MARCH 26

Easter '78

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The Lord's Perfect Timing

(A true experience)

By Betty Morgan*

Editor's note: The author is an enthusiastic new Nazarene who witnesses to the saving power of Christ everywhere she goes. This article was written as a special favor for the editor who has been recovering slowly from a major surgery.

A year ago in early spring on a brisk day when the grass was still brown and the dry leaves were still blown against the fence rows, I drove to Bartlesville, Okla., to see my daughter and son-in-law and two grandchildren. I wish I could remember the words of my prayers at the beginning of that exciting day! But likely, then as now, my prayer was to be used of the Lord, to be bold in my witness (with wisdom and finesse), and to be so strongly led that I would "fall in" to doing His will.

The drive to my family’s is about a three-hour trip from our farm in Wichita, Kans. As I neared the end of this journey, I became so sleepy that I had to find a place to pull my car over and nap. I searched for a safe stop for several miles. Finally, I left the highway to drive into the Osage Hills State Park. A scant half-mile inside the park, I drove up on a wide shoulder beside a fence and parked. I rolled down the car window a little and locked all the doors. Still in the driver’s seat, I leaned over and went immediately to sleep.

Shortly I was awakened by footsteps in the dry grass and leaves. I sat up quickly to look around. Right outside my car window, just across the fence, stood a beautiful white-faced bull all by himself staring placidly at me.

The clock on the dash of my car showed 6 o’clock. I had slept 20 minutes. My daughter was expecting me for dinner. I knew the Lord had awakened me with that gorgeous animal, so I said “Thank You, Lord." Then I drove back to the highway.

*Wife of a Wichita physician.
When I had traveled about a mile on the highway, I came upon an automobile wreck across the way on my left. The car was upside down in the ditch. Then I knew why the Lord had awakened me.

One thought was in my mind—there might be someone dying in that car who did not know the Lord! I forced my car to a stop and ran back down the highway to the scene of the accident. By this time there were three men helplessly examining the wrecked car. I asked one of them, "Is there anyone in that car?" He nodded yes.

I got to my knees to look inside the car and saw a woman lying on her back with her head underneath the dash so that I could not even see her face. By her sturdily-built body, I estimated her age to be fortyish. I could not tell if she was dead or alive, injured or uninjured, conscious or unconscious.

I hesitated a moment, but knew there was no time to lose. I touched her gently on the shoulder, then said, "Ma'am, do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior?"

There was complete silence. I did not know if she heard. But I could not give up. I shook her shoulder gently and said, "Ma'am, ask the Lord to forgive you your sins."

Suddenly with a cry of anguish for all to hear, she said, "Jesus forgive me!"

I stood up stunned. Then I kneeled beside her again and encouraged her. "Keep praying, keep talking to the Lord." The men were watching and listening nearby.

I learned the woman's name, and that she lived in a small town some 30 miles back in the direction from which I'd just come. Suddenly an ambulance sped in. Attendants lifted her into the ambulance and whisked her away toward Bartlesville.

A day or two later, I wrote this lady in care of the Bartlesville Hospital. My letter was returned unmarked and unopened. I wrote her again in care of her hometown. My letter was again returned unmarked and unopened.

Was she saved that day? With the fervor of her anguish cry inscribed indelibly on my memory, I feel there is a chance she was.

The Church is never a place, but always a people; never a fold, but always a flock; never a sacred building, but always a believing assembly.

The Church is you who pray, not where you pray. A structure of brick or marble can no more be a Church than your clothes of serge or satin or double knit can be you. In this world there is nothing sacred but man—no sanctuary of man but the soul.

That's the Church.

—Selected

in the traditional concept of success, where does the minister fit in?

The Minister's Sensitivity to Destructive Influences

By W. S. Muir*

I am reminded of the minister who sold a mule to a friend. The mule was trained to go forward when the minister said "Praise the Lord," and to stop when he said "Amen." The purchaser mounted the beast and rode away. As the mule began going faster and faster the rider kept calling "Wha?" with no response. At last he remembered and shouted "Amen!" The animal stopped. Wiping his brow, and taking stock of the situation the man observed he had stopped at the very edge of a cliff. Again wiping his brow, he declared gratefully, "Praise the Lord!"

With these words, I venture over the cliff.

Why are we in this profession? How did we get here? What are we doing in it today? As we face these questions, I ask three questions:

What is the minister?

The minister is one who is called of God. God's calling is strange indeed. Paul was a persecutor, Augustine was licentious, Luther was born at the back of an open stall in the market of Eisleben and could not say the words "Our Father" without a shudder because they reminded him of his own coarse father. Carey was a cobbler, Kagawa, the son of a Geisha girl. Strange that God would choose these men to shake whole countries with the gospel message. And strange indeed that He chose you and me to be His witnesses. Amos never grew accustomed to the strangeness of the call—"I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son." So here we are, still human, and that answers the first question, What is the minister? He is human.

What must the minister be?

As ministers we are called to be God's man to the people. We are to be God's man to the church board, to the congregational meeting, to the children in the streets, to the local city council, to the sick, to the dying. We must be God's man when we stand to preach, when we kneel with the congregation to pray. Can our congregation say of us, "Christ served among us in that man"?

We are preachers of the Word, never settling with a few stories. We are in the hospitals so much we seem like permanent residents, nurses know us by name. We stand with the bereaved, and families will say later, "We could never have gone through this without our pastor."

I yearn to see the pastoral take on
this meaning—unreadable—of being a pro-

moted, and of my success being largely

measured as to how I do that pro-
moting. I have difficulty with Matt.
25:31-46 where Jesus speaks about being
hungry and we feel Him, naked and
we clothed Him, thirsty and we gave
Him drink...

In our failure to do this we are ad-
momishened to depart, are cursed, and
sent to everlasting punishment pre-
pared for the devil and his angels.

This then brings me to the third
point:

What must the minister avoid?

Perhaps we could better respond to
the question by asking, What is suc-
ess? Each of us wants to be success-
ful, and indeed, God wants us to be.
However, in the traditional concept
of success, where does the minister fit?
A large salary; large, sporty cars;
a large, well-furnished home; a cot-
tage on the lake; a boat? I am always
drawn to the Pastors, with the realiza-
tion that some of God's greatest men,
in the eyes of man, were not at all
successful—indeed, they were com-
plete failures. Stephen was stoned.
Paul had his head chopped off. All of
the disciples but one were executed.
Jeremiah was ridiculed and scorned.
Jesus himself was crucified.

Success is not in the amount of the
salary, nor the number of de-
structive influences in the ministry is
this matter of salary. Many men have
lost their way because of this factor.
Indeed, how many have become sour
because the church wouldn't raise the
salary, or because a neighboring
pastor received a call to a church
that paid more. How many have aspired to First Church in order

feet of the man whose training came
from his love for people and his desire
to serve them. Jesus said some things
are hidden from the wise. Avoid the
the human aspect of success—the
the gods of money, of statistics, of show,-
ness, and of pride.

When, then, is success? Simply an-
swered in the Master's prayer: "They
will be done..."

We must be God's representative.
Years ago there was a Methodist
preacher named E. C. Powell whose
bishop appointed him to a little
town to start a church. It was his job
to gather a congregation and build a
building. He set out calling from door
to door, inviting people to contribute
to the church fund. He didn't go
far before he ran into the village athen-
ist. He didn't argue or try to get him
to join the church, but he did ask him
for a contribution. The man replied
that he didn't think he owed the
church anything. "No,"
agreed Brother Powell, "but I think
you owe God something."

"Well," said the other, "maybe
you are right." So he wrote out a
check for $40, making it payable to
God. Brother Powell accepted the
check, thanked the donor, and went
down to the bank. He endorsed the
check "God, by his agent, E. C.
Powell." And the bank cashed it!

God's representative!

Remember, young pastor—who is
enjoying "visible" success today—
many before you labored and sacri-
cificed to keep the doors open, laying
a foundation that makes your success
possible.

The Master's parable of the sower
shows us, that before harvesting there,
must be months of hard labor in
breaking the ground, planting, culti-
vating, and watering.

Where, then, lies the success for
which we all strive? Is it to get a
larger church, then larger, and so on
an area of a district superintendent,
the college president, the executive
at headquarters, and then the epitome
of success—a general superintendent
or a bishop? Is this what it's all
about? What would Paul say? "If I
speak with the tongues of men and
angels, but have not love, I am be-
coming sounding brass or a clanging
symbol." All these years to master
the art of preaching, and Paul calls it
"noise." All that study, all those
gifts... and faith to remove moun-
tains... and giving my goods to feed
the poor, even to dying a martyr's
death. Yet if I have not love, it profit-
eth me nothing.

Ford, in his book An Expository
Preacher's Notebook, reminds us of
Christ himself in the days of the
flesh. Christ reading people, spurned
by people, mixing with people, stay-
ing with people, rebuking them, for-
giving them, giving each what he
needed. Sensible, yes. A man of sor-
rows, yes. This is a true preacher. Not
a man with the gift of gab, though he
ought to strive to be an excellent
preacher. Not a man with a first
in theology, though he ought to know
his theology. Not just an ecclesiastical
diplomat, though he ought to be
able to get along with his brethren.
He must be a sensitive man who has
himself found God in the secret place
of his own soul, meeting his own
need, speaking to his own condition.
That is the man who speaks to oth-
ers. That is the man through whom
God speaks.

And so, like my friend sitting on
the mule at the edge of the cliff, I
say "Praise the Lord!"
It's okay to admit you are "fit to quit"—then begin to do something about it

**Fit to Quit**

A SUPERINTENDENT I have often visited with pastors and others who tell us with heavy hearts, "I'm awfully tired." I know they are talking about a special kind of tiredness and the sense that they are not spiritually gifted, or physically, mentally, or emotionally qualified. This is why the work of the nominating committee is so important. This is why it is so vital that we get our laborers by praying to the Lord of the harvest.

One of the most important jobs of the pastor is that of selecting and developing Christian workers. It is amazing how much vigor, life, and enthusiasm are injected into the tired old system just by the simple therapy of seeing success.

Whatever the cause of the tiredness, it will surely be helpful to admit it. It's okay in the words of Ian Thomas to admit you are "fit to quit." Then the way is clear to begin to do something about it.

Here are some things to try:

1. **Learn to praise the Lord.** This is one of God's magic formulas for seeing your way through a tunnel. It is quite exhausting to carry a load of worry and anxiety, but the Bible says, "Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving continue to make your wants known to God" (Phil. 4:6, Amp. NT). "In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18).

2. **Maintain an abiding wine attitude.** Ron Dunn, writing in the March 1977 issue of Worldwide Challenge says he decided to take a poll of the branches in a certain vineyard to find out how they managed to take the strain of bearing fruit. "After interviewing as many as possible, I came to some interesting conclusions.

   - One had an ulcer, was on tranquilizers, was uptight or apprehensive, physically worn out, or mentally fatigued. When he asked his secret, they said, "We just learned to abide. Have you ever seen a branch struggle and strain and worry and get uptight? We don't do that, because we understand that the responsibility for production is on the vine."

   - There is a rest for the people of God. When you are obeying, no matter how severe the problem, you can always pray, "God, You put me here, now You see me through." Even if He sees you through by taking you to heaven, that's okay. In some cases that may be the best solution. We don't have to worry when we are obeying.

