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The name of today's game is "Super-speed."

The rules of the game tend to give points for hurry-scurry, mad scramble, slapdash, and super-sell. The growing attitude seems to be "If a bigger one can be made, let's make it; if there is a faster way to get to the top, let's find it!"

It is refreshing to discover there is still something to be said for endurance, perseverance, faithfulness, and staying power. Everyone cannot get there the fastest, so if spectacular speed is the goal, most of us are destined to be losers. But everyone can stay on the job until it is finished. With staying power as our goal, all of us can be winners.

This is demonstrated for us in the events which followed Pentecost. In the final paragraph of the Pentecost chapter there is a verse which declares: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

You see, good things did not end on the Day of Pentecost. That is the day they began. And what was begun was to continue. "And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved" (v. 47b, RSV).¹

These Spirit-filled Christians continued steadfastly. They did not stop. They would not quit. They refused to run. They had found the secret of staying power.

There are some interesting aspects of their experience which should enlighten and encourage us. Notice how the Holy Spirit manifested himself in their lives by enabling them to "continue steadfastly."

He helped them to be teachable, for one thing. They "continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles" (v. 42, Phillips).² They did not "know it all." They were willing to listen. They showed a wholesome respect for leadership and authority; and were eager to learn.

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¹ From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946 and 1952.
Learn they did, and what they learned was “the apostles’ doctrine.” Theology, of all things! We cannot afford the luxury of shortcuts in this area of our discipleship. “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine” was Paul’s exhortation to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:16), and the same advice applies to us.

To say as some do, “Don’t preach theology, preach Christ,” is to show a strange lack of understanding concerning theology. Theology is knowledge of who Christ is, why He came, how He died. It is our understanding of how He arose from the dead and is now at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. It is the basis for our belief that He is coming again in glory to reign forever. Preach Christ without theology? Christ is what theology is all about.

The staying power of the early Christians is also seen in their togetherness. Day after day they broke bread together. The word which best characterizes their relationship with one another is “fellowship” (v. 42). They worshipped together, they prayed together, they worked and witnessed together. They loved one another so completely that they brought all their possessions into a common treasury for distribution among those of their number who had needs (v. 45).

The human person is made for fellowship. He is not designed to be a “loner.” He needs to give and receive love, companionship, and understanding. This helps him master the art of “continuing steadfastly.”

Significant on the list of God-given qualities which kept the Spirit of Pentecost manifested among them was the priceless habit of continuing in prayer. There is an exciting story in the simple words “and in prayers” (v. 42b). It sounds trite, but it is true: Prayer changes things. They knew that secret, and we should not forget it. No new plan, no imaginative scheme, no bold innovation, no clever gimmick will ever replace the power of prevailing prayer.

And don’t overlook the answers to prayer. Nothing feeds the faith of a Christian like a few miracles in answer to his prayers. There were “many wonders and signs” accompanying the persistent prayers of the early Christians (v. 43).

Best of all, wonders are still happening today for those who continue to pray and believe. Lives are changed, peace comes to troubled souls, homes that are on the brink of destruction are healed and happy again, and God is still answering prayer.

With prayer and its answers, there is also the spirit of joy and praise. They “did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God . . .” (vv. 46b-47a). Phillips’ translation has it, “all the people respected them.”

True, they were opposed, mistreated, threatened, and persecuted. They knew how it felt to be mocked and ridiculed. They went everywhere preaching the gospel, and they went to prison too. But through it all they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

O Lord, give us a double portion of that kind of staying power.

A new day is apparently dawning. A fresh consciousness seems to be emerging. The priority of preaching in pastoral ministry is undergoing a radical reappraisal on many fronts. A pulpit-centered ecclesiology is being called into question by a dynamic theology of lay ministry. Sweeping advances in the science of communicology has rendered the lone voice of one crying in the wilderness obsolete.

Consider the rising tide of authoritative opinion.

Preaching is nonproductive. So say the specialists in church growth.

The six principal functions to which pastors have been conditioned to devote their time were listed on an overhead projector at a ministers’ conference I attended recently. They were, in order of concentration: (1) sermon preparation, (2) reading and study, (3) administration, (4) pastoral work, (5) personal evangelism and new member recruitment, (6) training the laity for ministry. Our leader, a knowledgeable representative from a large evangelical seminary, invited us to analyze this traditional ordering of priorities with an eye toward church growth. Which of these tasks produced the greatest results? Does anybody go to anyone’s church these days just to hear a sermon? Does preaching draw crowds, build attendance, and promote lay participation?

Understanding myself to be one “called to preach,” I found my own answers to these rhetorical questions disconcerting. We were also asked to think about the superchurch pastors whom we had heard, or of whom we had read: How many of them contributed their astounding success to great pulpit work? Rather, did they not speak of visitation outreach, bus ministry, Bible studies, Sunday school, discipleship, etc.?

Then we were challenged to consider what might happen in our churches if we reversed our traditional time priorities and were to give ourselves to those activities most likely to be fruitful in “growing a church.”

Preaching is ineffective. There may have been a day when preaching exercised a compelling power in winning converts, changing character, and affecting behavior. But, with a
few notable exceptions, that era is long gone. About the least effective program of behavior modification imaginable is that of a preacher ex- 
hosing passive parishioners to piety from a pulpit placed far away and high above the people. As one noted pastor wrote in a theological journal, "The great delusion of preachers is that there is a direct relationship between what is said from the pulpit and what is done in the pew."

Nowhere is this shift from pulpit to pew more apparent than in the ex- plosive resurgence of New Testament personal evangelism. Our decade has witnessed an interest in and concern for personal soul winning rivalling any period in church history back to the Early Church era.

My friend George just returned from yet another ministerial confer- ence held at the posh retreat cen- ter of a leading personal evangelism organization. One of the featured speakers apparently hadn't been properly screened. Horror of horrors, this renowned pulpiteer began to exhort the thousand or so confreres on their need to spend more time in sermon preparation. He went so far as to say that he hadn't considered his principal Sunday sermon to be worth the delivery if not backed up by one hour of preparation for every minute of preaching.

Whereupon, the obviously agitated conference leader mounted the po- dium and, after appropriate apolo- gies, took direct issue with his dis- tinguished guest.

"Think of all the sick, lonely, lost, alienated people," he said, "who will never darken the door of your church to hear your sermon masterpiece. Think of all the people who are perishing for want of a drink of the water of eternal life while you luxu- riate in your cozy, book-lined study."

"You can have your great sermons, polished monuments to your preac- hing eloquence. But give me men, who will walk the highways and hedges of this world's life and compel men, per- sonally, one by one, to come to Jesus."

"Amen," responded George. "Why should I spend 10 hours in my study when in that same amount of time I could be dealing with four or five people about their souls?"

"Well, what could I say? Preaching is only marginally rele- vant. That is, preaching is but one of many roles—and by no means the most important, by which the pas- tor sets the laity free for ministry. Thanks to a sharper reading of Eph. 4:11 ff., the whole church is trembling with the exhilarating insight that the dividing-wall between klaemos, "cler- icy," and laikos, "laity," is being broken down. In fact, the word for "laity" doesn't even appear in the Greek New Testament, according to church renewal theologians. Now we understand that the whole body of believers is raised to the rank of laos, "people of God," and that the work of ministry is entrusted not just to ec- cleiastical "George" but to all the saints.

In this liberating new environment of the church that understands itself to be a "congregation of the Spirit," the professional minister is released from the centuries-long burden of having to be the one and only spokes- man for God. Now he is set free to equip the saints for the work of min- istry. For the Spirit is inciting a vari- ety of gifts within the body by which each minister to the other, and all— not just the pastor—minister to the world.

In view of the fact that the Word of God is now committed to many, the solitary pulpit yields to 'body life.' And the pastor's role becomes that of being a coach, a facilitator, an ad- ministrator, a manager, a trainer, an enabler, a recruiter, a discipler, etc. This is not to say that the traditional half hour reserved for preaching should be scuttled. To the contrary, it ought to be seized and utilized by the pastoral director for his all- important equipping ministry.

"But let the pastor avoid the appear- ance of "preaching." Let him either remove the pulpit altogether or come down among the people. Let proclamation become sharing. Let preaching become teaching. Let monologue give way to dialogue. Let there be an abundance of testi- monials, talk-back sessions, questionnaires, three-ring binders, multimedia presentations, musical extravaganzas, conversational prayer, small-group worship interaction, hand-shakes all around—anything to involve the total body in their cele- brative life together. Like the con- cert-master, let the pastoral director orchestrate the various gifts within the body in such a way that his solo voice decreases and the rising chorus of the servant community increases.

"Yes, brethren, the evidence is over- whelming. The facts are incontro- versible. The trends are irresistible. Preaching is an anachronism of the past. Sermons (a nonbiblical word) are no longer relevant to the needs of the church. Pulpit work is an in- excusable dilution of time and tal- ents. The time has come to convert our studies into offices, trade in our books for computers, transform our pulpit into stages, and line our walls with charts and graphs.

"As I reluctantly face the facts, I will have to admit that preaching is as nonproductive as . . . a hymn sung by the sea at eventide, a walk along the John Muir Trail, a love note scratched in the sand, a candlelight dinner for two, or lovers linking arms as they watch the sun go down."

Perhaps they are right about preaching. Who can compute its suc- cess or measure its results? It seems to me that it is as ineffective as a father flying a kite with his son, a rainbow on the edge of summer's storm. . . .

a moonlight stroll through a dew- dusted meadow, 

a Handel's Messiah filling the Ad- vent air.

Let us confess it, brethren, that preaching is as marginally relevant in the church as a whispered "Will you marry me?" or an announcement, "It's a boy!"

Preaching employs a monologue form of communication that is as anachronistic and obsolete as the news delivered to my wife and me by a green-robed surgeon regarding our daughter. The operation was a complete success. The tumor was not ma- lignant. We were able to get it all.

What is preaching? Fundamentally, it is an act of human speaking, just words like . . .

God created the heavens and the earth, God so loved you that He sent His only Son, God us in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, Christ died, was buried, and rose again the third day, Christ ascended to the Father and makes intercession for us, He who has the Son has eternal life.

Preaching has to do with pro- nouncements like that—really incon- sequential stuff. Let's face it: Preach- ing doesn't really accomplish much. All it does is pierce the heart, convict the soul, awaken the dead, quicken the spirit, and become the power of God unto salvation for everyone that believes.

It is difficult to discern any change when real preaching occurs. After all, why should we get excited when
the Spirit of the Lord is upon us to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to set free those who are downtrodden? All that happens is that sinners are converted, saints are nourished, Satan falls from heaven like lightning, the Kingdom comes, eternal life dawns, downcast spirits are raised, and the people of God are carried on the wings of the Word to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Considering how preaching has lost its appeal to the masses, one wonders what it was that over 1 million South Koreans went-out to see a few years ago when they gathered outside Seoul. Was it to hear a president? A premier? A king? A pope? Was it to hear a coach? A facilitator? An enabler? An equipment? A director? Or was it simply to hear a preacher, an evangelist, proclaiming the Good News—and through an interpreter at that?

One also wonders why it is that the Sunday morning preaching service seems to be consistently outdrawing every other kind of activity in the church, including Sunday school. Why is it that, when pastoral vacancies occur, churches still doggedly set out to call a preacher? And why is it that so few of our young people are feeling a divine call to enable, facilitate, and train? Yet they continue to be aroused by a misty-eyed, soul-gripping, all-encompassing, and captivatingly compelling call to preach?

Considering how nonproductive, how ineffective, and how irrelevant preaching has proven to be, it is a mystery past finding out why Jesus came preaching, why He commanded His disciples to preach the gospel to every creature, why Paul felt a burning obligation to preach; why the apostles ordered their servanthood ministries to give priority to the preaching of the Word, and why every fresh breakthrough of spiritual vitality in the history of the Church has been keyed to great preaching. It contradicts the evidence, violates logic, and flies in the face of communications research.

In short, it just doesn't make any sense at all why it is that “God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe” (1 Cor. 1:21, NASB).1

Are We Listening?

By George Epler

It happened so many years ago that I had forgotten. But she hadn't. Many things she had forgotten when I was her pastor. What was it, then, that still seemed fresh in her memory? She told me in four words: “You listened to me.”

It came back to me as she continued, “I was ill—bedfast. Our crops were in the disaster state, and we were to lose our land. You pulled a chair near the bed, and as you listened, our spirits related in understanding emotions. That was a new day for me—for us—because you listened to a woman with a broken spirit. And after you had gone, I told my husband who needed the same fortitude his Lord had received.”

Are you listening? Am I? Or is the present-day ministry a one-way verbiage imposed upon those who are burdened with the desire to tell understanding ears where they hurt, how they hurt? How they need to see the listener's tears flow a little instead of so many of his words? The one who hurts will appreciate more deeply what we say if first we have provided the much-needed ministry of listening.


The Entrance of Things

By G. Emery Pratt*

Once a person senses the conviction that God's will for him is to devote himself to the ministry, he usually goes to great ends to give a good account of himself in this field.

There is a course of study to pursue. This may vary from the home study course to a number of years at college, with added years at seminary, or perhaps a combination of all of these. This intellectual preparation takes several of the most energetic years of his life. It also demands arduous work—mental work to master the required subjects, and physical work to secure the necessary funds. During these years, tyrannical demands prohibit one from many social enjoyments. Even seemingly necessary things are sacrificed as the preacher-to-be presses toward the goal.

Perhaps he is motivated by a vision of the position he will one day occupy. He is intent upon attending to the King's business. In the enthusiasm of anticipation, he gladly goes, without things. There will be plenty of time to acquire them when he is pastor of "First Church." Already he is being lured into a concealed trap. His thoughts are being led away from spiritual to materialistic values. His idea of achievement is becoming conditioned to the false premise that an accumulation of things in abundance spells success.

*Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Waldoboro, Me.

Then the glad day comes when the D.S. informs him of a call to the church at West Overshoe. They cannot offer him much except a challenge, but he is strong and ambitious. He will have that church going great guns in no time. In the meantime some secular work will enable him to support his family and get some needed things for the home, perhaps a better automobile.

If he is not careful, he will yield to two temptations: (1) to anticipate larger financial returns in the near future; (2) to surrender to the desire for bigger and better things than his present income warrants. Yielding to these will result in a person whose calling is to spiritual labor, devoting a large portion of his strength and skill to the acquisition of material things. Often this occurs so insidiously that one hardly realizes what is happening to thwart the godly course he originally set out upon. This will retard the growth of his church and jeopardize his likelihood of a call to a stronger one.

Is there any way to escape the tyranny of things? It is a rigorous route. We must ever fix our eyes on the Captain of our salvation. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He had not where to lay His head. He was despised and rejected. The servant is not greater than his Lord, and if one looks upon Him rather to the more affluent brethren in the ministry, he will...
The Old Testament concept of "priest" has a relationship to today's pastor.

The Minister as Priest

By Robert D. Branson

To many of us the terms minister and priest are mutually exclusive. We have let the modern church shape our concepts about these offices, and too often think that the priest is an official of the Roman Catholic church or some highly liturgical Protestant church. However, in the Old Testament, the priest was the divinely appointed leader of worship, and inasmuch as a minister is the spiritual leader of a congregation, he, too, fulfills the office of priest. In developing a biblical concept of the ministry, it is necessary to ask, What specifically were the responsibilities of the priest, and how do they relate to today's minister?

The priest's primary task was to lead the community in worship—singing, praying, sacrificing. The rituals may have changed over the centuries, and yet in every regular worship service the people are still engaged in singing, praying, and bringing an offering to God. While there is no denominationally prescribed pattern of worship, each church quickly gets accustomed to doing things in a set way. Often when supplying at a church, I will ask if there is an order of service. Usually some layman will comment that the church follows the leadership of the Spirit and does not have a set ritual. He then proceeds to explain how many hymns to sing before the offering, when to sing the Doxology and offer the pastoral prayer and whether or not there is a special number in song.

