery of the paradoxical “already . . . but not yet” eschatology of the New Testament. As with Judaism, there is still a future coming in power and great glory.

But in anticipation of that, the Kingdom is *already* present in a hidden way in Jesus. The Age to Come has invaded the present Evil Age. “If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you” (Luke 11:20, NASB).^{*} God’s eschatological kingdom is already present in Jesus as is seen in the recognized eschatological sign of the casting out of the demons.

And not only in that. The resurrection of Jesus is the coming of the End, the Eschaton. Here in the middle of this present Age, God’s eschatological salvation is revealed, in that *in anticipation* of the Last Day, One Man is raised from among the dead in the glorious psychosomatic unity of the resurrection body. Here is the firstfruit: here is the prototype (1 Cor. 15:23).

Humanity is perfected, body and soul, in the Person of the Risen Lord. Spiritual and physical salvation is accomplished, and it is emphatically physical as well as spiritual. “Knowing that Christ having been raised from the dead is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all, but the life that He lives, He lives to God” (Rom. 6:9, 10, NASB).

Salvation is salvation from sin *and death*, and in the Risen Christ, in His soul and body, the eschatological salvation is accomplished. The Risen Christ is *already* in the New Age.

E. Already . . . but Not Yet!

For his disciples, however, this is not so. They still live in this

present Evil Age. Their bodies, unlike the body of their Risen Master, are still mortal bodies: they have not yet put on immortality. They are still subject to decay and corruption, for they have not yet put on incorruption. The Christian is still a fallen man in a fallen world.

And yet, that is not the full story. For because Christ is risen and has sent down His Spirit, they experience union with Christ. Thus they taste *in anticipation* “the powers of the age to come” (Heb. 6:5, NASB). And by the fullness of the Spirit—His Spirit—they share in His “full salvation.”

Thus the eschatological tension between the “already” and the “not yet” which runs through the warp and woof of the New Testament doctrine of salvation is reflected in the experience of the Christian disciple. Because they have received the Baptism of the Spirit, the disciples *already* share in the perfected humanity of the Risen Christ. Being united to Him by the Spirit, they share in His crucifixion of the old humanity and are raised in newness of life.

With the fullness of His Spirit, the sinful flesh, in the Pauline sense, is destroyed—crucified and buried. That is to say, not the physical flesh, but *dependence on the flesh*, trusting in oneself, self-centered autonomy is at an end, and the Christian shares the mind of Christ—glad and humble and wholehearted obedience to the will of the Father.

God is loved with a pure heart, that is, with the whole heart and soul and mind and strength. They are *already* thus far perfected (*teleios*) as to aim for the goal (*telos*) with single-mindedness (Phil. 3:14 f.; Jas. 4:8).

But the “not yet” is seen in that they have not yet reached the perfection (*teleios*) of arriving at the goal (*telos*) (Phil. 3:12, 14).³ Their bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit who gives life to their mortal flesh (Rom. 8:11) and who fills their hearts with the love of God (Rom. 5:5), but the treasure is in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7). Their bodies are still mortal.

^{*}From the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.

They still live out their lives of sacrificial service in the old physical flesh.

In Christ, they experience "Christian perfection," but they still await that final perfection when they shall be like Him in the glory of the resurrection body, when they shall see Him as He is. In short, Wesley's teaching of the imperfections of the perfect is an 18th-century expression of the paradoxical "already . . . but not yet" of New Testament eschatology.

III. Full Salvation and Humanity

Having sketched in all too briefly the wide scope of theological background, we return to the problems and misunderstandings with which we began. How do they now appear? How are holiness and humanity to be related?

We may make four statements:

A. We Are Holy but Human.

God in His grace makes us holy, but He does not make us divine. The old humanity has been crucified with Christ, but the new humanity remains, and always will remain, human. And to be human is to be a psychosomatic unity.

The Christian who is wholly sanctified, that is, filled with the Spirit, still has an emotional life and a motivation based in his physiological drives: hunger, sex, physical fear, aggression, and so on. He is still engaged in ethical choices and personal and moral development. He must still work at "mastering his moods" (in Albert Lown's phrase).⁴ He is still liable to worry or anger or fear insofar as these have their basis in the body and its basic instincts. He holds his treasure in an earthen vessel (2 Cor. 4:7-11).

B. We Are Holy but Fallen.

The Christian, filled with the Spirit of His Lord, nonetheless lives in this present Evil Age. His heart is filled with the love of God, but the physical basis of his being still suffers from the effects of the Fall. Original sin in the sense which John Fletcher called "the bent to sinning"⁵ is dealt with, for he is now made perfect in love.

He desires the will of God with all his heart. He has a "bent toward God" and has presented his body as a living sacrifice. Yet he remains a fallen creature living in the old, as yet unredeemed body which is falling away into senility and disease and death. His body is physically fallen, with the element of chaos and disintegration still at work in his members.⁶

Consequently, since he is a psychosomatic unity, he still may suffer emotional crises and personality problems. He may still suffer irritation or depression or laziness or be involved in conflicts and disagreements. He still has infirmities, failings, weaknesses, and shortcomings.

Whether we label these "sins" is immaterial at this point. Insofar as they arise from basic physiological drives they may not be voluntary sins, but they still fall short of God's ultimate salvation and hence need atonement, need forgiveness, need confession, need healing. And they give rise to temptation to deliberate, voluntary sin.

But read on:

C. We Are Fallen but Holy.

If statement B is the expression of the *not yet*, this is the expression of the *already*, the optimism of grace. Already we live by the Spirit a life of obedience. The Christian does not live a life of voluntary or deliberate sin (1 John 3:4-10). And as he lives in the fullness of the Spirit, his heart is made pure, so that he is cleansed from double-mindedness and wholeheartedly serves God.

Here we must remember that while our motivation has a physiological basis, it cannot be reduced to physiology. Because of the condition of his body, the Christian may experience irritation or depression or laziness. But insofar as he operates healthily at the level of conscious ethical choice he disciplines himself, "buffeting his body" (1 Cor. 9:27) and refusing to give expression to the weakness of the flesh.

Because of the condition of his mind—also, remember, to be included as "flesh" (i.e., the psy-

chosomatic unity which is man)—he may become involved in conflicts and disagreements. But at the level of conscious ethical choice he will continue to love his brother with whom he disagrees.

By the grace of God and the blood of Christ and the power of the Spirit, the heart (i.e., his affections and motivation) is cleansed continuously through faith from all longings contrary to God, so that daily in each ethical choice, the Spirit-filled Christian disciplines and controls his natural physiological desires, seeks to bring every thought into captivity to Christ and to yield his members as instruments of righteousness.

D. We Are Human but Holy.

In this final statement we should strike out the *but*. Holiness is primarily an attribute of God, but man was created to reflect His image. Far from humanity and holiness being contrary, therefore, man is only fully human when he is holy, that is, when he reflects the image of the God who is love.

To be renewed in His image and "perfected in love" is to become a whole person. It is to have a fullness of love which unifies the motives around the one integrating motive, love toward God. To know the fullness of the Spirit is therefore to be an integrated person. To be filled with the Spirit is to become fully personal, reflecting in our personal relationships the very love which has come to us from the very inner relationships of the Tri-personal God.

Humanity and holiness go together. To be fully human is to be like Jesus. It is to love with the holy love of God. 

FOOTNOTES

1. For the Wesleyan-Arminian position, see H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology*, vol. 2, p. 128.

2. John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, 1966, p. 43.

3. The word for "goal" in Philippians 3:14 is *skopos*. That does not affect the point that the adjective *teleios* is derived from the noun *telos* which means "goal" or "end."

4. Albert J. Lown, *Mastering our Moods*. Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City.

5. Cf. "a natural propensity to evil." John Wesley, *The Doctrine of Original Sin*, in *Wesley's Works* Vol. 10, p. 295.

6. Cf. W. B. Pope, *A Compendium of Christian Theology*, vol. 3, p. 47.

PROSPECTS FOR EVANGELISM

by Dwight E. Neuenschwander

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*Evangelize, evangelize!
Lord, help us to evangelize.
We've a debt to every man
To reveal salvation's plan.
Let us do it while we can.
Let us evangelize.*

—Kenneth Wells *

To evangelize does require God's help. Any success at all must be attributed to God. However, God has so designed His program that it requires human involvement. If God is to help us evangelize, we must first involve ourselves in activity God can use. This activity would open areas for discussion, such as: prayer, fasting, visitation, celebration, etc. However, we will limit our thoughts here to one vital activity, locating and cultivating prospects by making friends.

After nearly 200 personal evangelism clinics and numerous evangelistic campaigns, one persistent, frustrating fact confronts me. God cannot "help us evangelize" what is not there or what we have not found. The need is for good prospects.

It is true, "We've a debt to every man to reveal salvation's plan." Holiness people everywhere recognize the debt and are willing to pay the debt. This is manifested by those willing to go visiting, learn personal evangelism techniques, and attend and pay for evangelistic campaigns. However, activity after activity that produces little or no sense of accomplishment in "paying the debt" becomes disheartening and counterproductive. The tendency then is to cease the activity. The problem is not in the activity

done, but rather in the activity not done. If a farmer entered his unplowed, uncultivated, unplanted field with his combine to harvest wheat, he would soon be exhausted by futility. He would have to face the reality that no wheat was there due to his neglect of the earlier activity of soil preparation and planting.

The activity lacking in the church is often the finding and cultivating of prospects. The most common obstacle to successful personal evangelism training is the lack of good prospects upon whom the trainer and trainees can call and "reveal salvation's plan." The same is true with the evangelistic campaign.

A church situated in a population center should strive to maintain a prospect list of at least four prospective families (families with no one enrolled in Sunday School) for every family represented on its rolls. These families should be on the church mailing list, receive at least one friendship call per month and be cultivated through Sunday School class interests and activities along with family and other interest groups. After one or more members of a prospect family has been enrolled in Sunday School, the other members of the family should not be neglected, but continually cultivated.

Monthly calls on prospective families and weekly calls on absentees are essential to "soil preparation" for evangelism. With a carefully organized visitation program, many churches have discovered that every absentee can be called upon every week and

every prospective family once per month with no one making more than three calls per week. A factor in keeping such a calling program alive and healthy is to have the callers calling on different people each week. These churches have so organized their program that no caller is asked to call on the same prospective family or absentee more than twice per year. Any calling program will die when people are sent to see the same people week after week.

There are many ways of finding prospects: giant visitors' days, watching for unloading moving vans, special events in the church that attract guests (at least once a month), everyday casual contacts, new installations from utility companies, etc. Many churches maintain a prospect file by going door-to-door for two hours each Saturday morning.

Essential in the whole matter is the preparation of the church for company (guests): a rewarding program, good music, efficient ushering, prepared Sunday School teachers, exciting, Spirit-anointed, Bible-centered messages from the pulpit, clean and neat facilities, and friendly people.

Holiness churches can still grow. If we will cultivate the soil, plant the seed, God will without fail bring the harvest. He will "Help us Evangelize." 

Note: *Rev. Dwight E. Neuenschwander is the author of a book called VISITATION EVANGELISM. It is available from your publishing house, price \$2.95.*

THE MINISTER'S MARRIAGE

by Louis McBurney

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If your marriage is joyous and your relationship marked by a warm sharing of life's adventures, just disregard what is to follow. But hold it. Not too fast. Before you declare yourself exempt from problems, maybe you should ask your wife. I've been amazed at how little awareness many ministers have of the wife's feelings. If at this point you don't have the courage to ask her, just keep reading.

The minister's wife shares all the pressures and pitfalls that beset her husband, and she is victim on two levels. As an individual, she feels the loneliness and isolation, the fear and insecurity, the unexpressed hostility, the effects of poverty, etc. Then all of those sensitive wounds are compounded as she shares her husband's hurts.

The Minister's Masculine Approach

Most men either are not sensitive to their wives' distress, or they deny it because they feel impotent to offer a solution. Men are uncomfortable with any problem they cannot "fix" on the spot, but frequently these are the kinds of issues your wife brings up to you. Most of you will go to great lengths to avoid such conflicts, leaving your wives to somehow cope on their own. This is a typical masculine approach. Feelings are foreign currency you never learned to spend. So when your wife comes crying, you get mad because you feel the pressure to make everything okay, and you can't do it. You just don't have the sensitivity to feelings, or an ability to verbalize them freely.

The female you married is quite the opposite. Women are different—there is no such thing as unisex. She can hold things in and deny them just so long; then she must talk it out, if not to you, to someone else. Last spring we led a retreat for pastors' wives. Seventy or 80 women unloaded to each other and to us. There weren't many barriers to prevent that group from talking it out. The main one was their reluctance to expose their husbands' faults

and failings. The most frequent complaint was loss of individual identity and privacy.

Sharon's Story

Sharon was typical. A young, vivacious, capable woman, she reflected the feelings of the younger generation.

"I would like for people to relate to me as 'Sharon,' and not just the preacher's wife. I have likes and dislikes, joy and pain, doubts and fears like everyone else, but it seems that nobody cares about 'me!' Most of them don't even know I have a name."

Your wife is probably less caught up in the role-playing and image-fitting than you are, so she is not as bound by the expectations. And yet it isn't so much the unreasonable things she is called on to do—secretary, pianist, nursery worker, and maid—as the way she is asked to comply that bugs her. "Sharon" was not asked to do any of the tasks because of *her* ability, but because she was the "preacher's wife."

Loss of privacy is closely related to this problem. Not only is the preacher's wife property of the church, but so are his house and family. I never cease to be surprised at the liberties church members take with your privacy. A few years ago one wife was telling us of life next door to the church in a parsonage which was the well-worn shortcut from the parking lot to the sanctuary. Dinner parties and family Christmases were interrupted by troops of intruders who didn't knock and acted resentful that the pathway was cluttered.

Her husband tried locks and even jamming the door. To this action one helpful old gentleman replied, "Preacher, that back door has been stickin', but I just fixed it for you. Shouldn't cause you any more grief!"

To top that, a wife who had lived above a storefront mission was awakened one morning by a couple of ladies looking for the pastor—in their bedroom. The word got around that the preacher and his wife sure did sleep late!

In addition to those common pressures and her husband's pains, the preacher's wife must face the same issue confronting the wife of the executive or doctor: the loss of her mate. She rarely has a moment with you alone. You fight the battle for a living and for a sense of accomplishment in your vocation. Your wife seeks her fulfillment primarily in the context of the home. Thus the stage is set for the most common conflict—how each of you can achieve self-satisfaction, support one another, and even become one. The wife's desire to succeed as a helpmate dictates that she maintain the feeling of being a part of your life and interest. Her efforts to break into your daily work routine to attain this goal may appear to be an effort to run your life, and may be extremely threatening to you. This fear forces you to retreat farther into that other world. A destructive cycle is established, often ending with complete alienation and hatred.