   - I have a Swiss missionary friend, Heinir Germann-Edey, who prayed for his colleagues back in Indonesia and I heard him say, "Lord, keep them restfully busy... . It's not by trying, but by dying."

   - When the problems get so heavy we cannot bear them ourselves, I think it is all right to pray, "Lord, You've got a problem here." As Robert Girard suggests, we're too prone to read Prov. 3:5-6 as follows,
"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart... and keep a plan in the back of your mind in case that doesn't work."

Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Major Ian Thomas said in a message in Girard's book Brother, Hang Loose, "And I come and say to you I'm going to give you rest, what do you expect me to do? Sing a song? Quote Bible verses to you? Give you a new shovel?"

"No! You will expect me to climb down into the hole and dig, while you climb out and rest. That is what Jesus means to do for you."

Recently when my problems were especially complex, God let me see that problems and suffering are God's agents of change. If we never saw our need to change or improve, we would not move.

3. Wait on the Lord. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31).

Recently I talked to one who had quit having devotions because the pressure of business was too demanding on his time. That is when he most needed the resources God can give. During those waiting times God can either make us equal to our task or reveal to us that we should change our assignments. He may use different patterns by which we can achieve therapeutic success. When we leave that upper room, it is good to know we don't go out alone, but in the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit, who is able to produce Pentecost.

Are you fit to quit? Then praise the Lord. Go ahead and quit. Quit trying, get out of the hole, let Jesus do the digging for you. Rest in the Lord, keep abiding in Him and waiting on Him, and keep available to Him as a channel through which He can work. When He does it, you'll feel like your ministry is borne on the wings of eagles.

Is it possible that a "call conscious" pastor may be using time and energy unprofitably?

**Pastoral Calling**

For many years pastoral calling for me was a burdensome duty. Failure to make a sufficient number of calls in accordance with someone's numerical ideal produced deep feelings of unfaithfulness and even guilt. That favorite cliche, of convention and workshop speakers had already been around for a long time: "A home-going pastor will always have a church-going people." I believed it so completely that I thought pastoral calling was the whole key to church attendance. Periodically I would take my little book of recorded calls and start out to make up my quota. I discovered that by random contacts and careful counting I could rack up a pretty respectable report.

That kind of pressure soon got to me. Calling became such a heavy duty I couldn't even enjoy meeting people. People began to look like numbers. I believe they knew it too. I decided I had to find a better approach. I was confident pastoral calling was a more spiritual assignment than counting numbers. Furthermore, I felt it ought to have some scriptural basis as well.

By prayerful thought I arrived at an important conclusion. Callings is just one method of ministering to people, and it must take its place along with other methods equally important. I decided that calling was not the only method, nor necessarily the most important one. When calling is given such priority that it becomes a dutiful, compulsive task, more involved, with numbers than people, it loses its love. Such an approach can make a pastor feel like a salesman trying to keep up with his assigned number of contacts in order to fill up his sales quote.

There is always the possibility that the more people a pastor contacts, the more he may win to the Lord and the church—but not necessarily. The quality of pastoral calling is more important and effective than its quantity. Qualitative calling should be the desire and goal of every pastor.

That qualitative and not quantitative calling is the scriptural approach is abundantly demonstrated in the ministry and example of Jesus. It was a study of the Lord's approach to people and their needs that helped
me to settle on a scriptural approach to my calling.

It was a little surprising to discover that Jesus spent very little time in people's houses. Most of his ministry was done publicly. People either came to Him or were brought to Him by others who had heard Him preach and seen Him heal. Jesus was not at all concerned about the mathematics of home calling. His concern was with people's needs. Whenever there was a need, Jesus was available and present.

Any pastor who is available and need-conscious will be a calling person. asked of his district. Along came the church member who, in the warm and friendship are scarce articles these days. Professionalism and personal relationships have crept into our society and even into the church. A pastor must always be conscious that he is contacting a human being, for whom Christ died. People can tell when he is really interested in them, or whether he simply wants them in church to fill an empty pew. Increased attendance may be a number on his conference report. Cold, calculated, dutiful calling void of the love of Christ is undesirable and unacceptable to people in need.

A faithful pastor will make as many calls as his ministry requires. But he will see to it that it is quality calling and not just quantitative.

The reason so many people get very little from their Bible study is similar to the reason why maple syrup is so high-priced. About 36 gallons of sap have to be evaporated to make one gallon of syrup, and then a great quantity has to be further boiled down if one wishes to make a single cake of maple sugar. If you are going to gain a knowledge of the Word of God, you cannot be lazy. There must be gallons of devotion evaporated with more gallons of yieldedness to the Word, before there cannot be true growth in the knowledge of the Scriptures. But when the end product is reached, it will be "sweeter than honey." —Selected
Seven years later in the preface to A Pocket Hymn Book, for the Use of Christians of All Denominations, Wesley gave as the reason for omitting some 37 hymns included in an earlier volume that "fourteen of them appeared to me very flat and dull; fourteen more, mere prose, tagged with rhyme; and nine more to be grievous doggerel" (Works, XIV, 345). When someone informed Mr. Wesley that the people enjoyed some of the hymns he chose to omit, he indicated that their enjoyment only demonstrated their poor judgment and reflected poorly on the Methodists. He would not continue that poor reflection.

Question 39 in The Large Minutes of Wesley’s conversations, 1791 edition, asks, "How shall we guard against formality in public worship; particularly in singing?" In his answer, Wesley directed his reply to preachers, who were charged with leading the singing in most of the societies. He said; "(1) By preaching frequently on the head. (2) By taking care to speak only what we feel. (3) By choosing such hymns as are proper for the congregation. (4) By not singing too much at once; seldom more than five or six verses. (5) By suiting the tune to the words. (6) By often stopping short, and asking the people, "How do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?" (Works, III, 346).

Perhaps the best known of Wesley’s remarks on music are his famous “Directions for Congregational Singing.” He there stated five principles which reflect his views most clearly to his Methodists.

“That this part of divine worship may be more acceptable to God, as well as more profitable to yourself and others, be careful to observe the following directions:—

1. Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find a blessing.

2. Sing lustily, and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of it being heard, than when you sung the songs of Satan.

3. Sing modestly. Do not hawl, so as to be heard above, or distinct from, the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony, but strive to unite your voices together, so as to make one clear melodious sound.

4. Sing in time. Whatever time is sung, be sure to keep with it. Do not run before, nor stay behind it, but attend closely to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can. And take care you sing not too slow. This drawling way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from among us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.

5. Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing; and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve of here, and reward when he cometh in the clouds of heaven” (Works, XIV, 346).

Impartial Love

Ever stand by in wonder and look on amazed
As a waif from the lowest of people
Seems to stir, so to speak, in a filthy cocon
And emerges a spiritual steeple?

Well, my friend, let me tell you the terms high or low
Were unknown to our Christ in His years
He loved folk who were high, and the lowest of low—
All were souls to be plucked from the burning.

—Roy McCaleb
Evangelistically Speaking-

Pluralism, Toleration, and Evangelism

By Leon A. Hynson

America was once known as the "melting pot" for the world. The great immigrations which reached these shores in wave upon wave of questing souls made this land a caldron of dynamic activity. Aply portrayed by Oscar Handlin as The Uprooted, these diverse peoples came together in a new world and, tolerating all the greed of human manipulation, thrust their roots down in the soil of their adoptive nation. Immortalized in Emma Lazarus' famous commemorative work, these "buddled masses yearning to breathe free" forged a new America.

The nation became a testing ground for the expression of suppressed visions, a land where the seeds of aspiration might grow and come to full harvest. The symbol of the "melting pot" was a vehicle for bearing the national sense of material, social, and religious development.

However, the persons who came in those inundations to be poured into America's social caldron were the bearers of a cherished heritage which was destined to significantly alter the chemistry of the nation. Acculturation is not a thing of quantifiable ingredients, measured parts of a recipe, or the deliberate strokes of the social architect. Like the wind which comes and goes as it will, so spreads human culture.

If the symbol of America of another era was the "melting pot," the consequence of that infinite variety of men, women, and opinions would be another America, whose symbol might now be Jeremiah's "boiling pot" with its contents spilling over upon the land, in a plethora of disparate concerns. This land has become a society where every person seeks to do what seems right in his own eyes. In the term which Paul Tillich has made common theological coin, this is an autonomous society.

In summary, it is characterized by an almost infinite pluralism.

Toleration

In a pluralistic world, the spirit of toleration is demanded of all. A homogeneous society may find that its traditions forge chains which bind or build walls that are both inclusive and exclusive. This community may require less concern for toleration, while being less capable of displaying it. Toleration is not exercised in a social vacuum, but in a climate, where varieties exist, where tensions are ready to surface. In a heterogeneous world, such alternative views, ideals, and commitments are always present, necessarily calling forth a spirit of reasonableness and understanding if the society would possess any cohesion and common purpose.

Little imagination is needed to recognize the different requirements for tolerance in a pluralistic in contrast to a monistic society. In a state of society where one dominant force reigns, toleration is extended by the grace of that authority, and is ordinarily curtailed when any countervailing force threatens. However, where there are a diversity of powers, each pressing for recognition, each carving out its own space in society, toleration is evoked by the dynamic of the intersectional entities. In the monistic society, toleration, if extended, is more parochial, handed down from above by a superior authority. In pluralism, toleration is the consequence of many voices seeking to be heard, as to conditions of existing because the concerns of one are enough like those voiced by the other segments of the society. Pluralism creates the maximum setting for toleration. The monistic society bestows toleration from above; the pluralistic evokes it as the product of a response from within.

In the religious dimension, pluralism, while admitting the greatest variation, allows the most significant expression of religious persuasion. This seems paradoxical, since one religious view so quickly encounters another, with resultant fermentation and tension. However, in a pluralistic setting, no single commitment may override another without encountering still another. Thus a series of barriers is raised to prevent an intolerance which destroys the privileges of others. A monistic context lacks that kind of resiliency, being subject to the uncertain grace of the dominant authority. In contrast to many societies where toleration was a tenuous benefit granted from above, the American experiment of religious diversity makes possible a reasonably consistent pattern of religious toleration.

Evangelism

A new potentially volatile element enters the picture when the Christian concern for evangelism is considered. The Christian's call to evangelism cannot be ignored, despite the awareness of potential conflict in society. The considered opinion of some is that evangelism produces a sure tension with the spirit of toleration. "Live and let live" is a common viewpoint. How may religious toleration exist with Christian evangelism?

W. K. Jordan, author of the classic study The Development of Religious Toleration in England, has proposed a definition of "philosophical toleration" as the attitude of the mind "which has definite and pronounced religious opinions, but which is able and willing to concede to the minds of others the right to retain and practice contrary religious beliefs..." He argues that philosophical toleration logically leads to a skeptical attitude of mind. The Christian, therefore, who is possessed of an "evangelical intelligence," confronted with immortal souls facing eternity, cannot exercise such toleration.

Jordan's thesis deserves attention, for it expresses a rather common opinion regarding evangelism. There is a potential tension between personal liberty of conscience and the evangelistic concern. How may we harmonize the two, especially in a society where many evangelisms are existent? If one believes that every person is alienated from God, and that Christ is the one Lord and Savior, can that person remain in the presence of indifference? Is there an element of...
Pentecost Sunday Can Be a Big Day
In Your Church This Year!

By Gordon W. Johnson

We make much of birthdays. Why not really celebrate the birthday of the Church? Begin plans early.

