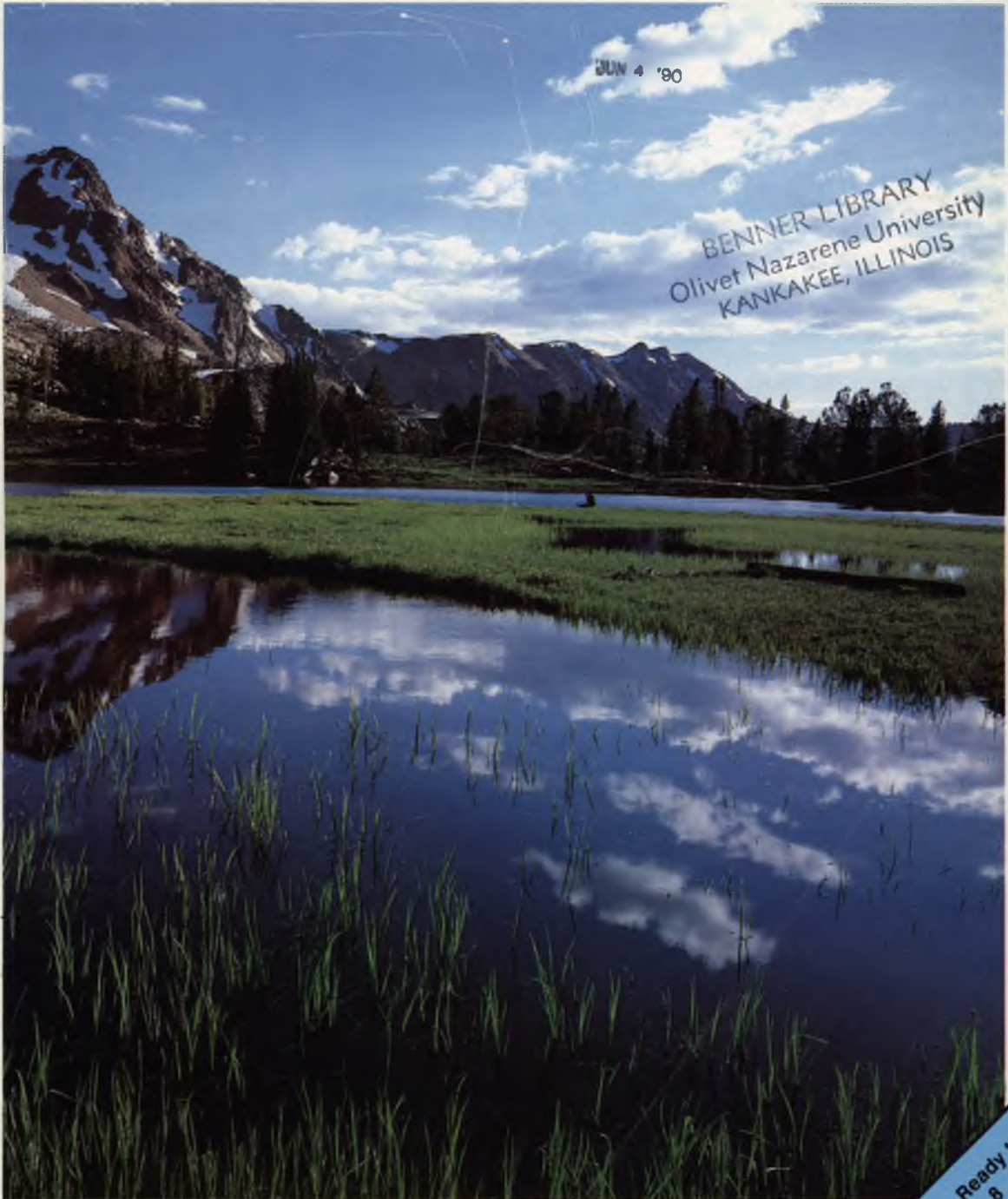


THE **PR** **REACHER'S** **IMC** **MAGAZINE**



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SUITABLE FOR FRAMING



**The Best Things
in Life
Are Not Things**

Christian Ministry— A Passion, Not a Profession

by Randal E. Denny

Samuel Chadwick declared, "Preaching must never be a profession: it must be a passion." Many of us have concluded that the Christian ministry must be the worst profession but the highest calling. One minister insisted, "A minister is a prophet of God. He is under orders. If no agonizing, terrifying convictions impelled him to enter this holy office, he had better never touch it."

Bishop Simpson explained in his *Lectures on Preaching*:

Even in its faintest form there is this distinction between a call to the ministry and a choice of other professions; a young man may *wish* to be a physician; he may *desire* to enter the navy; he would *like* to be a farmer; but he feels he *ought* to be a minister. It is this feeling of *ought*, or obligation, which in its feeblest form indicates the Divine call. It is not in the aptitude, taste, or desire, but in the conscience, that its root is found. It is the voice of God to the human conscience saying, "You ought to preach."

With deep conviction, Paul Scherer wrote:

We should . . . clear out of the road all the nonsense we have picked up . . . in the matter of the call to the Christian ministry. There is such a call; and when it comes, it comes straight from God. I believe with all my heart that a man must hear it and feel its imperious constraint before he can ever give himself with any wholehearted devotion and abiding wonder to this stewardship of the Gospel.

John Henry Jowett exclaimed, "The call of the Eternal must ring through the rooms of his soul as clearly as the sound of the morningbell rings through the valleys of Switzerland, calling the peasants to early prayer and praise." The powerful pastor, G. Campbell Morgan, spoke from broad experience:

No man can go unless the Spirit calls him. . . . Unless he hears that call sounding in his soul, ringing like a trumpet night and day, giving him no rest until he is compelled to say: "Woe is me, if I preach not," then, in God's name, let him stay where he is, in his present calling. But, if he hears the call, then let him remember that it is his business to go forward within the fellowship and under the guidance of the church.

The present pastor of the famous Moody Memorial Church in Chicago, Edwin Lutzer, defines a call: "God's call is an inner conviction given by the Holy Spirit and confirmed by the Word of God and the Body of Christ."

An anonymous writer answered the question, "What Does a Pastor Do?"

The pastor teaches, though he must solicit his own classes. He heals, though without pills or knife. He is sometimes a lawyer, often a social worker, something of an editor, a bit of a philosopher, an entertainer, a salesman, a decorative piece for public functions, and he is supposed to be a scholar. He visits the sick, marries people, buries the dead, labors to console those who sorrow, and to admonish those who sin, and tries to stay sweet when chided for not doing his duty. He plans programs, appoints committees when he can get them; spends considerable time in keeping people out of each other's hair; between time he prepares a sermon and preaches it on Sunday to those who don't happen to have any other engagement. Then on Monday he smiles when some jovial chap roars, "What a job—one day a week!"

This issue of the *Preacher's Magazine* highlights various aspects of the Christian ministry—a special calling of God to serve as shep-

herds. If a shepherd is allergic to the sheep, it must be a terrible task. But if he loves the sheep, what could be a higher calling? To love them is to open himself to the possibility of being hurt by them. Paul Rees said, "Prophets are offered no immunity from misfortune. Sooner or later most of them seem to get hurt. A call to the ministry is more than a call to service; it is a call to high courage." The only preacher to serve as president of the United States, James A. Garfield, admitted he had to step down to become president.

Since coming to Spokane Valley Church, I have read 24 of E. Stanley Jones' 28 books in chronological order. The discipline rejuvenated my ministry. In more than one book, Dr. Jones related:

I have a sense of being sent. This verse was given me in my early ministry: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father . . . he may give it you" (John 15:16, KJV). Before I speak I ask the audience to bow their heads in silent prayer with me. I really do not pray; I repeat this verse to God, to remind Him that I am not here by my choice, but by His. It gives me a sense of mission and commission, with divine backing, not on my own resources, but on His resources. So preaching is a joy.

And so I say to you, fellow pastors, what Paul said to Pastor Timothy: "Keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry" (2 Tim. 4:5).



THE **PREACHER'S** **IMAGAZINE** Proclaiming Christian Holiness

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The Highest Calling

Interview with a Young Pastor

"John" is a young pastor. Eighteen months ago, he and "Mary" were definitive yuppies: college graduates, both employed in professional, high-paying jobs, two nice cars, nice house, active in the arts, frequent travelers. John's call to the pastorate was a surprise to both but was shared by both: it was a natural outgrowth of deeply felt Christianity. Today, with John and Mary about to leave their 20s, we interview John about his first year or so in the ministry.

Our interviewer is "Stan," a recent J-school grad who dreams of being the next Dick Cavett.

Stan: What's the worst thing about being a pastor?

John: The worst thing about being a pastor is being introduced as one: having new people meet you as "Pastor So-and-So."

Stan: Is that because your ego suffers? Because being a pastor isn't as glamorous as owning a small ad agency? Because, maybe, you don't really respect the "profession" of the pastorate, and you don't think other people respect it?

John: You're an excellent judge of my character! You're probably correct in your observations, but those aspects weren't a conscious part of my answer.

Stan: So?

John: So when you're introduced as "Pastor," you inherit people's perceptions of what a pastor is. Those perceptions have absolutely nothing to do with who I am or what I'm like. Also, people usually "tense up" when meeting a pastor. They put on a more serious or a more religious "front." They're on their guard and suspicious, wondering what your motives are. But really, it's not so bad. I guess life insurance salesmen get a similar response.

Stan: I can't pass that up! You see yourself as a life insurance salesman?

John: No, I don't. But people meeting me as Pastor John seem to worry about me—what am I selling? Am I going to be pushy? Do they have to spend a lot of time hearing about my church? Do I view them as "prospects" and "sinners" or as people?

Stan: So you would rather get to know people as equals, then let them discover later that you're a pastor?

John: As much later as possible.

Stan: So, how should I introduce you to someone?

John: Assuming it's true, you could say, "This is my friend, John So-and-So." If I was a second-shift spaghetti slicer at a pasta factory, you probably wouldn't mention it when introducing me to someone.

Stan: Do you like your house?

John: Huh?

Stan: Do you like your house? I mean, do you like the parsonage the church owns and lets you live in?

John: I'm glad you're not from my church.

Stan: Why?

John: Because if you were part of the church I pastor, I wouldn't answer your question. I may not answer it, anyway.

Stan: Do you like your house?

John: I admire your persistence! Let me tell you a story. When we accepted this pastorate, I asked the church board to tour the parsonage and inspect it as they would if they were the ones about to move in. I felt really tacky and presumptuous even asking that, but I felt it was easier to ask than later.

Stan: You felt guilty for asking?

John: Basically I felt it looked like I didn't trust them to do that on their own. Candidly, I wasn't sure they *would* view it from the perspective of "What if I was moving in here?"

Stan: Did they?

John: Well, they found that the bathroom floor was rotted through. They decided to replace it. When we moved in they were well on their way—they had the old floor ripped out. They just didn't have a new floor in yet.

Stan: You had a bathroom with no floor?

John: We had more than that. Four days after moving in, we had an evangelist and his family move in with us for a week. The previous pastor had scheduled a revival, and evangelists had always been housed with the pastor. So we were there, with boxes all over creation, and no floor in the bathroom, totally new to the pastorate, with a houseful of unknown company.

Stan: So how do you like your house?

John: It's great!

Stan: But it's much less house than you're used to, much older, in bad repair, less modern conveniences, and it's not really "yours." I should have said, "How does your wife like the house?"

John: She's amazing. We have no dishwasher, no garbage disposal, no gutters, old *everything*—plumbing, paint, etc. Little things—no garage door opener—so when she goes to the Laundromat she fights an aging, rusted-in-place garage door just to leave home. Obviously, our previous life-style spoiled us terribly, and our house is a warm, safe place to live. But she's adapted to "living with less" incredibly well.

Stan: She goes to the Laundromat?

John: I make a huge speech and you pick up on the Laundromat?

Stan: So to speak. What about it?

John: After accepting the pastorate, the church board discovered that we had no washer and dryer (we had

sold ours). We were told by the board, quote: "We'll take care of that." That was 18 months ago.

Stan: So you're complaining because you wash dishes by hand and your wife drives to a Laundromat? Doesn't much of the world live a lot worse than that? Why feel sorry for yourself? By the way, what's the board doing about the alleged washer and dryer?

John: Yes, I am. Yes, they do. I don't. About the washer: One of our board members, just last week, said to my wife: "You know, I've had the same Maytag washer and dryer for 18 years. I really wish I could get a new washer and dryer, and then you could have mine! Wouldn't that be great?"

Stan: Your wife must have been really excited!

John: She's amazing. She just smiled politely and thanked the woman for her thoughtfulness. And, who knows? Maybe someday we'll actually inherit that cast-off clothes crusher. We'll be, of all people on earth, most fortunate!

Stan: You think God wants you to get new stuff, instead?

John: Only if it replaces some used stuff we could give to a general superintendent. I sound terrible, don't I? I'm sorry. I know how good we really have it. God probably put me here just to refine my character and make me less materialistic. And it's working, but as my answers reveal, not fast enough.

Stan: And meanwhile, your congregation lives designer life-styles and gives you generic support.

John: I think you've hit it exactly. I guess I sense too keenly the gap between my congregation's life-style and mine. They're talking about their new VCRs, new cars, home computers, new stereos, and then they vote us a \$10.00 raise and give us their hand-me-downs, used and abused stuff.

Stan: And you wait 18 months for an aging Maytag.

John: In a sense, maybe this is part of my role as a leader. Maybe we all have it too good. Maybe we go too far into debt to pretend "the good life" has something to do with things or comfort.

Stan: You *do* sound like a preacher.

John: Three times a week!

Stan: You enjoy that?

John: Sounding like a preacher?

Stan: Preaching.

John: No.

Stan: Because you're a perfectionist? Because you can't research, write, rewrite, and deliver three masterpieces a week? Because you fail to meet your own expectations of pulpit power?

John: Yes.

Stan: Is it *really* so hard, working three hours a week?

John: I hear that a lot, always intended as a joke. But since no one really follows me around all day, every day, no one knows what a great joke it is. And it seems like people do see this as an easy job, something for a loafer or a sluggard. Maybe they've seen it done that way.

Stan: You want my job?

John: Every day. Some days more than others. Definitely every Sunday. I'd really like to go back to being a layman now, and shower my pastor with love and attention and support and a high level of material comfort: books he'd enjoy reading, magazine subscriptions, sweaters in his favorite color, new appliances around the

house . . . stuff like that. Stuff I can't ask for and can't afford.

Stan: Can't ask for or won't?

John: Won't! And meanwhile I have to seem gracious and truly thankful while being underwhelmed by miserable but well-meant gifts from truly loving people.

Stan: So you're a liar, as well?

John: That's true, isn't it? I mean, I do *act* grateful, but I'm not. I even resent them for caring about me so cheaply. But I don't *act* resentful. I smile and say "thanks" and gush appreciation both privately and from the pulpit.

Stan: Which is a lie.

John: Which is a lie.

Stan: Aren't you sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

John: Sometimes all I remember is I promised to avoid the theater.

Stan: Which you do?

John: Religiously!

Stan: And meanwhile you watch your peers jockey for bigger churches, higher salaries, more "perks," and more visibility? And you refuse to play those games, feeling smug in your holy humility, even while feeling sorry for yourself?

John: Guilty as charged. On *all* counts.

Stan: Is God angry with you? Is He punishing you by condemning you to the ministry? Is this some sort of penalty for being too human or too frail?

John: You're too late.

Stan: You've already asked yourself those questions?

John: Yes. And the answers are all "No." Actually, God loves me a lot. He needs to stretch me and bend me and break me and mold me. He's picked a perfect way to do it. This job is way beyond my abilities.

Stan: You're not talking material comfort any more.

John: No, I'm talking spiritual service. I average about 95 hours a week praying, studying, listening, counseling, and trying to be "all things to all men" in order to save and secure a fallen world.

Stan: I thought someone already did the saving.

John: Quite so. But how do you know that?

Stan: Because someone told me?

John: Because someone told you. Because someone listened to you with real ears and reached out to you with real hands and spoke to you with audible words. Someone who was every bit a child of God, though not the Christ-child. I am a child of God, He loves me very much, and He needs my obedience to reach the hurting and the lost among my "neighbors."

Stan: So He made you a pastor?

John: So He is *making* me a pastor—limited always by my own limitations, frustrated frequently by my failure, always loving me but always urging onward my best self. Always begging, pleading, purging, leading, always more than meeting my every need.

Stan: You're very lucky.

John: I'm extremely blessed. God has loved me enough to save me from my own desires. He helps me desire Him, then He satisfies that longing deeply, richly, truly—each newly formed blessing a miracle of His love.

Stan: I think God's calling me to be a pastor.

(Continued on page 13)

REFLECTIONS ON THE MINISTRY AS A DIVINE AND HUMAN CALLING

by Leon O. Hynson
Pastor, Grace Evangelical Congregational Church
Harrisburg, Pa.

Is there a diminished interest in Christian ministry today? This appears to be the case, but it is possible that our anxiety is unfounded, that the call of God and His church is as pervasive as in the past. Perhaps the older patterns are merely being replaced with more orderly, more programmed approaches to ministry?

In some respects, we are not the more traditional patterns sometimes wasteful, at worst misleading? We know of many men and women who spent four or more years in preparation only to discover that they didn't fit the special demands of ministry. For some the churches did not meet their biblical responsibility to provide for their pastors' temporal needs. In discouragement, or worse, pastors turned to secular roles to meet the needs of their families.

When the district superintendent once proposed that pastors should live only on salary, however small, until the church became strong enough to meet his material needs, he was imposing a pragmatic substitute for the biblical theology of ministerial support. The substitute is the personal decision to sacrifice, as did St. Paul, for the work of the Kingdom. Biblical theology, contrariwise, declares the laborer is worthy of his hire. Paul's *practice* too often becomes our theology, but it is *not biblical theology*. We repeat the aphorism with sardonic pleasure: "Lord, You keep him [the preacher] hum-

Many spent years in preparation only to discover they didn't fit

ble; we'll keep him poor." We have distorted Jesus' and Paul's teaching (see Matt. 10:10; 1 Cor. 9:7-12), and then we sometimes speak ungraciously about the materialism of the younger generation of ministers. Let the principle be stated: No one has the right or freedom to require or expect any minister to live on what we used to call "hard-scrabble circuit." The minister alone, in freedom, may make that choice, as Paul did. When we license and ordain young men and women and send them out to a ministry that offers no financial undergirding, unless they *freely* choose with Paul to be tentmakers, we have violated biblical teaching.

Ministers, whether superintendents, fellow pastors, or other professionals, such as theological educators, are training young ministers with a measure of contempt when they send them forth empty-handed. That system is flawed and should be abandoned. It is not greatly different from the Roman Catholic expectation that religious persons (priest, monk, nun) affirm the counsels of poverty, celibacy, and obedience. We disavow celibacy, but expect our ministers to affirm the other two. Better urge them to practice celibacy if we are not prepared to meet their material needs. Bishop Francis Asbury, with good

reason, mourned the marriage of his Methodist circuit riders, knowing they couldn't afford both marriage and ministry (on \$75.00 a year, which they were promised but often didn't receive). We have diverted the called by our misuse of the biblical theology of ministerial support.

There is another dimension of this economic issue, which is reflected in the diversion of young people from ministry. Evidently many parents and acquaintances do not encourage the call to preach. The underlying motivation often grows out of the growing economic self-consciousness of families in our heritage. Once we sang with great joy,

A tent or a cottage, why should I care?

They're building a palace for me over there!

Tho' exiled from home, yet still I may sing:

"All glory to God, I'm a child of the King!"

Now the song is absent from some of our hymnals. Harriet Buell's gospel song may not be superb lyric poetry, but its loss symbolizes our growing interest in the gospel of wealth. "The world is too much with us; late and soon, / Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers . . . We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon" (William Wordsworth, *The World Is Too Much With Us*, 1806). Wordsworth's plea for the love of nature is appropriate to our special circumstances.

Can a church grow as it should without a called preacher?

Lord, You keep him humble; we'll keep him poor

It is my conviction that the call to ministry is being stifled in many minds because the church has conveyed negative or mixed signals. Let us be clear in our thinking! A wholistic theology of ministry affirms the ministry of *every* believer. We *are* bearers of the *dikonia* (the ministry), every one of us. That corrective of the elitism of the ordained is healthy. However, it may become the rationale for turning away from the specific and specialized call to the ministry of pastor-teacher. Here is the mixed signal in operation. We must affirm the specialized call to ministry or risk the diminution of ministerial resources.

Negative signals reach potential ministers when we grouse about the burdens, the poverty, the perils of

ing sense of the romance of ministry that surmounts the negatives of the work.

The ministry is a divine and a human calling. God calls, and the community of Christ participates in that call through affirmation, conformation, and support. God usually calls men and women in the church through the church. For denominations that means priority is given to theological education in financial allocations, educational philosophy, and institutional development. Painful as it may be, churches cannot support every worthy ministry that Christians may choose or to which they may be called.

Only when we show our best and brightest and the rest of us that the call to preach is a ministry of

If every believer is a minister, then who needs ordained teaching-preaching elders?

ministry. Pastoral ministry *is* stressful; it *is* terrifying at times; it *is* confining, weekends are almost never free (if the preacher is away from duty, duty is seldom away from him). Nevertheless the opportunities for preaching Christ, creating hope, healing the emotionally, physically, or spiritually damaged, watching people growing up in Christ, imparting knowledge to the novice believer, are sources of joy and fulfillment. The harmony of service given for Christ's sake overcomes the dissonance of church discord, financial limitations, and frustration with church protocol, paper minutiae, and other burdensome expectations. The call of Christ offers a last-

splendor will we establish a ministry capable of addressing all human issues and needs. Surely we are seeing hopeful signals; some truly gifted, called women and men; some compassionate farmers, blacksmiths, technicians; some lawyers, physicians, accountants; homemakers, teachers, managers, who sense the call to special ministry. "Special" never suggests superior or elitist, but it points out a particular need that must be satisfied. The church does not grow as it should apart from the teaching-preaching elder. Let us pray then for God to call according to His specific will. Pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth reapers.

Doggerel Written on

THE NIGHT BEFORE RECALL

'Twas the night before recall
And all through the manse
The preacher wasn't sleeping,
Wondering, "Have I a
chance?"

The sermons were all written
At the study with care.
He wondered if he could
preach them,
Or if even he dared.

His wife in her curlers,
He clung to Maalox and
Tums
In hopes that tonight
The Lord surely might
come.

Suddenly there came
The ringing of the phone.
Could it be the D.S.
Or somebody unknown!

But the receiver crashed down
Like a great bolt of thunder
When he quickly found out
It was just a wrong number!

To some, this story may sound
Very strange and funny.
But to a preacher like him,
It means home, job, and
money.

So he needs faith in God
To stand straight and tall,
To face the unknown
And take his recall.

Rip Wright
Spencer, W.Va.

Editorial Note:

The Preacher's Magazine dedicates this poem to the delegates that attended the International General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene, 1989, Indianapolis.

≡Ready to Go,≡

■ Ready to Stay? ■

by Leroy Channing

Why had it been so hard for us to leave that last pastorate? Other clergy friends of mine seemed to relocate with no more stress than incurred by shopping for a new pair of shoes. But, for my wife and me, it was never that easy. We had received a few offers during our ministry there. We had tried out for all of them, but they never felt right. More accurately, they never felt as good as "home"—the romance of our own church was still strong.

One friend told me that I found it hard to resign because of a family "bull dog mentality." "You are just like your father," he said. "When you get your teeth into something, you don't want to let go." The man was right—my father also has a history of longer pastorates. And it *is* harder to leave, the longer you stay.

One problem about wanting to move is that there *were* no problems. "Every church has a couple of stinkers in it," goes the common wisdom. But that wasn't true of our last church. Everybody loved our family and would do anything for us. I got everything I asked for in board meetings if the church could afford it. We had blanket approval to do almost anything to the parsonage, short of burning it down. The board had given me permission to order or charge whatever I felt the church needed. When we went as candidates at other churches, the people were wonderful, but not as wonderful as those back home.

My wife is very concerned for the welfare of our children. My daughter can make friends with anyone, but our six-year-old son warms up to people at a much slower pace. At the "other churches," the parsonages were located too close to the highway, or stood on big hills on

which Mark couldn't safely ride his bike, or had backyards too small for my girl to play in.

Why was it so hard to decide? So many things were perfect where we were, yet we still desired to relocate, to try something new and to go someplace different. Was I really "ready to go, ready to stay, ready my place to fill"? After each interview at a new church, my wife and I cried, prayed, argued, and lost many nights of sleep. When our children asked if we were going to move, our typical response was, "We don't know yet, honey." Many people had told us that God would lead us, but it seemed that either God was neutral to the problem, or that He would be with us *wherever* we went, and that the decision was still ours.

I attended the 1988 PALCON for Nazarene pastors in hopes of finding some answers. Of course, the home church paid my way. "Anything to equip you to serve more effectively," they had said.

On Wednesday morning of that week, John Maxwell addressed the issue of pastoral moves. He said, "There are five reasons why pastors leave churches." Reason number one was loss of a pastor's credibility. That hadn't happened to me, yet. Reason number two was problems in the church. As mentioned earlier, our church was free of any real problems. Reason number three struck pay dirt: "Sometimes pastors run out of resources." I had felt rung dry. I wasn't sure I had anything left to give. "Isn't that why I'm *here*?" I asked myself, "to get new resources?" Reason number four hit close to home too: "Another opportunity—not necessarily a *better* one; just different." That stung a little. I had interviewed for three other "op-

portunities" that weren't as good as what I already had, while the people who loved me back home were wondering about the future of their church and wondering what they could do to make me happier. Then came the final reason: "Number five," Maxwell said slowly, "is this one—'God has called me somewhere else.' This is the reason most frequently used, but it is only true about 5 percent of the time." I felt as if I had been shot. Was it God's leading that I sought, or was I just tired of the comfortable rut that I was in? I wasn't sure.

So, we moved. Everything felt right this time. Everything went smoothly. The right doors opened, and the wrong ones closed behind us. In our prayer lives, my wife and I felt clear about the new church. We felt the sense of release for which we had longed and prayed. This new church has many assets. The parsonage and church buildings are nicer. More people attend the worship services. The new town is larger than the one we left behind. There has been a slight increase in salary. We miss our friends at the old church, and go through times of homesickness, guilt, and depression for having left. I believe those feelings will gradually subside as weeks and months pass by.

Only one thing still bothers me a little. I have found a wonderful passage of scripture that I would like to preach to my new congregation. Unfortunately, it contains these words: "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit" (2 Cor. 2:17). As I plan my preaching schedule in my cavernous new office, I have decided that my sermon series on 2 Corinthians might have to wait—at least until my conscience clears a little more.



BEING “POWER HUNGRY”

by Keith Drury
Indianapolis

Do you hunger for more power from God? Are you one of those who desperately seeks a powerful anointing on your life? Do you crave power to make your teaching or preaching cut to the center of men's hearts, causing deep conviction? Have you heard stories of men like D. L. Moody and Charles Finney, who merely strolled through factories and men fell under a powerful spell of conviction just from being in their presence? Do you yearn for this kind of anointing?

If so, God may answer your prayer. To he who knocks, the door opens. Asking is how to receive. Seeking is the way to find. If you have a burning desire for God's anointing, you may get it. If your thirst for His anointing is desperate enough, and passionate enough, and you want it with all your heart, He may answer your prayer.

I don't know how God decides who gets His power. But some have it and others don't. God's anointing on a life is relatively rare, but it can occur. You can't work it up yourself, you can't earn it, and you can't receive it by reciting some formula or seeking a particular spiritual gift. But God does, in fact, give His power to men and women today. God can baptize you with His power so that your ministry is multiplied beyond your wildest imagination. I've seen it in the lives of dozens of men and women.

Many pray for this power from God. In fact, there is an increasing number every year. I have gotten letters and phone calls, and have had conversations with young preachers, especially, who passionately seek God's power. Their desire seemed so pure, so consecrated, so godly. Yet, underneath it all, there was often something very dark going on. They craved God's power for selfish purposes. They yearned for the success and fame that accompany God's anointing. They relished

the idea of pastoring famous superchurches or preaching to tens of thousands. They coveted the benefits of God's anointing more than the anointing itself.

Sometimes God answers these impure prayers. He sometimes grants His anointing to some very unworthy people. I know of one preacher who led a great moving of the Spirit in a meeting—people were being saved and filled with the Spirit. Yet several afternoons that week, he crept off to a nearby adult bookstore to feed his own lustful cravings. Another powerful preacher was having great outpourings of God in his camp meetings and ministerials, yet for years had been lying about his past achievements, even inventing a fictitious doctorate for himself. After having an anointed influence on my life years ago, one of my heroes turned out to be an adulterer.

What's going on here? How can men have such power when their insides are rotting? We are tempted to deny the rumors or accusations against these men when they fall. Isn't God's mighty use of them evidence enough to dispel the accusations? Once the truth comes out, we then ascribe their usefulness to mere human charisma or crowd psychology. We are wrong. They probably were anointed. God does not always withdraw His power or authority from corrupt vessels. Frightening, isn't it?

How could God do such a thing? Why does He not give His power only to the purest and most deserving of His followers? Why squander it on hollow men? We don't like the answer. It is both unreasonable and appalling: He sometimes imparts His power to such men so that all will eventually see their true inner bankruptcy.

Outward power and inward purity are two different things. Men who seek God's outward power yet have

no inward purity are destined to collapse. Their great ministries are houses of cards—the higher they go, the greater their falls. When God answers a man's prayer for power, he becomes greatly used in the Kingdom. His success and fame brings him greater opportunities, which lead to even greater use and fame. He plunges onward and upward, constructing an ever-growing ministry on a foundation of sand. Finally, his personal tower of Babel teeters, approaching God's predetermined limit. Then it comes crashing down in moral collapse, and he exits in ridicule and humiliation.

The rest of us scurry about to cover up the mess in order to preserve God's reputation and the church's good name. It doesn't work. The truth gets out. Everyone eventually discovers this great leader was a hollow hero. His outer superstructure was magnificent, but his inner moral timber was infested with termites. He had God's outer power without God's inward purity.

Yet God is glorified. How? Following his downfall, the church lays aside its secular preoccupation with outward power and talks in hushed tones about the importance of inward purity—for a few days, that is.

What is the crying need of the world today? Is it men and women with God's outer power, who move mountains, build great ministries, and raise millions of dollars for God's work? Or is it obedient men and women who have God's inward purity and want nothing more than to do their Master's will perfectly?

Do you hunger for more power from God? Have you been seeking God's outer anointing on your life? Beware. He may answer your prayer. And you'll eventually be seen by all people for what you really are. Rather, hunger for God's inward purity. Then, if He also grants you outward power, you will not crumble for all to see.

Would Someone Please Define Success?

by Garland Wallace
Evansville, Ind.

I grew up believing there was no greater privilege in all the world than being a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I remain convinced of the validity of that belief. Yet, after 23 years in the ministry I do have some questions regarding pastoral ministry today.

These questions seem to converge into one strategic inquiry. What constitutes success in pastoral ministry? I am persuaded that many of our ministers suffer from a lack of "feeling" successful in their vocation.

I have come to believe that pastors are struggling; many of them say so. In fact, they anxiously verbalize their struggles in areas of self-worth and career fulfillment to non-threatening and supportive listeners.

Many ministers suffer from a lack of "feeling" successful

Almost always their concerns relate to statistics. They are sincerely concerned about the gap between desire for spiritual and numerical growth and the reality of their growth. This painfully surfaces when the numbers don't increase.

Statistics are important. To suggest that statistics be discarded would be to throw accountability to the wind. Responsibly accountable, we use numbers to assign the value to such things as attendance, monies raised, membership, professions of faith, and the success or failure in payments of monetary assessments, namely budgets.

The high priority placed on statis-

tics is easily seen by our consistent use of them. Take, for instance, in our publications, we list appropriate numbers in local newsletters, district newsletters, district assembly handouts, and, finally, in exacting detail, in district journals.

From these statistics one can make a few observations. First, only a few churches excel in all categories at a given time. One church may be growing in Sunday School but falling short in payment of budgets. Another may have smooth sailing financially but rough sledding showing growth in attendance.

Considering the importance that caring pastors place on numbers, it doesn't take long to realize that many of them suffer from the "flat stat" blues. What if every pastor who considers his present statistics unsatisfactory were to leave the ministry next week? The result on the church

would be devastating.

Ministry must be seen as a multifaceted calling involving the interweaving of many elements.

There are four elements that might be insightful in helping us recognize the complexity of determining success in the pastorate.

First, the evaluation process should include the *environmental element*. Any fair appraisal of ministry should take into account the circumstances encompassing a specific ministry. The ramifications of this would include such things as geography, economical status of the community, the pastoral tenure record of the church, people's will-

ingness to follow pastoral leadership, and the general moral and ethical climate of the nation.

For example, consider the issue of the overall spiritual atmosphere of America. In what kind of world do we work? Philosophically, it may be possible that our entire process of evaluating ministry is more secular than scriptural. Is our procedure tainted by our American socioeconomic scheme?

Has our materialistic, existential society squeezed the church into the place where we have adopted a worldly system of evaluation? Have we allowed the world of management finance and, perhaps, even Hollywood to cast a spell over us until we have bought its "bigger the better, the more the merrier philosophy"? Is the church Christianizing America or is America Americanizing Christianity?

If we are in a time of moral decadence, doesn't this affect how we evaluate ministry? In our desire to see the church grow numerically, is it possible that we have taken the bride of Christ and married her off to the world?

Our objective is the building of *ekklesia*, the called-out ones, by the redemption through the atoning work of Christ.

To understand success in ministry we should ask these questions: What kind of society are we working in and what are we called to do within that society?



A second consideration in understanding success in the ministry is the *ecclesiastical element*.

Our perception of ministerial success cannot be divorced from the denominations in which we serve. When the corporate strategy of a denomination elevates certain accomplishments as measurements of success, then ministers are emotionally enhanced as they meet those standards and emotionally depleted when they fall short. What a joy to go to district assembly when all the right statistics are up. But, oh, the agony to go when even one of those stats doesn't make the grade.

Denominations most often reward harvesters—those with good statistics. They have not found a good way to say thanks to the sowers, irrigators, and repairmen. Is the man

who plants a new church a success while his brother, slaving to salvage a split church, a failure? I cannot believe that over half of our pastors, are lazy, uncommitted, uncaring, unprofitable servants. The commitment level of most ministers is more than admirable. Perhaps, it is time we begin to seek for answers in other dimensions.

Does the denominational record of a man's ministry reflect the circumstances of his ministry? Some churches do well regardless of who happens to be the pastor, while a few destroy pastors as if they were moving targets at an amusement park game.

A third area of consideration is the *ego element*. How long can men and women continue feeling that they are a failure in their calling? When there is a prolonged sense of failure, all kinds of destructive emotional forces evolve.

Sanctified egos need to be made to feel worthy. God puts within the heart of every Christian the desire to succeed. When one continues to feel like a failure, the end result is a battered and bruised ego, which erupts into all kinds of unproductive attitudes.

These struggles may be evi-

denced in the form of a morbid withdrawal or in destructive criticism of denominational programs, structure, and leadership. At the local level, this insecurity pops out as gossip, which targets fellow pastors, especially those with good statistics. Jealousy among ministers is directly related to poor self-esteem and a sense of failure.

Many ministers are on an emotional roller coaster—up when the statistics are up and down when the statistics are down. They feel like yo-yos dancing up and down the statistical string.

One of the most tangible evidences of the hurting ego is the matter of relocation. Far too often, when the statistics are not good, the pastor's first thoughts are directed toward moving. Here comes the U-Haul truck and the search for fulfill-

ment starts all over. Neither the man nor the church profit.

This ego phenomenon is also seen when we resort to spiritually immature methodology in order to build members. As a result the church is weakened where it should be strong. The whole process is repeated from pastorate to pastorate.

Success in ministry includes the reality that there will be a bad month from time to time, maybe even a bad year. At the same time, the servant of God should be allowed to feel

is no such thing as a failure if you try. But what if I try and don't succeed? What do you call that? Learning."

Wouldn't it be great if pastors had a definition of success in ministry that would be heavy on affirmation? Remember, **affirmation has to do with a person, while appreciation has to do with a performance.** Pastors, too, need to hear words of encouragement, especially when the performance level is less than desirable.

A fourth ingredient in formulating a definition of successful ministry is the *enunciation element*. The logical place to look for this aspect is the Word of God. The Bible is our final authority in these matters. Can we go to the Scripture and come up with some helps in understanding successful ministry?

The tenor of Scripture regarding success in ministry falls into three categories.

The first has to do with the *character of the messenger*. Scripture indicates that God cares about the kind of persons we are. We are to be servants with servant hearts. Jesus explained that being first in His kingdom was equal to being a slave. We are to be "good" servants, meaning we are to live godly lives. Paul told Timothy, "in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe" (1 Tim. 4:12, NASB). Jesus spoke words of commendation to the *good* and faithful servant (Matt. 25:23). It is interesting to study the word *good*. It means to be upright, free from guile, and useful. God is vitally

Only a few churches excel in all categories at a given time

Is the church Christianizing America or is America Americanizing Christianity?

good about himself because he knows he did his best.

The ultimate failure is when we quit trying, when we no longer make any effort to see our work progress. My son attends a private school where the emphasis is on academic excellence. While there recently, I noticed a poster on the wall: "There

interested in the character of His messenger. Recently in the religious world we have seen that men can build great statistics and yet be moral reprobates. God still requires His men and women to live holy lives.

Second, a definition of success should take into account the *content of the message*. Again Paul said to

the young preacher, Timothy, "Pay close attention to yourself and to your *teaching*" (1 Tim. 4:16, NASB, italics added). What are we preaching? No man can be a failure who lifts up Jesus Christ and faithfully expounds His Word.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul says that our works must be built on the right foundation. That foundation is none other than Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11-13). If our work is not built on Jesus and His Word, it will be wood and straw that will not stand the test of judgment.

Third, the concept of success should include *continuity in our mission*. Jesus said to His servants who came before Him to give an account of their opportunities, "Well done, good and *faithful* slave" (Matt. 25:23, NASB, italics added). Here the word *faithful* means one who keeps his trust or one who can be relied on. We must keep telling the Good News even when at the moment there seem to be no results. Faithfulness is very important to our Heavenly Father.

A comment should be made concerning the word *talent* in Matthew 25. *Talent* means that which is weighed. The Lord weighs our works with a desire to approve them. One man's talent may be in leading a church to a place of spiritual unity. The numerical growth he longed for may come under the next pastor whose talent or gift is evangelism. Both men have been successful. Their works were weighed and the Kingdom was advanced. We must continue to be faithful to exercise our gifts, and the Holy Spirit has the responsibility to make the Body of Christ complete.

Many spokesmen in Scripture, at some time in their ministry, looked like failures. Look at them: Noah, Moses, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Jesus, Stephen, Paul, John Mark, and even John the revelator on Patmos. What if these men had stopped when their statistics were flat? Preacher Noah was a prophet of righteousness, and he preached for 120 years with only eight saved including himself (2 Pet. 2:5). Those kind of statistics would not win an award at the district assembly, but they did win God's approval.

A good workable definition of

(Continued on page 20)

You Know It's Time to Move When

1. The church presents you and your wife with a trip to the Holy Land. You discover the airplane tickets are one-way.
2. The Finance Committee votes to recommend to the church board that your salary level remain the same. Your associate is given his second raise this year. He now makes \$15.00 a week more than you do, and he's hired to work part-time!
3. You decide to have a planning meeting next week with your church leaders to draw up the plans for the next church year. One by one they all tell you that they can't make it. Later you find out that they are meeting with the district superintendent that night. You were not invited.
4. Travel brochures start arriving at the parsonage from faraway places, stamped "Information You Requested." But you didn't send for them.
5. It comes time for the church to vote on continuing their relationship with you. You walk confidently to the platform, knowing in your heart that you have done your best. You look out over your congregation and discover that all those that you had called on these past four years, but were always too busy, or too sick to come, showed up. The regular members are all staring at you—smiling.
6. The members file out of the sanctuary on Sunday morning. Instead of "That was a good sermon this morning, Pastor," they comment on how nice your wife looks today.
7. The moving company calls, wanting to know when it is convenient for them to look your house over, so that they can figure the cost of your move. You try to tell them that a mistake has been made, that you didn't call

them. They insist on coming anyway. The request came from the church board. It was to be a surprise going away present for you and your family.

—Jerry L. Crain

THE MOVING VAN

by Russ Albertson
a 15-year-old P.K.

The moving van came up to me last November and said, "I have come to take you to another place to live."

I said I did not want to go. "After all," I said, "I have been to about every place there is! I saw you when I moved to Houghton Lake. I saw you when I moved to Kansas City. I saw you when I moved to Springport. I saw you when we moved to Farmland, and now you say I am going to have to move again. I am getting tired of seeing you. I do not want to go. Every time I move you tell me it is going to be better than before. But when I move there, it is such a bore."

The moving van said, "Well, I have overheard your dad say this is the last time we move. We are going to Warsaw."

I sat down and thought about moving for a long time.

So finally the moving van said, "Are you coming or not?"

I said, "Yes," and so here I am, hoping I do not have to move again.

SINCERE EXPLOITATION OF THE GOSPEL

by Dennis D. Frey
Champaign, Ill.

There is an explosion of interest in nontraditional promotion of the gospel today. We have, for our convenience, everything from gospel stick-ons and software to pre-recorded prayers and The Washington Hot Line News. Never have there been so many diverse ministries under the gospel banner. It almost seems like the fulfillment of prophecy.

However, even a cursory examination reveals a disturbing truth. There is a great deal of gospel "exploitation" going on under the sacred title of "ministry." Admittedly, much good is coming from this explosion of interest. Godly and sincere people are making a lasting impact on the world around them. However, there are godly and sincere people whose efforts, though apparently genuine, amount to nothing other than an exercise in the misguided gratification of the flesh.

This would not include the corporate bigots who deliberately exploit Christians for profit. We all know it is possible to turn a fast buck at the expense of hungry believers. What is far more disturbing, and ultimately more dangerous, is the sincere but misguided attempt to "do something big for God!"

It is easy to use the gospel as a front for pushing personal convictions, aspirations, and desires for justice. A case in point is the former minister who, having failed in the pastorate, now feels called to hold seminars on why he failed. This is

his full-time "ministry." It is not a question of sincerity. But what appears to be "God-called" ministry may be nothing more than "self-called" ego gratification. Giving personal preoccupations the stamp of the gospel will not legitimize them. Sincere or insincere, they are still exploitations of the gospel.

A well-known Christian psychologist recently admitted that his internationally syndicated radio program did not actually have to exist. God had not engraved the ministry in stone. But He has honored that man's ministry, and his much-needed program is still among the most popular of its type.


The other side of the issue is the person who attempts to turn his pet philosophy or personal penchant into ministry. Without any biblical basis for his efforts, he automatically assumes God's blessing because he is gospel-oriented and sincere. Matt. 7:21 stands as a contemporary warning against that kind of mentality.

There are at least two primary dangers involved here. First, in the promotion of "self-called" efforts, the legitimate "God-called" work of the gospel often goes begging for support—as in the case of the pastor whose activist involvements destroyed his pastoral effectiveness. Second, in pouring one's best efforts into personal preference, the legitimate church is often robbed of its lifeblood—as in the case of one small church desperate for musical

talent. A young couple offered their help, they did well, and the church began to grow. Then, before a proper foundation could be laid, the young couple felt "called" to go out on weekends and "minister" to other churches.

Yes, God does call people to specialized ministries. The church provides a God-honored structure within which sincere efforts have the best opportunity for success. It is this very structure that often drives the self-seekers into dependent efforts. Not that independent efforts are inherently evil; it's just that anything that fails to work within the legitimate church ought to come under severe scrutiny before we give it our carte blanche.

Any sincere effort to promote the gospel ought to mix well with the church and serve as an asset to her ministries. And yet, even that is not an iron-clad guarantee that the thing is genuinely of God. One may be an asset to the church while remaining a liability to himself. Piggybacking on the Body of Christ is no way to salvation.


What is the antidote for sincere but misguided exploitation of the gospel? The solution is to be found in the biblical admonition to examine, test, and prove our motives, reasons, and rationale (Ps. 139:23-24; Lam. 3:40; 2 Cor. 13:5-6). The light of God's Word and the illuminating insight of the Holy Spirit, if faithfully sought and honestly applied, will guide us into all truth. 

Interview with a Young Pastor *(Continued from page 5)*

John: Pray it isn't so.

Stan: But what if it is?

John: Then, my good brother, you will find yourself praising God more than ever before. You will find your-

self surrounded by constant miracles and constant care. You will find yourself learning and growing and pruning and changing. You will find yourself, and a bigger God than you realized. 

ARMSARMS TOO MANY ARMS? ARMSARMS

by Roy Austin

Ah, Monday! The kids are heading for school, and my wife, Judy, glances over at me with that "Let's-go-for-coffee-quick-before-the-phone-rings" look.

Not quickly enough. It rings, and I pick up the receiver. "Hello."

"My name is Tom. I know you're busy, but if you can spare a minute, I'd like to tell you a little bit about the organization I represent. We work with all denominations as a kind of arm of the church."

"Excuse me just a minute," I interrupt. "Judy, would you get the door? Sorry, Tom. Now, you were saying?"

"Well, I'm sorry if I've called at a bad time. I used to be a pastor myself, so I can appreciate your schedule. I was saying, we work in cooperation with many denominations and I was wondering . . ."

I try to stretch the phone cord far enough to see who's at the door. Judy says, "Yes, I'll tell him. Thank you so much. I'm sure my husband will be interested."

Tom's telephone blitz winds down.

"Yes, Tom. I'll sure let you know, and thanks for calling."

Judy hands me my jacket.

On our way out we pick up an envelope that has been pushed through the mail slot in the door.

I drive, Judy reads. "It's from somebody named Harry. It sounds as if he knows you. He's planned a service for our church on April 5. There's some testimonials from other holiness pastors. Have you ever heard of this group before? It says here that their purpose is to help churches of all denominations do their work more effectively—like an arm of the church."

She folds the letter and puts it back in the envelope. "By the way, Dick What's-his-name stopped at the house when you were on the phone. He'll come back later in the week to talk with you about a new

program they're starting. He wants you to be the first pastor in this area to use it. He seems like a really nice guy. There was something else he said—"

"Let me guess," I say, as we step out of the car and walk toward the restaurant. "They're like an arm of the church."

"That's it! How did you know? I thought you were on the phone."

The waitress brings our bacon and eggs.

We bow our heads . . .

"Roy, have you gone to sleep? Everyone's looking!"

"Sorry, honey, I was just thinking. The church is the Body of Christ, right?"

"So?"

"My thinking may be a little cloudy, but it seems to me that the body has sprouted a lot of arms lately, and most are rather poorly attached."

"Go back to sleep!"



THE CLERGYMAN AND

by Derl G. Keefer

Three Rivers, Mich.

A few years ago a man in my congregation suggested I should belong to a community service organization, I shrugged the idea off at first. My objections included the time it would "detract" from "real" church business and the cost. But then he nominated me for membership in the Rotary Club. After joining, I found myself serving on several committees, chairing two, and on the board of directors. I discovered the responsibility of membership really is service to the community.

Many factors, including the financial responsibility, the pastor's personality, the amount of time involvement, and the pastor's own tenure of office negatively influence the decision to join service organizations. There are, however, some positive factors that need to be considered in serving with community service clubs.

First, there is the opportunity to

serve outside the religious realm. A minister's noninvolvement in community organizations is often mistaken as a "too good for us" attitude. People see him only in the role of clergyman, not as "one of us." There is a need for people to see the pastor on their own turf. Standards of conduct need not be compromised. Experiential holiness should be demonstrated anywhere and everywhere. Pastors do not "just" serve the church; they serve the world. Isn't that what Jesus modeled?

Membership in service organizations also provides the opportunity to widen friendships and contacts. Community leaders usually serve in one of the local clubs. This allows great opportunities to meet and work alongside those leaders, many of whom the minister may not otherwise find accessible. Many of these may appear self-sufficient and not in need of friendship. However, that is

THE SUCCESS SYNDROME

by John M. Gardner
Lakeland, Fla.


We can only speculate why something so simple and obvious as love and care for people is so often ignored and forgotten. Perhaps it is the problem of our ability to complicate simplicity in the name of progress. In the complex business of personal activities and institutional shuffle, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that people (all people) are our business (our *only* business).

What I choose to call the success syndrome is a malady that sooner or later attacks almost every pastor and church. If not corrected, it goes through three predictable stages.

Stage One: You begin a new pastorate and to some degree are afraid

you will not make it. Perhaps you will not be accepted and will get "voted out." You have a family to feed and clothe and a career to protect. Failure is simply out of the question, so you just can't go too far or do enough to please your members. So if they want you to stand on your head and count hubcaps, you'll try. All your efforts are focused on rewarding the church members.

Stage Two: You are there for several months and the "honeymoon" is prolonged. Your efforts to reward your members are paying off handsomely with a steady and growing number of them. You start to feel confident. You are having more success than you have ever known before. You now have more people to care for than you can handle. You were a little short with that last visitor, but no big deal. Visitors are like buses: they come along regularly and often. There are plenty more where that last one came from. The success syndrome has taken hold.

Stage Three: Your care and concern for people has slipped, but you are the last one to know. You neglect to love people in your institutional wheel-spinning. Attendance drops off. Visitors aren't coming back. You blame it on the weather, the staff, or even the district superintendent. You change your personnel. You alter your priorities. You even go broke on last-ditch promotions or spectacles to lure the people back, but it doesn't. As Yogi Berra put it, "If people don't want to come out to the ball park, nobody's gonna stop 'em." Left uncorrected, the final stage of this disease is terminal. Learn to love people again—like Jesus our Lord loved them. After all, He is our Pattern. 

Due to the addition of "Worship and Preaching Helps," we are no longer accepting free-lance sermon outlines. We continue to welcome sermons written in full.


COMMUNITY CLUBS

seldom the case. People are wrapped with insecurities, marriage problems, serious illness, emotional hurts, wayward children, and unrealized hopes and desires, no matter who they are. They need genuine, sincere, godly acquaintances—and the minister can fit that need simply by being available. Many community leaders' church involvement is nominal if at all. They are not close to their pastors and may look elsewhere when crises come. The clergyman with whom they rub elbows at that club meeting may be the first one they reach out to. A caution flag should be raised here. Ministers should not look at these people as potential church prospects or potential tithers, but as people in need of ministry. Building solid relationships is of utmost importance.

There also comes the opportunity to know firsthand the community's needs. As ministers, we know all the "needs" of our church, but do we

know the needs of the community? What do we do to help? People may be shocked to see the pastor of the local church roll up his sleeves and help dig the footings for the high school's new snack shack, but it would be a pleasant shock, and they would recover!

The ability to discuss his town's problems intelligently also qualifies the pastor to be a part of the solution—to be on the cutting edge of community life. What community projects need to be tackled?

God has not called the pastor to minister solely within the four walls of the church. We must not limit our vision. The Lord has asked that we invest in people's lives. There is a world to influence for Jesus' sake. One of these influences may be a service club in your city. Think about it. See if there is a place for you to serve. As the motto of Rotary aptly states, it's "Service Above Self." 

THE FALL—AND RISE OF A PASTOR

Shattered. Totally, completely shattered. Our world tumbled in, and our ministry ended in one foolish, impetuous, immoral act. All we had worked for during the last 10 years ended with a crashing finality that made any problems prior to this one seem small indeed. It was my fault, and I shoulder the responsibility for the heartache and pain that I have caused my family and church.