To make matters worse, your spouse must overcome another obstacle. You are neglecting her—not for another woman, not to make money, not for drinking buddies, but for *the church*. This situation creates tremendous tension. She knew when you were married that you were dedicated to the ministry, but few wives anticipate the degree of neglect they come to feel. They can become bitter, beginning to resent you and the church, and then they may feel guilty because of the anger they feel.

One wife put it this way, "I wish it were another woman, I could go pull her hair out!" She can't fight it out on equal ground with the church.

The Two Types of Ministers' Wives

There seem to be two basic types of ministers' wives. One feels called to be a pastor's wife and shares enthusiastically in his dedication and involvement. The other fell in love with a particular fellow and wants to give her life to being his wife, and the mother of his children. There's nothing wrong with either position.

There also seem to be two basic types of minister-husbands. The one wants his wife to share his work and stand at his side throughout his ministry, helping in various phases. The other resents such involvement and really prefers his wife to be a helpmate at home, caring for his personal needs and for their family. There is nothing wrong with either of these attitudes.

When wife type A marries husband type B, however, something's got to give. These mismatches occur with regrettable regularity and are aggravated by the capricious whims of congregation C who may want an associate today, a pastor's wife tomorrow, both next week, and neither next month!

Phil and Betty had real problems in this category. Betty was highly motivated to be a leader in "their" ministry. She was convinced that she functioned better than Phil in several areas. That was part of the problem. She did. He saw her as more a threat to his control and authority than as a helpmate. He actually did need her help, but he was afraid to accept it. What developed was a *yo-yoing* role for her, alternately being drawn up into the action, then let down with a jolt when her presence became too dangerous. She resented not only being dropped from the church duties periodically, but also her alternate role of mother, which was uncomfortable for her.

Susan's Story

Susan, by contrast, married her man—not the ministry—and wanted dearly just to be a homemaker. She resisted his every effort and those of the church to enlist

her as associate. Neither Susan nor her husband had been willing to give up or compromise significantly on his individual role preference for her. He persisted in trying to force her into the work, and she stubbornly refused to be recruited. Consequently, a smoldering fire of discontent and tension pervaded their home. One would expect these kinds of conflicts to be openly discussed and differences negotiated. All too often they are never exposed, much less talked out. It was not so difficult for Susan and Mark to work out some compromises, once they realized the problem.

Barbara's Hang-up

Another little-discussed area of potential pressure in most homes is sex. The minister's wife is not exempt from the common disappointments and battles of the bedroom. In our culture of the double standard, it is often the woman whose enjoyment and fulfillment is most impaired. She learned the lesson well—sex is sin. But they forgot to teach her all the lesson—sex is also ordained by God.

I have had several wives in therapy who expressed what Barbara embarrassingly confessed. "Dr. McBurney," she stammered, growing more crimson as she began to whisper, "I've got this real hang-up about sex. I feel dirty when we have sex."

Barbara went on to share her early life experiences regarding sex, and it became apparent why she had "hang-ups." Not only did her mother and her church teach her that sex was dirty and at best a necessary evil, but she had been sexually molested at the age of 10.

No one had bothered to discuss the healthy Christian view of sex and help her overcome the stigma of the sin-label that was imbedded within her consciousness.

The main sexual hang-up is not a matter of technique or frequency, but it is the attitude about communicating our sexual desires and fears. The vast majority of sexual problems in marriage can be solved by talking them out. When the communication breaks down (or is never established), sexual fulfillment will be sacrificed.

Woman's Ways of Balancing Things

Have you ever planned an important project or event and found the whole scheme submarined by your mate? She was so dreadfully sorry, but "she forgot all about it." Have you ever had an important engagement and found that you had no clean shirt—again? Have you been dissatisfied with your wife's housekeeping efforts, only to meet with apologies and promises that are never kept? Have you found your sexual relationship deteriorating, but have not been able to discover the reason? All of these behaviors may represent the same communication. Her "forgetfulness" and uncooperativeness could be her only way of expressing her hostility and resentment—resentment that is generated by your "forgetfulness" and nonsupport of her.

Jim and Joyce were having problems in their marriage for the "first time" in its 10-year history. Joyce was painfully and vocally aware of all his shortcomings, but she did not believe she was contributing to the problem because he rarely complained. I asked her what was the one thing he would most like her to change. She answered immediately, "To be a better housekeeper, but that's not really the big issue." Later, when I interviewed Jim and asked him what bugged him about Joyce, the first thing he said was, "She is a sloppy housekeeper! I've hinted and even asked that she change, but she won't. It drives me crazy." They had no open conflict for 10

years, only a constant building of pressure. She expressed her resentment only through her refusal to improve her housekeeping, a potent weapon.

Bill and Martha married and had four children. He was met at home with constant criticism. Either there was a list of projects he had ignored, or incessant castigation for his always being away. He was conscious of his desire to schedule church work as often as possible to avoid the hassles and put-downs at home. His wife's attempts to gain a foothold only served to drive him farther into his main defense, avoidance. He had become locked into a routine of spending more and more time away from home until they finally separated.

Not all women will resort to such open tactics as nagging or fighting back. A more subtle system is that of warfare through the children. The wife's bitterness and resentment is unconsciously transplanted into the children. They become Mom's spokesmen and warriors, doing battle by their misbehavior, school problems, or rejection of their father.

The Pattern Emerges

Mary, who was totally unaware of this pattern, confided, "Sometimes I think he deserves all the grief they can give him." I am confident they received her message and dutifully obeyed, although she thought she had never verbalized it directly to them. One daughter caused constant turmoil at home with her emotional outbursts and another with school problems and running away. Mary also said she had quit trying to express her anger directly toward her husband years ago because she just couldn't stand the conflict.

These patterns are not consciously and maliciously conceived, but they are nonetheless destructive. Many of you can be justifiably proud that this kind of turmoil doesn't mar your marriage, but don't relax yet. I've left what is probably the most common problem until last—psychosomatic illness.

The body is affected by our emotions. Anyone who watches TV knows about Excedrin headaches No. 25, No. 32, and No. 11 a.m. Sunday. Our tensions either find release outwardly or take their toll on body functions. At the Mayo Clinic, our psychiatry section was born and nourished by this physiological fact. We rarely had patients who came to see us. They came to the internists or surgeons because of headaches, stomach trouble, bowel disorders, back pain, skin rashes, or heart attacks. Understandably, many had been to doctors for years and received treatment for the various possible causes of their symptoms. Finally, at the Mayo Clinic they would learn the truth: the illness was emotional.

Dutiful Carolyn

Carolyn is a model minister's wife. She considers herself to be the prime candidate for the Submissive Wife of the Year award. She tolerates an unbelievable degree of neglect and lack of consideration from her husband, who is sensitive to everyone's needs but hers. She does so without complaint; yea, she declares even without resentment. She never nags. She creates an admirable father image of him with the children. She is a dutiful wife in every respect except when her stomach is "acting up again." She has consulted several specialists. The physical findings have been highly questionable, but her denial of any emotional problems has made a psychiatric approach impossible. The only time her husband is attentive and available is when she is bedfast. Then he waits on her,

cares for the children, and shows interest in *her*. That's a lot of secondary gain to give up, especially when psychotherapy would force her to face the repressed anger that threatens to emerge.

One other means of blowing off the steam can't be overlooked. It can be more destructive than any of the rest. It is for the wife to attack her husband in public. The main reason for cutting down your mate before an audience is to gain either safety or sympathy. Couples who snipe at each other are frequently unable to work it out in private. One or the other is so afraid of conflict that he/or she clams up or storms out. The pressure mounts until it can be safely blown off. Only in the presence of some buffer do they find that safety. Among friends they feel that the anger can be vented but won't get out of hand. They may even veil the hostility with humor to entertain the guests. It is rarely entertaining, even if the guests laugh.

The desire for sympathy as a motive for cutting hubby down to size derives from the bitterness engendered by the praise and acceptance lavished on him by his flock. The wife is thinking, *If these people really knew what a self-centered louse he is, they would treat me with the respect and admiration I deserve.*

Facing Hostility Honestly

Eleanor would steam, just thinking about the way the church members worshipped her husband. She knew how imperfect he was. He was selfish and inconsiderate, gave her little help with the children, would pout or walk out if anyone got in his way, and made life miserable for everyone in the family. They would go to a party and she would boil as his flock expressed their love for him. A part of her wanted to share the warmth, but the rest of her burned with desire to expose him as a fraud. That part usually won out, and she would begin her exposé. He would desert her and spend the evening avoiding her stinging "wit." His avoidance intensified her resentment and sharpened her tongue.

Fortunately, hostility can be faced honestly. It may even be eliminated altogether. The secret is in reevaluating the expectations to which you subscribe, and becoming aware of what is happening in your relationship. You don't "have to be" always available to the church, but you must be a husband. You are commanded to leave parents and become one with your wife, to love her even as Christ loved the Church.

One minister at a marriage enrichment retreat had reasoned that since he was commanded to deny himself, and his wife was one with him, then he was obligated to deny her needs along with his own. To plug that reasoning into Paul's analogy of Christ and the Church would be to say that Jesus was to deny the church—the bride for which He died. The bride was high on Jesus' priority list. If that priority pertained to our Lord and the Church, does it not also apply to you and your wife—even if you are a minister? By the way, it was Jesus who married the Church—not you.

It was also Christ who said, "The truth shall make you free." This holds true for the marriage relationship. Don't be afraid to find out what's going on. The true feelings you have can be faced and worked through with a new freedom for becoming one. Most couples I counsel have been avoiding the truth for years. They are so afraid to look honestly at themselves that they often delay until there is little left of the marriage. Several factors contribute to this fear. I believe the most important is the reluctance to admit, "I may not be doing it right." After all, you are the man of God!

WHAT'S IN A STAFF RELATIONSHIP?

by Robert Dunn

It was District Assembly. I sat down beside him to listen to the pastoral reports. As a staff member, Dick was my senior pastor, and therefore, my superior. But, as I thought for a moment, he was really much more than that to me. As his report neared, I reflected on our relationship since I had joined the staff.

He had been a pastor to me. Often he had expressed interest in me personally and asked also about my wife and children. I remembered that during many of our prayer times together he had lifted all of us in prayer. His concern for me went beyond the occupational level of our staff relationship. I felt his concern for me and my family was the same as it was for every other member of his congregation.

He was my pastor; also he was my friend. Many times we had laughed together during the past year. There were those scheduled times when all the staff families had joined in times of fellowship and fun. There were many other unscheduled times when we had laughed together and enjoyed being with each other. He had never demanded my friendship and confidence, but he had won it through his love and openness. Although we both spend the largest percentage of our time with the congregation, I had felt the freedom to tap that friendship any time I had needed to.

Someone has said that some of the most lonely people in the world are full-time church employees. This is a strong statement and perhaps it's true. But I ask myself, Why? I believe it doesn't have to be that way.

I have found friendship to be a two-way street; it requires honesty, sacrifice, and the willingness to be

open on the part of both parties. It's the same for church staff relationships as it is for any other relationship. Love, selfless love, is the most important key for developing and maintaining real and meaningful relationships.

My pastor, my friend, but the man I sat beside was still technically my superior. Some might say there is a conflict of interests here. I don't feel that way. True, as chief executive of the church, he is my superior. I recognize and accept that with all of its ramifications. I have asked God to help me be the best servant to others that I may be for Him as I fulfill my own call. This means servanthip to all, not just some.

I am a steward of God's love to the world. When I joined this staff I asked God to give me a deep love and acceptance for my superior. God has done that. I asked God to show me ways I could support my superior. He has done that too, and I'm not surprised.

An interesting thing has happened through all this servanthip, stewardship, and support. I feared at first that I would lose my identity and the individuality that God has given me. But instead, I am feeling things that I felt when I first asked Christ to be my Lord and Savior. I have not only retained my identity and individuality, but realize who I am even more clearly than I did. I believe I have that reality because I found my real self in Christ years ago. I am now free to give myself to others.

Dick is my superior, my friend, and my pastor. As he stood to give his report, I was deeply grateful for this relationship, but even more, I am thankful to God for His real presence in both of our lives which is shaping us as His servants.



HEALING THROUGH PROCLAMATION

by Bruce E. Howell

Pastor, Kalamazoo Wesleyan Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan

The counseling ministry is not an isolated service of the pastor. What goes on in the total program of his ministry has much to do with his success or failure in getting his people to come to him. This relation of the counseling program to the other areas of the ministry *begins in the pulpit*. Here is where the majority of his people see and hear him the most often. The sermon can either draw people to the pastor or create a barrier between him and them. It gives an idea of the way he would react to life's situations. Usually it is the sermon that helps people in their problems that also draws them to the pastor. One of the ultimate tests of the worth of a sermon is how many individuals want to see the minister afterwards.

Not only is there a close relationship between preaching and personal counseling, but to be more accurate, there is a real interdependence of the two. Preaching announces the gospel and in that moment ushers in the New Order of God and His Christ; and personal care works for the securing of that order once it has been introduced and entered into.¹ So, really, neither can be completely effective apart from the other.

When a preacher speaks to the real condition of his people he soon discovers that he is being sought out by individuals who want his intimate advice. The right kind of preacher is coerced to become a personal counselor. People who listen to him week after week will come to realize that he is one to whom they can go with personal problems.

The Effect of a Homily

The use of the sermon as an instrument of group therapy is probably one of the oldest forms of ministry to the spiritual needs of mankind.² In the Old

Testament, prophets made individual behavior a matter of concern in their messages. The problems of the group were individualized. Social sins were dramatized as the excesses of individuals. The behavior of those who feared God and dealt justly with men was classified as "righteous."

Healing through proclamation is best demonstrated in the ministry of Jesus. Here was life-situation preaching at its zenith. When Jesus spoke, people felt their burdens lifted and in place of these burdens came a closeness to God that gave their lives new value. Under the preaching of Jesus they grew to a mature insight into their own natures and their relationship to their Creator. At the core of His preaching there was a sense of concern, even compassion, that made the individual in the group feel that here was a Friend to be trusted and followed.

Preaching to human needs demands the ability to visualize the congregation, even while the sermon is being prepared.³ The preacher will need to understand that people are concerned about such problems as futility, insecurity, loneliness, sex, suffering, inferiority, and guilt. Once having done so, the preacher is well on his way toward communicating with soul-healing power.