Without trying to sound dramatic I would say that the survival—let alone the growth—of any denomination depends upon what we do with Pentecost. In this brief article it is our design to look at Pentecost as to its origin, its significance for the truly sincere Christian, and also some practical suggestions for its observance.

It should be remembered Pentecost has its origin in the Old Testament. The Septuagint (which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament) uses the word πεντηκοστής (meaning fiftieth) when speaking of this feast. The Feast of Pentecost was celebrated on the fiftieth day after the Passover, or seven weeks plus one day. It was the first of the two agrarian feasts of Israel and always indicated the end of the barley harvest. Pentecost was the Feast of Weeks and occurred on the day after the completion of the seven-week period. The central feature of the Pentecost Feast was the presentation of the two loaves of leavened, salted bread. According to the Mishnah, the length of one of these loaves was seven handbreadths, its width four, and its depth seven fingers. This is important to remember if one wishes to understand the Christian concept of Pentecost which is spoken of later in such passages as Rom. 8:23; 11:16; and James 1:18.

Historians agree that when the Jews suffered banishment from their homeland (i.e., the Exile period), it gave them a new appreciation for Pentecost. After the Exile, it became one of their great pilgrim feasts and served to bind and unite them as a nation. There is evidence of God's hand in this.

As in all things, it took our Lord Jesus Himself to fill Pentecost with new meaning and make it a true power source for a thrilling, fruitful, life-style. The second chapter of Acts pictures the band of 120 defeated disciples in an upper room waiting in obedience to their Lord's command when He said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). And tarry they did. Then Acts 2 tells us when and how that endowment came. Read Acts 2:1-21 in as many translations as you can lay your hands on,

intolerance naturally arising from the compulsion of the evangelical call?

The answers to these questions require continuation of the task of evangelism. The invitation to Christ must be presented in a pluralistic world—courteously, thoughtfully. Evangelism entails a persuasion to commitment, not an intolerance which denies to others the right to believe what they consider to be truth. Ultimately every man must give account to God for what he believes, or what conscience requires.

It is precisely here that Christian Good News functions. Since every person answers to God, he or she must be given the revelation of God's will in Christ. The right of religious liberty and the necessity of religious toleration does not circumscribe the exercise of the evangelical call. The insistent proclamation of Christ and the corollary of persuasion to decision is a Christian imperative.

The right to personal beliefs is to be cherished by all. Tolerance of other viewpoints does not demand silence about one's own. In evangelism, the Christian recognizes and values liberty of conscience, seeking none, thought to persuade. Paul wrote: "Knowing... the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5:11). There are forms of persuasion which do not honestly recognize the principles of tolerance of human rights. Persuasion may be exercised without integrity, without recognition of the rule of Christ: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." According to John Wesley, founder of Methodism, evangelism is "offering Christ to humankind." Evangelism in the Wesleyan heritage is a genteel ministry, characterized by compassion, respect, and toleration. Wesley abhorred the exercise of psychological or social forms of coercion to bring about decision. Evangelism must never be subverted by disrespect for persons, or by denial of liberty, including the right to a free choice. He resisted a certain kind of "Gospel preaching" in which a "pert, self-sufficient animal that has neither sense nor grace [might] bawl out something about Christ..." "neither sense nor grace" is the key phrase. Sense and grace are always important to the offering of Christ. Sometimes persuasion containing sanctions is employed and is thus akin to persecution.

The task of Christian evangelism requires the persuasion of love. Integrity and patience must characterize our efforts. When this is faithfully performed, the evangelical demand may be legitimately carried out in the midst of pluralism. Evangelism, therefore, is not undermined by an appeal to tolerance.

Conclusion

A pluralistic context offers the maximum opportunity and challenge both to toleration and evangelism. The evangelist becomes one among many evangelists. Evangelism within a monistic setting struggles either with an affiliation with the dominant authority structure or against it as a tolerated minority expressing its faith. In celebration of our faith the Christian evangelism must compete the many voices of persuasion heard in society. That is its challenge. However, here in the open door to the announcement that God has incarnated himself among men; that life is God's great gift in His Son; that fulness of life is guaranteed in the Kingdom, which is both realized and hoped for; that the anguish of earthly discord is to be succeeded by the triumph of God's grace in the universe which He created, and redeemed through His Son.

J. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940), p. 16

The Preacher's Magazine

March—April, 1978
Possibly at the very moment of the Spirit's descent, the high priest was in the act of waving the leavened, salted loaf before the Lord in the traditional Pentecostal ceremony that, by now, lost all true significance. Little did the high priest know that only a "sabbath day's journey" from the Temple the mighty Holy Ghost was falling on humble disciples in an unpretentious upper room. His coming undoubtedly put a shunt in the soul of at least some of them, while in the hearts of others, there was such an awe, inspired by the majesty of the Spirit, that they were almost prostrated with "the weight of glory."

The experience completely changed these aspects and marked the true beginning of the Christian Church. We have ever since regarded Pentecost as our birthday.

We make much of birthdays, whether among relatives, within our families, or even in our Sunday schools. Since this is so true on a human level, it ought to be true of the birthday of the Church of our Lord. Would not that birthday still be worth commemorating? Pentecost Sunday will fall on May 14 this year. The celebration of this day in our churches gives us a great opportunity to really hand ourselves over to Him who gave us our being—namely, the Holy Spirit. What a chance for pastors and congregations to measure and evaluate their growth in Christ; to analyze their motives and goals in the light of the Holy Spirit's claim upon their total being! Perhaps we should begin by asking ourselves if we are really humbled by such a high priest who was "just waving his loaf" before the Lord. (Lots of waving and loafing going on in the church these days.)

Pastors should take time to prepare their congregations for this day. Selected scripture references dealing with the theme of the Holy Spirit could be printed in the church bulletin beginning in April and continuing through Pentecost Sunday could be suggested which deal in a helpful way with the filling of the Holy Spirit and His working in today's lay person. Starting several weeks ahead, pastors could deal with the grand message of sanctification and the Spirit's fullness at least once a Sunday, climaxing on Pentecost Day itself. The subject has so many aspects that you will only get started by the time May 14 rolls around.

Laymen should be involved in this. A board member, a Sunday school teacher, or an auxiliary leader (also a young person, if you wish) could give a much-prayed-over testimony to heart holiness in the morning service just prior to the pastor's Pentecost Sunday message.

May we mention that all the Early Church fathers highly esteemed the celebration of this day and looked upon it as a day of consecration to the Lord and as a rich opportunity to grow in grace. Chrysostom called Pentecost "the metropolis of festivities." Gregory called it "the day of the Spirit." Jerome said that he felt it was the experience that "gave birth to the notes of the gospel trumpet."

When I think of Pentecost I think of what an old man prayed at the funeral of William Booth. He knelt by the casket of the great leader after the crowd had left, and with a weeping voice exclaimed, "O Lord, did it again!"

God did not make a mistake when He drew His eternal blueprint.

---

**Injustice Vs. Victory**

**Within 12 hours prior to His death on the Cross, Jesus was literally dragged through six trial courts:** Once before the retired high priest, Annas; once before the son-in-law of Annas, Caiaphas, the latter serving as high priest; once before the Sanhedrin, the highest tribunal in Jerusalem with the high priest as president of such; once before Herod Antipas; and twice before the Roman procurator, Pilate.

At least ten reversible errors occurred during this fiasco in injustice.

1. It was against Jewish law to initiate legal procedure on a Jewish Sabbath or on a Feast Day. This regulation was obviously violated, as Jesus was arrested on the Passover Feast Day.

2. No legal procedure could be begun during the night of a trial which was to take place before the Sanhedrin. Jesus was taken as a criminal around midnight on that Thursday—consequently this rule was broken.

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**by J. Grant Swank, Jr.**
**Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Fishkill, N.Y.**

March—April, 1978

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3. The Sanhedrin had no jurisdiction concerning capital punishment situations. The Jewish court had been divested of that authority some 40 years prior by the Romans.

4. It was legally wrong for High Priest Caiaphas to have served as judge when he had publicly proclaimed, before the trial itself, that Jesus deserved to die. Caiaphas should have disqualified himself in that he evidently revealed his bias in the case.

5. Caiaphas, serving as judge, should not have tried to press Jesus to confess. This was an attempt to coerce a conviction by the sect's own confession without having supporting evidence. Such violation of law infringed on the person's guarantees against self-incrimination.

6. The Sanhedrin had not convened for a regular meeting; therefore the group was not actually in formal session, and consequently was without legal power.

7. The Roman Empire stipulated that trials were to be public; the grilling before Annas and Caiaphas were held in private, so were legal errors.

8. Jesus was appointed no lawyer. He had no legal counsel. If He himself could not have provided one, then the political system was under obligation to provide Him with one, but no lawyer was given Jesus.

9. It was not legal for the Sanhedrin Court to convict an individual
on the same day of the trial itself.

The Court could acquit on the same
day; but it had to wait at least
two days for a verdict of guilty concerning
capital punishment cases.

10. Procurator Pilate, having taken
the position that Jesus was in fact
not guilty, erred in allowing, the
crazed mob to win out with their ver-
dict of guilty. The judgment on evi-
dence was overruled by the insistence
of the mob.

Jesus was confronted with six trial
courts prior to the Crucifixion. How-
ever, there was a seventh trial of Je-
sus. This latter was conducted in the
courts of heaven before the Judge.
Father. Six is the number of man, but
deeety is the number of Deity. And Deity
had the last sentence—the
sentence of innocent/victory—in the
dedicated life of the Son. The Su-
preme Court of Eternity pronounced
Jesus free from guilt.

Then why was it that Jesus had to
undergo such injustice? In part, such
was to fulfill the Old Testament
prophecies. For example, in Ps. 35:11
there is a prediction that the Messiah
will be falsely accused. In Isa. 50-6
there is the prophecy that He will be
maltreated, spat upon, and the hair of
His beard plucked. In Isa. 50-6 and
53.3 there are the predictions that
He will be beaten with stripes. In
53:7-9, it is foretold that He will be
condemned and oppressed as well as
mercilessly maligned. Yet through it
all, the providence was at work to
yield the verdict of the seventh trial
court in heaven: innocent/victory.

The personal application for the
believer is to trust the same God to
be at work just as meticulously in His
bringing triumph out of trial. Can the
Christian have faith in God to be-
lieve that through the injustices of life
in the dedicated believer’s days
there will finally be victory in light
of eternity?

Corrie ten Boom wrote, “Some-
times it is difficult to understand
the secret, of God’s plan for this world.
But one thing I know, God did not
make a mistake when He drew His
eternal blueprint. God never makes
mistakes. He knows exactly what He
is doing.”

Then she tells of how she and her
sister Betsy, in the concentration
camp, prayed that God would heal
Betsy, who was so weak and sick.
Betsy had said with confidence,
“Yet, the Lord will heal me.”

But she died the next day, and
Corrie could not understand it. When
she viewed Betsy’s thin body on the
concrete floor along with all the other
corpses of those who had died that
day, it was hard to understand, to
believe that God would have a purpose
for all that. But she says, “Yet be-
cause of Betsy’s death, today I am
traveling all over the world telling
people about Jesus.

“Now everyplace I go across the
world, people tell me how much they
love my sister Betsy. . . . She is a
blessing for more people because she
died than if she had lived. God makes
no mistakes.”