An order of service, or ritual, is not bad as long as it is not a rut. The minister needs to control the service—and not vice versa. A conscious effort needs to be made not to allow a haphazard order, or even a previously planned order, to stifle worship. This is a call, not to do something different every service, but to plan each service for its maximum effect. The people gather to worship God. It is the minister's responsibility to so order the service that they can gain a sense of the presence of God. Each congregation is different. Each service is different. There are those special times of worship: the receiving of new members, baptizing a convert, dedicating an infant, conducting a wedding or funeral. A few minutes of planning can help bring a feeling of purpose to the service, a sense of being ushered into the presence of God.

One of the peculiar functions of a priest in the Old Testament was to determine the will of God. Our methods have changed since then, for not too many boards would be impressed with a pastor who cast lots to determine the will of God as did Samuel in choosing a king (1 Sam. 10:20-21). However, the church still looks to its leader to determine in some way the will of God for the congregation. It may be a new program, or building, or ministry over which the board ponders when the pastor is looked to for special guidance from God. He is their priest inquiring of the oracle of God.

The methods may vary: prayer, searching the Scriptures, meditation, seeking advice from godly persons. What a heavy burden. What a special privilege. It calls for a man of integrity to resist assuming that his own ideas are the same as God's. He must be open to the leadership of the Spirit, willing to listen and obey as He gives direction. The church which has confidence in its pastor's ability to determine the will of God will not be afraid to launch out into the unknown. It will be confident of God leading them into new lands to conquer.

A key responsibility of the priests was to teach the people the knowledge of God. It was their failure at this point that brought severe condemnation from Hosea (4:4-6) and Micah (3:11). The priest as guardian of the sacred traditions of the mighty acts of God was to teach the people about God and His laws, that they might not sin against Him. One of the heaviest responsibilities of the pastor is the teaching ministry. While the Bible is his primary textbook, a wealth of study aids is available to assist him: commentaries, dictionaries, books about the Bible, new translations. The long hours of study are vital for both the pulpit and the lectern, for the minister must not only proclaim but teach the Word of God. The secret of stronger and more mature church members is to be found in the priestly task of teaching.

Is the minister also a priest? Maybe not in name, but certainly in office he has priestly functions. They present to him possibilities of bringing his people closer—closer to God, more conscious of His working in their lives. In these ways the minister is a priest of God to his people.
Tender, Loving Care

AFTER 18 YEARS OF PASTORAL SERVICE and 7 years as a district superintendent, I am convinced that the ability to give "tender, loving care" is often the margin of success for a pastor. Other than the pastor's own spiritual experience, I believe the next priority is his grace and motivation that cause him to genuinely love the people of his congregation and care for them out of a heart of deep concern. I am far more impressed with the pastor's 'graces to love his people than I am with his academic credentials. Of course, the best combination is to have both these qualities.

This love for the people will manifest itself in many ways. First of all, the pastor will not be demanding for his own benefits. He certainly has a right to a decent living; but he will not make an issue of this. He will be willing to sacrifice personal possessions, conveniences, time, and security for the good of his people.

Further, he will not be demanding in his efforts to bring about Christian service. He knows the difference between being a pastor and an army sergeant. He leads by example and kindly persuasion.

The loving pastor will know how to handle situations that call for rebuke and correction. Discipline, as it is necessary, is made with brokenheartedness and a sincere desire to bring about reconciliation.

He preaches, not to serve his own needs and interests, but as a sincere effort to strengthen his people by the Word of God. He uses God's Word to encourage the Christians. The loving pastor does not plan to call attention to himself or advance his interests. His ministerial work is clearly directed to the benefit of his people. He is not solicitous of the attention from others, and can easily overlook what might appear to be neglect towards him. Rather, he finds pleasure in seeing the spiritual development of his people.

If he is motivated by love, he will not withdraw from necessary involvement. He knows the difference between assistance and interference. Even as Christ gave of himself, the loving pastor will involve himself with his people in order to better understand, help, and develop them.

This ideal pastor will consider the growth and development of his people as one of the greatest compliments to his own ministry. This pastor will have time to talk to people, even those who may not be able to contribute anything to his success. He makes no obvious distinction between the rich and the poor, the intelligent and the ignorant. Nobody is unimportant.

The loving pastor will understand that people have great needs that can be met in the gospel and through God's grace. He will encounter many people who will complicate his life and even resist what he tries to do. His attitude to such people will not be one of retaliation or resentment. Rather, he will see that such people have deep needs that may cause them to be irritants, and he will sincerely seek ways to refine and mature these people through God's grace.

Blessed is that church whose pastor really cares for his people; that pastor will have the most productive ministry.

Are You a Stumbling Block?

A blind man was walking along the foggy streets of London one night, carrying a brightly shining lantern held high in the air as if to light his path. A young woman approached the old man and said, "Sir, it is obvious that you are blind, so why are you carrying that lantern?"

A tear trickled down the old man's face as he turned in the direction of the questioning voice, and he replied, "I realize that I cannot see, but I carry the lantern so no one will stumble over me."

If some Christians applied this story to their own lives and witness, they would find that their lights have been hidden "under a bushel," and someone may have stumbled because of it.

Jesus said, "It is better for him that a millstone was hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea" (Mark 9:42) than to be a stumbling block to one of God's children. Strong words—but clear.

Let us seek to be like John the Baptist, of whom we read in John 1:8-9, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe: He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light."

May we be heirs of that saving Light, and not stumbling blocks.

—RONALD S. COMBS

March, 1977
Every Tuesday morning I look forward to meeting with about two dozen convicts at Green Haven Correctional Facility in Stormville, N.Y. From 9 till 11 a.m. we meet for an in-depth Bible study. Right now we are exploring the Gospel of Mark along with side glances in the Book of Revelation.

Prison ministry is an adventure! It is that chance to gather with a group outside of your own congregation. It is that opportunity to travel across some virgin territory, discovering new personalities—complex, some young, some old. It is a whole new setting for breaking up the weekly rut of routine. But more importantly, it is that door for witness for the Lord Jesus.

We pull up our chairs around several large tables in the Protestant Center study room. There is the blackboard and chalk ready for action. A stack of Bibles is piled in the center of the tables for anyone who shows up without his own Bible. At 9:30 sharp we begin with prayer, then we dig into the Scriptures, going from verse by verse through the chapters. Of course the atmosphere is more than straight lecture;

there is that lively dialogue between teacher and pupils. Near to 10:45 we stop for 15 minutes of intense prayer, different fellows calling out to God.

There are the drifters. They come and go. But over the months there solidifies a hard core of committed disciples of the Saviour. They are always present with Bibles in hand. They are the ones who ask pertinent questions, who earnestly seek to know more about the Word. They are the ones who lead out in prayer, who will be seen with others giving brotherly counsel when the Bible study has dismissed for the day.

I can never forget one particular young man—31 years old, black, thick Afro atop his handsome head. He had killed a man when he was 11 years old. For 14 years he had "spent time" when I came to know him.

In May, 1975, he had gone to a Sunday morning worship in the Protestant Center in order to pick a fight with the chaplain, Robert Martin. But God had held that man seated in the pew. Instead of snarling at the man of God behind the pulpit, he was overcome with a conviction of divine peace. He left the chapel, returned to his cell, and began to wonder what it was that was happening to him.

He made an appointment to meet the chaplain on another day. They talked about matters of the soul. Gradually God got his man in conversion. His life was changed. He became hungry for the Word, for prayer, for worship, and gave himself over to witnessing to fellow inmates.

In June of that year, while praying with fellow Christians one afternoon, he was overcome with the Spirit's infilling. Such power. Such purity. He had never experienced such a personal encounter with the Almighty in his life. As he put it, "God covered me from the top of my Afro to the bottom of my shoes!"

He was so beautifully sanctified that he wanted to go into "the yard" to tell other inmates about God's presence. But then he realized that they would think he was crazy, or drunk, or on drugs. He decided that he would not rush out into the yard, but would continue in prayers of thanksgiving with the others in the room.

In the early autumn he sensed God's call into the Christian ministry. I had a chance to introduce him to a Bible College catalogue. He read it enthusiastically, sent in his application forms, and was accepted for studies in September, 1976.

About that same time I had the privilege of recommending him for church membership in our own local congregation. The church board, serving as membership committee, unanimously agreed to receive him into membership. They also presented him with a local preacher's license.

"Other than my Bible, what do you think is my most treasured possession?" he asked me one day while I was having coffee with some of the men at the center. I gave a few limp answers, but none was correct.

With a gesture of his hand, he pointed to the local preacher's license that he retrieved from inside his pocket. He had me make extra copies of it to send to his mother and some other relatives so that they would realize that God had indeed changed his life for the Light.

On Sunday, December 21, 1975, it was a delight to have James J. Perry and Migda Zli Santiago exchange marriage vows in our sanctuary before a loving congregation of 300 during the morning worship. Following the brief ceremony, Jim delivered the sermon, telling of his conversion and the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

He looked so sharp that Sunday. Dressed in coal-black suit with light blue shirt and matching tie. And those patent leather shoes! Migdalia looked like a princess. The details of the wedding—new clothes, flowers, etc.—were underwritten by a love gift from the evangelist and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. Claude Jones of Bell Air, Md., who had met Jim while conducting a revival in our church the preceding November.

Jim was back in Green Haven on the next Tuesday at noon. Migdalia was back in her apartment in the Bronx. But right now it looks good for Jim's parole to open soon. The bride and groom will be reunited for the service of the Lord in ministerial training.

Who are the winners in this story? Well, of course, God has won his man and woman—Jim and Migdalia. And they have won their Saviour, as well as one another. But I also have won. I won their friendship and the adventure of being a minister to Jim while conducting weekly Bible studies at the nearby penitentiary.

I am so glad that God opened the door of prison ministries. Would there be a chance that God would open such a door for you in your community? If so, do yourself a favor. Walk through. There are diamonds on the other side.
Objectives of Sickroom and Hospital Calling

By Mel E. DePeal*

I was sick, and ye visited me. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matt. 25:36).

The special emphasis which our Lord puts upon visiting the sick identifies sickroom and hospital calling as an essential part of the pastoral ministry. It is often demanding work. It lacks the popularity and publicity which accompanies some other kinds of Christian service. But pastors who have faithfully performed this service know that it is some of the most fertile soil into which the seed of Christ’s love may be sown.

Seed-sowing in the sickroom requires training and knowledge. Great good or tremendous harm can be done, depending upon a pastor’s understanding of why he is there, what he is to accomplish, and how he is to conduct himself in the presence of sickness.

There are at least five objectives a pastor should have in view in sickroom and hospital calling:

Heartfelt sympathy
Personal concern, genuine sympathy, without pity, is the most comfortable atmosphere a pastor creates in his relationship with a sick person. Professionalism can be put aside. An artificial attitude is insufficient. It is a time when the pastor will make a sincere effort to understand what the patient is experiencing. The kind of sympathy needed is that which projects to the patient, “I feel very sorry for you,” but rather, “I understand how you feel, and I want to be with you in your trouble.” Sickroom calling is one-to-one, heart-to-heart relationship. Whatever the concern of the patient is, that becomes the concern of the pastor. The pastor is there as a caring, concerned friend.

Ministering to spiritual need
This is the pastor’s specialty. He is especially trained for spiritual counseling. But tactlessness; even in spiritual matters, can be very harmful. How does the pastor approach the spiritual need of the patient? Those who are authorities in hospital calling say that the door to a patient’s heart is his present condition, along with his present circumstances. The pastor should approach spiritual need in the sickroom in its immediate relationship to the patient’s sickness and surrounding circumstances.

If the patient is a believing Christian, his spiritual need should be approached in relation to his faith and his reaction to his present trial. The pastor must strengthen faith, offer the comfort of the Scriptures, extend the fellowship of prayer. The spiritual benefit of such a pastoral call can scarcely be evaluated.

If the patient is an unbeliever, he must be made to feel immediately at ease in the presence of the minister. He needs the assurance of the Scriptures that he is the object of God’s love, and that his sickness is not necessarily an evidence of God’s displeasure. In dealing with a sick person who is not a Christian, it is especially important that the Scriptures are used, rather than the personal concepts and opinions of the pastor. In a time of sickness, when his heart is apt to be more tender, and his awareness of spiritual need more keen, it is far better for the Word of God more effective and powerful than anything the pastor could say. Without taking unfair advantage of the circumstance of sickness, the unsaved sick person provides an opportunity to tenderly, lovingly, and tactfully lead a soul to new life and hope in Christ.

Sometimes the sickroom becomes a place of confession. The wise pastor will listen attentively with a non-judgmental attitude. Confessions in the sickroom are often made when the patient feels he may not recover. If he does recover, however, woe be unto the pastor who has betrayed his confidence!

Contributing to physical recovery
Every pastor should study to understand the dynamics occurring between the physical, mental, and spiritual faculties of a patient. He does not need a major in psychology to do this. It is important to understand that a mind and soul at ease is a great factor in physical healing. A pastor who has learned how to ask the right questions in an appropriate manner will be a great blessing to his sickroom parishioners. Many times, all a pastor needs to be is a good listener.

Another effective approach, and one especially good for the patient, is that of positive suggestion. Near the top of the list for a pastor in the sickroom is an optimistic attitude. He must be careful not to build any false hopes. Medical opinions should be left to the physician. Except in medically established terminal cases, the pastor should endeavor to leave his parishioner feeling, “My pastor believes I am going to get well.” A pastor’s prayers, his good judgment, and his optimistic attitude can be a turning point in recovery. Every pastor should seek to instill faith and the will to get well into the mind of the patient.

Contacting the patient’s family
Much of the anxiety suffered by a patient relates to his family. Anything the pastor can do to alleviate anxiety and to serve as a strong bridge of assurance between the family and the patient will be work well done. Involvement with the family is a golden opportunity to be a part of their experience in sickness and thus gain their appreciation and confidence.

Waiting at home is very difficult for the loved ones of sick people. The pastor who is not in the homes of his parishioners during times of sickness is missing one of the great opportunities available to work his way into their hearts. This objective is so important, it cannot be emphasized too strongly.

Private and intimate matters in the family are off limits for the pastor unless he is asked into them. Any intrusion will be resented, but avail-
ability, to be helpful will be greatly appreciated. The pastor can offer to help, but the acceptance of his counsel must be left to the family members. Pastors who have cultivated a wholesome, trustful, and affectionate relationship with family members will discover them coming to him in time of sickness.

**Working with the hospital staff**

In the eyes of the hospital staff the minister is a professional person. It will be worth any pastor’s effort when he endeavors to live up to the professional expectations of other professionals. By cultivating a professional rapport within the hospital staff, the pastor will accomplish two things at least. He will make his own hospital calling easier. He will enjoy the esteem and the appreciation of the hospital staff.

Here are a few guidelines for pastors in hospital calling:

1. Keep personal rights within the bounds of professional courtesy.
2. Learn the hospital rules and abide by them.
3. Make careful and courteous entry into a hospital room.
4. Be ready to “step out a minute” if a nurse enters to administer treatment.
5. Leave diagnosis and medical opinions to the physician.
6. Stop at the nursing station and inquire first, if a patient is seriously ill. The call may be advisable.

Hospital calling should be easier, faster, and more effective when these simple guidelines are observed.

---

**Evangelistic Pastors**

*O THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST* (2 Tim. 4:5)—the words of instruction from Paul to young Timothy, and the words of admonition to every pastor today.

A pastor should develop, motivate, mold, and lead his church into a soul-winning congregation. For a church to grow, it must be evangelistically oriented and have a genuine spirit of witnessing and winning others to Christ. When a church waits for two or three revival campaigns a year to suffice for its entire evangelistic outreach, it can thwart growth. We can continue to grow by winning others to the Saviour and thereby maintain the spiritual glow and fervor which has marked the Church of the Nazarene from its inception.