So much has transpired during the last 10 months that I must share it. When my world shattered, there were some things that I desperately needed in order to bring healing during this supreme crisis that pastors dread. There are also some things that I continue to need. So many questions bombarded my mind at the beginning—dozens at once attacking my mind.

What will I do for work? Where will I live? Where do I attend church? What are people going to think? Where can I go to be mended and healed? So many sides to so many needs surfaced in the process of restoring my life. However, all involved God's people willingly and gladly reaching out to my needs. Some of the needs were:

A LOYAL SPOUSE who reassures me—a dozen times a day if needed—that she still believes in me and that I am still "her pastor."

A CARING DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT who refuses to judge, and accepts me wholeheartedly. I knew I could approach him in my time of need because he had ap-

proached me previously and expressed his love for me and my family.

A LOCAL CHURCH AND BOARD THAT PRACTICED FORGIVENESS and voted unanimously for us to stay, even though we all knew this could not be done. The board continued our salary and allowed us to stay in the parsonage until we were on our feet. This Body of Christ demonstrated such love and compassion in a public service that the healing began at that moment. As I confessed my sin, the people spontaneously came forward to hug us, wish us well, beg us to stay, and tell us that they forgave and loved us. Some waited in the aisles for nearly 45 minutes in a miraculous demonstration of love. How could we give up? Equally wonderful is the fact that they have continued to keep in touch.

A NEW CHURCH HOME THAT ENVELOPED US IN LOVE. As we moved to a new church, our church family accepted us with a love that has been amazing. We have received so many cards, money gifts, and kind words from people remembering us on our birthdays and anniversary. From the very first day they assured us that we were a part of the family. We are loved!


A PASTOR AND WIFE WHO REFUSE TO BE THREATENED BY US. We need to feel that we are still able to minister. We need a loving pastoral team to make us feel nec-

essary and to shepherd us in the many decisions that we are making.

ZONE PASTORS WHO KEEP IN TOUCH, EVEN WHEN THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. Your presence and the sound of your voice over the phone means more to us than "the right words." Don't worry—we're not easily offended. We need you.

A GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT WHO TOOK THE TIME TO MEET WITH ME PERSONALLY AND HELP ME RENEW MY VISION. Such love, such compassion, such optimism and faith in me when I had such little faith in myself. *Oh, how I needed that!*

A REDEMPTIVE DENOMINATION that will give me a second chance when I really don't deserve it, and who believe that God's call to ministry is not negated by failure.

In this process of progressive healing, there was still yet one other source that has been the *true* source for healing. It has been the washing of the Word. This morning, as I prepared for a busy day in our new business, I read God's word to the prophet through the picture of the potter: "But the pot he was shaping . . . was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him" (Jer. 18:4). I sensed that the Lord had a personal message for me through the "potter picture." Pray for me as I slowly and carefully am being remade into a useful vessel once more. 

Preacher's Exchange

WANTED: Books with sermons by Richard Watson. He was a contemporary of Wesley, Fletcher, and Clarke. Contact:

John B. Durfee
1827 Allen Dr.
Salem, OH 44460
Phone: 216-337-9376

WANTED: Complete commentary sets. Senior ministerial student in serious search for comprehensive library materials. Send offers or donations to:

Rev. John F. Yancey
NNC, Box 2376
Nampa, ID 83686
Phone: 208-467-5197

A MATTER OF THE MIND

by Gene Williams

Wichita, Kans.

We pastors are involved in what should be the most exciting work a person can do, yet many of us are frustrated, burned out, and want out. Somehow that doesn't add up.

Why would anyone who is experiencing the reward of seeing lives dramatically changed and improved be discouraged and be ready to quit? Something is wrong.

In his book *The Magnificent Mind*, Gary Collins points out that our minds can either work for us or against us. That may be why there are so many weary preachers. Our minds are working against us rather than for us.

Most of us will not fall to an attack on our flesh and commit some act of sin. Nor will we turn aside for any other sinful pursuit. We are too convinced of the truth of the Bible for that. We will make it—somehow! But who wants a “somehow” life. When was the last time you went to dinner at a restaurant because a friend told you their food and service was “so-so” or “somehow”?

Satan delights in making us feel sorry for ourselves. He makes us feel overworked, underpaid, unappreciated, and just plain tired of it all. If only God would let us out!

Frankly, I don't understand such an attitude toward being on God's team. If I had a chance to sit on the Kansas Jayhawk basketball team bench, I'd take it in a minute. I want

to be a winner. The Jayhawks are national champions. Never mind the work and practice! Never mind the long hours, sore muscles, and being fussed at by Coach Larry Brown. Move over; make room! They say I can be one of them. That makes me a national champion as a part of the best team in the country.

God's team surpasses the University of Kansas. His teammates are winners in the universal contest for the souls of men. This trophy never tarnishes—and God has asked me to be on His team. Forget the hours; forget all the hard work; never mind being “fussed” at now and then by my people. I have the privilege of being on God's winning team.

Once my mind made the transition from feeling sorry for myself to sheer joy at being counted worthy of being chosen, I have ceased being “burned out.”

Somehow I never get too weary to do the things I enjoy. I have gotten up long before day, walked in freezing cold and even snow to hunt pheasant. It is not unusual to hunt right through the noon hour. Who's hungry? That is fun. When the day is over, we may be physically weary and nearly frozen, but the clock will be set for early tomorrow. No one is complaining or quitting. The mind says, “A few hours of sleep and back at it. There are birds out there!”

My mind works for me or against me.

My mind says, “God could have chosen heavenly beings to share His good news. He did once; He could again. But He didn't. He chose me—what a compliment!” This mind-set works for me. I am complimented, pleased, and richly rewarded that God gave me the privilege of working with Him in redeeming mankind.

I have been on God's winning team for over 35 years, and I still love it. Not all of my hunting trips have resulted in getting my limit of birds, but it was still fun. By the way, if you don't get into the field, you'll never get a pheasant. Not all of the University of Kansas teams win championships, but if you're not on the team, you'll never be a part of a national championship.

Some of my pastorates have been tough. Try preaching to 12 people when 5 of them are your own family. Tell me about bad votes—73 people saying “We do not want him as our pastor” is a lot of rejection. Do you want to talk about building programs or paying budgets? I'll swap stories with anyone.

Still, there is something special about being a pastor. Dr. W. T. Purkiser in *The Image of the Ministry* quotes Samuel Chadwick:

I would rather preach than eat my dinner or have a holiday. I would rather pay to preach than be paid not to preach. It has its place in the agony of sweat and tears. No calling has such joy and heartbreak but it is a calling an archangel might covet and I thank God that, in His grace, He called me into the ministry.

I'm with you, Chadwick! Thank God, He chose me for life's greatest opportunity. Somehow when I realize what a privilege is mine, I get a new surge of energy, my church gets a better pastor, and I get a better church.

Preacher's Exchange

WANTED: *Brother Paul*, by Paul Holderfield and Kathy Tharp. This book is a 1981-82 Missionary Book reading series from the Beacon Hill Press. I would like to buy this book. Contact:

George Crumbly
Rte. 1, Box 148
Horatio, AR 71842
Phone: 501-832-2567

If I Were a Pastor

by Walter E. Lanman

If I were to become the pastor of a local church again, there are some things that I would give some attention to:

1. BIBLE

I would plan to spend time reading my Bible every day. I would not read just looking for another sermon but with the express purpose of exposing my mind to God's Word and letting . . .

2. PRAYER

Him speak to my heart. During this disciplined and well-guarded time, I would pray for every family of my church, for their specific needs. As the church grows, the congregation would be divided up, alphabetically or geographically, but I would make sure they were all prayed for at least once a month.

3. SCHEDULE

I would have a daily schedule—a time to get to the office. No one will see that I get there, but get there I must, regularly and on time. I would spend my morning preparing sermons, writing letters (notes of appreciation, comfort, and congratulations). At least part of one morning each week I would give some time to planning, goal setting, and projections.

Calling, the contact with people beyond the structured schedule of services, demands a priority that rivals the regular, disciplined time for office and study. It is not always easy in this day of multisalaried, shift-working families to find a time that is convenient schedulewise to both pastor and parishioner—but calling is not an option, *it is a must.*

Be creative. Appointments can be made. Coffee or Coke breaks afford a special few moments, greatly appreciated and fruitful. Unexpected meetings often provide a providential setting that adequately fulfills the spiritual qualifications of a call, inquiring into their physical well-being or spiritual need, offering an appropriate scripture or promise of prayer.

Goals are important. Twenty-five calls a week is a minimal expectation. I have had associates for visitation and trained laymen to call as well, but I set the pace. Anything less than 1,200 calls annually was unacceptable to me personally. Parishioners attend better, hear more, and respond better when they know the shepherd cares enough to call on them.

4. COMPASSION

I would love my people—share with them in times of sickness, trouble, sorrow, and crisis. Experience has taught me that if I do this, they will overlook many of my weaknesses. I have even followed the ambulance to the hospital and on several occasions greeted one of my parishioners at the emergency room or admitting desk.

5. UNDERSTANDING

I know at the outset that not all people will agree with me all the time. I must understand that this is not bad.

The very best of friends can have differences of opinion on many subjects, but because a person had a viewpoint that varied from mine would not make him an enemy. If we are going to effectively build the Kingdom, we must harness the gifts and talents of people, even though their opinions and ideas may differ from our own.

6. BEST FRIENDS

I would treat my people in such a manner that no one around the church would be aware of who my best friends were. Children and older people always receive special attention. There will always be some people I enjoy more than others, but when at church, it would not be evident. I would not allow myself to be grouped or to group others at the exclusion of anyone, other than for a duly called meeting.

7. TREATMENT

If I were fed a bit of cold shoulder or a piece of hot tongue, I would make sure that those people received some extra attention—personal, prayerful, careful attention. Most people are not problem people, but many have problems that manifest themselves in hostile behavior. They are hurting, feeling neglected, inadequate, afraid, or maybe under conviction. I would go the second, or even the third or fourth mile. I'd do what was necessary, without compromise or jeopardy to the flock, to make that person feel needed, wanted, and a part of the family. Jesus needed people from all walks of life to aid in His ministry. I do too.

8. BOARD

I would be open with my board. I would keep them informed and seek their counsel and approval. I would develop a policy manual with them and live by it. I would ask their approval on any major changes and not overlook many of the smaller changes. Most things that need changing can be if we prepare the proper climate for change.

9. COUNSEL

When I got down and discouraged, I would get on my knees before God and reaffirm that it is His church, His concern, He is in charge; I'm just the office boy. "Say what, say where, say when—I am available, dependable, expendable. This is too big for me. I am under Your orders." It sure relieves a lot of pressure when you recognize that *He is in charge.* I would remember that He is my best Counsel. I might tell God, the D.S., or a neighboring pastor, but above all, I will remember that His counsel is safest and best.

10. ANSWERS

I wouldn't have to have an answer for everything. If I didn't know, I'd say so. I'd follow up with, "I haven't experienced that before"; "I have not been aware of this"; "I will do my best to find out." I have been in an active ministry role for almost 40 years, and I'm still admitting to things I don't know, still researching, learning, seeking. May it ever be so. I'd keep an open mind, an open heart, and a closed mouth when faced with a subject I didn't know much about.

I'm sure that I have not covered all that I should learn, but this is where I'd start.



Dad— *A Prayer for a Faithful Pastor*

by Donna Bordelon Alder

It's 11:30 and I'm still awake. The night is dark and silent except for the brush of wind through the willow tree near my window. My husband and children are long asleep, weary from a hectic Sunday. But the stillness is not enough to let me unwind. Today is Father's Day, and this last hour of the evening compels me to think on things of consequence.

I think about Dad. He has served 60 years in the pastoral ministry, most of them on one district in the Church of the Nazarene. I wonder how he is doing tonight. And I think back on the times. . . .

I remember the time he helped me put up a tent in the backyard—a real one, not just a blanket thrown over the frame of an old swingset, like I always made.

I remember when, as a teenager, I would slip into his office to ask for a new pair of shoes while he pored over a sermon. If I caught him in a mellow mood, he would take me shopping for a dress too. He would sit patiently in Sears while I would parade in and out of the dressing room first with a blue, then a white, then a green dress. He would nod or gesture with a broad sweep of both hands, feigning delight.

Sundays were pleasant days. We lived in an "apartment" in the rear of the church for 15 years. My room was a Sunday School classroom and our kitchen, the church kitchen. As awful as this might sound to most parsonage families now, I do not recall a single complaint from Dad. He would begin early Sunday morning to haul many of his congregation to church, then pull in to greet each parishioner with a broad grin. On special days he would give a flannelgraph lesson at the beginning of church, and I would sit engrossed

on the front pew. Then he'd preach with fervor, punctuating his sermons with animated gestures. He seemed strong and vital—unsinkable. He sailed through Sundays as though he were meant for them.

I went off to college where I found and married a preacher of my own. Then I followed him to seminary where I taught eighth grade science while he studied theology and wrote term papers.

One October evening Mother called to tell us that Dad had suffered a stroke. The prognosis was uncertain. It was difficult to think of his being vulnerable. All I had ever known him as was an active, strong southern gentleman. His constant admonition was "Always serve the Lord." Now he would have to step down for a while; a truly difficult thing for him. He slowly moved back into the gentle flow of a smaller church—still preaching, still admonishing.


The days, years, and decades since then have been measured by the events in my own parsonage life. I am now helpmeet to my husband in a lovely, growing church in the northeast, far from my dad. And now he is old, still serving the Lord faithfully in his corner, preaching, helping pastor a small flock. The church I now

serve is 10 times larger than his congregation. Yet his faithfulness dwarfs the lives of many "successful" pastors. His absolute commitment to God is monumental to me. It hurts to see him old, yet the years have brought a new perspective. He grows more memorable, more successful—to me.

Now, as he did so often for me, I breathe a prayer for him.

Lord, help him feel the worthwhileness of his life. His years have not been fruitless as the adversary would have him believe. Because the winter of his life shows meager gains in his Sunday School attendance, or little financial growth in his church, help him sense that the monument he has built to You with his life has cast a giant shadow over many, many lives. Give him the grace to know that what he is doing now in his 80th year is mighty because it is done in Jesus' name.

It has been hard for him in many ways, for I sense he was a righteously ambitious man—striving, longing, pushing for great goals. Let him know that the noblest ones have been accomplished.

In the loving name of a perfect Heavenly Father, Amen. 

Preacher's Exchange

WANTED: Any books that would be useful for a "start up" library for ministerial training schools in English-speaking West Africa. Contact:

Rev. John Seaman
Africa West Field
Church of the Nazarene
22 B.P. 623
Abidjan 22
Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)
West Africa

Ten Things I Enjoy About Being a Pastor

by Larry T. Allen
Chandler, Ind.

Your concerns about the ministry are probably concerns to me also. Such things as politics and power struggles, cruel boards and carnal bosses, demands and commands, revivals that don't take off and recalls that make you want to take off, burdens and burnout, and many other issues cause concern.

On "Pastor Appreciation Day," I received a card that made me think a lot about the ministry. The card came from my eight-year-old daughter, Kamela. She had written on the card these words: "I'm glad God called you to be a preacher." Recently, I've tried not to focus on the concerns of clergy but on the joys of the ministry.

At least 10 things give me satisfaction in serving as a shepherd.

1. I enjoy the hours of work. They are long; many times I work late into the night. The hours are somewhat flexible, and I get to set the schedule. I'm glad to be free of a time clock.
2. I enjoy being in the "people" business. There is no greater task. For God so loved the people of this world that He gave His Son. We love people and give ourselves to benefit others.
3. I enjoy receiving a salary. It's a

comfort to know that if I'm sick and miss a day I'll still be paid. All right, so I may not make as much as I'd like; however, I am paid better than many people I meet.


4. I enjoy being employed. I'm thankful for my assignment. Since entering the pastorate in 1977 I have never had to receive a single unemployment check. Since that time, however, I've ministered to many workers who have been idled, due to either layoffs, strikes, or plant closings.
5. I enjoy my duties. I love sermon preparation and pastoral visitation. Ministering in times of need is satisfying to me. As a pastor, I get tired, but I'm not tired of being a pastor.
6. I enjoy my colleagues. Fellow ministers have enriched my life. They have encouraged, inspired, challenged, taught, and fellowshiped with me. And loaned me sermon outlines!
7. I enjoy the fact that God can use me to accomplish some things for His kingdom. Sometimes I reflect on the progress God has allowed me to see in the churches I have served.

8. I enjoy striving for personal and professional growth. One of my goals is to read at least one book per week. The reading has enriched my mind and ministry. God is not finished with me yet.

9. I enjoy a multitude of favors from God's good people. I am overwhelmed at the things that come my way because I am a pastor. Permit me one illustration: the car I own was purchased through a layman who gives ministers a tremendous discount.

10. I enjoy the eternal aspect of my work. Many times I've stepped back to get a better perspective on things by asking myself if the issue at hand is a matter of heaven and hell. The eternal view is the important one.

It is helpful to me to pray often: "Heavenly Father, it was a great day in my life when You called me into the ministry. I thank You for that call. Help me not to allow the concerns to overshadow the joys. Sometimes I need to have that joy restored. Help me to concentrate upon the joys of serving others for Your sake, Lord. Amen."

And, Kamela, I too am glad God called me to be a preacher! 

Would Someone Please Define Success?

(Continued from page 12)


success in ministry might be found in this statement: A man is a success in ministry who is faithfully telling the truth about Jesus Christ out of a pure heart of love and is influencing and equipping others to do the same.

By now I'm sure you are wondering about my statistics for last year. They did not leap over the top of the chart, and yet, we experienced growth in Sunday School and worship attendance, church member-

ship, and finance. We paid all our budgets in full and were second on our district in overpayment of our General Budget for World Missions. Last, but not least, we received members by profession of faith. I do care about numbers because numbers are people. I rejoice with every church that is growing. In no way am I attempting to glorify failure.

But, only one voice of approval shall be sufficient in making me feel successful as a preacher of the Good News. I want to hear from Him

who sits on the throne, "Well done, good and faithful slave" (Matt. 25:23, NASB).

Do we throw away statistics? NO! God has always kept statistics and so should we. Let us use them in praise to Him when they are up. But in all times, let us remember what counts—our relationship with Jesus Christ and His Word. Let us remain a channel through which the Holy Spirit can flow. Let us be faithful to Him because He is always faithful to us. 



THE ARK ROCKER

I chanced to be in the "Headquarters" city of a holiness denomination. I decided to visit. As I drove up I was surprised to discover that the entire complex was walled in by fences. Not friendly white picket fences of small-town nostalgia, but ominous black wrought-iron fences. Tipped with sharp points designed to impale intruders.

As I approached the main gate, a posted red-lettered sign shouted, "NO TRESPASSING!" Then I saw the sculpted logo on the side of the multistoried structure that proclaimed, "Called unto Holiness." The irony was inescapable: "CALLED UNTO HOLINESS: PRIVATE PROPERTY, NO TRESPASSING!" What a graphic, unintentional metaphor of the Church!

I visited an inner-city mission recently. Crushed together in a dingy fellowship hall, steps littered with cigarette butts, there was the human flotsam of a major metropolitan ghetto: the poor, the homeless, the destitute—and yet they beamed as they boisterously sang "This Little Light of Mine."

The mission director compassionately preached "good news to the poor." Many responded to his invitation to ask Christ into their lives. I sat at the counseling tables as volunteers interviewed each person in a program of individualized care. I saw tears flow unashamedly as hands were held and prayers were offered. Hugs were freely given. As were groceries. And clothing. And completed job applications for the illiterate. And shelter for the homeless. And refuge for the abused. In that shabby fellowship hall I sensed the real presence of the living Christ. I

watched the community people leave with arms and hearts full, radiating that special glow of those who had been with Jesus.

Yet I wondered: Would these same people feel comfortable if they descended upon my local church on Sunday morning, with their junky cars, second-hand clothes, and rotting teeth? Would anybody speak to them? Sit with them? Invite them home for dinner? Or, would they crash into the walls of middle-class embarrassment and indifference?

If more than a token number of Hispanics or Cambodians should be attracted to our church, would we—under the aegis of the homogenous principle—quickly wall them off in their own church, with their own pastor, among their own kind? After all, church growth experts warn that the Pentecost principle that brought all sorts of nationalities and races into one great Spirit-filled fellowship simply will not "grow a church" in our time.

I fell into a conversation with the wife of a sitting judge, both of whom had been won to Christ and our church through the faithful witness of Christian friends. Their lives had been transformed. In due time, the husband asked the pastor if they could become full members. The pastor put our church's Constitution, with its rules, into this new believer's hands. He loved what he read. Then he came upon these words: "No tobacco users allowed!"

Sadly, he and his whole family bounced off the wall of "holiness standards" right into the arms of another Christ-honoring, Spirit-anointed evangelical church—fortunately. He discovered what too many have already experienced: It is easier to

be accepted into the kingdom of God than into a holiness church!

How about the singles, the divorced, the widows among us? Do they feel walled out when we advertise ourselves as being a **family** church, filling our bulletins with **family** potlucks, **couple's** retreats, and invitations appended with, "Bring your **spouse**"? How do they feel when we take off after church for pie and coffee in twos, fours, sixes, and eights, leaving them to stand alone—and desperately lonely—on the sidewalk? Forty-six percent of American adults are single, with the majority of these being formerly married. Do our worshiping communities reflect this ratio? If not, why not?

How about persons who are handicapped? Do our church steps, doorways, and bathrooms forbid wheelchairs to enter? Do we deftly fence off and freeze out the mentally retarded? In so doing, we are slamming the door in the face of nearly 40 million Americans who are so impaired.

What more shall we say about fences of holiness respectability that wall out unwed mothers, welfare recipients, ex-convicts, failed ministers, alcoholics, drug addicts, homosexuals, AIDS sufferers, women preachers, and charismatics?

Jesus may have torn down "the dividing wall" (Eph. 2:14), but we have been busy repairing the damage ever since. He may have ripped the veil in two, but we have applied ourselves diligently to stitching it up again.

**A mighty fortress is our Church,
A bulwark never falling . . .** ✠

Pulpit Masterpiece

Moses took it for granted that he would be accepted in the ministry.

ANY OLD BUSH WILL DO!

by W. Ian Thomas

By God's miraculous intervention, Moses had been saved as a little baby out of the bulrushes, but Moses did not have any say in that! The best he could do at that stage in his career was to squeak! God had foreshadowed these things.

Over 400 years before, God had told Abraham that He was going to raise up a deliverer for His people and save them from the tyranny of a wicked pharaoh, and now God's hour had struck.

Preserved from death, Moses was introduced by God's divine providence into Pharaoh's household, adopted by his daughter and nourished as her own son. With all the privileges of royalty, he received a magnificent education. He was trained as a statesman, a soldier, and an administrator, and by the age of 40 he was a polished, scholarly man who could have taken his place in any society. In the words of Acts 7:20, 22—"Moses . . . was exceeding fair, and . . . was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds" (KJV).*

This is the portrait that God gives us of the man in the prime of life, highly qualified and filled with a sense of urgency, yet in his humility seemingly indifferent to his own intellectual stature—poised, it would seem, upon the threshold of a brilliant career. In point of fact, he was a man only a few hours away from a tragic blunder that would bring to frustration all his noblest ambitions and make him useless to God or man for 40 years in the backside of the desert.

Acts 7:23-25—"And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not." On the basis of what he was, and on the basis of what he knew, Moses took it for granted that he would be accepted in the ministry for which he believed God had called him. "He *supposed* his brethren would have understood: but they understood not." With a strong sense of mission, he was baffled at his own impotence!

Maybe this is the dilemma into which you too have fallen. You have felt the surge of holy ambition. Your heart has burned within you. You have dreamed dreams and seen visions, but only to awaken again and again to a dull sense of futility, as one who beats the air or builds castles in the sky.

We need to turn to the record itself to discover how Moses lost the way. Exod. 2:11—"And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren." You can imagine the natural impulse of a man moved with compassion for his own kith and kin. There was nothing evil, there was nothing implicitly sinful or wrong in the thoughts that filled his mind; that natural feeling of resentment against a tyrannical people, mercilessly whipping one of his own defenseless

brethren—but it was just at that stage that he allowed sincerity and genuine compassion to rob him of his true vocation.

It says in verse 12, "And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand." The enormity of the need knocked him off balance, and in a false sense of dedication he committed himself to the task instead of to God—"He looked this way and that way." The one way he did not look was up! "And when he saw that there was no *man*," Moses became strangely insensitive to the presence of God. How easy it is for us to do just that, and relate our actions to the approval or disapproval of men. Are you "man-conscious" or "God-conscious"?

Had Moses been overwhelmingly confident that his actions merited God's complete approval, he would have been indifferent to other men's reactions—their opinions would have been irrelevant. Spiritual pioneers, consciously in the center of, whether it be Nehemiah building the wall, Peter taking the gospel to the house of a Gentile, or Wilberforce and Livingstone campaigning for the abolition of slavery.

Paul loved to preface his Epistles by introducing himself as "an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)" (Gal. 1:1). Yes, "by the will of God!" That was his mandate, that was all he needed to know, and so he could say, "The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my

*All Scriptures in this article are from the King James Version.

life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:23-24). He had become invulnerable; he had a God-given sense of vocation.

Moses lost his sense of God, and maybe you have lost your sense of God for the same reason. You are not called upon to commit yourself to a need, or to a task, or to a field. You are called upon to commit yourself to God! It is He then who takes care of the consequences and commits you where *He* wants you. He is the Lord of the harvest! He is the Head of the Body—and He is gloriously competent to assume His own responsibilities! Man is not indispensable to God. God is indispensable to man!

I sometimes have an uneasy feeling about certain missionary conventions and the missionary challenge to which we have been accustomed. You hear one speaker after another committing you to the *task*, claiming your life for this mission field or for that. "The need," all too often it is said, "constitutes the call!" There are a *thousand* needs, but you are not committed to these. You are committed to Christ, and it is *His* business to commit you where He wants you. No man or woman on earth has the right to commit any member of the Body of Jesus Christ to any task, or to any field; that is to usurp the authority of the Head of the Body, Jesus Christ himself. 1 Cor. 12:18—"But now hath God set

promotional activity, unasked, on God's behalf.

This is not to challenge the sincerity of those who are thus employed, but we so often confuse bustle for business, and plant for power, and perspiration for inspiration. What an embarrassment it would be to you if you had a pair of hands that always tried to demonstrate how busy they were! Do you expect your fingers to tell you each morning what their program is for the day, and then demonstrate their enthusiasm by a vigorous show of uncontrolled activity? Do you think you would be successful in playing the piano on that basis? I would not like to ask a barber who had hands like that to shave me!

Surely, what the head demands of every member of the body is *restful availability* and prompt response to every impulse of the head in instant obedience, producing the coordinated activity of the whole and the orderly fulfillment of that purpose to which each, as a member of the team, has been committed in particular.

The challenge we hear so often today in the name of consecration is "Do more! Give more! Be more!" Go! Go! Go! But God says, "Be *still*, and know that *I* am God" (Ps. 46:10). In other words, quit the panic! Just let God be God!

Moses had not learned that lesson when he saw the Egyptian smiting one of his brethren. He rolled up his sleeves and said, in so many words, "If ever there was a time

And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known" (Exod. 2:13-14). Yes, the thing was known. When Moses tried to tackle the job, he could not even bury one Egyptian successfully. Maybe he left his toes sticking out of the sand! When *God* tackled the job, He buried the whole lot of them in the Red Sea! That is how competent God is to deal with His own business.

Moses fled, for "when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay him" (Exod. 2:15)—and for 40 years he was in the land of Midian. A man whom God had specifically raised up for a particular task, but who on the basis of his own sincerity, and on the basis of his own enthusiasm, neutralized his usefulness because he committed himself to a need instead of to God. He tried to do God's work man's way, and he had to learn that it is not scholarship but relationship—not just his *ability* but his *availability*—that qualifies a man for God.

One can imagine the awful sense of futility that must have overwhelmed Moses again and again during those 40 years of uselessness, unrecognized and unknown in the backside of the desert, and maybe you, too, have found your Christian service unrewarding. You are converted, you can look back to the day when you put your trust in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, but you imagined that the Christian life was just conforming to certain patterns of Christian conduct—patterns that had been projected upon you—and that your spirituality would be judged in terms of your conformity. That is not spirituality, that is "copyism," and Christian service that stems solely from conformity to the demands of an organizational machine will always be lacking in spiritual luster and characterized by the absence of divine unction. You will waste away with Moses in the wilderness of Midian.

Poor Moses—soldier, scholar, and statesman! Born to be a leader, caring for a handful of sheep, his wife's husband, with a job on her father's farm! Hope must have seemed to wither at the roots, when "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and,

Moses allowed sincerity and compassion to rob him of his true vocation.

the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." The moment I claim the right to commit a man or a woman or a boy or a girl to some field of service, I blaspheme His sovereign place as Lord of the harvest.

God is perfectly capable of taking care of His own affairs, and the reason so little is being accomplished by the Church of Jesus Christ today is that we have all too often organized God out of business. Millions of man hours and countless millions of dollars are being misspent on man's

when I was on call, it is now!" and he blundered in like a bull in a china shop, smote the Egyptian, and tried unsuccessfully to bury him. With the best intentions in the world, he became a murderer instead of a missionary!

"And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?

behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed" (Exod. 3:2).

When Moses saw that bush, he was amazed! It was a phenomenon—something that immediately attracted his attention. Here was a bush that burned and burned and burned, and went on burning. As far as he could see, it could burn on for eternity, and he could not help but compare himself with that bush! In his heart he must have said something like this: "I have never seen a bush like that before. I'm not like that bush! Forty years ago I burned myself out in 24 hours, and I have been a heap of ashes for 40 years since. There must be something very unusual about that bush, something very unique! It must be a very wonderful bush!" And Moses said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt" (Exod. 3:3). Aroused within his heart there was a holy curiosity, and he did a very wise thing—he made intelligent inquiry and, in consequence, made a very wonderful discovery!

We are tutored in these days to hero worship. In every walk of life we become "fans," and that is not less true in the area of Christian activity. There are those in whose lives there is manifestly evident the mighty unction and power of God. They are transparently genuine. The hand of God is upon them. They speak with an authority that God honors. Lives are transformed. Those spiritually dead are raised to life again. Defeated, helpless, useless, barren Christians are transformed into useful vehicles of divine life. Wherever they go it seems that there is a touch of glory about their path, and we admire them and applaud—but we stand back as though this were to be the monopoly of the few! As though they have a special call upon the grace of God and as though this were something not for the common run of men. We say in our hearts, "*There* is a bush that burns! I would like to be a bush like that, but I am just a heap of ashes!"—and that is as far as it goes.

You discuss the burning bush

with others! You admit that it is an amazing thing, and maybe you invite others to come and look at the phenomenon, but you have resigned

mands of a man is his availability—to be what man was created to be, the human vehicle of the divine life, inhabited *by God for God*. That God may be *himself*—His size in terms of what you are on earth, in your availability to Him. What *you* are is totally irrelevant—nationality-wise, money-wise, education-wise, personality-wise, and any other wise, if

You are not to commit yourself to a need, a task, a field—but to God.

yourself to be nothing more than what you are—a heap of ashes! It has never dawned upon you that you could be anything different, so you have to make the best of a bad job in your own little desert! Resigned to sit on the balcony among the spectators, just to be average, a spiritual nonentity!

This is the attitude that Paul sought above everything else to avoid in those of whom it had been his privilege to lead to the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the significance of his words to the Philippians when he wrote, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (2:12-13).

To the Philippians, who were tempted to lean upon Paul as their spiritual crutch, as though God had a particular interest in him that He did not have in them, he said, in so many words, "All that God has given to me, He has given to you! The Lord Jesus Christ dwells in your humanity. What I have, you have! What I can be by the grace of God, *you* can be by the grace of God! Work out your *own* salvation! It is yours as much as mine. It is *God*, not Paul the apostle, who works in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Recognize that all the illimitable resources that God has vested in me in the Person of His own dear Son are the same illimitable resources that He has vested in you!"

This is the message of the Bible, that God has chosen the weak and the base and the nothing, and the things that are not, to confound the things that are, and all God de-

only you will recognize the principle that it is God that works "in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

The only ultimate source of divine activity in all spiritual life is God himself—"Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). The Church is so slow to learn. It admires and seeks to emulate the example of the mighty but so seldom takes the trouble "to turn aside, and see" the reason why. You read about the lives of men like Hudson Taylor, George Mueller, Dwight L. Moody, A. B. Simpson—men whose lives have made spiritual history. You would like to be like them and do the things they did, and yet maybe you have never taken the trouble to find out *why* it was they were what they were, nor *how* it was they did what they did! Instead, you mobilize your own resources and seek to emulate the example they set, and are constantly buffeted by a sense of frustration because of your hopeless failure in the endeavor.

As some have sought to introduce you to the principle that made these men what they were, and en-

With the best intentions Moses became a murderer instead of a missionary.

abled them to do what they did, you have been impatient, and said, "Don't interfere! I'm too busy trying to be like them, and I don't have time to listen to you!" Now is that not stupid? Why was Hudson Taylor what he was, and how could he do what he did? Why was A. B. Simpson what *he* was, and how could he do

what *he* did? Were they God's favorites? Of course they were not! They were simply men who had qualified in the school of failure and despair. They were men who came to the end of themselves and discovered that what they were apart from God was nothing!

Moses began by being a failure! That was the school from which *he* qualified! Abraham began by being a failure! That was the school from which *he* qualified! Jacob was a hopeless failure! David was a hopeless failure! Elijah was a hopeless failure! Isaiah was a hopeless failure and a "man of unclean lips," but it is in the school of destitution—the bitter school of self-discovery—that finally you graduate into usefulness, when at last you discover the total bankruptcy of what you are apart from what God is! These men made this discovery and were blessed!

Moses had to discover this, and you will have to discover it! He had to discover that a fine physique and noble ambitions, royal breeding and Egyptian scholarship, could never be a substitute for that for which man was created—God himself!

Moses said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses" (Exod. 3:3-4). God called him by name! *When* did God call him? While he stood admiring at a distance? No, God never said a word then—but when "he turned aside to see," God called!

Maybe you are wondering why it is that you have never had an urgent sense of call; why in your Christian life there is no real driving sense of direction; why you do not have a deep, Spirit-born conviction of the purpose for which you have been redeemed; why it is you drift and live with no target in view! Maybe it is because you never took time out to find the reason why! When Moses turned aside to see, God called him—by name!

Judged by purely human standards, you may be highly qualified for Christian service, and yet go out into the oblivion of spiritual uselessness. No matter to what distinction you may attain in this world, no matter how much you may be ac-

claimed by your fellowmen, no matter how gifted you may be, it is tragically possible for you to go down in the annals of spiritual history as one of those who did not count, either for God or man—and do you know why? Because you never took time out to find the reason why God uses men! You have been too busy, and you never turned aside to see, and God was silent. He never called you by your name!

And as God called, Moses said, "Here am I. And [God] said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

its own substance to sustain the flame, it, too, would burn itself out in 24 hours; it, too, would be a heap of ashes like you. But it is not the *bush* that sustains the flame, it is God *in* the bush; and *any old bush* will do!

Did you ever make this discovery? Have you ever come to the place where you realized that all you can produce, at your best, is ashes? Did you ever come to the place where you presented yourself for what you are—*nothing*—to be filled with what He is—*everything*—and to step out into every new day, conscious that the eternal I AM is all you need, for all His will!

We often confuse bustle for business, perspiration for inspiration.

Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God" (Exod. 3:4-6). God had something to say to Moses, and I think that it must have been something like this: "Moses, you have done a wise thing in making intelligent inquiry, for you thought that this was a very remarkable bush. You thought that there must be something about it at once peculiar and wonderful, something unique, that it could burn and burn and burn, and go on burning, and yet not burn itself out. But you are wrong—you are *quite* wrong! Do you see that bush over there? That scruffy, scraggy looking thing—*that* bush would have done! Do you see this beautiful looking bush, so shapely and fine—*this* bush would have done! For you see, Moses, *any old bush* will do—*any* old bush—if only *God* is in the bush! The trouble with you, Moses, is this: 40 years ago, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, mighty in word and deed, you admired your own foliage! You thought you were some bush! But you burned yourself out in 24 hours; and you have been a heap of ashes for 40 years! If this bush that you have admired were depending upon

This is the forgotten tense of the Church of Jesus Christ today. We live either in the *past* tense or in the *future* tense. We say either "Ebenezer—hitherto hath the Lord helped us," or we comfort ourselves with "Maranatha—Behold the Lord cometh"—but we forget that He is the eternal I AM, the eternal *present* tense, adequate right *now* for every need!

If you are born again, all you need is *what you have*, and what you have is *what He is*! He does not *give* you strength—He *is* your strength! He does not give you victory—He *is* your victory!

Do you understand the principle? Christ is in you—nothing less than that! You cannot have *more*, and you do not need to have *less*, and every day can be the glorious fulfillment of the divine end—"Prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2), as you present your body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Only remember this—any old bush will do!



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Protecting Your Family If You Are Disabled

Recent studies indicate that during one's working years (generally prior to age 65), an individual is at a significantly greater risk to become disabled than to die. However, it is interesting to note that most individuals in their working years are better insured against the financial loss that can result from premature death than they are against the financial impact of the more likely event of disability.

Many denominational pension boards have recognized this need and have made provision for ministers and full-time church-employed laymen of the denomination to have adequate coverage for lost income due to disability. There are four programs that are generally available to meet such needs.

Denominational Pension Plans

First, there are the denominational pension plans. In the event of a disability, such plans usually provide an amount for a disability pension once the regular pension has been vested. Often, Social Security determination of disability must be received in order to qualify for this benefit. Check with your pension office for details.

Long-term Disability Insurance

Many denominations also make available an individual long-term disability income protection plan to qualifying individuals. A typical plan provides either a set amount per month or a percent of salary to the end of most disabilities or to age 65, whichever comes first. The benefit amount may or may not be reduced by Social Security or other disability benefit payments. Premiums are paid by either the participant or the local church employer. If paid by the employer, the premiums may qualify as a tax-free, employee benefit.

Temporary Benevolence

Many persons are unaware that even though there are Social Security disability benefits available to cov-

ered workers, those benefits do not begin until after five months of disability.

For qualifying individuals, a few pension boards may provide temporary monthly disability assistance, which may pay up to the amount certified by Social Security, less any amount payable from any other plans offered by the pension board, for this five-month Social Security waiting period. Funding for this program is usually provided by the denomination.

District Disability

For districts that have elected to participate in special group coverage plans, the ministers of that district may enroll for long-term disability income protection at special group rates. These plans typically provide a benefit that pays a percent of compensation at the time of disability (including the value of housing or housing allowance). The benefit is usually offset by any Social Security benefit being received. Generally, the premium for this coverage is paid by the local church employer to the group benefit plan.

Qualifications

Although different eligibility requirements may apply to each of the above plans, there are two qualifications normally required for participation. The first is related to the credential one holds. The second is that some plans require full-time church employment. This usually is defined to mean eligible participants must be compensated for at least 30 hours per week or are earning their full livelihood from church employment. To the extent that staff members meet the requirements, often they too can be included in these plans.

If you do not now have adequate resources to provide for your family's financial needs in the event of future disability, request information from your denomination's board of pensions. They usually specialize in such plans in addition to the pension work they do.

Submitted by the office of the Board of Pensions and Benefits USA of the Church of the Nazarene.



Pontius' Puddle



WHO'S WHO AND WHAT'S WHAT AMONG POPULAR HOLINESS VOICES

by David F. Nixon
Pekin, Ill.

A layman handed me a letter he had received from a contemporary gospel singer. The Lord had urged the singer to deliver a message on holiness. He felt a keen sense of urgency because, "God's judgment upon our nation is at the very doorstep."

Another letter from a nationally acclaimed preacher answered the question, "What does it mean to *really* live?" Pointing to 1 Thess. 3:8-13, he told his readers how to stand firm in the Lord: Be (1) joyful in gratitude (v. 9); (2) earnest in prayer (v. 10); (3) abounding in love (vv. 11-12); and (4) *established in holiness* (v. 13).

Of the four, he was most concerned about the fourth, personal holiness. In a day when more and more Christians are getting soft morally, materialistically, and theologically, he challenged his readers to evaluate their walk with God. "If you sense," he admonished, "that you are weaker . . . that you are tolerating things you once resisted . . . let me urge you to return to the Lord. Establish yourself once again in holiness . . . in today's terms, 'clean up your act.'" This welcome call to holy living concluded, "Not until that slice of your life is in place will you stand firm in the Lord!"

It is encouraging that persons outside the holiness movement have begun to herald that gospel truth. But the holiness movement has issued this clarion call from its very inception. Holiness was proclaimed even when it was unpopular. Though no national personalities jumped on the bandwagon, lovers of holiness resolutely held high God's standard. With Jonah-like passion, but Jeremiah-like results, they called for righteousness "which exalts a

nation" and for "clean hands and a pure heart" in a dirty world.

Perhaps our exultation over this renewed interest should be tempered by a careful examination of the content of the holiness message our allies proclaim. Can we assume that popular holiness voices express our Wesleyan understanding of the doctrine? Without becoming negative and hypercritical, we must read the "fine print" in order to make an accurate appraisal.

Caution is needed when it comes to the timing and process of entire sanctification. In our Wesleyan understanding, salvation and entire sanctification do not occur in the same experience. Though we applaud when it is said, "There can be no holiness apart from the work of the Holy Spirit," and that "the sure standard for holiness is Scripture," our hands drop quickly to our sides when we hear that "holy living" is "the process of sanctification."

Some view holiness as a lifelong quest in which God and man cooperate. Sometimes God wins, other times we win. As Mother Teresa puts it, "Our progress in holiness depends on God and ourselves." In other words, God and man have a "joint responsibility for sanctification." Sin is something we never experience total victory over. It is a constant, daily struggle requiring continuing human effort.

Others liken this daily struggle with sin to "nations at war." "One defeats the other, as Christ defeated Satan at Calvary. But the losing army, though vanquished, takes to the hills and fights on as a guerilla movement." Fighting off sin is like having to beat back continual guerilla attacks.

Christ's shed blood on Calvary

made a complete atonement for all sin. Satan may have been sent into guerilla warfare against us, but believers whose hearts are sanctified wholly are cleansed from *all* sin. Christ's blood goes to the root of our unholiness, our sinful nature, and cleanses all sin so that it no longer has dominion over us.

The Holy Spirit does not come in, do His clean-up job, and get out. The vacuum created in our hearts when sin is completely removed is graciously filled with holy love. The result is one good thing after another flowing from a pure heart, and continual enabling power to live without sin and stand firm in the Lord.

Every believer who has received the washing of regeneration may, like the disciples at Pentecost, "Stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The same Holy Spirit who filled their hearts will fill the consecrated hearts of believers today. Holy Spirit's power within enables us to "clean up our act" by "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1, KJV).

Not only must the call to holiness be issued, but believers must be told how and when to be holy as well. Entire sanctification is not the culmination of a lifelong struggle, only finding fulfillment at death. It is not some pious wish that happens at glorification. Heart holiness is available now. Man's part is consecration. From that crisis moment on, God's Spirit takes over, freeing us from original sin (depravity) and bringing us "into a state of entire devotedness to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect" (*Man-*

(Continued on page 56)

Recommitted to Committees

by Mark J. Galli
Sacramento, Calif.

One of my goals was to escape committee meetings.

Just out of seminary, my concept of ministry wasn't, I suspect, all that unusual. *Real* ministry, I believed, happens in the pulpit, in the prayer meeting, on the doorstep of the unconverted. *Real* ministry is overflowing sanctuaries, published books, and "a presence" in the city. *Real* ministry requires imaginative and bold leadership. *Real* ministry is dynamic, energetic, and vital.

And then there is committee work—not exactly ministry, but sort of. After all, someone has to assign Communion servers, delegate the pulling of weeds, budget for crayons and glue, and decide who will bring hot dogs to the all-church picnic.

As for me and my ministry, however, I will serve in greater courts. I will make a name for myself . . . er, I mean, for our church . . . I mean, for the Lord. Yes, for the Lord.

Escaping committees

One of my first ministry goals, then, was to escape committee meetings, not an easy task upon first arriving at a church. Laypeople, who spend a lot of time in committees, have an odd notion that what they do is important to the church. They call a pastor, in fact, to help them do their important work better. So I couldn't let them know how I really felt.

But I could eagerly tell them I affirmed the ministry of the laity (meaning I wanted to get on to more significant things), I trusted *them* to do their work (meaning anybody could do that work), and I needed to be concerned about the big picture (meaning their job was to worry about petty details). For some reason they remained unconvinced and kept insisting that I be at their meetings.

So I tried a new tack. I pointed out that I couldn't spend so many even-

ings away from my family. Surely ministry shouldn't mean widowing one's wife and abandoning one's children. Expressed with subtle self-pity, it worked. They agreed to schedule all committee meetings on Monday or Tuesday nights to free the rest of my weeknights for my family—a partial victory.

And it prepared the way for my ultimate victory. Since two evenings a week away from my hearth was the new standard, I pressed home a new argument: I needed to call on people, and most of them worked in the daytime. Which was more important, calling or committees? At that, they waved the white flag, albeit unenthusiastically. I attended few committee meetings after that.

Ten years out of seminary, I'm the one waving the white flag.

I've discovered real ministry happens in committees as well as outside them. No, I'm not brain dead. I still acknowledge that committees can be dull and overly concerned with the minuscule. But I've come to see how vital they are for our entire ministry—and not only for those necessary details.

Here's how I believe my involvement in committee work helps the ministry of our church.

Maintaining ministry momentum

When I don't attend committees, decision making, which usually proceeds at the pace of the proverbial turtle, slows to the pace of a pet rock.

That's because committees hesitate to plan programs, raise money, or take action until they check with

the pastor. The quickest way to see if April 13 can be scheduled as a work day is to ask the person who knows the church calendar best: the pastor. Furthermore, most congregations hesitate to proceed with new ideas if their pastor has some moral or administrative objection, which I might if April 13 were Good Friday. We can weigh the desirability of such attitudes, but for most churches, especially small to medium ones, the pastor is integral to most decisions.

Consequently, when I don't attend committees, every decision is slowed by a month. When every new idea must plod through this tortuous process, we shut off committee spontaneity and enthusiasm. Building momentum is impossible.

Affirming the laity

Again, we may question the theology of this attitude, but it prevails: When a pastor attends a church function, it raises the status of the function, the morale of the leaders, and often the attendance.

Our choir had been struggling to get 8 to 10 members out to Thursday rehearsals. When one of the two tenors was confined to bed for two months, I offered my voice box to our discouraged choir director. I intended only to beef up the tenor section. But as I regularly attended rehearsals, I noticed choir members did so more regularly themselves. Now, it's unusual not to have a full choir at rehearsal.

I've also seen that phenomenon at work in committees. Even if a committee doesn't need my input, many nights I attend simply to make a statement with my presence: This committee's work is important.

Often, however, I go one step further. Periodically a committee ought to hear how I appreciate their regu-

lar sacrifice of nights at home and how I admired their recent teacher workshop or whatever. Praise from the pulpit is important, but sometimes a brief expression of appreciation in a more intimate setting means more to the members.

Energizing the laity

Another simple but often unacknowledged fact of church life is this: The majority of committee chairpersons are not as creative or energetic as we might wish. Frankly, how could they be?

Most of our members work in the office or garage or in the home chasing three preschoolers. Some do all three! In addition, many take care of aging parents, or raise money for UNICEF, or sit on the local Young Life committee. Some retired members are so busy they wonder when they used to find time to work. On top of all that, some even find space in their schedules to give to church.

These faithful have never been seminary trained. They don't get a paid study leave to attend church growth conferences. They seldom have time to read books on Christian ministry. It's utopian, then, to expect the majority of the chairpersons to generate creative ideas and to muster the drive to push their ideas through the committee.

That's not to deny the imaginative and bold leadership many chairpersons exhibit. But let's face it: such leaders aren't the norm. Most of the faithful need, and frankly want, inspiration and leadership from the pastor.

Attending committee meetings to offer my ideas and encourage bigger ideas can turn a church's 25th anniversary after-church reception into a two-day celebration, and a youth car wash to raise \$250 into a softball marathon that raises \$2,500 for world hunger.

I can hardly take full credit for such examples—as my members will be quick to remind me. But as a general rule, bigger and better things are planned when I attend committee meetings.

Enhancing pastoral care

Committee meetings are not merely places where business gets dispatched; they're also centers of Christian warmth. This is especially true of a small church.

I attended a workshop on managing the monthly meeting of Session (our board of elders). Suggestions included agreeing on agenda items, docketing items, sticking to the docket, and limiting extraneous discussion. In a flash I realized a Session meeting need not take more than two hours! My type-A personality was flushed with excitement as I left the workshop, silently vowing to implement the procedures at my next Session meeting.

In retrospect, I'm surprised my Session put up with such procedures for as long as they did. By the middle of the second meeting, they'd had enough. "Why do we have to be so scheduled, so businesslike?" complained one elder. "It makes the meeting feel so stiff that we can't relax. I feel like I'm forbidden to talk about anything but business. What happened to the church family?"

In short, along with business they wanted a little fellowship. I had assumed they wanted the agenda kept to two hours. It turns out they don't care if the meetings run past midnight—if they can do something more than business, such as share their lives with one another. Not that they don't still complain about Session meetings' length, but I now understand the nature of the complaint.

That's a long way of saying that committees become for me a time to mingle with my parishioners, to talk about the weather, the kids, the construction of the new Hyatt Regency. There's nothing earth-shattering about that, but as most of us have discovered, such conversation is vital to building trust.

When I don't attend, I miss out, and my relationship with my parishioners suffers.

Strengthening the larger ministry

Let me add a final reason I'm back to committees. Working with a committee helps not only that committee but other committees as well. Attending the worship committee, I can remind the members about the Bible seminar the Christian education committee will offer Saturday. Sure, they've heard about it in the newsletter and the weekly bulletin. But my mentioning it in an intimate setting is no small adjunct to other publicity.

GIVE

Give.

Give because a need exists—
Not for any anticipated
reward.

Give because of a brother's
adverse circumstances—
Not for the crowd's possible
recognition.

Give because you have
resources and skills—
Not for potential repayment.

Give.

Jesus' style of giving does not
require
rewards
recognition
or repayment.


Jesus' style of giving looks
only for
need-filled circumstances
or
a hurting brother
able to use our resources
and
skills.

Give.

—Jerry D. Hull

Furthermore, one committee becomes a place to receive feedback on some other committee's project or experiment. I ask the mission action committee what they thought about the Holy Week services, and the worship committee what they got out of the recent all-church picnic. The responses of people not wrapped up in making an event happen offer a valuable perspective.

So, as you can see, I'm a reconverted committeeman. Not every committee meeting needs my presence. But many do. And so I go.

It's certainly not the only important work of the church. After all, churches do not live by committees alone. But, then again, I've never seen one that could live without them, because that's where some *real* ministry takes place. 

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Show, Tell, and Trim

by Lois Hoadley Dick
Newton, N.J.

Is your church making news? A brief mention in the local newspaper or on a radio station may be the only way new neighbors will find your church. Some advertising is free. Make good use of it—every week!

Publicity for the church should be the responsibility of one dependable person who will learn to write newspaper-style. Publicity should *not* be another task added to the many other duties of a pastor.

SHOW

First, introduce yourself personally to the editor of church news, in his office. Promise to provide him with newsworthy articles and clear, black-and-white, professional glossy photos, 8" x 11".