1. “The Coming Tribulation.” Corrie ten Boom,
“Laguna Journal,” Plattsfield, N.J., November-Decem-

A new world opens up to the person who; in his suffering,
senses the possibility of using it rather than bearing it. We can-
not explain suffering, but we may exploit it.

—W. T. Purkiser

Before “giving up” on the rural church, we
should take a careful look at its unique
problems and hopeful solutions.

The Congregation
in the Rural Setting

By Howard A. Kuhnle

ARCH EVALFUS in the church in
recent years is on the urban
problem, but the long-time emphasis
on the rural situation cannot be
pushed under the rug in the neces-
sary continuing consideration of
church renewal. Indeed, rural con-
genations need just as much renewal
as its urban churches.

A basic question needs to be faced:
Is the rural congregation essentially
different from the urban church?
There are differences, of course. But
there are important similarities. Both
are used of people.

For example, the people in Rich-
mondville and Seward, Schoharie
County, N.Y., a county whose largest
village is less than 5,000 population
(where this writer formerly served)
are well informed chiefly because of
the communication media—particu-
larly radio and television. They know
as much about the wars, Russia, the
Peace Corps, and the stock market,
as “city slickers.”

Farmers have large investments
these days, especially because of the
high cost of land and farm machin-
ery. Interestingly enough, because of
modern technology and research, the
number of farms and farmers is de-
creasing every year, while the average
size of farms and the production of
milk (and many other items) is in-
creasing. The number of cows is also
decreasing.

Farmers are also subject to many
changes. The best example from
Schoharie County is the use of “fill-
ed,” “substitute,” and skimmed
milk, meaning that there is less de-
mand for milk from farmers: Part of
the reason is that many people are
more and more diet-conscious.

Many farming areas are now “rur-
ban,” meaning that some men are
employed in factories and do farming
on the side. Other farmers drive
school buses. Some men work in
nearby towns or cities and do not
farm. Many wives work in small vil-
lage factories.

Rural poverty is prevalent since
there are “hillbillies everywhere,
including New York state. Moreover,
there are the migrants, chief public-
ity for whose problems has been
given through various church groups.

The people in the country churches
are people who need renewal.

Most people in the country are con-

A new world opens up to the person who; in his suffering,
senses the possibility of using it rather than bearing it. We can-
not explain suffering, but we may exploit it.

—W. T. Purkiser

The Preacher’s Magazine

March—April, 1978

21
Gleams of Immortality

By W. B. Walker

II. "I Was Not Born to Die"

Let us consider the answer of Job's question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (14:14). This eternal longing seems to be implanted in our very nature. The longing for immortality is instinctive. Every normal soul longs for a life beyond the grave. Practically all nations have believed in it. The Chaldeans, Greeks, Egyptians, and Chinese all believed in it. It was taught by Plato, Homer, Socrates, and Cicero.

This universal impress was impressed by the Finger of God. There is in the soul of every man a boundless desire to meet God in peace. This is true whether rich or poor, educated or illiterate, heathen or Christian. It matters not how wicked a person may be, there is within him a fear to meet God unprepared.

When the soul comes to the terminus of the way, there is a sincere longing to meet its Maker in peace. Who gives the eternal call to the soul? Do you believe that a Holy God would give His creatures this normal longing for immortality without providing satisfaction to meet it? Do you believe that man is an organized lie?

Do you believe the Creator will keep His word with us? Truly He will, because He has said, "He is faithful that promised" (Heb. 10:23). Wherever there are wings, the Lord has provided air to match them. Where there are fins, the Lord matches them with water. Where there is an eye, He gives light. He gives to the ear sound. Where there is perception of the beautiful, He gives beauty to match it.

From our possession of constitutional instinct, we expect existence after death. I do not believe that the Lord gave us these longings to tease us.

The late Dr. Charles Edward Jeffer son said, "My belief in immortality is instinctive. I feel I was not born to die. I had it when I was born, and it does not become less with the passing of the years. There is something deep down in me which rebels against the idea of personal extinction. I feel the revulsion most keenly on the death of a man both great and good. This instinctive recoil reaches its climax at the suggestion that Jesus of Nazareth is no more."

Then Dr. Charles R. Brown says, "Can anyone name a single normal desire which does not have over against it a corresponding satisfaction? If men hunger, there is food for them. If they want breath, there is air in abundance. The desire to live on after death is normal, widespread, persistent—why not trust the integrity of the universe to keep trust also with the demand of human nature?"

So the question of immortality is the age-old question of humanity. It belongs to the scholar and it belongs to the man of the street. Kings and peasants alike ponder over it. It beckons to us when we were children, and it will haunt us when we are old.
The men of the schools and the men who cannot read stand side by side and peer into the great beyond and say, "If a man die, shall he live again?" So long as men keep dying, the heart will continue to ask the age-old question of Job. The question is kept fresh by death.

Every age must give its answer to this question. Wherever man has left legible traces of his existence he has left evidences of his belief in a life after death. Changing scenes of earth will not destroy this belief. According to the apostle Paul, immortality is the glorious discovery of Christianity. He said, "But now is made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).

Dr. Mendell Taylor, in his excellent book Every Day With the Psalms, says in commenting on the Twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord is faithful to the homing instinct of the lower forms of life. The robin will fly to the mild climate during winter season. But the next spring it will return to the same tree in the same backyard to build its nest. The salmon will leave the Columbia or some other river and go thousands of miles to its secret feeding flats in the Pacific. Then when its life cycle is about ended, it returns to the same river it left; fights its way up the falls and through rocky shoals and refuges to stop until it is at the same bend in the river where it hatched. If the Lord is faithful to these homing instincts, He will be faithful to fulfill our desire to live, and love, and learn forever."

There was a good spirit in the move, a line of continuity, and the congregation felt the support of the local and district leadership in it all.

Now I know that it cannot always happen this way—and for us it hasn't in the past. But I felt that our pastor moved deliberately to work it out so that we could absorb the shock and look forward toward new leadership.

He was also concerned about his family in all of this. He helped his wife in the packing, as did the congregation. He was sensitive to the needs and traumas of his children. His anticipation paid off in every way—both for the congregation and the pastoral family.

Pastor Johnson was able to come in and meet the board the same week that he announced his resignation. Then the new pastor came to town, and the two men met with the church at a fellowship dinner. Afterwards the new pastor met with the church board and the principal committees. The following week our pastor closed his ministry in the evening and our new pastor opened his in the evening.

MARCH–APRIL

For Pastors and Local Church Leaders

Compiled by the Department of Stewardship

General Superintendent Greathouse

Leading Your People in Worship

HEN YOUR PEOPLE gather on the Lord's day, assume they have come to worship—to see the Lord high and lifted up, His glory filling the temple, to worship and adore the risen Jesus and discover in a deeper way the meaning of His Lordship; to experience a new outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Worship, however, does not "just happen" when God's people meet. It may. But usually it occurs when certain forces are operative. At the top of the list of these motivating factors is the minister himself. Assuming you have properly planned a service which should usher your congregation into the presence of the Triune God, what is your role? Permit me to share a few suggestions:

1. Anticipate God's manifest glory. He will be there. Expectation is the key.
2. Enter the pulpit in the awareness of the Presence, with joy and praise. The general preparation is a holy life. The special preparation is a time of waiting before the Lord. Let the fire burn within your own soul.
3. Call your people to worship. Let your voice be the first to be heard. But never say, "Good morning, folks; nice to see you here. How good of you to come." If it were your house, this would be appropriate. You and the people with you, have gathered in God's house. It isn't your service; it is His. You aren't in charge. He is. He is God; you are but His servant. The people, you and, are there to meet the living God.
4. Lead your people in worship. Avoid distracting conversation on the platform. Sing with the spirit and with the understanding. Read the Scripture reverently and with interpretation. Permit God to minister to your own being throughout the service.
5. Bring your people into God's presence with you. As their priest, you represent them before God—with all their needs, their hurts, their victories, their failures, and inarticulate yearnings. Let your pastoral prayer gather all these together as you lead the congregation into the holiest.
6. As God's priest, you represent your people before God. As His prophet, you represent Him to them. You are His mouthpiece. Preach the
Word. Prepare to preach as though all depended upon you, then rely on the Spirit as though you had made no preparation. Expect God to speak through you. Look your people in the eyes. Don't be bound to your notes. Above all, don't be glued to a manuscript. Be free in the Spirit! Be responsive to the congregation and let the people help you preach. Be courageous but tender. "Comfort the afflicted; afflict the comfortable." Aim at results. Know where you are going, and by God's help get there quickly.

7. Close the service appropriately, ordinarily with a carefully selected hymn. Encourage the people to respond to what God has said to them through your sermon. Expect a miracle. When the service has reached its conclusion, give the benediction. The great benedictions of the Bible should be committed to memory. If your memory is poor, type them out and have them close by.

Finally, train your people to remain quietly in their pews as you take your accustomed place at the close of the service. "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

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24H

CHRISTIAN SERVICE TRAINING

Alive and Well

The legislation of the 19th General Assembly made a number of organizational changes, some of which had a direct bearing on the work of Christian Service Training.

The organizational changes were designed to strengthen, not weaken, the whole of lay training in the Church of the Nazarene. The importance of lay leadership has not diminished. Marion Lawrence said, "Leadership, humanly speaking, is the only problem before the church."

John R. Most said that the main problem in the church is that its forces were immobile. It cannot, of course, be otherwise unless due attention is given to dedicated and capable leadership. In Better Leaders for Your Church, Weldon Crossland says, "Four indispensable are to be found in every successful church. They are program, organization, morale, and leadership; but the greatest of these is leadership."

Christian Service Training is now the lay training sector of the Department of Education and the Ministry. Adjustments are being made in this new working relationship as rapidly as possible. While these adjustments are being made, the work of CST continues to have a vital ministry. The statistics for the 1976-77 assembly year were most heartening. A total of 74,007 credits were reported to the General CST office. Nearly 2,300 churches reported training classes. So in this period of transition, lay training is alive and well.

Not all adjustments can be made immediately. In a number of areas there are tests that have been outdated by the organizational changes. The replacement of these tests will take years. The new Division of Christian Life whose training programs, such as Teacher Training and SS Administration, serviced by the CST office, are working to update all their texts or find replacements. This task is a gigantic one. In the meantime, all of us must do our best to provide opportunities and programs for lay education in the local church.

Even in transition the resources of CST are helping our people. The following letter from Pastor William O. Hand of our Bloomingdale Church in Savannah, Ga., says it well: "Thank you for your letter of October 10. I am honored to receive the Certified Teacher certificate. This is a great program. I appreciate the privilege of having a part in it."

"A little over a year ago we started the CST program in our church. In order to set an example, I thought it would be good for me as pastor to take a few books to show how important I thought this program was. I soon got hooked. Most of the books I have read never read a pastor for more than 30 years and I have enjoyed each book very much. I believe I am a better preacher as a result."

"In a little over a year my little church has received more than 300 credits, won the top district award, have 11 Registered, 7 Qualified, and 3 Certified teachers. In two years our SS has grown from an 18th average to 55 last year, 64 last month, and so far 69 this month. In two years we have received 39 members into the church."

"God receives all the glory, but much of the credit goes to an informed laity, as a result of CST."

"Thank you for all your work in producing and correcting papers to help us. We shall continue to study, CST and promote it in any way possible."

24H
Mission is important... but Mission INFORMATION is also necessary!