Every pastor should develop those talents and abilities which enable him to be a soul winner. Each pastor bears many responsibilities in his pasture—preacher, teacher, shepherd, leader, financier, and the list goes on. Along with all of these demands he must also lead and direct his people in evangelism.

With all our emphasis on personal soul winning, it is still essential that we have strong evangelistic preaching from the pulpit. Sunday after Sunday. Evangelistic preaching is preaching that wins others to the Saviour. It is preaching with a passion for souls. With Paul, it is saying, “Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (1 Cor. 9:16). It is preaching against sin and
with a warning of the coming judgment and of hell. It is preaching that lifts up Christ, His atonement, His love, and power to forgive all sins and to sanctify wholly.

This kind of preaching appeals to the heart as well as to the intellect. It is logically clear and scripturally sound. It maintains emotional appeal that stirs the heart and moves the volition toward God. Evangelistic preaching calls for decision, persuading men to come to Christ. This preaching must be bathed in tears and soaked in much prayer. Hearts aflame with God’s love can persuade others to accept the Saviour.

Jesus said, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19). This is what we are—“fishers of men”—winning, leading, training others to win!

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Nazarene Christian educators plan curriculum for the course "Summer Ministries in the Church of the Nazarene." Shown here, front row from the left, are Dr. Ken Heidrick (ONC), Dr. Cliff Fisher (PLC), Rev. Lyle Flinner (BNC), Mrs. Betty Robertson (BNC), Dr. Harold Davis (Department of Church Schools), Dr. Chester Galloway (NTS); back row, Dr. Harper Cole (TNC), Rev. Gene Williams (pastor in Wichita, Kans.), Rev. Marselle Knight (Kansas district superintendent), Prof. Bill Youngman (MVNC), Prof. Dan Berg (NNC), Prof. Joe Rapalje (ENC), and Prof. Dean Baldwin (MANC).
Dr. Paul Fromer, noted author, says, "There must be a shift of realism in our Christian writing. It must be pointive...it must face facts and be more practical than imaginary." In order for it to be realistic, Christian writing must show a sense of the living God.

English author Thomas Carlyle, upon greeting the newly called pastor of his church, took him aside and said, "What this church needs is someone who knows God other than by hearsay."

Nazarene literature must be realistic and show a sense of the living God. It cannot be considered realistic if it ignores Him, if it relegates God to mere hearsay.

What kind of literature should be placed in the reader's hands? The following words by Dr. Sherwood E. Wirt, former editor of Decision magazine, answer this question. They form an important part of the rationale for the existence of Etcetera magazine, the young adult monthly, for the Church of the Nazarene.

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From the Quadrennial Address delivered at the Nineteenth General Assembly, Dallas, Tex., June 20, 1970.

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(Dean Wessels)
not for Ladies Only

If everything is not all right at home, I'm no good.” A pastor once made this remark rather casually. It probably could have been said truthfully by any man, for no man is at his best if he has trouble at home. But especially is it true of ministers, for a minister's home is a vital factor in his work; and if everything is not all right there, his whole ministry suffers.

The atmosphere of his home depends largely on the attitudes of his wife. If she is contented and happy, the family members will likely be contented and happy too. She sets the tone.

However, 40 years of marriage have taught me that the man of the house has his part, and together they make the home what it is. (The editor tells me that the men read this page too.) There are some unique circumstances of the ministry which might put a strain on the marriage relationship. Against these we need to be on guard:

The pastor is constantly giving to others in selfless service outside the home. When he gets home, he's ready to relax. There may be a subtle temptation to relax his thoughtfulness. I've heard of a proverb about the man who was the joy of the street and the sorrow of the home. This is the danger. His work is exceedingly important. It takes its toll of physical, mental, and spiritual resources. But it should not drive them to the point where he is too exhausted to be thoughtful of the one he vowed to love and to cherish. There is romance in his public life. But his part is also to keep romance alive at home with unselfish concern for his loved-ones.

Of course, when he goes home, if she greets him with affection rather than complaints, she is creating an atmosphere conducive to his thoughtfulness. The pastor listens without limit to members of his parish if he is a true pastor. He is human. He can become weary of what sometimes seems to be trivial; and when he gets away, he wants peace and quiet. He may be inclined to lapse into silence at home. His wife may be hungry for adult conversation. She needs more than “Uh-huh” as he picks up the evening newspaper. As his wife she is a friend to all, but she has no exclusive friends in the congregation. No other

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by Irene Coulter
General superintendent's wife
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March, 1977

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occupation makes this demand of a man's wife. If she is conscientious in her desire to be a helpmeet to him in the ministry, she'll deny herself the luxury of special friends. She'll do it for him and for the sake of the greatest good of all in the parish. Besides the Lord, her husband is really all she has to fulfill her need for closeness. He should be her best earthly friend—take an interest in her interests, listen to her talk about her life, her burdens, hopes, and plans.

I once read an article on "The Healing Touch of Attention." It told of a boy who was brought to the Foundation for Religion and Psychiatry for help. It didn't take long for the therapist to find out what was wrong. "My parents don't care about me. We never do anything together. My father never looks at me when I talk to him. My mother nags about my hair, but she never listens." When you fail to pay attention, you are rejecting. "Rejection hurts. Attention heals. It is as simple as that." Formed homes are salvaged, joy and sanctification. He taught that there can be no sanctification until the heart is whole, pure, and perfect. "So that every high degree of perfection, neither more nor less than the world, the ministry, he'll deny herself, her thoughts, her attitude, her worries, her attentiveness, her counting the quality of the pastoral care. Love is easy, but when he speaks of sanctification, it is love to God without the least love of the creature; love to man, excluding all envy." (For a fuller treatment see Works, VI:100-402.)

McDonald says that Wesley believed that all the fruits of the Spirit existed in regeneration, but not in the same measure as in entire holiness. One was the work begun, the other the work completed. Herein Mr. Wesley is perfectly consistent with himself" (op. cit., pp. 83-84).

John Wesley's acute perception of human nature is doing, to be concerned with the needs of others, and to be willing part of the time to forego pleasures they'd like to enjoy. "They need you more than we do" is a much better reaction than "Do you have to go?" when a cherished family activity is interrupted and Dad is called away.

Take a little time to be alone together. You may find it hard to arrange, but the joy of success in the church will be dampered if the pastor is going so hard that he and his wife become strangers.

But with all of the circumstances of the ministry that can cause strain, the opportunities for sharing and closeness are greater than in any other walk of life.

A minister's work overflows into his home. He and his wife know the same people. They are united in a common purpose—commitment to Christ and the church. The rewards are greater than just bringing home the paycheck. Seeing lives transformed, homes salvaged, joy and hope coming into the countenances of people, knowing together you have invested something of you love and self-forgetfulness to see these things come to pass, is great compensation.

More than that, such sharing in a common purpose contributes to the blessedness of your relationship with each other. No couple has greater opportunity for oneness than a pastor and his wife.

How things are in the parsonage colors the quality of the pastoral ministry. It takes two—both the pastor and his wife—looking out for the needs of the other, paying attention, listening.

As they succeed in this important relationship, they are obeying scriptural admonition and giving to their congregation an example of Christian love and grace.

1. The quotation is from a Reader's Digest of unknown date. The article was condensed from Goodspeeds of April, 1969.

The Preacher's Magazine

March, 1977

Wesley on "Entire" and "Instantaneous" Sanctification

By Roy S. Nicholson*
man nature led him to feel that some who had experienced the wonderful change in justification might lead them to "naturally... imagine that all sin is gone, that it is utterly rooted out of the heart, and has no place there. How easily do they deride the conclusion, I feel no sin; therefore I have none; it does not 'still' therefore it does not 'exist'; it has no motion, therefore it has no 'being.'" But he reminds his readers that "sin remains in him; yea, the seeds of all sin, till he be sanctified throughout" (ibid., p. 82).

- Gradual or instantaneous?

Wesley considered that the doctrine of Christian perfection and entire sanctification was "the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists, and for the propagating this chiefly he appears to have raised us up."

One of the questions which has persisted unto this day is: is this experience obtained gradually or instantaneously? Some argue that it is obtained gradually, and others that it is obtained instantly. Both sides quote Wesley as their authority. William McDonald, a Methodist and the leader of the leaders and promoters of the organization which for a century was known as the National Holiness Association (now the Christian Holiness Association), treats of the apparent differences in Wesley's writings on this matter.

In his work "John Wesley and His Doctrine," McDonald says that in the early part of his ministry, Wesley did not seem to have been settled on this point. But as Wesley "advanced in his work, personal experience threw much light on the subject, and settled in his mind some questions of great value. The question as to whether it was 'gradual' or 'instantaneous,' or 'both,' was difficult to determine; and not until he was convinced by the testimony of hundreds of his ministers that it was instantaneous, did he allow himself to be persuaded to the conclusion. This conviction he could not doubt, was he forced to regard it as an instantaneous work, preceded and followed, like justification, by a gradual work" (p. 89).

At first, Wesley was inclined to believe that it was gradual, and to be accomplished at or near death. Later he declared how painstakingly he had personally examined those who professed instantaneous sanctification with "the most searching questions we could devise," which led to replies "without hesitation, and the utmost simplicity, so that we were fully persuaded that they did not deceive themselves." (ibid., pp. 90-91).

Wesley's meticulous examination of the experiences, and observation of the lives, of those who believed they were sanctified, and comparison with the Scriptures, "who declared with one voice that the experience was wrought by a present moment," led him to affirm: "I cannot but believe that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an 'instantaneous' work." And Wesley further concludes concerning "instantaneous" sanctification that "there is evidence enough to satisfy any prejudiced person" (ibid., pp. 92-93).

Ap propos this same "instantaneousness," Wesley speaks of physical death as occurring in "the instant the soul is separated from the body." And in the same paragraph he says one "is not dead till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love." (Works, XI:306.)

Hester Ann Rogers in her "Journal," page 173, contains a clear and pointed statement by John Wesley on this vital matter: "You may obtain a 'growing' victory 'over sin' from the moment you are justified. But this is not enough. The 'body of sin,' the 'vain mind,' must be destroyed; the old man must be slain; or we cannot put on the new man, which is created after God (or which is the image of God) in righteousness and true holiness; and this is done in a moment. To urge the necessity of this work need hardly be nonsense, as much as if we talked of gradual justification" (quoted by McDonald, op. cit., p. 92).

On the matter of "entire" and "instantaneous" sanctification, we have Wesley's teaching, supported by the Word of God, that it "implies deliverance from all sin; that this is received merely by faith; that it is given instantly in one moment; that we are to expect it, not at death, but at every moment... Our word does not profit either in regard to justification or sanctification, unless we bring people to accept it while we speak" (ibid., p. 94).

"The Sum of the Doctrine": (of Christian Perfection) and "Brief Thought on Christian Perfection," which Wesley stated to have been "a simple account of the manner wherein I first received the doctrine of perfection, and the some wherein I do receive and teach it to this day," may be found in Works, XI: 441-46.

The vital relationship which exists between clear and correct preaching of "entire and instantaneous" sanctification and the progress of the work of God is plainly expressed in Wesley's Journal for August 14-15, 1776, on the occasion of his visit to Launceston: "Here I found the plain reason why the work of God had gained no ground in this Circuit all the year. The people had given up the Methodist testimony: Either they did not speak of Perfection at all, (the peculiar doctrine committed to our trust), or they spoke of it only in general terms, without urging believers to 'go on unto perfection,' and to expect it every moment. And whatever is not earnestly done, the work of God does not prosper" (Works, IV:83).

Midweek Happening

By Winn O. Allison

Wednesday evening prayer services can be either very inspiring or extremely boring. At our church recently, we had a real midweek "happening." It was an exciting time of sharing with each other, of dialogue, of praying, of talking, of singing, and more—the Lord met with us in a unique way. Our lives were touched and challenged by the Lord.

It wasn't too complicated and certainly didn't take a great deal of preparation. I share the idea with you in the hope that the Spirit might be able to break in on other Wednesday evening congregations.

Before the service, we arranged two lectures—side by side on the sanctuary.

*Associate pastor, Taylor Avenue Church of the Nazarenes, Racine, Wisc.

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through prayer that we are able to hear the preaching” (p. 35).

Elsewhere in this volume, Killinger writes: “Regardless of how fine a preacher the pastor is, or how efficient an administrator, or how clever a table conversationalist, he, by no shepherding of Christ if he does not pray for his congregation. No one is more partial than I to preaching. Yet I would rather have a minister who lifted me before God than one who merely lifted me by the hair of my head” (p. 95).

**A Lesson from David**

In 1 Samuel 30 a moment of discouragement and despair is revealed in the life of David. "But David took strength from the Lord" (NIV, Living Bible). (The Berkeley Version reads, "and held on the Lord his God.")

I gathered these thoughts from the chapter: (1) There is the posture of the soul, which determines destiny. It began’s part to acknowledge his need, and God’s part to meet it. David stood at attention before God. (2) There is the promise that invites onward. There is always a promise from God that His presence is available. David had lived enough with God to know this. (3) There is a plan which takes us to tomorrow. And that-plan always includes an open, obedient heart, and a strengthening, shepherding God.

**The Tragedy of Solomon**

In 1 Kings 11, we read the tragic disobedience of Solomon. It unfolded in the opening part of the chapter when Solomon is cautioned not to marry outside the will of God, for, as v. 2 warns, the woman would turn his heart from the Lord. The remainder of the context shows three stages in Solomon’s disobedience:

1. Solomon’s downfall began with a question of loyalty. Solomon disregarded the warning not to marry outside God’s plan. But v. 3 relates the tragic conclusion when Solomon turned his loyalty from God. It states: “. . . and sure enough, they turned his heart away from the Lord. . . .” They encouraged him to worship their gods instead of trusting in the Lord. Solomon completely in the Lord as his father David had done.”

2. Stage 2 shows the quality of life that became Solomon’s in his disobedient state: “Thus Solomon did what was clearly wrong and refused to follow the Lord as his father David did” (v. 9).

3. Stage three is seen in the quantity of Solomon’s losses, V. 11 gives us God’s summary: for Solomon: “Since you have not kept our agreement and have not obeyed my laws, I will tear the kingdom away from you and your family and give it to someone else.”

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**Thoughts on Pentecost**

Gordon Johnson, editor of *Time to Tell*, a publication of the Evangelical Methodist church, shares this paper with me, and from one of its recent issues I pass along this “starting point.”

Pentecost needs to be (1) reviewed in depth; (2) received in faith; (3) revived in prayer.

There’s a lot to be uncovered if these points are pursued.

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**Prayer and Preaching**

John Killinger’s recent book, *Bread for the Wilderness, Wine for the Journey* (Word Books, 1976), is exciting reading. The book really is about Killinger’s pilgrimage back to some of the basics he felt he had lost somewhere along the way.

One of the discoveries for Killinger was prayer. Among other things, he says what he wrote: “. . . it is through prayer that the power comes to preach well, and it is:

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**Seeds for Sermons**

**Joshua Our Jesus**

**Looking Toward Easter**

"When the name ‘Joshua’ is translated into Greek it becomes ‘Jesus’ (cf. Acts 7:53; Heb. 4:8). The name signifies ‘Saviour.’ In many ways this Old Testament Jesus foreshadows the characteristics of the New Testament Jesus. He had no evil recorded against him; he was free from all desire of self-aggrandizement or lust of gain; there was no taint of selfishness to mar the simple nobility of his character; in every circumstance he displayed one supreme desire: to know the will of God” (Chester O. Mulder, BBC, Vol. II, p. 21).

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**By C. Neil Strait**

Pastor, Taylor Avenue Church of the Nazarene

Racine, Wis.