The best photos may be obtained from your denominational headquarters, your missionaries, or directly from the speaker or singing group who will highlight your Sunday services. If you receive no photos, or photos of poor quality, correct it at the source. When you schedule visiting persons, ask at the time for a photo. One good photo will attract more attention and take up more space than three columns of "wordage."

Do *not* write on the back of photos, except for an identifying name in tiny penciled printing on the very bottom edge of the photo. Send the newspaper a stamped, large envelope in which to return the photo. Some newspapers sell their photo later for a small fee or give it upon request.

Provide the editor a caption sheet along with the photo. A caption sheet is a separate page that gives the bare bones of information, listing names of people as they face you, from left to right. "Rev. and Mrs. Frank Jones and daughter Susan

will present a musical program Sunday evening, at 7 P.M. in the County Christian Church of Blairston."

Besides visiting talent, feature everything unusual that the Sunday School, church, or youth group does. Ask the church editor to send a photographer and give him the exact location and time to arrive. Our children's church had a rhythm band. I asked the photographer to arrive five minutes before the session ended and told the children to expect him. The photographer chose the four children with instruments to be in the picture. This eliminated any hard feelings of either child or parents.

One Children's Day, a dozen of the little ones dressed as nursery rhyme characters and put on a delightful program of gospel nursery rhymes. I slipped up, forgot to call the church editor and ask for a photographer to appear at the last practice, and the opportunity was lost. Yes, newspaper photographers do work on weekends, and many freelance photographers are available.

If you take your own pictures, show no more than three persons, close up. No mob scenes. Find out the deadline to submit both photos and writeup. If the public is invited, take the pictures at least three weeks ahead of time.

WRONG: A mob scene showing all 40 children from children's church, each face the size of a pinhead, and not one distinguishable.

RIGHT: Three children of children's church working on a poster.

WRONG: Church family picnic. One hundred fifty persons lined up around a bus, which looks no bigger than a thumbprint.

RIGHT: A senior citizen, a teenager, and a tot packing a picnic basket.

TELL

Learn to write newspaper-style. That is, in the first paragraph, if possible answer the questions—Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?

In our rural area, where people, congregation, and newspaper office were separated by the miles, it was not possible for the one in charge of publicity to visit the newspaper every week. We worked out a schedule two weeks ahead of time.

Each week, Mondays at 10 A.M., I phoned the pastor and asked questions, took notes, then did the writeup. He gave me his sermon title, the topic for the adult class, the persons in charge of nursery and children's church, the Sunday evening information, and the midweek events. This information was mailed, timed to arrive before the deadline.

Read other church notices. Learn to edit out the verbiage. Cut flowery flattery.

WRONG: "The Joybells, whose inspired, lively singing has thrilled the hearts and souls of countless thousands across the nation . . ."

RIGHT: "The Joybells, a nationally known choral group . . ."

Edit. Edit. Or, the editor will edit for you. He will also become very annoyed at your church. He may even cringe when he sees your church news in the stack of mail on his desk.

WRONG: "Dr. Xander, who gave his heart to the Lord around a campfire in Cherry Hill, and dedicated his life for full-time service after a very emotional experience when he was 18, then struggled for his education, will speak on 'Youth Years.'"

RIGHT: "Dr. Xander will speak on 'Youth Years.'"

Christmas, Easter, and other holiday times usually find newspapers
(Continued on page 50)

MISSIONARIES: Mortal Men and Women

(Acts 14:8-23)

The account of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra instructs missionaries on matters crucial to both theology and practice. Compelled to tell the Good News to Gentile Lystrans, Paul preached about God's grace extended to all people, touched a lame man and then responded to a situation that went quickly from enthusiastic to hostile. His immediate entreaty to be considered as only a human being, coupled with his willingness to suffer for the gospel, shows how missionaries must live out the message they proclaim.

The impulse of mission

Luke does not record Paul's initial sermon in Lystra, where he and Barnabas had fled from an antagonistic crowd in Iconium. But his sermon sparked faith in at least one person, a man lame from birth. As Paul perceived the man's faith to be healed, Paul called out, "Stand up on your feet!" (Acts 14:10). A miracle occurred: his command incited response to faith in the power of God, and the man jumped up and began to walk.

As an implication for missions practice, Paul focused on the need of this individual who was ready to believe. Missionaries must see persons and needs. Caring love must be directed. In Paul's case this display of God's power upon one individual was sufficient to persuade others to believe that something marvelous was transpiring. Paul's ministry, like Christ's, was wholistic. Paul did not ignore the physical malady. It could easily have been hunger or poverty. As a Christian, how could Paul fail to have compassion and to do whatever possible for the man? Paul cooperated with God's healing power in inciting the man's

by Floyd T. Cunningham
Metro Manila, Philippines

faith. As in similar instances in Jesus' ministry, physical and spiritual wholeness were inseparable.

Missionaries cannot ignore the physical dimension of life. Perfect love compels missionaries to do all they can within their resources to heal the hurts of men and women. True compassion is concerned with every sphere of human existence.

Missionaries go to people like this man: they have not had the privilege of knowing the good news of Jesus. The Word of God sparks faith in individuals to respond for their own spiritual wholeness. Indeed, miracles occur as individuals, through grace, "jump up" from their misery and walk with the Lord. Missionaries must be careful not to curb the enthusiasm of those who are healed. The one Lystran, responding to grace, and being transformed, gave immediate testimony to God's power in the preaching of the Word. As a result, people unable to comprehend the words of the gospel were persuaded to believe. Persons touched by the gospel become as effective as missionaries themselves. So, let them jump up, let them walk, and let them go! Let others see the miracle.

The purpose of missions is to incite faith in Christ, not in oneself. Paul tried to do this through his words and deeds. Nevertheless, the people misunderstood.

The imminent danger of missions

Witnessing what Paul and Barnabas had done, the crowds were in awe. An old legend in Lystra said that Zeus and Hermes had once come in disguise. All but one couple,

later immortalized as trees, ignored them and were consequently annihilated.¹ It was no wonder they did not want that to happen again. So the people began sacrificing to Paul and Barnabas. Since Paul was the speaker, he was called "Hermes." Perhaps more stately looking, Barnabas was called "Zeus." Even the pagan priest readily joined in the adoration. Yet there was no spiritual change in the people. They were only impressed by the miracle and were mindful of the consequences should these men prove to be gods.

Missionaries are sometimes treated like gods. They come with seemingly superior technology and wealth, as well as the gospel. People may simply be attracted to the missionary himself. In many countries, as missionaries arrive in jets and air-conditioned cars, it seems to some people that they are gods from machines. The comparative wealth of missionaries enables them to afford homes, cars, appliances, and other conveniences that indigenous people only dream of affording. Especially upon first contacts, missionaries may seem to be able to do no wrong in people's eyes. Superior in so many things, do not these missionaries stand on some higher spiritual plane? Nationals may stand in awe. There's the danger that a missionary may come to view himself with a sense of infallibility. At least, it may seem that no mistakes, no genuine humanness, are permitted to be shown to the nationals. To outsiders the missionaries may seem to be not so much God's servants as His privileged ambassadors.

Are missionaries as quick as Paul and Barnabas to tear off their fine clothes and rush in where misper-

ceptions exist and shout: "We too are only men, human like you" (Acts 14:14)? How soon should a missionary reveal his true identity as a human being? What if Barnabas had leaned over to Paul and whispered, "We have to tell these people that we are not gods someday—give it two weeks, maybe two months."

Perhaps missionaries feel that it would stifle their leadership roles if their humanness were known to the nationals, or if they were perceived as having many of the same troubles and emotional and spiritual doubts as any normal, sanctified Christian. Will not the nationals stop looking up to them? There is a great deal of satisfaction, indeed an intoxicating satisfaction, in having people think that one is special—a bit something more than a mortal human being. Yet, unless the nationals believe in themselves as spiritually equal with missionaries, a holy confidence in their own privileges and responsibilities as partners with God in building His church will not emerge. Instead, they will continue to rely on the missionaries' alleged expertise. Paul and Barnabas do not encourage faith in them, nor seek support from them. They encourage the Lystrans to look to no one but God.

The conception of the pastoral ministry as a partnership with laity must take place on the mission field. There must be an in-depth sharing of personal needs and frustrations as well as victories by the missionaries with national friends. The church will be built up interculturally and congregationally as there is honest and intimate discipling. Simply, there must be close-bonded peer relationships and friendships between the missionaries and national workers.² If Jesus could call His disciples "friends," sharing His most inward depths, certainly missionaries should bond themselves with nationals. Indeed, most mission fields have been established long enough by now that national leaders are often older than the newer missionaries. The newer missionaries should look with respect to the national leaders and find from them counsel, advice, and direction for ministry. The mission field must form the context of ministry for the missionaries. Their ministry is defined by the needs of the national church.

Inevitably the people on mission fields will realize that missionaries are only human. Certainly it would be better to freely acknowledge this than to beguile. Or else, when nationals do inevitably realize the humanness of missionaries, they will say, "These missionaries are trying to pass themselves off as gods." Persecution may ensue, as it did for Paul and Barnabas when the people realized they were not gods as they thought at first.

Imperative goals of missions

Paul did have another opportunity to preach, and his sermon is a foundation for the theology of mission. Paul speaks to the people in their context. His sermon here is markedly different from others recorded in Acts because in other places, upon entering cities, Paul addressed predominantly Jewish crowds. In Lystra, he speaks the gospel as he would do later in Athens, in the context of the Greeks.

The news is good! Though Paul does not hesitate to call their former ways of sacrificial worship "worthless," he does not call their indigenous religion "evil." He simply points out that their religious forms did not lead them to the living God. Since the good news of Jesus is for everyone, the way is open for them to worship the One who created all that is seen around them.

Rather than preaching from a text that would have had no meaning to them, Paul alludes to the true meaning of things seen all around them. Paul insists that people can see from the beauty and order of the world itself that there is a God. This God has been blessing them already with food and joy. Paul does not speak to them as if they are in misery. Not only has God been good to the Jews but God has been good to them, and they have enjoyed happy lives because of Him. All good things have come from God. God's grace had already reached them, even before they knew His name. Thus, Paul acknowledges grace—unmerited favor—and joy even in these people who seem to be so far from revelation and truth. God has already worked among them, and they have only to see that all that they enjoy is from the God who is now making himself known through His Word.³ Paul's sermon under-

scores the universal invitation of the gospel and the prevenient grace of awareness of God among all people.

How deeply these words affected the people is not related, but Lystran "disciples" are already mentioned in Acts 14:20-21. Apparently some were receptive and truly converted while most hearers kept on in their old ways, scarcely heeding Paul's words. That is the way with any proclamation of the gospel. Some people accept, some reject, and others simply do not pay attention.

Meanwhile a group of Paul's Jewish opponents arrived from Antioch and Iconium, and the crowd was finally persuaded that Paul was right—he was only a man. Missionaries likewise expect opposition, coming often from the religious establishment of a nation. The people stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, leaving him for dead. Miraculously, Paul got up and went back into the city. How strange, that after being rejected in that city, Paul would return there. But that is where the thrust of evangelism and mission must be—in the cities.

Paul then strengthened and encouraged the new disciples (Acts 14:22). Ministering to the faithful, educating and building up those disciples already committed to the faith, is an ongoing task. Believers caught as much from Paul's life as from his speech the fact: "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." A missionary may tell people this, but what will his words mean if it seems that he himself is not suffering at all? Not only must missionaries tell the gospel well, but also they must live it well.

Paul secured indigenous leaders and committed them to the Lord. Even after such a short time among them, Paul and Barnabas appointed elders, trusting them with the message and the ministry. Indeed, Timothy came from the church at Lystra (Acts 16:1). Timothy was to take the apostle's place. The goal of the missionary is to find persons through whom God's work will be carried on and spread further.

Despite the initial misconceptions regarding Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, their work was blessed. Through them some Lystrans re-

(Continued on page 74)

Stifle Those Pulpit Announcements!

by Rob L. Staples
Kansas City

I beg to differ with the position taken by my longtime friend, Kenneth Vogt, in his article titled "The Place and Purpose of Announcements" in the December, January, February issue of *The Preacher's Magazine*, 1989-90. His main thesis is that "announcements . . . are a part of the fabric that assists the worshipers to be participating members of the family of God." That may possibly be true if the pastor is skilled at weaving such fabric. But such pastors are few and far between.

Brother Vogt is certainly correct when he says "the privilege of making announcements has been often and terribly abused." How true! Over the years I have worshiped and preached in many different churches across the country and have often been horrified by the amount of time taken to make announcements. The suggestion that announcements can be made "in the form of a greeting, before the worship starts," is hardly an improvement. Usually it is even more deadly, succeeding only in killing off the worship service before it is born. It is difficult to raise from the dead something that never had life!

One way to abuse announcements is to assume that they must be made orally from the pulpit. Brother Vogt recounts his visit to Boston's Park Street Church where one of Dr. Ockenga's announce-

ments about a church picnic "left a warm glow" in the heart of the worshipers! Perhaps, but the glow in my heart would have been much warmer if the time had been used for an extra hymn or reading from God's Word.

Brother Vogt's claim that "not to announce almost implies secrecy" seems extremely myopic. Against the practice of Dr. Ockenga, I would set the example of my pastor, Rev. Randall Davey of the Overland Park Church of the Nazarene in greater Kansas City. He almost never—not over three or four times a year—makes an announcement during the Sunday morning worship service. He believes strongly that the worship of God is the most important thing for the congregation to do and that nothing should interfere with that supreme objective. To compensate for the absence of announcements from the pulpit, all announcements are carefully printed in the worship folder. When he first started the practice of letting the printed page carry the full burden of announcements, some of us missed a few committee meetings or church picnics because we didn't read the announcements carefully. Why read the announcements when you know they will be given from the pulpit? But, it didn't take long for the congregation to be retrained. Besides, we have a biweekly paper containing announcements that is mailed to

everyone on the church's responsibility list. There is no excuse for missing an announcement. It goes without saying that those who have announcements to make know that there are deadlines for getting them into each of these publications.

Of course, very small churches perhaps cannot afford worship folders or midweek papers. In such cases, let us pray that their pastors are as skilled as Dr. Ockenga in making announcements! But, except for such cases, it just isn't true that "to leave announcements out is virtually impossible." Omitting pulpit announcements is the easiest thing in the world, especially if there is a worship folder provided each Sunday and if the congregation is literate. The benefits greatly outweigh any supposed losses. Furthermore, the people will grow to appreciate the fact that when they enter the sanctuary they have come for one purpose and only one—to worship God and glorify Him, from the first note of the prelude to the "amen" of the benediction. And newcomers will be attracted to a church that recognizes that its chief business is to praise and glorify God. Beside that noble act, all else pales in comparison. The mutilation of worship by the repetition of announcements that people can read for themselves should have been included in the list of deadly sins!

Well, at least it is a *mistake!*

BEYOND BELIEF



HOW I DEVELOP A SERMON

by Roger L. Hahn

*Professor at Southern Nazarene University
Bethany, Okla.*

The development of a sermon is a very personal matter for a preacher. Like Saul's armor, it is designed to fit one person. However, all armor has a common purpose, and most armor is quite similar. Sometimes only small personal adjustments make it fit another. So it is with preaching. In the following paragraphs I will describe my armor—how I develop a sermon.

Armor is put on one piece at a time. Likewise, a sermon is developed through a series of steps. The first step is grasping or being grasped by an initial idea. The disciplined work of study follows so that the idea can be properly and fully understood. The fact that a sermon is spoken aloud means that a structure, an outline, should evolve. Finally, the outline, like a skeleton, must be given flesh, blood, and the breath of life.

The Initial Idea

A sermon does not simply exist; it must be born, it must have a beginning point, an entry, an initial idea. Since my preaching is almost entirely expository, the Bible is the ultimate source of my initial ideas. These ideas frequently come from Bible reading, both devotional and professional preparation for teaching and preaching. Often the season of the church year or circumstances in the life of the local congregation send me to specific portions of Scripture. However, a long-range plan for preaching guides my Bible reading in search of the initial idea.

Actually we preachers cannot read the Bible devotionally without also thinking occasionally of the way a verse, a passage, or a phrase of Scripture would contribute toward a sermon. Though that fact affects my devotional life, it is good for my

preaching. When I encounter an idea in my devotional reading, I write it down and file it for future reference. Sometimes it leads quickly to a sermon; sometimes a long period of fertilization and growth is necessary before the idea is ready for sermon development.

Several years ago I was reading Mark 10 in my devotions. I noticed that the emphasis in verses 46-52 was not on the healing of blind Bartimaeus but on the conversations. The word *call* seemed especially prominent, appearing three times in verse 49. I knew that someday I would develop a sermon on the passage around that insight, but I didn't know exactly when or how the sermon would develop. I filed the idea. Several months later circumstances and a sense of direction from the Lord led me to retrieve that idea, and I developed a sermon that is still one of my favorites.

Preaching needs a more comprehensive plan for finding sermon ideas than simply devotional reading of the Bible. I develop a long-range plan for preaching with several components to guide me to passages of Scripture that will produce a balanced diet of initial ideas. I follow the church year from Advent to Pentecost. In December I read the birth narratives and the Old Testament passages that prophesy of the Messiah. In January and February I read the Gospels looking for initial ideas out of the life and teachings of Jesus. Near Easter I review the passages in the Gospels, in the Epistles, and in the Old Testament that speak of the suffering and death of Jesus. From Easter to Pentecost I study passages dealing with the resurrection of Jesus and with the Holy Spirit.

From June through November I develop a schedule of Bible reading based on a balance of other spiritual and theological needs of the congregation. Years of study have given me a basic knowledge of the general subject matter of each book of the Bible. If I sense that people need instruction in churchmanship, in prayer, and in hope, I schedule my Bible reading in Ephesians, in the Psalms, and in the prophetic books. The actual sermon ideas will not come until I have read those portions of Scripture. However, long-range analysis of needs tells me where to read in the Bible to find the initial ideas for developing sermons.

One other long-range consideration guides my Bible reading for initial ideas. The whole Bible must be the source of my initial ideas, not just my favorite parts of Scripture. There should be a balance of Old and New Testament reading and preaching. Presently I am aiming for 40 percent of my sermons to come from the Old Testament. I monitor and plan a balance within each Testament. Law, prophets, psalms, and wisdom literature must be balanced. Gospels, Epistles, Acts, and Revelation must be balanced. If I read this year in Deuteronomy and Matthew, then next year it will be in Leviticus and Luke.

Some might think this plan is complicated for generating initial ideas for sermons. However, it works well for me. In my years of preaching, I have never lacked an idea for a sermon. My problem is the selection from many ideas to choose one for developing the sermon. This method has enlarged my enthusiasm for preaching. God's Word is so rich and so diverse and yet so practical that I never run dry of ideas or of the de-

sire to communicate His Word. Sometimes I am the first person needing the Word. A Bible reading plan for initial sermon ideas meets my needs.

The final phase of finding the initial idea is to determine the length of the passage as the text for the sermon. Passage length varies according to literary structure. One must determine the unit of thought in that passage. Usually the paragraph is the basic unit of thought, so usually the paragraph will be my text. Sometimes it encompasses a whole chapter, sometimes several chapters. I preached one sermon last year with 1 Samuel 4—6 as the text. With the passage limits determined, one is ready for the work of disciplined study.

The Work of Disciplined Study

The work of study takes longer than any other step in developing the sermon, but it is most quickly described. I follow two basic steps in study—translating the passage from the original language and reading as much as I can to learn about the background of the passage.

The presupposition that guides my study is that the original meaning of a biblical passage is the starting point for finding and proclaiming the message from God out of that passage for today. For me, the first step in searching for the original meaning is to translate from either the Hebrew or Greek into either English or Spanish, the language in which I will preach. I read from commentaries, biblical theologies, Bible dictionaries, and works on Bible manners and customs. I use as wide a range of commentaries as I can. I especially study technical commentaries on historical and literary aspects of the text. I look for clues and small details about the original setting and meaning. Thus technical commentaries are more useful to me than homiletical or devotional commentaries. Similarly, works on Bible manners and customs unlock secrets of the cultural framework of the biblical world and provide clues to original intention. It only takes a few seconds to glance through the Scripture index of a book on Bible manners and customs, but the insights may provide the basis of a whole point of a sermon. A Bible dictionary often provides historical and

literary information on the background of the book.

Studying theological commentaries is helpful, especially those by 20th-century German authors. While I may not accept some of their presuppositions and arguments, they are immensely stimulating in raising the question of the kerygmatic nature of the passage. That kind of theological proclamation helps to shape the central idea that guides the sermon. Word studies of significant theological words like *redemption*, *propitiation*, *life*, *apostle*, *covenant*, etc., from theological and biblical dictionaries are also useful.

Finally, I study simple, predigested material like Barclay's little *Daily Study Bible*. Earlier in my preaching career it served as a model of how to digest technical information into sustenance for the soul. Today I am comfortable digesting for myself, but I still read Barclay and similar works for the sake of comparison. Occasionally he has useful ideas that I hadn't thought of but will incorporate into my message.

A sermon must be born.

Usually I do not take notes while reading these materials, though on rare occasions, when I find a particularly pointed phrase or idea, I may jot it down. My purpose in extensive reading is not to write down ideas but to fill up my mind with as much information about the text as possible. I let that information soak and permeate my thinking. I strive to enter into the hearts and minds of the original authors and audience, to think their thoughts with them as they wrote, spoke, and heard the text. Once the walls between the 1st and 20th centuries become transparent, I begin organizing the sermon into a communicable form.

The Evolution of the Outline

Since my sermons are developed for preaching rather than publication, I must develop an outline that is simple, logical, and easily remembered. I then determine the one basic idea or purpose I wish to communicate. At this point, I return to the biblical text from which the sermon will emerge. I read and reread

the text until the purpose and basic structure of the passage emerges. Then I write and rewrite until the sermon outline emerges.

I read the text sometimes 10 times, sometimes 20 times, sometimes more. I am looking for the unifying theme and the basic structure of the passage, which provides an outline. In some ways, I am waiting for inspiration from the Lord concerning the message of the text. I cannot control how much time must be spent at this point. However, over the years I have become increasingly confident that if I will keep reading the text, soaked with all my study, the basic theme and outline will emerge.

I pay close attention to grammar and content of the passage. I look for parallel grammatical constructions—they are often indicators of the structure. Parallel imperatives or parallel purpose statements provide an outline for the sermon. For example, Heb. 10:19-25 has three hortatory subjunctive constructions, "let us draw near" (v. 22), "let us hold unswervingly" (v. 23), and "let us consider . . . one another" (v. 24). The grammar provides the basic outline. Isa. 40:1-11 contains three references to a voice: "A voice of one calling" (v. 3), "A voice says, 'cry out'" (v. 6), and "Lift up your voice" (v. 9). Repeated use of a word opens up the structure of the passage. All I must do for an outline is to find simple, logical, and easily remembered ways of expressing that structure.

Once the passage's structure has emerged, I begin jotting down an outline. Sometimes for each main point I simply write a single word or phrase from the text that draws my attention to the structure. I jot down subpoints to indicate how the main point might be developed. Frequently I am still struggling to articulate the main purpose or theme of the sermon. I attempt to write the outline again in more polished form. As I think about the passage further, I will rewrite the outline again trying to frame it in simple and easily remembered statements. I try for alliteration and statements with a parallel construction. I don't force alliteration and parallel construction if they are not truly reflected in the structure of the passage. However, I have discovered that if I am patient

and think and rethink, write and re-write the outline, I can often find alliterative and parallel ways of phrasing main points. That helps me remember the outline. I've discovered that it also helps the congregation remember the outline and thus the sermon. It is best if the theme word of the sermon is a prominent part of each statement of the main points in the outline. Once the outline emerges, the final step in the development of my sermon is to give that skeleton outline flesh, blood, and life.

Fleshing Out the Outline

The final stage in the sermon is fleshing out of the outline. An introduction and conclusion must be developed. Illustrations must be found. Finally, writing the manuscript and/or internalizing the message prepares me to preach.

The introduction is crucially important since the attention of the congregation is won or lost in the

and the main points for the conclusion. Sometimes, however, the final point of the outline is climactic and the conclusion of that final point may quite adequately serve as a sermon conclusion. In addition to summarizing, the conclusion must also challenge the congregation to decision and action. Whether it is an invitation to seek help from the Lord or a call to greater faithfulness or an affirmation of the work of God in the life of individual or church, the congregation needs to know how that message can be actualized in their lives.

Illustrations can give life to the message. I frequently draw illustrations from other passages in the Bible, from different cultural presuppositions of the biblical world, and from different word meanings and word usages in the biblical world. My own experience, as a child, as an adolescent, and as an adult, also becomes a fertile field for illustrations. I never use my successes or accomplishments to illustrate, but I occasionally use my failures, disappointments, and hard times. Positive, loving relationships with my parents, spouse, child, and friends are useful for illustrations. Occasionally I will use illustrations from history and literature. I must be able to identify personally with the illustrations if I am to preach them genuinely, so I never use books of illustrations.

I try to never use more than one long story illustration in a sermon. However, I do want at least one short, two- or three-sentence illustration for each main point. Several single-sentence allusions to other biblical characters or passages can illustrate one main point. I've never worried much about illustrations or collected and filed them. My homiletics teacher called illustrations "windows to shed light on the message." But to me a sermon should not be a glass house. I concentrate on the message of the passage and search for natural illustrations. They have come more easily the older and more experienced I have become.

When the outline, introduction, conclusion, and illustrations are in place, writing the sermon manu-

script is usually the next step. In my first three years of preaching, I wrote a manuscript for every sermon. The next three years I preached from detailed sentence outlines. Since then I've tried to balance writing the sermon manu-

The whole Bible is my source, not just my favorite parts.

scripts and preaching from the sentence outlines. I need both disciplines. If pressed for time, I do not feel guilty about preaching from an outline and do not write a manuscript. However, if I go too long without writing a manuscript, I find myself becoming sloppy and undisciplined in preaching from outlines. So I make time and write some manuscripts for a while.

Whether using a manuscript or an outline, I spend up to an hour prior to preaching the sermon internalizing the message. I do not try to memorize the outline or the manuscript, but, by going over and over the sermon, the outline is usually memorized or I know the manuscript well. Then I am ready to preach.

Conclusion

Developing a sermon is a step-by-step process similar to putting on each piece of armor. When all the pieces of armor have been put on, the soldier is ready to fight. When I have gone through all the steps described above, I am ready to preach.

I have said nothing about prayer, yet prayer is a vital aspect of my preparation for preaching. For me, prayer is the oil that keeps the pieces of armor from rusting and the polish that keeps them shining. Constantly, regularly, along each step in the process, I pray. Apart from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, none of the steps will be productive in preparing to preach. I have discovered that by experience. As I commit my work to the Lord, following the steps I have described allows me to preach with a sense of His presence and power and with effective results.

The Lord led me to retrieve an idea.

opening minute. For that reason, I frequently draw attention to the main subject or theme of the sermon. Definitions, real-life experiences, tendencies of the modern world, and literature all provide ways to introduce the theme. In a sermon on Eph. 2:1-10 dealing with the church as God's poem, based on the Greek word for "workmanship," *poiema* (v. 10), I began the introduction by quoting a poem on the work of a poet.

Frequently I present background material from historical or literary aspects in the introduction also. This sets the stage for enabling the congregation to enter into the mind of the biblical writer. However, introductions are only to introduce. I must fight the temptation to put too much in the introduction. When the introduction is as long as one of the main points of the message it is too long. It will draw attention to itself rather than to the sermon theme.

Usually I summarize the theme of the message, the flow of thought,

Illustrations give life.

The Hidden Treasure

by J. Grant Swank, Jr.
Walpole, Mass.

The church has a hidden treasure. We have lived with it so long that we have come to take it for granted. Nevertheless, its familiarity must not prevent us from a fresh discovery that could rejuvenate the church around the world.

The hidden treasure is the small congregation. One might define the small congregation as a church that has 50 or less persons consistently in a Sunday morning worship.

With much attention these days given to church growth throughout Protestant denominations, the accent has often been placed upon medium-sized and large congregations. The thrust has been to get them to increase in size more and more.

In all the excitement, the small church sometimes has been left in the dust. This is unfortunate, for this is our hidden resource for religious adventure, spiritual and numerical growth, and untapped energy.

Frequently the parsonage families ministering to small churches live with a lack of self-esteem. In addition, laity feel defeated due to small numbers, meager finances, cumbersome some responsibilities, and rare gains.

Nevertheless, what would a denomination do without these clusters of faithful believers? We would be impoverished overnight. They make up the bulk of churches; consequently, we must not ignore their importance to the eternal work of God's kingdom.

Out of scores of small congregations have come many pastors, pastors' wives, missionaries, church administrators, college personnel, as well as faithfully committed laypersons serving in the secular workforce.

What can a denomination do to spark a new day for the small church? How can we assist this worldwide community to realize its worth to the larger cause of Christ? Perhaps in the process, we would discover numerous small congregations beginning to grow to larger sizes. Yet if some did not, they would sense their value for the gospel's sake. Even the small congregation has eternal significance.

The following practical suggestions could get us started:

1. Each district could establish a buddy system by which *pastors of small churches would link up with one another*. The same could be done for the parsonage wives. We really do need one another; yet so often there is an isolation from one another in the daily work of the church. This need not be if we purposefully linked up.

2. Each district could sponsor regularly *open discussion forums whereby small church personnel would meet with their district superintendents* and other leaders simply to talk out matters. This would help clergy and laity.

Much is to be said for the listening ear. Bridges across islands of the heart are built not only when we gather to receive district information concerning programming but when the communication flows in the other direction as well. Small church members and friends have a lot they would like to say. They need opportunities to speak up concerning a variety of issues and burdens.

3. *Support systems of listening and healing* could be instituted on each district. These support systems could be composed of professional counselors, elder clergy and wives who have moved out of active

pastorates, as well as staff persons from larger congregations.

A network of helpers is needed in every locale by which small church leaders can ask for prayer, advice, and support, particularly when under pressure of discouragement. This assistance should be available to lay leaders as well as clergy.

4. *Larger congregations could "adopt" small churches.* This would provide a wide variety of opportunities for ministry. Such partnership would create many avenues of creative ways for laypersons to get involved.

Laity from a small church need the exchange experiences with members from larger congregations. One group helping another stimulates all involved.

5. *Seminars and conferences scheduled denomination-wide can be set for members of small churches—clergy and laity alike.* Practical workshops for small churches would be most helpful, with special attention given to free times of open dialogue between the small church persons.

Many forums are geared for congregations of 50 members and above. Attendees of small churches feel left out in the cold. To discover our hidden resource—to really energize its latent force—specially planned "think tanks" for people involved daily in small church ministry could be enriching.

6. A *welcoming system* could prove encouraging on each district, by which *new parsonage families would be hospitably greeted* into their new pastorates.

Usually the local laypersons plan a welcoming occasion for the new pastor and family; yet a district-

(Continued on page 64)

SEXUAL FAILURE IN HIGH PLACES: When Ministers Go Down in Flames!

When an irate contractor phoned the district denominational office to report to the superintendent that Pastor Mark Goodson from First Church was involved in adultery for the last two years with his wife, he got action. His wife had volunteered at the church every Wednesday for nearly 10 years, helping to put out the midweek mailing to the 900 family constituency. She seemed to get a lot of help, he thought, but he didn't suspect this kind of "help." Pastor Goodson and his family were out of the parsonage within 48 hours. Gone. Superintendent Jones made a two-week transitional appearance and made the usual discreet announcement that Goodson had been removed from the senior minister role because of personal indiscretion.

Downstate, in another situation, Pastor Lem Lindley and his wife simply seemed to turn up "missing" from their church and a moving van loaded their goods after dark. There were rumors, naturally, and a single-parent mother reported quietly to a few people that her daughter had been used sexually by Pastor Lindley during some of several sessions in which she was revealing the pain of her personal loss of a father. The district board acted swiftly, since rumors of Lindley's visits to adult bookstores and massage parlors had already raised serious questions in their minds, but they had no incontrovertible witnesses to either. Church members had ignored rumors of beer purchases, since he preached regularly against all sorts of specific "sins of the flesh," and none of them had seen him with their own eyes buying beer.

But the biggest bombshell of all was the front-page story in the *Tri-*

by Donald M. Joy
Wilmore, Ky.

**We seldom consider
which are
"symptoms"
and which are
"core" issues
in sexual failure.**

bune. It detailed the charges against superchurch pastor Tony Christensen. A "second family," the story alleged, lived in a city only 30 minutes away by freeway. In a church-planting adventure stretching over nearly 30 years, Christensen had created a substantial congregational membership. Few people would have said they "loved" him, largely because no one got close enough to him to know him personally. He kept a professional distance that may have enhanced his authority. In the early days, when someone dared to ask who served on the board of finance, he said simply, "You are looking at the board of finance." He was the "founding pastor" and not infrequently took on the tigers of sexual promiscuity, pornography, and abortion. He did this from biblical foundations in his sermons, but he also accepted leadership and visible clout positions on community agencies allied to his positions.

The *Tribune* report indicated that evidence suggested that another woman's children out of state were now in college where it had been verified that their bills and expense accounts handled by the college fi-

nancial aid office had been paid personally by Christensen. Their legal or other connections to Christensen, it was said, were not known at this time. "What is known," the news story went on, "is that Pastor Christensen has a reputation over a long history of carrying on a rather extensive philanthropy and operates out of several accounts, most of them entirely under his discretionary management."

Pastors Who "Love Too Much!"

The Goodson error—involvement with a woman who spends several hours each week in his workplace—is both typical in cases of pastoral sexual failure, and is the simplest to explain: Any healthy pair of people given enough time for visual, voice, and emotional sharing will develop some sort of attachment. And since "pair bonding" and "friendship" and "common civility relationships" all awaken the same brain chemicals and send messages throughout the same nervous system and parasympathetic sexual responses as did the original marital bond, it is possible for a very strong and urgent pair bond to develop. Such an alien bond is all the more likely to develop if any grief or ecstasy event brings feelings to the surface and the two people find themselves grieving or celebrating together. The "heightened emotions" are indelibly recorded in emotional memory by "marker" chemicals in the brain. This "bonding" can quickly turn any friendship attachment into a full-blown "pair bond," without any reference to their legal marital status.

Since this alien bond is fresh and throbbing with the intoxicating imagination and fantasy of eros—even, unbelievably, a "future ministry to-

gether!"—it often supercedes the older, deeply invested marital bond in its sheer sticking power.

Compensatory Compulsive Addiction

Lem Lindley's case is vastly more complicated than Mark Goodson's. The sexual abuse of a teen and legal minor under the guise of "ministry" is a symptom of a nest of profoundly deeper problems. We seldom are able to restrain ourselves sufficiently to consider which are "symptoms" and which are "core" issues in sexual failure. As the Lindley case unfolded, there was documentation of current adult bookstore visits a half hour away, including both videos and "services" beyond pictures. The beer was consumed on late Sunday night binges. Lindley would excuse himself to "go wash the car" as a cover for picking up the beer as self-medication for the depression that followed the Sunday celebration, the "episode" high. Indeed, the better the week going into Sunday morning, the deeper the depression when the Sunday evening service was over.

Compensatory compulsive sexual behavior almost always comes in a package deal with other addictions. The multiple addictions serve as "backup systems." When you are depressed from one binge (beer, pornography, or ministry) you turn to another in your repertoire to get a "lift." The desperation in the deeply damaged personality of the compensatory compulsive addict prevents normal resistance based on actual probable effects of yet another episode. Look at the cycle of addiction, here, and imagine three cycles overlapping each other, with Pastor Lindley at various stages of each:

Primary Addiction—Compulsive addiction to ministry expressed as workaholic—neurotic evangelist—solo savior, hitting the "episode" phase on Sunday morning, and "despair" by Sunday night, based on the secret knowledge that he is a fake!

Secondary Addiction—Relief for the spiritual emptiness comes through quick consumption of beer, bought and consumed alone. The hypnotic, trancelike pull of "DESIRE" is rooted in a half-dozen years of medicating his emotionally

abused experiences at home during junior high and senior high school. Put aside at his conversion early in college years at an evangelical school, it has returned as his nagging self-doubt unravels his sense of assurance in his own integrity as a minister.

Tertiary Addiction—The pornography is an occasional third kicker. It had been repressed except for rare occasions since college. But with frequent excuses connected with his pastoral duties in the city, he laminated the porno videos and services to those visits as a booster to his sagging spirits. The desensitizing in adult bookstore booths turned his own office into such a booth as he "TRANCED" into the sexual episode with the teenage girl.

Each addiction leaves a profound "SHAME" effect, with its negative deposit, which accumulates into ever deteriorating "SELF-ESTEEM." What we rarely contemplate, however, is that Lem Lindley's compulsive behaviors are all compensatory. They are his efforts to "MAKE UP FOR" major losses somewhere long ago. His cup of self-esteem was cracked, and the hole in his emotional soul is getting larger with each of his compensatory episodes. If there is help for Pastor Lindley, it will

have to begin deep in the roots of the problem, not simply on the tragic, shameful, destructive, present symptom behaviors.

Behold the Tournament!

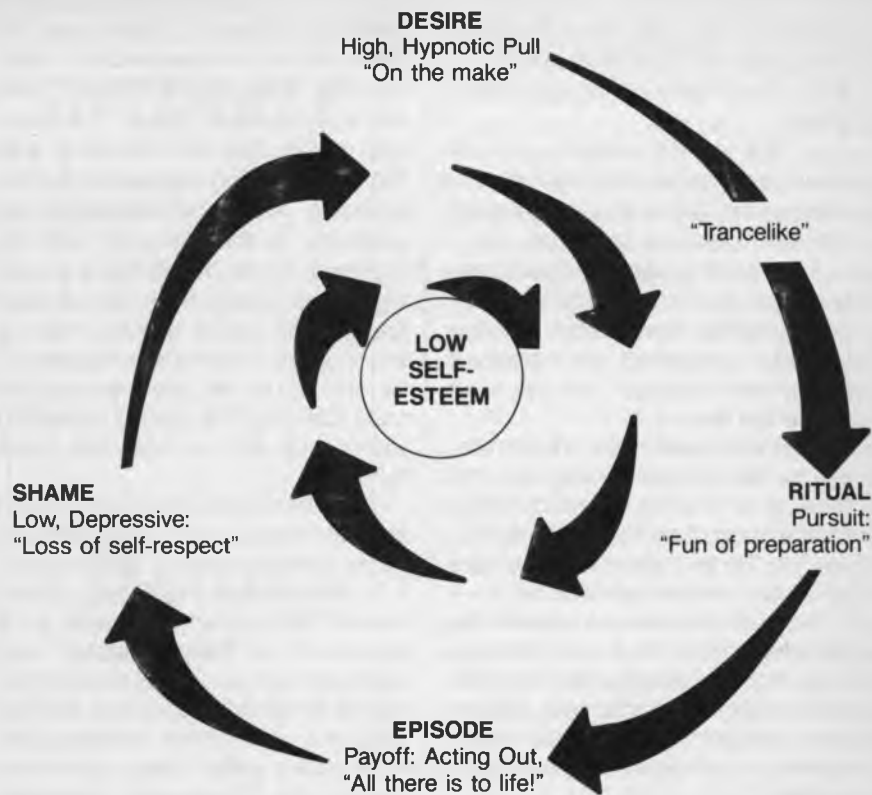
Anthony Christensen is a hero. His long tenure and visible success in the church he founded three decades ago is the envy of the entire denomination, not to mention this district. Not once did anyone suspect that he was capable of sexual immorality. His support of two and perhaps three separate families defies imagination.

Tony's wife provides a clue, however. She is the parsonage matron of these 30 years but seems less in shock than the rest of us. "You know," she confided last week to a friend, "David was a man after God's own heart, and he had hundreds of wives. Tony only wanted a few. Maybe he deserved them."

The tournament male, and on rare occasions his female counterpart, entertains ideas that move on a sure and self-justifying foundation:

1. If I am successful and can manage the financial arrangements, I owe it to myself to get anything I want or need. I deserve the best.

2. I am "in charge" in every situation. My wife is "MY" wife, so she can be brought into compliance with



anything I want or need. But since she is my wife, I can also protect her from the knowledge of my exterior affairs.

3. This is "MY" church, so I can arrange separate emergency and benevolent funds that are entirely MY discretionary accounts.

4. If what I want is against the law, I can find a way that is not flagrantly visible. I understand the law. Indeed, I help write it, and I preach it. But since I create the law, I am above the law.

5. Rules, even basic moral rules, are for the masses. Since I work so hard at controlling so many things for the good of so many people, I am outside the law. My rule is "be careful" and do what needs to be done.

Tony Christensen is a modern-day philanthropist and polygamous male, not altogether unlike King David, except that his harem is a secret one owing to the temporal inconvenience of modern laws forbidding bigamy.

Within the animal and bird kingdoms, tournament males "lord it over" harems of females in about 85 percent of the species. These are inevitably "chain of command" structures, with pecking order even within the harem of females. About 3 percent of those species are hierarchically organized around tournament females. The phalarope of South Africa is such a case, in which a solitary female courts and then supports a large harem of males who are kept for breeding purposes.

Tournament males are visible by their dominant characteristics. They tend to be visibly larger than their females and are more highly ornamented with extravagant symbols of power. Many animals carry "racks" of attack weapons. Virtually all of them wear plumage or coloring that is striking in appearance. These males are competitive, hence the name "tournament" species. They dominate the turf they have won by eliminating opposition. Their success is determined by control of that turf and by its expansion. The only "motivation" they know is "winning." Tournament males are quick and businesslike in their courtship approaches, and they have a low investment in the care of the young.

The exclusive pair-bonding species among birds and animals are re-

markably different: Males and females are indistinguishable in size, coloring, and ornamentation. There are no symbols of power. The courtship is elaborate and extensive, with the nest building completed before breeding. And most striking of all, perhaps, is the uniquely high investment these males make in caring for the young. Both can be seen feeding the young if "crop milk" is the supply. Marmoset monkeys, which mate for life, are seen with the male carrying the young, releasing them only as he watches them nurse.

The textbooks on tournament species hardly need translation to throw light on Anthony Christensen. It is little wonder that Pastor Christensen distinguished himself as a proponent of "male headship" and carefully maneuvered all women into silence in the adult business and educational work of the congregation. A "woman's place" became well defined in the Christensen congregation. The key boards were exclusively male, as was the entire professional staff, except for key secretaries who were necessary for the service and more distaff side of the church operation.

Christensen's teaching on sex roles was enforced everywhere: Women were to submit, even though battered into submission spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Men control their wives and serve as "protectors"—largely through working hard to bring home increasingly good paychecks.

We can grieve for Anthony Christensen and his genre of pastors. They distort biblical teachings to favor their own superior position, then shape whole congregations and constituencies to parrot the theological distortions that serve their ego needs. They neither understand nor preach the mystery of how "two become one" or that "head and body" together form "one whole person," or that "women should keep silent in the churches" is one of a half-dozen heresies Paul is identifying and blasting in First Corinthians. They have no sense of the union of Christ the Groom and Christ the Bride in the coming end of the age as we assemble to celebrate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. That Anthony Christensen was created to become

a visible witness to that Last Adam by his exclusive monogamous union with one woman as his "body" is an idea that has never crossed his mind. He is captive to the Fall and the tragic consequence that warned the woman "He shall rule over you!" has become, in Christensen's theology, his core doctrine of self-interest. He has literally "called evil good" and may be beyond the hope of repentance.

Spotting the Tragedy

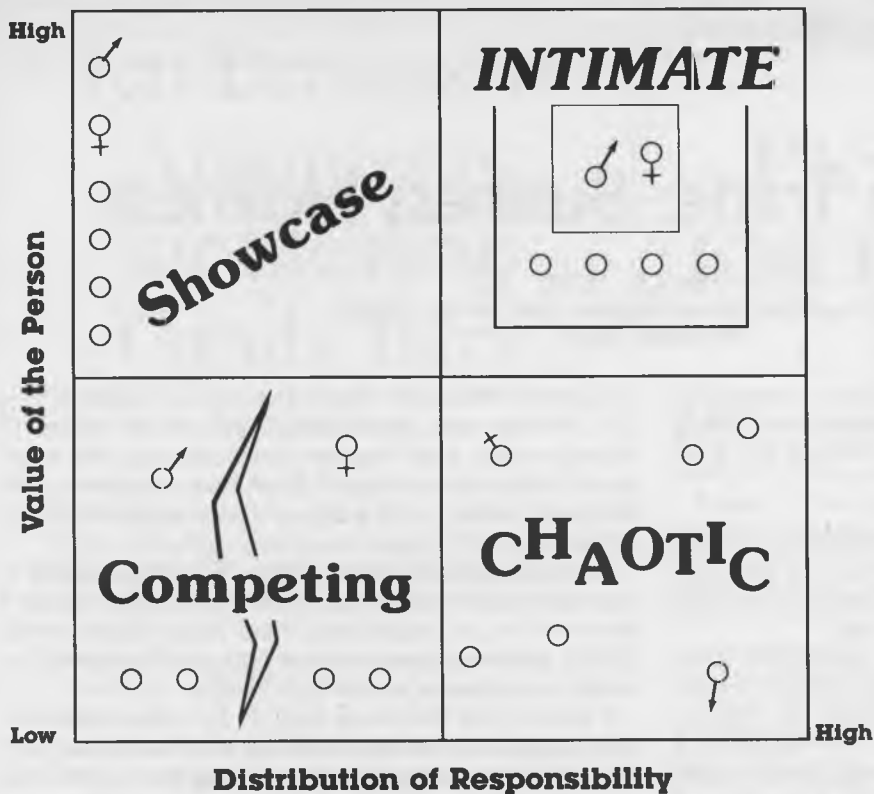
Not long ago my wife, Robbie, and I completed the story of our own "conversion" from a Genesis 3 "Fall" model of marriage into what we believe is beginning to approximate the Creation and Revelation model. That book, *Lovers: What Ever Happened to Eden?* reveals the painful account of our struggles through three marriages—all to each other.

Then, I was called to Washington, D.C., to serve the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention as a consultant. There I dipped into current research that matched some older research on families. So, coming off the writing of *Lovers*, with its profound and comprehensive Scripture base, I was startled but delighted to see that secular research has found the same thing: If you want to risk-proof your children against alcohol, drugs, and sex, then you must work on the entire set of family relationships. I reduced the overwhelming research findings on "family systems" to a simple diagram showing two factors that seem best to predict the vulnerability of children to destructive things that are loose in our culture: (See diagram on page 41.)

Only the INTIMATE FAMILY achieves the best risk-proof environment. Not surprisingly, it requires the one-flesh unity of husband and wife and the early mentoring of responsibilities, skills, and community secrets to the children. If these children become involved in alcohol, sex, or drugs, they can, as we say, "come home" to hope, healing, and forgiveness.

Children of COMPETING and CHAOTIC FAMILIES, as well as adults, are "at risk" to every destructive thing in the culture. Lem Lindley's family history likely begins somewhere here. He may rail against prostitutes from the pulpit,

TYPES OF FAMILY SYSTEMS



but as a male he is vulnerable by Creation's sexual activity.

The SHOWCASE FAMILY is our painfully real cultural ideal. "We have met the enemy and he is US!" is not only Pogo's tragic confession but ours as well. This chain of command household sets daughters up to be "used" as they submit to what their man wants, should he either hit the fast lane or decide that polygamous David, a man after God's own heart, is their sexual model. Tournament adultery is a very high risk here for men. How boys talk about girls, their sisters, and mothers is a good prediction of future multiple partners justified by competitive, often highly visible macho types. These boys have breathed the intoxicating air of "all animals are created equal, but some are *more equal* than others," and they know the rules are suspended if they can arrange their private adventures.

Predicting Sexual Failure

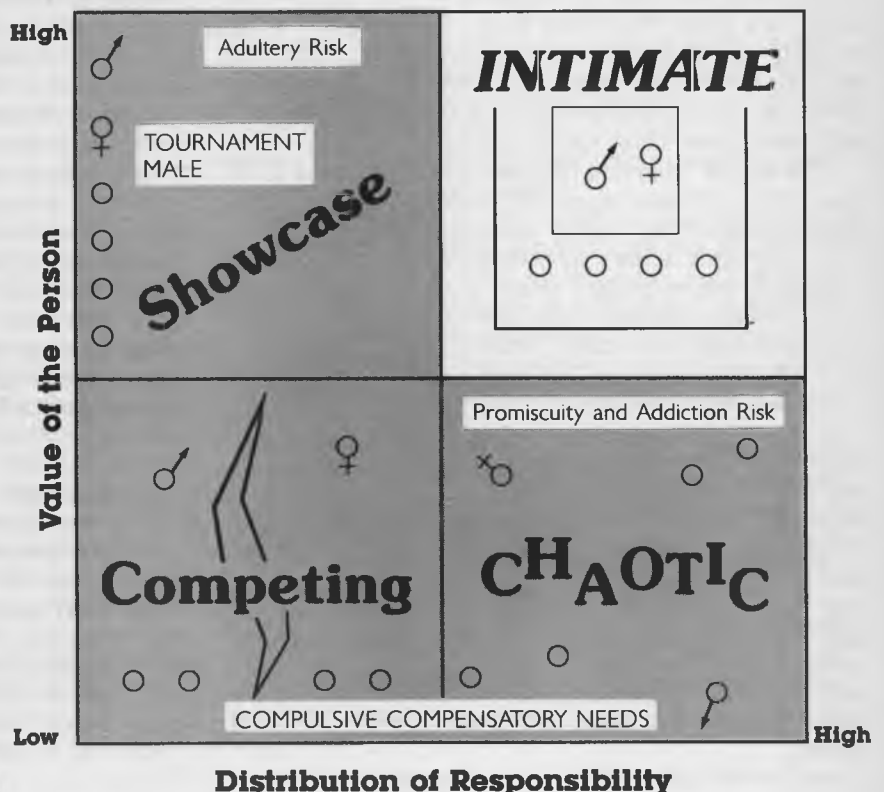
Let me superimpose some predictions over the FAMILY SYSTEMS picture.

Notice that the "low value of persons" families predict promiscuity and compulsive compensatory sexual addiction. These "skin hunger" or "power mongering" adventures

are efforts to get what they needed but could not satisfy in the security of intimacy and affirmation and training in competency and responsibility

across the early years. We describe their sexual sins as promiscuity, pornography, sexual abuse, incest, rape, and a host of both secret and unlawful activities. The KJV consistently called this disorder "fornication," translated from the Greek *porneia*, which is visibly the root, as well, of pornography. Fornication never, in Scripture, referred to premarital contact as such, but to this instrumental, devaluing "use of persons." So "the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread" in Prov. 6:26 is matched by the caution in 1 Cor. 6:16 not to be sexually united with a prostitute because you become "one flesh" with that person. In such a case a healthy bonding person would have united with a compulsive compensatory person who, like Gomer in the Book of Hosea, is always on the prowl for another lover in her skin-hunger or power search. Virtually all compensatory behavior has roots in emotional, physical, and sexual abuse in childhood. Any hope or healing will need to go deep enough to meet those needs.

But look at the probability that the chain of command SHOWCASE male will eventually collect a harem of lovers whom he supports. When
(Continued on page 66)



Honesty in Trade: Business Holiness

by Barry L. Ross

Professor, Immanuel General Mission Bible Training College
Yokohama, Japan

Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quality. Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin (Lev. 19:35-36).

Here is a command that brings all matters of business trade into the realm of holiness. Its goal is to assure that I act in a holy manner, as God would act (see Lev. 19:2), in every trade deal with others.