Plan to use the new 1978-79 missionary materials.

The Rising Caribbean Tide, by John Smeer, is the new resource book which provides interesting, up-to-date information on the work of the Church of the Nazarene in the Caribbean area.


Miracles Are Happening in the Dominican Republic, by Louie and Ellen Bristle
Stop, Look, and Listen, by Paul Miller
Puerto Rico Profiles, by Juanita Torner
You Can't Tell if It's Sharp Until You Cut, by Thomas Pound, with Jerold Funk
Ever the Pioneer, by Dougie Swarth, with John Oster
A Balm in Gilead, by Helen Temple

Missionary
To Grandma with Love, by Kendra Smeer, with her parents
Children from the Gaps, by Helen Temple
Treasures from the Land of El Dorado, by Alberta Donner

Biography
A Song is Born—Haldor Lillenas, by Bill Young

Fiction
The Mystery of the Dunes, by Margaret Howard

Christian Living
Only Dopes Use Drugs, by William Goodman

Letters from Kendra, by Kendra Smeer (adapted for primary by Elizabeth Jones)
Stories from El Dorado, from Treasures from the Land of El Dorado, by Alberta Donner (adapted for primary by Robert Troutman)
The Bearded Island, from Children from the Gaps, by Helen Temple (adapted for primary by Jeannette Wieniecke)

See the 1978-79 missionary slide sets!

Bahamas
Belize
Dominican Republic
Haiti
Lesser Antilles

Baamas
Dominican Republic
Haiti

Caribean Cruise, compiled by Alberta Donner. The packet contains material for 12 complete missionary lessons, 3 posters, 1 map, 20 stencils ready for handwork (both junior and primary materials). A must for every church!

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USE INFORMATION TO INCREASE INSPIRATION!

CHRIST DID!

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1976-77

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VISUAL ART DEPARTMENT, NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

(Continued from page 215)

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VISUAL ART DEPARTMENT, NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

(Continued from page 215)
The Preacher's Wife

Hers is a rare adhesive owned by the Master Creator-Mender. The Master designed her especially for His most delicate projects. They work side by side creating works of art and mending those masterpieces that are broken in the rush of life.

One day Reconciler became curious about herself and her role in the workshop. "Master," she timidly probed, "why do you always make sure I'm not seen when we mend those china teacups? Don't you think it would be good if others saw me and knew what good work I am doing?"

The Master replied, "I place you where you need me the most, I ask you to do your job the best I approve. Isn't that enough reward?"

"O Master, it is! But sometimes I feel so insignificant."

"Reconciler, let me tell you how essential you are to my work. My work of creating and mending could not possibly go on without you. I cannot get in between the broken parts to hold them together except as I place you there to make that bond. Also, the jobs where I use you require total self-involvement. I cannot use my other glue which participate half-heartedly. Finally, I made you strong so that with you at the center, my creations do not fall apart under the stress of everyday use. I don't know what I'd do without you."

God needs all of us, but there is a special group that appears indispensable. Paul writes, "All things are of God, who... hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18). I believe that the ideal pastor's wife is the most strategically placed reconciler. Her main ingredient is self-giving love. She is the glue that holds her husband, her home, and even her church together. In the husband-wife relationship, many times it is the woman who first senses a break or a problem. Filled with self-giving love, she tries to mend that broken relationship or help solve the problem. Such support is essential to the pastor's ministry at the church, because he cannot minister effectively with problems drag-

by

Joanne Orjala

Student, Nazarene Theological Seminary

Pinning essay on the ideal preacher's wife

March-April, 1978

25
The wife is ready to step into those minings of the church together. She is called by God to be there! She also knows the value of security and structure in the lives of her children. The busy work of God's chosen reconciler is more than the bond that holds husband, children, and church together. She is called by God to reconcile all people to Him. She studies to learn the basic skills with which to communicate her faith to an alienated sinner. Practice and self-giving love make her one of the best personal evangelists in the church. But her concern does not end with winning. She helps organize follow-up workers and seeks help for the emotional and physical problems of the new converts. She is a student of the Bible and a student of mankind.

The pastor and his wife are in ministry together. Each has unique and indispensable gifts to bring to God's service. Together they include their children in ministry. As a child I remember distinctly how my parents included us children in every project and outing possible. Of course, there were times when the invitation said, "No children." And we did not go. We knew, though, that Mom was unhappy with the host. The simple act of taking time to plan to include children separates the ideal parent from the average.

The time pays off. In our day when most parents are wondering where their 19-year-old son is, my mother has no fear. Last Sunday Jon brought his friends home for some fellowship after church. Mom discovered a brown paper sack in the refrigerator and asked what it was. Jon answered, "That's a surprise!"

Later on as Mom was turning in for the night, she heard the voice of her son telling the others that they would like to have Communion together. The surprise in the pastoring was the bread and grape juice. My self-giving mother rejoiced in the Lord as she heard the young voices lifted in prayer and thanksgiving to God. Together, she and Dad had helped to prepare the next generation of reconcilers—children in tune with the Great Reconciler.

Prayer for the Morning After

O Lord,
This is the morning after board meeting,
I am impressed. I am depressed.
I am amused. I am sad.
I am glad—but I feel bad
Because my brother brets and hurts,
And cannot relate to a board situation.

Dear God,
Give us some short-term emergency measures
Along with long-term solutions.
Make my mind firm—no futility.
And our soul open to receive constructive criticism.
May the ache I carry with me day and night
Somehow be redemptive.

O God,
May my brother who gave his verdict,
"I'm disgusted and quitting.
Hang in there,
To find solutions.
Which will be satisfactory to all,
And pleasing to you.

--Anonymous

O Lord Jesus,
I have read what has been written so far.
You see the tears on my cheeks.
I hope they are not tears of self-pity.
But the sign of a broken heart.
I do want to be accepted by You.
May faith find fertile soil in brokenness.

O Lord Jesus,
Please forbid that frustration
And panic should overwhelm me.
To drag me down into the pit of despair.
When others panic, help me to see You Standing before Pilate saying, "You have no power over me except as God allows."

O Lord God,
Forgive me for chaffing under what You allow.
Forgive me for being called under the rigors of this assignment.
To panic, I must not.
I shall not—by Your grace.
Help me to build on firm foundations,
Moving steadily ahead, sowing the seed.

Discouraged by neither cloud nor rain,
In Jesus' name,
March--April, 1978

The Preacher's Magazine
The Interpretation of Micah 6:8

“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you But to do justice, and to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?” (NAB).I

I. The Historical Question: Where do we find our text? What was the life set-
ting of Micah?

In what historical form? Micah belongs to the shorter prophetic writings known as the “minor prophets.” The book of Micah is a collection of sayings and reports (of visions, symbolic actions, etc.) originating from the ministry of the prophet, preserved both in written and oral form until arriving at their present arrangement.2

From what historical setting? The ministry of Micah belongs to the last half of the eighth century B.C. (1:1), most of his extant oracles coming from the reign of Hezekiah. Micah stood in the company of the eighth-century prophets—Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, his great contemporary. The new feature in the preaching of these men, shocking to their hearers, was that God “was summoning Israel before his judgment seat, and that he had in fact already pronounced sentence upon her.” Divine wrath was a fact for these men on ‘their contemporaries’ whole way of life, their social and economic attitudes, their political behavior and, in particular, their cultic practices.3 But their proclamation of judgment led to the proclamation of salvation, salvation on the basis of fresh acts of God. Because of God’s judgment the prophet put Israel’s life on the new basis of God’s future salvation; they called not for a new legality, but for a life in relation ship to God, founded not on past performance but on God.4

Micah himself came from Moresheth (1:1); a small village in the hill country of Judah, southwest of Jerusalem. He was probably a free farmer with firsthand knowledge of the grievances he spoke against.5 He prophesied at a time when Judah existed as a vassal state under the increasing encroachment of mighty Assyria, a political fact that informed the eighth-century prophets, announcement of judgment. In Micah’s day both Damascus (Syria) and Samaria (Northern Israel) had fallen and even Judah was overrun in 701 B.C. by Assyrian troops because of Hezekiah’s sedition activity. But Jerusalem was not captured and Hezekiah was left off with fines and some loss of territory.6

Micah’s day saw an influx of material prosperity. But it spawned a selfish materialism in which greedy men diagnosed the cause of their land (2:11, 8:1), corrupt rulers not only did not dispense justice, but they themselves guilty of cruel oppression (3:1-3, 8-11), and even the clergy uttered no rebuke, for its only concern was its living (3:5, 11). Religion became a means of achieving human desires and the age-old sanctions of the divine covenant were shrugged off. For Micah, the most heinous crime of all was the exploitation of the poor on which he fiercely pronounced the judgment of God (2:2).7

In this setting, Micah, linking together the socioeconomic, religious, and national situations, proclaimed judgment on the brink of disaster under the judgment of God. Micah’s controlling theme was the universal God, the covenant who holds all men responsible. On the basis of His covenant righteousness and covenant promises, He is the God who destroys and delivers, the God of judgment and the God of salvation.8 Although it is impossible to know how soon Micah’s oracles were committed to writing and to retrace precisely the process of their collecting and arranging, the final editor appears to stand in “the post exile era before the appearance of the dynamic Ezra and Nehemiah, who set the struggling community on its feet.”9 This means that we understand the book in at least two settings: that of the prophets that Micah sketched above and that of the final editor. It is significant also that the prophecies of Micah functioned as a living tradition in the life of the community in the intervening centuries.

The postexilic editor intended the oracles of Micah to serve as a digest of the collections for those who had returned to their homeland. The ministry of Micah, seen in the light of the subsequent history in which God’s wrath is vividly seen at work, serves as an implicit warning that the path of disobedience leads to national disaster. Having taken to heart the message of judgment, the people can now rightly await the renewal of salvation history, the promise of a divinely guided future (7:8-20). The book was probably issued in its final form for use in Temple worship.10

How does Micah 6:8 function in the book?

Following the heading (1:1), the book of Micah reveals a threshold structure.11 “Penalty and Promise” characterize 1:2—2:13 as oracles of warning (1:2—2:4 are crowned by a short oracle of hope, 2:12-13); “Hope Beyond Affliction” summarizes 3:1—5:15, as oracles of distress and hope concerning Jerusalem and Israel intermingled; and “Grace Triumphant over Sin” covers the final combination of “messages of reproof and lament” (6:1—7:7) with “confident hopes and prayers” (7:8-20). Our text falls in “God’s case against Israel” (6:1-8) which opens the final major section of the book.12 The oracle is stated in vv. 1-4, the defen dant poses self-justifying questions in vv. 6-7, and v. 8 is the prophet’s answer, elaborating on Yahweh’s requirements of His covenant people.13 Here is the prophetic declaration of the demand of God upon His people in the face of past failure, the only foundation of hope for the future.

II. The Recreative Question: What did our text mean to its ancient readers?

How does the writer seek to communi cate his message?

What is the form?14 and structure of the text? In 6:1-6 two quite diverse forms or genres have been used to construct a third. Verses 1-3 represent a legal case in which Yahweh brings a grievance against Israel, and vv. 6-8 are molded on a
cultural entrance liturgy, which consists of "an individual's inquiry as to the conditions of admission to the sanctuary and the馈赠 of the offerings."