March, 1977

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**By Mark E. Moore**

Pastor

Church of the Nazarene

Sylvania, Ohio

March, 1977
March 13

JOSHUA OUR JESUS—HE LEFT NOTHING UNDONE

Scripture: Josh. 11:15; Num. 33:50-56

Text: "As the Lord commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua; and, so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses." (Josh. 11:15)

Introduction: If there could be an epitaph on the tombstone of Joshua, nothing would be more fitting than these words: "He left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded." If there were an epitaph carved into the cornerstone of the empty grave of Jesus, nothing would be more fitting than Jesus' words: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4). In Joshua and in Jesus we see God's plan of salvation for man.

In Num. 33:50-56 we read God's plan to Moses:

1. Drive Out. "Drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you: despoises the inhabitants of the land." (vv. 52-53). In ancient Joshua, one shudders at the heartless destruction of the enemies of God's people. Yet the message is clear. Either you will utterly destroy the enemy, or the enemy will finally destroy you. Joshua 16:10 is one of many illustrations where the enemy was not totally destroyed. The final downfall of Israel years later had its seeds of destruction in failing to utterly destroy the enemy.

Many of us remember the closing of the Nazarene work in China in the late 1940s. Years before, the Nationalist army of China defeated the Communist forces and drove the small remnant to an obscurity corner of the nation in what history records as "The Long March." Yet from this small group came the seeds of destruction that finally conquered China. When God says, "Drive out," He knows that only full victory is victory.

2. Destroy. "Destroy all their pictures" (v. 52). I am glad that the Nineteenth General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene in Dallas last June reaffirmed and strengthened its stand against pictures that destroy. "The avoidance of the motion picture theater ... the violent, or the sensual and pornographic." Susannah Wesley's advice to her son John is still valid: "Take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things—indeed whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you; however innocent it may be in itself." It is still true—whatever gets your attention gets you.

Conclusion: "For if Jesus [Greek spelling of Joshua] had given them rest, then would he afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." (Heb. 4:8-9). Thank God, one day there came a greater Joshua! He too did all God told Him to do. He drove out the devil. He destroyed the evil pictures of our mind. He gave me an "inheritance among them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:17), and I dwell in the Canaan Land of His rest.

March 20

JOSHUA OUR JESUS—THE RED ROPE OF REDEMPTION

Scripture: Josh. 2:12-22; 6:17, 22

Text: "Thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by." (v. 18).

Introduction: This scarlet thread is a symbol of the blood of Christ that is woven through the pages of the Bible. It was more than a weak piece of yarn for it held the weight of the two spies. It was a "Red Rope of Redemption.

I. OTHERS HAVE BEEN SAVED BY THIS RED ROPE OF REDEMPTION.
March 27

THE CHOICE IS YOURS.

Scripture: Josh. 24:14-28

Text: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (v. 15)

Introduction: An old Chinese proverb carries the thought: "He who picks up one end of the stick picks up the other end as well." You have the power of choice, but do you have the power to alter the outcome of that choice.

I. I Choose. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." My father has said that one thing he remembers about family prayer in his home was his father praying, "Lord, we care not for riches, wealth, or fame, but only that we might be an unbroken circle around the throne of God." Because this man chose God for himself and his family, grandchildren such as Gary Moore are blessing our church, and great-grandchildren such as Paul Earle are on the mission field.

II. You Choose. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve..." Your choice as to whether you will serve God or gods is your greatest choice in life. A friend of ours who for many years was director of a child placement agency had one unusual requirement for adoptive parents: Both parents must attend church—the same church. This was her evaluation of the place of God and the church in family life.

III. You Have Choices. "Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen the Lord, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses." (v. 22)

Now that you have chosen to follow the Lord:

A. Do it sincerely. (v. 14) God will put up with a lot of blunders and imperfections if we are sincere.

B. Do it jealously. (v. 16,19) True love is a jealous love. Our God is a jealous God. He will not tolerate our sharing our love with "godless." C. Do it with faith in yourself. (v. 24) Many people fail in their Christian faith, not from lack of faith in God, but from lack of faith in themselves. A pastor put his hand on the shoulder of a young convert as he was leaving the church service, and said, "Russell, you are going to make it." Later the young convert said, "I was very discouraged that morning, but I thought, my pastor believes in me. My God believes in me. I must believe in myself." Today he is a pastor, and one of the tenets of his ministry is: "Believe in yourself.

Conclusion: "So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day... and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord." (v. 25,26) "And Joshua... died." (v. 29)

One day my Jesus went to the accursed tree—"I wonder, Was it, too, an oak? And there, Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant!" (Heb. 12:24) died for me. How can I say otherwise than "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"?

February 17

Gleanings

from the Greek

2 Corinthians 3

Commendation or recommendation? (3:1)

"Commend" is the verb symintanen, which is a variant of symintan. Arndt and Gingrich define it as: "(to) commend someone to someone." (p. 798) (See Earle, Word Meanings, p. 356).

From this comes the adjective symintatus (only here in NT), meaning "introducing, commendatory." (AG, p. 802). In the law courts of the KJV a witness is more full than the Greek, which simply says (NASB): "Letters of commendation to you or from you." But the technical term today for this is what the NIV has: "letters of recommendation to you or from you." In many places the NIV represents contemporary English idiom better than any other version.

Of Christ (3:3)

Is the genitive case here subjective (written by Christ), objective (telling about Christ), or possessive (belonging to Christ)? If in many other cases in the New Testament we cannot be certain. Pearson (EGT) and Bernard (EGT) propose for the first. This is well represented in the NIV, "a letter from Christ."

Ministered by us (3:3)

The Greek is diakonethen hyph hemon, literally "have been served ministered by us." The connection with the preceding expression is well brought out by Barnard: "The Apostles conceiving of himself as his Master's amanuensis (EGT, 3:50). This idea is caught by Weymouth—"pened by us." Paul says that the Corinthian Christians were "the fruit of our ministry." (NIV). The most important result of his ministry was what was written on the hearts of his converts.

Tables or tablets? (3:3)

"Tables of stone" is evidently a reference to the two "Tables of stone" (Exod. 31:18) on which the Ten Commandments were written. But the correct term today is "tablet."

The Greek plax occurs only here (twice) and in Heb. 9:9: "the stone tablets of the covenant." (NIV). The word literally means something flat, and so here a flat stone.

Contrasted with "tablets of stone" is "tablets of human hearts" (NASB, NIV). Incidentally, "in" (twice, KJV) should be "on."

Sufficient or adequate? (3:5)

Paul's statement here, "our sufficiency is of God," is an answer to his very pertinent question in 2:16: "And who is sufficient for these things?"


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Ralph Earle
Professor of New Testament, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.
That is clearly the correct translation here (cf. NASB, NIV):
Incidentally, it should be noted that "engraved in stones" (v. 7) should be "engraved in letters on stone" (NIV). This is what the Greek text says. The reference, of course, is to the Ten Commandments.

Plainness or boldness? (3:12)

Pareasia occurs 31 times in the NT and is translated "boldness" 8 times, "confidence" 6 times, "openly" 4 times, and "plainly" 4 times. Only here is it rendered "plainness of speech.

The word comes from pas, "all," and hresis, "speech." So it basically means "freedom of speech." Abbot-Smith says: "In LXX, Josephus, and NT, also (from the absence of anoint which accompanies freedom of speech), confidence, boldness" (p. 347).

Schiller writes: "Above all, the discussion in 2 e. 3:12ff shows that for Paul paraesia to God--the uncovered face of Paul looking towards Him, 3:16--implies an uncovered face which men can see as Israel could not see the covered face of Moses, 3:13. He who lifts up his face uncovered to God also turns uncovered to men" (TDNT, 5:985).

So we have here the idea of openness and boldness. The latter is perhaps not only "in our speech" (NASB), but in general (NIV).

Veil (3:13-16)
The noun kalymma is found once each in these four verses, and nowhere else in the NT. It comes from the verb kalypso, "cover," and so means "a covering.

Abolished or fading away? (3:13)
While the verb katargeo does have "abolish" as one of its meanings, "fading away" (NASB, NIV), fits much better here. It was the glory on his face that faded away after a while.

The reference is to Exod. 34:33, where the KJV reads: "Till Moses had done speaking with them he put a vail on his face." Plummer says: "This is erroneous. The correct translation is, "When Moses had done speaking with them he put a veil on his face." [cf NASB]. He knew that the brightness was caused by converse with Jehovah, and would fade away when he was absent from the divine presence. He did not wish the people to see the disappearance of the brightness, and therefore, when he had delivered his message, he covered his face, until he returned to the presence of the Lord" (pp. 38-39).

Open or unveiled? (3:18)
The Greek for "open" is anakalymmeno, the perfect passive participle of anakalypso. This verb is found only here and in verse 14, where it is translated "taken away." It literally means "To unveil." (A-S, p. 301), and so the correct translation here is "unveiled" (NASB, NIV).

Glass or mirror? (3:18)
"Beholding as in a glass" is all one word in Greek--katapirizomenoi, the present middle participle of katapirizo (only here in NT). In the middle it means "to reflect as a mirror." (A-S, p. 242).

Since they did not have glass mirrors (only bronze in Paul's day), "glass" (KJV) is incorrect.

Changed or transformed? (3:18)
The verb is metamorphoo, which is rendered "transformed" in Rom. 12:2 (see our comments there). This is the literal meaning of the verb and the correct translation here.

We Need the Church

I recently completed a book that studied growth of Christians in the last 15 years. Special attention was given to the Jesus Movement and the unusual revivals around the world (Latin America, Korea, Indonesia). A decade later these researchers asked, Where are the converts? Almost without exception, they discovered that these converts who had either joined and were actively involved in an established church, or formed a new church were still Christians. But those who had remained outside of the church in small groups had returned to their old ways of living.

This leads to the conclusion that the church is essential to the Christian and spiritual survival.

JAMES T. CHRISTY

The Family of Man

Scripture: Philem. 1-25

I. The family of man should be ACTIVE in Love and Faith (v. 5).
A. Toward God
B. Toward each other
II. The family of man should be ACTIVE in Sharing the Faith (v. 6).
III. The family of man should be ACTIVE in Presenting Good Things About Christ (v. 7).

We Need the Church

I. The family of God has ONE LEADER--Christ: "The living stone" (2:4, NIV).
II. The family of God has ONE GOD--worshipping Christ, "offering spiritual sacrifices" (2:5).
III. The family of God has ONE FELLOW-ship—the body of Christ.

The End

Scripture: Rev. 22:12-21

Text: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (v. 21).

The Family of God

Scripture: 1 Pet. 2:4-12

Text: Verse 5

Introduction: C. E. B. Cranfield writes: "The free-lance Christian, who would be a Christian but is too superior to belong to the visible Church upon earth in one of its forms, is simply a contradiction in terms."

William Barclay says: "The individual Christian only finds his true place when he is built into the edifice of the Church. What we are then is a real family—the family of God.

JAMES T. CHRISTY

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I. The family of God has ONE LEADER—Christ: "he living stone" (2:4, NIV).*
II. The family of God has ONE GOD—worshipping Christ, "offering spiritual sacrifices" (2:5).
III. The family of God has ONE FELLOW-ship—the body of Christ. "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (2:9-10).
IV. The family of God has ONE GUIDE—Christ's Spirit. "And in him you are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (Eph. 2:22).
V. The family of God has ONE PROCLAMATION—that Jesus is Lord, "glorify God" (2:12).

Deil G. Kreher

*All scripture is from The New International Version, copyright © 1973 by New York Bible Society International. Used by permission.

The End

Scripture: Rev. 22:12-21

Text: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (v. 21).

I. The End—ENDS IN THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST (vv. 12-13).
A. Christ is coming again.
   1. Claim to believers
   2. Claim to unbelievers
B. Christ is the Beginning and the End
   1. Christ's claim is completeness.
   2. Christ's claim is eternal.
   3. Christ's claim is authoritative.

II. The End—ENDS IN GOD'S PROMISE TO MAN (vv. 14-15).
A. Promised to the accepted man
B. Promised to the rejected man
Because the Spirit Has Control

Text: Eph. 2:22

I. A Love that dominates differences.
II. A Victory that will not be stifled.
III. A Growth that cannot be stopped.
IV. A Joy that must be shared.
V. A Future that is bright.

Miserly doesn't seek company so much as create it.

It would be sacrilege, it would be desecration, it would be wrong, unfair, unjust, if divine power were given on any other terms than absolute self-abandonment. —Catherine Booth

I know not by what methods rare,
But this I know: God answers prayer.
I know not when He sends the word
That tells us fervent prayer is heard.
I know it comesh soon or late;
Therefore, we need to pray and wait.
I know not if the blessing sought
Will come in just the guise I thought.
I leave my prayers with Him alone.
Whose will is wiser than my own.

—Selected

The clock of life is wound but once,
And man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.
To lose one's wealth is sad indeed,
To lose one's health is more.
But to lose one's soul is such a loss
That no man can restore.

—The Preacher's Magazine

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WANTED: We appeal to elderly ministers who are dispensing with their libraries to make some of their choice books—commentaries and holiness books—available to our Portuguese ministry, all of whom read and speak English. Contact before shipping. Earl E. Mosteller, 1611 S. Sheppard, Kennewick, Wash. 99336.

WANTED: Memoirs of MeChiya, by Andrew A. Bonar; Book 1, letters and messages. Harold Quinzi, Box 274, Eckville, Alberta, Canada.


WANTED: *Preacher's Magazine* for May, 1937; November, December, 1940. Will pay $1.00 each. Write before sending, Larry Stover, 6607 Walworth, Kansas City, Mo. 64132.

WANTED: Copy of Elias Potter of Easington-Zion, by John M. Bamford. Also The Unseen and Songs in Trial, same author. Rodger N. Mayes, P.O. Box 28, Achilles, Va. 29641.

WANTED: Copies of T. W. Willingham’s book A Basket of Ornaments. (Can use up to six copies.) Also Words of Cheer for Each Day of the Year, by C. E. Cornell (can use four copies). State price, condition, and number of books. H. M. Rainsford, 228 W. Saint Francis St., Dexter, Mo. 63441.

FOR SALE: 1911 Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene Manual, good condition. Send offer, Thomas S. Fowler, Sr., P.O. Box 252, Millington, Md. 21651.

WANTED: We Can If We Will, by Russell V. DeLong, Donald W. MacNeil, 325 E. Hunter St., Logan, Ohio 43138.

**COMING**

next month

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*Have Faith in a Failure*
Anyone can appreciate a success, but Jesus knew how to recognize something of value in people considered by others to be failures.

*Wesley's Views on Humility*
Everyone knows how John Wesley's spirit exemplified this virtue, but not many have listened to what he had to say about it.

*Two Roads to Canaan*
God’s road to Canaan is the shortest possible way. He does not want His people to wander “in the wilderness.”

*Praise Your Way Through*
There is a time for everything, and that means there is a time for praise! Sometimes it offers the best possible way through.

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AMONG OURSELVES

It has not been too long now since more than 80 percent of the 10,000 or more high school students questioned placed the sermon at the top of the list of reasons why they went to church. Admittedly, it was not last month. But if the pre-eminence of preaching in the worship of Christ's Church has declined, it is the fault of those who speak for Christ. You might find it more helpful than you expected to read the article by Dr. Cowles (p. 3) and then place it in perspective with all the other demands our modern culture puts upon the minister. It will not, we think, lessen in any way our interest in the sick (p. 14) or for those in prison (p. 12). It will not cause a conflict with our role as priests (p. 8), but will encourage us to provide the “tender loving care” our people need (p. 10). It may even have its effect on that “happening” that can occur at midweek (p. 21). But you know all this—or you would not even bother to read such a magazine as ours!

Yours for souls,

[Signature]

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The Preacher’s Magazine
THE NAZARENE ARCHIVES

Since 1936, the General Secretary of the Church of the Nazarene has been mandated by the General Assembly to maintain the denominational archives. As of 1984, the archives maintains approximately 1000 cubic feet of materials spanning from the 1870s to the present. The collection documents the rise, development, and movement of the Church of the Nazarene through photographs, correspondence, audio recordings, periodicals, minutes, sermons, personal papers, etc. The archives generally does not collect library or book format materials, theses, or dissertations. These are available to researchers at the library of the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri. The archives also does not collect materials broadly related to religious history or the holiness movement unless these materials would have a definite connection to the Church of the Nazarene.