Three methods of calculating goods are listed in verse 35: by length (e.g., cloth), by weight (e.g., metals), and by quantity (e.g., oils, wines, or grains). Verse 36 expands on the last two (weight and quantity). The scales (of a balance type) and weights used with the balance speak to the selling of goods by weight. The ephah was a measure for such dry goods as flour (Judg. 6:19), barley (Ruth 2:17), and roasted grains (1 Sam. 17:17). The hin was a measure for such liquid goods as oils and wines (mentioned several times throughout Numbers 15 and 28).

Deut. 25:13-15 expands this basic law: "Do not have two differing weights in your bag—one heavy, one light. Do not have two differing measures in your house—one large, one small. You must have accurate and honest weights and measures, so that you may live long in the land the Lord God is giving you." Note that the rationale for honest dealings is the same as that given for honoring one's parents (see Exod. 20:12)!

This law of "business holiness" was so central to Israel's life that it was taught in proverbial "saying" form. Three forms of the "saying" are preserved:

"The Lord abhors dishonest scales, but accurate weights are his delight" (Prov. 11:1).

"Differing weights and differing measures—the Lord detests them both" (Prov. 20:10).

"Honest scales and balances are from the Lord; all the weights in the bag are of his making" (Prov. 16:11).

In the eighth century B.C., the prophet Amos pronounced the Lord's judgment against the northern kingdom: "I will spare them no longer" (8:2). Then follows a listing of the sins of the people that have brought the Lord to this irreversible decision (vv. 4-6). Among these sins is the accusation that the (business) people are saying, "When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat?" (v. 5). Then follows the Lord's condemning evaluation of their business practices: "Skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales."

Also in the eighth century B.C., the prophet Micah, in

proclaiming the Lord's legal case against Israel (6:1—7:7), includes this accusation: "Am I still to forget, O wicked house, your ill-gotten treasures and the short ephah, which is accursed? Shall I acquit a man with dishonest scales, with a bag of false weights?" (6:10-11).

Let's look again at the basic law. "Differing weights in your bag" (and "differing measures in your house") seems to be the legal issue here (Deut. 25:13; Prov. 20:10); one heavy set and one light set. Now, what is meant by a "heavy" and a "light" set?

It seems that the stone weights for use on the balance scale would be kept in a bag—the easier to carry them from place to place as one bought and sold. The unscrupulous vendor would keep two sets in his bag, neither of which was of accurate weight. One was light—for selling, the other heavy—for buying.

Let's play "make believe." Let's suppose Elizedek (a fictitious name meaning "My God is righteous"), who specializes in the importation of spices from the East, has a shop in downtown Jerusalem. Recently, the Babylonian traveling trader has passed through on his annual journey from India to Egypt. Elizedek has restocked his supply of spices. Hannah hears from her neighbor of the new stock of spices at Elizedek's shop. Since she had used the last of that special spice her husband likes so well just a month ago, she hurries over to Elizedek's shop before the new stock is sold out. She orders 20 ounces (she would like 30, but it is rather expensive).

Smiling, congenial, anxious to please, Elizedek reaches into his bag of weights and places a small, rounded stone clearly marked "10 ounces" on one side of the balance. He carefully pours out the precious spice on the other side until the scale balances. This he repeats, bags up the lot, and exchanges the spice with Hannah for the going rate in silver dust. Hannah, happy that she got to the store before all the spice was sold out, returns home believing in the honesty of Elizedek (after all, wouldn't a man whose name includes "God"—and especially "my God is righteous" treat others with godly righteousness?).

Actually, Elizedek had pulled out a stone that weighed slightly under 10 ounces—about 9.5. Hannah had received short weight for her money!

So what, we say. "They" do it all the time. It was only half an ounce, hardly worth getting upset about. Besides, Hannah never knew she was cheated. Wouldn't it be just as well to ignore the whole thing?

No! For it wasn't only Hannah whom Elizedek

(Continued on page 62)

Ten Persuasive Arguments for Stealing Candy Bars

by Keith Drury

1. **Everybody does it.** I even know some Christians who steal candy bars.
2. **You probably won't get caught.** Because the practice is so widespread and there is so little enforcement, the chance of getting caught is small.
3. **Even if caught, prosecution is doubtful.** You probably wouldn't be taken to court or tried anyway.
4. **It doesn't involve much money.** Stealing a car, or a boat, or something like that—well, that's different. But candy bars cost so little, taking them is certainly not serious.
5. **The owners will never miss it.** There are millions of candy bars circulating around the world. Who's going to miss one or two?
6. **It will save you money.** Stealing candy bars on a regular basis can add up to a substantial savings. After all, we are to be good stewards of our money—and that means cutting expenses everywhere we can.
7. **It will save you time.** Stealing candy bars will save waiting in those long checkout lines. Better yet, stealing them at work saves a trip to the local candy store, or maybe even a long wait for a mail order supplier to send your bars.
8. **The law is confusing.** I'm not a lawyer, and you know how confusing legal matters are. Some say do, others say don't. Why not go ahead and steal until they straighten out this mess and make it clear to all of us?
9. **The owners are Christians anyway.** If the owners are Christians, we Christians should have a right to steal a few candy bars. After all, they shouldn't be trying to make money off other Christians.
10. **It's for a good cause.** Now I might be persuaded that stealing for personal benefit is questionable, but certainly stealing for the congregation, choir, or Sunday School class wouldn't be wrong, would it?

(For 10 persuasive arguments for photocopying copyrighted books, songs, and sheet music, see above.)

Pastor. Be Encouraged

PASTOR, BE ENCOURAGED!

by C. Neil Strait
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Many times I hear laypersons say, "We need to be encouraged." They do need encouragement and plenty of it. But pastors need encouragement too!

Pastor, let me urge you to draw strength and encouragement from the faithful in your church, as a deterrent to the fighters. The fighters are vocal, often vicious, and too many times are vindictive. But they are not the last word—or even a valid word—on your ministry. Let the encouragement from your faithful supporters soften the distractions from the fighters.

Pastor, let the words from the committed Christians be encouragement and motivation to you, and weigh them against the words of complainers. Complainers, you and I will find, can be chronic and caustic. Often they are lashing out at their pastor because of some other disturbances in their life. Remember, that while you have to listen, their complaints are not the last word on your ministry. Before you draw conclusions from complainers, mix in the encouragement and support of your committed people. Chances are the mix will be more palatable and wholesome.

Pastor, hear the encouragement of those servants in the church, the doers, the behind-the-scenes people. They are focused on others, on a great mission, on serving and helping. Usually, they are encouragers, boosters, supporters, and are positive. Keep their words fresh in your hearts when the selfish and sharp impose their wills and words on you. Who has the more valid word for you, the servant or the selfish?

We pastors need to remember that God has given a great host of dedicated laypersons to the church, and we are privileged to have some under our leadership. We owe them our best. We need to keep a healthy balance between the encouragers and the destroyers. For to be devastated by the destroyers means that we are made less adequate to serve those who appreciate and support our ministries.

Those who support, encourage, and pray for their pastor need to know that we value their support and encouragement. One way to demonstrate this is to hold our heads and hearts high in the midst of the battle, drawing strength from their encouragement and allowing it to steer us through uncertain times.

Pastor, be encouraged! You have faithful, committed servants who love you, pray for you, support you, encourage you, and follow your leadership. Draw deep from their strength and support.

Books That Stir the Soul

by Marion K. Rich

There are times when I must stop to evaluate why I read what I do. I remember a time when I felt a bit humiliated if I had not read the latest Christian book when the popular titles were being dropped in literate circles. But today Christian books are rolling off the presses at an unbelievable rate. The reader is forced to be increasingly discriminating. I have decided that my choices for devotional reading should not be based on opinions of those around me, nor on the quantity and variety of material that I can cover. It is more important that I gain truth with understanding, that I read certain books well and plan to return to them for rereadings, and that I make an effort to select the "best" to keep in my library.

What criteria do I use for selecting what I think are the "best" of Christian books?

1. How does the book influence me personally? Does it create in me a soul-searching experience and a desire to change for the better?
2. Does the book speak to my mind and spirit simultaneously?
3. Does the book call me beyond surface living into a deeper relationship with God?
4. Am I alert to books that deal with frothy experiences and shallow teachings that I should shun?

As a committed Christian, I must give attention to cultivating the inner life through my walk in the Spirit. In my library I have a section of books that I consider "Books That Stir My Soul." Some of them are experiential classics that have served as an aid

in cultivating intimacy with God. These books are written by persons who have explored the depths of Christ. They have gone before me and marked the way.

Many contemporary books deal with aspects of the inner life, but as I think back on my journey in the Christian life certain books have dealt with the central issues of my life and left a marked influence upon me.

Shortly after experiencing spiritual birth as a young woman, I began to read the Bible avidly for the first time in my life. Then a friend gave me a copy of the devotional book *Abundant Living*, by E. Stanley Jones. To me, this little book emphasized the importance of a disciplined life-style and the need for abundant spiritual resources. Other books by E. Stanley Jones helped me see my need for the fullness of God's Spirit and the necessity of fully surrendering the self.

Andrew Murray's books *With Christ in the School of Prayer* and *The Inner Chamber* taught me that the only way to live in uninterrupted fellowship with God is by a prayer life that leads into God's presence and keeps me there.

The art of meditation was introduced to me by two writers, Brother Lawrence of the 17th century and Thomas Kelly of the 20th. In their books, *The Practice of Christ's Presence* and *A Testament of Devotion*, respectively, one finds a solid path to a deeper inner life. Thomas à Kempis, in *The Imitation of Christ*, speaks of a sense of balance in the life—cultivating the ability to be at peace throughout the activities of the day.

Among my favorite writers is A. W. Tozer. *The Pursuit of God* and *The Knowledge of the Holy* intensified in me a thirst after God and helped give me a right conception of God.

Among many books on holiness, the ones that whetted my appetite for a thorough study of the doctrine of entire sanctification were *Life in the Spirit*, by Richard Taylor, and *The Spirit of Holiness*, by Everett Cattell. Of course, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, by Hannah Whitall Smith, highlighted the simplicity and practicality of a life of holiness.

Daily devotional books by Oswald Chambers and John Henry Jowett are unsurpassed, enduring books as well as many books by the excellent contemporary writer, Phillip Keller. A more recent book by Bob Benson and Michael W. Benson, *Disciplines for the Inner Life*, deserves many rereadings. Each time one will be rooted more deeply in the resources of God.

These are just a few of the books that have served as a tutor for me and given me a fuller exposure to Christ's presence. But I have learned that "At its very core 'devotional life' is not a technique, a discipline, or a religious duty. It is the fascination of a person for a person. It is the God-drawn questing of one's soul for that divine friend by whom we were created for fellowship."

The greatest book is the Living Word, Jesus Christ, who reveals himself through His Spirit and teaches us all things. Let us not linger on the lower slopes but press upward and higher. Let us learn of Him!

*Dick Winn, *Ministry*, January 1986.

Book Reviews

AMONG FRIENDS: YOU CAN HELP MAKE YOUR CHURCH A WARMER PLACE, by James Hinkle and Tim Woodruff, Navpress, 1989 (PA089-109-5578, \$7.95)

This book grew out of the material developed for use in seminars on Christian relationships. In the preface the reader finds the philosophy that permeates the entire book:

The Church is more than its creeds and ceremonies and sanctuaries. It is people who are learning to love each other as their Lord has loved them. True religion is not just private and vertical; it is communal and horizontal as well. . . . Our most powerful answer to the skeptics' doubt is not found in reasoned arguments but in real relationships. When the Church is a gathering of true friends, it offers the world its most compelling apologetic.

This last statement sets the tone of the book, and the authors remain true to their emphasis on relationship with a clear de-emphasis on church structure. The claim is made in the first chapter that "the greatest danger facing the Church today is neither doctrinal nor moral. It is relational."

Among the issues dealt with were: our need for sincere love and fellowship; the need for an environment conducive to true interaction—as opposed to what the authors call "foyer small talk"; the "me" generation versus the "we" generation; "unity is not uniformity; it is acceptance"; conflict in the church; how to fight fair; individual participation.

Among Friends is a well-written book with a good flow of thought. The authors begin the first chapters with a description of the present church in contrast to the New Testament church. Though, in my opinion, there was a lack of historical explanation as to why the Early Church existed as it did, the purpose of the authors was clear: to move the reader away from a "private religion" toward a "community" faith involving warm relationships. Indeed, the authors are quite honest and up-

front about their goal. In the last chapter they state: "If you have finished these pages without experiencing a profound repentance, we have failed to communicate the core of our concerns. Our ultimate purpose is neither to educate nor to expound. We write to convict." And convict they do! I was forced to evaluate my own participation in the family of God. The book ended with an emphasis on individual responsibility and participation: "It all begins with me!"

The format of the book was quite helpful. At the end of each chapter was a set of discussion questions for group as well as personal reflection. Also, at the end of the book is an appendix that includes a "Conflict Style Inventory." Both of these elements make the book a very valuable tool for small-group settings. This book is a very practical and useful help in making our churches a "warmer place" for people to gather.

—Robert Sherwood
St. John, Wash.

CITIES, MISSION'S NEW FRONTIER, by Roger S. Greenway and Timothy M. Monsma (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 321 pages (PA080-103-8316, \$18.95).

Designed as a textbook for seminary students, this book is not easy reading. Both Greenway and Monsma are firmly evangelical in theology and serious stewards in our calling. Both are experienced in the church's mission to cities. Professor Greenway, who wrote the major portion, has a writing style that in spots becomes redundant. Field man Monsma makes a persuasive case for research but needs the touch that a qualified researcher could add to it in design and interpretation.

The scope of this text is wider than expected, including solid biblical reasons for the church pressing to reach the urban masses, a worldwide view of the difficulties to be overcome, the necessity of research in advance of a thrust, the heart-rending pathos of the unfortunate

finances and the attitude and policy of the Church.

Yet this is not a "how to" book. The examples given are not the best examples of success in the present-day effort to reach cities with the gospel. Greenway tells of a nearly dead church in Revere that is now growing by "leaps and bounds." It now has a day-care center with 37 children and a budget surpassing that of the church itself. It also has refugee work, but recipients of their ministry move away soon. In conclusion, he indicates that this church has affected hundreds of lives.

Family considerations for missionaries are studied. Responses from 24 missionary wives and mothers are worth the price of the book.

—Earl D. Hunter

TWO GIANT STEPS AND THE ROAD BACK by Wilbur T. Dodson (Indianapolis: Wesley Press), 089-8270-707, 178 pages (PA089-827-0707, \$6.95).

Wilbur T. Dodson writes from a wealth of experience as a pastor who has lived close to his people in churches large and small in both rural and urban areas. He has written 43 chapters dealing with a wide range of biblical truths and practical churchmanship. His pointed, unusual illustrations and observations help in the application of the truths.

This book can be a source of new ideas and illustrations for pastors looking for fresh thoughts on basic truths. Useful for groups in studies of doctrinal and ethical matters, it gives clear and strong emphasis on such subjects as sanctification, salvation, carnality, stewardship, Christian living, and many others.

Wilbur T. Dodson has served as a pastor for nearly 30 years. His academic training includes the A.B. degree from Southern Nazarene University, Bethany, Okla., and the M.Psy. degree from Zion Theological Seminary, Winchester, Ky. He retired from pastoral duties in 1980 but continues as a free-lance writer.

—Jonathan T. Gassett

“WE *STILL* BELIEVE IN THE *CONDITIONAL SECURITY* OF THE BELIEVER”

by J. Ray Shadowens
Spring, Tex.

TAKING SERIOUSLY BIBLICAL WARNINGS

Scriptural warnings are to be taken seriously. Consider Paul's pointed admonition to the Corinthian Christians: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12, KJV). The apostle was not playing word games with these first-century believers. He was inspired by the Holy Spirit to sound this alarm because self-deception would result in a "fall" from grace. Their quest for mature discipleship was endangered.

Paul's warning continues to serve followers of our Lord as a reminder to keep their spiritual guard up at all times. Issued from a shepherd's concern, such a precaution does not cloud *true Christian security* by inciting unhealthy fears and irrational stresses. A delightful vacation trip through the most scenic beauties of nature is not devastated by occasional "TRAVEL AT YOUR OWN RISK" signs placed along the route by responsible highway construction crews. Neither is there anything morose about the watchword voiced by Paul to the Corinthian pilgrims—and to us—on the Christian venture of faith.

Exponents of unconditional eternal security dull the seriousness of Scripture's safeguards. A popular expression voiced frequently by them is, "You can know that you are assured of heaven as if you were already there." On the surface, that seems to be reassuring and convincing. This seriously flawed cliché teaches that a person once saved is

automatically guaranteed eternal bliss regardless of any subsequent rebellion against transparent biblical precepts.

One advocate of this treacherous teaching, commenting on Ps. 51:12, declares, "He (David) didn't lose his salvation." This is not an isolated instance of such strained interpretation. Advocates of this fallacious teaching insist that one may be "out of fellowship with Christ" but still sustain a mysterious "relationship with Him." In spite of acknowledged transgressions, one's unconditional security remains intact, eternally guaranteed. How zealous adherents of this false hope can be so passionately committed to this totally unacceptable doctrinal position is a mystery!

The religion editor for a large metropolitan newspaper in Texas reported a controversy that had erupted in the nation's largest modified-Calvinist denomination "... over a theology professor's stand that it was possible for a Christian to become an unbeliever."

Interesting and pertinent are the Scripture passages that this beleaguered professor cited in defense of his beliefs: Heb. 2:1-4; 3:7-13; 6:4-6; 10:26-30; and 12:14-17. Though drawn from a single New Testament epistle, these verses do not exhaust the biblical warnings significant for Calvinists and non-Calvinists alike.

Scriptural safeguards serve a vital purpose. The caution signs are out, not to make us paranoid by creating abnormal fears of backsliding but to

alert us to the danger of drifting away from the true course. Reason dictates that the growing disciple not dismiss as inconsequential these spiritual monitors. God has provided them to assure our true Christian security. The King James Version translates Heb. 2:1, "lest at any time we should let them slip."

Loss sustained because of sheer carelessness is always regrettable. Where spiritual destinies are concerned, to disregard alarm signals is to risk serious moral lapses. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, holds out precautionary alerts to Christian pilgrims of each generation; His intent is obvious to the sincere soul. "The picture is that of a careless, drowsy boatman in danger of drifting past the safe haven and being carried out to sea."¹ The sentry word, *drifting*, is accentuated both in modern-language translations and explanatory notes.

Contemporary Christians must not ignore, to the risk of their own spiritual loss, the almost imperceptible tendency to dangerous drifting. Any prodding by the Holy Spirit, any scriptural insight that would serve to make us conscious of the slightest deviation from discipleship guidelines, should be welcomed as corrections of our threatened religious course.

The basic presuppositions of those who take uneasy comfort in eternal security must be hard-pressed by the grave warnings of Heb. 3:12-13: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of

unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (KJV). Here is heralded an arresting truth that every Christian pilgrim should hear and heed. H. Orton Wiley comments, "Keep up your spiritual guard against falling away by being alert to the Adversary's intrigue." How anyone can take seriously the phrase "in departing from the living God" and construe it meaning to be something other than a grave possibility of spiritual dereliction is inconceivable.

Commenting on the clause "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," Richard Taylor observes:

It is a solemn thought that the human heart, even a heart once Christian, can congeal as cement, and lose its malleability. The danger is aggravated by the fact that the damage is done by the delusion of sin. Sin which is seen as sin can and will be more readily avoided. But when it is disguised as apparent good, the hardening process goes on unnoticed. Only keen alertness which is fully aware of the deceitfulness of sin can prevent this gradual hardening of the heart.²

The series of warnings issued in the Epistle of Hebrews become more somber, if possible. "Having fallen away" (6:6) reflects the original language more accurately than the King James rendering, "If they shall fall away." Attempting to explain away the obvious fact that the author of these disturbing passages had in mind persons who were once regenerated is futile indeed.

The consequent incorrigibility that seals the spiritual destinies of those "having fallen away" is pathetic to contemplate. Dr. Taylor, commenting on this passage, suggests that "it is impossible to stir them toward repentance. If they have gone this far, they won't even lay again 'the foundation of repentance.'"³ Strained efforts to dilute the strong terminology employed here with respect to those who have deliberately rejected Jesus Christ are the height of spiritual and intellectual folly.

The final caution against apostasy in Heb. 10:26-30, illustrated by Esau's heartrending example in

12:14-17, makes for some of the most distressing realism in the New Testament. One shudders even to consider the possible moral and spiritual plight of those so graphically described in woeful terms: "who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (10:29, KJV).

The inspired writer may have been reasoning from a hypothetical situation and not actually condemning these Hebrew disciples as victims of this awful plight. But this does not rule out an irreversible fall as a grave possibility. As A. T. Robertson observes: "It is a terrible picture and cannot be toned down."

Once again the balance and symmetry of revealed truth come front and center with full impact. The great positive affirmations of Scripture are to be treasured and taught. That we are attracted to the illuminating and inspirational assurances of the Word is readily acknowledged by committed Christians of every doctrinal persuasion. Who of us would not much prefer reading Psalm 23, Isaiah 53, John 14, Romans 8, 1 Corinthians 12, or Hebrews 11?

This much can be said: Safety is on the side of *conditional security*! Unconditional eternal security is exposed as a grievously flawed doctrine by the way it skirts the force of the glaring warnings in these and other solemn biblical cautions. The purpose of such warnings is crystal clear. They provide essential safeguards against willful carelessness on the part of the Christians.

To take these warnings with full seriousness is not a plea for "eternal insecurity." Just as there is sound scriptural ground for indispensable Christian assurance, there is an equally solid basis for proper Christian security.

ONCE SAVED: "IMPOSSIBLE" TO BE LOST?

Just how the historical narrative of the Flood and the preservation of Noah's family (Gen. 7:7-10, 15-18) might be conceived as supporting by type, symbolism, or even illustration the distorted teaching of unconditional eternal security, is shocking

indeed. Yet an evangelical luminary, enjoying the rather envious distinction of being the most widely read conservative author on the current scene, employs in his booklet *Eternal Security* this familiar story as "An Old Testament Example" purported to support his staunch advocacy of once-in-grace-always-in-grace. This prominent West Coast speaker and writer focuses upon the final clause of Gen. 7:16, "and the Lord shut the door." Using this as a springboard, this scholar attempts to draw from this meaningful declaration a conclusive parallel of the believer's Sovereignly sealed spiritual destiny. He summarizes by exulting: "And that is exactly what He plans to do for us. The One who closed us in at the moment of our new birth is currently preserving us from all threats . . . and will some day release us into His eternal home. Blameless."⁴

For all of his acclaimed erudition, even in non-Calvinistic circles for his inspirational writings, this contrived use of this ancient event to illustrate what he mistakingly conceives to be authoritative biblical doctrine is astounding. We have here another case of fabricating a theological theory and then laboring to buttress it with some totally unrelated scriptural account. True, we do not al-

"Take heed lest he fall"—Paul was not playing word games

ways consider the use of illustrative materials as carrying the same weight in establishing the bases of articles of one's faith, but reasoning from Old Testament types in this manner exposes the superficiality of this mode of reasoning.

This popular religious author regards as, "Concluding Comfort": "I find that this doctrine [eternal security] weaves its way peacefully and perfectly through the fabric of God's Word."⁵ False security, no matter how embellished, is as dangerous as it is false! J. B. Phillips, in *The New Testament in Modern English's* paraphrase of Rom. 6:1, warns, ". . . and see how far we can exploit the grace of God." It should serve to

alert the conscientious Christian disciple at this point against inordinate presumption on the goodness and faithfulness of our Heavenly Father.

That the Scriptures, properly interpreted, teach the probationary condition of believers who make up the Body of Christ on this earth has been regarded as one of the distinguishing tenets of Wesleyan-Arminianism through the centuries. Contrary to charges leveled by opponents of this doctrinal position, the redeemed ones' reliance upon true Christian security has in no way been diminished by embracing sound biblical exegesis. Indeed, continued trust and obedience serve to strengthen immeasurably the confidence of the born-again person in the trustworthiness of God's sustaining promises proffered in His Word.

Richard Taylor, prolific writer and respected theologian, declares that unconditional eternal security "removes the believer from the area of probation and makes meaningless the numerous warnings of Scripture addressed to the believer." If carried to its logical conclusion, this distorted teaching threatens to obliterate the Christian's power of contrary choice where moral issues are concerned. Despite strong disclaimers from devotees of unconditional security, it comes perilously close to fatalistic determinism.

Non-Calvinistic evangelicals shudder when they are confronted in print with such terminology as "not possible" or "impossible" where God-man saving relationships are under consideration. To suppose that proponents of this tenet have "muted some of their extreme claims," one need only read the following: "If it were possible for me to lose my salvation, then God would have to reverse the transaction in some way, i.e., take back His gift or somehow strip me of His forgiveness, whatever. . . . Not only is it unthinkable that God would take back an eternal promise, it is *impossible*" (italics mine).⁶ Never let it be said that the Almighty is capricious in any of His dealings with the objects of His amazing grace: sin-stained hu-

mans. Any departure is always initiated by sin-enticed creatures.

Jon Johnston, in *The Pursuit of Christian Excellence*, addresses this issue with characteristic insight: "The born-again relationship in no way negates our power to choose. We are secure only as long as we choose to remain an adopted child.

To take these warnings seriously is not a plea for eternal insecurity

If we choose to commit a sin (i.e., willfully transgress against a law of God of which we are aware), then we separate ourselves from God. However, if we choose to 'walk in the light as He is in the light' (1 John 1:7), our fellowship with God and spiritual condition is secure. In brief, nothing can separate us from unfeigned fellowship with our Maker—except our decision to intentionally disobey His will (Rom. 8:38-39)."⁷

Another exponent of once-in-grace-always-in-grace seems to advance an even more extreme position of this distorted notion of security. Guy Duty quotes J. F. Strombeck in his book *Shall Never Perish*:

No man ever willed to be born into the human race, and equally impotent is he to will to separate himself from the human race. . . . As it is impossible for man, by free action, to separate himself from the human race, so it is equally impossible for him, by a free act, to separate himself from God's kingdom (pp. 119-20).

Truly, once a son of mankind, always a son of mankind, and equally true, once a child of God, always a child of God. There is no possibility for a man, by his own will or action, to change either of these two conditions. . . . All who are saved are secure for all eternity (p. 120).

When one has of his own free will accepted Christ . . . he is given a new nature which makes it impossible for him to will to return to his former state (p. 124).⁸

The late John R. Rice adds his contribution to this false security fare by unequivocally asserting:

Once a poor sinner has been re-

generated by the Word and the Spirit of God, once he has received a new life and a new nature, has been made partaker of the divine nature, once he has been justified from every charge before the throne of God, it is absolutely impossible that that man should ever be a lost soul.⁹

Viewed from the Wesleyan-Arminian perspective, this pronouncement cannot be reconciled with sound scriptural interpretation,

which sets forth the treasured relationship that exists between our loving Heavenly Father and the spiritually reconciled penitent. This unacceptable view of the Christian's security represents a serious misuse to the authoritative Word of God.

Dr. Paul Rees, who has enjoyed the mutual respect of both theological orientations across the years, makes clear his understanding of the truth taught throughout the New Testament:

No doctrine of security remains fully in touch with the New Testament revelation if it empties of meaning the solemn word: 'if we deny him, he also will deny us.' (2 Timothy 2:12). The faithfulness in which *He* persists, even if *we* prove faithless, is faithfulness to Himself, whom *He* cannot deny.¹⁰

Contrary to what some may contend, this is not a plea for, nor a justification of, uncertainty and instability in discipleship relations. Backsliding we deplore. We grieve because the corporate Christian witness suffers in the minds of unbelievers when it occurs. This kind of defense of the probationary status of believers does not, in any sense, make backsliding any less unfortunate. But to deny the possibility of falling from grace and, by persistent disobedience to the gospel, depart from the Way, is to close one's eyes to the transparent teaching of the supreme source of inspired truth—the Bible.

WE BELIEVE IN THE CONDITIONAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

The evangelical umbrella shelters two divergent theological orienta-

tions claiming the allegiance of many believers—modified-Calvinism and Pentecostalism (also known as Neo-Pentecostalism). The former wing of contemporary religious conservatism proclaims as one of its distinguishing tenets, unconditional eternal security. The unfortunate misnomer of “Charismatic” has branded this latter branch of evangelicalism. This movement’s identifiable doctrinal characteristic is “The Baptism in the Holy Spirit,” evidenced by ecstatic utterances. Somewhat overshadowed by these two dominant religious forces stands Wesleyan-Arminianism. This segment of modern Christendom traces its heritage back through the Great Evangelical Revival of the 18th century. John Wesley and his fellow-laborers have been regarded as human instruments in this memorable religious awakening. The scripturally inspired faith expressed in free, full, and final salvation has been consistently proclaimed in many world areas since its inception.

The 20th century will go down in church history as a period that witnessed a renewed interest in, and attention to, the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. Much of this has been welcomed and recognized as being spiritually profitable to virtually all aspects of Christian faith and practice. Excesses and distortions, which unfortunately seem always to accompany every religious awakening, have manifested themselves in glaring aberrations. No denomination or communion has escaped the infiltration of some undesirable fallout. This has necessitated the task of reaffirming the scriptural interpretation of Christian holiness or Christ’s baptism with the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion.

Continued faithfulness to the message and mission of full salvation requires a constant vigilance so that there be no encroachment from any quarter, even among those with whom the Wesleyans share an ecumenical relationship. It seems imperative, at this juncture, that an unequivocal declaration be sounded that modern-day lovers of Christian holiness believe that the Bible, correctly interpreted, teaches the *conditional security* of believers, as opposed to the unacceptable theory of

once-in-grace-always-in-grace. Through the medium of television, by means of the printed page, and by zealous fellowship-prayer groups more Wesleyans are being exposed to this false teaching than, perhaps, at any other time in recent decades.

Nowhere are the words of our Lord more authoritative than when He declared “to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31, KJV). With strong emphasis, He asserts: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death” (John 8:51, KJV). The conditional aspect of these serious yet reassuring utterances of Christ comes through loud and clear. Continued discipleship depends on conscientiously keeping His sayings. To fasten on to the clause “he shall never see death,” and misconstrue that to mean an automatic guarantee of heaven, is to be willfully blind to the preceding conditions upon which this blessed hope rests. Even Calvin, champion of this dogma inextricably bound to his name, correctly comments, “If, therefore, we wish that Christ should reckon us to be His disciples, we must endeavor to persevere.”

How could those entrusted with the responsibility of transcribing His sayings and privileged hearers of His utterances fail to grasp the impact of the conditional aspect of such concise instructional precepts as: “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned,” and again, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love” (John 15:6, 10, KJV)? To “abide in his love” affords the trusting, obedient redeemed one exalting confidence and Christian assurance. It is this prized relationship that exists between our only Lord and His devoted disciples of every age.

Guy Duty’s cogent summary puts this truth in proper perspective: “The ‘ifs’ in Christ’s teaching is suf-

ficient evidence for our conclusion that salvation is conditional. The authority of the Greek New Testament fully corroborates our view. True love and faith working together have continuous action in Christ.”¹¹

The apostle Paul, in Romans 9, 10, and 11, comes to grips with one of the most profound questions in all of revelation: “Why has God apparently set aside ancient Israel and chosen the Church to be the new people of God?”¹² But our interest centers on Rom. 11:22, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off” (KJV). William M. Greathouse comments: “God did not spare Israel when she fell into unbelief (20); neither will He preserve Gentile Christians unless they stand fast by faith and continue in His goodness (22; cf. 8:17; Col. 1:21-23).”¹³ The validity and authenticity of true Christian security is undergirded by solid, inspired precepts and scholarly expositions. It has nothing to fear from the closest kind of objective scrutiny.

Christian assurance, like a golden thread, is woven skillfully throughout the Pauline Epistles. This prolific writer employs many well-chosen symbolisms to convey abiding spiritual truths that support the believer’s faith in the Christian’s true security so evident in the

**Any departure is
always initiated by
sin-enticed creatures**


New Testament. What we learn of Paul’s character portrays him as the embodiment of trustful reliance upon the Holy Spirit’s sustaining power and presence. But with this glorious insight, he ever kept before him the awareness that even the most seasoned saint could fall into the snare of the Adversary. Paul always displays a wholesome balance for positive affirmations of Christian allegiance while maintaining a sensitivity to devastating temptations, which are common to all spiritually-minded persons. Paul reminds himself: “But I keep under my body, and bring it under subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away” (1 Cor. 9:27, KJV). Duty

quotes biblical scholar A. T. Robertson on the meaning of *castaway*: "It means not standing the test. . . . Paul means rejected for the prize, not for the entrance to the race. He will fail if he breaks the rules of the game (Matt. 7:22). Most writers take Paul to refer to the possibility of rejection in his personal salvation at the end of the race. . . . At the end he has serene confidence (2 Tim. 4:7) with the race won. It is a humbling thought for all to see this wholesome fear instead of smug complacency in the greatest of all heralds of Christ."¹⁴

How any disciple-in-the-making could seriously study John's First Epistle and not be persuaded by the irrefutable evidence supporting conditional security is difficult to understand. No, it is not that the Beloved Apostle set about with the single purpose of writing a polemic providing the necessary framework for this essential tenet. It will prove to be very rewarding to study 1 John 1:6-7; 2:3, 5, 19, 24, 29; 3:7-8; and 5:12. The whole tenor of these selected passages points convincingly to true Christian security.

The very concise manner in which this inspired writer conveys timeless truth is obvious in this declaration: "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father" (1 John 2:24, KJV). This verse has special significance because of the manner in which "remain" and "continue" are employed to compliment one another. The salvation-truth has been committed to these believers addressed in this manual for Christian living. It is all-important that they "continue" in the glorious relationship with our Blessed Lord!

The burning question of whether a believer can forfeit his personal salvation and ultimately be lost is likely to be a controversial one as long as Christ tarries. This is not an exhaustive study of the New Testament's teaching on the true security of the born-again person. What is offered here is the conviction that there is an urgency in reaffirming forcefully what too long has been taken for granted, namely, that

20th-century Wesleyan-Arminians are categorically committed to the belief that the Word of God teaches the *conditional security* of the believer. Above all else, let it be thoughtfully understood by the rank and file believers that this safe, sane, and sound doctrine is not now, nor ever will be, negotiable! 

NOTES

1. Richard Taylor, *Beacon Bible Commentary*, A. F. Harper, ed. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967), 10:32.
2. *Ibid.*, 72.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Charles R. Swindoll, *Eternal Security* (Portland, Oreg.: Multnomah Press, 1981), 20-21.
5. *Ibid.*, 21-22.
6. *Ibid.*, 8.
7. Jon Johnston, *The Pursuit of Christian Excellence* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 23.
8. Guy Duty, *If Ye Continue* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1966), 22.
9. W. T. Purkiser, *Security: The False and The True* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1956), 20.
10. Paul S. Rees, *The Adequate Man* (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1959), 79.
11. Duty, *If Ye Continue*, 71.
12. William M. Greathouse, *Beacon Bible Commentary*, A. F. Harper, ed. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1968), 8:196.
13. *Ibid.*, 226.
14. Duty, *If Ye Continue*, 105.

Show, Tell, and Trim

(Continued from page 30)

crowded with community events and ads for clothing sales and supermarket bargains. However, certain other months are "dead," and editors gladly welcome news. Find out the "off" weeks and submit writeups on groups in your church that rarely get publicity.

WRONG: "Mrs. Snope was elected chairperson of the Historical Committee. Other members are: (followed by a list of 15 persons). Mrs. Jing was elected chairperson of the Mission Women. Other members are: (followed by a list of 20).

RIGHT: "Chairpersons for the following year are . . ."

Honors, promotions, craft work, suppers, gift shop, tapes available—are all newsworthy.

In our small rural area, writeups of

special events were sent to six radio stations and five newspapers.

Be on time with the news. Don't expect them to hold the presses for you. Don't ask the editor to take information over the phone; he is not your secretary.

Begin your page of church news by stating, in parentheses: "Church news for the Friday, January 6, edition of *Blairston Bugle*."

A few times a year blanket the entire area with fliers and posters. Most supermarkets and department stores have a community bulletin board. Some radio stations offer the same, with a maximum of 40 words permitted. Consider, also, paid spot announcements on radio or a display ad in the paper.

Try a church newsletter sent not only to members but also to the un-

churched. Design a large calendar page for the coming month with each event and time marked on the proper date. A church is entitled to special bulk rate mailing. Or, some Saturday give fliers to all the kids for door-to-door distribution, then treat them back at the church with a Christian movie and popcorn.

TRIM

After you think you have condensed and edited the news—trim it down. Trim, trim, trim. Get rid of adjectives. Write in verbs and nouns. Keep within word limits. Every inch of newspaper is costly to the publishers. "Think of each word as costing us ten dollars," an editor told me.

There is one exception, discovered by personal experience. Always add on to the end of your

Benefits of Congregational Singing

by Thomas Alan Duncan

Vandalia, Ohio

"Sing to the Lord, you saints of his: praise his holy name" (Ps. 30:4). "Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). Martin Luther incorporated congregational singing into the church service more than 450 years ago as a means of giving the congregation an active part in the worship service. What a reforming idea it was! Prior to this, congregations had no choice but to allow the priests to sing and speak for them, and even then in a lan-

guage they did not understand. Now congregations could praise God through song as a body of believers, singing at the top of their voices. What an exciting time it must have been! Today, however, we seem to have lost the meaning of congregational singing. John Churchill pointed out, "... Much singing in the church is thoroughly dull; played and sung without rhythm and without enthusiasm, it seems to lack any intelligible reason, either verbal or musical, for existing at all. ... The ideal of congregational worship is far removed from the feeble muttering which is so often heard."¹ Is congregational singing important? What is congregational singing about?

James R. Sydnor, in his book *The Hymn and Congregational Singing*, offers five reasons that Christians sing hymns: "Through hymn singing, Christians express their feelings and ideas . . . , proclaim their faith . . . , to others . . . , are bound in closer fellowship . . . , are taught Christian truth . . . , [and] are sustained in daily life."² His first three reasons sum up what many consider a major purpose of congregational singing. That is, to unify the congregation together as a body in one spirit for the purpose of corporate worship. Sydnor wrote: "When a group of Christians sing with vitality the same melody, responds to identical rhythms, thinks and feels the same ideas and emotions during the act of common praise, it becomes well-nigh inevitable that each is drawn closer in spirit to his neighbor. They cease to be isolated individuals."³ I have found this to be true.

Henry Phillips, in *The Singing*

Church, acknowledges that, "There are many occasions . . . when men who meet together, need to sing together, for nothing equals a hymn for summing up the prevailing tone of a meeting and firing its audience with a common enthusiasm."⁴ It is something special when a congregation seems to be moved as a whole, by the Spirit, and sings louder and more meaningfully than usual. It brings a sense of expectation for the rest of the service. On the other hand, congregational singing can have a negative effect on the spirit of the service. Dr. Hugh C. Benner noted: "Scarcely anything in a church service is more depressing or disappointing than to hear a great hymn of praise or a victorious gospel song completely nullified in effect, by a group of people mumbling the words in a desultory, half-hearted manner."⁵ How true! We were not created to live the Christian life by ourselves. If we were, we would have no need of a church service. We could simply worship alone at home. As Christians, we need to meet together to worship God. Heb. 10:25 commands us, "Let us not give up meeting together, . . . but let us encourage one another." Congregational singing is one activity in a service that everyone may participate in simultaneously, doing exactly the same thing to praise God.

writeup: "The church is located at (address) and parking is available at (location). This is a friendly, Bible-believing church, and your family is always welcome."

The editor may cut it out—but then again he may be grateful for a few lines of "filler" to end a column neatly. It's happened.

Finally, ask a teenager or senior citizen to read and clip all notices and pictures of your church. These may be entered in a scrapbook, to be kept with other records, or which the pastor may take with him if he leaves. Or both.

"I read the newspaper to see how God governs the world," said John Newton in the 1700s.

Maybe this week someone is saying, "Let's look in the paper and see if we can find a church home." 🐾



Why is this great means of worship not used today in its fullest potential? First, I would suggest that we live in a society that makes it easy to be shallow Christians. The decline in our zest for complete spiritual maturity or our lack of spiritual growth leaves us with a nonchalant attitude about the words we sing. We simply do not mean what we are singing. "Through [hymns] individuals have the opportunity to express the feelings of their inner souls. . . . Singing hymns is a barometer of a church's spiritual commitment and gives evidence of the living vital faith of a congregation."⁶ If the hymn singing is lacking, first check the spiritual life of the church.

Second, many people do not pay attention to the text. We seem to be able to sing through a beautiful hymn of praise and not have a clue as to what we are saying. The words are important, not the music. To quote Churchill, "It must be emphasized . . . that in the singing of hymns . . . the meaning of the words must be the first consideration."⁷ If we would make a practice of taking note of what we are saying, we would eventually bring hymn-singing up to its potential impact. Paul writes, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14:15, KJV). Martin Luther says, "Our dear Lord speaks to us through His Holy Word, and we in return speak with Him through prayer and song of praise."⁸ How can we if we do not even know what we are saying? Quoting John Wesley, "Attend strictly to the sense of what you sing and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually."⁹

The phrase, "offered to God continually" gives rise to another idea that we have missed. "Our music must be directed toward God in thanksgiving, praise, and adoration. Our music in worship must be music of worship, focused on our Lord."¹⁰ We are not singing to the people around us but to God. Many times we get caught up in the excitement of hearing ourselves in this great, enthusiastic sound and forget that God is the One to whom we are singing.

We have begun to turn back to the practice of letting others sing for us. Donald Hustad declared, "In recent

years evangelicals have sold their birthright of believer-priest singing for the pleasure of spectatorist music."¹¹ We have become content to sit back and listen to special music and choirs and not put much into our congregational singing. We deprive ourselves of this opportunity of personal worship. Other people cannot do our worshiping and praising for us. Edith Thomas states that "Being a witness to what is taking place is not enough, for Protestants believe that all the people, as well as the whole person, should engage in the worship ceremony."¹²

Wesley pleads, "Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing Him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve of here, and reward you when He cometh in the clouds of Heaven."¹³ We worship God by singing "to" Him from our hearts.

Not only do we worship through congregational singing, but there is great potential power available to believers. We have a tremendous example of this power in 2 Chronicles 20. Jehoshaphat and the people of Jerusalem were engaged in battle against Moab and Ammon: "Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness" (v. 21). "As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab . . . and they were defeated" (v. 22). The Lord began to act as they began to sing praises to Him. Also, in Acts 16, Paul and Silas were chained in prison: "About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God . . . Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken" (vv. 25-26). Jehoshaphat, Paul, and Silas knew there was power in singing hymns to God. I do not imply anything magical or mystical about congregational singing. I do, however, believe these passages speak to us of the potential of genuine hymn singing, as a powerful tool that God can use to accomplish His will, whether His will is to bring a mighty earthquake or to bring a soft

note of conviction upon a worshiper's heart. God promises, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20, KJV). If we could only realize our power over Satan through congregational singing and begin to tap into it!

Congregational singing is important and essential. Hustad believes that the "only indispensable music of evangelical Christianity is congregational singing, the whole church demonstrating its priesthood in song."¹⁴ Martin Luther saw the tremendous need for it. Numerous books have been written on it. Most of us have witnessed a genuine moment of worship and praise through congregational singing. Let our hymns be sung from the bottom of our hearts. Let us not mock God by our "feeble muttering" of great hymns that were written to ascribe praise, honor, and glory to God!

Congregational singing provides a great opportunity for true individual and corporate worship. Each person must help make corporate worship possible. Can we ask ourselves, "Am I encouraged through corporate worship with other believers? Am I growing spiritually and living in the center of God's will? Do I actually know wholeheartedly what I am singing? Am I singing to God? Do I believe there is power in worshipping God through singing? Do I really believe congregational singing is important?" Let us search to see how we can make congregational singing a worshipful activity. Then, through our singing, let us ascribe to God the worship, praise, honor, and glory that He deserves!

NOTES

1. John Churchill, *Congregational Singing* (Wallington, Surrey: Fleetwing Press, 1966), 7.
2. James R. Sydnor, *The Hymn and Congregational Singing* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1960), 15-19.
3. *Ibid.*, 17.
4. C. Henry Phillips, *The Singing Church* (Russell Square, London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1968), 231.
5. Hugh C. Benner, *Singing Disciples* (Kansas City: Lillenas Publishing Company, 1959), 30.
6. Diane Bish, *Church Music Explosion* (Alexandria, Va.: Fred Bock Music, 1982), 39.
7. Churchill, *Congregational Singing*, 7.
8. Edith L. Thomas, *Music in Christian Education* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1950), 9.
9. *Ibid.*, 17.
10. Harry C. Causey, *Open Doors . . . to Creativity in Worship* (Rockville, Md.: 1985), 47.
11. Donald P. Hustad, *Jubilate! Church Music in the Evangelical Tradition* (Carol Stream, Ill.: 1981), 263.
12. Thomas, *Music in Christian Education*, 27.
13. Sydnor, *The Hymn and Congregational Singing*, 20-21.
14. Hustad, *Jubilate! Church Music*, 243.



WORSHIP & PREACHING HELPS

June/July/August 1990

by Bud Reedy
Oxford, Pa.

INTRODUCTION

Summer is here. It hardly seems possible! And summer is a different breed of horse, isn't it? With the summer months come unusual circumstances for our people and for us preachers of the Word. Vacations, weekend trips, camp meetings—often, our “regular” crowd is missing and visitors are more frequent. All of these factors must be kept in mind as we plan our preaching schedule for the fluctuating summer months.

With that in mind, I submit this series of messages on the church. Although the overall theme throughout the summer will be the nature and mission of the church, individual messages will stand on their own, independent from the others for meaning. Each service is designed to be a separate entity. That way, a one-time visitor will not be at a disadvantage and, at the same time, your regular attenders will sense a continuity of theme from one week to the next.

As you glance over these messages, you will notice I have dealt with a variety of subjects, some of which, I am sure, you deal with quite frequently in your preaching—evangelism, holiness, the Second Coming, Communion, and stewardship. I have also included messages on topics you may not preach on as frequently—healing, Christian friendship, Christian family life, care-giving, and church membership. The summer schedule lends itself to such variety.

I hope you find these resources helpful. I consider it a privilege to share these ideas with you. Adapt them to your setting and to your preaching style. I trust you will enjoy preaching from these resources as much as I enjoyed preparing them for you. My prayer is that our preaching will be used by the Spirit to touch and change the lives of precious folk who occupy the pews.

—Bud Reedy

"THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH"

Rom. 1:16-17

June 3, 1990

INTRO:

The Church of the Nazarene is an evangelical church. Do you know what that means? It means that we are proud of the gospel of Jesus Christ and that we are committed to proclaiming it!

In verses 16 and 17 of Romans 1, we find some positive, exciting words from the apostle Paul. You can almost see him stand up, straighten his back, pull back his shoulders, stick out his chest, and say: "I am not ashamed of the gospel!" Put positively, Paul is saying: "I am proud of the good news!"

That statement takes on even greater significance when you consider what Paul had experienced in his missionary career. He was imprisoned in Philippi, chased out of Thessalonica, smuggled out of Berea, called a fool in Corinth, laughed at in Athens, and stoned and left for dead on more than one occasion. Those were the "good ol' days," yet there was something in the gospel message that caused Paul to say, "I am not ashamed; I am proud of the good news of Jesus."

In our text, Paul tells us exactly why he is so proud. He gives us, in a few carefully chosen words, a summary of his entire letter; a definition of the gospel he intends to preach. It is Paul's theology in a nutshell. From these two verses, we discover why Paul is so proud of the gospel of Jesus Christ and why we should be proud of it too.

I. We Are Proud of the Gospel Because It Is the Power of God.

A. *Note: Paul does not say the gospel contains God's power but that it is the power of God.*

B. *Something happens when the gospel is proclaimed:* The Holy Spirit begins to speak to the hearts of men, convicting them of sin; the Holy Spirit begins to draw men to Jesus Christ and point them to Calvary; the very power of God is set loose.

C. *There are several Greek words for power.* Paul chose the word *dynamis* to describe the gospel. In other words, the gospel is *dynamite*! It is like an explosion. Its effects can be seen and heard and felt in the people's lives.

D. *The gospel is not dependent upon any human activity or condition.* The gospel is divine activity. It is the power of God. 1 Cor. 1:18—The word of the cross to those who are perishing is foolishness, but to those who are being saved it is the power of God!

ILLUS. A traveler to China asked a citizen of that nation if he had ever read the gospel. "No," he replied, "but I have seen it." There was a man in my village who was the terror of his neighborhood. He had a violent temper; he was an opium smoker, a criminal, a dangerous man. But the gospel made him gentle and good. He left off his opium. "No, I never read nor heard the gospel, but I have seen it, and it must be a powerful thing!"

E. *Yes, it is the power of God.* And we are privileged that God has entrusted us with the message of the gospel. We are proud of the gospel.

II. We Are Proud Because the Gospel Satisfies Man's Deepest Need.

A. *Man's greatest need is salvation from sin.*

B. *The gospel is, according to Paul, the power of God for salvation.* The Greek word for salvation is *soteria*, which means "deliverance." Salvation is deliverance from the wrath of God and from our own sin.

C. *The work of the church is the gospel; it is the salvation of souls.* The work of the church is the most important enterprise on the face of the earth. Every moment spent in service to the church, every dollar given is an investment in the salvation of souls. For that, you can and should be proud.

D. *I am always amazed at the "causes" some people are willing to give their time and energies for.*

ILLUS. I am constantly amazed at the causes people get excited over and are willing to give their time, talents, and treasures to. There is an organization in and around Harrisburg, Pa., called N.A.G., Neighbors Against Gnats! A gnat can be a real nuisance. This organization exists to raise enough money to spray the Susquehanna River and kill the pesky little creatures. Unbelievably, one year N.A.G. raised over a quarter of a million dollars! Is the elimination of gnats a cause worth dying for? Probably not. But the salvation of souls certainly is. That is why we, as an evangelical church, have committed ourselves to the cause of Christ.

E. *The church has been entrusted with the gospel of Jesus Christ.* We can stand up with confidence, boldness, and pride and shout to the world, "Jesus saves! He delivers! He saves from physical illness. He saves men out of this crooked and perverse generation. He saves men out of their despair and lostness. He came to seek and to save the lost. He saves men from the bondage of sin! We are proud of the gospel!"

III. We Are Proud of the Gospel Because It Is Free to All Who Believe.

A. *Here is one of the cornerstones of our beliefs:* "the righteous man shall live by faith" (v. 17).

B. *I am proud to be a spiritual heir of Martin Luther,* who dared to stand up and say that we are made right in the sight of God—not by works but by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This saving faith is itself a gift from God, extended to whosoever!

C. *The single greatest thing in life, your salvation, is absolutely free!* Here is all you must do to accept it: If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and if you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. For man believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness. He confesses with his mouth, resulting in salvation (Rom. 10:9-10).

ILLUS. A man had been a member of a church in England for years. One day he was reading the Book of Acts. He read about the peace and joy of the Early Christians. He wondered why he did not have peace and joy. He decided to pray. He prayed for hours, but his life was not changed. He decided to fast. This did not work. One day, in his room, he felt that he could no longer go on with such an empty life. He cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" Suddenly, he felt compelled to look at a passage of scripture he had read in Acts: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31, KJV). Praying had not been enough. Fasting had not been enough. But simply believing was sufficient, and his whole life changed.