"The law court and the sanctuary furnish the dress in which Micah presents a recapitulation of Yahweh's saving work, a call to obedience, the two motifs of the covenantal formulation. This resultant form is "an impressive unity built around the theme of the divine call to covenant, the outworking in human society." Verse 3 is a comprehensive call to covenant obedience expressing in cathectical form: "the repentance of the commandments as the prophets understood them," the expected life of Israel in the light of divine judgment.

The structure of the covenantal formulation as a whole and of its concluding element (v. 8) is now evident:

6:1-5—Yahweh's case against Israel. 
6:1-2—The summons of the people to trial and the call to the witnesses. 
6:3-5—The indictment, Yahweh's recital of His saving acts. 
6:6-7—The defendant's self-justifying questions.

6:8—The prophet's answers, Yahweh's covenant requirements.

6:8a—Introduction: "He has told you; O man, what is good."

6:8b—Catechetical summary definition of the covenant demand.

6:8c—The leading question: "And what does the LORD require of you?"

6:8d—The first requirement: "But to do justice...

6:8e—The second requirement: "To love kindness.

6:8f—The third requirement: "And to walk humbly with your God."

Our text functions in the structure of the covenantal formulation as the prophetic answer to Israel's questioning of vv. 6-7. The people's questions are their repudiation of Yahweh's accusation that they have failed to remember or accept.

precisely all He has done for them (vv. 1-5). Their occasional delinquency has not been so serious as to offend the background of the attack to which they are quite unwarranted. Raised, however, is the basic question about the response to the covenant. In vv. 6-7, Yahweh enumerates the authoritative answer as in sets forth Yahweh's covenant requirements.

Introduction (6a): "He has told you, O man, what is good."

Verse 8 is a comprehensive call to covenant obedience expressing in cathectical form: "the repentance of the commandments as the prophets understood them," the expected life of Israel in the light of divine judgment.

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text of judgment and salvation, Israel's existence as defined by the prophetic re-
interpretation of the ancient covenant in eschatological perspective, is God's re-
quirements for His people in their continuing present.

Required is the revealed "good" of God. As von Rad insists, "there is no de-
mand here for ethics instead of a cult, as if the prophet's desire was to lead men
from one set of laws into another. No, something quite simple is contrasted with
the arduous performance of works which can end only in destruction—a way
along which man can walk before God." This is the way (1) of justice executed in
human affairs and (2) of a commitment to
covenant loyalty in life's relationships,
(3) a way enabled by and the substance of
a careful walk with God. Excluded is any
misunderstanding of the nature and pur-
pose of the covenant in a reliance on form
rather than substance, on a detailed or
evangelistic observance of law or ritual to
the neglect of the heart's obedience to
God fulfilling the totality of the obligations
of the covenant. Yahweh's sovereignty
extends to the whole of one's life and
character.

III. The Life-Response Question: How
does our text apply to contemporary
life?

What do I hear?23,
What do I proclaim? — a sermon: The
Life of Worship.

Introduction

1. God's people were under judgment
for failing of His covenant requirements
(vv. 1-5, 211, 8.1, 3.1-3, 3.9-11).
2. The people, offended by the charge,
asked in exaggerated form the question,
25. See previous issue for suggested subquestions.
Again, care needs to articulate the statement of this in-
dispensable question in the interpretive process.

Not what you own,
But what you give;
Not what you learn,
But how you live;
Not how you talk,
But what you do,
Make up the person
Known as you.

What worship and services does the Yah-
weh really require? (vv. 6-7).

- The prophet answers that the re-
quired worship is life. The life of the re-
vealed covenant will of God for His peo-
ple in v. 8.

The Foundation of the Life of Worship:
"He has told you, O man, what is good.

1. God has revealed to man His good.
   a. In the old covenant, Deut.
   b. In the new covenant, Mark 10:18,

2. God has revealed to man his crea-
turalness (Gen. c. 1-3). The

Fundamentals of the Life of Wor-
ship: "And what does the Lord require
of you? But to do justice, to love kind-
ness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Worship is a life given to justice in
the human community.

2. Worship is a life committed to:
the needs of one's fellowman.

Worship is a life lived in discerning
fellowship with God.

Conclusion

The worship that God requires is that
we live in His presence; discerning what
He truly is in relation to men, and thus
sensitive to the depth of our own need
and the needs of others. It comprehends
no ethic that flows totally from the grace
of God.

God's Abiding Love

God's love can mean so many things.
Because it is so vast.
It gives us hope for future days.
And saves us from the past.

It shines down through the clouds
above,
And brightens saddened hearts,
And brings real joy in serving Him—
that's what His love imports.

His love can mean a peace of mind
While wars around us roar,
And true contentment through His
grace;
His love is evermore.

—Linda Maurice
The Preacher's Magazine

THE STARTING POINT

The Journey of Faith

In Ephesians 2, there is a context that
spells out the journey of faith. It breaks
down into three progressive stages:

1. The journey begins in darkness (sin)
as mentioned in vv. 1-3 (NIV). From the
context, three observations could be
made about this life of sin: its only des-
nation is death; its only companion is
darkness; its only view is despair. What
future is there to a life like that?

2. The journey of faith continues with
discovery. The discovery of freedom—
through Christ—vv. 4-7: discovery of
faith, vv. 8-9; discovery of a future, vv.
10-13; discovery of the family of God,
v. 19; discovery of a foundation—in
Christ—vv. 20-22.

3. The journey of faith leads to dis-
cipleship, v. 10 (TLB).

Discover Your Wealth

In Ephesians 3 there is a gold mine of
God's resources waiting our discovery.
These are projected by the apostle Paul
in the following ways:

The discovery of the riches of God's
grace, v. 16, "out of his glorious riches" (3:8, NIV). This Ephesian letter talks
about God's "unsearchable riches" (3:8).
The dividends of our riches in
Christ, namely, "strength" and "stabi-

ty" in vv. 16-17—"strengthen you with
power through his Spirit" (v. 16), and
steadfastness represented by the words
"dwell," "rooted," and "established" in
v. 17.

3. The delight of our riches in Christ.
We delight in the inexpressible grace
(3:8, "unsearchable riches"); we delight
in the power of his grace for the indi-
vidual and the indwelling Christ (vv. 16-
17).

Challenge of Holy Living

God's call to the church at Ephesus for
Christian living is articulated in Ephes-
ians 5. We see it, first, as a challenge.
"Be imitators of God" (v. 1): "live a life
of love" (v. 2); "live as children of light" (v. 8): "be very careful... how you live" (v. 15). Christian living is presented as a
challenge and an expectation, for in
v. 3 he talks about "God's holy people."
The second aspect of chapter 5 is the
arena of living in which the challenges
are echoed: "divides of darkness" (v. 11) and
evil days" (v. 16). Every contest—be it
spiritual or spatial—has a setting in which
the opposition is real.
The third thought of chapter 5 is the
strategy given to us to become "God's
holy people" (v. 3), and it is seen in the
admonition of v. 18, "be filled with the
Spirit." When life is filled with God, it is
empty of self. So the strategy is to move
into the arena of temptation and in the
fullness of God. For out of the ful-
ness comes resources for life and holy liv-
ing.

Run Life

David A. MacLellan, writing in the
Clergy Journal—using his remarks on
Phil. 1:21, "For me to live is Christ,"
gives four solutions to life and how it can
be run.

1. You can run away from life.
2. You can run along with life.
3. You can run life.
4. You can let Christ run your life.

While it is simply stated, it is some-
thing that men need to hear, ever and
again.

A Look at Ministry

A. J. F. Behrends, writing in a recent
issue of Pulpit Digest, wrote something
 Seeds for Sermons

March—Big Words in Our Vocabulary

March 5

CHARGE!
Text: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing” (2 Tim. 4:1).

The most versatile word in our vocabulary is charge. It is applicable in every area of activity. At sporting events one word that is often yelled is, “Charge! Charge!” The football team is urged to give the second effort by hearing the fans shout “Charge!” Often a rally at the baseball game is kept alive by the people in the stands yelling “Charge!”

In the business world, as you go to the cash register to complete a transaction, the question will be asked, “Cash or charge?”

In the mechanical world, we must make sure that the battery and alternator register charge. A red light comes on to give a warning that something is wrong in the wiring system if there is a change from charge to discharge.

In the legal world, a person who is apprehended by the law will always raise the question, “What is the charge against me?”

In the military world, when an offensive is launched, the final command by the officer in charge of the operation will be, “Charge!”

In the psychological world, one of the questions asked by the counselor will be, “What gives you a charge in life?” The implication is that a key to understanding your personality is found in what turns you on, or gives you a thrill.

March 12

ABILITY
Text: “… if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth” (1 Pet. 4:11).

One of our most important words is ability. Usually this word includes so much by way of talent, skill, and competence that we think it is all-sufficient in itself. Thus the individual with a bountiful supply of ability may think that he has everything it takes to make a go of this business of living. However, ability is not enough. For it is related to a family of words that must be operational as a team. When the words that have a kinship with ability form a cluster, then a person will realize a maximum of efficiency and effectiveness.

 Dependability is the word related to ability. This means that a person is punctual regarding his appointments; responsible regarding his commitments; and faithful in the performance of his duty.

Too often a person with plenty of ability will be negligent in some of these areas. He thinks he has so much talent that he does not need to give attention to these areas of regulation and regularity. However, ability will be weighed in the balances and found wanting unless it is linked to dependability.

March 19

HANDS
Text: “… and there was a man, there which had a withered hand … and he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other” (Mark 3:5).

Our hands are involved in everything we do. There could be no music, no art, no architecture without the use of hands. There could be no writing, no driving of a car, no mechanical work without the use of hands. Thus a person without the use of his hands will be severely handicapped.

Probably no other word is used in so many combinations with other words as hands. Some of the secular use of phrases which combine hand with another word are very expressive. For instance, we often use the phrase “handout.” This may mean that we are expecting someone to give us something, so we are looking for a handout. Or it may mean that we are anxious to give someone something so we are ready to give them a handout.

Another combination is “hands up.” This could apply to a robbery when an order is given, “Hands up!” It may apply to a prisoner of war who is told to come out with both hands up. Or it may apply to a situation where a policeman is searching someone and he is told to keep his hands up.

Another combination is “hands down.” This refers to a person winning a victory without much effort. Another is “hands off.” This is a frank
way of saying that the other person is to stop and work on your affairs. This particular list of the uses involved with hands is sufficient to let you know the many ways we make use of the same.

The spiritual world also makes extensive use of references to the hands. For instance, "hands down" would indicate that we are letting go of everything that would interfere with a vital contact with God. "Hands up" indicates that we are anxious to receive the best the Lord has to offer. "Hands off" would indicate that we are reaching out to be His hands extended and that we are sharing what we have with others. As Christians, we are to be healing hands, lifting hands, serving hands. Above all, we are to walk hand in hand with our Lord.

March 26

GRACE

Text: "... he might show the riches of his grace" (Eph. 2:7).

The most important word in the Christian vocabulary is grace. The greatest exponent of the concept of grace was the apostle Paul. He referred to this term in the salutation of every letter, and in the conclusion of every letter—with frequent use in between. We will define this word in our study today by structuring an acrostic that gives a rich flavor to the word:

G—God's—will be the word that is represented by the G in grace.

R—Resources—will be the word that is represented by the R in grace. He is perfect in His attributes of being all-powerful, of being all-love, of being ever-present, and all-wise. He is all-sufficient in all ways, and has absolute holiness in the quality of His being.