What should a minister say when faced with such soul needs as listed above? Or, to put it another way, what should he refrain from saying? A sermon could serve as a soul-injuring instrument as well as a soul-healing force. To be a soul-healing influence, a sermon should face the reality of life honestly, proceed creatively toward goals that are reasonable and challenging to the best in life. It should present a way of living life at its best that is both comprehensible and attainable.

Ideas and attitudes which have a healing effect can be communicated through the sermon. Every sermon can breathe a *sense* of faith without having faith as its central theme. Again, not every message can be on the value of the human soul, but every sermon should assume it. This can be of great therapeutic value to the one who is struggling with the common problem of self-esteem. For those who feel as though they are beset by unsolvable problems, there comes the message of hope and encouragement. Every sermon can assume the presence of a power beyond ourselves which is able to help solve the

lect the need of his people for a faith that can be defined. It is also theology that provides a dimension of *stability* that is so badly needed in our ever-changing age. Modern technology has brought to our society such a state of flux that it has brought into question those values, mores, and religious beliefs that were heretofore unchallenged. To know that some truths are eternal and fixed can be a blessed and comforting thing. This knowledge brings a certain calmness to the souls of those perplexed persons who otherwise could not cope with the malleability or fluidity of our society.

The pulpit is a temptation to the pastor's ego. Before the rapt attention of his hearers he can set up his straw men and then proceed to knock them down with unchallenged finality.

most serious of human difficulties. It is the preacher's task to help people to come to an understanding that God is a real and present force in life.

The practice of dealing with individual persons, in both personal counseling and the sermon, oddly enough, has the beneficial effect of strengthening the preacher's confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ. As he wrestles with individuals over their problems, he sees the gospel produce a miracle of transformation. In addition, he beholds the gospel getting into the lives of people with the resulting effect that they are sent forth confident, cleansed, and generous.⁴

The Role of Theology

Questions which arise from life's situations are quite naturally related to theology, for this discipline concerns itself with such basic things as the nature of God, man, and sin. Historically, theology has been the attempt by man to relate scriptural truth to human experience. Christian theology has gone through a process of development, necessitated by the changing philosophies within the church as well as the assaults by those who hated or deserted her.

Aside from the historical setting, though, theology has sought to answer such basic questions as, Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? It endeavors to provide biblical answers to the queries which have haunted mankind for ages. Because theology deals with such important areas as death, immortality, suffering, morality, and purposeful existence, it is not difficult to see its significance in relation to healing through the proclaimed Word. People must be guided in establishing biblical views of such issues as sin, guilt, forgiveness, and free will. This knowledge comes in large part through the medium of preaching. Pastors, then are theologians when they proclaim God's way with man and man's life before God in the light of the Christian faith.

There is also a psychological need for theology; it satisfies the demand of the intellect for a definite structure in ideas and is reason's way of grasping religion.⁵ Therefore, a preacher must not be vague in his theology lest he neg-

Understanding Human Nature

The preacher's primary concern must always be to relate the gospel of Jesus Christ to every need and condition of men. If he is to succeed, he must know his people and understand their needs. The rapport that is needed in counseling can be initiated by the preacher if his sermons show an understanding of human nature. The Bible itself is the chief source book in this area. Every need known to man is described in this Book of books; the record of the experience of a host of people is described in stark realism. Here in the Scriptures are portrayed the results of such crippling emotions as guilt, doubt, futility, and fear. Here also are found the healing medicines of the soul: assurance of forgiveness; belief in the value of each individual; the challenge of self-forgetful service; the message of the transforming power of love; the faith that makes life strong and gives it meaning.⁶

The study of psychology will also help the preacher in his quest to better understand the needs and actions of men. Through studying this science he can acquire a knowledge of the method of operation of the human personality; he will then begin to recognize these patterns in himself and others. In this manner he will grow sensitive to the psychological clues that interpret human behavior, and will be able to explain the intricacies of human nature to his people.

Still another source for understanding human nature is that of the preacher's personal experience. Reflection upon one's own ministry should enrich pastoral understanding and thereby enhance his ability to preach relevant sermons. Pastoral records and reflection upon relationships in the light of the Christian faith, will enable the minister to relate in a more effective manner to his people.

The preacher who truly cares for persons will search out and use every possible level of knowledge, human and divine, at his disposal. If he is to preach to the needs of humanity, he must do all he can to increase his understanding of the life of the soul.

The Preacher's Attitude

There can be an approachable quality in preaching which will make the hearer feel at ease in the preacher's presence. It is that posture that is inviting. This attitude is composed of three ingredients: humility, tolerance, and humanness.

Humility is often a missing ingredient in the preacher's life. The pulpit is a temptation to the pastor's ego. Before the rapt attention of his hearers he can set up his straw men and then proceed to knock them down with unchal-

lenged finality. Although they may admire his eloquence or even his logic, the people with problems may wonder about his ability to understand. On the other hand, if his people recognize his humble dependence upon God they will be more open to hear what he has to say. The preacher's challenge is to lead people to the attitude of mind where Christ and they can meet. This is a humble task, for as in counseling so in preaching, he must decrease while the Lord must increase.

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It is not enough to tell people to have faith or even to describe all the values of faith. What they need is someone who can tell them how to get this faith. It is not enough to tell the people what to do; the preacher must tell them how to do it. Only the pastor who has *developed his own*

If the preacher gets the slightest pleasure out of denouncing people for their sins, they will sense it and resentment will probably result.

lenged finality. Although they may admire his eloquence or even his logic, the people with problems may wonder about his ability to understand. On the other hand, if his people recognize his humble dependence upon God they will be more open to hear what he has to say. The preacher's challenge is to lead people to the attitude of mind where Christ and they can meet. This is a humble task, for as in counseling so in preaching, he must decrease while the Lord must increase.

People must also know that their preacher is a man of tolerance. A harsh and condemning attitude, no matter to whom it is directed, is a barrier to counseling. If the pastor sounds as unbendable as a stone wall, his listeners may fear his judgment upon them. He must condemn sin, yet love the sinner. He must preach the law as well as grace. However, it is the *spirit* in which he preaches the law that is important for counseling. His people must be aware that he has a genuine sorrow over sin and its effect upon their lives. If he gets the slightest pleasure out of denouncing people for their sins, they will sense it and resentment will probably result.

Again, the preacher must avoid giving the impression of being too good. His people must understand that he too is human—that he also struggles with problems of his own. Too often laymen have thought of the preacher as a superearthly sort of creature whose interests and feelings are foreign to theirs. They are not aware of his humanness. Sermons that stimulate rapport show the preacher as he really is—a human being, “a man of like passions as we are.”

Preaching also has its oratorical barriers to an inviting attitude. If the preacher's tone is unnatural it may repel his people. He should not shout at them. The best type of preaching is conversational in tone. It is that preaching in which the preacher is sharing with his people his insights into an understanding of the mind and purposes of God.

The Preacher's Personal Devotional Life

The pastor's sermons reflect his personal life. The time he spends in communion with God is a blessing not only

faith is in a position to do this. The kind of preaching that meets their need and draws them for counseling is characterized in one layman's appraisal of his pastor: “When our minister talks about God,” he said, “you know he is talking about *his* God.”⁸

Conclusion

Proclamation has as its goal, healing. The healing of souls can only be accomplished through preaching when the pastor speaks to the needs, concerns, and problems of his listeners. People come to church with every kind of difficulty and problem flesh is heir to. A sermon is meant to meet such needs—the sins and shames, the doubts and anxieties that fill the pews. This is the place to start, with the real problems of the people. This is a sermon's specialty, which makes it a sermon—not an essay, an exposition, a lecture. Every sermon should have for its main business the head-on, constructive meeting of some problem which is puzzling minds, burdening consciences, and distracting lives, and no sermon which so meets real human difficulty with light to throw on it and power to win victory over it can possibly be futile. Any preacher who, with even moderate skill, is thus helping people is functioning, delivering the goods which the community has a right to expect from him. Even when he addresses a multitude, he speaks to them as individuals and is still a personal counselor.⁹

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Mark R. Moore



THE TONE OF THE TIMES AND THE TASK FOR TOMORROW

*Dialogs About the Practice of Ministry conducted by Dr. Mark R. Moore, executive director
of the Department of Education and the Ministry, Church of the Nazarene.*

Mark Moore: What changes do you see challenging the church in the 80s?

Dallas Mucci: Probably the most profound change that I have seen is a breakdown of society as we have known it. We no longer have strong leaders and if we *did* have strong leaders, we would destroy them with our carping kind of criticism and our nit-picking media.

The other part of the problem is the tremendous affluence which has developed the possibility for a rampant kind of hedonism. Again I don't think that sexual immorality is much worse than in the past days. The great difference is that it has become acceptable, and that is a radical change.

On the religious scene there are two interesting developments. The charismatic movement is beginning to burn out. That is going to create a vacuum in the 80s. On the other side of the coin, the liberal churches are beginning to ask themselves questions about identity and mission. I am convinced by some of the stirrings in some churches that they may *not* just go off and die in the corner.

Ed Nash: I would agree with Dal that affluence has not only affected the church but has affected the mainstream of our whole sociological makeup. Case-in-point would be the fact that our consumption in this country far outdoes our productivity. I think, also, that we have put too much of a premium on youth. In spite of the fact that the test scores and students' abilities continue to go down, we still tell kids, "you're bright, you're smarter than the previous generation." I think that is fallacy.

Also, we are so parochial in our mind-set, we are completely divorced from history, we are so existential that we have lost all contact with the past. Unless you put things into perspective historically, you just really don't have a

basis of understanding what the current problems really are. So I think affluence, a parochial mind-set that's so existentially oriented that it is completely divorced from history, and the youth movement are three challenges the church must meet in the 80s.

Another thing I think has happened is that, in the words of Malcolm Muggeridge, "Christianity has died." It is dead. Christ is not. Christ is still alive. But the church no longer holds the clout as an organization that it used to.

Mucci: First of all, I don't fully agree with Muggeridge that the church has lost its clout. I think the church has lost its political clout in large measure, and that is good.

I think probably the most disastrous moment in church history was when Constantine decided that everybody was a Christian. That was the beginning of the death of the Western church right then and there. Ever since, there has been massive confusion about the theology of the Church. I have never seen a book written in the Church of the Nazarene—I've seen a few Presbyterians attempt it—defining the theology of the Church. To me, a biblical theology of the Church doesn't ever allow us to be comfortable. I'm always hurting and squirming and examining. Not my fingernail on my pulse saying, "I wonder if I backslid today, or if somehow I've lost my sanctification and my salvation," and all of this endless debate which holiness people and Calvinists love to engage in, but the business of the Church as the suffering servant in a broken and bleeding world. And who wants to be a suffering servant? I am not anxious to be one. But when God's thumb is in my back, then of course, I am becoming the Church. That means I have the kind of clout that God wants. The kind of clout I want and even somehow the kind of clout I hear Malcolm Muggeridge saying he wants at times.



Dallas Mucci has served as the pastor of the South Hills Church of the Nazarene, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for 15 years. He previously pastored at Tinley Park, Illinois, for 8 years. He graduated from Eastern Nazarene College, holds a master's degree from the University of Chicago, and has done additional graduate study at the latter institution. He has held various district, regional, and general church offices. Dallas Mucci has recently become district superintendent of the New York District Church of the Nazarene.



Edmond Nash has served as pastor at College Hill Church of the Nazarene at Nashville, Tennessee, for the past seven years. He previously pastored at Kingston, Missouri, and Westminster, Colorado. He graduated from Olivet Nazarene College and Nazarene Theological Seminary, and holds the Doctor of Ministry degree from Vanderbilt University. He has filled various denominational positions.

Nash: I agree in that, to me, the whole concept of the kingdom of God and the Church is *servanthood*. When Jesus took the towel and washed Peter's feet, to me He was saying symbolically, "My disciples and My Church will succeed by carrying on the dirty work of the world." If it means dumping garbage, if it means working with the destitute, if it means working until you die (and if you follow His example, that is what you will do), that is the only basis of authority and power that we have. Our Christian heritage is in the company of the faithful who have been servants. I don't guess there has ever been a time when it is any more difficult to be a leader in the Church of the Nazarene than it is today. But it would seem to me that one of the things that we need to do from the top to the bottom, the clergy, laymen, everybody—we need to demonstrate that we are servants.

Moore: Are you recommending that the program for the 80s is all-out servanthood?

Nash: To me that is the key. If we are to recover the uniqueness, the fire, the fervor, it will be by saying, "Folks, we as pastors, we as district superintendents, we as general superintendents are going to serve and we are going to bleed and we are going to die." And that is all we are called to do. I think affluence is so subtle. It is the apple of the garden. It destroys the will to be an explorer, to get out beyond what you feel you can do humanly speaking. I think that for God to really bless and honor, our pastors and all of our people need to get to the point we'd bleed our last drop of blood and then let God pick us up off of the floor and say "I'll extend your strength."

Moore: If the directive of the 80s is servanthood, what does that say to us about how we deploy our resources and abilities in the coming years?

Mucci: *First*, I think we have to recognize that the greatest danger in the Church of the Nazarene today is we want to be too safe. If we are not willing to be like a corn of wheat and fall into the ground and die, then we have no hope. To me, the tremendous preoccupation with the shibboleths of holiness are killing us. I am not interested in reading more and greater sermons on the theory of holiness. I've read more already than I could ever plagiarize and preach in a lifetime. What we need is an expression of that holiness in the lives of our people. That's what brings us as a holiness church to servanthood.

Second, the church must get its resource into ministry—not temples. I no longer am impressed with temples. And if we don't get rid of the temple complex and move

to the Christian concept of the temple in the heart of the person, we are in great trouble. We have invested huge amounts of money in houses and lands when our investments should have been in people and in the kinds of ministries peculiar to the particular communities in which we serve.

Third, we had better redefine what a pastor is. He is not just a guy who pays budgets or erects buildings. He is a person who can discern who has the gifts and graces, and abilities to serve successfully—and then he enables those persons to fulfill their ministry. What we need is persons, not programs or temples.

Moore: All right, Ed, how do you think we should invest our ministry resources in the 80s?