D. *I do not know what others shall choose to preach, but from this pulpit you will continue to hear the gospel of Jesus. There is nothing more relevant or more important. We are proud of the gospel!*

CONCLUSION:

A. *How about you? Are you proud of the gospel? If you are, it's a sure sign you are saved, because you know it is the power of God set loose in your life.*

B. *If you are not, if you are indifferent or even slightly embarrassed or ashamed, the message is very simple. You must believe in the Lord Jesus and then you will be saved.*

ILLUS. A soap manufacturer, who was not a Christian, was walking with a minister. The soap maker said: "That so-called gospel you preach has not done much good in the world. I see lots of wickedness, and wicked people." Just then, they passed by a child who was making mud pies. His face, his hands, and his feet were filthy.

The preacher said in the same tone the soap manufacturer had used, "Your soap hasn't done much good in this world, either. I see lots of dirt and many dirty people!"

"Well," said the soap maker, "that's not quite fair. You must remember that soap is useful only when it is applied."

"Exactly," said the minister. "And so it is with the gospel."

C. *Yes, we are an evangelical church, and we're proud of it. Come, join the cause of Christ.*

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

We Gather to Celebrate the Gospel
 Welcome and Announcements
 Choruses of the Good News
 "Christ for Me!" "Everybody Ought to Know"; "Give Them All to Jesus"; "He's Able"; "Lead Me to Some Soul Today"; "That the World May Know"
 Invocation
 We Proclaim the Gospel in Song
 Hymn "Jesus Saves"
 Hymn "Redeemed"
 Special Song "Give Them All to Jesus"
 We Draw Near to Him
 Prayer Chorus "For God So Loved the World"
 Prayer for the Unsaved
 Offertory Sentence
 His Tithe/Our Offerings
 We Hear the Gospel Proclaimed
 Scripture Lesson Rom. 1:16-17
 Special Song "Jesus Is All the World to Me"
 The Message "THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH"
 We Take the Gospel to the World
 Closing Chorus "That the World May Know"
 Benediction

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Invocation

Father, let Your Word be a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. Let me hide it in my heart that I might not sin against You. Amen.

Offertory Sentence

"And he said unto them, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' If you are sure God has *not* called you to leave your homeland and go to a foreign field, you may be equally sure He *has* called you to give so others can go. Let us give this morning so that others may go.

Benediction

"O Lord, we beseech Thee to raise up for the work of spreading the gospel faithful men and women who will count it all joy to spend and be spent for the sake of Thy dear Son and for the souls for which He shed His most precious blood upon the cross, and we pray Thee to fit them for their task by Thy bountiful grace and heavenly benediction; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen."

From the Book of Common Worship

Who's Who and What's What Among Popular Holiness Voices

(Continued from page 27)

ual of the Church of the Nazarene, para. 13).

Believers do not grow into this work of grace. It is "wrought by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and

the abiding, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service. [It is] provided by the blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by faith, preceded by entire consecration" (Manual, para. 13).

Prominent voices calling our world to holiness are welcomed. But let us not throw away our doctrinal distinctives as we proclaim "Holiness Forevermore." Welcome the holiness voice, but be sure to check its biblical source.



"THE FAMILY CHURCH"

Gen. 1:28; Psalm 127; Deut. 6:4-9
June 10, 1990

INTRO:

If an announcement came over the radio or TV, "We are under nuclear attack, go to the nearest bomb shelter," what would you do? I've a feeling that one of the first things you would do is try to locate your family. Family relationships are important to all of us. And the family should be one of our nation's top priorities. Unfortunately, it has not been. Many of our nation's major social problems—divorce, juvenile delinquency, child abuse, spouse abuse, and elder abuse, to name a few—can be linked very closely to the breakdown of family life.

ILLUS. On a recent television talk show, a guest advocated what he called "alternative family life-styles." He stated that America's greatness could be linked to its willingness to change.

To this, another more conservative guest responded, "Yes, we must be prepared to change with the times. But we must also be willing to learn from history and not make the same mistakes others have made in the past. When you study the ancient cultures of Egypt, Rome, and Greece, you see a common pattern: When these cultures were coming into the peak of their power, the families were strong. Then, as these nations 'progressed,' the family came to be not so highly valued, the culture became extremely individualist, and traditional family values deteriorated. When that happened, the societies themselves fell. This is what history teaches us. Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it!"

It is time the church of Jesus Christ sounded a warning and sent a positive message: **FAMILY IS IMPORTANT.** There is no substitute for family! And so, in an attempt to be a family-oriented, family-centered church, we begin by teaching what the Bible reveals about the purpose and importance of family.

I. The Primary Purpose of the Family Is to Rear Children in a Loving Atmosphere.

A. *God commanded the first married couple, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Gen. 1:28, KJV).*

B. *Mankind does not have the power to create.* We can only manufacture out of that which God has created. God created family life to include procreation, bringing children into the world and raising them. [Note to pastor: We must be sensitive at this point, regarding those present who want children but who have been unable to have them. You may wish to encourage the people of your church to pray for those couples who are going through this.]

C. *We should be concerned that in certain segments of our modern society, the rearing of children is made to sound like drudgery; that children are an intrusion, not a joy.* We often hear through the media: "Go ahead; you can have it all. Don't let your children inhibit your freedom."

D. *The family church is willing to go against the tide of popular thought and proclaim, "It's a good thing to have children. In fact, they are a blessing, not an intrusion!"*

E. *"Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children are a reward from him.* Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate" (Ps. 127:3-5).

F. *It is the duty of Christian parents to create an atmosphere of love and acceptance at home.* That is what our children need more than any other thing.

ILLUS. In the 13th century, Frederick II, emperor of the Roman Empire, attempted an experiment. He wanted to find out the type and manner of speech children would have if they grew up speaking to no one beforehand. He instructed foster mothers and nurses to suckle and bathe a group of children, but in no way prattle with them, speak or make cooing affectionate sounds to them, or cuddle them. He wanted to learn whether they would speak ancient Hebrew, or Greek, or Latin, or Arabic, or perhaps the language of their parents. But all his efforts were in vain. All of the children died! They could not live without love.

G. *Is there an atmosphere of love and acceptance in your home?* Do your children feel loved and wanted? With God's help, we can create a more loving, accepting atmosphere at home. After all, that's why God gave us children: so that we might love them with the love of the Lord.

II. The Second Purpose of the Family Is to Teach Christian Values.

A. *Listen to the word of the Lord: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house . . . and when you rise up. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. And you shall write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates" (Deut. 6:4-9, NASB).*

B. *Teaching our children moral values is not the ultimate responsibility of the church.* As a church, we will try to *help* teach your children Christian values through the Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Caravan, junior church, and other children's ministries. But these programs exist to *supplement* and *reinforce* what children should be learning at home. It is up to parents to teach their children eternal values.

C. *Dads, both present and future, you are the priests of your homes.* It is your God-given responsibility to live and teach the Jesus-life at home; to lead by your exam-

ple. Establish a family altar. Read the Word of God to your families. Pray with them. Get involved in their Christian education. Remember, Dad, you are doing a great deal to shape their lives.

ILLUS. In *The Effective Father*, Gordon McDonald tells the story of the medieval sidewalk superintendent. He asked three stone masons on a construction project what they were doing.

"Laying bricks," the first replied.

"Building a wall," said the second.

But the third laborer demonstrated genuine esteem for his work when he said, "I am raising a great cathedral."

Pose that same question to any two fathers concerning their roles in the family, and you are liable to get the same kind of contrast. The first may say, "I am supporting a family." The second may say, "I am raising a family." The first man looks at his job as putting bread on the table. But the second one sees things from God's perspective. He is participating in the shaping of lives.

D. *Moms, both present and future, moral values are best learned before the age of five.* If at all possible, mothers should be at home during those developmental preschool years, in order to create a loving, warm, secure, orderly atmosphere for children. It is in this atmosphere that the Christian values are best taught.

E. *There is no way to adequately communicate the effect of parental influence over children.* The fact is that parents do have an awesome influence over their children—and subsequently over many generations to follow.

ILLUS. Do good Christian parents and good Christian

homes really matter that much? I turn to the most revealing proof of which I know—the cases of Jonathan Edwards and Max Jukes. Jonathan Edwards was an outstanding Christian. A researcher learned that out of his 1,394 descendants, 13 became college presidents, 65 professors, 60 prominent lawyers, 32 noted authors, 90 were physicians, 200 were ministers, and 300 were good farmers.

Max Jukes was the antithesis of Mr. Edwards. He was notorious as a crook, lacking principle or character. Of 903 of his offspring, he spawned 300 delinquents, 145 confirmed drunkards, and 90 prostitutes. Some 285 had "evil diseases," and over 100 spent an average of 13 years in prison. It was estimated that the crimes and care of that one family cost the state of New York over \$1 million. Jonathan Edwards never cost the government a single penny. Instead, he was making contributions of incalculable worth.

CONCLUSION:

A. *This morning, let us recommit ourselves to our families—to love them and teach them Christian values.*

B. *And our church wants to help.* We want to be a family church. That is why we continue to proclaim and teach what the Bible says about family life. We will continue to equip parents and encourage you to be Spirit-filled parents. We will commit ourselves to age-group ministries designed to supplement and reinforce the values learned at home.

C. *To the best of our ability and with the help of the Lord, we will be a family church.* My prayer is that yours will continue to be a Christian family where Jesus is Lord.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

Choruses of Praise

"A Vessel of Honor for God"; "Father, I Adore You";
"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"; "The Bond of
Love"; "The Greatest Thing"

Call to Worship Eph. 5:1-2, 20-33

Invocation

Hymn "How Firm a Foundation"

Choir

Prayer

Announcements

Offering

Children's Message "Happy the Home
When God Is There"

Old Testament Lesson Deut. 6:4-9

Special Song

The Message of the Morning "THE FAMILY CHURCH"

Closing Hymn "A Christian Home"

Benediction

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Children's Message

Gather the children in and begin by asking: What is the most special thing your parents have ever given you? (for Christmas, birthdays, etc.). Wait for their responses. When you have interviewed a few, share with them that the Bible says parents are to love their children. Therefore, the greatest gift a parent could give a child is love. Now, ask the children: "How do you know your parents love you? What did they do to prove it?" (spend time with you, hiking, reading bedtime stories). Pray, thanking God for loving parents.

Benediction

O Lord our God, Thou art strong; we are weak. Give us of Thy Spirit; that in trust we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior. Enlighten our minds, purify our hearts, renew our wills, and may we give ourselves wholly to Thee. For the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

"THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH"

Acts 2:1-13; Eph. 5:15-21

June 17, 1990

INTRO:

Read Acts 2:1-13.

ILLUS. A hundred years or so ago, a committee of pastors was discussing having Dwight L. Moody come as an evangelist for a city-wide crusade. One young pastor who didn't want to invite Moody stood up and said, "Why Moody? Does he have a monopoly on the Holy Spirit?"

There was silence. Then one of the other pastors spoke up. "No, Mr. Moody doesn't have a monopoly on the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit does have a monopoly on Mr. Moody!"

To be filled with the Holy Spirit means that God has a monopoly on your life. He has your time, your talents, and your treasures. He has your past, your present, your future. He has everything because you have offered Him everything. That's complete consecration. His response to our consecration is entire sanctification. We believe this is a second, definite work of grace, and that it occurs instantaneously when a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit.

How can you tell if a person is indeed filled with the Holy Spirit and has been entirely sanctified? For our answer, let's look to what happened on the Day of Pentecost.

I. God Gave the Church Signs to Authenticate the Holy Spirit's Infilling.

Let's examine the three signs, for they help us understand what happens when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit.

A. *The first sign was the sound of wind.* We read: "Suddenly a sound like a blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting" (v. 2).

1. Wind is an Old Testament symbol of power. Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

2. Sometimes the wind is a refreshing, gentle breeze. Sometimes it blows with hurricane force. So it is with the power of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. Sometimes the change is a subtle, gentle one; some changes are made in more dynamic, dramatic ways. But all believers receive power when the Holy Spirit fills them: Power to do what God asks; power to be what God requires.

B. *The second sign was the evidence of sight.*

1. "They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them" (Acts 2:3).

2. Fire is used frequently in the Old Testament as a symbol of purity. That's exactly what happens when a believer is filled by the Holy Spirit. His heart is purified of

selfishness and replaced with God's pure love—a work that only the Holy Spirit can perform.

ILLUS. The well-known pastor and evangelist, Robert G. Lee, wrote of a homeless little boy who wandered the streets of one of America's major cities. One day a couple found him and took him home with them. They gave him a good scrubbing and clothed him in a handsome new suit. The boy had never been so clean nor looked so good. For a long time, he stood before the mirror and admired his new clothes. Later, when bedtime came, he had to take off his suit and put on a pair of pajamas. This distressed the youngster greatly. As the lady of the house prepared him for bed, she taught him his first prayer. She asked him to repeat the usual children's prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

Half-asleep, he murmured. "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my clothes to keep." Surprised, the woman gently corrected him. But he repeated his request as before, "I pray the Lord my *clothes* to keep."

Just as this boy wanted his clothes to remain clean and safe, so we can ask the Lord to keep the "outer garment" of our lives unspotted from a world contaminated by sin. God, by His Holy Spirit, can enable us to avoid or overcome the things that could defile us. Then, through instant confession when we do sin, we can have a moment-by-moment forgiveness. We can have a clean life—a victorious life. Let's pray that the Lord will keep the "clothes" of our life clean.

3. If we are ever to "love one another deeply, from the heart" (1 Pet. 1:22), our hearts must be made pure. Only the infilling of the Holy Spirit can accomplish that.

C. *The third sign was the evidence of communication.*

1. "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language" (Acts 2:4-6).

2. The miracle of tongues on the Day of Pentecost can be described as follows: All were filled with the Holy Spirit. Some, however, were enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak in *known* languages so that the gospel could be communicated to others. Communicating the gospel in *known* languages appears to be the sole reason God bestowed this gift upon the church.

3. Why did God pour out His Spirit upon the church at Pentecost? Why do believers today still need to experience the infilling of the Holy Spirit? To receive power, to experience purity, to better communicate to a hurting and dying world. This best describes a Spirit-filled church. You can tell an individual is filled with the Holy Spirit if he displays these characteristics—which leads to another important reason why being filled with the Holy Spirit is so important.

II. God Meets Our Deepest Needs Through the Infilling of the Holy Spirit.

A. *Paul makes this clear as he writes to the believers in Ephesus: "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the spirit" (Eph. 5:15-18).*

B. *Paul is sketching an antithesis between being filled with wine and being filled with the Holy Spirit. We all know people use alcohol for a variety of complex reasons. But ultimately, alcohol usage reflects a search for meaning, for happiness.*

C. *Meaning and happiness cannot be found at the bottom of a bottle. Intoxication leads only to the dissipation of life—to debauchery. (Contrary to the way the advertising media depict use of alcohol.)*

D. *In contrast, when the Holy Spirit fills a person, there is vitality, fulfillment, and true meaning.*

ILLUS. (You can use another testimony here, or even a personal testimony of how God meets the deepest needs of people through the Holy Spirit's infilling.) I recall my mother testifying many times about events leading to her being filled with the Holy Spirit. Born and raised in a Christian home, Mother accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Savior as a teenager. But all through her adult years, she struggled with the sense that there was something missing in her life—a lack of power; a lack of meaning and complete satisfaction with her life; a lack of peace. One day, a work associate invited her to revival services at the Hollywood, Md., Church of the Nazarene. In that service, she heard for the first time about the doctrine of entire sanctification. Not long thereafter, she sought and found the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. She now testifies: "For years I searched for that something more. On the day I was entirely sanctified, my search ended!"

E. *Quite possibly, many of the problems you face in life, and some of the issues we face as a church, are there because we have not let God meet our deepest need—the removal of the selfish sin nature.*

F. *God wishes to displace carnality in our lives with power, purity, and love. He does this through the infilling of the Holy Spirit.*

CONCLUSION:

God has a wonderful gift, a glorious provision He wants to extend to the church today. Are you willing to make a complete commitment of your life to Jesus Christ? If you are, then you are a candidate for the experience of Spirit infilling. Ours can be a Spirit-filled church.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Choruses | |
| "Where the Spirit of the Lord Is"; "A Vessel of Honor for God"; "The Bond of Love"; "O Breath of Life" | |
| Call to Worship | Joel 2:28-32 |
| Invocation | |
| Hymn | "Pentecostal Power" |
| Hymn | "Holy Ghost with Light Divine" |
| Choral Music | |
| Prayer Hymn | "Holy Spirit, Be My Guide" |
| Pastoral Prayer | |
| Children's Message | |
| Announcements | |
| Offertory Sentence | |
| Offering | |
| Scripture Lesson | Acts 2:1-13; Eph. 5:15-21 |
| Special Song | |
| Message | "THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH" |
| Closing Hymn | "Fill Me Now" |
| Benediction | Acts 1:8 |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Children's Message

Do you have someone who helps you? Who is he and what does he help you do? [Give them time to respond.] Once upon a time in the Alps, lived an old man. Because he was partially crippled, he had never joined the mountain climbers. He could only dream of the thrill of reaching the top.

One day, a famous mountain guide said to him, "How would you like to climb the mountain yourself?"

"Oh," beamed the old man, "I would like that very much, but I am too old and I have a bad leg. I could never climb the mountain."

"Alone, you cannot. But with me as your helper and guide, you can do it. I will show you the right path and help you in the right places. In fact, when you are too weak to walk and the path is too steep, I will carry you." And together, they reached the top of the mountain. And the old man was very happy.

Being a Christian is very much like climbing a mountain. It is not easy to live for Jesus. But we have a Helper and Guide: the Holy Spirit. He will give you strength and courage. This is why God has given us the Holy Spirit. Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will help you live a life that will make Jesus happy.

Offertory Sentence

"There is that which we hold in our hands, of possessions and influence, which are to be no longer held as unto ourselves or so as to revolve around ourselves; they are to be melted into our life's devotion unto Jesus Christ."

—Phineas F. Breese, October 10, 1901

"THE REACHING CHURCH"

Col. 4:2-6
June 24, 1990

INTRO:

Evangelism. It's a simple, 10-letter word. But the mere mention of this word scares the socks off of some believers. Just the thought of making a presentation of the gospel to a card-carrying sinner, button-holing someone and laying the gospel's claims on him seems rather frightening to most rank and file Christians.

ILLUS. [Preacher: This may be a good place in the message to share a personal experience in the realm of evangelism. Possibly an example of fear or failure, even of a humorous nature. Personal illustrations are always the most effective!]

Confrontational evangelism, presenting the gospel to an unbeliever one-on-one, is not easy. Although that brand of evangelism is extremely important, it is a ministry performed by a rather small percentage of believers. They have spiritual gifts, personalities, and communication skills that make confrontational evangelism natural. [Give a modern-day example of this kind of person.]

So, the question is, where does that leave the rest of us? Is evangelism the work of an exclusive few, leaving the rest of us on the sidelines? Absolutely not! Because God is a reaching God, we are to be a reaching church! The scripture lesson for this morning's message reveals what that process is and how we all can involve ourselves in it. It reveals how our church can be a reaching church.

I. A Reaching Church Must First Be a Praying Church.

A. *Paul said to the people of Colosse: "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful" (Col. 4:2).*

B. *Prayer is where the evangelism process begins.* Maybe you've never considered prayer as crucial to the evangelism process, but it is. It is likely you are here today because someone spent time in prayer for you.

C. *Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that your unsaved friends will find Jesus unless you pray for them.* Prayer changes things—and people. Prayer is the first, indispensable step in the evangelism process. If ours is to be a reaching church, it must become a praying church.

D. *J. B. Chapman, former general superintendent, observed, "There is not enough heartbreak over the lost, not enough soul burden, not enough groaning and weeping and fasting and crying [in our churches]."*

E. *How long has it been since you prayed, fasted, groaned, and wept over your unsaved friends and loved ones?*

ILLUS. A 16-year-old young man was born again. Each morning and night, he prayed for the strength to live a Christian life. He entered college. One afternoon, his roommate had a fall in the gym. He was carried to their room, seriously injured. A doctor was called. With terror in his eyes, the injured roommate whispered, "Wilson, I wish you would pray for me!"

The Christian young man knelt down and prayed for his roommate. God answered the prayer. The young man said later: "You know, that faltering prayer for my roommate opened to me the wide door of intercessory prayer. My Christian faith had been weak because I had never prayed for others."

A reaching church is one filled with intercessors.

II. A Reaching Church Must Be Consistent in Its Conduct.

A. *Paul talks about the importance of holy conduct in the evangelism process: "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt" (vv. 5-6).*

B. *It could be that, when all is said and done, the most effective form of evangelism is the consistent conduct of people like you and me.* After all, our lives communicate a great deal more about God and the church than do our words.

C. *Conduct evangelism begins when you become an authentic Christian—when you live out what you believe in the offices and restaurants and Laundromats of your world.* Every action, every reaction, every attitude, every word has the potential of either driving your friends a step closer to God and the church or nudging them a step further away. That's heavy, but true.

D. *I could give you many good reasons why Christian people should pursue a holy, Christlike life.* Two good ones are that God demands it and the Bible requires it! But consider this: Committing yourself to a holy life and asking the Holy Spirit to empower you to live a consistent life is an important part of the evangelism process. Why? Because people are watching you! They're watching to see if you're real; if you're consistent!

ILLUS. Two rival merchants attended a revival meeting being held in their city. These men knew the troubles and testings that arise daily in business life. After some nights, one of them went forward to confess his faith in Christ as his Savior. The other was under conviction but unyielding. When he saw his business competitor go forward, he said to himself, "I will watch him. If he really lives the Christian life for a full year, then I'll know that there is really something to this thing, and I will become a Christian myself."

For one year, the merchant watched the other man. He saw a complete change in his business dealings and in his everyday conduct. At the end of the year, the watcher sought and found God and forgiveness for his sins. He then went to the merchant whose life he had watched so closely and said, "For one whole year, I have watched you. Your life convinced me there is something real in your Christianity."

E. *If we are to be a reaching church, we must commit ourselves to holy, consistent, Christlike lives.*

III. A Reaching Church Must Be a Responsive Church.

A. *Paul challenges the believers at Colosse to be responsive to those around them, "so that you may know how to answer everyone" (v. 6).*

B. *Being a responsive friend is a form of evangelism.* Evangelism doesn't require that you go door-to-door with a pocket full of tracts. It doesn't require that you spend your life looking for some unsuspecting soul upon whom you can pounce and beat senseless with your family Bible. Response evangelism simply requires that you be sensitive to the needs of those around you and respond with the love and compassion of Jesus. After all, love earns you the right to share the gospel as nothing else will.

C. *Evangelism, then, begins in your circle of friends, the people God has put into your world.* As V. H. Lewis has said, "The front line of evangelism is always right next to you. The man who works next to you; the woman who sits at the next desk; the family living in the apartment next door—they are the front line for you. Right here is where we so often fail. We have eyes on the needs far away. But the harvest field for you, for me, is right next to each of us."

D. *We need churches filled with "responsive" people*—people who care for and are interested in others, especially unsaved others.

ILLUS. Many years ago, a little street urchin in Chicago used to travel many blocks by foot across the frozen streets of the great city to attend Dwight L. Moody's Sunday School. On his way, he passed many other churches. Someone asked him, "Why do you go so far to Moody's Sunday School? Why don't you go to one closer to home?"

The little boy replied: "I go to Mr. Moody's Sunday School because they love a fellow over there."

People are looking for love, attention, and compassion. A reaching church must be a responsive church.

CONCLUSION:

A. *There are two groups of Christians here today:* Those who are part of the evangelism process and those who are not. Which group are you in? Do you pray for the lost? Do you live the consistent, holy life? Are you responsive to the needs of others?

B. *I challenge you:* Commit yourself to the evangelism process. Only then will ours be a reaching church.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Praise Choruses | |
| "People Need the Lord"; "My Hands Belong to You"; "My Desire"; "Whatever It Takes"; "Seek Ye First"; "Lord, Lay Some Soul upon My Heart"; "I Will Serve Thee" | |
| Call to Worship | Matt. 11:28-30 |
| Invocation | |
| Hymn | "Rescue the Perishing" |
| Children's Message | |
| Pastoral Prayer | |
| God's Tithes and Our Offerings | Matt. 15:15-18 |
| Scripture Lesson | Col. 4:2-6 |
| Special Song | "People Need the Lord" |
| Message | "THE REACHING CHURCH" |
| Open Altar Prayer Time | |
| Benediction | Acts 1:8 |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Children's Message

Begin with the story of the little boy who walked to Dwight L. Moody's Sunday School. Ask children why they like Sunday School and church. Conclude with a simplified discussion of how boys and girls can reach out to their friends who do not know Jesus (prayer, good conduct, care).

Open Altar Prayer

At the conclusion of the message, it would be appropriate to open the altar for people to commit themselves to the evangelism process. Have them come, also, to intercede on the behalf of one unsaved friend or loved one. Pray that God will transform your church into a reaching church.

Honesty in Trade: Business Holiness

(Continued from page 42)

cheated. And it wasn't with only the sale of that special India spice. This was Elizedek's way of life, hiding behind the good sound of his name. Every customer and every sale was short-weighted—only a tiny fraction, but when those tiny fractions were added up over a year of business transactions, Elizedek was making an immense ill-gotten profit. And no one ever knew!

Don't believe it. There is One who knows. The Lord God is concerned and is delighted with accurate weights. And those of us who bear the name, or claim to

bear the name of our holy God will also be scrupulously concerned and delighted with accurate weights and measures in all dealings with our fellowmen. We dare not be otherwise!

Lest any of us excuse Elizedek (and ourselves) for such practices, let us be reminded of Moses' words in Deut. 25:16, "For the Lord your God detests anyone who does these things, anyone who deals dishonestly." From Moses to Wesley to 1989, God's law of honesty has not changed! True Wesleyans are truly honest and practice holiness in business!



"THE SACRAMENTAL CHURCH"

1 Cor. 11:17-34
July 1, 1990

INTRO:

The church is a complex organism. It is many things; it has several functions. Our understanding of the church would not be complete without a discussion of the sacraments, for the true church of Jesus Christ is a sacramental church.

We believe in and participate in two sacraments: water baptism and Communion. Do you know *what* a sacrament is and *why* we participate in them?

A sacrament is that which makes a person aware of God's presence and His grace. A sacrament is when that which is ordinary becomes holy. If you really think about it, that's why Jesus came—to sacramentalize the commonplace; to bring meaning and purpose into the ordinary experiences of life.

One night, nearly 2,000 years ago, Jesus gathered with His disciples for the Passover supper. He blessed a crust of bread and a cup of wine and gave them to His disciples. From that moment, two most common elements of every Jewish meal became a monument. From then on, those ordinary elements were holy—sacramental—for they represented Jesus' body and His blood. The supper became a sacrament. The thing that makes this sacrament so special to believers is that our Lord ordained it! He said, "Take this. Eat this. Drink this. Do this in remembrance of Me."

Paul was concerned that when the church in Corinth participated in the Lord's Supper, they would do so reverently and with meaning. From the passage of scripture we have read together this morning, we discover the following:

I. The Lord's Supper Reminds Us of Jesus' Death.

A. *"The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, this is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me"* (1 Cor. 11:23-24).

B. *Death is a subject we tend to avoid.* Death is not pleasant to think about. And Jesus' death, as you well know, was especially gruesome. But our Lord wants us to remember and even *reflect* upon His death. Why? Because without His death upon the Cross, without the shedding of His blood, there is no hope of salvation.

C. *As believers, it is good that we remember the great price Jesus paid for our personal salvation, and be thankful.* When we partake of the bread, remember.

ILLUS. A little street waif was admitted to a children's home. Given a new outfit, he felt pride in his new suit and boots. But he refused to wear the new cap, clinging to his old ragged one. The matron firmly insisted that he take the new cap and give her the old one. Before handing it to her, he tore out the lining and stuffed it into his pocket.

"Why did you do that?" asked the matron.

Tears came into his eyes as he answered. "The lining of my old cap was part of my mother's dress. It is all I

have left of her." The lining of the torn cap was merely a piece of faded material, but it was a holy symbol to that boy.

The bread and the wine, of which we partake at the Lord's Table, are holy symbols that help us remember His death upon the Cross.

(AT THIS POINT IN THE MESSAGE, YOU MAY WISH TO SING OR SIMPLY QUOTE THE LYRICS FROM THE HYMN "LEAD ME TO CALVARY.")

D. *Kneeling at the altar to receive Communion is a journey to Calvary; it is sacramental.*

II. The Lord's Supper Proclaims the Death of Jesus.

A. *Paul said, "Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes"* (v. 26).

B. *Participation in Communion is a form of proclamation.* When you take the bread and the cup, you are sending a message, "Jesus is my personal Savior."

ILLUS. My wife, Sally, and I grew up in the turbulent '60s, when demonstrations seemed to be commonplace. Young people constantly demonstrated for one cause or another. The school district in the rural area where we lived made several sweeping administrative and fiscal changes, that many thought would adversely affect the students. So several students and faculty members secured a permit to demonstrate in the town square of the county seat. Carrying homemade signs and wearing black armbands, they walked hand-in-hand to the courthouse, demonstrating against the superintendent of schools. Sally was one of those demonstrators! Without saying a word, she was making a statement: "I believe in this cause!"

The Lord's Supper is a form of demonstration. When you take the bread and cup, you are stating, "I believe in the cause of Christ. These people are my people, and Jesus is my Lord." This simple act is a form of proclamation.

(AT THIS POINT IN THE MESSAGE, YOU MAY AGAIN WISH TO SING OR SIMPLY QUOTE THE LYRICS FROM THE HYMN "WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?")

C. *Joining with us at the Lord's table, you are proclaiming, "I am on the Lord's side."* Obviously, then, Communion is an exclusive act. It is not for everyone. It is for people who know Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Paul makes it clear that the unsaved person is unworthy of the bread and cup (1 Cor. 11:27).

D. *That is rather strong, is it not?* But Paul is clear: to live a life of sin and yet participate in the Lord's Supper makes a mockery of His death.

E. *To partake worthily is a beautiful demonstration of His death and our personal faith.* It is the proclamation of the gospel without words.

III. The Lord's Supper Is an Opportunity for Us to Examine Ourselves.

A. Paul says, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord, eats and drinks judgment on himself" (vv. 28-29).

B. The invitation to examine oneself includes both the saint and sinner. It is an opportunity for believers to check their spiritual health. It is also an evangelistic opportunity for unbelievers, an opportunity for that one who doesn't know Jesus Christ as his personal Savior to be born again.

C. So let us examine ourselves. For, as someone once observed: "The unexamined life is not worth living." [Consider either singing or sharing the lyrics from the hymn "Cleanse Me."]

ILLUS. "Have I Done My Best for Jesus?"

I wonder, have I giv'n my best to Jesus
Who died upon the cruel tree?
To think of His great sacrifice at Calv'ry,
I know my Lord expects the best from me.
How many are the lost that I have lifted?
How many are the chained I've helped to free?
I wonder, have I done my best for Jesus,
When He has done so much for me?
The hours that I have wasted are so many,
The hours I've spent for Christ so few.
Because of all my lack of love for Jesus,
I wonder if His heart is breaking too?
I wonder have I cared enough for others,
Or have I let them die alone?
I might have helped a wand'rer to the Saviour;
The seed of precious life I might have sown.
No longer will I stay within the valley,
I'll climb to mountain heights above;
The world is dying now for the want of someone
To tell them of the Saviour's matchless love.
—Ensign Edwin Young

CONCLUSION:

A. Jesus wants to invite you to participate in this sac-

ramental community. As we partake of the Lord's Supper, Jesus invites you to remember Him and examine yourself.

B. Join us around the Table, and listen for His voice: "Do this in remembrance of me."

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Call to Worship | |
| Hymn | "O Worship the King" |
| Prayer Chorus | "Fill My Cup, Lord" |
| Pastoral Prayer | |
| Announcements | |
| Offertory Sentence | |
| His Tithes/Our Offerings | |
| Scripture Lesson | 1 Cor. 11:17-34 |
| Special Song | "Worthy Is the Lamb" |
| Message | "THE SACRAMENTAL CHURCH" |
| The Lord's Table | |
| Choruses | |
| | "Jesus, Name Above All Names"; "Holy Ground"; "We Bow Down"; "This Is My Body" |
| Benediction | |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

My God, and is Thy table spread?
And does Thy cup with love o'erflow?
Thither be all Thy children led,
And let them all its sweetness know.
Philip Doddridge

Offertory Sentence

Prov. 4:23 reads: "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." Giving is more important for its spiritual significance than its financial significance; more important for its indication of the Lord's place in our lives than for its help in paying the bills incurred in the Lord's work. It is well that we examine our hearts as we give.

Benediction

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

The Hidden Treasure

(Continued from page 37)

sponsored welcome would tie in those newcomers to the district family.

7. Retired clergy and spouses could be helpful on each district in the role of "listening posts" for clergy and laity of small churches. This important ministry would keep the retirees in Kingdom work by drawing on their experiences, wisdom, and caring. How kindly they

could be used as senior partners to small congregations—not as pastors but as partners.

Frequently, the small church carries an inferiority complex compared to the larger congregations. Everyone is needful to God's work—whether in a large or small church. Smaller congregations need fellowship with persons in larger groups; we all need each other—for we are

all believers and followers of Jesus.

Let us view the small church differently. Let us get behind these many, many faithful communities of disciples. If we truly nurture the small church, encourage it, helping to water it with tears of intercessory prayer, and smile the sunshine of caring love upon it, we would realize the rich resource we already have.



"THE FRIENDLY CHURCH"

Matt. 7:1-12

July 8, 1990

INTRO:

Friendship. What a beautiful word! Just the word *friend* brings warm feelings, a sense of security, and precious memories of moments shared with a special person. No doubt about it, one of God's greatest gifts to us is the gift of friendship. Friends make our life fuller, richer, more exciting. Thank God for friends!

The church ought to be a friendly place: a place where lasting friendships are made and nourished. What better place to make friends than the Church of Jesus Christ? We desire that this church fellowship will be a place where friends are made and friendships are constructed. We want to be a "friendly" church.

This morning, we are going to examine what the Bible says about friends and friendships. We may discover how valuable our friends really are and how we can become better friends. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "God evidently does not intend us all to be rich, or powerful or great, but He does intend us to have friends." From Matt. 7:1-6 we discover a few simple principles for building friendships and being a friendly church.

I. Principle 1: To Have Friends You Must Be a Good Friend.

A. *In what is now known as the Golden Rule, Jesus said, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets" (v. 12).*

B. *You must treat your friends as you wish to be treated.* To have friends, you must be a good friend. Therefore, ask yourself: "If I were someone else, would I like to have myself as a friend?"

C. *Be the kind of person others would want as a friend:* kind, giving, accepting, and loving.

II. Principle 2: To Be a Good Friend You Must Be Non-judgmental and Accepting.

A. *Jesus said: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged.* For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" (vv. 1-3).

B. *Nothing will destroy a friendship or potential friendship more quickly than judgmentalism.* William Barclay suggests that there are three great reasons why no one should judge another. (1) We never know either the whole facts or the whole person. Only God knows the whole story. (2) It is almost impossible for any man's judgment to be strictly impartial. Only God can be completely impartial. (3) No man is good enough to judge any other man. Only a sinless God is good enough. Therefore, leave the judging to the Judge!

C. *Our task as Christian friends is not to stand in judgment over or to criticize our friends.* Our task is to love and accept them; to overlook their shortcomings

and accept them as they are. Lawrence Peters has noted that you can always tell a real friend: "When you've made a fool of yourself, a true friend doesn't feel you've done a permanent job!"

ILLUS. Babe Ruth was one of baseball's all-time greats. His bat had the power of a cannon, and his record of 714 home runs stood until Hank Aaron came along. "The Babe" was the idol of countless sports fans. But in time, age took its toll, and his popularity waned. Finally, the New York Yankees traded him to the Cincinnati Braves. In one of his last games in Cincinnati, Babe Ruth began to falter. He struck out and made several errors, allowing the Reds to score five runs in one inning. As Babe walked toward the dugout, there rose from the stands an enormous chorus of boos and catcalls. Some fans actually shook their fists. Then a wonderful thing happened. A little boy jumped over the railing. With tears streaming down his cheeks, he ran out to the great athlete. Unashamedly, he flung his arms around Babe's legs and held on tightly. Babe Ruth scooped him up, hugged him, and set him down again. Hand in hand, they walked off the field together.

D. *Give your friends, or those you wish to become your friends, the gift of nonjudgmental, unconditional acceptance.* Remember, we have a great Friend in Jesus who loves us regardless of our failures and shortcomings. The friendly church is accepting of all!

III. Principle 3: To Be a Good Friend, Follow Jesus' Example.

A. *Jesus was a wonderful Friend!* He was loving, caring, responsive, and forgiving. He still is! If you really want to know what true friendship is like, if you want a perfect model or pattern to follow, look to Jesus. Jesus is the greatest Friend I know!

B. *Jesus is a giver, not a taker.* He said: "Ask, and it will be given to you" (v. 7). He is always willing to give himself. A true friend is willing to contribute more to the relationship than he will probably receive in return—more time, more acceptance, more forgiveness. A good friend must be more patient, more understanding, more willing to make the relationship work. To be a good friend, we must be more like Jesus, the perfect model of a true friend.

ILLUS. Two sisters were separated for a time, living in different cities. While away from home, one of them became a Christian. They both went home to visit not long after her conversion. One day, the other girl said to the new believer, "I don't know what has happened, but you are a great deal easier to live with than you used to be." Praise the Lord. That is the way it should be. Christians should make better sisters, better brothers, better friends!

IV. Principle 4: To Be a Good Friend Requires Personal Commitment.

A. *If you are going to be a better friend, if we are go-*

ing to be a friendlier church, we must be willing to commit ourselves to it. We must be willing to ask, seek, and knock. Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened" (Matt. 7:7-8).

B. *God is willing to lead you into a life of closer, more meaningful relationships, but you must commit yourself to becoming a better, truer friend.*

ILLUS. Two little boys lived next door to each other, attended the same Sunday School, and were both from Christian homes. One day while they played, they began quarreling long and hot. Suddenly, one said to the other, "I think it's time one of us acted like a Christian. How about you going first?"

C. *Make a personal commitment to Christian friendship.* "I will be a better friend, as the Lord helps me. I will make our church a friendlier place. I will follow the example of our Lord Jesus. I will become the kind of friend I want my friends to become." When each of us makes such a commitment, then—and only then—will our church become the friendly church that will attract our friends.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

We Welcome Our Friends
 Call to Worship Prov. 27:17
 Choruses
 "God Loves You and I Love You";
 "The Family of God"

Invocation
 We Worship Him in Song
 Hymn "In Christ There Is No East or West"
 Choral Special or Solo "What a Friend
 We Have in Jesus"

We Express Our Friendship with God
 Prayer Chorus "I Love You with the
 Love of the Lord"

Open Altar (We Pray for Our Friends)
 Children's Message
 His Tithes/Our Offerings

We Hear His Word
 Responsive Reading "The Body of Christ"
 Special Song "Friends" by Michael W. Smith
 The Message of the Morning
 "THE FRIENDLY CHURCH"

We Commit Ourselves to Deeper Friendships
 Closing Hymn "Our Friendly Church"
 Benediction Eph. 6:23-24

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

Prov. 27:17 reads: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." We have gathered here today to celebrate the gift of friendship. Let us worship our Friend, Jesus Christ. Let us listen as He teaches us how to be better, truer friends.

Children's Message

Begin by telling the story of the two boys at play. Stress that friendship begins with me, not the other person. Challenge the children to be good friends (share toys, be kind, etc.). Close with a discussion of Jesus as Friend.

Offerory Sentence

As friends of God, we want to give of our own resources to help promote His cause.


Sexual Failure in High Places

(Continued from page 41)

a young man from a "plain people" tradition explained to me that he had bought his young fiancé a diamond and wedding ring combination even though their covenant membership forbade the wearing of any jewelry, he justified it: "That is all right for most people who cannot afford jewelry, but I can afford it." I watched him take both of them out of that tradition, but when "success" became a heady wine, and they were far from their roots, he established a reputation for having any woman in sight. One of his sons reported that efforts to scandalize his father for playing around by reporting a pregnant secretary were absurd: "Dad had a vasectomy 10 years ago!" The son was already well settled into the tournament male vision.

Tournament pastors or executives who work hard to climb to top visible posts with rewards of money, power, and status are particularly vulnerable to the adultery of mistress lovers—the equivalent today of the King David harem.

In this introductory exploration of sexual failure in high places where ministers, evangelists, superintendents, and bishops go down in flames, I have been offering a vocabulary for thinking about various kinds of sexual failure. If we have no tools for thought, we are very far from finding either prevention or healing. Think of a highly visible person whose career you watched destroyed. Can you identify those in which you saw evidence of the alien bond of adultery with its long-term development and its powerful hold on both partners in the affair? In another case, did you see the complete absence of any "bond"? but the public railing against sexual sin while secret compensatory fornicating was going on? And can you dip again into memory and identify someone who seemed to make significant attachment to more than one partner, and seemed baffled that neither their partners nor we could tolerate the situation once it surfaced. With such tournament males there is little guilt. Their conquests establish their sense of self-esteem, and they tend to regret only that they "blew their cover" and lost the privileges they deserved if only "people understood."

In a subsequent discussion I will open up issues of recovery and hope for each of the sexual disorders: adultery, fornication, and the "original sin" tournament male. But I will also look at congregational healing in the wake of pastoral failure, playing off typical scenarios with which you are familiar, but whose effects remain devastating for decades in the community of faith. 

This article is an expansion of findings and observations published and illustrated with diagrams developed by the author in the following additional resources: *Treatment of fornication, adultery, and tournament species appear in Bonding: Relationships in the Image of God*, Word, 1985; and *Re-Bonding: Preventing and Restoring Damaged Relationships*, Word, 1986. The diagram on compensatory compulsive addiction appears in *Walk On!* p. 79, Wheaton, Ill.: Victor, 1988, and in *Unfinished Business: How a Man Can Make Peace*

(Continued on page 68)

"THE HAPPY CHURCH"

Matt. 5:1-12

July 15, 1990

INTRO:

ILLUS. An Englishman, a Frenchman, and a Russian were discussing happiness. "Happiness," said the Englishman, "is when you return home tired after work and find your slippers warming by the fire."

"You English have no romance," said the Frenchman. "Happiness is having dinner with a beautiful woman in a fine restaurant."

"You are both wrong," said the Russian. "True happiness is when you are at home in bed and at 4 A.M. hear a hammering at the door and there stand the secret police who say to you, 'Ivan Ivanovitch, you are under arrest,' and you say, 'Sorry, Ivan Ivanovitch lives next door.'"

The definition of happiness may differ from one person to the next. But one thing is clear: happiness is not something that happens *to* you. Happiness is something that happens *in* you! That is what prompted Jesus to say, "Blessed [or happy] are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matt. 5:8).

This morning, we are going to examine this, the sixth—and possibly best known—beatitude, in order that we might become a happy church. As we study this statement from the lips of our Lord, we discover:

I. Happiness Springs from a Pure Heart.

A. *Real happiness is not circumstantial.* There are people living under seemingly ideal circumstances who are terribly unhappy. And some whose circumstances are very difficult seem extremely happy. That is because happiness is the outward evidence of an inward grace.

B. *Jesus knew this.* That is why He spent so much of His time and energy teaching and preaching on the condition of the heart. He knew that unless one's attitudes were transformed, he could never be happy, regardless of his circumstances. "To be happy," Jesus said, "a person's heart must be pure."

C. The Greek word for pure is *katharos*, and it can simply mean clean. In *this* case, it means, "unalloyed, unmixed, like a pure metal that contains no alloys." With this definition in mind, Jesus is saying, "Happy is the person whose motives are unmixed. Happy is the man or woman who has one pure motive." That sounds very noble and quite desirable. But is it possible? Is it attainable? Can you and I really be made pure in heart, or is that an experience reserved exclusively for the super-saints? Friends, I have some very good news!

II. Heart Purity Is Available to Every Born-again Believer.

A. *Jesus addressed the Sermon on the Mount to believers—those who had already made a decision to follow Him.* Their sins had been forgiven; they were born-again.

B. *Just because a person is saved doesn't mean his heart is pure.* Just because a person is born again

doesn't mean his *motives* are pure. Some people love Jesus, but He is not Lord of their lives. They have committed their lives to Jesus, but not completely. They have experienced forgiveness for committed sins, but the sin *nature* remains. The tendency toward sin remains. James describes this condition as double-mindedness.

C. *Søren Kierkegaard said, "To be pure in heart is to will one thing: to love God with all of the heart, soul, mind and strength and one's neighbor as oneself. The pure in heart have perfect intentions. And although the actual performance will never be perfect, the heart's desires and affections can be."*

D. *No one is naturally pure in heart.* No matter how hard you try—through education or culture or personal resolve—you cannot change the condition of your heart. Hearts can be made pure only by a work of divine grace. Only as you make a complete commitment of your life to Jesus will the Holy Spirit purify your heart.

III. Heart Purity Is Needed by Every Born-again Believer.

A. *You say, "from a purely academic standpoint I believe God can purify a person's heart and in so doing, perfect his intentions. But is it really necessary?"* Yes, if you're really interested in living the consistent Jesus life. Yes, if you want to stand fast in the face of temptation. Yes, if you really want to love others as Jesus loved them. Yes, if you want to really impact your world for Jesus. A pure heart is crucial.

ILLUS. Thorwaldsen was a Danish sculptor. He had completed a statue of Jesus that was famous all over Europe. One day the French government offered him a commission to carve the statue of the Roman goddess, Venus. He answered, "The hands which carved the figure of Christ can never carve the figure of a heathen goddess."

B. *In order to make the right ethical decisions; in order to really live pure, clean lives; in order to live the consistent Jesus life; in order to stay pure in the midst of a dirty and perverse world, you must have a pure heart.* The work of heart purity is God's way of equipping you to live a happy and consistent life.

ILLUS. A man was visiting a coal mining town. To his surprise, he noticed a beautiful white flower growing up beside the black roadway to the mine. The tourist asked a miner, "How can such a pure, beautiful flower exist in these dirty surroundings?"

The miner replied, "Throw some coal dust on it and see." When the dirt touched the petals, it slid right off to the ground. The flower was just as lovely as before. The petals were so smooth that the dirt could not stick to the flower.

Christians cannot avoid living in a sinful, morally polluted world. But God can keep them so pure and clean that though they encounter sin on every side, it will not soil their souls. Jesus' disciples can stand in the midst of

a dirty world, unsullied by it. "Happy are those whose hearts are pure" (Matt. 5:8, TLB).

IV. Only the Pure in Heart Will See God.

A. *It is a simple fact of life that we only see what we are able to see.* If I go out on a night of stars, I see a bunch of stars. That is what I am fit to see. But in that same sky, an astronomer will call the stars and planets by their names. He really "sees the stars." If I walk through the woods, I see a bunch of trees. That's what I am fit to see. But in the same woods, a botanist will call the trees by name. He really "sees the trees."

B. *So, says Jesus, it is only the pure in heart who shall "see God."*

C. *What is in the heart determines what the eyes of the heart can see.*

ILLUS. My dad began to develop cataracts when he was 35. By the age of 40, he needed surgery. Back then, cataracts required major surgery. He was in the hospital for two weeks. I'll never forget when they took off the bandages and he said, "I can see clearly now. For the first time in five years, I can see things as they really are."

D. *Man's sinful nature is like having a "cataract" on one's soul.* Selfish ambitions and desires keep us from seeing God and others as they truly are.

E. *When we totally commit our lives to Jesus, the Holy Spirit purifies our hearts, and the carnal cataracts are removed.* We begin to see people through the lens of Christ's love. With our new vision, we are able to see beyond what people do to what they are. We begin to see the meaning of Scripture as never before. The pure in heart see God and see life from His perspective, not through the lens of selfishness. The pure in heart have a whole new perspective on life! True happiness is possible.

CONCLUSION:

This beatitude demands that we examine ourselves:

1. What motivates you? Selfish ambition or love for God and others?
2. Is your service given from selfless motives or from motives of self-display?
3. Is your church work done for Jesus or for prestige?
4. Are you standing fast in the face of temptation or living inconsistently?
5. Have you made a complete commitment of your life to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Our Lord stands ready to purify your heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| We Gather in His Name | |
| Call to Worship | Ps. 144:15 |
| Invocation | |
| Responsive Reading | "Purity of Heart" |
| We Worship Him in Song | |
| Hymn | "Holiness unto the Lord" |
| Anthem | Choir |
| We Draw Near to Him | |
| Prayer Hymn | "Cleanse Me" |
| Pastoral Prayer | |
| Announcements | |
| Children's Message | |
| Tithes and Offerings | |
| We Hear His Word | |
| Scripture Lesson | Matt. 5:1-12 |
| Special Music | |
| Message | "THE HAPPY CHURCH" |
| We Respond to His Voice | |
| Closing Hymn | "A Heart like Thine" |
| Benediction | |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Children's Message

Gather the children at the front and ask, "What things make you happy?" (Give them opportunity to share.) "Did you know God wants His children to be happy? He has written a Book that tells us how we can be happy. The Bible tells us that the way to be happy is to give your heart to Jesus. Do you know any happy people in our church? Do you know why they are happy? Because they have Jesus in their hearts! I hope you are happy boys and girls. I am. In fact, now that I have Jesus in my heart, I'm happier when I am sad than I used to be when I was glad. So put on your happy face, and I'll put on mine. Let's be a happy church."

Offertory Sentence

The hymn writer tells us that "there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." Let's obey God, bringing the tithe and our offerings to Him. Let's trust Him to multiply our meager resources for His glory, and to supply all our needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus.

Benediction

"There is therefore no holiness, if Thou O Lord, withdraw Thine Hand. No wisdom profiteth, if Thou leave off to guide the helm. No strength availeth, if Thou cease to preserve. No purity is secure, if Thou protect it not. For when we are left alone we are swallowed up and perish, but when you work with us we are raised up, and we live!"

—Thomas à Kempis, *An Imitation of Christ*

Sexual Failure in High Places (Continued from page 66)

with His Past, p. 191, Victor, 1989. The family systems diagram appears in *Parents, Kids, and Sexual Integrity*, p. 116, Dallas: Word Books, 1988, and illustrates from secular research what Scripture teaches about marriage, husband-wife relationships, and family structure. The Joys have traced their own sometimes painful history alongside biblical teachings in their *Lovers: What Ever Happened to Eden?* Word, 1987. The author, Dr. Donald M. Joy is professor of human development at Asbury Theological Seminary and occupies the Ray and

Mary Jo West Chair of Christian Education. He is an ordained elder in the Wabash Conference of the Free Methodist church and is the author of two books being released in 1990 by Regal Books: *Celebrating the NEW MAN in the Family!* and *Celebrating the NEW WOMAN in the Family!* He and his wife, Robbie, are featured in a new adult curriculum video resource shot at a family life conference at Crystal Cathedral, *For Parents Only: Risk-Proofing Your Family!* GL Publishers, 1989.

"THE WAITING CHURCH"

2 Pet. 3:8-18
July 22, 1990

INTRO:

Delays are annoying, aren't they? Traffic jams; plane, bus, and train delays; long lines; and slow checkout counters get under our skin. Delays annoy us! [You may give personal, humorous illustration/example of dealing with a delay.]

We really get impatient when we have to wait. People have always struggled with delays. The first-century church was no exception. They were convinced, based on Jesus' own words and the apostles' teaching, that the Lord Jesus' return was imminent. And when He did not return immediately, some became impatient.