The collections are largely focused on the denominational rather than the district or local level of the church. However, the archives does maintain what may be the most complete collection of Nazarene district assembly journals (1908- ) and a sizeable concentration of records from the American Nazarene schools. The materials related to the religious bodies which formed or later joined the Church of the Nazarene are another significant collection.
ACCESS TO THE NAZARENE ARCHIVES

Access to the collections of the Nazarene Archives is limited to recognized scholars, published authors, church projects, graduate theses or dissertation work, and genealogists. Church projects may include projects by any institution or office within the church. Term papers for graduate or undergraduate classwork are not generally permitted; however, the archives will be happy to work with research seminars of graduate or undergraduate students when certain criteria are met. The faculty of the Nazarene colleges might especially consider conducting seminars with the Nazarene Archives during their January interims.

Certain collections in the Nazarene Archives may be closed or restricted from access or use. These materials may be restricted due to (1) preservation considerations, (2) copyright considerations, (3) confidentiality of morals cases, and (4) office files less than 15 years old.

The Nazarene Archives is generally open by appointment during business hours. Copying services for documents, photographs, and audio recordings are provided for a fee. The archives has no research staff, but will respond to questions which can be answered in a brief letter. Larger requests may require either a visit by the researcher or the hiring of an assistant. The archives will be glad to recommend someone as a research assistant.
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THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

The Preacher's Magazine was initiated by the Church of the Nazarene in 1926 under the editorship of J. B. Chapman. It was a monthly magazine, "specializing in theological and sermonic material especially adapted to the requirements of the men and women who are giving their lives to the preaching of the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness." In the beginning it was stated that "the magazine will not be sectarian, and holiness preachers of all churches are invited to subscribe with the assurance that the central purpose will be to help preachers to preach holiness effectively where they are, and not to proselyte them to some other communion."

J. B. Chapman served as editor through 1947. D. Shelby Corlett, managing editor, then took the reins for several months until L. A. Reed became editor. Reed served until his death in 1952, and Corlett resumed the office and was named editor in early 1953. He served until July, 1954.

In August, 1954, Lauriston J. Du Bois took the editorship and served through 1961 when Norman R. Oke became editor for the two years 1961-63.

In 1964 Richard S. Taylor became editor. Richard Taylor changed the magazine's name from Preacher's Magazine to Nazarene Preacher and it remained so until 1972. Taylor also initiated the magazine insert called "Pastor's Supplement" which carried promotion from all the departments of the church's headquarters.

In 1972 James McGraw occupied the editor's chair, and the magazine was reassigned the name Preacher's Magazine. He also renamed the insert, calling it "Nazarene FOCUS." These changes complied with the agreement made with two other denominations of Wesleyan/Arminian doctrine to make the magazine available to their pastors and include their own promotional inserts.
In the fall, 1978, Neil B. Wiseman became editor. He gave the magazine a new look with a colorful cover in the larger \(8\frac{1}{2}\)" x 11" size (formerly \(5\frac{1}{2}\)" x 9"). It also went from bimonthly format to quarterly. The insert was renamed "Nazarene Update." The magazine now served pastors in The Wesleyan Church, the Evangelical Friends and the Churches of Christ in Christian Union, as well as the Church of the Nazarene.

Wesley Tracy became the editor in 1980 and serves at this writing (1984). During Tracy's tenure another denomination, Brethren in Christ Church, was added to the recipient list on the masthead.

The magazine's stated purpose is much the same as it was in 1926: "A professional journal for ministers of the Church of the Nazarene and several other Wesleyan/Arminian denominations, designed to help parish pastors carry out their ministries more effectively."
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IT was the darkest hour of human history after that first Good Friday. The stunned disciples were confused and disconsolate. Their Lord had been crucified. His body lay in the garden tomb, sealed with a heavy stone, under a Roman guard. There was a portrait of tragedy and defeat.

But the night ended, and the new day dawned. The God of heaven sent an earthquake to shake things loose. Angels from His eternal throne rolled the heavy stone from that grave like it was a tape of paper, and let light into the dark tomb. God's mighty power meanwhile had had the Roman soldiers into a sleep. The shadow was cast on the face of death, and a radiance upon the face of life, the only begotten Son of God.

The darkness of all nights brought the dawn, and it became the brightness of all mornings! So it has always been, in the providence of God who does all things well. His majestic nature is akin to beholding in such sharp focus as it appears when He comes to turn our night into day.

God demonstrated His ability to do this when He was with Israel as they stood on the shores of the Red Sea and listened to the sound of the approaching army, bent on their destruction. But the day dawned. The waters parted, they crossed on dry land, and the enemy was destroyed attempting to follow them.

Joseph knew the terror of the long, dark night. He sat there in a waterless pit, and he was sold as a slave to the Egyptian cruel rulers. His night was further darkened by the false accusations of Potiphar's wife and years of imprisonment in a foreign country. But a new day dawned, and his freedom was restored. His power and influence flourished, and he managed to turn a famine into a feast. As a "horse," his own brothers and his father Jacob were the chief beneficiaries through it all.

Daniel went through his night when he defied the repressive edict of a king and desired to continue his prayers to Jehovah. It must have been the darkest night of his life when he was cast into a den of lions and left to die. But His God "suffered the unbelief" of the lions. (Don't ask how. God has a thousand ways to get things done!) His night ended, and his new day dawned. "He was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in His God" (Dan. 6:23).

The Hebrew children also went through their night. Precisely
Observation asks, "What do I see here?"
Interpretation asks, "What does it mean?"
Application asks, "What does it mean to me?"

On the Inductive Method of Bible Study

This type of Bible study inspects upon a firsthand reading for one's self of the biblical books and passages with the purpose of seeing with one's own eyes and mind exactly what the biblical writer is saying and proclaiming. Believing that the Bible was not written in heaven but upon earth, and under the special inspiration of God's Holy Spirit upon some human mind, we therefore insist that in the study of biblical writings we deal with composition. And composition in writing is the product of the mind. Therefore, respect for the laws of mind in verbal expression must be exercised in the process of grasping the thoughts of the biblical writer. Logical, grammatical, rhetorical, and associational paths must be loyalty followed in Bible study.

Now since in all written expression the paragraph is the unit of thought, the paragraph comes in for special attention in the study of any literature. It is composed of a group of sentences, all of which belong to the essential single thought of the paragraph.

So the secret of success in the study of a paragraph is to discover the sentence in it which contains the essential thought. We call it the topical sentence. Then we must observe the relation in thought of the other sentences to this one. One needs to ask himself what the paragraph is about. What is its subject or topic? Then he should note how each part contributes to the interest of the subject as presented. Consider how the paragraph in hand came to follow the one preceding it; also note why it is followed by the one next after it. Pretty much as you note the reason for succession of letters in a single word, or words in a sentence, or sentences in a paragraph, so also note the reason for the succession of a series of paragraphs in a segment or chapter. Just as a paragraph has its topical sentence and its transitional sentence, so the segments of a writing have their main paragraphs and their transitional paragraphs.

*Because of the importance of the paragraph as a unit of thought, one needs a study Bible that is published in paragraph form in preference to the old-style publication that presents Scripture in the paragraph fashion of verse and chapter divisions only.*
Whether it be the paragraph or a segment of paragraphs, the theme may be discovered and discerned by the reader. One should seek to decide upon a subject or title for each paragraph of the portion he is studying. Let each title grow naturally out of its paragraph. Then one should join these in his mind and by means of them think through the paragraph in order, and finally through the segments, in order.

Ask yourself these questions: What is in this portion of writing? Where is it in this portion of writing? Why did the writer include it in the portion? And why is it where it is in the portion? This will help you develop the art of seeing what you read, and along with it the ability to discern what you read.

Here are four good steps in the inductive approach to the study of any book or segment of the Bible:
1. Construct a table of contents of the book as a whole, based upon a recognized grouping of its parts.
2. Reconstruct the historical situation out of which the writing has come.
3. Study its parts in their chronological order.
4. Concentrate on the author's various facets of interest.

By means of reading the entire writing through once at a sitting; one should get an initial view of the book or writing as a whole. Then he can analyze it into its various sections of thought and development. The use of good maps to determine the geographical location and background of the writer's thoughts, is very important.

Honest Bible study seeks not to impose the reader's viewpoint upon the writing, but rather to discover the writer's point of view. So the discerning reader will seek to find out how and why the writer has arranged or elaborated his treatment of his subject. One must watch for the cues given by the writer as he takes his reader into confidence and discloses his viewpoint. Note how he does this by various emphases upon a given person, a place, a time (or times), an event, or an idea.

The reader must learn to put his mind in gear with that of the writer. He should seek to see, feel, and experience as does the writer. Only then is one prepared to act as that writer's interpreter. Only then may he judge intelligently what an author has written. This requires spiritual as well as mental awareness, and a discriminating receptivity. Three things must be distinguished: content, form, and meaning. Content is the substance of what is presented to the reader's attention. Form is the pattern in which it is presented. And meaning is concerned with the question, So what?

There are two major laws which pertain to the inductive method of Bible study: the Law of Relationships, and the Law of Proportion. They have been stated as follows: 1. Everything written or spoken sustains some specific relation to something else. It may be in contrast, or comparison, or repetition, or cause and effect, or means to an end, or the expression of some other such relation. Signs of contrast are found in the use of such words as but, however, or instead. Or contrast may be expressed in the presentation of opposites, in figures of speech, statement of qualities of character, or the use of contrasting terms.

Comparison is expressed through the associating of similar ideas or thoughts. It is expressed by such terms as even as, or even so, or the simple coordinating conjunction and. One should watch for illustrations and imagery used to set forth and amplify a similarity of relations. The repeated emphasis upon some term, name, place, or person, is an author's method of calling attention to the particular focal point of his patterned arrangement of ideas.

The earmarks of cause and effect are such terms as therefore, thus, consequently, or hence. Any such term of conclusion is an invitation on the part of the writer for his reader to look back in the passage to discover the steps by which the writer has come to such a conclusion or declared effect. The meaning of an end expressions come to us in what we call purpose or result clauses. Key terms in such expressions are in order that, so that, for, lest, so as to, etc.

2. An author reveals his point of view by his comparative emphasis, or omission of, certain factors which always accompany development of thought: for example, person, or place, or time, or idea; and especially by the amount of space he gives to any one of these. (Note that each Gospel writer devotes about one-third of his Gospel to Christ's passion week.)

The reader now should view the passage from such other reading clues as Where? When? What? How? Why? and Who? A sympathetic, teachable, understanding attitude is what always characterizes the true learner—it is the attitude of receptivity. It evidences a hunger for the truth.

Firsthand enjoyment of the Bible is an art worth cultivating. It involves some concentration and directed effort. One should not expect too much of himself at the start, but let him not miss the priceless values that come through this kind of approach to Bible study. Let us beware of mere piecemeal reading of the Bible, and let us beware of a mere secondhand grasp of biblical truth. Let us see its message through our own eyes and mind with insights brought vividly home to us by the Holy Spirit (He inspired the Book). Then, and only then, should we look at the Bible through the eyes and comments of the various masters of scriptural interpretation.

Three things to remember: (1) Observation asks: What do I see here? (2) Interpretation asks: What does it mean? (3) Application asks: What does it mean to ME? These are elements in a scientific approach to any subject, the Bible included.

Respond or React?

Whether we respond or react to various situations which arise in our ministry is often determined by our position at the time—spiritually, financially, emotionally, physically, or psychologically. This is a truth we dare not forget, and one we owe it to ourselves to consider carefully. After all, the same phenomenon is called both a "sunrise" and a "sunset." It depends upon the position of the sun, and where we are in this world.

John H. Shank

April, 1977
A clearer insight into the cause of backsliding may help us develop a strategy for helping the one who has stumbled.

**Helping the Backslider**

By Lyle Pointer*

Our communities, churches, and families invariably include persons who once had a vital relationship with Christ. But something happened—suddenly or gradually. They no longer live in harmony with God. We know the importance of bringing the spiritual delinquent back to God. If he is not restored, his soul will die. Just as serious is the continual grief he pours upon God by sinning. Also, we long to have intimate fellowship with him—the kind that only Christians have.

We pray. We ask others to join with us. Many times the results are seen immediately—sometimes it takes time. Often when no visible encouragement comes, we are confident God is ministering.

Our praying is not sufficient. James 5:19-20 places the privilege of ministering on us: “My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner away from his error will save him from death and cover many sins” (NIV).**

Since God has entrusted us with leading unbelievers to saving faith, there must be a way to help God restore the backslider.

First, it is advantageous to know why people backslide. Our analysis would be that they stopped trusting and obeying God. This is true, but few backsliders give that as a cause. Most will give reasons coming out of life rather than theology. Following are four causes usually given:

1. He neglected his spiritual growth and gradually lost out.
3. He may have been disappointed by a pastor, a church, or another Christian.
4. The standard of the Christian life was preached beyond divine intention and human attainment; causing frustration and confusion.

Second, let us consider how each of these causes may be used to bring about his salvation.

1. If the erring brother gradually lost out, in all probability it will take some time before he is ready to receive Christ again. A relationship with God is a loving one. Affection is not instantaneous. Commitment is immediate, but usually after a period of cultivated interest and involvement. Here is a suggested strategy:

   a. We will allow time for the prevenient grace of God to pull on the heart of the prodigal.
   b. We can be of assistance to God by living and loving God’s principles.
   c. We can testify to God’s goodness and kindness, for God leads men to repentance by kindness (Rom. 2:4) as well as by conviction.
   d. We can keep the doors of conversation open to spiritual things. It may be possible to reminisce about the “good old days” when the wayward one was a genuine disciple. Again and again, he will say these were the best days of life. We need not dry away from talking about God unless he shows signs of irritation.
   e. We should invite him to church services but not be disappointed if he says no. He may not need that atmosphere to bring him to a decision.
   f. If he reads the Bible, God can deal with him easily. The key to his conversion is a renewal of spiritual thirst and desire.
   g. Occasionally we can ask him to make a positive commitment to Christ.

2. The person who was overwhelmed by a crisis usually comes back to God quickly. He was struck down by unexpected grief for a loved one, or was thrown into an irreversible circumstance. When the turmoil ended, he was away from God. No one was more surprised than he. He has longed for someone to help and encourage. He will respond to the same stimulus used with the person who gradually drifted away.

3. The difficult case is the one who has been disappointed or embittered. He will rehash with fervor the incident and persons that injured him. It is well to listen and understand his feelings. It is not important to decide whether he was right or wrong. We are not in a position to blame anyone. At times, it may be necessary to apologize for the person who offended him.

   Then it is possible to move the disappointed or hurt brother to the present. Our approach is: “Aren’t you glad all of that is in the past? You are not about to allow that to deprive you of all God’s blessings. Wouldn’t you feel good about being in love with God again?

   It may be necessary to repeatedly pull him back to his relationship with God. His persistence in dwelling on the unfortunate past, is his way of escaping responsibility for his own salvation. He may use the “iniquities in the church” as a smoke screen. This objection can be confronted with Rom. 14:12, “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

   We must speak candidly to him, but the law of God or the penalty of sin dare not be our message. He will listen to us as we speak of our understanding and forgiving God. Our attitude must portray concern: As we speak the truth in love, God tenderizes his heart and heals his wound.

   4. Some well-intentioned Christians have been guilty of preaching the standard of holiness beyond God’s expectations. Because of that, sensitive people have honestly faced the fact that they cannot live on that plane. For example, it is preached that God removes all anger from the sanctified Christian. When righteous anger arises, the Christian is convinced he was never sanctified. He may have every right to come to that conclusion from what he has heard. The Christian worker will have to do some reeducating.