Nash: One of the things that has concerned me is that we have developed congregations of spectators. And while I feel very strongly about a deeply meaningful morning worship service, and while it is fun to preach to a full house, we have a lot of people in our larger churches who merely come to observe. I, for one, feel that in the worship experience the free church tradition, from which we come, has usually involved the laity in the worship experience. The Catholic Church went into her period of stagnation when the priest did everything for the people. The priest stood up at the altar, the people sat out in the congregation and they were observers, they were spectators. Now I cannot help but think that psychologically some of the things we are doing are creating the priest-spectator situation. We have developed a generation that wants to sit back and say, "You can do it for us—if you do it neat enough, we might come back." Now, if you are not a participant in the worship service, but only a spectator, the chances are going to be pretty good that when you get out in the workaday world, you are still going to be a spectator. You are not going to participate in the servanthood kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ because you are not participating in that unique moment of worship.

I think that the only way we can develop the move from a spectator to developing a church of service is for the pastor to teach and to model a "participation" kind of Christianity. Jesus *always* modeled. He didn't just say, "Go do it." He showed them how. If we are going to minister successfully in the 80s we are going to have to shake off our spectator role, our "entertain me" notions and give our lives in service. Ministry, not security, must become our goal. Centuries ago the pope said to someone that the church no longer has to say, "Silver and gold

have I none," and the response was, "Yes, but the church can no longer say 'Rise up and walk' either."

As far as ministers are concerned, I think we need to look again at the success formula used in the early days of our church. Our clerical ancestors did three things, if I understand it right. They prayed, they spent time in sermon preparation (even if they had to miss a church party), and they were truly concerned with helping people. There's our program for the 80s—prayer, preaching, and people.

Moore: Do you think that the church itself, with its leadership, its organization, its structure, with its motivation and its objective, can actually turn itself around, or will it take a devastating depression or a third world war or a great catastrophe to bring us to the realization of our place under God in servanthood?

Mucci: I think the Church's victories after catastrophes in history have been overstated. I do think the Church can be the Church in any age, even in the 80s. I have stayed in one church for 15 years. Not because the church has not offered me someplace else to go, but the key thing to accomplish there was to build a church that would be the church. I come back to a theology of the church that casts the church in this threefold mold. (1) the church is never an institution, it is only a mission. If it is an institution, then I may as well do the Jerry Falwell number. I might as well get all of the kicks and everything else I can get out of it. That's what an institution is. It meets *my* needs. What we have done is we have moved to a place where we are not so much concerned about mission as we are about building the church. It was Bruner who said, "Fire exists by burning and the Church only exists by mission. And when there is no mission, the Church will never burn."

(2) None of us owns the church. It frightens me to death to not be able to really run that service. I'm probably the worst guy in the world for wanting things the way I want them. A couple of Sundays ago, this poor lady who is from the backwoods, got up in our fine church just before I was ready to preach after a marvelous song from the choir, and gave an inane testimony (and that's being kind), and she shed a few tears, and she sat down. I breathed a sigh of relief and thought, "Oh, no." And then if I was ever spoken to by the Holy Spirit, I was that morning. And it was, "Oh, no, what?" And I realized that there I was, resisting a needy, desperate person who wanted to share her pain with the saints. If I shut her down, where can she go? Sitting that morning in the congregation was a very prominent man and his wife who have just been coming to our church a short time. The next week they called me and said, "We want to talk to you about joining the church." I went out to their home. For five minutes, the wife, who is a brilliant girl from Berkeley, California, said to me with the tears rolling down her cheeks, "Do you know something? That little old lady's testimony is the most magnificent thing I have ever seen in church." I said, "You saw it because of the Lord." I never made a statement of love and expression of concern for that lady because she had interrupted everything and the truth is I was half mad. And she said, "You know, Pastor, I got in the car and said to my husband, 'That's where we must go to church. Because that's where people matter.'" And I'm not trying to be sentimental. I'm trying to face the fact that we cannot for a minute think that we are the head of the church. Christ is the head of the church.

The third point is that *everyone* is a minister. I'm a pastor, but every Christian is a minister.

Moore: Would you really encourage some young person to go into the ministry now? If so, why? If not, why not?

Nash: I have two daughters and while I want to be very careful and *will* be very careful not to push them into any particular environment as far as vocation is concerned, I think that I would share with them what my father shared with me. He said, "Ed, I don't care what you do when you grow up, but I hope that you will do something that would benefit humanity." I think that general statement is a legitimate statement a parent can make to a child. I don't think there has ever been a day that more people were hurting. True ministers of Christ are needed now more than ever. Further, serving Christ is what really counts. Everything I have—my friends, my health, my wife, my girls—everything someday will be taken from me, and all I will have left is that relationship with the Lord. I would say to young people, get involved, give your life for Him, because He is all you really have. From that standpoint, I would say, yes, enter the ministry.

Moore: Dal, do you have a comment to make on that?

Mucci: I think what Ed is talking about is the ultimate freedom. I haven't any qualms about saying to the best kids, sure, go into ministry. I am the freest guy in the church I am pastor in most ways. Sure I am constrained by love, but I am not constrained by other things, as long as Christ is Lord.

Moore: Do you have something to say to church leaders in the uneasy 80s?

Mucci: I would say five things to them. (1) Don't panic. (2) Don't take yourself too seriously. (3) Provide for us genuine, spiritual leadership, which results in effective preaching—not little essays on where we are or where we have come from or where we are going—but effective preaching of the Word of God. That means holiness as well. (4) Get it clear that the objective of the Church of the Nazarene and the creation of the Church of the Nazarene was not to preach *one* doctrine. Holiness is meaningless if it is cut off from the new birth. We must make clear to all of our people that holiness is the whole counsel of God, that holiness is not a sermon on how to have a second definite work of grace all by itself. In other words, we need to define *holiness* so that our guys understand that it isn't preaching one sermon every six weeks that comes in a vacuum. That to me, is crucial. Finally, (5) our leaders need to provide some demonstrations of continued and ever-increasing concern for persons. We realize our mission is not necessarily to have bigger churches. Our mission is to have Spirit-filled people to impact our world.

Moore: What you are really saying is that the objective is to put people first and let the growth follow. And if you put people first, that numbers are likely to follow.

Mucci: That is my theory. But I even want to be so radical as to say, that maybe the numbers belong to Him who is the Head of the Church. Our leaders need to generate in us an appreciation of who we are, who Christ is, who the Church is, and thus what we are to be to our world.

Moore: Ed, what is the advice you would give to the church leaders?

Nash: Part of what I have to say is from my father. I've watched him serve. He has been a servant. He taught me that the idea of servanthood has to convey two things. We have to convey a deep commitment, so deep that it would indicate, "I'm going to serve, I'm going to give of myself, whether or not you treat me fairly." I think somehow our leadership must realize that they are first of all Christians. And by definition, if they are Christian disciples, they are servants. They need to say, "We are going to be model churchmen. We are going to give ourselves



“Even in the new church it’s STILL, ‘I do,’ NOT ‘Yaaaa Baby.’”

without reservation.” I think the church is really saying, “Look. We just want to know that we have leaders who serve and love and give themselves.” To me, the whole theology of the kingdom is based on the idea of servant-hood. If our leaders can model genuine spirituality, people can look at them and say “there is a man in whom there is no guile,” a man who is willing to spill his lifeblood for Christ and the Church.

Moore: We’ve explored more the tone of the times rather than how ministry will change. I would like for you to respond to this question. How will Christian ministry in your local churches, in light of all of the complexities, and in light of the fact that 47 percent of this country is non-Caucasian, and in light of the pluralism within the church, change between now and 1985 or now and 1990?

Mucci: If the holiness church is indeed the Church of Jesus Christ, then we are confronted with being all things to all men that by all means we might save some. I think what is crucial for us to understand theologically and biblically, is that we are the salt of the earth. We are not the earth. We are the salt of the earth. If the congregation that I have pastored can discover they are the salt of the earth, then they will not face the kind of complexes that have been laid on us because we don’t have 17,000 people there on Sunday morning, or that our attendance does not exceed that of the Pittsburgh Steelers. Then I think that we are under way for the 80s to recognized the serious and unbelievable concept that Jesus gave the Church. You are not really to have that kind of obvious clout. You are to be the salt of the earth, the leaven in the lump, the candle sitting on the hill. That is where we are to be. Now if we will do that, we’ve got tremendous opportunity to become what Ed’s been talking about in the Church being the Church in that each lay person becomes a minister.

For I envision us being able then to attack the changing age sector, moving to older people. I can see us getting

involved in meaningful nursing-home ministry. I hope for meaningful involvement in bringing older people away from the Western syndrome of retirement back into life. They don’t retire, they simply change their job, or change their assignments, or change their vocation. Hopefully we will begin to face up to the fact that we can no longer, economically, if for no other reason, build great edifices. And if we do that and understand that the greatness of the church is not in her holdings, but in her spirit, we’re going to have a whale of a great time ministering in the 80s.

I think the other area that we’ve really got to bring into focus is the understanding that each person in the church is a minister.

The next thing we have to do is forget one of the key things in church growth theology and that is that you must build homogenous groups. The saddest thing for us is to assume for a minute in a culture like ours that the way we do it is to build bigger and better walls around our cultural or ethnical ghettos. In fact, we must find a way to unabashedly cross barriers to reach people. I must find in my life an awareness that I am not being “nice” to some black guy, and I’m not satisfying the NAACP, or I’m not being anything at all special when I bring Christ to him; I’m simply being Christian. And all of this other stuff has come because we have sinned. I think, we must eliminate from our own thinking in the church, some of these artificial barriers. They are not artificial in the world, they are very real. But they are quite artificial in the church. And this goes right to the heart of all of the cultural fears that we face about these things. And I don’t think we can back away from it in the 80s.

Moore: Ed, how will ministry change in your church during the 80s?

Nash: In terms of specifics, I’m not sure. For me here in 1980 to project what I’ll be doing in ’83 or ’84 in terms of methods, I don’t honestly know. If I’m at College Hill three or four years down the road, with college students that are on the Hill, with senior citizens on the Hill, with the blacks down at the foot of the Hill, I will probably in some part continue to try to meet the needs of senior citizens and young adults and those who continue to come to my church, who drive in. Who knows what the energy crisis is going to do to us? I’ve thought maybe the day is going to come when we are going to just have to set aside one day and spend that whole day at the church—come in on Sunday and just make it a whole day. Wednesday night might become a thing of the past. It might be some Sundays you’d have to just come in and lock in for one whole day. Sunday morning, Sunday afternoon you would have your choir practice, your Caravans, you would have dinner on the grounds, you’d have everything. On Sunday evening, a 5:00 to 6:00 service because everybody would be tired. I don’t know what the future holds. I have thought about that. We could do worse than to just make one day and center it around the church and really bring everybody together.

In terms of our black people, we have a day-care center. Not because it makes us money; it loses money. But it does touch the lives of people. I feel like in terms of welfare kids and people who need us in that community, we’re there. We teach their kids in Sunday School, we have a special program for them once a year or more, and we’ve had them attend church on occasion. We try and follow up to some degree, although we don’t do as well as we should.

Moore: I think you have said that the project is to try to bring some hope in a generation of despair, and you are saying we are going to do whatever we have to do through servant-living to bring that message.



by Clarence L. Bence
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EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION

In his oft-quoted preface to *Sermons on Several Occasions*, John Wesley confessed his desire to know only one thing—the way to heaven; and then indicated his commitment to the Bible as the one Book which is the Source of that knowledge. He concluded,

I have accordingly set down in the following sermons what I find in the Bible concerning the way to heaven; with a view to distinguish this way of God from all those which are the inventions of men. I have endeavored to describe the true; the scriptural, experimental religion.¹

This word *experimental* has been abandoned as an archaic term of Wesley's day, no longer appropriate for describing the Christian faith. Instead modern scientism has claimed it for its own.

Chemistry is experimental, psychology is experimental; but no one would call something as intangible and spiritual as religion, experimental.

In searching for a suitable word to translate Wesley, most scholars have adopted the modern category of religious *experience*.² And when properly understood, experiential religion is a very good description of the Wesleyan message, which emphasizes a personal and dynamic relation-

ship with God as the core of Christianity.

However, there are other meanings to the word "experience" which can distort, and even destroy, Wesley's doctrine of holiness. In fact, experiential religion can easily become quite the opposite of experimental religion as Wesley understood it. Experience, falsely understood, can lead us into a subjective, ego-centered world where ethical conduct and biblical doctrine are discarded in favor of the personal feelings of the moment.

Entire sanctification may be degraded into a psychological crisis of the moment.

This incorrect (but very prevalent) understanding of religious experience can be traced back to Friedrich Schleiermacher, the father of classic liberalism. In 1799, a few years after Wesley's death, this German theologian proposed that essential religion must aban-

don "all claims on anything that belongs to science or morality."³ Religion was not a matter of knowing, or doing; it was primarily a matter of *feeling*, an inner consciousness of God and one's absolute dependence upon Him. A Christian was one who felt the presence of God in one's life, correct doctrine and ethical standards were of little importance.

This liberal view of Christian experience spread to America and was further refined in William James, *The Variety of Religious Experience*. After describing numerous types of spiritual experiences (conversions, visions, healings), James concluded that there were no clear standards for judging what was true or false, right or wrong, in the spiritual realm. All these experiences seemed to exhibit a common "saving experience" with a "wider self;"⁴ but beyond that fact, little of substance could be said.

Since religion dealt with spiritual (subjective) rather than physical (objective) realities, it could only be described, and never tested for truth and falsehood like scientific facts. If any criterion for religious truth remained, it was purely pragmatic—"If it works, it must be right." But even this test was soon modified by the existentialist claim, "Truth is

what is true for me, in my own experience."

Unleashed from all tests and measures, Christian experience has often become a very personal, individualized affair. Each person experiences God in his or her own way, and dares not make any judgment regarding the validity of another person's spirituality or conduct. Christians may "do their own thing" and justify it by claiming a spiritual experience as its foundation.

This distorted view of religious experience may even creep into holiness circles. "Born again" may be explained more in terms of turning on to Jesus than a genuine transformation of one's life and conduct. Altar calls may become nebulous invitations to be "touched by God" rather than repentance for specific sins and commitment to the absolute demands of the gospel. Entire sanctification may be degraded to a psychological crisis of a moment, rather than holiness of heart and life. Being Spirit-filled may be understood more in terms of emotional events than divine control of actions and attitudes.

Wesley would repudiate any such experiential religion, and call instead for "a substantial, practical *experimental* divinity."⁵ As a competent scientist himself,

Wesley knew what it meant to put the claims of medicine or physics to the test, to verify them in repeated situations that could be observed by the experimenter and others by means of the senses. He would not approve of our modern-day isolation of objective science and subjective religion.