A—Available—will be the word that is represented by the A. Everything that God is and has, He makes available to us. His consuming desire is to share His power, His wisdom, His nature with us. He makes this boundless supply of assets personally accessible and intimately available to all of us. All of these resources are on deposit in the bank of heaven.

C—Claimed—will be the word that is represented by the C in grace. The moment we start exercising our privileges in the Lord, we start drawing on this resource, claiming this limitless supply, and appropriating these assets as our possessions. We claim one aspect of these provisions to receive forgiveness, another to receive salvation, another to sustain us in our daily work with the Lord.

E—Enthusiastically—will be the word that is represented by the E in grace. This means that we accept the resources of the Lord gladly, joyfully, and wholeheartedly. We revel in the mystery, the majesty, and the grandeur of His resources. We are in constant pursuit of something that gives us excitement, enthusiasm, and exuberance for our pilgrimage with the Lord.

G—God's—will be the word that is represented by the G in grace.

Text: "... that all things in heaven and on earth may have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18).

Another phrase that is used often in communicating ideas is "No strings attached." One way this is used is to enter into a contract with another party, and to conclude the list of terms relating to the agreement with the statement: "No strings attached" that would change the terms or be a hidden restriction on what was meant in the agreement. Again, if an individual making a promise wishes to convey the idea that there is nothing going to happen that would cause him to change his mind, he can make this point clear by saying, "No strings attached." Again, when we want to assure someone that he has our complete confidence and loyalty, we can make statements along this line and then clinch the point by saying, "No strings attached."

Our chief concern in living the Christian life is to give Jesus the preeminence in all things. Thus when we express our love, loyalty, and devotion to Him, we should let Him know that He has these things with "no strings attached." The same is true in the area of commitment and dedication to Him. When we refer to our relationship with Him and tell Him that we belong to Him without condition or limitation, it is in order to conclude such a declaration with the words, "No strings attached."

When we want Him to know that He holds the place of top priority in our thoughts and words and activities and that we are under His absolute sway, we can make known the finality of our faithfulness by saying, "No strings attached."

April 18

"IT'S NOT WHAT YOU KNOW, BUT WHO YOU KNOW THAT COUNTS"

Text: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12).

This phrase usually comes up when political maneuvering has brought about a promotion for someone who was not qualified for a position. However, they were given the special attention because they knew someone who was able to use his influence to bring the special advantage to a favorable position. This practice goes under various headings such as: "playing politics," "pulling wires," "pushing favorites," "undercover manipulating." All of these have negative overtones. They imply that competence and ability are bypassed for the sake of giving a person a break just because he knows the right people.

However, this statement is absolutely true and is the very essence of the Christian way of life. The One Person that we must know if we are going to make progress spiritually is Jesus. What we know is of no special merit in this relationship. Intellectualism and rationalism, if accepted just for the sake of exalting self-sufficiency, can become a serious barrier to spiritual development. The same is true in the area of commitment and dedication to Him. When we refer to our relationship with Him and tell Him that we belong to Him without condition or limitation, it is in order to conclude such a declaration with the words, "No strings attached."

When we want Him to know that He holds the place of top priority in our thoughts and words and activities and that we are under His absolute sway, we can make known the finality of our faithfulness by saying, "No strings attached."

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what we know but who we know that we should.

On the other hand, the smartest person in the world cannot rationalize his way into an experience of salvation. His intellectual pride may be a severe handicap to him as he endeavors to be saved. He must become acquainted with the Christ of Calvary for this to happen.

Thus it is not what we know but who we know that counts.

April 23

"PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD"

Text: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

We live in an overpolite society. One of the popular books is designed to inform us on the subject: How to Win Friends and Influence People. Studies of this type accent the theme of "Put your best foot forward," "Master the techniques of making a good impression," "Polish your exterior like the emery wheel of etiquette so you will be admired." The underlying principle involved in this type of thinking is to let people see only the good side and keep up the appearance that makes you socially acceptable.

This whole approach is utterly contradictory to the Christian way of life. Instead of trying to put our best foot forward to prove that we are worthy of salvation, we put our two worst feet backwards as we kneel before the Lord. We do not try to prove how good we are, but we bring up the matter of how terrible we have been. When we repent before the Lord, we acknowledge that we are disgusteds with ourselves, that we are responsible for the wrongdoing that we have engaged in and that we want to turn away from it and live for the Lord. When we confess to Him, we are acknowledging how hopeless, how mixed up, how derailed our lives have been.

The beautiful thing about doing business with the Lord is that He pleads guilty of every count that is against us. He accepts that we turn ourselves over to the mercy of His court. At this point we get a verdict of acquittal that frees us from the penalties of our past record. We do not try to show how innocent we are by putting our best foot forward, but how guilty we are by acknowledging how terrible we are, so we can receive His pardon.

April 30

"LOST IN THE SHUFFLE"

Text: Thou understandest my thought afar off, and art acquainted with my ways (Ps. 139:2-3).

At the present we are doing everything on a massive scale. In the economic field we are engaged in mass production; in the communication field we are informed by the mass media of communication; in the transportation field we are trying to come up with a mass transit system; in the educational field we are striving for mass education; in the psychological field we are concerned about mass hysteria; in the urbanization program we have mass centers of population. All of this accent on mass has caused us to lose sight of the individual. The common feeling of Mr. Common Man is that he is "Lost in the shuffle." He considers that he is nothing, nobody, and nil on the social register.

However, in the spiritual realm no one is lost in the shuffle. The Lord knows us by name, by nature, by need. He is so interested in each person that He knows us by voice. He designs a voice box for each of us so our voice will be different from everybody else's. When we come into His presence, we do not need to inform the Lord how we look. All we need to do is start talking and He knows who is speaking.

The Lord does not deal with us in wholesale lots or carload amounts. He operates on a person-to-person basis. He is so interested in us that He keeps up with the thoughts which we entertain in our minds and the activities in which we participate. His amazing interest in us is not generated because He is curious to find bits of information that might be used as gossiping subjects, but He is interested because we are so important to Him that He wants to keep up to date on everything that is a part of our lives. It is thrilling to know that He who knows us the best loves us the most.

Matthew 3:4—4:23

"Meat" or "Food"? (3:4)

The Greek word is τροφή, which comes from the verb τρέφειν, to nourish or feed. So the basic meaning is nourishment or food. One of the many ways in which the KJV fails to communicate accurately to people of our day is in its constant use of "meat" for food in general.

"Fain" or "Fork"? (3:12)

The word πτεύω means a winnowing fork or shovel. Today in Palestine one can still see a man on a threshing floor using this instrument to throw grain into the air, to let the wind blow the chaff away. The word occurs (in NT) only here and in the parallel passage in Luke 3:17.

"Garner" or "Barn"? (3:12)

The word ἀποθήκη literally means a place where things are put away (from the verb ἀποθηκάζειν). Abbott-Smith says it means "a storehouse, granary" (p. 50). Aside from here and Luke 3:17, the KJV regularly translates this word as "Barn's" (Matt. 6:26; 13:30; 12:18, 24), which is the correct rendering here (NASB, NIV).

"Imprisoned" or "Arrested"? (4:12)

The Greek verb παραδίωκω literally means "gives aside" or "puts away" (from παρά and δίωκειν) and has been put in Latin as "imprison" (NIV) and "had been taken into custody" (NASB) are equally accurate. Since John the Baptist's imprisonment would have immediately followed his arrest, there is no problem here. The important point is that Jesus did not begin His public Galilean ministry until after He had no desire to run in competition with Him.
Upon the sea coast or "By the Lake?" (4:13)

Anyone reading "upon the sea coast" and looking at a map of Palestine would naturally wonder if the expression referred to the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. But such was not the case. Capernaum is on the north shore of the Lake of Galilee, a body of water only 15 miles long and 4 or 7 miles wide.

The Greek here has the adjective parthalainias, "by the sea" (only here in NT). But we do not speak of a small body of water as a "sea."

"A net" (4:18)

Matthew uses a special word for net, amphiblasteron (only here in NT). It comes from the verb amphiblassei (found only in Mark 1:16), which literally means "throw around" and so, "cast a net." Matthew's noun, then, means "a casting net," as distinguished from a drag net (sargos, Matt. 3:4, and only there). A casting net would be used in shallow water.

"Mend" or "Prepare:" (4:21)

Most versions say that James and John were "mending their nets," but IVV has "preparing their nets." Why? The Greek verb here is katarizō. It literally means to make active, "fit" or "sound" or "complete." Thayer suggests for this passage and Mark 1:18, "to mend (what has been broken or rent), to repair."

But he notes that these phrases may also be included under the meaning "to fit out, equip, put in order" (Lexicon, p. 398). Since the word usually carries the broader sense, it was felt that "preparing" should be used, which would include washing the nets and getting them ready for the next night's fishing.

"Preaching" (4:23)

The Greek verb is kerysso, which comes from keryx, "herald." So it means "be a herald, proclaim." It was the function of a herald to make an official proclamation for his king or military general. So the preacher is responsible to proclaim God's Word, not "air" his own ideas.

"Gospel" or "Good News? (4:22)

The Greek word for "gospel," euanghelion, literally means "good news." That is what the gospel is— "the good news" of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and His atoning death for us at Calvary.

That He died for us—that is good news, the best news there is.

We are used to the word "gospel" and most Christians today know that it means "good news." So it is hard to decide between these two translations. The NAB has "gospel," the NIV "good news." These are equally accurate and acceptable.

"Lampe" or "Epileptic? (4:24)

The Greek has the participial form of the verb seismizō (only here and in 17:15). It comes from seismos, "shock," and so literally means "seismographic." But it was the term used for epilepsies, because it was thought that epilepsy was caused by the moon. So the correct translation is "epileptic" (NAB, NASB).

The Obligation of Holiness

By Ross Price

SCRIPTURE: 1 Pet. 1:13-16

INTRODUCTION:

1. Following a paragraph of doctrine, Peter now turns to exhortation.
2. Great doctrines always carry great implications for both conduct and character. Thus he offers practical admonition for the Church as God's New Israel.
3. Because of the provisions of divine grace just previously considered, there are some moral obligations in our Christian calling.
4. Salvation is both experience and ethic. So the election of the Father, the sanctification of the Spirit, and the sprinkled blood of the Son all demand and provide for holiness in man. (Cf. 1 Pet. 1:12)
5. Chosen holiness is the purpose of God for all creation. Peter would have us embrace this divine characteristic, and obey the ancient command (Lev. 11:44).
6. Holiness is the glorious holiness of God's excellence, held as the principle of His own action, and as the standard for His creatures (Wm. N. Clarke, Outline of Christian Theology, p. 81).

I. BASIC TO THIS HOLINESS ARE

A. An understanding mind

1. A girdled thought life

a. "Having girded up the loins of your mind," (Peter uses the aorist middle participle here to concentrate the action into one moment—one principal act.) This makes one ready for energetic action and instant obedience to God. As Oriental, wearing long flowing garments, tucks the dangling folds up under his belt so he will not trip over them, and they will not hinder his ready and active action.

b. The mind of each Christian must be brought into a compact frame, cutting off loose thoughts and idle speculations that lead nowhere and only hamper obedience.

2. So it is time for modern Christians to wear the girdle of truth.

a. God commands us to love Him with our minds.

b. The Church must liberate people from superstition and error.

c. Sternness that only entertain but do not instruct are, at best, superficial.

d. The modern cry for less theology is not in harmony with the demand of the gospel.