   Another element is a stress upon incidentals. The convictions of people are proclaimed as if they were the commandments of God. Sincere persons become confused and/or disgusted and give up, forsaking the church and God. Again, it may take several sessions to bring this backslider to a moment of conversion. The Christian worker will have to do some homework to successfully “reprogram” the mis-
informed backslider. He would do well to learn the real meaning of "entire sanctification" and study some acceptable texts that provide an understanding of the Bible teaching on holiness. The backslider must be retaught.

Here are some suggestions that may bring enlightenment to the confused.

a. God can provide us with perfect intentions but not perfect performance.

b. Holiness churches define "sins" as those transgressions for which we are to blame. We categorize other offenses as infractions, mistakes, or failures.

c. God asks us to live by His commandments, not the convictions and opinions of people.

d. God doesn't remove natural human drives such as temper, sex, pride, and ambition. He does take, the selfishness out of them.

e. Even after entire sanctification every person has to supervise and discipline himself.

/ Sin and temptation, not the same.

A clearer insight into the cause of backsliding provides a better understanding of the person who has stumbled. To know why there is spiritual failure encourages specific steps to be taken to shore up against it. Knowing the stumbling blocks gives impetus to building a strategy toward conversion also.

Insight doesn't guarantee success. It does offer hope and courage. When nothing seems to penetrate the steel wall of the backslider, we need that hope and courage.

While the barriers of resistance are stacked against the personal evangelist, the truth is, the backslider finds few who help him. Any attempt we make, God will honor and the backslider will appreciate.

We will make mistakes but we must try. Meanwhile, God will be ministering. Prodigal sons and daughters will begin to return home.

**REFLECTIONS**

"How about attending a history class with me in the morning?"

This was the query of my host, a young urban pastor who was taking advantage of a state university class at hand. I agreed, and the early morning found us in a classroom, with a number of students awaiting the beginning of the lecture. A bell rang and into the room strode the professor. Without a word of introduction and no visible notes, he lectured rapid-fire for 50 minutes. He spoke with authority; he knew his field well. At the close he left the room as abruptly as he had entered.

My host asked if I would like to meet the professor. We knocked on his door, and were invited into his office. The man behind the desk was small of stature, and he was wreathed in a cloud of smoke coming from a crooked stemmed pipe which he wore furiously. As the pastor introduced me, the man stood and shook hands warmly, then he proceeded to give me a minute thumbnail sketch of the history of the denomination from Dorese to the present.

In amazement I asked, "Man, how do you know so much of Nazarene history?"

With a smile he answered, "That's easy. My grandfather was a circuit rider with Bishop Asbury, and you have the same message of holiness evangelism that he had."

Then he made some startling statements. He gave us full attention, and then this historian, out of years of observation, said, "Beware of the danger of respectability." There was a pause. He continued, "Let me tell you, sins, America wants its patriotism and religion served hot. And don't you ever forget it!"

"More than ever, I believe he was right," C. T. Connell

The Preacher's Magazine

April, 1977.

**Have Faith in a Failure**

It has been said that anyone can support success, but it takes an exceptional person to have faith in a failure. Jesus showed this remarkable quality in His character time after time.

Peter had failed miserably when the testing time came. Boisterous bragging quickly was changed into cringing cowardice. The fearless fisherman became the fearful follower from afar. The Christ that he swore to die for became the Lord about whom he swore in profane denial.

Jesus did not give up on Peter. In the tender look that He gave Peter was the assurance of mercy, understanding, and faith. He saw in Peter, not the coward that he had proven to be, but the man of rock that he could become.

It is easy to dispense with the man who has failed at his assigned task. We have become so enamored with the glamour of success that we are willing to step on and over people in order to attain it in the areas of our ambitions.

James Hilton's classic story *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* illustrates how gloriously a failure can come to success. As you read the book, you will find the story of an ordinary teacher in a boys' school who was never successful enough to be considered for the position of headmaster. The impact of World War II caused Mr. Chips to become indispensable in the eyes of his pupils. Hilton has drawn us a heart-warming character sketch of a grand old failure who wonderfully succeeded.

Be compassionate and patient with the failures with whom you come in contact. Muretus, a saint of past generations, fell desperately ill while in exile for his faith. He was carried into the paupers' ward of a hospital in Lombardy. There the surgeons, believing him to be as poor in mind as his shabby clothes proclaimed him to be in earthly goods, gave him an examination and began to discuss his condition with him hearing in scholarly Latin. Muretus understood every word when one of the physicians said, "Let us experiment with this worthless animal." When Muretus heard this, he answered in the same learned language that was being used in the conversation and asked, "Will you call one worthless for whom Christ did not refuse to die?"

Faith in our fellowman who has honestly tried and failed will give us all hope that our tomorrows will be better than our yesterdays and todays.
mean opinion of ourselves, considered with respect to God alone, I can readily join with his opinion. But I am more uncertain as to comparative, if I may so term it; and think some plausible reasons may be alleged to show, it is not in our power, and consequently not a virtue, to think ourselves the worst in every company...

If a true knowledge of God be necessary to absolute humility, a true knowledge of our neighbor should be strictly necessary to comparative. But to judge one's self the worst of all men, implies a want of such knowledge. No knowledge can be, where there is not certain evidence; which we have not, whether we compare ourselves with our acquaintance, or strangers. In one case we have only imperfect evidence, unless we can see through the heart; in the other, we have none at all.

His mother, Susanna, rather chides John in a letter of reply, stating that he does not still understand her views. And perhaps, I might add, just as Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered, and just as Paul through many and bitter experiences had to learn to be content, so it took more age and experience for John to understand what his mother meant by her loving but analytic reply.

You say that I have obliged you by sending my thoughts on humility, and yet you do not seem to regard them in the least; but still dwell on that single point in Dr. Taylor of thinking ourselves the worst of all men, and past offences against him; together with a consciousness of our present infirmities and frailties.

In characteristically frank manner, John replied to his mother, admitting that he found it difficult if not impossible to "judge one's self the worst of all men."

You have much obliged me by your thoughts on Dr. Taylor, especially with respect to humility, which is a point he does not seem to me sufficiently to clear. As to absolute humility, consisting in a disposition to think meanly of ourselves, which I take to be more comprehensive, because it extends to all the cases wherein that virtue can be exercised; either in relation to God, ourselves, or our neighbor; and renders that distinction of absolute and comparative humility perfectly needless.

We may in many instances think very meanly of ourselves without being humble; and sometimes our very pride will lead us to condemn ourselves; as when we have said or done anything which lessens that esteem of men we earnestly covet.

The other part of your definition I cannot approve, because I think all those comparisons are rather the effects of pride than of humility.

Though truth is the object of the understanding; and all truths as such, agree in one common excellence, yet there are some truths which are comparatively of so small value, because of little use, that it is no matter whether we know them or not. Among these I rank the right answer to your question, whether our neighbor or we be worse. Of what importance it is to us! Comparisons in these cases are very odious, and do most certainly proceed from some bad principle in those who make them. So from reasoning upon the case, that we ought not to permit ourselves to entertain such thoughts, but if they ever intrude, to reject them with abhorrence.

Perhaps I could leave the matter here. Or I just might suggest two verses of scripture that have always challenged me: "If honour preferri ng one another" (Rom. 12:10), and "we dare not . . . compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they . . . comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12).

This materialistic age has produced a resistance to full surrender; hence the imperative need of preaching on entire sanctification.

—Murray J. Pullett

April, 1977
Wesley’s Views on Humility

By George E. Palling

Wesley was neither a passive nor retiring person. In fact, in the best sense of the word, he may be described as aggressive.

One reads in his diary of Wesley’s missionary efforts in Georgia—dedicated and exhausting. One also reads of his early itinerant preaching in England after his Aldersgate experience. So holy did the flame of assurance burn in his soul, and so surely did he feel that he was sent by God to evangelize, that his courage was dauntless. He claims that he never slept between two eyes and upon the mouth—until he died—without sensing harm or feeling discomfort! Those early crowds he preached to as ravens and wolves, and only by unyielding bravery—with God’s grace—did he continue his work of preaching in the homes, at the mines, and in the fields, for he was prevented from doing so in many churches.

Sure of God’s Word and Christ’s grace, sure of his own joyous experience and of his divine call, Wesley took time to search his soul. He would take spiritual inventory now and again, lest covetousness, pride, ill will, or jealousy draw him from Christ and make him a castaway.

At an early period of his life he was concerned about pride and humility. His mother, Susanna, responding to his questions, gave her idea of humility.

Humility is the mean between pride, or an overvaluing ourselves on one side, and a base object temper on the other. It consists in an habitual disposition to think meanly of ourselves; which disposition is brought about by a truth knowledge of God; his supreme essential glory, his absolute immense perfection of being and a just sense of our dependence upon him, and past offences against him; together with a consciousness of our present infirmities and frailties.

In characteristic frank manner, John replies to his mother, admitting that he found it difficult if not impossible to “judge one’s self the worst of all men.”

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You say that I have obliged you by sending my thoughts on humility, and yet you do not seem to regard them in the least; but still dwell on that single point in Dr. Taylor, of thinking ourselves the worst of all men; though the necessity of thinking so is not inferred from my definition. I shall answer your arguments, after I have observed, that we differ in our notions of the virtue itself. You will have it consist in thinking meanly of ourselves; I, in a habitual disposition to think meanly of ourselves, which I take to be more comprehensive, because it extends to all the cases wherein that virtue can be exercised; either in relation to God, ourselves, or our neighbor; and renders, your distinction of absolute and comparative humility perfectly needless.

We may in many instances think very meanly of ourselves without being humble; nay sometimes our very pride will lead us to denounce ourselves, as we have said or done anything which lessens that esteem of men we earnestly covet.

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This materialistic age has produced a resistance to full surrender; hence the imperative need of preying on entire sanctification.

—Murray J. Pallett
There was a lively emotion of happiness in the New Testament Church. No artificial boundaries could contain it. It was an energy that boiled over.

**Energy That Boils Over**

Former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird has called the Polaris Submarine a "priceless asset in the Cuban missile crisis" which occurred during the administration of President John F. Kennedy. The man responsible for the development of the Polaris was Rear Admiral William Raborn, Jr. He carefully recruited his top management personnel. When they came on the job, he would give them their families a patriotic pep talk on the importance of their assignment. On those occasions when it appeared that someone was not doing his best, he would call on into his office for "rededicating.

One officer, recalling one of those emotional sessions, said, "When I walked out, I knew I was ready to die for someone. I didn't know whether it was for the admiral, the president, my mother, the head of the boy scouts. But, brother, I was ready to die!"

That is enthusiasm!

Enthusiasm has been defined as "energy that boils over and runs down the side of the pot." One of the exciting characteristics of the New Testament Church was that they really enjoyed what they were doing. They reflected the instructions given them by Paul, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord' (Eph. 5:18-19, NIV)." Paul explained his advice that enthusiasm is part of the overflow of the Spirit-filled life when he noted that "the fruit of the Spirit is... joy" (Gal. 5:22).

Wait a minute. Is joy the same thing as enthusiasm?

If not, it is a close relative! The dictionary defines joy as "a lively emotion of happiness." There was energy in the New Testament Church, an energy that boiled over. It was an energy that could not be contained. No artificial boundaries could hold it or restrain it. The old forms of worship were inadequate for its expression. The old relationship to a distant Church, "The fruit of the Spirit is... joy"—a lively emotion of happiness!
One of the principles of church growth in the New Testament was enthusiasm. It was not an artificial product nor a substitute commodity. It was real because it grew out of their relationship with the risen Christ. They were enthusiastic because they were filled with the Spirit.

Their energy boiled over and ran down the side of the pot. When it happened, the Church moved forward. The emptiness of the past was forgotten as they moved eagerly into the future. They were children of a nation that kept looking back to the great days, to kings like David, and prophets like Isaiah. "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:8), they asked. They wanted to know if they were going to be able to return to the "good old days." Give us back our world, they pleaded. Change it a bit if you will, clean it up as you wish, but give us back our world.

Jesus did not answer their question. He leaped out of the past into the future. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, ... But ye shall receive power, ... and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, ... and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:7-8). It is far more important to have the power, the spirit, the energy, and the vision to create new kingdoms than to restore and patch up any old kingdom that has served its day and belongs to yesterday.

The future is going to be determined, not at conference tables and committee meetings, but by the outgrowth of an enthusiastic Spirit-energy that boils over and runs down the side of the pot!

closed His road to Canaan? Must everyone that desires to go to Canaan travel the wilderness road? Consciously or unconsciously, the holiness movement has too often assumed that most Christians must travel the wilderness road. That is, there is usually a long time span between conversion and the experience of Pentecost. God's plan for His people today is the same as His plan was for His ancient people, Israel. He desires to lead them by the shortest road to Pentecost in the shortest possible time.

No doubt there will always be travelers on the wilderness road. We seek by every possible means to lead them into the experience of Pentecost. At the same time, we must do everything we can to popularize God's road into Canaan, and do our best to keep the new convert from getting on the wilderness road.

Our teaching and teaching should sharply contrast these two roads. The wilderness road should always appear to be true light. It is the road of disobedience and extremely high casualties. Good judgment advises against taking this road. It is the road of second choice, and it can never rise to the blessings of God's first choice. On the wilderness road there is a real danger that we may become confused in our religious experiences.

God's road into Canaan has everything in its favor.

First, it measures up to biblical examples: (1) We see Jesus receiving the baptism of John the Baptist. This is symbolic of repentance, absolution, surrender, and reconciliation with God. A few minutes later the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descended upon Him (Luke 3:21-22). (2) On the Day of Pentecost, Peter instructed those who were seeking to repent, and be baptized... and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). Neither of these examples suggest a long period between conversion and receiving the Holy Spirit. Nor is there a suggestion that they should wait until they are convicted of the need for a clean heart before they begin seeking the Holy Spirit.

Second, God's way wonderfully meets our needs. The new babe in Christ is in a very favorable position to receive the Holy Spirit. There should be no delay of acceptance. God's promise of the Holy Spirit cannot be rejected or delayed without considerable risk. (1) There may be an element of God's displeasure and judgment involved. (2) It could well mean that if Canaan is ever reached, it will have to be by the wilderness road.

The new babe in Christ may have had various conversion experiences; but he is still a very needy creature. These needs can be met only by the baptism and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit cleanses the heart, and His abiding presence strengthens with might the inner man. His gracious fruit is shed abroad in the heart and manifested in the life. He becomes the Counselor and Guide of life. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal to the heart and mind the riches of the grace of Christ. Only in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit can the babe in Christ come to know full fellowship with His Father.

My earnest appeal to our holiness brethren is that we put forth a tremendous effort to make God's short and direct road to Canaan the popular road to Pentecost. Let us constantly hold up the example of the Lord Jesus. And may we iterate and reiterate the gospel formula as presented by Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38), until saints and sinners are convinced that this is God's way.

The Preacher's Magazine
1. Do you know these brochures are available for your information? Why not put some in your tract rack, or on your information table, for your congregation to have available.

![Mission Award]

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- **Memorial Roll Certificate**
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If your church has not given an M.R. or D.S.A. certificate this year, then please help the missionaries in this vital area of support by taking an offering NOW and sending it to Norman O. Miller, General Treasurer, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131. **MARK IT: MEDICAL PLAN AND RETIREMENT.** Your church will receive 10 percent credit for this.

**We know we can count on you.**
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Dr. Orville W. Jenkins, general superintendent, will write a personal letter to each new church member that is received by profession of faith to welcome them into the Church of the Nazarene.

Dr. Don J. Gibson, executive director of the Department of Evangelism, sends free to each new member one of the following:

- Children—MR. NAZARENE, by Emily Moore
- Teens—FACING THE DAWN, the Paul Rice Story, by George Rice
- Adults—Card is sent giving them opportunity to select samples of Nazarene periodicals and brochures

Please call—toll-free—and give their name, address, age, date joined, church name and address, pastor, and district name.