Christianity itself must be verifiable to the senses as it is lived out in flesh-and-blood experience. He condemns those "who have advised us 'to cease from all outward action; wholly to withdraw from the world, to leave the body behind us, to abstract ourselves from sensible things.'"⁶

Instead he offers us what one writer has called a "theological empiricism,"⁷ a faith that is visible and verifiable in the light of the judgment of reason, Scripture, and the observations of others around us. Wesley called for "living witnesses" to the doctrines he preached, persons who demonstrated in the experiment of daily living that the claims of full salvation from sin were indeed true. He wrote,

To glorify [God] with our bodies, as well as our spirits; to go through outward work with hearts lifted up to him; to make our daily employment a sacrifice to God, to buy and sell, to

eat and drink, to his glory—this is worshipping God in spirit and in truth, as much as praying to him in a wilderness.⁸

Wesley scorns legalism and formalism, for these are mere outward expressions of religion which lack the deep personal fire of heart religion. But when heart religion becomes distorted to meaningless emotionalism or spirituality by subjective feeling, Wesley demands a faith that is *practical* and *visible*, a religion not only of inward experience, but outward demonstration. And in his own life and ministry he taught us much of that balanced religion of heart *and* hand, spirit *and* action. We might well benefit by discovering again the power of experimental religion. 

FOOTNOTES

1. "Preface to Sermons on Several Occasions" (6), *Works*, V, p. 3.
2. See for example Delbert Rose, *A Theology of Christian Experience* (Wilmore, Ky.: Seminary Press, 1958).
3. *On Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), p. 35.
4. *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Mentor Books, 1964), p. 388.
5. "A Further Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion" (III/ii/10), *Works*, VIII, p. 221.
6. "Sermon on the Mount: Discourse Four" (3), *Works*, V, p. 295.
7. George Cell, *The Rediscovery of Wesley* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), pp. 5-12.
8. "Sermon on the Mount: Discourse Four" (iii/6), *Works*, V, p. 306.

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WHAT IS BIOETHICS?

by Albert Truesdale

Professor of Philosophy and Ethics, Nazarene Theological Seminary

In this article, the pattern of the series shifts from contemporary theology to bioethics—a particular area of contemporary ethical inquiry. This rapidly expanding field of ethics is intensely important for today's parish minister because it directly impacts the people to whom he ministers. Its range of investigation is too broad to allow more than an introduction to the major themes that are included in bioethics.

Bioethics may be defined as “the critical examination of the moral dimensions of decision-making in health-related contexts and in contexts involving the biological sciences.”¹ It is the branch of applied ethics which studies practices and developments in the biomedical field.

Although the term bioethics is of relatively recent origin, the nature of the problem with which it deals is ancient: the interdependence of medical care and ethics. Emergence in this century of bioethics as a distinct discipline of applied ethics has been prompted by the dramatically increased capabilities of medical practice and medical-related advances in science. The principal question faced by bioethics is, “How may what can be done in the fields of health-related practice and research be guided by an ethical content that safeguards the freedom of the health-related professions, while at the same time carefully protecting the human dignity of patients, families, and the community?”

At least from the time of the Greek physician, Hippocrates, in the late fifth century B.C., people have known that the practice of medicine (and its related technologies) entails not only responsibility for medical expertise but also for the human integrity of those for whom the medical arts are developed and practiced. There was a time when the practice of medicine and the ethical issues that arose as a result, were made fairly simple by the relatively rudi-

mentary medical skills and options available to the physician.

But now, when decisions must be made such as who, out of the millions of cancer patients will be allowed to receive experimental Interferon² (only 400 billion units can be produced annually, and daily doses of millions of units are needed for each patient being tested), the complexity of the ethical problems provoked by modern medicine and research have soared to astronomical proportions. Astonishing developments in medical research, discovery of cures for once deadly diseases, and use of space-age medical technology for detecting and treating diseases have together prompted extensive investigation into the rights and duties of patients, health professionals, research subjects, and researchers. The complexity of the problems examined by bioethics is also reflected in the diverse professional fields involved. These include biologists, doctors, philosophers, jurists, and moral theologians.

The amount of technical expertise often needed to make informed ethical judgments about bioethical problems can appear as a bewildering obstacle to parish ministers who must help families make practical decisions. This point was driven home recently in a class on bioethics at Nazarene Theological Seminary. The guest speaker, a Christian layman, is a research psychologist at the University of Kansas. After carefully diagramming and explaining what he and others are finding out about the impact on human behavior made by some disorders in the chemistry of the brain, he asked for our guidance about how he as a Christian should understand the ethical implications of his research results. Although we thought our orientation to Christian ethics to be sufficient, our responses were frustratingly inadequate because we lacked understanding of the technical language necessarily used

by the psychologist. How could we give informed ethical guidance if we couldn't even adequately understand the problems?

Bioethics is a branch of applied ethics. This means that the ethicist engaged in bioethics attempts to apply the particular type of ethical theory that guides him. All types of ethical theory have their attending branches of applied ethics that examine all kinds of ethical issues. Ethicists distinguish between non-normative ethics which is primarily interested in *describing* the way ethical language is used (in a particular religion for example), and normative ethics which attempts to establish or *prescribe* a particular norm or standard by which ethical judgments and actions ought to be carried out. Ethicists who are involved in bioethics are applying *normative* ethics.³

Three distinct stages in the development of bioethics may be identified and these three also describe the three major divisions of bioethics.

1. Medical Ethics, which attempts to "formulate ethical norms for the conduct of health professionals in the treatment of patients. The Hippocratic Oath, Percival's Medical Ethics (published in England in 1803), and the American Medical Association's *Code of Ethics* (1847) are landmark documents in this long tradition."⁴ These have been supplemented by similar codes of ethics written for practitioners of other health professions, e.g. nurses.

2. Research Ethics. Since the 17th century, the effort to derive new knowledge through systematic human experimentation has compounded and we are all beneficiaries of these efforts. But as is obvious, research that is carried on through use of a human subject immediately raises serious ethical issues and calls for developing ethical codes that "focus on the obligations of the individual researcher in his or her relationship to each individual subject."⁵

3. Public Policy. The third stage, beginning in the early 1960s, witnesses the effort "to formulate public policy guidelines for both clinical and biomedical research."⁶ By utilizing the contributions of fields such as jurisprudence, sociology, philosophy, medicine, and religion, public policy recommendations on numerous issues have been set forth. The current federal ban on certain types of research involving genetic manipulation may serve as an example. Policies regarding the fair allocation of scarce medical resources also exemplify this stage.

There are at least 10 types of problems dealt with by bioethics.

1. The allocation of limited resources. Here the problem is how to resolve the ethical dilemma created when needs outstrip available resources.

2. The regulation of health care. By whom, under what conditions, by what criteria, and for what goals should medical practice be regulated? There is a growing sense that medicine is now too complex and its social implications too wide-ranging to expect self-regulation of the medical profession. For example, who shall determine the conditions for

mass screening for heritable diseases or severe birth defects? Answers to such questions are directly linked to societal values that must somehow become embodied in public policy.

3. The use of human subjects in experimentation. How may both the dignity and worth of the individual, and the legitimate need by scientists to carry out experimentation in order to perfect potentially beneficial discoveries, be safeguarded?

4. The scope of medical prerogative. While it is generally agreed that the medical profession is the one most competent to make medical decisions, no such general agreement about what constitutes a medical decision exists. For example, is the question whether a woman should have an abortion a purely medical question?

5. Constraint of research objectives. What are the fundamental purposes and possible effects of research? By what criteria shall we reach a resolution of this question? How may the potential value of a particular research project be harmonized with other and possibly competing values?

6. Responsibility for dependent persons. What are the societal responsibilities for people who, for such reasons as mental retardation, congenital deformity, advanced age, blindness, etc., are unable to function in the society with normal independence?

7. Death and dying. Our ability to indefinitely sustain the function of bodily organs long after their involuntary operations have ceased, and even when other vital signs such as brain activity cannot be registered, has made it necessary to seek new criteria of death. "When is a person dead?" or, "Under what conditions may a person be allowed to die?" are very real questions facing doctors, families, and the courts. "Living wills" that carefully detail the conditions under which one desires to be allowed to die, i.e., life support systems withdrawn and medicine not administered, are being written by many people, and some states are actively considering legislation that makes such wills legally binding.

Some ethicists draw a distinction between "euthanasia" and "allowing to die." By the former term they mean intentionally terminating an irreversible illness by a second party, e.g., a doctor. This is usually referred to as active euthanasia. By "allowing to die" these ethicists mean withholding esoteric life support systems from patients in instances of irreversible illness. In such instances death comes about without further attempts to artificially postpone it.

But *other* ethicists refuse this distinction and say that euthanasia should include cases in which a patient is *allowed to die*. They argue that there "is no clear logical or ethical distinction between killing and allowing to die."⁷ Ethicists who advocate *active euthanasia* argue that this procedure is manifestly more humane than allowing a person to suffer indefinitely, or to withhold life support measures and allow the patient to linger indefinitely, often while racked by maddening pain.

8. Commitments of the medical profession. How is the physician to act with ethical consistency at a time when his traditional commitment to prolong life conflicts with his equally firm commitment to relieve suffering? How is he to be guided in situations "where adherence to one value requires violation of the other?"⁸

9. The physician-patient relationship. Perhaps no area of bioethics has been more broadly discussed in the public media than the search for an equitable balance between a patient's rights and professional responsibilities. "Physicians have a uniquely privileged and powerful position with regard to their patients,"⁹ and criticism leveled at the medical profession for alleged misuse of this privilege are legion.

The American Medical Association has presented a 12-point Patient's Bill of Rights that has received widespread attention. Among the rights listed are: "The patient has the right to considerate and respectful care. The patient has the right to obtain from his physician complete current information concerning his diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis in terms the patient can be reasonably expected to understand."¹⁰

But ethical problems created by the physician-patient relationship also show up in the tension that arises between the doctor's commitment to protect information confided to him/her by a patient, and the court's desire for that information.

10. Control of behavior. In my opinion, this is one of the most difficult, and yet one of the most promising areas of bioethics. The increasing availability of techniques (e.g., psycho-surgery) for modifying human behavior demand that we ask, "What sorts of behavior may justifiably be controlled, by whom, in what ways, for what purposes, [and] in accordance with what values?"¹¹ By what standard will we judge between normal and abnormal, acceptable and unacceptable behavior? What model of normalcy and abnormalcy is acceptable? What concept of man lies behind the development and application of a particular behavior modification technique? Christian faith, with its high estimate of the worth of the human person, must take an active role in formulating guidelines for answering these questions and for combating techniques and goals that threaten to jeopardize human dignity.

But these questions apply primarily to a living person whose genetic structure is now unalterable, even if through such techniques as psycho-surgery genetically transmitted diseases such as focal epilepsy¹² (and the episodes of violence that occasionally occur between seizures) may be corrected.

The possibilities now exist for shaping human behavior according to a desired pattern much earlier in the human life cycle. Such phrases as "genetic testing," "genetic screening," "in vitro fertilization," "cloning," and "genetic intervention" all deal with present or possible procedures for significantly controlling or altering certain genetic or physical characteristics of one's offspring. Discussion of these procedures in the public media is becoming

increasingly prevalent. Such phrases as "genetic intervention" and "reproductive technologies" may strike us as cold and impersonal, but their potential implications for the future of mankind arouse some of the most heated debates in the whole range of bioethics.

Genetic testing of adults, children, and newborns may assist in treating existing diseases. Other genetic disorders can be diagnosed for which neither a cure nor preventative measures are available, Huntington's chorea, for example. Genetic testing also makes it possible to make predictions concerning the genetic characteristics of the individual's offspring. One disease that can be predicted with a high degree of probability is Tay-Sachs disease, most common in Jewish persons of eastern European heritage. The disease leads to the gradual debilitation and death before the age of five of afflicted infants. How should public policy relate to high risk carriers of such diseases?

Techniques are now available that allow genetic testing to be extended to the fetus *in utero*. Through use of such techniques as amniocentesis¹³ or the fetoscope, approximately 50 genetic or chromosomal disorders such as Downs Syndrome (mongoloid) can be detected. If the diagnosis reveals that a fetus is afflicted with such a disorder, parents must face the very difficult question of whether the fetus should be allowed to come to full term. As is obvious, the availability of such new information is also the catalyst for ethical dilemmas not faced by our grandparents.

Programs of genetic screening simply apply the techniques of genetic screening to large numbers of persons. They may be of two types: voluntary or involuntary, and may be used to detect either post- or pre-natal disorders. Should someone be forced to undergo such diagnosis if he or she is suspected of contributing to the continuation of a disease such as Tay-Sachs, or sickle-cell anemia?

The appearance in recent years of astonishing reproductive technologies such as *in vitro* fertilization (literally, fertilization "in a glass"), cloning (a method by which offspring are reproduced asexually, resulting in offspring which are genetically identical to a single parent), sperm banks (e.g. recent establishment in California of a sperm bank created by "Nobel Prize Winners") are making demands on ethicists completely unknown to our predecessors. We should note that gardeners practice a common form of cloning by rooting a branch from a single tree or flower. But it is now at least theoretically possible to clone a human being.

Genetic intervention refers to the possibility of actually altering or controlling the genetic information in the DNA molecule that serves as a unique blueprint by which each individual is structured—color or hair, eyes, height, inherited diseases, disease propensities, etc. This form of genetic control is known technically as Recombinant DNA. The human race is afflicted by approximately 2,300 identifiable genetic or chromosomal disorders.

The ability of molecular biologists to control the genetic information could "contribute substantially

to our understanding of genetic defects and may one day provide a mechanism for the repair of defective human genes . . . It is but a short step from the elimination of genetic defects to the enhancement of human genetic capabilities."¹⁴ But the promise of cloning and genetic engineering for improving human life lies also in its application to agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry.

However, such potentially beneficial scientific advances call into play new ethical questions that cannot be answered by the scientific community alone, but must engage the whole range of human interests and values. In the debates that have already begun and are sure to follow, Christians must be ready to give creative and informed guidance.

The problems dealt with by bioethics seem so complex and initially bewildering that we may be forgiven if our first impulse is to retreat from their demands upon us. But the world in which such concerns are prominent just happens to be the sort of world in which we are called to minister. The issues outlined above have to do with people—our people, our families—with us. They involve the world created and redeemed by the Christ who gave himself that all people may have life and have it more abundantly. The world to which this gospel is addressed must be the complex one in which we live. Otherwise, the message of hope and guidance we bring will not really be the “good news” that citizens of this world can hear.