Impatience is something we all deal with at one time or another. It sometimes causes nervousness, anxiety, tension, and other less-than-healthy emotions. But for some in the first-century church, impatience over the "Big Delay" led to disbelief and skepticism. Some were tempted to say: "He has not returned. Maybe He was not the Son of God after all. Maybe there was no Resurrection. Maybe He's not coming again."

Many years have passed. After countless predictions, sign readings, and date settings, our Lord has chosen to delay His coming further. He has asked His Church to wait a while longer. How much longer, only the Father knows. We must wait.

Peter shared with the first-century believers from basic principles that will aid us as we wait. From 2 Peter 3, we discover:

I. God Views Time with a Perspective We Lack.

A. *"But do not forget this one thing," Peter said. "With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day" (2 Pet. 3:8).*

B. *We are subject to the laws of time.* Our perspective is one of seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, decades, and centuries. But God knows no such limitations. God is eternal. He is not subject to the laws of time.

C. *We have finite minds.* We cannot fully comprehend eternity. Yet as believers in Jesus Christ, we are given a glimpse of it. Faith in Jesus Christ and His purposes allows us to view our waiting for His return from His eternal perspective. This helps us wait with patience until He returns.

II. God Wishes That All the Lost Should Be Saved.

A. *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).*

B. *God has delayed the coming of His Son,* not from procrastination, tardiness, or laziness, but because of His great mercy. He spares the sinner so that there will be further opportunity for salvation.

C. *That is why, as your pastor, I have mixed feelings about His coming again.* Like you, I desire to be caught

up in the air with Him and changed in the twinkling of an eye; to leave this vale of tears and spend eternity with Him. But there is so much to be done, so many friends and loved ones who are still lost. What a comfort to know that our Lord has delayed His coming in order to give our church another opportunity to win someone who is lost. That should help us wait patiently for His return! Church, until Jesus returns, we must do our best to save the lost.

ILLUS. Some years ago, a rescue crew was organized at Northwestern University in Chicago to rescue people from Lake Michigan. Early one cold November morning, word reached the campus that the *Lady Elgin*, loaded with passengers, had been caught in a violent storm. She was rapidly going to pieces near the shore. The crew hurried to the scene, plunging into the cold, angry waters. But they were soon driven back.

One athletic youth, Ed Spencer, would not give up hope of rescuing the drowning people. He threw off most of his clothes, tied a rope about his waist, and threw himself into the choppy, frigid water! Swimming out to the wrecked vessel, he got hold of a drowning man and signalled those on shore to pull him in. Time and again, he leaped into the chilly waters, finally rescuing 10 people! Then, utterly spent, he went over by a fire that had been built on the beach. He was blue, trembling, and hardly able to stand.

As Ed stood there, he looked again toward the sinking *Lady Elgin*. He saw men, women, and children struggling in the water. "Boys," he said, "I'm going in again!"

"No, no, Ed," they cried, "It is utterly vain to try. You have used up all your strength. You can't save any more!"

But Ed said, "They are going down. I must try again!" Diving into the bleak, cold waters again, he brought five more persons safely back to shore! Now he could hardly get to the fire on the beach. A spar of the wrecked ship bobbed on the waves. Then, he noticed a man's head just above the spar. He said, "Boys, there is a man out there trying to save himself. I'm going to help him!"

"No, Ed, you can't help him," they said.

"I'll try anyway," said Ed, and into the water he leaped.

Ed rescued his man. As he reached the shore with him, he collapsed. He was carried to his room delirious. During the day and night, whenever his mind cleared, Ed would ask, "Boys, did I do my best, my dead level best?"

"Why, yes, Ed," they would reply, "you saved 16!"

Then Ed would say, "Yes, I know that; but did I do my best, my dead level best?"

D. *Are we doing our best to reach the lost, to rescue the perishing?* Let's work till Jesus comes. And don't lose heart, for—

III. God Has Promised in His Word That Jesus Will Return Again.

A. *Peter reminds us: "But in keeping with His promise*

we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13).

B. Faith in this promise will help us wait with patience.

We know He is returning again because the Bible says so. [This would be a good place to quote some of the scriptural promises of His return: Isa. 65:17; Matt. 24:44; 1 Thess. 5:1-2.]

These promises have encouraged believers down through the centuries. I hope they will encourage you. Jesus is coming again. No delay will invalidate that promise!

ILLUS. A Chinese lady in Java was wonderfully saved. Though she knew Christ as her Savior, she knew nothing of Him as coming King. One day in her home, she heard a voice say clearly in her own language: "Messiah is coming!" She did not know the meaning of the word *Messiah*. She thought a visitor was coming to call on her. She wondered how she would entertain the coming guest. Again, the voice came, saying, "Messiah is coming soon!" Perplexed, she went to a Christian friend and asked who Messiah is. She found that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, that He is the coming King. How happy she was over the news. Her daily life became different. She lived each day in readiness for the Messiah's coming.

C. Wait patiently. The Messiah is coming! Finally—

IV. God Requires His Followers to Live a Holy Life.

A. Peter reminds those who are waiting for our Lord's return: "Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives" (2 Pet. 3:11).

B. Whenever we hear of our Lord's promised return, it should inspire the desire to live a holy life. A person who is concerned with loving God with all of his heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbor as himself, will not have much opportunity to be frustrated over our Lord's delay. He's too busy hammering holiness out on the anvil of his life. Show me a believer whose supreme desire is to be like Jesus, and I'll show you a believer who is waiting patiently for His return.

ILLUS. A little girl heard her mother and some friends speaking about the near return of the Lord Jesus. Some hours later, the little girl was missed. They finally found her at a window, near the top of the house. She said, "Oh, Mother, I heard you say that Jesus may come today. I wanted to be the first to see Him. See, I washed myself and put on a clean dress."

If we daily look for Christ's soon return, we will try to keep ourselves clean, "unspotted from the world." God's Word says, "Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).

CONCLUSION:

A. Let us be challenged by His delay—challenged to spread the Good News of the gospel, to live the holy life,

and to live in harmony, lives centered in His will. Let us wait patiently for His return.

ILLUS. One day Queen Victoria heard her court minister give a message on the second coming of Christ, with all its attendant glories and blessedness for our needy world. It thrilled her heart and stirred her soul. She was seen weeping quietly in her royal box. Afterward, the court minister asked the queen why she wept. With tears in her eyes, the queen said, "Oh, that I would be here when He returns! I would like to place my crown at His feet!"

CLOSING OPTIONAL (CHALLENGE OR INVITATION: ARE YOU READY?)

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Call to Worship | |
| Welcome and Announcements | |
| Chorus | "He Is Lord" |
| Invocation | |
| Hymn | "O That Will Be Glory" |
| Choral Song | "When We See Christ" |
| Children's Message | |
| His Tithes/Our Offerings | |
| Offering Prayer | |
| Scripture Lesson | 2 Pet. 3:8-18 |
| Special Song | "The Old Rugged Cross" |
| Message of the Morning | "THE WAITING CHURCH" |
| Hymn of Invitation | "There's a Great Day Coming" |
| Open Altar Prayer Time | |
| Benediction | |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

"Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Children's Message

Begin with the story of the little girl who prepared herself for Jesus' coming. Stress how important it is to be good, obey your parents, and love others. This is how one prepares for Jesus' coming.

Offertory Prayer

"O Almighty God, look mercifully upon the world which You have redeemed by the Blood of your dear Son, and incline the hearts of many to dedicate themselves to the sacred ministry of the church, through Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Benediction

"Grant, our Lord, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may, through grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of holy living, to the honour and praise of Thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

"THE HEALING CHURCH"

James 5:13-18

July 29, 1990

INTRO:

The Church of Jesus Christ has always been a healing church. In fact, healing was one of the great characteristics of the Early Church. The Acts of the Apostles is filled with examples of divine healing (Acts 5:15; 8:7; 9:33 ff.; 14:8-10; 16:18; 28:8 ff.).

The church, from the time of Justin Martyr in the first century, through the Middle Ages and Reformation, to the present time, has consistently emphasized and sought healing for the sick.

Jesus placed a significant emphasis upon meeting the needs of suffering humanity. Nearly 20 percent of the entire Gospels is devoted to Jesus' healing ministry and the discussions occasioned by it. Out of 3,779 verses in the four Gospels, 727 relate specifically to Jesus healing physical and mental illnesses. (Read Matt. 4:23.)

Although His teaching and preaching ministry took precedence, Jesus did not neglect the physical and emotional needs of people. He fully expects us, His disciples, to continue the same work—to be a healing church.

To better understand how our church can become more of a healing community of believers, we shall examine James. (Read James 5:13-18.) From this passage we discover the principles of a healing church.

I. A Healing Church Is One Where Healing Is Sought.

A. *Some Christians think that they must suffer alone*—to hide their hurts from their brothers and sisters in Christ. But James invites the sick to "call the elders of the church to pray over him" (James 5:14).

B. *The church's healing ministry begins as the person in need shares his burden.* Paul said that we are to "bear ye one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:2, KJV). How can the church bear your burden unless you are willing to share your burden? To remain silent about your pain is to miss the ministry that comes from a healing community.

ILLUS. A rather timid young lady went to her pastor before the service began and asked: "Pastor, will you pray for me today? I have a problem, but please, do not mention my name."

In the service that followed, when every head was bowed and there was perfect silence, the pastor prayed fervently for this "unspoken" request: "O Lord, there is a young lady here who does not want her identity to be known. But You know who she is. Lord, meet her need."

There was silence for a moment. Then the young lady arose and said in a pleading voice: "Lord Jesus, it's me. It's me!" Her heart was so hungry for God's touch that she became unafraid to publically seek His help. And so she came and prayed and experienced His touch upon her life.

Eventually, in our walk with God we all come to this place: An awareness that it's not my brother nor my sister but it's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer.

C. *I thank God that our church believes in the biblical doctrine of divine healing.* Our articles of faith clearly state that we are to "urge our people to seek to offer the prayer of faith for healing of the sick" (*Manual, Church of the Nazarene*, Article XV, italics added). I would urge you to seek God's healing power in your life.

II. A Healing Church Is One Where Biblical Guidelines Are Followed.

A. *In recent years, an unbelievable variety of movements has emerged that have made healing the major feature of their ministry.* Many of their activities are "extrabiblical" or, in some cases, inconsistent with biblical guidelines for healing.

B. *The Word of God is very clear.* (Read James 5:14.) This is how the church is to conduct its healing activities.

C. *When someone seeks the healing ministry of the church*, the elders, or appointed leaders of the local church, are to gather in and surround that individual for prayer and support.

D. *An elder is to anoint that person with oil.* Such anointing serves as a symbol of obedience, encouragement, and the healing power of God. This anointing has deep spiritual significance, for it is done in the name of the Lord.

E. *Prayer is offered in behalf of the one in need of healing.* Prayer recognizes that all healing comes from God and is an expression of complete dependence upon Him, our Great Physician.

ILLUS. In a warm and tender biography, James Ross tells about migraine headaches that his wife, Clare, had suffered all her life. The attacks came every two or three weeks with such intensity that she could not lift a finger for 24 hours. The pain was so excruciating that it distorted her vision and speech. Doctors offered no hope. The only thing to be done was to put her in bed, darken the room, and leave her to suffer.

While Clare, in middle age, was still feeling sick and wretched in the aftermath of one of her worst attacks, her husband took her to a church where they gathered in, anointed her head with oil, and prayed. She left that chapel with all signs of the migraine gone, and to the end of her life she never had another attack.

Her husband later wrote: "The cynic may say that a psychosomatic complaint had been dealt with by psychological means; the cynic may say what he will. In faith, my Clare took 20 years of sickness to God, and in faith she left that sickness with Him."

You, like Clare, can leave your problem with God.

III. A Healing Church Is One Where True Faith Is Exercised.

A. *When prayer is offered by the church for the sick*, it must be made faithfully. (Read James 5:15.)

B. *Faith is the key that opens the door to God's healing touch.* Jesus himself asked the blind men: "'Do you believe that I am able to do this?'

"'Yes, Lord,' they replied. Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, 'According to your faith will it be done to you'; and their sight was restored" (Matt. 9:28-30).

C. *Do you believe that Jesus is our Great Physician?* That all healing comes from His hand? He wants you to be a whole person! Put the full weight of your trust upon Him today. Come, seek God's healing for your mind, emotions, and body.

ILLUS. Charles Wesley penned the following words reflecting his personal faith in the healing power of God.

*With simple faith on thee I call,
My light, my life, my Lord, my all;
I wait the moving of the pool,
I wait the word that speaks me whole.*

CONCLUSION:

A. *The church wishes to extend to you a priceless gift that Jesus has entrusted to us:* We wish to extend His healing touch to you.

B. *Jesus is passing by.* If you will reach out in faith and touch the hem of His garment, He has healing for you. Healing for damaged emotions, for destructive memories, for confused minds, for worn-out, diseased bodies. Come. We shall gather around you. We will anoint you with oil. We will pray for you! It is an honor to do so.

ILLUS. Dr. Paul Tournier, Swiss psychiatrist, in his book *The Healing of Persons*, describes a visit to a man in a hospital.

My dear friend, you have come to a crossroads. I have no doubt that God has brought you to this present moment so that you can make your choice. There are two roads in front of you. One goes from clinic to clinic. The road is full of suffering but it is an easy road to choose. It is the road along which you expect healing to come from others, from doctors clever enough to discover some new remedy which will cure you.

The other road is very hard. It is the road to Jesus Christ, who has warned us that it is a narrow and difficult one. If you take it, you must accept what comes to you, carry your cross, put up with your troubles, have the courage to go back to work, and face up to life even though it hurts. It is a road which demands a change of heart. But you do not travel it alone; and even if it demands sacrifice, you will find joy in it because as you go, you will find that Christ is by your side . . . and your sins are forgiven.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| We Gather in His Name | |
| Welcome and Invocation | |
| Praise Choruses | "He Touched Me"; "There Is Peace in the Midst of the Storm" |
| Expressions of Fellowship | |
| We Worship Him in Song | |
| Hymn | "Arise, My Soul, Arise" |
| Choral Music | "There Is Peace in the Midst of the Storm" |
| We Participate in His Mission | |
| Announcements | |
| Offering | |
| Offertory | |
| We Hear His Word | |
| Scripture Lesson | Matt. 9:27—10:1 |
| Special Song | "He Touched Me" |
| The Message of the Morning | |
| "THE HEALING TOUCH" | |
| We Come to Him for Healing | |
| Hymn | "I Must Tell Jesus" |
| Healing Service Around the Altar | |
| We Depart to Serve Him | |
| Closing Chorus | "He Touched Me" |
| Benediction | Phil. 4:4-7 |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Invocation

Our Father, as we have gathered here today, remind us in the moments that follow of the gracious words our Savior Jesus has said unto all those who truly turn to Him: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall rest unto your souls." We wait humbly before You today in anticipation of the fulfillment of these, Your promises. Amen.

Note on Healing Service

Upon having extended an invitation for your people to seek healing, invite them to come to the altar to kneel and pray. You may start at one end of the altar and work your way to the other. Gather the elders around the seeker, have them lay hands on him, and, follow the suggested procedure:

Pastor: "Joe, what is it you wish the Lord to do for you this morning?"

Joe: "Heal the arthritis I have in my knees." (If you have a microphone, hold it close to Joe so the congregation can hear his request. If you do not, repeat the request to the congregation.)

Pastor: "Joe, I anoint you with oil in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As you apply the oil to Joe's forehead, you may wish to conform to the ancient church tradition of making the sign of the cross with the oil. Now, pray for Joe's physical need. Be specific. Be compassionate. And thank God for His healing touch. Then, move on to the next seeker.

"THE GIVING CHURCH"

Luke 16:1-13; Mal. 3:6-12

August 5, 1990

INTRO:

ILLUS. The minister of a small church believed some practical joker was teasing him as I.O.U.'s began to appear in the collection plate. One Sunday night weeks later the collection included an envelope containing bills equal to the total of the I.O.U.'s.

After that, the parson could hardly wait to see what amount the anonymous donor had promised. Contributions ranged from \$5.00 to \$15.00—apparently based on what the donor thought the sermon was worth. There came a Sunday when the collection plate brought a note reading, "U.O. Me \$5.00."

Yes, it is true, churchgoers use various methods to determine what they will give to the church. Some people give only what they have jingling in their pockets or purses. Some give the same amount every week, like clockwork. Some tithe 10 percent of their income on a regular basis. Others give nothing at all. However, the ministry of the church continues to depend upon the giving of people like us.

Some people feel that preachers talk too much about money. Lucille Goodyear tells the story of a church member who complained to his pastor: "It's getting so that all we ever hear around here is one continuous give, give, give."

The pastor said, "Praise the Lord! You have just given one of the best descriptions of Christianity that I've ever heard!"

Preachers talk about giving because it is a biblical mandate. The Bible has a great deal to say about giving. Let's examine two passages of Scripture, one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament. We will discover how to become more of a giving church.

I. We Must Act Wisely in Financial Matters.

A. *Jesus taught financial wisdom in the parable of the shrewd manager* (Luke 16:1-13). Jesus tells the story of a manager who was commended for acting shrewdly in a business transaction. (Read Luke 16:8-9.)

B. *In this parable, Jesus calls attention to the clever manner in which the manager did business.* Opponents of Christianity have drawn upon this parable to argue against Jesus' ethical integrity. They claim Jesus advocated a "make it any way you can" mentality. This view simply reflects a misunderstanding of how Jesus used parables to teach one central, spiritual truth. The one truth Jesus is teaching here is that Christians should be prudent in handling money, even more so than people of the world.

C. *To be a giving church, we must be good stewards of every penny God entrusts to us,* neither extravagant nor sloppy in our financial affairs. We must use our best judgment in order to make all we can. The more we make, the more we have available for God's use.

II. We Must Be Free from Slavery to Material Possessions.

A. *Jesus said: "No servant can serve two masters.* Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money" (Luke 16:13).

B. *Believers must be very careful not to get caught up in "the tyranny of things."* Twentieth-century North American Christians are tempted to use up all of their financial resources to purchase and maintain things. If we are not careful, accumulation of things can become an all-consuming, cruel master. Christian, be on your guard! Do not let your possessions become your master.

ILLUS. Many modern-day examples could be given that illustrate how people become servant to their possessions. But no story illustrates this more powerfully than the story of Jesus' encounter with the rich young ruler. (See Matt. 19:16-22.)

C. *The good news is that we do not have to be slaves to our possessions.* Our financial resources can become our servant. God has given us a method to properly manage our financial resources: TITHING.

III. We Must Give God the Tithe from Our Income.

A. *Tithing, giving 10 percent of our income to God, is not a new idea.* Abram brought a tenth of his income to the priest, Melchizedek (Gen. 14:20). The Lord told Moses that "a tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord" (Lev. 27:30). God said to the people of Israel through the prophet Malachi: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it" (Mal. 3:10).

B. *Tithing is a thoroughly biblical principle.* God expects His people to bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, the church of Jesus Christ. Failure to tithe misses a tremendous blessing and actually robs God!

C. *Only a small percentage of believing Christians tithe.* Disobedience may be a primary cause. But it also reflects a lack of trust in God. Many people lack faith in God's promise to bless those who tithe.

ILLUS. Once a man was lost in the desert, nearly dying from thirst. He wandered aimlessly through the burning sand for many days, growing weaker by the moment.

At long last he saw an oasis far in the distance. Palm trees indicated a source of water! He stumbled forward feverishly and fell beneath the shade of the trees. At last he could slake his tortured thirst. But then he noticed

something strange. Instead of a pool of water, or a well, or a spring bubbling up from the ground, the man found a pump. Beside the pump were two objects—a small jar of water and a parchment note.

The note explained that a leather gasket within the pump must be saturated with water for the pump to work. Within the jar was only enough water to prime the pump. The note also warned the reader not to drink from the jar. Every drop must be poured into an opening at the base of the pump to soak the heat-dried gasket. Then, as the leather softened and expanded, an unlimited supply of fresh water would be available. The parchment's final instructions were to refill the container for the next traveler's use.

The man faced a dilemma. He was dying of thirst and had found water. Not much water, of course, maybe not enough to save his life, but it seemed the height of folly to pour it down the base of the pump. On the other hand, if the note was accurate, by pouring out the small

quantity of water, he would then have all he wanted. What should he do?

CONCLUSION:

We find ourselves at a point of decision. Like the man in the parable of the pump, God wants us to be givers. He wants us to be a giving church. What shall we do with our glass of water—the tithe? Shall we gulp it down? Or, shall we trust God's Word and pour it out?

(SHARE A PERSONAL TESTIMONY.) I am here to say that I have tested God in this regard. I dared to give God the tithe, and He is as good as His word! He has not only provided for our needs but has blessed us beyond measure.

Let us become a giving church. Let us commit ourselves to the biblical principle of tithing. If every believer would tithe, the church would have no financial pressures. Test God and see if He will not throw open the floodgates of heaven! Let us become a giving church because we serve a giving God!

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Choral Call to Worship | "Everyday Is a Victory" |
| Invocation | |
| Hymn | "Give of Your Best to the Master" |
| Choral Music | "Lord, Let Me Serve" |
| Prayer Hymn | "Take My Life and Let It Be" |
| Open Altar Prayer Time | |
| Old Testament Lesson | Mai. 3:6-12 |
| His Tithes/Our Offerings | |
| Special Song | "Make My Life a Living Sacrifice" |
| The Message of the Morning | "THE GIVING CHURCH" |
| Hymn of Dedication | "A Charge to Keep I Have" |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Offertory Sentence

2 Cor. 8:1-2 reads: "And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity." How can you tell when the grace of God is working in a person's life? By the way he gives, for there is nothing closer to ourselves than substance. Let us, like the Macedonian believers, give out of our overflowing joy with rich generosity.

Missionaries

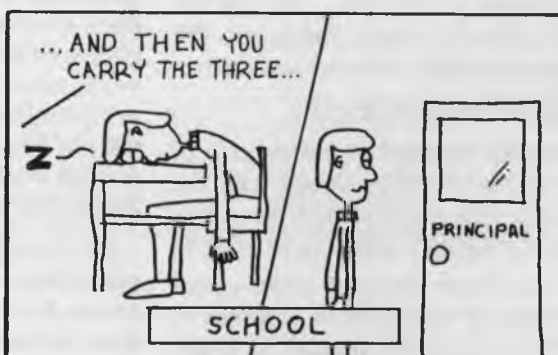
(Continued from page 32)

ceived the gospel message and continued to testify and build the church in that city. Their work was not in vain. Importantly, Paul and Barnabas had preached the gospel in a way that the Lystrans would understand it. The apostles freely confessed that they were "only men."

NOTES

1. William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 109.
2. One Filipino church leader suggests a "compadre" system in missions based on both intimate friendship and constant companionship between missionaries and nationals, resulting in true partnership in the gospel of Christ. Greg Tingson, *Mission and Obsession: A Collection of Essays* (Quezon City: Asian Christian Outreach, 1982), 21-23.
3. For intimations of how the Wesleyan doctrine of prevenient grace may be applied to the world mission see: Lycurgus M. Starkey, Jr., *The Work of the Holy Spirit: A Study in Wesleyan Theology* (New York: Abingdon, 1962), 150-55; Harald Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification: A Study in the Doctrine of Salvation* (Reprint, Wilmore, Ky.: Francis Asbury Publishing Co., n.d.), 44-50.

JUSTIN TIME



"THE CARING CHURCH"

Mark 2:1-12
August 12, 1990

INTRO:

ILLUS. Jerry Bridges, in the book *Crisis of Caring*, makes the following important observation about the modern-day church: "There is a crisis of caring in the Church of Jesus Christ today. Many Christians readily identify with David's lament, 'No one is concerned for me . . . no one cares for my life' (Psalm 142:4). We are all so busy, absorbed in our own responsibilities and insulated from one another. We pass each other like ships in the night, uttering a friendly, but empty: 'Hi, how're you doing?' and leaving an equally hollow response, 'Oh, fine, how're you?' We'd be shocked if someone replied, 'Would you really like to know?'"

Bridges is right. We are not as caring as we could be. The reason is quite simple: we do not see ourselves as care-givers. God has called us to the ministry of caring for others. As yet we have not come to a full realization of this calling.

ILLUS. Kenneth C. Haugk, in his book *Christian Caring: A Way of Life*, makes the following statement: "In 1 Cor. 3:6-7, Paul wrote: 'I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.' As a farmer's responsibility is to 'plant' and 'water,' God then provides the growth. In other words, Christians are responsible for care; God is responsible for cure."

The scripture lesson powerfully illustrates Christian care-giving. Let's set the stage for the story. Jesus had recently turned to Capernaum, His base of operations in Galilee. A crowd gathered at the house where He was staying. As He was teaching, five men entered the story. Four were well; one was sick. In fact, he was paralyzed. Out of care and concern for their friend, they carried him to Jesus on a mat. Immediately they encountered a problem: So many people were pressing in to hear Jesus, they could not reach Him. So they hauled their sick friend up the stairs and onto the housetop. Removing a section of roof, they lowered their friend to Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, He forgave and healed the paralytic! What a powerful example of care resulting in cure.

Every believer is called to the ministry of care-giving. Here are simple steps we must take if we would become a caring church.

I. We Must Bring the One in Need to Jesus.

A. *That sounds obvious, but that's the first step to becoming a care-giver.*

B. *Some of us have anguished over the "paralysis" of people we love—their physical, emotional, and spiritual problems. We have sorrowed over them, reasoned with them, pleaded with them, to no avail. Don't you think it's time to do the best thing, the only thing left to do: bring them to Jesus!*

C. *Care-giving begins with intercessory prayer. By*

definition, to intercede for someone is to "bring them to Jesus."

ILLUS. A young man, 16 years old, was wonderfully saved. Each morning and night, he prayed for strength to live a Christian life. He entered college. One afternoon, his roommate fell in the gymnasium. He was carried to their room, more dead than alive. A doctor was called. With terror in his eyes, the roommate whispered, "Wilson, I wish you would pray for me!"

The Christian young man knelt down and prayed for his roommate. God answered the prayer. A change came, and the roommate was immediately better. "That faltering prayer for my roommate opened to me the wide door of intercessory prayer, prayer for others. My Christian faith was weak because I had never prayed for others." Every Christian should be an intercessor.

D. *If we would be a caring church, we must be an intercessory church.*

II. We Must Refuse to Give Up on Them.

A. *It would have been easy for those four nameless men to give up their efforts:* "Jesus is too busy. Besides, the door is blocked." But *they did not give up.* They persevered! And we must if we are to be a caring church.

B. *The "paralytics" we love may have given up on themselves and on God.* They may feel crippled by fear, self-doubt, depression, destructive habits, rebellion, and even sin. But we must not give up our attempts to bring them to Jesus. Some will never make it to Jesus without someone's help. That someone could be you!

ILLUS. (THE BEST, MOST POWERFUL ILLUSTRATIONS ARE PERSONAL ILLUSTRATIONS. HERE WOULD BE AN IDEAL PLACE FOR YOU TO SHARE A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF HOW SOMEONE REFUSED TO GIVE UP ON YOU!)

III. We Must Be Willing to Take Some Risks.

A. *Real care requires vulnerability.* It requires risk. Those four men must have known the risks. They risked ridicule—what would their friends, neighbors, and religious leaders think?

B. *They risked rejection.* What if Jesus himself didn't take kindly to having His sermon interrupted?

C. *They took financial risk when they ripped the tile off the homeowner's roof.* Can you imagine how the owner might have felt about that?

D. *They risked doing the unorthodox!* It's never been done that way before!

E. *But care-givers must be willing to take some risks.* Frank Sculley asked: "Why not go out on a limb? Isn't that where the fruit is?"

F. *Care-giving requires faith!* The writer to the Hebrews defines faith as "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see!" (Heb. 11:1).

ILLUS. George Allen, with his wife, visited the famous Mueller Orphan's Home in Bristol, England. Mrs. Allen looked at the large building, and then she turned to Dr. Burton and said, "It must take a lot of faith to keep all this going."

Dr. Burton answered, "Mrs. Allen, little faith in a strong plank will carry me over the stream. Great faith in a rotten plank will land me in it!"

How truly did Dr. Burton speak. Little faith in a great God will carry us safely through life.

IV. We Must Share the Burden with Others.

A. *The paralytic made it to Jesus because he had four friends bearing him up.* One man, no matter how

strong, could not have transported the dead weight of his friend, lugged him to the roof, and lowered him to Jesus alone. Our whole church, young and old alike, must become involved in the ministry of care-giving.

B. *There is a significant spiritual lesson to be learned:* "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2, RSV). "Burden bearing" has a therapeutic, healing effect on those for whom we care.

CONCLUSION:

Our world needs caring churches now more than ever. Churches need to be filled with people who are willing to bring others to Jesus in prayer, refusing to give up and willing to take risks, and willing to share someone's burdens.

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Call to Worship | Luke 10:25-37 |
| Invocation | |
| Hymn | "Make Me a Blessing" |
| Hymn | "Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak" |
| Choir Song | "Lord, Let Me Serve" |
| Announcements | |
| Offering Sentences | |
| Offering | |
| Scripture Lesson | Mark 2:1-12 |
| Special Music | "Make Me a Servant" |
| The Message | "THE CARING CHURCH" |
| Prayer Hymn | "Burdens Are Lifted at Calvary" |
| Open Altar Prayer Time | |
| Choruses | |
| | "One in the Bond of Love"; "I Am Loved"; "Something Beautiful"; "He Careth for You"; "Lord, Lay Some Soul upon My Heart" |
| Benediction | |

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

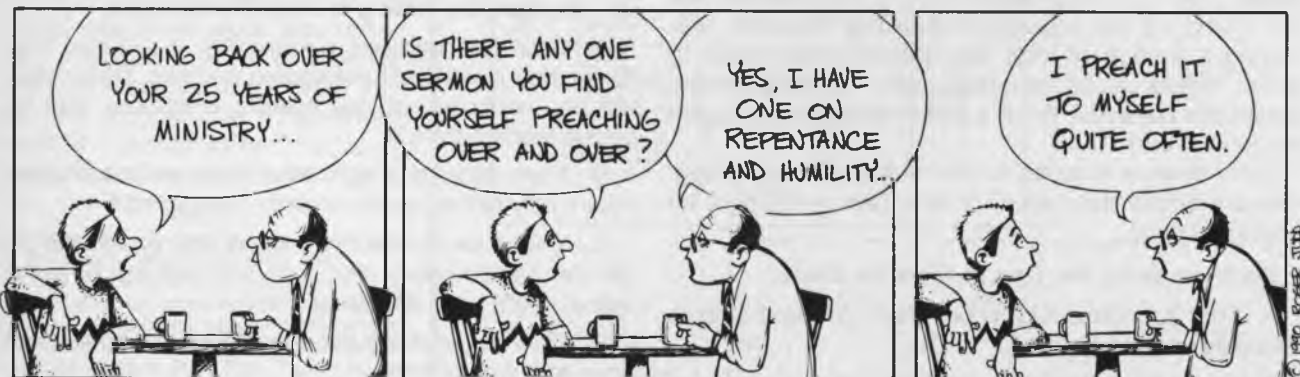
Offering Sentence

Paul expressed his sincere appreciation to the believers in Philippi: "I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God." Phil. 4:18 speaks of giving that supplies the needs of others as "the sweet fragrance of a sacrifice that is acceptable and well-pleasing to God." This giving that regards the needs of others. May our giving be such a fragrant offering.

Closing Prayer

A closing prayer around the altar would be an appropriate and meaningful finish to this particular service. First, invite people to come and pray who are in need. Next, encourage three or four people to surround the one who has come. In essence, when they surround the one who is seeking God's help, they are saying: "Here, let me help you come to Jesus. Let me carry a corner of your mat. I care about you!"

BEYOND BELIEF



"THE SPIRIT-LED CHURCH"

John 16:1-14
August 19, 1990

INTRO:

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit has been more ridiculed, reviled, and perverted than perhaps any other part of Christian teaching. Out of fear of criticism or inattention, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one of the most neglected themes in evangelical circles. We cannot allow the doctrine of the Holy Spirit to remain the step-child of Christian theology. The work of the Holy Spirit is vitally important. Without His work Christianity degenerates into a futile striving after goodness. Jesus calls us to obey God, to love friends and enemies, to be forgiving and kind, to turn the other cheek, to be cooperative rather than competitive, to accept the woes of life with courage. The Christian life is tough and demanding, but without the Holy Spirit it is an impossible life.

Let's examine God's Word to better understand who the Holy Spirit is and what He does in and for the believer.

We begin with the words of Jesus himself. In our lesson Jesus communicates what one has called "The Holy Spirit's job description; His errand to the Church."

I. The Holy Spirit Convicts the Church of Sin (v. 8).

A. *Believers, remember the days before your new birth.* Remember how guilty your sin made you feel. Remember the lack of peace and the restlessness in your soul. Remember feeling that you needed to pray for forgiveness and be delivered from the weight of sin. That was old-fashioned conviction by the Holy Spirit.

B. *Uncle Buddy Robinson described the feeling this way:* "When the Holy Spirit convicted me of my sin, I felt so low . . . as if I could work under the belly of a snake with a high hat on."

C. *The Holy Spirit will set you free, but first He makes you miserable.*

D. *God draws sinners to himself.* One method He uses is conviction by the Holy Spirit.

ILLUS. I heard the story about a missionary to India who was telling the story of Christ by means of lantern slides projected on the whitewashed wall of a village house. When the picture of the Cross was shown for the first time, an Indian stepped forward as if he could not help it. "Come down," he cried. "I should be hanging there, not you." Why should the sight of a Man crucified as a criminal in Israel 2,000 years ago affect this man so? The Holy Spirit's conviction!

E. *When Peter preached in Jerusalem, 3,000 Jews were pricked in their heart and born again.* Was it the preaching? No, it was the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. His errand to the world is to convict the world of sin.

F. *If the Holy Spirit is speaking to your heart about sin, feel honored that the God of all creation cares enough to confront you with your sin. If you are dealing with the guilt of sin and there is a heaviness in your*

spirit, this is the Holy Spirit's convicting. He nudges you to a place of repentance and forgiveness. This is one way by which He directs His Church.

ILLUS. In this classic book, *The God of All Comfort*, Hannah Whitall Smith makes the following observation about the Holy Spirit's conviction: "If I am walking along the street with a very disfiguring hole in the back of my dress, of which I am in ignorance, it is certainly a very great comfort to me to have a kind friend who will tell me of it. And similarly, it is indeed a comfort to know that there is always abiding with me a divine, all-seeing Comforter, who will reprove me for all my faults, and will not let me go on in a fatal unconsciousness of them. Emerson says it is far more to a man's interest that he should see his own faults than that anyone else should see them, and a moment's thought will convince us that this is true, and will make us thankful for the Comforter who reveals them to us."

II. The Holy Spirit Reveals Truth to the Church (v. 13).

A. *The word for God bringing truth to mankind is revelation.* We only know about God because He has revealed himself to us.

B. *God has revealed himself to us through His creation.* The Bible tells us that the heavens reveal the glory of God and their expanse declares the work of His hands. This is an example of God's natural revelation.

C. *God has also revealed himself through Jesus.* The Bible tells us that "the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). Jesus came to reveal what God is like.

D. *God has also revealed himself through the Word of God, the Bible.* The Bible is His inspired Word revealed to us on the pages of the Book. This is called God's special revelation.

E. *The Holy Spirit gives us a better understanding of God through nature, through Jesus, and through the Bible.*

F. *Have you ever stood on the top of a mountain and wondered:* "How could anyone doubt that God created this?" The Holy Spirit reveals the glory of God.

G. *Have you ever prayed and felt Jesus so close that you could almost touch Him?* That is the Holy Spirit at work.

H. *Have you ever read a verse of scripture, something you have read or heard hundreds of times, but suddenly it came alive and you really began to grasp what it means?* That was the Holy Spirit applying truth.

III. The Holy Spirit Glorifies Jesus (John 16:14).

A. *Jesus said of the Holy Spirit:* "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (v. 14, NASB).

B. *The work of the Spirit is Christ-centered.* The Holy

Spirit draws attention not to himself but to Christ. He glorifies Christ. His ministry builds upon the work of Christ.

C. William Barclay comments that the Holy Spirit's job is to take the things of Jesus and reveal their significance. The Holy Spirit is a dynamic force in the church and in our personal lives. For He is always revealing something new about our Lord Jesus. No one has ever grasped all that Jesus came to say and do. No one has fully worked out all the significance of Jesus' teaching for life and belief, for the individual and for the world, for society and for the home. The Holy Spirit continually opens up the meaning of Jesus. He glorifies the risen Savior.

CONCLUSION:

We know what the Holy Spirit came to do. Are we allowing Him to do His work in our hearts?

The Holy Spirit always works in the context of obedience.

Disobedience grieves the Holy Spirit. Let us commit ourselves to be an obedient, Spirit-led church.

ILLUS. A minister in New Albany, Ind., was sitting late one night in his study. He was strongly impressed to leave his work and call upon a man who lived a few blocks away. He tried to rid himself of the impression so he could finish the work. But he could not get away from the leading of the Holy Spirit. He went to the home. Twice he knocked at the door and received no answer. The third time he knocked, a light was turned on in the house. The man who lived there opened the door and invited the minister to enter. The man soon unburdened his heart to the minister. He said that when the pastor first knocked, he had already turned on the gas in a small bedroom, intending to end his life! This man's life and spirit were saved because the minister obeyed the voice of the Holy Spirit!

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

The Spirit Brings Us Together
 Call to Worship
 Invocation
 We Sing in the Spirit
 Hymn "He Abides"
 Choruses
 "Come, Holy Spirit"; "Holy Spirit, Thou Art Welcome"; "Not By Might"; "Spirit of the Living God"; "Where the Spirit of the Lord Is"
 Choral Music
 The Spirit Draws Us to Jesus
 Prayer Hymn "Holy Ghost, with Light Divine"
 Pastoral Prayer
 Announcements
 Offertory Sentence
 His Tithe/Our Offerings
 The Spirit Reveals Truth to Us
 Scripture Lesson John 16:1-14
 Special Song
 The Message of the Morning
 "THE SPIRIT-LED CHURCH"
 We Respond to the Spirit's Promptings
 Closing Hymn "Holy Spirit, Be My Guide"
 Benediction

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Call to Worship

"Our help is in the name of the lord, who made heaven and earth. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth."

Offertory Sentence

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16, KJV, italics added). You may give without loving, but you won't love without giving. Let us worship God with His tithes and our offerings because He gave so much!

Benediction

"Regard, O Lord, the supplications of Thy servants, and grant that we may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit and may continue to be Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto the end of our days. Amen."

"SOME REFLECTIONS ON CHURCH MEMBERSHIP"

Heb. 10:19-25
August 26, 1990

INTRO:

ILLUS. An old man past 80 years of age was half blind and nearly deaf. On his way to church one morning, an acquaintance who was an adamant nonattender of church stopped the old man on the street. "I've often wondered why you bother to go to church, in light of your physical condition."

The old man responded, "I suppose it looks strange to some people to see me going to church every Sunday. I can't hear a word and can hardly see the people. But I want the young people of this town to know I am on God's side. If I stayed at home, they might get the wrong impression."

Being a member of the church is a statement. It leaves an impression: "This is my church; these are my people; I believe in God. I don't want to give you the wrong impression. I am on God's side!"

What a joy it is to have a church to call your own!

Tremendous privilege accompanies church membership. We will review the requirements when our membership candidates stand before us. Let's consider the privileges that accompany church membership.

I. Church Membership Reflects Our Need to Receive and Extend Ministry.

A. *We come to church and receive—and there's nothing wrong with that!* We enter the holy place of God with confidence because we have been washed in the blood of Jesus.

B. *We gather together and draw near to our great High Priest, Jesus Christ.* As we draw near to Him with sincere hearts, He sprinkles our hearts with His pure love!

C. *There must be a balance between receiving ministry and giving or extending ministry.* The effective, growing church meets our needs and gives us an opportunity to minister to others. The person who only sits in the pew and is fed Sunday after Sunday becomes spiritually flabby. On the other hand, the person who gives and gives yet is never fed withers spiritually. Sincerely joining the church helps to reach a balance in your life.

D. *Church membership includes hallowed fellowship,* helpfulness with brotherly watch and care and counsel, the care of pastors, the teaching of the Word, and the helpful inspiration of social worship.

E. *The church also requires cooperation in ministry to others,* accomplishing that which cannot otherwise be done. And that's important too!

ILLUS. Someone observed that there are five different kinds of bones in the average church. There are *wishbones*. They always wish for better things, but they never work for them or pray for them. There are *jawbones*—all talk no action! Then there are *funnybones*. These folks are like the crazy bone in your

elbow that is always getting hurt—much too touchy. Their feelings get hurt all the time. Then there are *dry bones*—dead and cold. They show little or no sign of Christlikeness at all. Those that remain are the *backbones*. They provide the spiritual life and support of the church. They pray, attend, tithe, support, and work! They feel it is a privilege to receive and extend ministry in the church.

II. Church Membership Reflects Our Need to Be Accountable to Christ.

A. *Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds* (v. 24, NASB).

B. *The word "stimulate" in this verse can also be translated "to provoke, to incite, to arouse."*

C. *The author of Hebrews makes a bold statement:* To participate in the fellowship of believers stimulates us, challenges us, and incites us to be better Christians.

D. *Church membership suggests accountability.* When a person joins a church, he is saying, "I voluntarily hold myself accountable to this church. I voluntarily submit myself to the authority of this church. I voluntarily submit myself to the beliefs and standards of this church because I want to be accountable to God and to His church for my conduct. Dr. W. T. Purkiser said, "Individual and personal Christianity *always* involves incorporated and public Christianity."

ILLUS. Phineas F. Bresee, the founder of the Church of the Nazarene, said more than 90 years ago: "Wandering stars who are under no obligation to fellow Christians and bear no co-joint burdens with others to maintain and carry forward the work of the Lord, are of little good to the Lord's work in the world."

E. *An individual who refuses to be accountable to the Body of Christ often finds it difficult to be accountable to Christ himself.*

F. *It is a privilege to be a part of this church.* You have challenged me. You have stimulated me. You have incited me to love and good deeds. I am convinced that I'm a better Christian today because one day I stood before God and His people and joined the church. It is an expression of voluntary accountability.

III. Church Membership Reflects Our Need for One Another.

A. *The Bible says that we must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together,* as is the habit of some, but encourage one another (Heb. 10:25).

B. *Time has proven that the church that is warm and friendly and emphasizes meaningful relationships is the church where people want to attend.* Relationships are more important to visitors than buildings, programs, doctrines, and even preachers!

C. *A few years ago, I read a book by John Naisbitt titled "Megatrends."* In his book, he identifies 10 trends

that are affecting and will affect our world. One trend I found very interesting: "High Tech/High Touch." The more technologically complex our world becomes, the more people need to be together. For that reason, organizations that stress togetherness will meet a basic human need: other people.

ILLUS. The Sequoia trees of California tower as high as 300 feet. Strangely, these giants have unusually shallow root systems that reach out in all directions to capture the greatest amount of surface moisture. Seldom do you see a redwood standing alone because high winds would quickly uproot it. They grow in groves. Their intertwining roots support one another against the storms that come.

D. *We join the church in response to this need for other people. We need each other. We really do. That fact motivates many to join the church.*

ILLUS. *There's a Lot More to Health than Not Being Sick*, tells about a woman who, on the advice of her doctor, had gone to see a pastor to talk about joining the church. She had recently had a facelift, and when her doctor dismissed her, he gave her this advice: "My dear, I have done an extraordinary job on your face, as you can see in the mirror. I have charged you a great deal of money and you were happy to pay it. But I want to give you some free advice. Find a group of people who love God and who will love you enough to help you deal with all the negative emotions inside of you. If you don't, you'll be back in my office in a very short time with your face in far worse shape than before."

E. *As each membership candidate comes forward to join our church, let's reflect back to when we joined the church. Let's remember why we joined. Let's recommit ourselves to the mission and ministry of the church. Let's join hands and hearts with our new members.*

SUGGESTED WORSHIP ORDER

We Gather in His Name
 Praise Choruses
 "We Are His Hands"; "Lord, Be Glorified"; "I Will Serve Thee"; "I Love You with the Love of the Lord"; "Family of God"
 Invocation
 We Worship Him in Song
 Hymn "The Church's One Foundation"
 Hymn "In Christ There Is No East or West"
 Choral Music
 We Draw Near to Him
 Prayer Chorus
 Pastoral Prayer
 Announcements
 Offertory Sentence
 His Tithes/Our Offerings
 We Hear His Word Proclaimed
 Scripture Lesson Heb. 10:19-25
 Special Music
 Message
 "SOME REFLECTIONS ON CHURCH MEMBERSHIP"
 We Respond to His Voice
 Induction of New Members
 Greeting New Members
 Closing Hymn "Blest Be the Tie That Binds"
 Benediction

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS:

Note to the Pastor

The induction of new members into the church is a most meaningful time in the life of the church. You may wish to conclude this series of sermons on the church with "Church Membership Sunday." On this particular Sunday the induction of members is not a sidelight but the highlight or climax of the service. The following worship reflects that goal.

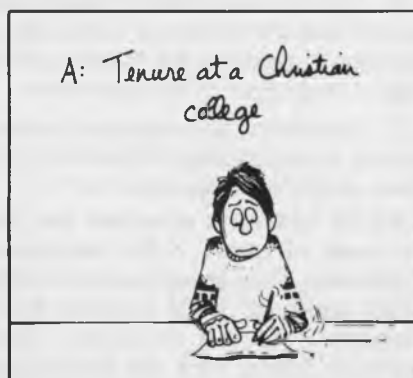
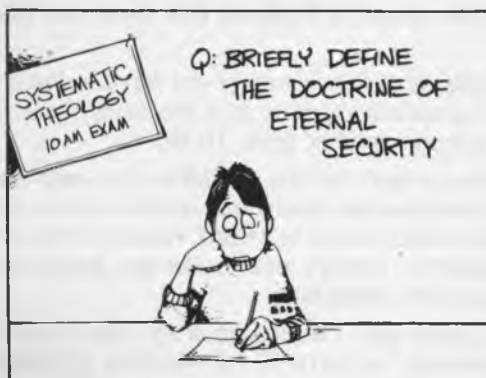
Offertory Sentence

One of the tremendous privileges of church membership is the financial support of the local church through the giving of tithes and offerings. "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts" (Ps. 96:8).

Benediction

O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in Thee and participation in Thy church, Thou hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples in the church, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through Thy mercy, we, with Thee, attain to Thine eternal joy; through Him who is the author and finisher of our faith, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BEYOND BELIEF



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A Journal of Church Growth, Evangelism and Discipleship

**Mission Achievement
in New England
and Beyond**

**Sixty-Six Study at
Large Church School**



True Love Means Incorporation



Love is the most powerful witness to the authenticity of the church. That's what Jesus said: "All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" (John 13:35).

From outside the church, love probably looks like mutual concern, respect, and friendship. But from inside the church, what is the appearance and feel of love? When people have become active in the church, what does love look like to them?

To people who have become active in the church, love looks and feels like genuine incorporation — a sense of actually belonging to the church. That means a person satisfyingly participates in some kind of small group — a Sunday school class, a friendship group, a Bible study group, the choir,

a musical ensemble, a task group, or a prayer circle. Incorporation means that a person feels accepted and free to be a full participant in the activities of the group.

The social fellowship of a church is the authentication of the church to its members. Beliefs are important. Preaching is vital. Spiritual dynamics cannot be overlooked. But in the final analysis, people evaluate the church by the love its members demonstrate for each other.

This is important to people outside the church, but it is even more important to people inside the church. And it may explain why so many of our insiders become outsiders.

"Dear friends, let us love one another" (1 John 4:7a).

Bill M. Sullivan

Mission of Church Growth Division

To contribute to the advancement of God's kingdom by fostering growth in the Church of the Nazarene.

To promote aggressive evangelism in all its many forms throughout the denomination.

To create an awareness throughout the church regarding the necessity for planting new churches, including the mission potential among cultural minorities.

To increase participation and effectiveness in a reproductive ministry that is engaged in Christian mission.

ESTHER SANGER CALLED NAZARENE MOTHER TERESA



In the Boston area south-shore communities, a dynamite little woman named Esther Sanger, 65, continually looks for ways to serve throw-away people like the homeless, hungry, alcoholics, drug users, AIDS victims, battered women, elderly poor, and deserted mothers with babies. Her unique compassionate ministry is called Quincy Crisis Center, an understated name for a variety of Christ-centered ministries. And Sanger's Catholic friends call her the Nazarene Mother Teresa.

Esther Sanger serves as the founder, spark plug, fund raiser, chief cook, legal advocate, crafty strategist, and Christian example in these crisis-intervention efforts. Quick to give credit to God for her plans and energy, Sanger is a long-time Nazarene who started a new journey of intense servanthood in her fifties. Now, hundreds of interested people, both inside and outside the Church of the Nazarene, help her with prayer, money, and time — the list of volunteers numbers 1,000.

**THROW-AWAY PEOPLE
FIND SOUL FRIEND
NEAR BOSTON**



NAZARENE MOTHER TERESA



Sanger shares her passion for hurting people.

Well past fifty, Esther Sanger set out to fulfill a long-standing missionary call. Her call dated back to college years, when she offered herself for missionary service but was not appointed because of poor health. So she earned a literature degree at Eastern Nazarene College and later completed nurse's training at St. Vincent's Hospital in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Along with her husband, Leland, a public school teacher and counselor, she raised three children. Out of the public eye during those years, she described herself as a wife, mother, and homemaker who occasionally worked as a nurse when extra money was needed for the family income and wrote a column for the *Quincy Register*.

Esther was deserted and homeless almost from birth. But an opportunity for a new life came when Bertha Munro, academic dean at Eastern Nazarene

Sanger's impressive record of ministry is motivated by an inner pilgrimage of faith.

College, found Esther in a foster home and made arrangements for her to enroll in the college's academy. From the start of the ENC experience, Esther

Williamson, Madeline Nease, and Bertha Munro became a spiritual family to young Esther. Even now, she refers to Mrs. Williamson as her "mother by affection" and expresses gratitude for the way those ladies modeled what spiritually-minded and spiritually-spoken persons should be. Their godly influence continues through Quincy Crisis Center like the widening circle from pebbles dropped into a pond.

Sanger's impressive record of ministry is motivated by an inner pilgrimage of faith. She explains that when quiet times came after the children were grown, she was reminded of unfinished business with God which had nothing to do with the mission board's earlier decision. She believes those heart issues went all the way back to childhood and represented her dark night of the soul, but she planned to live it out until she died, with no intention of dealing with the problem.

Esther explains her mid-course spiritual correction: "This was not an empty-nest syndrome, a passing whim, a mid-life crisis, depression, or even a need for a second career." Rather, she believes it was "a total awareness of a throw-away life, from a throw-away kid, who had a throw-away attitude about myself — and yet I could see that there was salvation for everyone else."

About the time she started dealing with these issues, she suffered a severe illness which left her unconscious for three months. As recovery began, she recalls a time when she could have given up her life. Her physician advised, "I can't help you any more. The fight is in you; if you lose it, you lose the battle." At that moment, she determined to turn her face away from the wall and give the situation to God. She describes the experience as a "head-on decision to hang onto the real and let go of the phony. My call was still there, and that was real."