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Green Lake, Wis.  Sept. 12-16
Glorieta, N.M.  Sept. 19-24
Montreat, N.C.  Oct. 10-14

For folder with complete information write:
Melvin Shrou
Director, Senior Adult Ministries
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, Mo. 64131

May 16

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Announce and dramatize the importance of this
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adult age.

It can be musical or non-musical. Sharing of
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Give that your neighbor might LIVE!
1976 Summary of 90 Percent Districts
Pensions and Benevolence Budget

Listing by Percentage
ASSEMBLY YEAR 1975-76

DISTRICT PERCENTAGE

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Deuteronomy 6:6-9

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Industry and business have learned that numbers mean victories. Is the church aware of this?

Productivity and the Pulpit

By Jerald L. Duff

In my 28 years of experience around mid-management of both large and small corporations, I have found a similarity in office decor. On the wall facing the desk is a numerous grid square with unusual line patterns. From these lines, the manager, at an instant, can relate shipping schedules, key personnel, missed goals, costs, and so forth. He can also predict potential shortages and identify developing problems. This information is constantly bombarding him for review.

The manager makes use of a tremendous productivity tool—the graph. On the other hand, a basket of papery, if sifted through, reveals a series of weekly exception reports, monthly progress reports, departmental goals, projections, etc. Here again is a common tool—the written report.

The local church has a manager, and the name of the game is still productivity—producing the highest quality and quantity for the lowest possible per hour. Yet, belittled is the pastor who dares keep more than a simple chart. Both clergy and layman alike fail to see the value of information. “Numbers!” they say.

As if some satanic de-personalization were involved. Why has it been learned that numbers mean victories, but the church has not? Why is it universally accepted in industry and rejected in church? Is there something intrinsically wrong with recognizing a concern before it becomes a disaster?

Then the report. When is the last time department heads submitted targeted goals and followed up with a quarter’s end review? What would happen to the Sunday school of supervisors selected goals; knowing that an appraisal, performance, and a helping hand would accompany?

Big business succeeds because of delegation of authority and responsibility. From the plant manager to the man on the line, everyone has a target for the month and is held accountable for the objective. The church still lets “clerical George” do it, because clerical George is not aware of what is transpiring “on the line.”

The U.S.A. is the world’s most productive nation. Is it possible that the church could profit by utilizing a few simple tools of industry? Perhaps it is time for some productivity from the pulpit.
Praise Your Way Through

That is not a typographical error in the title.

We are familiar with the slogan "Praise your way through..." and how vital it is to Christian growth and accomplishment. But God's Word richly attests the fact that praise is a very real element in victory. At times it is even the deciding factor between near defeat and outstanding triumph.

It seems almost an anomaly. How can one summon the lips expressions of praise and joy when the heart is heavy with burden and concern? And yet the Word constantly reminds us that thanksgiving and rejoicing are weapons the Spirit actually uses to rout the enemy.

This is beautifully illustrated by an event recounted in 2 Chronicles.

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, received word that the Moabites and the Ammonites were coming to do battle with him and his kingdom, and he was greatly afraid. Naturally so. And he immediately sought the Lord, which is a good thing to do under such circumstances; and he proclaimed a fast, which is also a good thing to do. And he called the whole nation to seek the Lord's help while he, the king, led in prayer.

Then through the priest, Jahaziel, God spoke to His people, assuring them that He had assumed control. And all the priests "began to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high." The battle was not yet set in array, nor was the victory won, but with a loud voice the ministers of the Lord began to praise Him.

The following day as all Judah went out to the engagement, Jehoshaphat encouraged their faith. Then he got his music committee together ("consulted with the people," v. 21) and appointed singers that should praise the beauty of holiness and should say, "Praise the Lord," as they went out before the army.

"And when they began to sing and to praise" (italics are mine), the Lord set ambushments against the enemy and they began to destroy one another. Initially, he singing and the praise was the catalyst that triggered the victory for the children of God.

Music was a very real part of the worship of ancient Israel. Massed choirs assembled on the hills of Jerusalem and lifted their voices in mighty anthems of praise to God. They were accompanied by musical instruments—trumpets, harps, and psalteries, stringed instruments and organs, cymbals and the high-sounding cymbala. Praise and rejoicing were a consistent part of their worship experiences. The Psalmist said, "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth; and a two-edged sword in their hands." If we have lost it, let us rediscover the lifting effect of congregational songs of praise and thanksgiving in our gathering together. The spoken word of rejoicing and thanksgiving should also be heard frequently in our services. Nothing takes place of the testimony of young and mature Christians alike voicing their praise to God.

But, pastor's wife, there is also a very special application of this emphasis to you in your unique position. Are you faced with some very particular problem which perhaps is yours alone? Begin to praise your way through to a solution. Are you charged with a responsibility which seems too great for you? Praise your way through to accomplishment. Do you feel overwhelmed or misunderstood or frustrated? Try praise. Let words of joy and thanksgiving sound audibly from your lips. They may come out sad and squeaky at first. But they are a start, and if you will keep it up, the quality and the genuineness of your rejoicing will rapidly improve.

Try saying aloud, "Praise the Lord!" "Jesus, I love You." "Thank You, Jesus." "Lord, I adore You." "Praise God for His goodness." "Praise Him for His mercy." "Praise Him for His faithfulness." "Lord, You are able." "Father, I trust You." "Praise be to God." "Glory! Hallelujah!" 

There is something contagious about praise to God. It is more than the power of positive thinking, which is all right too. But glory and honor, majesty and power, ascribed to God our Father and to Jesus our Saviour and to the Holy Spirit our Comforter, have a reactionary effect upon our own spirits. "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:10), and we simply cannot remain weak and defeated when genuine words of praise and rejoicing are proceeding from our hearts. It is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, but occasionally the mouth has to stimulate and stir up the depths of the heart.

The psalms of David encourage us so to rejoice in the Lord even in times of perplexity and adversity. Says he, "I will bless the Lord all the days: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Ps. 34:1).

"My tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long" (Ps. 35:28).

And from Paul comes these inspiring words: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4, 6-7).

I challenge you to try it! Praise your way through!
A Thought on the Church

David H. C. Reed, pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York; raises a good question in one of his articles—"Belong to a Church: Covenant or Covenantal? (Pulpit Digest, July/August, 1976, p. 9).

That’s a good question to pursue as you study the Early Church’s life-style in Acts 2.

Thoughts on Discouragement

Here are some thoughts on discouragement from Elijah’s life:

1. Discouragement does something to one’s self-image. “But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life: for I am nought; and set thy servant down by his own want” (1 Kings 19:4).

2. Discouragement causes us to evade responsibility. “And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?” (1 Kings 19:9).

3. Discouragement causes a person to blame others for his situation. “And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away” (1 Kings 19:10).

4. Discouragement causes a blurring of the facts. Elijah thought he was the only man in the region who had been faithful to God. But the Lord said, “Yet I have reserved to myself seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed him” (1 Kings 19:18).

A Preacher’s Style

Dr. Duncan E. Littlefair, pastor of Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., might not do much for his Wesleyan preacher, due to his content and thought. But there is something from his style of preaching that is worth noting.

In 1970, the University of Chicago awarded Littlefair its Alumni Citation for “creative citizenship and exemplary leadership.” Among other things, one of the nominating statements gave this account of his preaching style: “rich with love, warmth, faith, and hope” (from the preface by David W. Swign, Sin Comes of Age—Duncan E. Littlefair, Westminster Press, 1978, p. 15).

These four great characteristics should be a part of every preacher’s style. And while the preacher may have good content and know the Wesleyan truth backwards and forwards, it cannot be effectively conveyed without love, warmth, faith, and hope. May these increase in your preaching style—and mine.

Tricks of the Enemy

In Exodus, chapter 5, we have the experiences of Moses as he encounters Pharaoh. The experience reveals how the enemy works to create distrust and discouragement.

1. The first thing Moses faced was rejection by the enemy, through ignorance of God’s plan: “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go” (v. 2).

2. The enemy has no idea of the ways of God. Hence, his arguments can be a barrier to our faith and our courage.

3. Moses faced rejection by his brothers because they became suspicious. Verses 19-21 record the reaction of the people when they saw how Pharaoh had increased their work load. It is hard to keep the levels of belief high when friends are encouraging you to go another way.

4. Moses faced the reality of his own doubts. Verses 22-23 record the haunting doubts that tortured Moses as he began reflecting on Pharaoh.

The last barrier, often, is doubt. It rolls in like a sea and engulfs us. It is the plan of the enemy to keep us doubting.

There is one phrase that occurs in the chapters following that is the clue to survival and victory—for Moses and for anyone, “So Moses and Aaron fled as the Lord commanded them” (it occurs first in 7:9).

Seeds for Sermons

April: Alms or Psalms

This month read the first 72 psalms.

Here is a definite break in the Psalms. Psalm 73 begins a large section by other writers. Often we come to the Lord asking ALMS. This month let us come unto Him with PSALMS. The story is told that when Mr. Roosevelt was president in the 1930's, one came to him, saying: “Mr. President, you know your secretary of state is under heavy criticism. Why don’t you dismiss him?” To which President Roosevelt replied in effect, “If someday you should sit where I sit and know that everyone who comes to you through that office door wants something from you, then you would know what it is to have someone who asks nothing of you but to serve.”

April 9—Palm Sunday

ALMS—PALMS—PSALMS

Scripture: Psalm 24

Introductory: The Psalms are a smorgasbord of good things. We wish we could feast on all of them. In that Psalms 22:23; 24 are a trilogy of Christ-honoring psalms, it is fitting that we study them this Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and the Sunday after Easter. Psalm 24 is a fitting psalm for Palm Sunday. It asks no alms, no “give me” from God, but only waves palm branches of praise in psalm.

I. WHAT HE HAS DONE ABOUT ME (vv. 1-2)

When I read these first two verses, I, too, sing “How Great Thou Art” and “This Is My Father’s World.” We have watched men walk on the moon. We have seen pictures from the surface of Mars. More than ever our psalm of praise is “This is my Father’s world.” Frank Borman said it well that Christmas Eve in 1968 as he circled the moon, The three astronauts had just finished reading the
II. WHAT HE HAS DONE WITHIN ME (vv. 3-6)

Today we wave palms and think of Jesus coming to Jerusalem. We also think of what a day it will be when we come to the New Jerusalem and crown Him Lord of all. To the fearful question, "Who shall stand in his holy place?" we rejoice for what He has done within us: (a) Clean hands—unto forgiveness; (b) Pure heart—purity through the Holy Spirit; (c) Victorious living—kept from false vanity and deceit. Wave a palm branch! Shoot and sing like Jacob (v. 6). Our generation too will seek His face.

III. WHAT WE WILL DO TOGETHER (vv. 7-10)

This is the greatest part of the psalm. It was likely written when the ark was brought from Obed-Edom to Mount Sion (Adam Clarke), cf. 2 Sam. 6:1-15. But its import is greater than this. Handa's court and his majesty are set under the words to music in his great Messiah. Adam Clarke, in his Bible exposition, writes: "Jesus has conquered sin, Satan, and death by dying. He now rises from the dead; and, as a mighty conqueror, claims an entrance into the realms of glory, the kingdom of heaven. He has purchased by His blood, to appear ever in the presence of God..."

CONCLUSION: Today we ask no alms of God. We rejoice! We wave palms! We sing psalms! Rejoice and sing "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

April 10—Easter Sunday

OUR SUFFERING SAVIOUR

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 22

TEXT: "He hath done this" (v. 31).

INTRODUCTION: The story is told that when President Lincoln had been shot, and the funeral procession was going by, a child waved a white flag high in the column and said: "Take-a-good look, Honey-child. He died for you." This glorious Easter morning may I point you to Jesus and say: "Take a good look, Honey-child. He died for you!"

This psalm is indeed the "Psalm of the Cross—our Lord must have recited to himself during those hours of anguish" (F. B. Meyer). While some of the psalm is definitely "David," no Christian can fail to see Christ.

I. HE HATH DONE THIS—suffered and died

Reading this psalm, we see our suffering Saviour. In the hymn "There is a Green Hill Far Away," Cecil Alexander said, "We cannot tell what pains He had to bear."

He suffered pains of: (a) The agony of Why me, Lord? (v. 1; cf. Matt. 27:46). Others had found God near in their hour of trial (vv. 3-5), but Christ suffers alone. (b) The agony of mockery (vv. 7-11; cf. Matt. 27:27-30). (c) The agony of crucifixion (vv. 15-16; cf. John 19:16-18; also for v. 18, cf. John 19:24). I am constantly reminded by this thought I keep on my desk: "Is the life you are now living worth the price Christ paid for it?"

II. HE HATH DONE THIS—He lives again

Verse 22 changes to praise. A teacher was vividly telling the story of Jesus dying on the Cross, and a boy rose from the dead; and, as a mighty conqueror, claims an entrance into the realms of glory, the kingdom of heaven. He has purchased by His blood, to appear ever in the presence of God..."

CONCLUSION: Today we ask no alms of God. We rejoice! We wave palms! We sing psalms! Rejoice and sing "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

April 17

ME—HE—WE

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 23

INTRODUCTION: This best-loved psalm speaks to all of us. Let me share what it says to me.

1. ME (vv. 1-2). What the Lord does for ME.

I often think of the blessings that are mine all because of Jesus. My shepherd. I want not. He satisfies ME. He leads ME. Dr. Purkiser, commenting on this psalm, says: "Sheep never lie down, we are told, until they are satisfied with their grazing. Every spiritual need is supplied, for I am contentedly abased by the personal attention the Lord gives me."

II. HE (vv. 3-4). What the LORD does for ME.

Quickly I turn from my blessings to the Blesser. Only He can restore my soul. HE leads me because He is WHO He is. HE always knows the right path. His leading glorifies His name. David continues—through life, through death. HE leads. In life we have a changing path and an unchanging companion. I like D. L. Moody's comment on v. 4. In the last, or at least nearly last message he ever preached, he said: "The Twenty-third psalm is more misquoted than anything else in the whole Bible." HE goes on. Moody tells people talk about the dark valley of the shadow of death, and it is the devil who puts in the word dark. "What is the difference? Must not there be light where there is shadow? Can you get a shadow without light? All that death can do is to supply a shadow across his path. Shadows never hurt anyone—there is nothing to fear. A shadow is a testimony that the light—Jesus our Light—is shining brightly."

April, 1977

THE BEATTITUDE OF PROSPERITY

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 1

TEXT: "And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (v. 3).

INTRODUCTION: I could get along better with the psalm if our text phrase were not in there. Especially that word whatsoever. It makes it hard on all the alibas and reasons I have for wanting prosperity and David begins his psalm with the beatitude of prosperity, I must see what he has to say.

I. AVOID THE NEGATIVE (v. 1)

This could be applied to our spiritual, physical, and material life. Spiritually we have the classic example of Peter who denied the Lord the night he stood and sat with theSimon and Judas. Physically we know many who are sick because of negative and defeatism thinking. Avoiding the negative is necessary in our total life. If the Wright brothers had listened to the scornful, they would never have taken their glider and planes to "kill-devil hill" in North Carolina and given wings to a freeborn flight.

II. DELIGHT IN THE POSITIVE (v. 2)

M. Lum, in his book Treasures in...


II. EXPLOIT TO PROSPER (v. 3)

A speaker at a high school commencement said to the seniors: “One of the problems of our day is that we have a Polaroid psychology. Like the camera we expect instant results. But life is not like that.” Another has said that when we ask God for “fruit of the Spirit,” He only gives us the seeds. But as we expect the planted fruit tree to grow and prosper, so may this be in our lives. God’s rules are so simple: Avoid the negative. Delight in the positive. In time your life will testify that God’s Word is true. For the righteous man, “Whatever he doeth shall prosper.”

CONCLUSION: The ungodly do not have the stability and assurance that the righteous have. David ends with the same assurance as Job. “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10).