The challenge to speak the Word of the gospel in the latter part of the 20th century, to do it as ministers who are not only informed about the biblical message, but also about contemporary people and the ethical issues that face them, is admittedly immense. But the urgency and presence of God's love for His world will not allow us to shrink from that responsibility.



ENDNOTES

1. Samuel Gorovitz, "Bioethics and Social Responsibility," *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, Beauchamp and Walters, eds. (Encino, Calif.: Dickenson Publishing Company, Inc., 1978), p. 52.
2. See "Interferon: The IF Drug for Cancer," *Time*, March 31, 1980, pp. 60-66.
3. For an excellent introduction to the major types of ethical theory, see William Frankena, *Ethics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963).
4. "Bioethics as a Field of Ethics," *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, p. 49. For a basic introduction to bioethics given from the perspective of medical ethics, see Harmon L. Smith, *Ethics and the New Medicine* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970). See also *The Encyclopedia of Bioethics*, and *Bioethics* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), basic writings on key questions associated with the field of bioethics.
5. *Ibid.* The Nuremberg Code (1947), as it came to be called, was drafted in response to the Nazi practice of performing high-risk and often lethal experiments on concentration camp inmates and other non-consenting subjects. Subsequently, additional national and international codes of research have been formulated.
6. *Ibid.*
7. "Euthanasia and the Prolongation of Life," *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, pp. 286-90. See also James Anderson, *Issues in Life and Death: Abortion, Birth Control, Capital Punishment, Euthanasia* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1977). Everett Koop, *The Right to Live; the Right to Die* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1976). Glaser and Strauss, eds., *Awareness of Dying* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co. 1965).
8. Gorovitz, p. 54.
9. *Ibid.*
10. The complete text of the Patients' Bill Of Rights may be found in *Hospitals*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Feb. 16, 1973), and in *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, pp. 286-90. See also Vincent Edmunds, eds., *Ideals in Medicine* (Chicago: Christian Medical Society, 1958).
11. Gorovitz, p. 54.
12. Focal epilepsy is one of the more common diseases afflicting the limbic brain. Such epilepsy may be associated with behavioral abnormalities, and the focus may originate from the inner or medial-anterior portion of the temporal lobe. From Vernon H. Mark, "The Case for Psychosurgery," *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, p. 531.
13. "During the middle trimester of pregnancy, a pregnant woman can request a procedure called amniocentesis, in which a sample of amniotic fluid is removed from the sac which surrounds the fetus. This fluid is then subjected to laboratory analysis. By the mid-1970's approximately fifty genetic or chromosomal disorders . . . could be detected by the method." ". . . the fetoscope has been used experimentally to visualize various parts of the fetus." Taken from Leroy Walters, "Genetic Intervention and Reproductive Technologies," *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, p. 568.
14. Walters, p. 571. See also Joseph Fletcher, *The Ethics of Genetic Control* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1974). *Playing God: Genetic Engineering and the Manipulation of Life* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

BEING, SELF-UNDERSTANDING, AND AUTHENTIC MINISTRY *(Continued from page 7)*

ter, instead of being something a man possesses ready-made, is simply the pattern formed by good actions throughout his life."

A young seminarian, for example, may graduate with only a vague awareness of his basic motivations. Perhaps he has "delusions of grandeur" in the ministry, based on the outward success of another minister who serves as his idol. In his first ministry, however, he comes into contact daily with the suffering and misery of human beings. He prays with patients in hospital beds dying from cancer. He sees the trauma of little children when parents are seeking a divorce. In his preaching, he feels the power of God working through the written Word. Can we deny that the pursuit of his ministerial responsibilities actually contributes to the development of his own being? I believe we can enhance our character by becoming strongly task-oriented. The outstanding leaders of every generation have given themselves to a great cause. Washington denied himself the comforts of Mount Vernon to suffer with his ill-clad soldiers at Valley Forge. Lincoln gave his life to save the Union. Devotion to our own mission should make it possible for being itself to expand and grow.

Why spend every moment in self-analysis? Instead, let us press on in the work for which God has called us, asking Him to purify the gold of our desires. He will provide the power to keep the dross at a minimum. At the same time, we will concentrate on seeking the welfare of others.

To summarize, we must not see the drive for self-worth as a constant negative factor in our usefulness for the Kingdom. Christian leadership demands a certain sense of self-worth. We cannot function effectively in the ministry if our own sense of well-being is slowly being eroded.

We need to "consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24, NASB). My praise for another minister helps reinforce the quality of his being which makes his ministry possible. By the same token, his response to me reinforces my own activities. By loving affirmation of each other, we help increase our mutual effectiveness in the Kingdom.



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“THE CHURCH ALIVE”

Mark 6:34-56

by C. S. Cowles

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D. Elton Trueblood relates that he tried out over 90 titles before settling on *The Company of the Committed* for his runaway best-seller. He would undoubtedly approve if we borrowed that expressive title for a series of expositional sermons dealing with the nature and mission of the Church from Mark 6:34-56. We could set the stage by developing a sermon around the theme:

“The Creative Rhythm of the Church’s Life”

First, The Church Gathered is a picturesque way of describing the feeding of the 5,000 (6:34-44) which vividly exemplifies the Church at worship.

Second, The Church Scattered is a pointed way of depicting the storm at sea (6:45-56) which dramatizes the Church in mission to the world. The spiritual power of the Church depends upon a proper balance and dynamic rhythm between these two dimensions of its life.

In developing these two aspects of the Church’s existence, we could begin by analyzing.

“The Worshipping Community”

First, The Setting was Desolate (35)

1) It was a lonely place (32). To get there was difficult.

2) It was an unpromising crowd that gathered (33-34). They were fatigued, harrassed, and confused—a fairly accurate description of the congregation as the pastor sees it.

Second, The Servers were Reluctant (35-6).

1) The disciples felt ill-prepared: “it is already quite late.”

2) The disciples felt ill-equipped (36).

3) Jesus does not even acknowledge their excuses. Rather,

He commissions them to do what they can and use what they have (37).

Third, The Service was Satisfying, because Jesus was there!

1) Jesus used what they committed unto Him (38).

2) Jesus organized the service (39-40).

3) Jesus consecrated common elements of daily life toward meeting basic human needs (41).

4) Jesus mediated His ministry through the obedient hands of His servants, the disciples.

5) The crowd was satisfied and the disciples were amply rewarded (42-43).

This miracle story can be further developed by focusing upon the three principle actors in the unfolding drama.

First, there is Jesus.

1) He is the One that people seek (33).

2) He is moved with compassion (34).

3) He teaches before He feeds (34).

4) He takes, blesses, and supernaturally multiplies that which they offer Him until they are fully satisfied (41).

Second, there are the disciples.

1) They enjoyed a special relationship with Jesus (30-32).

2) They resented the incursion of the crowd (35-36).

3) They were rebuked by the Master: “You give them something to eat” (37). Ecclesiastical self-centeredness must continually give way to servanthood ministry.

Third, there is the crowd.

1) They have deep needs which they sense only Jesus can satisfy (33).

2) They were eager and open (33c). They even ran ahead of Jesus and the disciples, and got there before they did.

3) They were hungry, first of all, for the Word of God (34c).

4) They needed to be organized (39-40). There is a difference between a crowd and a community.

5) They needed leadership and the ministry of others (the disciples). They were unable to provide their own spiritual nourishment.

6) They ate and were satisfied.

In thinking about the Church at worship, it might be useful to develop the theme of eating as it is found in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. There is a definite link between physical and spiritual nourishment. Jesus left His Church only one spiritual rite of worship, and it focused upon the common elements of a Palestinian meal: bread and wine. Verse 41 is couched in the eucharistic language of the Last Supper.

What a portrait of worship! Jesus is the host at the banquet table of the Kingdom. He provides supernatural sustenance. Gathered at His table are the apostles, all the saints of the ages, and every born-again believer of our time. And it is a table which has no end, stretching beyond the boundary of this world’s life into God’s eternity!

Nourished and equipped, the People of God are now ready to become *The Church Scattered* in a servanthood mission to the world. A sermon could be developed accenting both the trauma and the triumph of the servant-Church around the theme . . .

“Jesus, Lord of the Storms”

From the peaceful security of religious worship (35-44), Jesus abruptly uproots the disciples, compels them to get into a boat, and then sends them out upon the treacherous waters of this world’s life alone. What a vivid portrait of Monday morning work-world reality!

First, the disciples are reluctant to go across the lake. They knew what the lake was like: after all, they made their living out there in that unpredictable, unstable, and threatening environment. Further, they knew what waited for them on the other side of the lake: more needy people (53-56).

Second, the disciples encounter difficulties.

1) They felt abandoned (46). The word "departed" is the same used to describe Jesus' ascension in Acts 1:9.

2) The going was tough (48a). "Straining" means "struggling, laboring, severe pain, torture, distress."

3) The night was dark (46b). It was between 3 and 6 a.m. when it was the darkest. The implication is that they had lost their bearing.

Third, Jesus does not abandon His own. Though they could not see Him, He ever had his eye of watchful care upon them (48a). They were in no condition to seek Him out. But He came to them. He did not leave them alone.

Jesus came to His own walking on the waters in a powerful demonstration of His Lordship over all the threatening seas of sin, death, and hell. The disciples did not at first recognize Him (a direct allusion to Jesus' post-resurrection appearances).

The Master's presence among His own is often "incognito," incarnate in a traumatic experience or in the caring of a special friend. Jesus identifies himself with the greeting He will often use after His resurrection: "Fear not, it is I." *Ego eimi* in the Greek is literally, "I am!"

Therein lies the Church's confession of faith: Jesus is the great "I AM" who was, and is, one with the Father in creation, redemption, and in the final consummation of all things in Him. Jesus is *Lord of the Storms* of this world's life.

Fourth, Jesus accompanies His own in their servanthood ministry to the world (53-56). Jesus' Lordship is not political, but personal. It is designed not to protect a realm but to project the reign of God within the hearts of men. It is not to reduce the world to ser-

vility, but to reconcile the world to God. That is the high and holy mission of the Church.

Cultivating the Preaching Art: The Sermon's Conclusion

Woody Hayes shocked millions of Americans just before Christmas in 1978 by slugging a Cleveland football player in front of the television cameras. Thus was brought to an ignoble conclusion one of the most illustrious football coaching careers in history. Unfortunately, most of his acknowledged achievements as Ohio State's legendary football hero will be lost to posterity, because *last impressions are lasting!*

Many an otherwise strong sermon has its effect nullified by a weak, indecisive, or even gross conclusion. All of the positive value patiently built up by the careful development and impassioned delivery of a message can be lost in the final words.

Why is a sermon's conclusion so important?

1) Every important human experience needs a definitive, decisive, and appropriate ending. A drama, or concert, or literary work that reaches no point of culmination leaves one frustrated and disappointed.

2) The conclusion affords the preacher his finest opportunity to impress his message, inspire his hearers, and incite them to action.

Why is a conclusion the most difficult part of the sermon?

1) The preacher is most tired when he prepared it. When he gets to that part, he has already incorporated his best ideas into the earlier parts of the sermon.

2) The listeners are most fatigued when they hear it. The sermon faces multiple challenges in trying to maintain the interest of the hearers as it approaches its end: fatigue, restlessness, and clock watching.

How does the preacher overcome these problems?

1) The conclusion ought to be the first part of the sermon developed. To know how a sermon is to end greatly helps in developing the introduction and body. Wise is the preacher who saves

his keenest insight or best story for the conclusion.

2) The conclusion ought not to make any further demands upon the minds of the hearers. Its purpose is to drive the truth home at the feeling and willing levels of human personality.

3) Direct address is the most forceful way of putting one's concluding remarks: not "let us repent," but, "you must repent and believe in Jesus." It is difficult for a sleepy congregation to remain disinterested when personally addressed by God through the voice of His servant.

How may sermons be concluded?

1) A *good story* or illustration incarnating the central sermon theme is always effective in at once gaining the hearer's attention and driving the point home.

2) *Poems and hymns* can be effective only when they are memorized and delivered with maximum feeling.

3) *Shock effect* is sometimes appropriate: Peter Marshall's sermon on Elijah's contest with the priests of Baal must have been hard to forget when he said: "If the God of Elijah be God, then serve Him, and enter into the eternal blessedness of the Lord. But if Baal be God, then serve him, and go to hell!" After a long pause, "Shall we pray."

4) A *call for decision* is effective so long as there is an appropriate opportunity to act.

5) A *question* that leaves the listener pondering can be very effective. One pastor concluded a sermon on stewardship in this manner: "If your cancelled checks could rise up and testify regarding your priorities, what would they say?"

A good conclusion is one in which the last sentence is clear, concise, evocative, and delivered with forceful passion. A deliberate pause following it, with unbroken eye contact, serves to drive the point home. Avoid dissipating the effect by pulpit small talk. Move straight on into a hymn, or an altar call, or the benediction.

"Having nothing more to say, I shall say nothing more."—Albert Camus



SERMON OUTLINES



THE WISDOM OF THE WISE MEN

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 2:1-13

TEXT: v. 1

INTRODUCTION: Much speculation relative to wise men. Regardless of what is signified in term "wise men" they were indeed wise.

I. They were wise because they freely sought Christ.

They did not seek contrary to their desire . . . they *wanted* to. We, too, have freedom of choice. Seeking Christ is always a matter of personal choice.

II. They were wise because of determination to seek Christ at any cost.

The journey was long, difficult, dangerous, costly. Upon seeing the face of the Child, discovered "it was worth it all." No one finds Christ without personal cost. Always, it is "worth it all."

III. They were wise because they recognized and heeded divine guidance.

The star . . . The dream . . . God has many ways of guidance. He can and will direct our lives today.

IV. They were wise because they worshipped Jesus and not Mary (no disrespect intended).

Mary was a woman of God. Two statements from ancient tradition:

1) "She was possessed of unexcelled grace and piety . . . never before equaled. She was distinguished for industry, character, devotion, and modesty . . . no less than for a melodious voice and a form and face of incomparable beauty."

2) "She was slender, slightly above middle height, fair complexioned, blond hair, rich hazel eyes, ruby lips, hands of delicate beauty. Speech so gentle and winning that the world might well pause and listen." Whether fact or fiction, a lovely character. No scripture, however, indicates that she is to be worshipped.

V. They were wise because they recognized the Lordship of Jesus.

The precious gifts were placed at His feet . . . gold, frankincense and myrrh.