Right after her hospital release, she returned to Eastern Nazarene College to earn a B.A. in social work in 1979, at age 54, and an M.A. in family counseling in 1982, at age 57. When quizzed about additional preparation, she replied, "I went back to school to get ready. If you try to do something without being prepared, you will really make a mess of it." Sanger credits Ruth

Bullock, Cecil Paul, and Timothy Smith as significant encouragers during those years of renewed education.

Her ministry to throw-away people started soon after she finished college with a hot line, using her home phone number. To get the word out, she simply scrawled a few handbills with this message: "Do you have problems? I'd be glad to help. Call 471-7075." Handbills were posted in subways, on telephone poles, and in all-night laundromats; and she personally distributed these announcements to people who lived on the streets, under bridges, in cemeteries, at the port, or on the beaches. With thanksgiving, she reports, "When I got home, the phone was ringing off the hook, and it hasn't stopped yet." Even now, Sanger and her husband operate the hot line, without help, from their residence on a twenty-four-hour-per-day basis.

Quincy Crisis Center, unlike most care agencies, takes help to people where they are. During crisis times, she cuts red tape so help can be given at the time it is most needed — day or night. Often, she delivers help herself without much thought about time, location, or safety. This ministry starts with food, shelter, and clothing, building on the assumption that it is easier to understand the message of Christ after basic physical needs are satisfied.

The long list of methods for helping people through Quincy Crisis Center is impressive, even incredible. When asked about her unique strategies, Esther Sanger replied, "If God calls you, He orders your steps. If you get up in the morning with a completely open mind and a determination to listen, you cannot help but go in the right direction."

In response to the first hot line calls, God directed Esther to cook for the hungry, and she took the food wherever it was needed. But as requests increased, she ran out of time, so she started serving hot meals from her family van. About this time, she asked Quincy officials to help feed homeless people. Their response: "There are no homeless people in Quincy." So to increase their awareness, she parked



NAZARENE MOTHER TERESA SERVES ON BOSTON'S SOUTHSHORE

her food distribution van in front of City Hall, where she served huge meals for as many as 125 persons each day; she parked the vehicle in the same location every day for six years.

Next, Sanger sensed that the elderly and single mothers needed food to take home, so she started a food pantry that delivers groceries to the needy. The next effort helped isolated elderly persons manage their money and provided transportation for medical care and shopping. Then a 30-foot mobile home

"In the abortion debate, there is a great deal of interest in the unborn child but very few places to help out after the baby is born."

was purchased and remodeled into bunks so street people could get out of the cold weather.

Describing herself as a pro-lifer, Sanger was burdened by the idea that "in the abortion debate, there is a great deal of interest in the unborn child but very few places to help out after the baby is born. The attitude is that the child has a right to life, but after it is born, who cares?" She knew something had to be done for deserted, sometimes battered women and their children.



The Mary-Martha Center models Christian love and acceptance.



"I am doing the most natural thing in the world. My phoniness is all over. I want my life to count."

So she went to prayer, all the while looking at warehouses, apartments, and old rooming houses, but nothing seemed right until she was directed to a perfect piece of property with a house and three acres, located in upscale Hingham. When she saw the facility for the first time, she said, "I felt this is a healing place. This is a place of peace." After many months of neighborhood opposition, extensive remodeling, bringing the building up to code, constructing additions, and fund raising, the Mary-Martha Learning Center opened. Facilities at the Center consist of an eighteen-room house with sleeping space for twenty persons, classrooms, offices, two kitchens, a dining room, living room, family room/children's day room, and laundry.

The Mary-Martha Learning Center, named after the Bible sisters, provides spiritual and emotional counseling and teaches money management, parenting, nutrition, and career planning. The Center's stated goal offers a place where homeless women with infants will be given assistance designed to enhance their physical well-being, intellectual and career growth, and to provide for spiritual and emotional enrichment. Women and children sometimes stay in the program as long as six months, and staffers help them find permanent housing. The Center models Christian acceptance and love.

In summarizing her inward journey that motivates her very active service to God and to throw-away people, Esther Sanger says, "There is nothing in the

whole world that can take the place of your church family. Your church family waits for you to go from birth to maturity, whether it takes 17, 25, 45, or 55 years. They are there. They wait. They are patient. They always open their arms to you when you go to them. To me, the Church of the Nazarene personalizes that, and I always have to remember that when I was not at my best, when I was withdrawing from that family, they still modeled what real love is."

When friends express surprise at the amazing intensity, broad scope, and raw energies needed for these compassionate ministries, Esther Sanger replies, "I am doing the most natural thing in the world. My phoniness is all over. I want my life to count."

And it does.

GROW

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HARVEST CHALLENGES IN NEW ENGLAND

The holiness work in Boston had already been in existence for nearly 30 years when the various groups merged at the 1908 Pilot Point General Assembly. Eleven churches had been organized by 1910 in the area now called Boston Metro — eight congregations started with the express purpose of reaching immigrating people. Thus, targeting responsive populations has been a part of Nazarene efforts from the beginning in New England.

Now a new day is dawning, and there is reason to believe God may be sending an awakening to New England again. Immigrant populations keep expanding all around us, providing large concentrations of responsive people with strange-sounding names for whom English is a second language. Although color, culture, ethnicity, religious background, and language keep changing in the ripening harvest fields, the Church of the Nazarene in New England and throughout North America must win converts from these recent arrivals and from the second generation of more established immigrant populations.

New strategies, additional resources, sanctified creativity, and imaginative ways of serving will be needed to meet the challenge, but we already have a start. Hats off to New England congregations who target special-language groups, offer multicultural ministries, and organize multicongregational churches. Honor is due hardworking, tentmaking ministers; 13 of 25 pastors in Metro Boston are bivocational. Often the tentmakers' young families and/or grown, extended families are a significant part of these heroic commitments. Gratitude must be expressed to congregations who share facilities; the cost of property makes it an absolute necessity. In Boston, 18 percent of all evangelical churches meet in facilities shared with other congregations.

The ripening harvest surrounds us. Beyond bigotry, fear, myths, and excuses, we hear the words of Jesus loud and clear: "Do not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest' I tell you, open your eyes and look at the field! They are ripe for harvest!" (John 4:35, NIV)

The challenge of Boston and New England is identical to the challenge everywhere: **GOD EXPECTS A HARVEST.** — Dennis M. Scott, Boston Metro Coordinator

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WILL HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF IN NEW ENGLAND?

As New England nears the 250th anniversary of the climax of the first Great Awakening, some New Englanders say another awakening may be in the offing. So far, no one is claiming anything comparable to the waves of revival that swept such towns as Boston and Northampton, Massachusetts, in the mid-1700s. But many church leaders note an increasingly visible surge of evangelical piety in a region known for its reserve.

"We're on the brink of something," claims Stephen Macchia, president of the Evangelistic Association of New England (EANE). "There's a movement afoot, and everyone I talk to in the evangelical community says the same thing."

The signs of resurgence take several forms, say evangelical church leaders. Perhaps the most noticeable have to do with the growing number of churches. Assemblies of God congregations, for example, have almost doubled in the last 20 years or so, with church membership climbing from less than 8,000 in 1968 to approximately 25,000 in 1988, according to Sherri Doty Cousens, statistician at the denomination's international headquarters.

While the Southern Baptist Convention claimed only 31 congregations in New England two decades ago, the figure now stands at 175. Some of them are small and without their own church buildings, but Larry Martin of the Greater Boston Baptist Association says many are thriving. "God seems to be opening doors faster than we can keep up with," he states.

Southern Baptists and other church groups report an especially fertile mission field among the region's urban ethnic populations. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, has strengthened

a number of ethnic congregations through its Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) in inner-city Boston. The center offers multilingual classes and allows pastors to complete all degree requirements without leaving the city.

Heightened interest in evangelism training is another indication of possible revival, observers note. Attendance at an annual regional evangelical training conference for pastors and laity rose from a typical 400 in the late 1960s to multiple thousands in recent years. The approximately 6,000 who gathered in Boston's Hynes Auditorium for EANE's Congress '85 made the event the city's fourth-largest convention that year. Macchia said EANE is working to see "every willing Christian in New England involved in evangelism."

A mainline infusion

In addition to evangelical denominations, mainline liberal churches are being touched by charismatic and evangelical renewal, says Carlene Hill, editor of EANE's *New England Church Life*. These include United Church of Christ and Episcopal congregations.

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary is at least partly responsible, observers agree. Garth Rosell, professor of church history and director of Gordon-Conwell's Ockenga Institute, notes that the seminary has fed hundreds of graduates into churches in surrounding communities. "What we are beginning to see," says Rosell, "is that a lot of the old, traditional, mainline churches have been infused by new people — young, biblically trained pastors and youth leaders who, over a period of time, have been bringing about changes in those churches."

But not everyone is convinced there

is significant evangelical resurgence in New England. While David Roozen, director of the Center for Social and Religious Research at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, believes evangelicalism in New England is "a source of religious vitality to be watched," he believes it "still has at best a foothold." All Protestant bodies in the region are extremely small, he notes, with no Protestant denomination claiming more than 5 percent of the population in any of the New England states.

Growing vitality

Rosell believes, however, that one of the most hopeful signs of renewal has to do not with statistics and more visible indicators, but with a growing vitality that expresses itself in the spread of Bible-study and prayer groups. He said such groups are "emerging in remarkable profusion throughout New England."

Don Gill, until recently president of EANE, says he has seen significant gains in the impact of evangelicalism in the almost 20 years he worked with EANE. But he is also careful to suggest that renewal is best seen in the light of "ongoing development." Said Gill, "When we talk about renewal or revival, a lot of people think in terms of some kind of spiritual brush fire that sweeps across the area and has a lot of emotion. If that's what people are looking for, I think they are bound for disappointment. On the other hand, if you look at the situation in terms of emplacement of congregations and entities that have a gospel base and a gospel center," he said, "something significant is indeed taking place."

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Growth Markings & Main Points

People are not talked into the kingdom. They are loved in.
W. Charles Arn

A major shift in leadership style is often necessary to maintain growth. In situations where the entrepreneur or founding pastor maintains control and is unwilling or unable to include others in the planning, and to delegate responsibilities, the organization's strength and achievements plateau. In churches where the "shepherd" is unable to acquire the skills of a "rancher," the church levels off to the number of members and groups that one shepherd can control.

George G. Hunter III

To start rapid growth by multiplication, we must encourage our own local church (be we pastor, layman, or missionary) to reproduce itself in another part of the city or in a neighboring town or village.

Paul David



Thanks to a nearby rock pile, a beach message for rescue 'copters was quickly put into place after an abrupt end to Pastor and Mrs. Leonard Quigley's summer sailing vacation.



Robertson

The ministry and purpose of the local church today must reflect the ministry and purpose of Christ. If "ministry" for laypersons in the church today is defined outside of this basic purpose, it is either substantially incomplete or simply inaccurate.

W. Charles Arn

An inactive Christian is as impossible as a hot snowball.

Kent R. Hunter

Whether persons are transferring to a new church or are looking for their first church, they always visit before joining. Visitors are the only source of church growth (except for biological growth—children of believers). If visitors do not feel genuinely welcome, needed, or wanted, they seldom return.

Win Arn

Where the people of God are most receptive, seeking God's power with all their hearts, we are assured that the power will come in God's good time.

George G. Hunter III

All methods of evangelism have their place: radio evangelism, television evangelism, medical evangelism, mass evangelism, personal evangelism, educational evangelism, and presence evangelism. But God's primary method of evangelism in a new community is by planting a New Testament church to reach the area with the gospel.

Elmer L. Towns

Fellowship in dynamic churches is nurtured by the Word, the Holy Spirit, prayer, service, and the mutual support of fellow members. It is heart-to-heart and has the substance of reality. Honest, loving care is so rich that people often refuse to accept promotions if it requires moving away from their church.

John N. Vaughan

Quality and quantity growth are inseparable. Quantity without quality is false growth. It's short term; it cannot last. Quality without quantity is self-centered and suffers in the stagnancy of arthritic religion.

Kent R. Hunter



101-YEAR-OLD MALDEN CHURCH SHARES FACILITIES

ATTENDANCE NEARS 200 IN HAITIAN CHURCH

Two growing congregations share the facilities of the Malden Church of the Nazarene, near Boston. If you stand in the main hall, which links sanctuary and fellowship area, on Sundays between 11 a.m. and noon, you hear noble sounds coming from two separate congregations using different languages and distinct worship styles. The combined impact of these two congregations for Christ's Kingdom is impressive and thrilling.

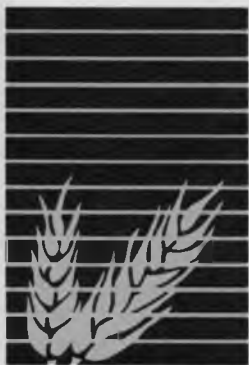
The English-speaking congregation, organized in 1889, stands as a beacon of ministry to its community and a symbol of missionary zeal for the world. Its services, led by Pastor Prescott Newhall, are warmly Nazarene, with a New England Yankee atmosphere. About three years ago, in a spirit of missionary generosity, Malden Church opened its fellowship hall to a new Haitian congregation for worship.

The newer congregation sings, prays, and preaches in Creole. Their Haitian worship pattern includes spirited singing, accompanied by guitars and tambourines. Pastor Dan Marechal started this church in January 1987 with less than twenty in attendance. At the end of the first year, the church averaged 60 in attendance and 312 people came to celebrate their first anniversary. The church, organized in June of 1989 with 53 charter members, now frequently exceeds 200 in worship attendance.



Dennis Scott and Pastor Dan Marechal.





Pastor Marechal was called to Christian ministry while attending Eastern Nazarene College. In addition to his pastoral ministry, he works as a full-time case worker for the state welfare system. Brother Marechal chairs the New England District Haitian Council, which resources Haitian pastors and sponsors a Haitian camp meeting. At present, Pastor Marechal is leading his church to sponsor two home Bible studies which he expects will eventually become organized Nazarene congregations.

GROW salutes Pastor Marechal, his growing congregation, and the Malden Church for the impressive church growth record that has been achieved in such a short period of time.





As a first step for starting the Church of the Nazarene in 1936 on the Cape Verde Island of St. Vincente, Rev. John Dias rented a house. Dias, a native Cape Verdean, had returned to his homeland to share the gospel after being led to Christ

through the Church of the Nazarene in the United States. Soon after Dias moved into the house, he shared the message of Christ with Antonio, the property owner's ten-year-old son — this was the first time the boy had heard the evangelistic message.

Dias' simple witness began a rippling effect of the gospel which started Antonio Leite on a journey of faith taking him into fellowship with the Nazarenes, into pastoral assignments in three different world areas, and to planting a new church in the greater Boston area. Many assisted in this effort, including pioneer leader John Dias, missionaries like Everette Howard and Earl Mosteller, North American district leaders like Bill Taylor and Neale O. McLain, and unnamed missionary prayer partners in hundreds of Nazarene churches around the world.

Pastor Leite is a sterling example of national leaders, both clergy and laity, who bring ministry and missions from their countries to the United States. In several North American cities, minority populations are being effectively served by personnel from their homelands. It is literally true — missions have come home, providing unparalleled church growth opportunities and presenting pressing gospel needs. Cape Verde, Cuba, Haiti, Hong Kong, Japan, China, Latin America, India, and many other regions of the world have come to Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Toronto, and Chicago.

The ministry of Antonio Leite has taken him to three world areas including Cape Verde, Brazil, and the United States. He served six churches in Cape Verde: Nova Sintra, Brava; Mindelo, St. Vincente; Mosteiros, Fogo; Assomada, Santiago; Ribeira Brava, St. Nicolau; and the Maude Chapman Memorial Church in Praia, St. James. Veteran Missionary Earl Mosteller says that during Leite's six-year pastorate at Praia, the church had more than 300 members, 400 in attendance, and 1,000 in Sunday school (central and suburbs).

Then, in 1972, the Leites moved to Brazil, where they served the Belo Horivonte Church and Indianapolis Church in Sao Paulo — a city of 18 million people. In

PASTOR LEITE BRINGS GOSPEL TO BOSTON

MISSIONS COME HOME FROM CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

addition to pastoral duties during those seven years in Brazil, Leite served as district treasurer and taught in the Bible College.

About ten years ago, Pastor Leite began a new work among the Portuguese people of the Boston area, where he founded the Emaus Church. This church plant met for several years in a facility called Boston Chapel and then moved in 1984 to the campus of East-

ern Nazarene College. Last year, the church averaged 105 in attendance. Members of the congregation commute from places like Chelsea, Dorchester, Roxbury, Brockton, and Cambridge; the drive time for many is 30 to 40 minutes. When asked about the opportunity, Leite estimates more than 75,000 Portuguese-speaking people live near Boston, including Brazilians, Cape Verdeans, Azoreans, and Portuguese.

The Leite family includes seven children and several grandchildren. Mrs. Leite is a school teacher in the Brockton public schools. Pastor Leite keeps close contact with new immigrants as president of the Boston Public School Parent Advisory Council for Cape Verdeans. He is able to minister more effectively to both his congregation and community people because of his recently earned M.A. in family counseling, completed at age 59, from Eastern Nazarene College. Recently, Pastor Leite's son, Daniel, a Nazarene elder from Brazil, joined his father in the ministry at the Emaus Church.

When asked about his most pressing concern, Antonio Leite spoke of the tremendous gospel opportunities among immigrant people: "Those who have recently arrived are usually open to the gospel because they have so many struggles with languages and customs." He believes the fields are especially ripe for our church because so many people from Cape Verde knew about the Nazarenes before moving to the United States — that's a distinct advantage, if we use it.

GROW salutes Pastor Leite for faithful ministry in three countries. In a faith-inspiring way, both his salvation and the quality of his service are results of Nazarenes' prayers from another era for the people of Cape Verde. Now, like many other brothers and sisters from mission areas, Pastor Leite has come to minister among us — that makes the home church stronger and better.

Because of the faithful prayers of present-day Christians, there is a very strong likelihood that the Head of the Harvest is preparing other workers just like Brother Leite in many locations around the world.

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PIONEER AREA STARTS 11 NEW WORKS IN 5 YEARS

CONNECTICUT WORSHIP ATTENDANCE TOPS 1,000

God used a cassette, a prayer box, and a Graham Crusade to burden Alex Cubie with the spiritual needs of Connecticut. While driving across New York State late one night, Cubie listened to a recording of the Pasadena (California) First Church choir singing, "I'll say yes, Lord, yes, to your will and to your way." Cubie was deeply moved by the simple call to all-out commitment without even a hint of future events.

The prayer box was used for requests in Cubie's adult Sunday school in his home church at Manchester, Connecticut. Remembering the impact of the cassette, Alex placed a personal promise in the prayer box: "I'll say yes, Lord, yes." Like any good Sunday school teacher, he challenged his class with the fact that the Lord will do strange and wonderful things when we sing that chorus with conviction. Little did Cubie realize what was about to take place in his own life.

About the time the Connecticut Pioneer Area idea started, Cubie served on the Executive Committee for the Hartford Graham Crusade, where God provided the highest decision ratio in any U.S.A. crusade. Cubie says, "I was flabbergasted to see how God was moving." Alex also learned that one million people — about one-third of the entire state population — are completely unchurched, with no affiliation.

While God was preparing Cubie, He was simultaneously leading the New England District and the Church Growth Division to consider establishing a Connecticut Pioneer Area. Dis-



ALEX AND GREETA CUBIE: Connecticut Pioneer Area Coordinator.

trict Superintendent Neale O. McLain and Church Growth Division Director Bill M. Sullivan were key leaders in the decision.

Just five years ago, in July 1985, the New England District named Cubie the Pioneer Area Coordinator. He reports, "At that time, there were six churches in the Connecticut area of the New England District. Two were organized between 1900-1920, two were organized between 1920-1940, one between 1940-1970, and one in 1980." Cubie continues, "The Homesteaders were those churches organized before 1980: Manchester, Hartford First, Danielson, Wallingford, Preston, and Hartford Calvary."

Eleven pioneer works have been started in the five-year period, including Rockville, Groton, Enfield, Hartford Hispanic, Colchester, East Hartford, New Britain Hispanic, Waterbury, Waterbury Hispanic, Meriden Hispanic and Holyoke Hispanic.

This passion for achieving Christ's mission in Connecticut has several supportive ministries including the Connecticut Bible Training Institute (a Nazarene Bible College extension), a John Wesley Prayer and Fasting League, a Joshua and Caleb Society (monthly prayer meetings for pastors), Nazarene Happy Hour (a monthly evangelistic rally for all churches), annual ladies' retreats, and Canvas Cathedral Camp-meetings. Twelve persons have already been called into ministry and granted local ministers' licenses; they are being trained as present and future leaders in the churches and in the Institute.

**KEVIN McLAIN,
CUBIE, JAMES
SHIELDS:** *These pastors
were pupils in Cubie's boys'
Sunday School Class years
ago at Manchester.*



**We are planting churches
in the tradition of Paul,
training lay preachers in the spirit
of John Wesley,
and focusing on the
mission statement of Jesus,
“to seek and save
those that are lost.”**



CUBIE PRAYS FOR CHURCH PLANTERS: *Prayer forms important part of planting strategy.*

PIONEER AREA

Connecticut Pioneer Area Diary

-
- May 16-19, 1985 - **Billy Graham Crusade at Hartford** - Cubie chairs lay workers committee.
-
- July 1985 - **Alex Cubie Named Pioneer Leader** - Only six Nazarene churches exist in the area.
-
- May 1, 1986 - **Rockville** - Raymond Grazel appoints church planter and starts two Bible studies.
-
- May 1, 1986 - **Enfield** - Kevin McLain begins Bible study.
-
- July 1, 1986 - **Groton** - Military Chaplain Larry Kendrick starts holding services.
-
- November 1986 - **Rockville** - First services are held, with monthly average of 25.
-
- February 1987 - **Rockville** - Monthly average of 68 makes it necessary to increase size of sanctuary.
-
- March 22, 1987 - **Hartford Hispanic** - Church is organized, with Pastor Sepulveda.
-
- June 1, 1987 - **Enfield** - Pastor Douglas Fish starts the work.
-
- June 6, 1987 - **Rockville** - Church is organized, with 25 members.
-
- September 1, 1987 - **Colchester** - Pastor Kevin McLain organizes Bible studies.
-
- October 25, 1987 - **East Hartford** - Pastor Jim Shield begins services at YMCA.
-
- December 6, 1987 - **Colchester** - Pastor Kevin McLain begins services.
-
- January 3, 1988 - **New Britain** - Pastor Freddie Lebron starts church-type mission.
-
- January 1988 - **Waterbury** - Pastor Gerald Eddie of Wallingford Church begins Bible studies in Waterbury.
-
- April 3, 1988 - **Enfield** - Church is organized.
-
- April 1988 - **Redletter Day #1** - Connecticut churches go over 1,000 on Sunday morning attendance for the first time.
-
- September 1988 - **Groton** - Pastor Clifford Bernier assumes pastorate when Chaplain Kendrick is transferred.
-
- February 12, 1989 - **Waterbury** - First service, with 39 in attendance.
-
- April 29, 1989 - **New Britain Hispanic** - Church organized, with Rev. Freddie Lebron as pastor.
-
- May 1989 - **Redletter Day #2** - Connecticut churches go over 800 in Sunday school and 1,056 in worship attendance. 35 percent are from new churches.
-
- June 1989 - **Holyoke Hispanic** - Starts with Carmen Santa as a church-type mission.
-
- October 1, 1989 - **Waterbury Hispanic** - Holds first service under leadership of Pastor Ramon Sepulveda.
-
- October 1, 1989 - **Meriden Hispanic** - Holds first service under leadership of Pastor Daniel Blanco.
-
- October 1989 - **Manchester First** - Dedicates new church building.
-
- January 21, 1990 - **Colchester** - Church is organized, with Rev. Kevin McLain as pastor.
-



Pastor Abraham Santa, Hartford Hispanic



Pastor Clifford Bernier, Groton

**The creation of a new baby church fosters excitement
and paternal instincts across the district.
The old adage is true: new blood vitalizes old blood,
new converts challenge old converts.**



Pastor James Shields, East Hartford



Pastor Freddy Lebron, New Britain Hispanic



Pastor Kevin McLain, Colchester



Pastor Tim Simpson, Enfield

The attendance in the pioneer churches during the spring of 1990 is 42 percent of the Connecticut area, with a worship attendance of 1,000.



Pastor Ramon Sepulveda, Waterbury Hispanic



Pioneer Area Leader Cubie rejoices in the progress of Connecticut.



QUESTION:

Pastor's Guidance?
Parental Influence?
Prayerful Concern?
Personal Decision?

... Which influence is greatest in determining a young person's choice of a college?

ANSWER:

ALL OF THE ABOVE!

Pastor, this summer many young people are still making final plans for college attendance.

... Where will they go?

... What will be the perspective of their professors?

... Who will be their friends?

... Will they graduate with a desire to serve Christ "in this present world"?

Pastor, share your concern and prayers *now* with your college-age young people. Urge them to attend their regional Nazarene college. Consult your church board and, if possible, offer a church scholarship to *every young person* who attends your Nazarene college. Include these concerns in your personal and pastoral prayers.

THE RESULT WILL BEAR ETERNAL DIVIDENDS

Stephen W. Nease, Education Commissioner

Along the Revival Trail With Norman Moore



Here's an inside view in a typical month in the ministry of Norman Moore, who is convinced that "Heaven will be fuller than it would have been, and Hell will be emptier than it would have been" because of his ministry.



The 41-year-old evangelist had just finished loading his luggage in the trunk. "Well, it's time to go again," Norman Moore said, as he hugged and kissed his wife, Vickie, and 14-year-old daughter, Nickie, goodbye.

Nickie had just finished breakfast, was collecting her schoolbooks, about to climb into her mom's blue Ford Taurus and be driven to Tri-City Christian School, where she is a freshman and a cheerleader.

ALONG THE REVIVAL TRAIL WITH NORMAN MOORE

Norman began the familiar routine of driving to the San Diego airport, parking in the long-term lot, and checking his luggage. He boarded a United flight to Sacramento.



OROVILLE, CALIFORNIA

This time, the plane was only ten minutes late. Norman was greeted by the pastor, Ed Redfern. After picking up the luggage, they were soon north-bound on Interstate 5 on their way to Oroville, where Pastor Redfern has served for more than 13 years. On the way, they stopped to fill up with gas and get a yogurt.

A few hours later, Norman Moore, dressed in a predictable dark traditional suit and white shirt, stepped onto the platform. As the service progressed, Norman silently wondered about who the people were, and what their needs were. He prayed and meditated, seeking the leadership of the Holy Spirit about what to preach. Norman is continually mindful of his sense of divine calling to evangelism, rooted in Jeremiah 1:7-8: "But the Lord said to me, 'Do not say I am only a child. You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.'"

Night after night, an invitation was given following the message. Sincere, needy people came forward in each service and knelt at the altar to receive spiritual help.

Two unusually thrilling victories came on Sunday morning. Dwayne, 16, came from a difficult home situation of drug addiction, alcoholism, abuse, and even Satan worship. It got so bad that the local authorities placed Dwayne in a foster home, a family in the church. During the invitation, both Dwayne and his new foster brother, Tom, 14, came forward, knelt at the altar, and prayed to

receive Jesus as their Savior. What a sight! Two boys from two different backgrounds: Tom from a strong Christian home, Dwayne from a home about as rough as they come, both with the same need to be saved. The hugs, tears, and smiles seemed endless as the family celebrated what God had done.

The discomfort of Norman's time away from his family is eased by their nightly phone appointment at 9 o'clock, when they catch up on the events of the day and have a family prayer together.

Pastor Ed Redfern reports: "We had just concluded our revival services and it was a very refreshing meeting for our church. We have been in an extensive building program that has taxed the congregation's energy. Our evangelist was sensitive to the Holy Spirit's direction for us, and preached the Word of God that encouraged us and inspired us to keep going. His messages are scripturally sound and well-illustrated so that everyone is able to understand. He allows the Holy Spirit to bring conviction without getting in the way. That is the mark of a gifted spokesman for God: to be the channel through which the Lord can speak."



HOME AGAIN

On Monday morning, it was back to Sacramento to catch a flight to San Diego for a few days with Vickie and Nickie. The family's ability to cope with the heavy travel schedule is further assisted by Norman's flying round-trip each week, returning home after every revival.

Having arrived back at their home in Vista, Norman was greeted with a hug and kiss from Vickie. Nickie was still in school. Vickie surprised Norman with his favorite dessert: home-baked cherry chocolate fudge cake and Dreyer's marble fudge ice cream.

At home, the normal agenda includes: review phone messages, read the mail, mow the lawn, and "tag up" by phone with the staff of Norman Moore Ministries in the office in Chandler, Arizona.

Normally, the family enjoys a night out for dinner and a trip to the nearby mall in Escondido, or a walk on the beach in Carlsbad.

Norman tries to see his favorite television show on Tuesday nights, the story of a clever southern attorney, *Matlock*, played by Andy Griffith. Often, while Nickie is in school, Norman and his wife take a two-mile aerobic walk together.

A special feature during the time at home is "share day," when Norman either takes Nickie out to breakfast before school or picks her up at school to go out to lunch for a dad-and-daughter visit. It is obvious that they work at having quality family time together.

Next, it was a long flight from San Diego to Tampa, Florida. Norman was glad to have the extra time on the plane for ministry planning, writing, and reading.



LAKELAND, FLORIDA

Upon arrival in Tampa, Moore was welcomed by W. Donald Wellman, pastor of the Highland Park Church in Lakeland.

The pastor drove his guest evangelist to the Sheraton on South Florida Avenue after they stopped by the church for a "sound check."

Sunday had been announced as a "Great day of evangelism." Regarding this special Sunday, Pastor Wellman reports, "Our congregation was deeply moved by our evangelist's unique, biblical approach to evangelism."

Early Monday morning, the pastor and evangelist made their way through the rush-hour traffic to the Tampa airport.



HOME AGAIN

Soon aboard — no tie, no books to read, no yellow pad on which to write — Norman was tired and needed a day off. After he had enjoyed the cheese omelet breakfast served by the United stewardess, he slept all the way to Denver, where it was necessary to change planes for San Diego.

At home again, in addition to the normal responsibilities, Evangelist Moore had to squeeze in time to write his article for the next issue of *Harvestimes*, his semi-monthly newsletter.



PHOENIX, ARIZONA

The next Wednesday-through-Sunday revival was to be Moore's third visit to the Monte Vista Church in Phoenix. Pastor Dave McGarrah met the America West flight. They climbed into the church van and stopped for a quick burrito at a favorite Mexican restaurant.

Norman welcomed the chance to work mornings and afternoons at his ministry's office in nearby Chandler. Those hours were productively spent working with Doug Pierce, executive administrator and media director; Ruth DeLong, personal evangelism training coordinator and development associate; and with Jo Noder, secretary.

During the week, Evangelist Jimmy Dell, Pastor McGarrah, District Superintendent Bill Burch, and Norman Moore got together at a Chinese restaurant in Chandler for lunch and enjoyed a time of rich fellowship.

Pastor McGarrah reports, "The Monte Vista Nazarene Church has been the recipient of some special blessings of God's Holy Spirit. In a recent revival, we saw a number of lives changed as God

answered prayer. A young woman by the name of Erma knelt at an altar of prayer and received Christ as her personal Savior. After visiting with her for a few minutes, she shared that she had never been to church before in her life. And God had touched her that morning to the point that she will never be the same again. It's been a real joy, watching her grow.

"One other couple that specifically stands out knelt at an altar of prayer and found Christ. They have done more to light the rest of the church on fire than perhaps anything else. Their growth and excitement has been contagious. It was a great week, and the revival created eternal results."



HOME AGAIN

On Monday morning, Norman met with his staff in the Chandler office and finalized plans with Doug Pierce for an upcoming television project. Then he caught a 10:55 flight back to San Diego.

Vickie and Nickie knew that they would have less than 48 hours with the man of their house this week, so they carefully budgeted every hour.



BETHANY, OKLAHOMA

Next stop: Bethany, Oklahoma. Norman was glad to see Pastor Lee Steele and Youth Pastor Brian Wiesinger again. The Lake Overholser Church was ready for revival. There was evidence of good preparation: advance prayer meetings, proper advertising, and schedule priority.

Pastor Lee Steele described one man's victory: "He was uprooted and transplanted here. Seeking God's purpose, he came to the altar, surrendering his will and agreeing to God's will. He was led by

the Spirit to make a major contribution to totally replace the roofing on the sanctuary, gym, and educational facilities! Thank God for revival! Another major victory was a lady who came from her unholy alliance with a live-in, alcoholic boyfriend to deliverance, joy, and peace and a new-found family — our church! I've never had a revival where I've had more lingering results and continuing glow. We had a turnaround. People who were just hanging on are now excited about their church. The preaching was current, real, livable, and understandable. Thank God for revival!"



HOME AGAIN

Monday, after breakfast in the Steeles' home, the pastor drove his evangelist to the Oklahoma City airport and said, "Goodbye 'til next time."

Again, Norman flew home to his family with a strong sense of fulfillment, knowing that men, women, teenagers, and children had discovered new spiritual victory. With tears in his eyes, he said, "There's real satisfaction in knowing that someday, when it's all over down here, I'll meet some folks in heaven whom the Lord used me to reach, and some of them may not have been reached any other way."

A special victory was experienced when Norman and a friends made a personal call on Tom, 31, who had been in serious trouble. He had been divorced twice, a user of cocaine, marijuana, and alcohol. He had served "hard time" in the state penitentiary for a felony drug conviction, and had recently been released from the county jail from another conviction. He was having a hard time keeping a job. Tom's life was a tangled mess of drugs, alcohol, girlfriends, guilt, and self hate.

After a lengthy conversation, the plan of salvation was presented to Tom. He responded by praying to receive Jesus Christ as his Savior. There were smiles, tears, and a firm handshake as Tom thanked them for their visit.



Dorchester Immanuel Shares Sanctuary With Haitian Church

Two Congregations Minister to 150 in Same Facility

Lazare Mathurin, for most of a decade, worshiped and fellowshiped with the Dorchester Immanuel Church near Boston — an English-speaking congregation composed mostly of people with West Indian roots. But in response to his evangelistic passion dating back to his graduation from the Nazarene Bible School in Haiti in 1968, Mathurin asked for permission from the Immanuel Church to begin Creole-language services on Sunday afternoon in the Dorchester church facilities. The work began when Pastor Joannes Leatham and the church board of the

Immanuel Church approved.

Pastor Mathurin started services in 1988, and the church was organized with 29 members in May of 1989. Early in 1988, Raoul Pierre joined the Haitian congregation as associate pastor. Now, the Haitian Church averages 75 and the Immanuel Church has a monthly attendance of 75.

The church growth record is impressive: one congregation multiplied to two; the combined attendance has doubled the number of people receiving ministry; and Pastor Mathurin has brought missions from Haiti to Boston.



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*An adequate budget for evangelism at the beginning of each church year is imperative for each congregation.
 A revival savings account is useful in building toward adequate support for the evangelist.*

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Sixty-Six Pastors Study at Large Church School

GOAL: 50 CHURCHES OF 1,000 MEMBERS BY YEAR 2000

Sixty-six Nazarene pastors from churches with more than 250 members studied with national management experts at the third session of the School of Large Church Management at Phoenix, January 15-19, 1990. Over a three-year period, the school's curriculum will deal with 24 critical leadership concepts. Four topics are covered in each weekly session; two sessions are held each year. All 24 concepts will be covered in 1989-90-91 sessions.

Faculty members from the University of Central Florida taught in the two 1989 sessions at Orlando. The first meeting of 1990, held in Phoenix, was resourced by Bob Kreitner and Angelo Kinicki — both Arizona State University School of Management professors and published management specialists. Training during the January meeting focused on four topics: Building the Team, The Supervision Process, Conflict Management, and Motivation. Los Angeles will be the location of the next session on October 15-19, 1990.

An impressive list of church leaders from outside the Church of the Nazarene at the Phoenix session included Dr. David McKenna, president of Asbury Seminary and author of a recent book entitled *Power to Follow, Grace to Lead*; Dr. Richard Jackson, pastor of the 20,000-member

North Phoenix Baptist Church; Terry McIlvian, associate pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church; and John Vaughan, director of International Mega-Church Research Center, Southwest Baptist University, at Bolivar, Missouri. The format of the school includes lectures, inspirational messages, ecclesiastical perspectives, interaction with resource leaders, and network discussions in peer groups.

K-Church, an abbreviation for kilo (a prefix meaning 1,000 in the metric system), is a short way to explain the goal of growing 50 Nazarene churches to 1,000 members by the year 2000. The K-Church Project began at the 1988 PALCONS when the plan was presented in church size seminars. An inspirational conference followed in November 1988 in Los Angeles. Then in January 1989, the first School of Large Church Management was held at the Orlando Sheraton Airport Hotel. A second session of the school was held at the Orlando Marriott Hotel in October 1989. The third session met at the Airport Holiday Inn East in Phoenix in January 1990.

When asked to outline characteristics of the School of Large Church Management, Dr. Bill M. Sullivan, Church Growth Division director for the Church of the Nazarene and founder of the schools, summarized:

1. All participants have demonstrated ability to lead churches with 250 or more members; all have considerable experience and expertise.

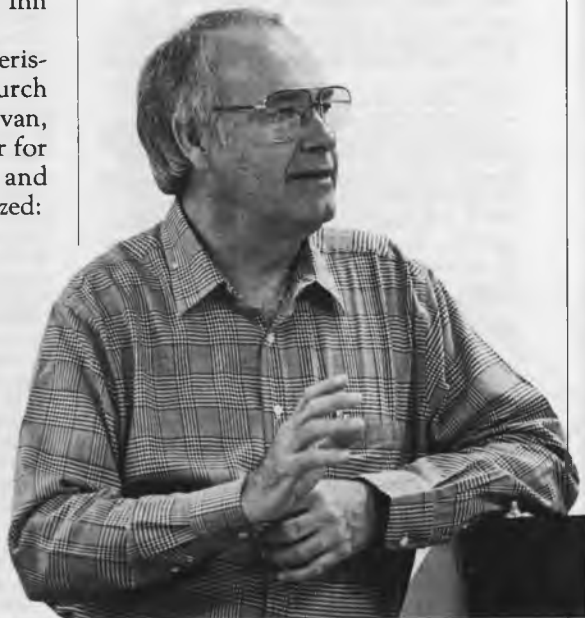
2. A positive atmosphere prevails; everyone appears hopeful and optimistic.

3. Pastors seem grateful that the denomination provides such a program.

4. There is an impressive eagerness to learn and a passionate desire to reach the lost for Christ.

5. One participant is preparing a *Large Church Operations Manual*; perhaps a computer floppy disk can be provided so adaptations can be easily made and the document can be personalized for each church.

6. Our goal is to see churches with 250 members or more grow to more than 1,000 members by the end of this decade.



**Goal:
50 Nazarene
Churches to Grow
to 1,000 Members
by the year 2000.**



Dr. Bob Kreitner, Professor,
*Arizona State University School of
Management.*

Pastor Daniel R. Gales,
Calgary, Alberta.



Pastor Richard Jackson of 20,000-member North Phoenix Baptist Church, *Resource person.*



Network Group *Discussing New Ideas.*

John Vaugh, *Director, International Mega-Church Research Center.*



Pastor John Howald, Canton, Ohio.
Bruce Jones, Syracuse First Baptist Church.



Pastor Larry Dennis
and Dr. Richard Jackson.

Network Leaders discuss Church Growth strategies.



Pastor Walter Crow,
 Clarkesville, TN, and
Pastor Jarrell W. Garsee,
 Anaheim, CA.



Pastor Stanley Moore, Beulah Church,
 Brooklyn, NY, and **Pastor Clarence Jacobs**,
 Miller Memorial Church, Brooklyn, NY.





Pastor Verdean Owens, Kokomo, Indiana.

**Large Church School
Focused on Four Topics:
Building the Team, The
Supervision Process,
Conflict Management,
and Motivation.**



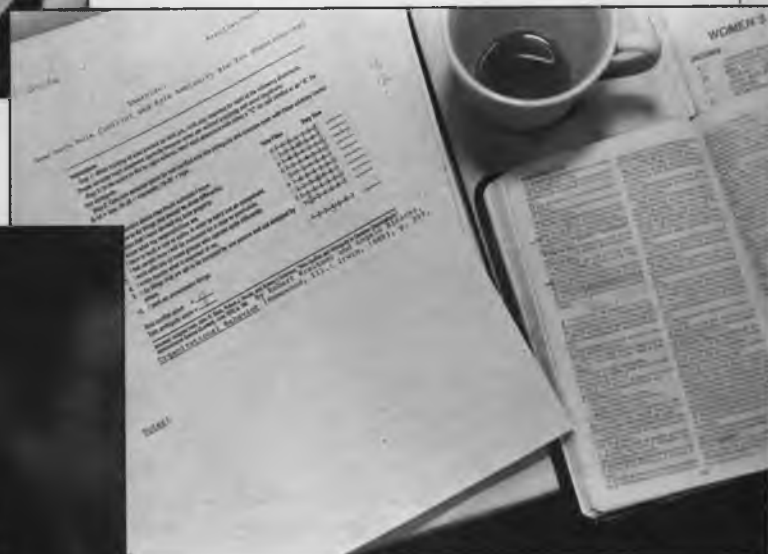
Pastor Stanley Moore, Brooklyn.

Pastor John Payton, San Luis Obispo, California.



Geographic Region Meeting.

Pastor Mack Fuller, Mesa, Arizona.



TO: Pastors

**FROM: President Jerry D. Lambert
Nazarene Bible College**

RE: Prospects in your church

Is God calling laypeople in your congregation
to ministry?

Are they older than average college age—
perhaps with families?

Do they know that Nazarene Bible College was established
just to serve them?

Dr. Paul Cunningham, pastor of Olathe,
Kans., College Church, found just such a
couple—Richard and Hollie Crumley—and
directed them to NBC. As freshmen, they
greeted Dr. Cunningham when he spoke in
chapel in Colorado Springs.



Why not use the form below to assist the college in contacting your parishioners
who need to train for ministry. Just fill it out and mail TODAY!

Please send application materials to _____
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(street address)

(city)

(state)

(zip)

Comments: _____

Pastor

Mail to: NAZARENE BIBLE COLLEGE, P.O. Box 15947, Colorado Springs, CO 80935





ROOTED IN CHRIST

— Personal Growth Helps for Leaders —

LEADERSHIP Through Encouragement

WEEK ONE

THE MINISTRY OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another" (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

The original word for encouragement, **paracletos**, is one of the most beautiful in the Greek language. It means "to be alongside of," "rendering cheerful and supportive influence," "to be a strong fortress," "to give strength and courage." It is the word Jesus chose to describe the special office work of the Holy Spirit. It is variously translated as comforter, advocate, helper, counselor, enabler.

Dana Walling tells a moving story about attending the Special Olympics in the Los Angeles Coliseum on behalf of Joey, a mongoloid teenage friend. Joey's best race was the 440. Sure enough, he soon broke out of the pack and was thirty yards ahead of the next best competitor as he headed down the stretch. Just before he got to the finish line, he looked back and saw the boy giving chase stumble and fall. Joey skidded to a stop, turned around, went back, helped the boy up, put his arm around him, and the two continued

down the track, crossing the finish line together — in last place!

"There were times," Dana confesses, "when I prayed, 'Oh, God, I thank Thee that I am not like Joey.' But on that day I prayed, 'Oh, God, please make me like Joey.'"

WEEK TWO

A MODEL OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"And Joseph, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means, Son of Encouragement) . . ." (Acts 4:36)

With good reason did the apostles give Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, the nickname of **encourager**. When the Jerusalem apostles refused to have anything to do with the newly converted persecutor, Paul, because of fear, it was Barnabas who "took hold of him and brought him to the apostles" (Acts 9:27). It was Barnabas who later sought out Paul and encouraged him to join him in the work at Antioch. Together they launched the first and greatest missionary movement in the history of the church (Acts 11:25-27; 13:1-3).

Barnabas was to play a key role as **encourager** in the life of another young believer as well. When John Mark wanted to join Paul and Barnabas on their second missionary journey, Paul refused to take him along because he had left them earlier (Acts 13:13). This

precipitated "such a sharp disagreement" between Paul and Barnabas "that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus" (Acts 15:39). Barnabas, ever the encourager, stuck by Mark.

Because Barnabas **encouraged** Paul, the "persecutor," the Church found its greatest apostle, missionary, and theologian. Because Barnabas **encouraged** Mark, the "missionary drop-out," the church discovered its first gospel writer.

WEEK THREE

ENCOURAGEMENT'S SURPRISING DIVIDENDS

"I appeal to you for my child, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, Onesimus" (Philemon 10).

Paul wrote this delightful little letter, Philemon, on behalf of Onesimus, a runaway slave. In it, Paul asked Philemon to receive Onesimus back, "no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother" (v. 16). More than that, Paul wanted Philemon to release him so that "he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel" (v. 13).

What happened to Onesimus? The New Testament doesn't say. We discover in reading early church history, however, that Onesimus was set free

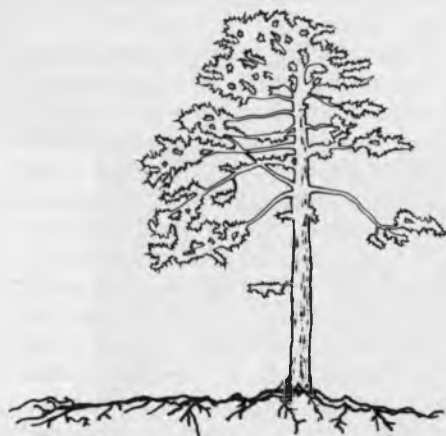
ENCOURAGEMENT'S SURPRISING REWARDS

"And He saw a certain poor widow putting in two small copper coins. And He said, 'Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them'" (Luke 21:2-3).

Helen Divine gave my son Dean five dollars for the mission one day. He protested. She insisted. She had been moved out of her shabby little room and so had a little extra rent money. Though now homeless herself, she still wanted to help others in worse need!

Having just signed papers to purchase an office-warehouse complex next to the church for the purpose of caring for the homeless, Dean accepted the five dollars as the very first contribution toward a \$60,000 down payment he had to raise in 90 days. District Assembly began the next morning. During his mission report, Dean showed the delegates that five-dollar bill and told the story behind it. The offering plates were passed — \$38,000 in cash and pledges came in.

The building was purchased and began serving the homeless immediately, even though it is still in the process of being completely refurbished. In their first year, nearly 5,000 homeless people passed through its doors, receiving assistance of all sorts and massive doses of Christ's love. And it all began with the **encouragement** of a five-dollar bill wrapped up in the love of a homeless woman who, herself, had been rescued from despair — beside a trash dumpster — through the **ministry of encouragement**.



and eventually became the bishop of the churches in Ephesus (c. A.D. 110). At that time, the church was being threatened by the Gnostic heresy within and Roman persecution from without. Since Ephesus was the strong center of Christianity at that time, Onesimus was the key person in holding the church steady. We can therefore say: **In the beginning Paul saved Onesimus, but in the end Onesimus saved Paul's churches.**

Furthermore, we discover that Onesimus was the first to gather Paul's scattered letters into one volume so that they could be preserved for posterity. **In the beginning Paul set Onesimus free for ministry, but in the end Onesimus set Paul free for the ages!** We never know what might happen when we become an **encourager** to some lost, lonely, and floundering young person.

WEEK FOUR

ENCOURAGE THE DISCOURAGED

"I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink" (Matthew 25:35)

One of my students, a single mother, was sharing her desperate situation with me. She had so little money that she was unable to buy a single present for her daughter's fourth birthday the previous Saturday. She couldn't even afford to bake her a cake.

Her frail little daughter, sitting on a chair beside her, was eyeing an apple sitting on my desk. I gave it to her. She ate it. She ate the whole apple — core and all!

I shared that experience with my wife that night. She suggested that the class throw Keri a birthday party. She volunteered to provide enough cake and punch for everybody. So I sent notes to my students announcing a birthday party for Keri the next day during class.

I was unprepared for the response. News of the party had spread. The classroom was jammed with over 100 students. A large table overflowed with

presents. Envelopes, circulated in other classes, were stuffed with over \$150.00 in cash. When Keri's mother squeezed her way into the classroom with her daughter, everyone began to sing, "Happy Birthday, Keri." Keri's mother was not the only one who shed tears that day as we watched that little girl open more presents than she had ever seen in her life. We will never forget the singular joy of participating in a **ministry of encouragement**.

WEEK FIVE

ENCOURAGE THE DESTITUTE

"I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me" (Matthew 25:35-36).

Dean, our oldest son, is founding director of Shepherd Community, an inner-city mission. One day he noticed an older woman picking through the dumpster in back of the church. He introduced himself, took her into the clothing room, and outfitted her from head to toe. He loaded her battered old shopping cart with groceries.

Dean hardly recognized her when she walked into the sanctuary the next Sunday, dressed up in her new clothes. It was her first time in church since childhood. She gave her heart to the Lord.

During a lull in a community dinner provided for about 150 homeless and destitute people the next Wednesday night, this little lady went over to the upright piano, opened the lid, and — in spite of arthritic fingers — began to play with uncommon flourish. The people applauded. Thus encouraged, she began to sing in a beautiful, clear soprano voice, "Amazing Grace" . . . then "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" . . . then "How Great Thou Art." A holy hush filled the room. Many wept.

Helen Divine, a one-time barroom entertainer, has since become one of the most loved and indispensable workers in the mission. She is affectionately called "Inner City Angel."

ROOTED IN CHRIST

WEEK SEVEN

ENCOURAGE THE DEFEATED

"Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble" (Hebrews 12:12).

Steve Green ran track in high school. Often their meets would feature competition between young people with physical and mental disabilities. He tells about one event in which a boy with cerebral palsy got tangled up in his feet and stumbled at the starting line. He bounced right up and ran as hard as he could to try to catch up, only to trip again. Gamely, he got up and continued running, but fell one more time in such a way as to knock the wind out of him.

He struggled to get up. Noticing that the rest of the contestants had already finished the race, he collapsed on the track. The stands grew deathly quiet. All attention was focused on him, lying in the dirt on the far side of the track. Then a spectator began to clap, slowly and in rhythm. Another joined in, and another. Soon the whole stadium was rocking with the sound of rhythmic clapping.

Taking heart, the lone runner painfully got to his feet, brushed off the dirt, and started off one more time. As he ran, the crowd picked up the pace of clapping. When he crossed the finish line — knees bloody, cheeks tear-stained, big smile — the spectators erupted with a thunderous standing ovation.

WEEK EIGHT

ENCOURAGE THE DESPISED

"I was in prison, and you came to Me" (Matthew 25:36).

It is doubtful if there has ever been a more despised American in public life than Richard M. Nixon following his resignation as President in the wake of the Watergate scandal. In shame, he retreated into self-imposed exile behind the walls of his San Clemente estate.

At about this time, while enjoying a concert featuring a new Bill Gaither musical, a professor at Azusa Pacific University began to think about Nixon. Afterwards, he purchased an album, wrote a note to the President, and encouraged him to listen particularly to one of the numbers. He mailed it, but doubted that it would get to Mr. Nixon, or that he would listen to it if it did.

Several weeks later, he was called out of a class to take an important phone call. President Nixon was on the line. He thanked him for what he described as "the most beautiful gift I have ever received" and assured him that he had listened to the whole musical — especially the song he had underscored. And what was it?

"Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives, all fear is gone,
Because I know Who holds the future,
And life is worth the living,
just because He lives."

WEEK NINE

ENCOURAGE THE DISPIRITED

"Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary" (Galatians 6:9)

I was at the lowest ebb of my pastoral ministry. Our church was caught in the vortex of rapid urban racial change. Relocation became a divisive and explosive issue.