Wesley’s Words—

“The world is my parish.” Mr. Wesley was a man of far-reaching vision and a wide range of travel. Being an Anglican clergyman—even to his death—Mr. Wesley was often asked about the location of his parish. From a big heart he gave the answer above. Today, outside City Road Chapel in London is a statue of Mr. Wesley, at whose feet are the words “The world is my parish.”

As Wesley’s “sons in the faith” we have an even greater world parish. The message of Wesleyan holiness is reaching a greater number than ever before.

Submitted by Robert Emes

2 Corinthians 4

“Faint” or “Lose heart”? (4:1)

Today the verb faint is used as a synonym for “swoon”—becoming dizzy and falling down. But the verb ekeino means “become weary” or “lose heart” (AG: p. 214). Achilles comments: “Weakening here is not physical but spiritual” (DNTT: 1:350). The correct translation is “lose heart” (RSV, NASB, NIV).

“Dis honesty” or “shame”? (4:2)

It is difficult to see where the King James translators got the word “dishonesty” here. The Greek simply says, “the hidden things of shame.”

But what does this mean? Arndt and Gingrich suggest, “what one conceals from a feeling of shame” (p. 24). This is an example of a word used in the NAB: “the things hidden because of shame.” The NIV puts it a little more generally: “secret and shameful ways.”

“Craftiness” (4:2)

In the Septuagint passage means “cleverness,” in a good or neutral sense. But in classical Greek and the NT, it is used in a bad sense—“craftiness” or “deception” (NIV).

“Handling deceitfully” (4:2)

In the Greek this is the present participle of the verb dokeo, which comes from the noun doxa, a “bait” or “snare.” So the verb literally means “ensnare.” But both noun and verb are used metaphorically in the sense of “deceit” or “treachery.” Arndt and Gingrich say that the verb means “falsehood, adulterate” (p. 292).

—it was used in secular Greek for adulterating wine. One could deduce the idea here: “Don’t water down the Word of God!”

“Hid” or “Veiled”? (4:3)

The Greek word here is not related to the one translated “Hidden things” in verse 2. There it was the adjective cryptos, “impenetrable.” Here it is the verb epynto, “To cover or veil.” So the best translation here is “veiled” (RSV, NASB, NIV).

“Lost” or “Perishing”? (4:3)

Evangelical Christians are familiar with the thought that the unsaved are “lost.” But does this word communicate the truth accurately and adequately to an outsider?

The verb apotheosi in the active voice means “destroy” (cf. 1 Cor. 1:19). In the middle voice, as here, it means “perish.” So there seems the best translation if “those who are perishing” (NASB, NIV). It is the same verb that is translated “perish” in John 3:18. The main argument for using “perishing” is the connection with the three parables of the lost in Luke 15, where this verb is rendered “lose” or “perish” (seven times). But we also find the prodigal son saying, “I perish foully many with hunger” (v. 17).

We should not continue using the term lost to describe the condition referred to here. But the other concept is also important. Oepke says that apotheosi indicates “definitive destruction, not merely in the sense of the extinction of physical existence, but rather of an eternal plunge into Hades and a hopeless destiny of death” (DNTT: 1:350).

“The Lord” or “As Lord”? (4:5)

Paul declared, “We preach Christ as Lord” (1 Cor. 1:23). But the Lord is also the Name of our God. “To preach Christ as Lord” is to preach Him as crucified, risen, and glorified, the Lord to whom all authority in heaven and earth has been given” (p. 116).

“The alert reader may have noted that NASB has “Christ Jesus as Lord,” whereas NIV has “Jesus Christ as Lord.” Which is right? The answer is “we cannot be sure.” Our two chief Greek manuscripts of the NT (as a whole) come from the fourth century. Of these two, Vaticanus has Christion Iesou and Sinaiticus has Iesou Christion. All three fifth-century manuscripts have the latter. That is probably why this reading was adopted in the United Bible Society Greek. Textual critics, now considering the best in print. It may be noted that the correct reading at the end of verse 6 is “Christ” (NASB, NIV), not “Jesus Christ,” (KJV). In this case the Greek is very clear.

“Earthen” or “Clay”? (4:7)

The adjective astracos is found only here in 2 Tim. 2:20. Arndt and Gingrich say that here it is used “as a symbol, denoting breakableness” (p. 591).

This adjective is the basis of the theological term astrance, used for broken pieces of pottery that often have ancient writing inscribed on them.

“Vessels” or “Jars”? (4:7)

The word skewos is rendered “vessel” in the KJV 19 out of the 23 times it occurs in the NT. Most of the time it refers to what we today would call “jars” or “containers.” “Vessel” is now used more for a ship. There “jars of clay” (NIV) is more contemporary than “earthens vessels” (RSV, NASB).

What is meant? Gen. 2:7 suggests that God made man’s body from clay. So many have thought that the reference here is to the physical body. But Plummer writes: “It was in the man as a whole, and not in his body in particular, that the divine treasure which was so entirely the world was placed to be dispensed to others” (p. 127). He notes that this metaphor is common in the OT (Isa. 29:16; 50:14; 40:12; 66:1: Jer. 16:19).

The figure used here emphasizes the frailty of our humanity. This is in contrast to the greatness of God’s power and glory.

“Troubled” or “Hard pressed”? (4:8)

The Greek word is the present participle of thlito, the verb meaning “to press.” Occurring 10 times in the NT, it is translated “comes” and “afflicted,” 3 times. But since the
basic meaning is “press,” it seems that “Hard pressed” (NIV) is best here. Plummer also notes that the radical significance of ‘pressure’ (MK. iii. 9) must be retained, because of stenochoromenos” (p. 128).

“Distressed” or “Crushed” (4:8)
The verb stenochoromein is found in the NT only here and in 6:12 (twice), where the KJV has “straitened.” This catches better the distinctive meaning of the word. It comes from stenos, “Narrow,” and choros, “space.” So it means “To compress.” This idea is caught by “crushed” (NASH, NIV).

A play on words (4:8)
“Perplexed but not in despair.” The Greek has “aporiaomenos but not-exaporomenos.” Ex (ok) is a prepositional prefix meaning “out of.” It acts here, as often, in the sense of strong intensive of the simple verb. Plummer suggests: “In despondency yet not despair” (p. 159).

The verb, aporo, occurs four times in the NT. It means “be at a loss, in doubt, uncertain” (AG, p. 97). Aporo means “to lose one’s way, to be lost.” It has the force of being “utterly at a loss,” and so “in despair.”

“Cast down” or “Struck down?” (4:9)
The latter is preferred for katakalomenos by the NASB and NIV, as being more contemporary. Phillips puts it very vividly: “We may be knocked down, but we are never knocked out!”

“By” or “With?” (4:14)
The KJV says “by Jesus” and “with you.” The Greek has the same preposition in both places—syn, which means “together with.”

“Redound” or “Abound” (4:15)
“Redound” (KJV) is obviously out of date. The verb is perissomena, which occurs 39 times in the NT. In the KJV it is translated “abound” 17 times and “redound” only here. The former gives the correct sense.

“Far more exceeding” (4:17)
This represents another play on words in the Greek: kath’ hyperbolon eis hyperbolon. Arndt and Gingrich define the first part of this as “beyond measure.” To get the full force of the double expression, they suggest “beyond all measure and proportion” (p. 846). The NASB has “far beyond all comparison,” and the NIV “that far outweighs them all.”

2. A Jesus who could no longer hear their questions.
3. A Christ who no longer aware of their troubled hearts.
B. They found a living Christ.
1. A Christ able to speak. He spoke to Mary. She wept, but her tears were turned to joy.
2. A Christ who could answer their questions.
3. A Christ who had compassion for their troubled hearts.
Illus. v. 15; “Whom seekest thou?”
C. A Christ who can still be found by those who look for Him. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is still available to all men.
An alive Christ is indeed an available Christ. He sees us. He knows us. He hears us. He helps us. He guides us through this maze of life.

II. A LIVING CHRIST MEANS A COMING Censer
The angels made this announcement and Luke recorded it.
Acts 1:10-11, “And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as they went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

Illus. If the last of Jesus had been thesealed grave, then we would have no reason to look for Him.
Christ has not yet done all He is going to do for us. We have not yet the full benefits of the Resurrection, Rom. 8:23, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

CONCLUSION: I remember when Easter meant to me: A marshmallow candy, a chocolate rabbit, a gruity, yellow candy egg, a basket filled with grass that never lived.
Easter is the celebration of life:
The birds sing about it.
The trees proclaim it with new green robes.
The flowers announce it with fragrance that no man can match.
Not just breathing life, nor arm-waving life, but ETERNAL LIFE.
Jesu lives; and because He lives, we can live also.

Communion Worship Outline

The Body and the Blood
"Begateth the Cross of Jesus"
Prayer
Matthew 26:16
April, 1977
THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CROSS

Our crosses are hewn from different trees, but we all must have our Calvaries.

We do not need culture, but we need Calvary.

The Cross is God's plus sign to a needy world.

The Cross is the only ladder high enough to touch heaven's threshold.

ADULT DELINQUENTS

The way American adults manipulate children to make dollars is a sin. They rape their morals and seduce their minds with their television commercials and advertising, as they pound into their heads that, "If you only have one life to live, live it as a blonde."

No! I have only one life to live, but the Bible says I can go living forever if I love Jesus (1 John 2:5).

"You should escape and come on over to Calvary."

No soft drink can save you! Come on over to Jesus Christ. He's the Real Thing! —Bob Lawrence, in What A Way To Go.

Shoulders which carry responsibility have little room for carrying chips.

There is nothing wrong with being a self-made man, provided you don't consider the job finished too soon.

PHOTO FACTS: Gossip is a negative that is developed and then enlarged.

A man may fail many times, but he is not a real failure until he begins to blame somebody else.

There are some saints that the devil cannot tempt with the usual snares; for these he especially reserves discouragement.

One should marry as one's father's daughter.
Emelny's Expositions
By R. Kettlewell Emelny (Published by the author, 492 Eden St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14220. 66 pp., paper, $1.25 postpaid).

Dr. W. T. Purkiser rates the author of this little book a preacher who "has the well-deserved reputation among us of a Bible expositor in the best British tradition."

This book offers selected passages from Luke and John and the Thessalonian Epistles. Preachers should find it helpful in suggesting thoughts for sermon preparation. It will also be useful in prayer meetings and Bible study groups.

J. M.

Family Life—God's View of Relationships

The authors discuss in four parts, God's view of marriage, God's view of parents and children, God's view of the single person, and God's view of relationships. Roy Stedman, David Roper, and Jack Crabtree are pastors of Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, Calif.; and the other three coauthors—Jean McAllister, John Fischer, and Del Fuller—are part of the same church.

Roper strikes the keynote in declaring, "A successful marriage in terms of God's epistemic consists not in finding the right kind of person, but in being the right kind of person. In the Scriptures there are clear-cut directives as to how to be what God intends us to be.

The book is stronger in exposition than in practical solutions. However, there are many practical illustrations that apply the scriptural principles to marriage and home problems. Stedman recalls a "family that sent a note to the teacher when their child started to school which said, "Please don't hit our Willy. We never hit him at home except in self-defense."

Stedman's chapter on "Life Without Marriage" offers help where there is little available for the single adult.

J. M.

Expository Sermons on the Book of Daniel

Introduction to the Interterestamental Period
By Raymond F. Surburg (Concordia Publishing House, 1975. 197 pp., cloth, $8.50).

I would recommend this book to the pastor and any other person interested in gaining knowledge of the general historical developments of intertestamental times. It also covers in general the main religious groups of these times, the main theological emphases, and a resume of the intertestamental writings called the Apocrypha.

The list of sources at the back enhances the value of the book immensely for the person who wishes to extend his reading or study beyond this volume.

Harvey Finley

New International Version
With Study Helps

The New International Version of the New Testament is now available in heavy paperback. Study helps in the back include a subject index, "How to Study the Bible," "Ministry of Jesus," and maps.

Luther and the Mystics

Weleyans will welcome this superb study of Luther's relationship to mysticism. Historically, Luther has been identified with an objectivism which did little to identify his obligations to the mystics and their relationship to his understanding of justification by faith. Usually his mysticism is treated as a minus factor in our understanding of Lutheran theology.

Dr. Hoffman has examined primary sources with a scholarship which places a new dimension to our understanding of the subjectivism in Luther. He is very careful to show what mystics influence him, and which he refuses to inculcate in his understanding of the tradition. His documentation and notes are exhaustive.

His writing on God, man, and salvation, including "purity of heart" grounded in the Word, will enrich a pastoral experience as well as enlarge the understanding of a tradition which has been interpreted confessionally.

The author certainly has sources on his side to argue that mysticism has not been given proper attention as a "creative force" in Luther's thought. May I strongly recommend this new book to the thoughtful pastor.

Oscar F. Reed

Family Love in All Dimensions—A symposium

Twelve blue-ribbon authorities affirm here the time-honored principle of the solidarity of the family and offer practical and biblical guidance for countering the insidious forces conspiring to destroy the home today. John B. Nelson, Dr. Howard Hamlin, Millard Reed, Darrell E. Luther, Leslie Parrott, Arlene K. Hupe, Richard S. Taylor, T. Crichton Mitchell, Earl G. Lee, Audrey J. Williamson, and Joseph Nielsen write chapters. Also contributing is the noted psychologist, Dr. James Dobson. This book is a must for pastors. There are, not enough books to meet the demands for help in this vital area of need, and many of them fall short of our expectations. We believe this one will live up to them.

J. M.

Expository Sermons on the Epistle of James
By W. A. Criswell (Zondervan, 1975. 128 pp., cloth, $4.50).

There is something refreshing about Criswell's preaching, and it shows in his books of sermons. His book of sermons on Daniel, as one would expect, takes a strong position in defense of the validity of this material and our responsibility to heed it. The author believes in "prophecy" and makes the reader believe in it. The sermons are interesting, and they are scholarly. The book is filled with word studies, background information, provocative analysis, and colorful descriptions of the text.

The book of Daniel is a reprint of what formerly made up four volumes.

His expositions on James capture the wholesome Christian attitudes and
dead faith, with the words of rebuke and encouragement that the apostle adds as corrective to the distress of suffering and sin. The material is well illustrated and effectively applied to life today.

J. M.

**Preachers’ Exchange**

WANTED: Three vols. History of Nazarene Missions by Taylor. Larry Stover, 6617 Walford, Kansas City, Mo. 64132


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**AMONG OURSELVES**

There is not a more significant quality in good preaching than its biblical content. If it is not biblical, it is not real preaching, but something else. There are, of course, other necessary qualities, but this one must not be ignored. It is encouraging to witness a revival of interest in expository preaching, not only among those who preach but also among those who listen to preaching Sunday after Sunday. They find the Bible to be much more interesting, exciting, and relevant than they had thought it to be—back during their days of wandering in the wilderness of churning out topical themes on various subjects. Dr. Price has a word for us (p. 3), and there will be other helps as time and space permit.

Halford Lucecock put it so very aptly: “Now abideth these three: topical, textual, and expository, but the greatest of these is expository.”

Yours for souls,

J. M.

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**FOR SALE:** Pentecostal Papers: The Gift of the Holy Ghost, S. A. Keen (1st ed., 1896); Commentary to the Acts of the Apostles, Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (1st ed., autographed copy, 1883); Sociology and Social Problems; Cha. A. Ellwood (1913); Heart of Sane San; Elizabeth Cooper (about Japan); Efficient Religion, Geo. Arthur Andrews (1912); Moody's Anecdotes and Illustrations, Dwight Moody (1890); Beacon Lights of History, John Lord; Old Pagan Civilizations (1883); *Swan's Sermons*, Vols. 1 & 2, Geo. Swan; Heroes for the Truth, W. R. Tweedle (1890); The King in His Beauty, Richard Newton (1st ed., 1878). Prices on request. S. T. Moore, 211 West Park Ave., Greenfield, Ind. 46140.

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