We too, have precious gifts to lay at His feet. Our natural gifts, talents,

etc. Our personality . . . our unfinished life, etc.

Wise men today recognize the Lordship of Jesus, His rightful claims, His rightful place.

CONCLUSION: This Christmas day, all the talents I have, I lay at His feet. Hymn: "My Wonderful Lord."

—Harold Frodge

OUR PERFECT PROVIDER

TEXT: Ps. 46:4-7

INTRODUCTION: What will happen to the church in the 80s? Will high fuel cost, a declining moral society, or political unrest cause the church to decline? Did God provide for the church in these troublesome times? Three provisions for the church in Ps. 46:4-7. They are:

I. A River for Joy—v. 4

- A. Essential—the Setting (River required for survival)
- B. Exclusive—the Source (God)
- C. Exceptional—the Results (makes glad)

II. An Anchor for Stability—v. 5a

- A. In the midst of instability—note vv. 2, 3, & 6
- B. The need for God's people
- C. The mark of the victorious Church

III. An Assurance for Perseverance—v. 5b

- A. In the morning (note Ps. 30:5)
- B. Example Joshua—Josh. 1:5
- C. Example Elijah—1 Kings 19:9-18.

CONCLUSION: God *has* provided for His church in very difficult times. He has provided:

- A River for Joy
 - An Anchor for Stability
 - An Assurance for Perseverance.
- God is our Perfect Provider!

—Norman A. Shaw
Elyria, Ohio

OUR PERFECT PROTECTOR

TEXT: Ps. 46:1-3

INTRODUCTION: We are living in difficult times. There is much stress, i.e., foreign, domestic, economic. Future is doubtful—difficult. Where is

God? What is His relationship to His people in difficult times?

I. A Declaration (v. 1a "God is")

- A. Emphatic—Center of attention
- B. In Priority—God first
- C. In Present Tense—"is," "now," "I am."

II. A Description (v. 1b)

- A. Our Refuge
- B. Our Strength
- C. Our Present Help

III. A Deduction (v. 2a)

- A. We will not fear
- B. In physical chaos v. 2
- C. In political chaos v. 6

CONCLUSION: There is a logic to present-tense faith. If God is *now*, in present tense, and He is our Refuge, Strength, and Present Help, it is only logical and true to say, "We will not fear," no matter what the 80s may bring.

—Norman A. Shaw

HONEY OR SALT?

TEXT: Matt. 5:13

INTRODUCTION: Jesus does not say to become salt. He does not say to strive to be like salt. Jesus does not say we will eventually become salt. Jesus simply said: We are the salt.

What Does Jesus Mean?

I. Salt Is Not Honey or Sugar

- A. Salt does not soften the bitterness of guilt.
- B. Salt does not explain away the truth.

II. Salt Stings

- A. We want healing without pain; however, healing requires pain.
- B. We want to see ourselves in perfect health. Salt shows us the wounds that need healing in our lives.

III. Salt Preserves

- A. It stops decay.
- B. It preserves the truth.

IV. Salt Sacrifices

- A. A little salt accomplishes much.
- B. Salt must give of itself . . . holds nothing back.

CONCLUSION: What will we do? We want to stay in the salt shaker. We are afraid we will lose out saltiness. We think we need to be stronger. We must get out of the salt shaker. We are the salt!

—Paul Carruthers
Eagle River, Alaska



TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

Every book reviewed in this column may not agree at all points with evangelical holiness positions. Yet each book contains sufficient useful material to warrant bringing it to our readers' attention.

Evangelistic Preaching

By Lloyd M. Perry and John R. Strubar (Moody Press, 215 pages, hard back, \$9.95).

At last a book on preaching which takes into account the classic canons of public address. In fact, most of the book is structured around *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elecutio*, and *pronuntiatio*. If you don't remember what those four Latin words are all about, that just accents how much you need this book. If you buy only one book this month, this should be the one. This is the most helpful book on preaching I have read in years.

—Wesley Tracy

Who Dares to Preach?

By Wallace E. Fisher (Augsburg Publishing House: Minneapolis, \$4.95).

The mechanics of preaching are available in scores of other contemporary books on homiletics. With a different objective, Wallace E. Fisher, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pa., devotes the major part of this book—the most valuable part—to the preparation of the preacher. The basics of sermon preparation are dutifully covered with relevant insights and practical examples in the second part of the book.

Fisher is sensitively conscious of our cultural milieu which provides the atmospheric motivation for his appeal to biblical preaching. He believes that a "genuine renewal of the church and consequent revival of human decency" depend on biblical preachers who "ache with tension" between our post-Christian world and "the treasured values of the Scriptures."

Five basic elements in biblical preaching are poignantly amplified: The person proclaiming the message, the divine authority by which he preaches, the discerning of the divine Word, the employment of human words, and the spiritual self-disciplines required.

The author exposes his own weaknesses and mistakes, even his struggles in escaping and returning to the preaching ministry. His effectiveness as a preacher is well known, yet he confesses for us all that "biblical preachers are learners to the end of their days."

He encourages us to learn to integrate the various functions of the church's ministry under the primacy of the Word, resulting in better preaching and less fragmentation of our ministry.

Fisher does not dodge the issue of authority of the Scriptures and the confusion going on in Roman Catholic and Protestant circles. He bores in on the integrity of the preacher. "If the pulpit is empty, it is because the preacher is empty . . ." He is particularly incisive in his criticisms of "sermons that plug peace of mind, huckster possibility thinking, foster a cultural piety . . ." and of the "cadre of religious 'performers,'"

The title must have been inspired from a quote he uses from Karl Barth: "Preaching is an act of daring, and only the man who would rather not preach and cannot escape from it ought to even attempt it."

This challenge to be a better preacher takes the courage to be a better man: a servant of the Word.

—Wilbur W. Brannon

The Annotated Pilgrim's Progress

Edited by Warren W. Wiersbe (Moody Press, 209 pages, \$6.95.)

Though this classic of Christian literature has not changed since 1678, the living, changing, dynamic English language has. Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe has made it easier for today's somewhat baffled reader to understand the symbols and allusions John Bunyan used in creating his classic. A "must read" on every Christian's book list, Dr. Wiersbe in no way subtracts from Bunyan's monumental work. His deft sprinkling of tidbits of information and clarification make reading this version even more exciting. He helps Bunyan speak to us in such a way

that all can readily grasp and enjoy. The *Annotated Pilgrim's Progress* will open new truths and enrich your spiritual life.

—Ronald S. Combs

Historical Theology: An Introduction

By Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Eerdmans, 455 pp., hardback, \$14.95).

John Williamson Nevin, the 19th-century Mercersburg theologian, once warned his communion (the German Reformed church) that no demonation could long survive as a vital part of the Christian Church if it permitted an erosion and ignorance of its theological foundations. Although Nevin recognized the significance of the emotional qualities that form a vital part of Christian faith, he also knew that failure to give proper theological guidance and structure to faith would eventually lead the church into destructive errors.

The recent publication of *Historical Theology: An Introduction*, by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, is a book that can help a pastor meet the need described by Nevin. As the title of the book indicates, it is not a systematic theology, but a history of theology.

In such persons as Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Barth we meet churchmen who worked to understand, state, and defend the church's faith. Each of them was driven by a profound love for Christ and the Church which is His body. Each one knew that failure to systematically state the contents of the Christian faith for his time would eventually lead the church into triviality, confusion and contradiction.

The history of theology is the chronicle of the living church trying to understand more completely what it means to confess that Jesus is Lord. The careful reader of this volume will be led to a greater understanding of, and appreciation for, the integrity of this confession.

The book is very carefully outlined and the progression of thinkers and topics is clearly delineated.

—Albert Truesdale

OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES



by Charles Isbell

A Study of the Word **Slavery** in Exodus

The first key word in the Exodus narrative (Exod. 1:14) is a Hebrew root 'bd; it translates into English in several ways. In section "A" (see preceding article), the root 'bd is introduced by its five-time occurrence in 1:13-14: "Then the Egyptians en-slaved the sons of Israel harshly. They embittered their lives through hard slavery, with mortar and bricks, and through various types of field slavery. In every aspect of their slavery they enslaved them harshly."* Now these five underlined words all represent the root 'bd. But various versions use words other than "slave" or "enslave" as I have done here. NIV chooses *work*; NEB prefers *servitude* or *labour*; JB has *slavery*, *work*, and *labour*; RSV has the more familiar *service/serve*.

The point of this five-time repetition of 'bd in such a short span is to establish the problem to be solved later in the story. The Israelites, who entered Egypt a proud, prominent, and free people, now suddenly find themselves stripped of dignity by the bitterness of slavery. They must work, but for someone else to enjoy the results. And basic to the story which unfolds in subsequent sections is the fact that before God can be trusted and followed, He must first prove His ability to free His people from slavery inflicted upon them by the Egyptian taskmasters.

We next meet our root 'bd in 2:23 where we are informed that Israel cries out in distress because of her *slavery*, God hears, and, we are left to assume, the stage is set for Him to act. Notice carefully, however, that before the call of Moses, God does nothing to indicate either His willingness or His ability to alter the situation. This is why 3:12 is so significant. There, as the sign of His power to

commission Moses to free the people, God promises that following a safe exit from Egypt, Moses and his freed people "will *worship* God on this very mountain." Now it is important to note that this English word *worship* is from the root 'bd which is everywhere else translated as "enslave." And, in fact, that is its meaning in 3:12 too. For in simple terms, the story of the Exodus was not so much the tale of how a people moved from slavery to freedom as it is the account of people whom God considers to be *His* servants but who need to be transferred from Pharaoh's service (slavery) into Yahweh's service (worship). Note that a single Hebrew root carries both of these ideas which require four English words: work, serve, slave, worship. In fact, our word "worship" can be used in the phrase "worship service" in a way that closely approximates this relationship in meaning. Worship of God really does require absolute slavery to Him. And that is not a difficult concept for Wesleyan preachers to accept. We know from Paul that we are slave of what- or whomever we yield ourselves to in obedience (see Rom. 6:16). Perhaps it is useful to know that Paul's idea was not a new one.

To return to Exodus, we must now notice that the story is not going to be quite as simple as it might seem. For example, in section "C," the people of Israel themselves have trouble with the very idea that deliverance from the Pharaoh is imminent. The first thing that happens when Moses relays the demands of Yahweh to the Pharaoh is that the slavery is increased (see 5:7-9). And the people, seeing that their redemption will not be accomplished easily, call out for relief not from God but from god, the Pharaoh who was believed to be the

divine son of Ra (the sun god). They refer to themselves, in fact, as slaves of the Pharaoh (5:15-16) and believe their future will continue to be controlled by him. In other words, months (or years, we can not determine) of being told they were slaves, being treated like slaves, feeling like slaves, all have taken their toll. Now they believe what everyone has been saying about them all along. Now they accept themselves as slaves and are quite comfortable to take their lot in life as "slaves of the Pharaoh."

And so the ball is back in God's court. He must speak in a new way to Moses and address the problem that is now compounded by His people's acceptance of it as the way things ought to be. In 6:5, the divine pronouncement is powerfully expressed. "I have heard, . . . I have remembered, . . . I will bring you out (Lit., I will exodus you!), . . . I will deliver you from slavery to them." This is the first part of redemption, deliverance from the former master. And notice that the second part follows immediately, adoption by the new master. "I will redeem you, . . . I will take you (technically, 'adopt you'), . . . I will become your deity."*

The point is clear. Israel must be snatched away from the clutches of Pharaoh and embraced in the arms of her new Master, Yahweh, the God of the patriarchs. Only then will her redemption be completed. And notice too that in these phrases it is the activity of God that is significant. "I will act," we might paraphrase God's words here, "and then watch the difference which that makes."

Of course, the story does not end here either. Before redemption can be accomplished, a terrible price must be paid (the plagues), the faith of the people will be tested more than

(Continued on page 63)



NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

John 1:6-17

Was (1:6)

In the Greek an interesting contrast takes place at this point again. We have already seen that the verb *en*—"was continuously"—is used three times in verse 1 and once in verse 2: the *logos* existed eternally. But in verse 3 we find three times the verb *ginomai*, "come into being"—used of creation.

This same verb is used in verse 6 for John the Baptist. The *Logos* always "was." John the Baptist came into being. So we translate: "There came a man" (NASB, NIV).

His Own . . . His Own (1:11)

These two expressions are not the same in Greek, and they should not be the same in English (as they are in KJV). The first is neuter, and so means "His own things." The second is masculine, "His own people." This distinction should be brought out in any accurate translation. The first clause may be translated "He came into his own home" (RSV)—the Promised Land, Jerusalem, the Temple. Arndt and Gingrich translate the second clause: "His own people did not accept him" (p. 619). The Greek verb here is not the simple *lambano*, "receive," but the compound *para-lambano*, "take to oneself," and so "accept." What the Gospels show repeatedly is that Jesus' own people did not accept Him; instead they rejected Him as their Messiah.

Power (1:12)

The word here is not *dynamis*, which rightly means "power," but *exousia*, which means "authority"—that is, "the right" (NASB, NIV).

The Sons of God (1:12)

This would be *hoi whuioi theou*. But the text has *tekna theou*, "children of God" (NASB, NIV).

The Will of Man (1:13)

The Greek word for "man" here is not the generic *anthropos*, "human being," but *aner* (genitive *andros*), which means a male individual. In the KJV it is translated "man" 156 times, but "husband" 50 times. It would seem that this is one place where it should be rendered that way: "a husband's will" (NIV)—there is no definite article in the Greek.

Was Made (1:14)

Again we have the Greek *egeneto* "became" (RSV, NASB, NIV). The *Logos* always "was" (v. 1). But He "became flesh" (v. 14) in His incarnation.

Dwelt (1:14)

The Greek has the verb *skenoo*, from *skene*, "tent." So it literally means "tenting" among us. The force of this is brought out well in the NIV: "lived for a while among us"—only 33 years.

Is Preferred Before Me (1:15)

The Greek literally says "has become before me." B. F. Westcott writes: "'After' and 'before' are both used in a metaphorical sense from the image of progression in a line. He who comes

later in time comes "after"; and he who advances in front shows by that his superior power" (*The Gospel According to St. John*, p. 13). So we can say: "is preferred before me" (KJV), or "ranks before me" (RSV), "has a higher rank than I" (NASB), or "Has surpassed me" (NIV).

He Was Before Me (1:15)

The Greek has: *protos mou en*. *Protos* means "first"—literally, "He was first of me." What does this mean? Westcott says: "It expresses not only relative, but (so to speak) absolute priority. He was first altogether in regard to me, and not merely former as compared with me" (ibid., p. 13).