One member became so disturbed that he took it upon himself to circulate a petition to have me removed. He even solicited signatures during a revival while a general superintendent was preaching. Though rejected by the board, the petition succeeded in further polarizing the people.

It was the next Saturday evening. My heart had been cut out of me. I was so despondent that I doubted I could preach the next day. The doorbell rang. The last thing I wanted at that moment was to face anybody, particularly a parishioner. Nevertheless, I opened the door.

One of the sweetest and most supportive women in our congregation stood there. She held a single rose, the first bloom of the season in her garden. She pressed it into my hand. With tears in her eyes, she said, "I love you, pastor, and I'm praying for you." Then she turned and slipped off into the night. She just happened to be the sister of the man who had circulated the petition. Whatever, by God's grace, I have been able to accomplish in ministry since then, I owe, in large measure, to a simple act of human kindness, a gift of a rose, in the darkest hour of my life.

WEEK TEN

ENCOURAGE DROP-OUTS

"Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

Upon my recovery from the pit of despair described above, I wrote a series of articles for *Preacher's Magazine* on the subject "The Pastor Deals With Failure." Years later, a fellow pastor told me this story.

His first church, right out of college, doubled in two years, yet the people voted him out. His next church tripled in five years. Alas, he was voted out again. Having nowhere to go and a family to support, he found work digging ditches. He felt an utter failure in ministry and doubted if he would ever preach again.

Though no longer pastoring, the denomination continued to send him *Preacher's Magazine*. He read my articles. He sensed that in me there was at least one other person who understood what he was going through. He took courage and decided to try again. He entered the field of evangelism. My church was among the first to invite him to hold a revival, and that is where I learned this story. He has since successfully pastored one of our larger churches over a decade and is once again in the field of evangelism. A final note: All three of his children have been students of mine. One is presently in full-time ministry; another is on the way. And the whole chain of events began with the gift of a rose.

ROOTED IN CHRIST

WEEK ELEVEN

ENCOURAGE STRANGERS

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:2)

The sexton of a great cathedral was about to lock up when a stranger, with wrinkled clothes and a disheveled appearance, walked in. He asked if he could see the organ, reputed to be the finest in all Europe. The sexton replied that it was impossible.

The stranger persisted, saying that he had traveled a long distance just to see that organ. So, reluctantly, the sexton took him up into the cramped alcove which housed the great instrument. The stranger asked if he could look at the console. The sexton protested, but then unlocked it. Then he asked if he could just play a few notes. Against his better judgment, he gave him permission. Soon the cathedral resounded with swelling music, the most beautiful the sexton had ever heard.

Astonished, he then asked the stranger's name. It was Felix Mendelssohn, famous composer and the 19th century's most accomplished organist. Later, the sexton mused, "I almost didn't let Mendelssohn play his music on my organ!"

WEEK TWELVE

ENCOURAGEMENT TO FOLLOW JESUS

"And Jesus said to them, 'Follow Me ...' And they immediately left the nets and followed Him" (Mark 1:17-18).

How does Jesus call people to follow Him today? **Through** people who are themselves following Jesus.

I look back on my life in wonder. I am amazed at how often the voice of Jesus came to me through people. It was as my mother prayed for me that I first felt the call to invite Christ into my life. It was while in college that a district superintendent befriended me and offered to

give me a church when I completed my education. He kept his promise — twice.

It was a layman who, following a Bible study one evening, approached me and said, "Pastor, you have a unique way of opening up the Scriptures. Have you ever thought about preparing yourself to teach in one of our colleges?" It was a seminary professor who, while holding a revival for me, strongly encouraged me to pursue doctoral studies. Furthermore, he laid out a plan showing how I could achieve that goal without having to break the continuity of pastoring. It was a *Preacher's Magazine* editor who first encouraged me to write.

At the crucial intersections of my life, it has been the **encouraging word** of supportive friends which has planted seeds, opened doors, and set me free to actualize my potential for ministry.

WEEK THIRTEEN

THE POWER OF ENCOURAGEMENT

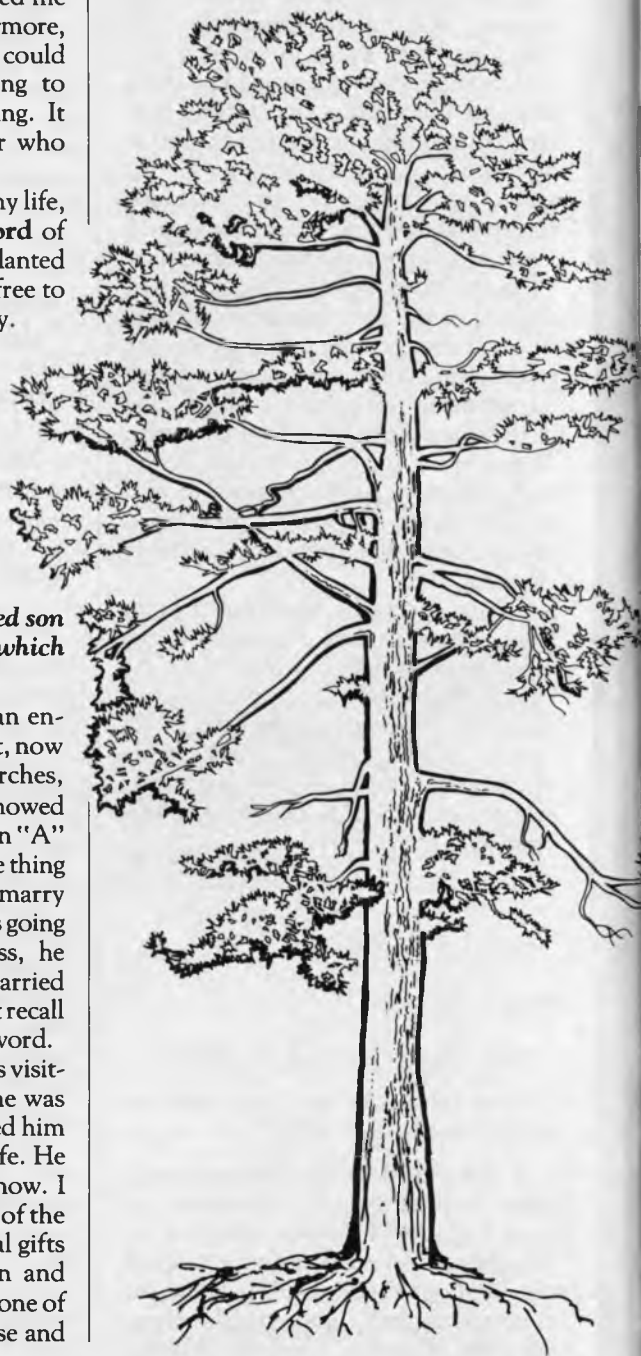
"Paul . . . to Timothy, my beloved son . . . kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you" (II Timothy 1:1-6).

I am amazed at the power of an encouraging word. A former student, now pastoring one of our strong churches, pulled out an old term paper and showed it to me recently. I had given him an "A" but then appended this note: "One thing thou lackest, Steve; go thou and marry Ruthie!" The problem was, he was going steady with Bonnie. Nevertheless, he broke up with Bonnie, and married Ruthie! For the life of me, I cannot recall why I wrote that "encouraging" word.

Mike, my teaching assistant, was visiting with me in my office. Since he was just weeks from graduating, I asked him what he planned to do with his life. He confessed that he really didn't know. I told him that I thought he had all of the intellectual, spiritual and personal gifts to make an excellent theologian and that he should prepare to teach in one of our colleges. He registered surprise and

disbelief. I even outlined the major steps he would need to take: seminary, pastoral experience, ordination, and then graduate school.

That was thirteen years ago. Mikael Lodahl followed those steps precisely. Today, he is a highly esteemed colleague, working side by side with me, teaching theology at Northwest Nazarene College. We never know what "gifts of God" might be stirred up when we open our mouths and speak an **encouraging word!**



Did Last Summer's Drought

Hit Your Church?

The drought of 1989 was devastating to many of the nation's farmers. In many cases crops barely offered the reclamation of the seed planted.

While drought, wind, and hail may combine to bring loss, the failure to plant, for fear of nature's sometimes cruel hand, is *sure* to invite disaster!

Has your church been doing its "planting" through a Wills Seminar conducted by our representatives? They are offered at no cost by your general church. Only a freewill offering for the representative is requested.

Near 1,000 churches report having been included in the almost 14 million spendable dollars received from bequests over the past four years. One church will report a 5 million dollar bequest in 1990. In most cases "it didn't happen by chance."

Life Income Gifts Services

Church of the Nazarene
6401 The Paseo
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Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

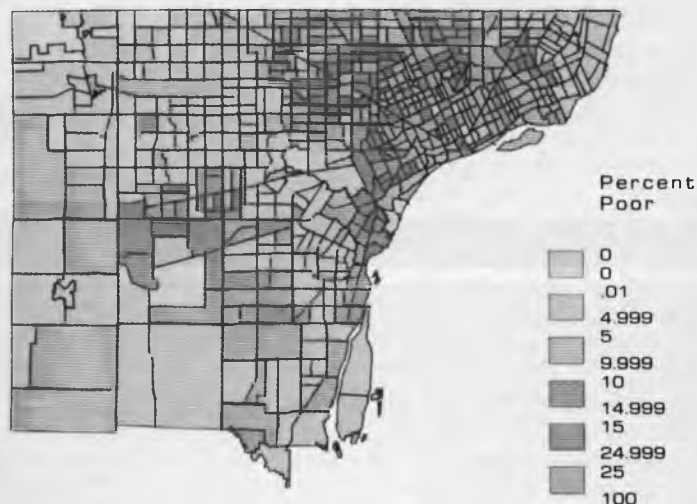
Church: _____

District: _____

☐ I/We would like to talk to someone about scheduling a Wills Seminar at our church.

COLLEGE GRADUATES**NEW RESIDENTS**

New to County Since 1975

FAMILIES IN POVERTY

Families Below Poverty Level

Picture Your Opportunities

Where are the receptive people in our ministry area? What needs exist in our neighborhood? Where are the people who are like our congregation?

One district wanted the answers to these questions for its most populous county. Contacting the Church Growth Research Center, they not only found the data but also were able to see it in easy-to-read maps.

Have many Nazarenes on the district been to college? The western part of the county is similarly educated.

New residents are especially likely to respond to the gospel; the southwest part of the county should be targeted for growth strategies.

Jesus said He came to minister to the poor; there is obvious need for such ministry in the eastern part of the county.

Help your people see the opportunities for ministry. Contact the Church Growth Research Center for assistance.



Church Growth Research Center

6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131

RESEARCH AND TRENDS



Provided by Church Growth Research Center
Dale E. Jones, Manager

New Churches

About 10% of new churches will pass 100 members within 10 years . . . and nearly all of these get close to 100 by their fourth year. Two lessons here:

New churches need to keep reaching out even after organization . . . tendency to think official organization means they've arrived. Next four years will set pattern for rest of decade . . . and probably longer. Important for laity and pastors to keep working on reaching the community. Consolidating gains is important, but don't do it too soon.

All Churches

For all churches . . . this emphasizes "growth seasons" concept. Growth tends to occur rapidly and in spurts . . . not "slow and steady" as the old fable implies. When growth is happening, plan for continued growth . . . plan more activities to attract newcomers . . . expand the number of Sunday school classes or fellowship groups or Bible studies . . . create more opportunities for new Christians to minister. Discipleship is crucial, but don't let outreach suffer while trying to nurture.

Nazarenes in City

Nazarenes are reaching major cities in the USA. Of 186 cities of 100,000 or more, active Nazarene works are reported in all but 7. Five of these are targeted within the next five years . . . Yonkers, NY . . . Paterson, NJ . . . Oceanside, Irvine, and Inglewood, CA.

New York Progress

New York City has more organized Churches of the Nazarene than any other city in the world . . . 32 inside the city limits. Recent thrust has put it on top. And its membership is now 5th largest among large USA cities.

Metro Expansion

Metro areas receiving greater coverage, too. In mid-1970s barely half of USA Nazarene churches were in metro areas. Today, 56%. And 68% of our members in metro . . . 66% of attenders . . . 65% of Sunday school enrollment. And most church planting takes place in metro areas today. 13 of 15 newest churches reported by Church Extension are in metro areas . . . and 11 of the 13 are in large metros.

HELP WANTED

TO MAKE GROW INTERESTING

GROW
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Personal Evangelism

Conversions

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Testimonies

Evangelistic Churches

Urban Evangelism

Nazarenes Involved in Mission

Here is how to send us a story that needs to be told. Write it well, including specific details such as names, places, events, church, and human interest factors in 200 words or less. Your name, address, telephone number, and mailing date should be on all items. Contributions can only be returned when accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Longer stories or articles should be written in brief outline form and sent to the editor to see if they are usable in *Grow*. Send material to:

Neil B. Wiseman, GROW Editor, Church Growth Division, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Missouri 64131.

GEORGIA

Joe Brown, pastor of Battlefield Parkway Church of the Nazarene, near Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, cites the use of their new church building as the most significant reason for adding 49 new members last year, 35 by profession of faith, for a total membership of 166. Sunday School Superintendent Jim Amburn led the Battlefield Church to become Sunday School of the Year on their district, and he was named Sunday School Worker of the Year.

Pastor Brown named other growth factors, such as well-planned, Christ-centered worship, church location visibility, loyal service of lay leaders, six new Sunday school classes in one year, prompt visitation of new people, and a church newsletter sent to 6,000 homes in their community.

Battlefield Parkway Church doubled their Sunday school and worship attendance with a Friendship Day last fall, which gave them many new prospects.

ARIZONA

Dobson Ranch Church in Chandler, near Phoenix, added 66 new members during the last church year for a total membership of 386. Pastor Mark Fuller believes the greatest single reason for this growth is because "a genuine spirit of joy and enthusiasm for the Lord permeates everything the church does. Our people come expecting to experience what God has for them and our young people are leading in this journey of joy which serves as a catalyst for the rest of the church.

"Our teens have a vision to start a Bible study in all of the 24 schools represented in our youth group and they are well on their way to achieving that goal."

Regarding service, Fuller observes, "We try to build upon the unique gifts of our people to meet needs in our community rather than fit our members into a particular program or tradition. The result is a liberating environment where God's people are equipped to serve and the unchurched are drawn in by the love and joy they experience."

GROWING CHURCHES SHARE THEIR VICTORIES

Churches of all sizes are growing in a variety of locations. Pastors of growing churches have been asked to share the stories behind such growth. If you have church growth victory reports, write the editor of GROW, giving specific facts of how God gave the increase.

OKLAHOMA

Pastor Stan Toler led Oklahoma City First Church during the last church year to a gain of 69 new members for a total membership of 750. Significant factors caused this growth, including six new Sunday school classes and adding several ministries. Their expanded ministries are a Sunday morning orchestra, a forty voice choir, a new college ministry, a full-time children's minister, expanded ministry to 30 singles, and a commitment to compassionate benevolence outreach. Two ministers donate their ministries: Ed Williams, outreach and evangelism, and Charles Crow, senior adults.

The church hopes to burn its mortgage by the church's 80th anniversary on May 13, 1990, so various ministries can be expanded more. Dr. Toler explained, "These new ministries have opened doors not only for growth in numbers but an overwhelming growth in spirit and inspiration as well."

OHIO

Pastor Charles Williams of Gloryland Church in Carroll, Ohio, reports their church was organized on April 12, 1987; they received 67 new Nazarenes in 1987, 81 in 1988, and 74 in 1989. Their growth is built on a principle of "Dollars — Dedication — Direction."

Williams explains, "Access to money, empowered by the dynamic of committed people led by a spirit-filled leader who knows how to motivate, inspire, and invest wisely, will produce an explosion." He continued, "Excellence at every level is required — it is really spirituality with dignity."

Gloryland has an immediate goal of 300 in average attendance by their third anniversary.

FLORIDA

Pastor Don Hayes of Bartow First Church on the Central Florida District received 32 members during last assembly year for a new total membership of 84; 22 were received by profession of faith. The growth continues in this new church year, so they expect to easily break the 100 milestone this year.

Hayes believes those who are most responsible are ten people who meet weekly with him in the prayer room to plead with God to make their church a soul-winning church; of course, God answers when more than one-tenth of a church combines intercessory prayer with evangelism.

One inspired soul-winning story is the conversion of Bess Wisz, who was recently converted after being associated with their church for more than thirty years. She found Christ in a personal way one Sunday evening when Pastor Hayes felt compelled to go to church and preach even though his physicians had ordered six weeks of bed rest due to a severe back injury. Because of the pain, church members had to help the minister to the pulpit so he could preach the old story of salvation. Check the results: Mrs. Wisz was saved, her husband began attending services, and the pastor's physical condition greatly improved. The pastor concludes the report, "We are being obedient and God is building His church."



CAMBRIDGE CHURCH SERVES MANY NATIONALITIES

91-YEAR-OLD CNURCH STARTS MISSIONARY FACTORY NEAR HARVARD

History and evangelistic opportunity meet in Boston. Vivid reminders all over town show the city's role in the formation of the United States. With a population of 2,550,000, Greater Boston boasts of 200 universities, colleges, and schools, and 224 libraries offer four million books to its people. From all over the world, immigrant populations seeking free-

dom, opportunity and education have settled in Boston for more than three hundred years, and the migration continues to this day.

Cambridge is a significant part of the human and historic mosaic of Greater Boston. As the hometown of Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge deserves the reputation of being a center of cultural and educational opportunity.

But within a mile of those prestigious learning institutions there is a center of spiritual fire known as Cambridge Church of the Nazarene. Founded in 1899, the Cambridge church is a vibrant center of evangelism, outreach, and discipleship.

In a time in human history when 80 percent of Americans dwell in cities, and at a period when it is projected that people of color will total

one-third of the nation's population by the turn of the century, Cambridge Church is targeted for magnificent future mission achievement with its multicultural, multicongregational, and multilinguistic ministries. Although an incredible diversity of nationality, skin color, language, and culture is beautiful to observe, the Christian unity of this group of believers is magnificent to experience.

Unity coupled with diversity, a characteristic started in the first century upper room, is contagious. Twelve different nationalities worship together on Sunday. Language groups minister during the week to Haitians, East Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and Hispanics. On an average Sunday, eight or ten non-English-speaking persons will attend services with friends, sponsors, or fellow university students.

Pastor Bowen's Pilgrimage of Faith

John Bowen, present pastor of Cambridge Church, is a child of the Church of the Nazarene. His father started in ministry when John was twelve. After finishing Eastern Nazarene College twenty-five years ago, Bowen and his wife, Margaret, attended Cambridge Church during the pastorate of Rev. Neale O. McLain, now superintendent of the New England District. Soon Bowen embarked on a successful business career which finally made him president of a high-tech company in Massachusetts.

However, five years ago, as a result of his wife's witness and because of increasing disillusionment with profit, prestige, and pressure, Bowen resigned to start Freedom Industries. This new company provided job training and placement for ex-offenders and ex-convicts. He continued this work for three years, putting him in touch with Colson's Prison Fellowship program and other Christian groups ministering to New England prisoners.

In April 1989, McLain asked Bowen, an unordained Christian businessman, to pray about the possibility of pastoring Cambridge Church. For weeks, Bowen and his wife were confused by the idea until they met the church board, composed of 80 per-

cent non-whites. In their first meeting, the church board shared their feeling that if the church was to remain multicultural, they needed a white pastor like Bowen. Then, as the church board, the district superintendent, and the Bowens prayed about the matter, God directed them to this new assignment — and what a happy relationship it is!

The Traditional Nazarene Church at Cambridge

With all these innovative plans, Pastor Bowen emphasizes that all ministry must flow from a strong urban church, rooted in traditional ministries of worship, evangelism, Bible studies, and service. Bowen said several times in an interview, "Every-



MINISTRY TEAM: Gus Sealey, Minister of Worship; Baldemar Posada, Church Planter; Chris Wiley, Director of Institute; John Bowen, Senior Pastor.



TEEN MUSIC TEAM: Nathan St. Aldi; Geof Bowen; Victor Smith.

CAMBRIDGE CHURCH

thing revolves around a strong church." He shares his vision: "We want to inspire young people to believe that an urban church can be a very good place to worship and to bring up a family. It doesn't have to be just a missionary venture, but it can be a church everyone would aspire to be a part of."

When asked about the congregation's attitude to new people, the pastor replied, "Our people, even the older people, have a positive, open attitude toward newcomers. Some of this grows out of the fact that many of the new people are established Nazarenes who come here from world areas where they first found the Lord. Often, these people have been grounded in the Church of the Nazarene in their homelands, so they bring a mature testimony and churchman-like commitments — good, solid, Christian people. It's difficult to deny their common roots with the church, the spiritual tone of their lives, their commitments, and their enthusiasm for the church."

As one might predict, such a heterogeneous church takes hard work on everyone's part. Leaders and members try to be inclusive and deal fairly and sensitively with issues related to differences. The people at Cambridge make it happen because of the unity they have experienced in Christ, because of the evidence of faith they see in their fellow worshipers, and because of their commitments to impact the city with the gospel.

Cambridge, a church for all people from every nation, is located on Central Square, in the middle of a block, with no off-street parking. Many might think such a church should be satisfied to minister to a faithful remnant from their past. But their future is as bright as the challenge of the city. It is predictable that Cambridge Church will have its best days in the final nine years of its first century of existence.

Cambridge Church's Commitment

Cambridge Nazarenes want to minister to every human need. Bowen says, "We want to develop a strong



church in the city. We want the church to be the dominating element of everything we do. We want to offer a variety of ministries with a solid base that is unequivocally a church with a mission — a church designed to win souls to Christ, to disciple and equip persons for ministry. We want to have a strong presence in the city as a body of believers coming together for worship, fellowship, and evangelism.”

This body of believers would like to establish a model of ministry to the city for Nazarenes and other evangelical holiness churches to replicate in other urban settings.

The Institute in Urban Mission

Chris Wiley, working with the Cambridge Church, has established the Cambridge Institute in Urban Mission. Wiley, a graduate of both Eastern Nazarene College and Nazarene Theological Seminary, calls himself a “street kid” who was led to Christ by a church in Pennsylvania. Sensing a call to urban ministry, Wiley paid his own moving expenses to New England after graduation from seminary with no assurance of an assignment or

church. He was convinced that the Lord had a special ministry for him in Boston. And God did — at Cambridge. Now, Wiley has joined the local church staff with a creative commitment to the programs of the Institute.

The Summer Institute for Urban Mission is a college intern program designed to give college students a knowledge of life in the city and an introduction to urban ministry.

The second phase of the Institute’s work is the Missionary Factory, a plan to reach out to suburban high school young people, providing them an urban ministry weekend that is a cross between a retreat and a work-and-witness experience. Teens live at the church for the weekend and do ministry in the area surrounding the church. The purpose is to challenge young people with the missionary possibilities of the city. The Missionary Factory simply provides an environment where a young person can hear God’s call into some special service.

The third program is the Church Planters Fellowship, in which persons called to plant churches may use church facilities such as offices, com-

puters, copy machines, counseling rooms, support systems, and library as a base for ministry in the city; ten church-planting locations have been targeted in Greater Boston. The idea is to encourage, resource, and even train church planters.

In the near future, Cambridge Institute in Urban Mission will offer a full-year internship to help students focus on the needs of the city before they begin graduate work. This concept is borrowed from the practices of several influential business schools that require students to get sound business experience before they can be admitted to graduate programs. Later, it is hoped that the Institute can develop a lay ministry training center that will be shared by members of the new church plants, as well as other Boston churches, to train lay Christians for ministry in the city.





THE SHEPHERD'S

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

RENEWAL, WORSHIP AND GROWTH IN "THE YEAR OF SABBATH"

In Jewish history the "Sabbatical Year" followed two three-year tithing cycles (Deut. 14:28; 26:12). It was not a time of casual resignation to inactivity. Rather it was a time of exciting anticipation for special kinds of new activity. Land owners did not plow or harvest their fields so any produce from the land that year was God's and had to be shared with other humans.

Since the slave and owner had the same rights to the land the Hebrew slave had the opportunity to be free. Debts were cancelled. No loans were made but assistance was offered to the needy without obligation.

Expectations for the arrival of the Messiah was at its height during the year of Sabbath. It was a time of spiritual renewal with fresh hope and joyful celebration. This one year (the seventh) belonged exclusively to God by right of creation. In a way time was suspended and the people gained a new sense of belonging to God.

I have been thinking again about the meaning of Worship. It is experiencing the presence of God, not intellectualizing His existence or merely reflecting on His acts. He is present and I draw near. I hear Him speak, confess my need to Him, praise Him, and joyfully follow Him.

Instead of thinking we have to prove the miraculous birth, the resurrection, and the ascension of Jesus Christ these things are confirmed to us as we are caught up in the mystery of God's presence! A bankrupt secularized church and society thirsts for that kind of reality.

What if . . . ? What if someone actually discovered God in our midst! A miracle? Surely! That kind of miracle renews in the mind of the worshippers the purpose of the church. Worship focuses on God and embraces His world. Only worship can issue in evangelism. And without evangelism there is no church growth.

You could say that the "Year of Sabbath" is the time for worship renewal. Our private worship flows from our public worship. It is in community we know God. But then personal worship enlivens corporate worship.

Pastors, I would like to challenge you to take time to withdraw in a retreat for prayer. It is a time to gain perspective on your ministry and a fresh vision of what God's mission is for your church. Make these summer months a time to prepare for such a retreat. Special planning for it can engage your energies for the most productive season you and your church has ever experienced.

If you want some help in knowing how to prepare and conduct such a retreat write Pastoral Ministries and ask about the F-L-A-M-E material. It is not a program. It is an experience, a Sabbath experience, recovering the sense of God's presence for visioning your church's future. By giving Him our unplowed ground we have nothing to claim. Whatever emerges and gains belong solely to God. We offer our praise and gratitude to Him for when He gives the increase it is an increase! We do not have to juggle the numbers because the result is real growth.



Wilbur W. Brannon
Pastoral Ministries Director



PASTORS VALUE "HEARTLINE"

The "Heartline" received a high rating in the recent Gallup survey taken. Pastors continue to express their appreciation for this resource. More and more clergy families are benefiting as they face personal and family pressures.

Any Nazarene minister and family in the United States is only a phone call away from help in time of crisis. "Heartline" is your toll-free connection to a professional counselor at Christian Counseling Services in Nashville, Tennessee. Five Christian counselors rotate each day from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (CST) from Monday through Friday.

You can find help! The "Heartline" is confidential, credible, and safe. The resource people are credentialed and competent. Try calling 1-800-874-2021; 1-800-233-3607 (Tennessee residents); Alaska residents call 0+615+255-5667, wait for dial tone, then dial 8081.

COURSE OF STUDY UPDATE

In the MAM '89 update you were notified that *Proclaiming the Truth* by Donald Demaray, Elder, Level IV, #144d was out-of-print. Since that time Baker Book House has agreed to reprint the book.

The Complete Book of Youth Ministry by Warren S. Benson and Mark H. Senter III is the replacement required reading book for *Youth Education in the Church*, Deacon-Christian Education, Level IV, #244a.

Introduction to Psychology and Counseling by Paul Meier, Frank Minnerth, and Frank Wichern is the replacement required reading book for *General Psychology for Christian Counselors*, all tracks, Level III, #136a, 236a, 336a, 436a.

Compassion by Donald P. McNeill, Douglas A. Morrison and Henri J. M. Nouwen is the replacement optional reading book for *In the Land of the Living*, Deacon-Compassionate Ministries, Level IV, #345d.

The following is a new category and course that has been added to Elder track, Level IV:

To Spread the Power by George G. Hunter II is the text under the category of **Evangelism/Church Growth**, Elder, Level IV, #146.

Softly and Tenderly by Leslie Parrott, #146a, and *It's Altar Time* by Wilbur W. Brannon, #146b, are the required reading books.

The following reading books are out-of-print:

When Adam Clarke Preached, *People Listened* by Wesley Tracy, Elder, Level II, #124c.

Building Today's Church by Leslie Parrott, Elder, Level II, #125e.

The Care and Feeding of Youth Choirs by Paul Bobbitt and Gerald Armstrong, Deacon Music Ministries, Level III, #435b.

Contact Pastoral Ministries for their replacements.

PERCENTAGE OF CALLERS IN 1989

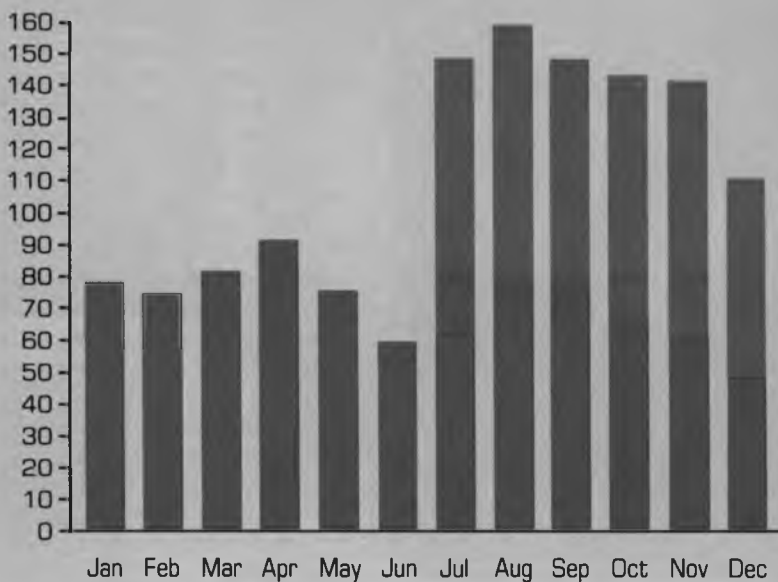


Pastors
58%

Spouses
30%

Other
12%

NUMBER OF CALLS IN 1989



NO. OF CALLS

AT&T ACCESS



REVIVING SPIRITUAL VERVE FOR MINISTRY

FLAME PROVIDES FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Do you feel like Sundays pass like mile markers on the freeway, and you are over-involved in activities, but accomplishing little for the Kingdom of God? Pastor Thomas Ritchie, Telegraph Road Church of the Nazarene in Downey, California, came to that point this past summer. Even though good things were happening, he felt

the church was not accomplishing its mission to win the lost for Christ. He wondered what he could do to implement change and realized improvement always begins with the leader.

He remembered a notebook entitled *F-L-A-M-E (Fashioning Leadership Authority for Mission Engagement)*. He said, "I read this notebook and found it presented what I desired in my own pastoral ministry. I discovered what I needed to give me a fresh perspective for ministry. It helped me reflect on where our church was and where we wanted to go in accomplishing our goals.

"Within the notebook I found a wealth of information that would benefit any pastor. There were guidelines on how to pray for your people, how to plan a prayer retreat, how to be the pastor God wants you to be.

"There were some questions that really hit home, such as: How much time do you spend as the priest? How much time do you spend as the pastor? How much time do you spend as the evangelist? In my heart and mind, I knew I spent a lot of time in planning, organizing, praying, and calling, but I was not really giving much time to being an evangelist.

"I remembered the ordination exhortation given by a general superintendent to those being ordained to 'do the work of an evangelist.'

"Each section of this notebook helped me."

In an effort to help pastors develop more effective spiritual communication, Rev. Wilbur Brannon, Pastoral Ministries director, edited and compiled the first series of the notebook, which guides the pastor in formulating an agenda for a prayer retreat. Steps are also given to prepare the church for a ministry of prayer.

The remaining four series, written



"Within the notebook I found a wealth of information that would benefit any pastor."

by Pastor Lyle Pointer, deals with areas concerning the pastor as leader, planner, priority manager, and conflict manager.

The unique feature of this series is that the principles of spiritual leadership, planning, and management focus on church growth — the evangelistic priority of ministry.

Dr. Tom Goble, district superintendent of the Anaheim district, recently wrote: "The F-L-A-M-E material produced by Pastoral Ministries has proven to be of great benefit to our district. Several of our pastors have discovered the renewal and strength of personal prayer retreats. They have come back from their prayer retreats with new insight, vision, energy, and enthusiasm for their pastoral tasks.

"F-L-A-M-E is also an excellent resource to pastors in the areas of administration, organization, planning, and time management."

Charlie Brown went to Lucy to ask this question: "What is the meaning of life?" Lucy replied, "Charlie Brown, life is a deck chair on a ship. Some people take their deck chairs to the back of the ship to see where they have come from. Others take their deck chairs to the front of the ship to see where they are going." Lucy continued, "Charlie Brown, where is your deck chair?" Charlie Brown said, "I don't know, I haven't been able to get my deck chair unfolded." The F-L-A-M-E material will help pastors unfold their deck chairs!

—by Pat Warren
Pastoral Ministries
International Headquarters



"I discovered what I needed to give me a fresh perspective for ministry."



SCHOOLS of EVANGELISM

DOBSON RANCH CHURCH IMPACTED BY PERSONAL EVANGELISM SCHOOL

Pastor Mark Fuller, Dobson Ranch Church of the Nazarene, Chandler, Arizona, reports:

What a life-changing week we experienced with Ruth DeLong in our recent School of Evangelism entitled "How to Give Away Your Faith"! Not only did several accept Christ during the calls made on Saturday, but others made their decision during the morning worship the next day. Probably the greatest impact on our church has been the new level of boldness and confidence among our people in sharing their faith in the day-to-day conversation and relationships of their lives.

Personally, as pastor, although I have always been evangelistic in preaching, I struggled with fears and insecurities in sharing my faith one-on-one. Having come through this excellent training time, there is a new boldness and confidence I have never known before.

Probably the biggest hurdle for us to overcome was to honestly face the fact that we were not reaching the unchurched in our community for Christ, repent of our selfishness in ministry, and commit ourselves again to the great commission. God is already honoring these steps of obedience. More people have come to Christ this past week than in the previous six months combined. I have actually had people come to me and ask if they can become a part of our calling ministry . . . now that's revival!

TWO DISTRICTS SPONSOR COOPERATIVE SCHOOLS OF EVANGELISM

The Southwestern Ohio and Eastern Kentucky Districts hosted a School of Evangelism on October 16-18, 1989, at Covington, Kentucky, First Church. Dr. Harold Graves and Rev. Garrett Mills, district superintendents respectively, took the training along with about 20 pastors and laypersons. The training class was taught by Mrs. Beverly Burgess of Evangelism Ministries in Kansas City. Rev. Beverly Turner and Rev. Tim Gocha coordinated this important and exciting event.

Rev. Chris Sutherland, pastor of the host church in Covington, Kentucky, had five personal evangelism trainers in his local church August of 1989. He trained eight more, who then served as trainers for the School of Evangelism in October. These brand new trainers took pastors and laypersons from other churches on on-the-job training calls.

Covington First Church has one of the best examples in the Church of the Nazarene in training their laypersons to share their faith. Laypersons have now taken over the responsibilities of teaching the Personal Evangelism Training class and following up on all new converts. In December, 20 received their certificates for completion of the course. Thirty were signed up for the training in January. They have followed the material as designed in the *Personal Evangelism Training* books.

One trainer, Scott Duff, was converted in May 1989 when a person

from their local church presented the gospel to him. He wanted to win his friends to Christ and took the training in September and served as a trainer in this school. He gave a tremendous testimony in the class and was an inspiration to all.

Mr. Don Weston from Lansing, Michigan, drove to Kentucky to take this training. He started the training in his local church when he returned home and, by the end of November, 20 persons had committed their lives to Christ.

PINEVILLE CHURCH TRAINS PERSONAL EVANGELISTS

Mrs. Beverly Burgess, personal evangelism program manager, conducted a School of Evangelism at the Pineville Church of the Nazarene in Charlotte, North Carolina, on September 13-16, 1989. About 10 persons took the training, along with Pastor Russell Branstetter.

After the school was completed, Rev. Branstetter wrote, "Thank you again for your leadership and teaching. We will begin to train three to five others and go calling on Thursday nights beginning next week. I thought you would like to know that I had the privilege of presenting the gospel to a Mr. Jeff Morrisette recently. Jeff is 29 years of age and dying of incurable cancer. He accepted the Lord at the end of the presentation. My wife, Gail, was with me and it was a blessed moment when he received Christ! Please pray for his wife, Kim, who is struggling with the circumstances right now."

Rev. Fred Bates and Rev. Dale Hardy, associate pastor at Pineville, and Beverly Burgess served as trainers.

CHURCH GROWTH DIVISION

the church meeting human need



On January 1, 1990, the CAN/US office of the Nazarene Compassionate Ministries within the Church Growth Department, was opened in Washington, D.C., under the direction of Tom Nees, executive director of the Community of Hope.

International Nazarene Compassionate Ministry will continue under the direction of Steve Weber within the World Mission Division

Services and Programs Provided by the CAN/US Office . . .

DISASTER RESPONSE

coordinated response to natural disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.

EMERGENCY RELIEF ASSISTANCE

matching grants for local congregations through qualifying districts

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION GRANTS

applications available upon request from the CAN/US office

NAZARENE COMPASSIONATE MINISTRIES DIRECTORY

program and organizational information on over 100 ministries—GMCM-840, \$8.40 from Nazarene Publishing House

COMPASSIONATE MINISTRY REVIEW

periodic technical journal for church leaders and compassionate ministry practitioners

SEMINAR FOR CHURCHES

getting started—"How Compassionate Ministry Can Help the Church Achieve Its Mission Objective"

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

on-site consultation for program development and financial planning

For information contact:

Thomas G. Nees, Administrative Director
Nazarene Compassionate Ministries—CAN/US
1417 Belmont St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20009
202-232-2106; FAX 202-232-1014

TOGETHER WE CAN SEND THE

Join *World Mission Radio* in bringing God's Word to lands where it has never before been heard.

We've a story to tell to the nations. Behind the Iron Curtain. Into the Arab-speaking world. Throughout Third World Countries. Beyond borders and boundaries long closed to the Gospel. Today, *World Mission Radio* reaches millions with the saving message of Christ—men, women and children who until recently have been considered unreachable.

Now, where strident voices have preached hatred, we send words of love. To people shrouded in spiritual darkness, we bring the light of Christ. Never before have Christians had such an opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to so many people, in countries where the Word of God has never been broadcast.

World Mission Radio broadcasts in some countries where many people cannot read or write, but where they can—and do—listen to the radio. On small transistors and large multi-band radio/cassette recorders, these developing nations stay “tuned in” to the messages we send.

World Mission Radio brings the Good News to 96 countries.

Some of the languages included in our broadcasts are:

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| English | Spanish |
| Portuguese | French |
| Italian | Mandarin Chinese |
| Kekchi | Creole |
| Marathi | Pokomchi |
| Zulu | Tamil |
| Sotho | Afrikaans |
| Shangaan | Pedi |
| Chewa | Tswana |
| Ilongo | Tsonga |
| Filipino | Cebuano |
| Armenian | Ilocano |
| Navajo Indian | Bicol |
| Arabic | Turkish |

policies around the globe restrict traditional missionary activity. Remote areas are often too isolated for any outside contact. In fact, 70% of the world's population is unreachable via person-to-person evangelism. But radio waves get through. From mountains of Peru to the banks of the Yangtze. From thatched roof huts of the Zulus to the masses of Calcutta and Bombay. For 40 years, *World Mission Radio* has been getting through. And now, with recent changes in Eastern Europe, we have more broad-



70% of the world's population is unreachable via person-to-person evangelism. But radio gets through.

cast opportunities than ever before.

Right now, 97% of the world's population depends on radio for news, information and education. Even in the poorest countries, radio is the primary means of mass communication. And at just \$25 for one minute of global broadcasting, radio is, by far, a most economical and cost effective means of evangelism.

Around the world in minutes with the message that lasts an eternity.

The miracles of modern technology! Advancements in communications have made radio transmissions more powerful and far reaching than ever before. Satellites, laser and microwaves enable *World Mission Radio* to transmit crystal clear messages taken from Genesis to Revelation to places as distant as Guyana and Romania.

Transmitters for short- and long-range broadcasting dot the globe, beaming the Gospel to the most remote and isolated locations. The result: life changing choices for tens of thousands of individuals, old and young alike.

Each year, *World Mission Radio* receives more than 25,000 letters from men, women and children whose lives have been touched—and transformed—by the Good News they received over the radio. Here is just a sampling:

From a Soviet Teenager: “I am writing to you for the first time. Whatever spiritual food I get comes to me only through your programs. But...my soul desires more. I am 17 years old and I am turning to you to help me. Can you? I beg you, help me, send me a Bible. You are my last hope. Help me, please.”

From a college student in China: “I am one of the Beijing University students who was very active in Tienanmen Square. I am sincere in my search for freedom in our society, but since I came to Christianity through your program, my search is also one for spiritual freedom. I have not been able to listen to your program since I fled Beijing. I miss it so very

We've a story to tell to the nations and recent political changes as well as advancements in radio communications make it possible for World Mission Radio to broadcast in lands never before open to the Gospel.



WORD OF GOD AROUND THE WORLD.

much because it always seems as though God is speaking to me as I listen. Please pray for me and for my nation."

From Botswana, Africa: "I thank you so much for this program. It is a blessing to me, and I also enjoy the music. My friends who were non-believers are now saved and believers through your program."

From Guatemala: "Three years ago I quit going to church... I went back to the world. But, thanks to God, today through your broadcast, I have been awakened."

These are some of the reasons *World Mission Radio* continues on the air. These brothers and sisters represent only a small fraction of those to whom our programs have ministered over the past years.

The Iron Curtain has lifted and a window of unprecedented outreach opens.

Recent policy changes in the Soviet Union provide a receptive climate to outside influence. Perestroika/glasnost is creating unprecedented opportunity—and great uncertainty—for the church in the Eastern bloc countries. And signs indicate immense spiritual hunger among the Soviet people.

Now is the time to penetrate the Soviet bloc and bring the life changing truth of Jesus Christ to millions. There may never again be such an opportune moment. New vistas lie before us. New challenges await us. The harvest is ripe with new opportunities to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to more people than ever before.

Can we do it? Yes, if we work together. Will we do it?

By God's grace and by the cooperation of pastors like yourself.

One million dollars a year for millions more to hear.

Our goal is to raise \$1,000,000 a year to enable *World Mission Radio* to purchase air time to broadcast to Russia, to Arabic nations, to Asia, to Latin

America, and Africa and to continue expanding our radio ministry around the world.

Will you help us?

Each gift of \$25 will purchase one minute of air time. We ask that you speak to your church about this unique opportunity to help preach the Word around the world.

Let them know what Nazarenes are doing on the air. Provide them with this unique way of participating in the Great Commission.

Share with your church family the needs their brothers and sisters around the world have to hear God's message. And encourage them to sponsor at least one minute (or more) of *World Mission Radio* air time.

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Celebration Sunday—October 7, 1990

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Part 2: Dr. Louise R. Chapman
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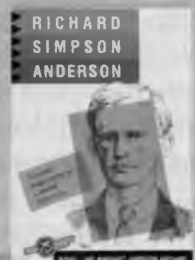
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Small churches can do BIG THINGS

Building on Strengths of the Small Church

Growing churches know their strengths and build on them. Here are seven strengths of the typical smaller church which should be used in planning growth strategy . . .

1. The heterogeneous mix. In the smaller church there are seldom enough different "kinds of people" for many groups. Those who enjoy the mosaic of people find the smaller church attractive. Young adults who enjoy the wisdom of older adults . . . older adults who are renewed by children . . . single adults who are comfortable with couples . . . will find a place of fulfillment in the smaller church.

2. The sense of "family." Smaller churches typically include several extended family networks. The belonging, concern, and security these relationships provide in smaller churches will be attractive to many non-members in those networks. Helping members reach out to unchurched friends and family is an important growth strategy for small churches. (A resource such as THE MASTER'S PLAN FOR MAKING DISCIPLES is an effective way to train members to reach out to friends and family.)

3. A common concern. The smaller church usually focuses on one church-wide event or priority at a time. If the church has a highly visible task in which many members are involved, this mission can attract unchurched persons who share this concern. For example, child-care and development can be a church priority which attracts similarly concerned people. Senior citizen support and sharing could be another. Identify the church's concerns, seek out those in the community who share a similar concern, and provide ways for them to become involved.

4. The ease of involvement. Persons who have been previously active in a church usually join a new church with a willingness to become involved. Whereas

in larger churches it may be years before they "earn" the right to be given responsibility, in smaller churches newcomers willing to be involved are more likely to be welcomed into positions of influence and leadership . . . if for no other reason than there are not enough people to serve the various program needs and opportunities. Smaller churches will be attractive to people who want to be involved.

5. The sense of being needed and valued. Because it is easy to become involved quickly in the small church, the by-product is that persons who do become active make friends and develop a sense of self-esteem and worth as a valued church member. In terms of effective outreach by the smaller church, persons who need self-confidence/esteem are good candidates for membership.

6. A non-formal church environment. The smaller church is more informal and flexible in activities and worship. People who have not become involved in church (or who dropped out in adolescence or early adulthood) because of perceived hypocrisy in the church may often feel the smaller church is more genuine and honest in who it is and what it stands for.

7. The love and caring. According to our research, smaller churches are significantly more loving and caring among members. The larger a church becomes, the less loved people report feeling. The smaller church can build on this natural love-ability. Be sure, however, that the love is intentionally focused outward to newcomers, since the natural tendency in smaller churches is for love to be inward-focused, often to the point of being exclusionary.

You may have other strengths in your church which should be built on. In your promotion, advertising and new-member recruitment, highlight these strengths and target people who will be receptive to them.

—from the Win Atn Growth Report #21

CHURCH SIZE STRATEGIES

The Smaller Size Church 0-99

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A lot has changed over the years, but the Board of Pensions and Benefits USA remains dedicated to providing Nazarene pastors with the most accurate and timely information concerning pensions, taxes, insurance, and other employee compensation issues.

Some of the brochures available from the Board of Pensions and Benefits USA are listed below. This information is available at no cost to you. Simply check the brochures desired, complete the name and address at the bottom, and mail to the Pensions office at the address indicated.

All MEMOS listed are revised periodically to keep up to date with tax law changes.

- ☐ **MEMO No. 1, Housing for Your Pastor: Parsonage or Housing Allowance?**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 2, Church Employees or Independent Contractors?**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 3, Tax Procedures for Congregations**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 4, Changing Patterns in Ministerial Compensation**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 5, Minimizing Income Taxes for Church Employees**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 9, Workers' Compensation Laws and the Local Church**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 10, Can Ministers Opt Out of Social Security?**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 11, Auto Expenses and Federal Income Taxes**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 12, The Deacon's Tax Status**
- ☐ **MEMO No. 13, The Minister's Housing Allowance**

- ☐ **MEMO No. 15, Moving Expenses: Reporting Requirements and Deductions**
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- ☐ **The Nazarene Individual Retirement Annuity Plan (IRA)**
- ☐ **Information on Group Term Life Insurance for Church Employees**
- ☐ **Information on Long-Term Disability Income Protection for Church Employees**
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Clip this column and return to:

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BABY BOOMERS NEED MINISTRY

A RESPONSIVE GROUP OF WINNABLE PEOPLE

They are the generation of Americans between the ages of 25 and 43 who are missing from most churches.

Some 77 million strong, they make up one-third of the nation's population. Within a decade, they are expected to comprise nearly half.

These so-called "baby boomers" — people born in the 20 years after World War II — represent a potential major resource for many shrinking congregations. Studies show that young and middle-aged Americans who are unaffiliated with a church could fill a lot of pews.

But experts say congregations seeking to attract baby boomers may be going about it all wrong. Experts say that churches seeking to evangelize young and middle-aged Americans will have to go more than halfway in the bargain. Growing congregations will be those with leaders who are creative and flexible, who value emotional expressiveness, who develop programs that help people alleviate pressure in their lives.

A group of about 20 United Methodist leaders gathered recently at Webster Hills United Methodist Church in Webster Groves, Missouri, near St. Louis, to hear these and other conclusions. Talks by experts, videotaped by the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church, were presented by two pastors, the Rev. Larry Williams, associate pastor of Webster Hills, and the Rev. J. Brent Mustoe, pastor of Centralia United Methodist Church in Centralia, Missouri.

Williams said, "It is hard for many ministers to be dispassionate enough to see clearly what baby boomers need and want." Why? "Because we are they," he said.

Experts who have studied the generation under scrutiny find that these characteristics of baby boomers stand out:

- They lead high-stress lives; many have demanding careers. Churches are often perceived as sources of more stress.

- Many are divorced, single parents. Churches may be perceived as bulwarks of the traditional nuclear family.

- Those with children want to spend more time with them, and when children have to be left behind, parents expect quality care. They are looking for programs for families, including nontraditional families, and child-care programs that measure up.

- They take for granted a wide variety of choices in just about everything, including which church to attend. Although studies show them to be interested in spiritual matters, denominational loyalties are weak.

For members of the postwar generation, personal and family needs are likely to take precedence over the traditional reasons for choosing a church: theological perspective or traditional family ties to a denomination. When baby boomers seek a church, they



often go shopping.

Experts also note that baby boomers are slower than their parents were to make commitments and that some baby boomers change their places of residence as often as once every three years. Therefore, churches that advertise with specific information about programs and benefits are likely to get their attention.

Tex Sample, professor of church and society at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, advised congregations to plan with rather than for people and to start by meeting needs of people who are already there, regardless of their ages. He also urged churches to offer quality programs and lots of options, with an eye to settings that foster development of friends.

People are also looking for programs that help them connect beliefs to daily life, he said.

"We have to learn to be more creative," Mustoe said. "The message within the life of the church remains the same" — the gospel of Jesus Christ — "but the method of delivering it has to change."

by Pamela Schaeffer
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St. Louis Dispatch



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**"Teach them to obey everything
I commanded you."**

GROW — A JOURNAL OF CHURCH GROWTH, EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

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THE UNSUNG FAITHFUL

Robust servants of God in Bible times wrote amazing records of heroic accomplishments. The faith chapter (Hebrews 11) shows how a godly passion transforms ordinary people into mission-achieving disciples. Connection with Omnipotence made an incredible difference.

That amazing record of mission achievement continues even now. In unpublished places, the Church of the Nazarene is blessed by thousands of servants of the Lord Jesus of whom "the world is not worthy." Many are unpublicized. Many are unknown. Many shrink from prominence, intending their service to be to Christ alone. But it does not take a Gallup poll to discover unsung heroes in the front lines of church growth, evangelism, church planting, revivals, witnessing, and compassionate service.

Editing GROW puts me in touch with many such selfless, unknown disciples who do remarkable deeds in the name of Jesus. In this issue of GROW, we celebrate the achievement of Christ's mission in the world by Esther Sanger, Antonio

Leite, Alex Cubie, John Bowen, and Daniel Marichel. A similar group appeared in the last issue and future editions will report others. Although the world is not worthy of them, the Kingdom is.

Your church, city, state, or district has many "unsung faithful servants of Christ" of whom the world is not worthy, but the Kingdom is. You may be one of them.



If not, you can be. Truly effective service always begins with the self-emptying pattern of our Lord Who "made himself nothing, taking upon himself the very nature of a servant" (Philippians 2:7). Although you may

never be well known to the world, the denomination, the district, or even to people in your church, you are well known to God; He keeps the records. Invest your energy, strength, money, and commitment in achieving the mission of God in the world.

His mission will stretch and mold you into the likeness of Christ Jesus.

—NEIL B. WISEMAN
Editor, GROW



**“More and more men and women
believed in the Lord and were added
to their number.”**

Acts 5:14