For (1:16)

The Greek preposition is *anti*. In the light of its use in the papyri, James H. Moulton and George Milligan affirm: "By far the commonest meaning of *anti* is the simple "instead of" (*Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament*, p. 46). So the idea here is "one grace in place of another." The NIV has sought to bring this out by saying: "We have all received one blessing after another."

Truth (1:17)

The basic meaning of *aletheia* is "truth." But this word also means "reality" (Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, p. 36). Bultmann says that in Greek usage "*aletheia* takes more and more the sense of 'true and genuine reality'" (TDNT, 1:239). He also declares: "In John *aletheia* denotes 'divine reality'" (1:245). 



ALL
HUNG
UP
FOR
NEW
IDEAS?

DROP INTO THE

IDEA MART

AND BROWSE A WHILE

Gifts for the Christ Child

Several years ago a lady surprised the church with a Christmas gift of a new piano for the sanctuary. It arrived the Saturday afternoon before the Christmas Cantata, tuned in a different key than was the organ. Shiny, new, and ribbon-bedecked, it sat silent when most needed! Her well-intentioned, but ill-timed gift (she hadn't even told the pastor) caused me to realize that Christ usually takes a backseat to all our friends and relatives on His birthday.

As a result, each December we extend to members and friends of our congregation the opportunity to give "Gifts for the Christ Child" in the Sunday morning service before Christmas. In preparation for this event, I compile a list of needed items of equipment or furnishings and make it available to the congregation. These have ranged from new hymnals to new pews, from tape recorders to 16-mm. projectors. Every attempt is made to purchase the item and have it on hand for the Christmas service. Donors give the money to the church and we purchase the gifts in order to save sales tax and to provide uniformity and direction.

A lady in the congregation beautifully wraps and displays each package. We also print a special bulletin listing the "Gifts for the Christ Child" and the donors. Some of the gifts are memorials, some are in honor of loved ones still living and others are not designated.

In addition, we provide Christmas gifts, food, and clothing for several needy families each year. Thus people can give "Gifts for the Christ Child," in a way that is most meaningful to them.

—William L. Poteet
Melrose, Mass.

Christmas Communion

(Luke 2:20-39)

Text: "They brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord" (Luke 2:22, NASB).*

*From the *New American Standard Bible*.
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In God's spiritual economy, the road to Bethlehem must eventually lead to Jerusalem, not only for Jesus but for every believer.

The Incarnation separated from the Crucifixion is sentimental religion. But in Scripture the two are never separated. The Cross and the Cradle are intertwined in the Christmas story, and the Communion of the Lord's Table is entirely appropriate at Christmastime.

Like Mary, the mother of Jesus, we have the opportunity of storing up beautiful and costly treasures at this holy season. The treasures of Christmastime Communion:

Dedication
Devotion
Decision

1. DEDICATION—IN THE LIFE OF THE HOLY FAMILY. The *naming* of Jesus, and his *redemption* in the Temple reveal His absolute identification with the human race. The covenant relationships of the Old Covenant are brought spiritually into the New Covenant of Christianity, and they require the pain of forgiveness and separation from the guilt and being of sin. The elements of bread and wine signify the truth of dedication.

2. DEVOTION IS THE FIRST FLOWER OF DEDICATION. Like saintly Simeon, Christians long for the consolation of God's rule in our hearts. We are aware that devotion springs from the revelation of God's Spirit in our hearts.

Like Simeon, we learn that devotion expands through faithful obedience:

The leading of the Holy Spirit is real.

Spiritual discernment learns to apply God's promises.

Willingness to step aside in harmony with God's purposes.

3. DECISION IS THE ROUTE OF COMMUNION. Simeon caught the ultimate significance of the birth and life of Jesus, and so must we at His Table.

The Cross hangs over the Cradle ("A sword shall pierce through thine own soul").

Jesus is the Continental Divide of the spiritual life ("This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel").

We cannot walk around Him. He is the Door.

He is the Sign by which we find our spiritual bearings ("This child is set . . . for a sign which shall be spoken against").

At the Lord's Table, we too must go up to Jerusalem to present ourselves to the Lord.

In our hands we hold the signs of God's unspeakable love: broken bread and crushed grapes.

In Europe a lovely custom is carried out at Epiphany, or Twelfth Night, which commemorates the Feast of the Three Kings or Wise Men. French or English families bake an Epiphany cake, in which is secreted a bean. He who gets the piece of cake in which is found the bean becomes "king" or "queen" for a day. The cake is always cut into one more piece than family members. This extra piece, called "God's Share," is given to the first needy person who knocks on the door.

At the Lord's Table, we are all needy persons knocking at the Lord's Door, and through God's secret of the ages, His only begotten Son, we are all made kings and priests of the most High God.

As we hold these sacred signs, let us look at them and remember that we are God's children by grace. At Christmastide we see that the Cradle only has meaning in the Cross. Like the Holy Family, we present ourselves to the Lord.

—Neil Hightower
Red Deer, Alberta, Canada

Christmas Day Family Worship

To encourage our families to spend time together on Christmas Day in worship, we printed up "Christmas Day Family Worship" sheets. We suggested that each family select one or two ideas from each category depending on the ages and interests of family members. The ideas listed on the sheet are as follows:

Family Discussion:

1. Read the Christmas story together from *The Living Bible*: Luke 2:1-20 and Matthew 2:1-11.
2. If you could be something or someone in the Christmas story, what or who would that be and why?
3. How would you have felt if you were one of the following:
 - a. A shepherd when the angels appeared to you.
 - b. A wise man seeing Jesus after two years of journey.
 - c. Mary, the mother of Jesus.
 - d. The innkeeper after finding who was born in your stable.
 - e. Joseph, the father of Jesus.
4. If you were one of the wise men, what would you have brought Jesus?

Possible Projects:

1. Select pictures from old magazines that represent something you would like to give each member of the family if money was no object.
2. If you were a newspaper reporter when Jesus was born, what headline would you have written in the *Bethlehem Daily News*?
3. Write an interview or do a role play with any of the personalities of the Christmas story. For example: "Mr. Shepherd, how long have you been tending sheep?" "What were you doing the night Jesus was born?" Etc.
4. On a large sheet of paper, have each member of the family draw different parts of the manger scene: manger, Mary, Joseph, animals, shepherds, Baby Jesus, etc.

Prayer Time:

1. Go through the Christmas cards which you have received this year

and each family member selects a card and prays for the sender.

2. Sit in a circle with hands joined and pray for the person on your right.
3. For those with younger children, sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus and pray thanking Him for the good day on His birthday.
4. Write a Christmas prayer with everybody in the family contributing one sentence to that prayer. Read the prayer.

—Earl P. Robertson
Arvada, Colorado

Wake Up Your Annual Meeting

One way to help make your annual church meeting an event instead of a drag is to perk up the reports with filmed highlights of the church year. Some churches use slide presentations, but showing motion pictures of the church year may add even more life, and after the initial expense of a camera and projector, the motion pictures may be more economical than slides.

What could be included in the annual presentation? You would, of course, want shots of everyone who joined the church that year. Showing the new converts actually joining the church is so much better than simply saying, "The church has received 15 by profession of faith." Another alternative would be to film a very brief interview and testimony of each new member. This can be done fairly economically with sound home movies. The congregation could then relive the uniqueness and happiness of the event.

Revivals, baptisms, and baby dedications are other "naturals" for filming. Show the juniors and teens on the way to and from camp, the Quiz Team in action, and possibly the

senior citizens in some service project. The list is endless! Almost anything that happens during the church year would make interesting footage. Whatever brought rejoicing during the year will bring it once more if relived and remembered at the annual meeting!

The search for the "church photographer" just might provide someone a chance to use gifts and ministry skills which might otherwise remain undeveloped.

By advertising this "extra" for the annual meeting, people will look forward to coming. Movies, or even slides, might liven up not only this one usually rather dull service, but the rest of the year too!

A Communion Service

Here is an idea that enhances our Sunday evening service regularly. Our tables are set in a long row down the middle of the basement and covered with full length white paper. Elegant candles and holders are set along the middle and at each place setting a tiny wafer is placed mid-center on a small plate; a long stemmed glass of strong grape juice, a chorus book, and chairs are set in readiness around the table.

Beautiful shadows created from the glow of candlelight illuminate the evening with reverence as we softly sing, share testimonies, and listen to encouraging words of an informal sermon from the pastor. It is a reverent, holy time when even children sense its seriousness and sit quietly in respect.

The Holy Spirit does come down to us in a special way and we always go home refreshed after this service.

—C J Stodola
Marshfield, Wisconsin 

OT WORD STUDIES

(Continued from page 60)

once, and a journey over impassable water must be attempted. It should come as no surprise that in the final section of the basic Exodus narrative the root 'bd again plays a major role. In 14:5, the reason Egypt decides to pursue even after all her country has suffered is because they did not want to lose a major labor (slave) force.

And, again all too typically, when faced with the reality of choosing between the forces of the Pharaoh that were visibly bearing down upon them and the power of a God whom they could not see, the people were driven

to make the incorrect choice. "It would be better to *serve* (be slave to) the Egyptians than to die" (14:12). Only the leadership of Moses convinced them to stand still long enough for God to act.

And so the story ends. The people are freed from Pharaoh, brought safely across the Sea, and now may anticipate a totally new existence. "They believed in Yahweh and in Moses his *slave*" (14:31). In a sense, then, the story ends as it had begun. The problem was people *enslaved* to the Pharaoh (1:13-14). The solution

came through one person (Moses) who was *enslaved* to Yahweh enough to be called his "*slave*." Exodus itself might well be called the drama of slavery. It is the struggle of two masters, Pharaoh and Yahweh, who desire the same group of slaves. There is no middle ground. Slavery is inevitable. Only a master may be chosen. The Exodus is not only the story of slavery ended, it is also the story of slavery begun. 

*Scripture quotations in this article are the author's own translation.

On Praying Properly

"We dash in, flop down, and start giving God dictation at the rate of 20 words per minute with gusts up to 180! . . . We rush in, out of breath and in a hurry, panic stricken with the possibilities that lie in our circumstances, and we begin to chatter. To God? No, not really. We bypass Him and begin to pray to our problem. And it looms bigger, much bigger than God himself."

—Arnold Prater, *You Can Pray as You Ought*

Future's Future

The future of just about everything has been cited, hailed, mourned, or celebrated in recent months. But the apex of it all must have been the recent meeting in Toronto, where seven experts from four countries gathered to lead a workshop on the "Future of Future Studies." What next?

General Nuisance

Last Thanksgiving in Grand Rapids, Mich., a pastor was cited by the police for being "a general nuisance." His misdemeanor was playing the hymn "Now Thank We All Our God" on the church chimes. When requested by the city attorney to come to some accommodation, Pastor Ritter agreed to cut down the volume and shorten the period of hymn playing from 18 to 5 minutes a day. "We don't want to be a nuisance," the minister explained. The news item reporting this concluded, "There is something wrong if 'Now Thank We All Our God' is noise pollution."

—William F. Wills, *Pulpit Digest*

The Little Brown Church Ain't What She Used to Be

Recently my wife and I worshipped at a country church that I'd long admired for its red brick colonial beauty. However, the service consisted mostly of two electrically amplified guitars and a mouth organ. The volume was so loud and the sung words so impossible to understand that I decided to try to find some escape by reading the hymnal. There, hidden away, I found a copy of the Easter order of service and the end this note: "Your choice of red wine or white grape juice is now available for Communion." What misfortune. We had missed it by only two Sundays. Can't you see some smart alec kid whipping out his I.D. card as he reaches for the wine? By now my irreverent thoughts were completely undisciplined. Why not a further choice, white or whole wheat bread?

—William A. Guenther, *Monday Morning*

Atheist Renounces Past

William Murray, the 33-year-old son of professional atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair, was 16 years old when his mother named him as plaintiff in a lawsuit which ended prayer in public schools. Murray now states that "looking back on the 33 years of life I wasted without faith and without God, I pray that I may be able to correct just some of the wrong I have created."

—*The Church Around the World*

The New Emotionalism

"The Protestant cleric who used to look down on the manipulation and forced emotionalism of the old-time tent revivalist does not shrink from using modern liturgical gimmickry such as balloons, dance, clowns, drama, and contrived gestures of intimacy to induce various emotional states in his own congregation . . . When worship is reduced to a pep rally for the pastor's latest crusade or to a series of acts that contain the minister's own hidden agenda, our concern for worship is called into question."

—William H. Willimon, *Worship as Pastoral Care*

Is Anybody Home:

"Statistics show . . . that only seven percent of American households are occupied by the so-called 'ideal' family, i.e., consisting of two parents for whom this is their first and only marriage, a father who is the breadwinner, a mother who stays at home, and two or more growing children. Churches that are organized around family membership often overlook the rising number of affiliates who are living alone or coming from households of a different makeup."

—Ted Peters, *Fear, Faith, and the Future*

Shortcuts to Preaching

The fallacy in the reasoning of those who seek shortcuts to better preaching, is that such preaching preparation need not be excessively time-consuming. Let it be known, once and for all time, that there is no easy way to write good sermons. To be a preacher of good sermons and an effective communicator of the gospel, requires a competency and proficiency that comes exclusively from real, honest-to-goodness, hard work. There is no substitute for that work.

—Gary Phaup, *The Christian Ministry*

Communication's the Thing

Newspaper headlines such as "Key Witness Takes Fifth in Liquor Probe" cause the same sort of confusion in humans as the following sentence caused a computer: "Time flies like an arrow." Most readers would not regard the sentence as ambiguous at all, but the machine thought "time flies" might be insects who are enamoured of arrows. Leave it to a machine to cast darkness where there was only light. Another infernal machine, this time a Chinese computer programmed to translate English, reportedly translated "out of sight, out of mind," as "invisible idiots."

Nevertheless, exactness in writing is essential. A case in point is found in the word *billion*. American readers understand the word to mean ten to the ninth power, or a thousand millions; the English understand *billion* to mean ten to the twelfth power, or a million millions, a difference of 999 billion—a difficulty not likely to be encountered while counting the Sunday offering.

—adapted from *The English Journal*

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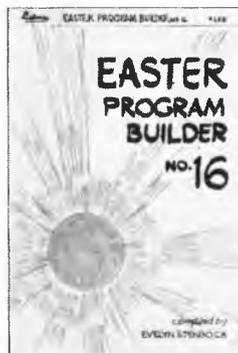


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