We should seek to become and remain "intelligently sanctified," and let nothing else us of our peace, unity, and sound judgment.

B. A sober spirit

1. Spiritual sobriety must exclude spiritual drunkenness.

a. Both Peter and Paul contrast these two states, Paul in Eph. 5:18 and Peter in Acts 2:15 if.

b. Spiritual sobriety guards men against the intoxication with false views that are doctrinally and morally capricious.

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2. This grace enables one to walk circumspectly without rashness or foolishness. So Peter commands it of his readers (1 Pet. 5:8, 9).

a. Let us remember that the Holy Spirit is not the author of confusion.

b. There is no substitute for spiritual entity.

C. A hopeful heart

1. This kind of heart is "perfectly hopeful about the possibilities of grace." (1 Pet. 5:10)

"Hope for the grace being brought to you in the revelation of Jesus Christ."

a. Peter himself is the great Apostle of Hope. Paul joins him in declaring that this hope has no reason or occasion to, blush for shame or disappointment. (Rom. 5:5)

b. Christ is not a disappointment.

US us perfectly hope in the grace revealed to us in Him.

2. The hope of Christians must not become mixed up with foolish and fanciful speculations of the gospels of a temporal Messianic Kingdom, and thus surrender the true reign of Christ's grace in the heart.

The Christian's hope is greater than the modern speculative "future-seeking."

II. THE TWO PHASES OF THIS HOLINESS (v. 14-16)

A. Holiness means separation

1. God's people are possessed and indwelt by a spirit of obedience.

a. Obedience is one of the cardinal virtues of the New Testament Christian.

b. Those of us who live in this modern age of rebellion need to take note of this.

2. "Children of obedience" are "children of light." They are opposites of the "sons of disobedience" or the "rebellious house" (Ezekiel's term for false professors of sonship to God, Cf. Ezek. 3:22-27, Jer. 5:31).

3. Their entire life-style is different.

a. They are not conforming to the former ignorant passions of Gentile animalism.

b. "Not fashioning yourselves" means not schemed after the mode of life in the preconversion state.

c. "Not conforming yourselves to the habits which formerly ruled you in your ignorance."

d. The sanctified give no sanction
to desire that are other than what God allows (cf. 1 John 2:16).

God's desire is never holy. Sindarkens the understanding with a cloud of prejudices and false notions. Licentious living arises not only from lust, but from ignorance of true values and the things that matter most.

So Peter insists there must be no relapse into the former loath habits with which they were bound as pagans.

B. Holiness means sharing the divine nature "Holier like God." "Be holy yourselves in all your conduct."

1. This involves "cleansing"
   a. There is no impurity in deity.
   b. God is holy because He is separate from all uncleanness.
   c. Man must have goodness in the inner part of his being.
   d. What's in the heart is certain to appear in the life.

2. This involves conduct.
   a. "Do ye also become (as a result of divine grace) holy in every manner of life.
      (The apostle's life and the imperfection which denote here a action that is to take place immediately.)
   b. In all your turning to and fro, or walking up and down (cf. the Greek term, anástrophe).
   c. Here is the divine summons to holy behavior.
   d. Holiness after the divine pattern of God is both the chief requirement and the goal of our vocation.

3. This involves a radical operation of divine grace.
   a. Our only hope is in the grace revealed to us in Christ as His purpose for His people (Heb. 13:12).
   b. Our sanctification is an act of divine grace. God's grace seeks not only to wash us from lawlessness, but also to purify a people for His own possession who are "zealots" for good works (cf. Titus 2:14).

III. The Stipulation and the Promise (v. 16). Because it is written, "Ye shall be holy; for I am holy."

A. The demand of Scripture is holiness

It is written: Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26. Here God's people are to make distinction between clean and unclean. They are to be severed from uncleanness so that God can call them "mine," a people for His own possession.

B. The promise of the Scripture is holiness

God says, "I will cleanse you ... and ye shall be clean." (Cf. Ezek. 36:25-27; also Is. 11:19-20.) So Peter's text here is future and yet used as an imperative. God promises to make His people holy. He therefore has the right to demand it of them.

CONCLUSION:
1. Holiness is the perfect realization of the hope for mankind unveiled in the transforming grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. The "girding up" and the "hailing" are concentrated into action realized in one moment—once principal act—as the apostle tense was to indicate (so say the commentators).
3. The choice is ours, but the demand is God's. Nothing less could be His purpose for mankind.

4. Chosen holiness will be the characteristic of all who populate heaven (Rev. 21:27). And it is the obligation of all who hear God's call on earth.

NOT BY BREAD ALONE

By C. D. Hansen*

Scripture: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

Introduction: The devil tempted Jesus by pointing to some small stones that looked like bread and said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread" (Matt. 4:3). There is a temptation to the devil with the Scripture. The Christian, also, must resist the devil with God's Word.

The Christian today is confronted by some physical needs.

1. The Bread of Plenty (Luke 12:19)

Satan's lie to men of every clime is that they should enjoy life with the pleasures of sin, for they have plenty of time to repent.

2. The Bread of Unbelief (2 Thess. 1:8-9)

A teacher was telling her class about the miracles of the Bible, and how many of them were myths, but good for illustrating faith. "For example," she said, "we know that when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, there was only six inches of water." From the back of the class came the response, "Praise God for the miracle!" Rather annoyed, the teacher asked, "What miracle?" The Lord must have drowned the whole Egyptian army in just six inches of water," explained the student.

3. The Bread of Malice (Eph. 5:3)

Malice infects the mind, body, and soul.

Malice or another cause more hurt to the person carrying the grudge, than to the one being misguided.

4. The Bread of Pride (2 Cor. 5:12, 14)

Pride is a dishonor. It can be overcome. Pride always comes before a fall. Someone has penned these words:

What's true, renounce your pride.

Self-praise and boasting over succors;
Thus will you glorify the Lord,
And by His grace Christ's name adorn.

5. Bread of Neglect (Heb. 2:3)

We often neglect others, until it hits us personally. We can neglect our own salvation until it is too late.

6. Bread of Alibis

Some time ago a newspaper carried a story about Mrs. Lila Craig, age 81, who had not missed church for 20 years. With tongue in cheek, the writer asked, "What's wrong with Mrs. Craig?"

"Doesn't Mrs. Craig ever have company on Sunday? Doesn't she ever go anywhere on Saturday night so that she gets up tired on Sunday morning? Doesn't she ever have headaches, colds, or nervous spells, tired feelings, poor breakfasts, sudden trips out of the city? Doesn't she ever go on Sunday picnics, family reunions, or doesn't she sleep late on Sunday morning? Doesn't she ever have any friends who invite her to go out of town on a weekend trip? Doesn't it ever rain or snow on Sunday?"

Doesn't she ever become angry at the minister? Doesn't she have a radio or TV set so she can stay home and hear some good service? Doesn't Mrs. Craig ever get her feelings hurt by someone at the church?

Alibis—what needs them?

7. The Bread of Partiality (James 2:1)

The Lord condemns the favoring of rich or influential individuals. The Lord is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).

Conclusion: Yielding to temptation is sin. Man does not live by the bread of the world—but by the Bread of God. Jesus is the Bread that can help man overcome the temptation he faces every day. It is Christ in me, that helps me be the overcomer. St. Patrick expressed it in these words attributed to him:

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

The Garden Experience

Scripture: Gen. 3:22-24

I. What Was Lost in the Garden of Eden?

A. Right relationship with God
B. State of holiness
C. Life of heart and spirit

II. What Was Gained in the Garden of Gethsemane?

A. Confession of weakness
B. Surrender of will
C. Crucified with Christ

III. What Was Won in the Garden of the Tombs?

A. Resurrection with Jesus
B. Restoration in His image
C. Newness of life

—RALPH W. MORGANE

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43
I Will Never Walk Alone

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 23

I will never walk alone again, for the Lord is Mine. 1is is—

I. MY DIVINE COMPANION
   "The Lord is my shepherd."

II. MY DIVINE PROVIDER
   "I shall not want" (v. 1)
   "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures" (v. 2)

III. MY DIVINE LEADER
   "He leadeth me beside the still waters" (v. 2)

IV. MY DIVINE COMFORTER
   "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (v. 4).

V. MY DIVINE ASSURANCE—through Him
   "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (v. 6).

—The late Rev. W. R. ROBINSON, Regina, Saskatchewan, a few weeks before his death with a terminal cancer.

Ideas That Work

Picture Presentation

Nothing thrills new parents more than showing real interest in their baby. One church capitalized upon this and showed it's care and concern by taking a Polaroid picture of each new baby in the nursery. It was given to the parents in an envelope which read: "It was a pleasure to have your new baby in our nursery. Do hurry back to worship with us real soon. We have nursery facilities provided for infants and children up to three years of age during all our services. We invite you to leave your children with us!"

—Betty B. ROBERTSON

Pastor's Party

Within three months after my husband and I arrived at our new pastorate, we had a "Pastor's Party" for the boys and girls in our church and neighborhood. It was held in our backyard. Puppets were used to tell a simple Bible story. There was also singing, organized games, and refreshments. Registration slips were made for each child so we had names, addresses, and responses to church attendance.

It provided a unique opportunity for the pastor to get acquainted with the children. It was also the initial contact for a brother and sister who started coming to Sunday school. In the years which have followed, they have been responsible for bringing seven other children from the neighborhood to our church.

The pastor could continue to have parties once a quarter, or a community club could be started in the church neighborhood for a more concentrated effort.

—Betty B. ROBERTSON

Show and Tell

On the first Sunday night of each month, following the evening service, we have what we call "Show and Tell." It is a time of light refreshments in our fellowship hall, and one of our members shows pictures of a vacation trip or some other pictures of interest. We have found this to be a time of real Christian fellowship, sharing, and getting better acquainted—even for those who have known each other for years.

This idea has worked wonders for our Sunday night attendance, and not only on "Show and Tell" night.

—Donald K. AULT, JR.

DO YOU KNOW

You cannot say the Lord's prayer, and even once say "I"?
You cannot pray the Lord's prayer, and even once say "my."
You can pray the Lord's prayer, and not pray for another.
For you ask for daily bread, you must include your brother!
For others are included in each and every plea.
From the beginning to the end of it, it does not once say "thou".

—Selected

Do not worry about tomorrow; God is already there.

—Selected

What's causing so much disharmony among the nations is the fact that some want to beat the big drum, few are willing to face the music, and none will play second fiddle.

—Selected

WHAT IS CHARITY?

It's SILENCE when your words would hurt.
It's PATIENCE when your neighbor's cup overflows.
It's DEAFNESS when the scandal flows.
It's THOUGHTFULNESS when the scandal flows.
It's PROMPTNESS when storm duty calls.
It's COURAGE when misfortune falls.

Helpful Discipline

A loose wire gives out no musical note, but fasten the ends, and the piano, the harp, or the violin is born.
Free steam drives no machine, but harness and confine it with piston and turbine, and you have the great world of machinery made possible. The unhampered river drives no dynamo, but damp it up and you get power sufficient to light a great city.
So our lives must be disciplined, and our thoughts be kept under control if we are to be of any real service in the world.

—Selected

THE SOUL WINNER'S PRAYER

Lord, give to me Thy love for souls.
For lost and wandering sheep.
That I may see the multitudes
And weep as Thou dost weep.
Help me to see the tragic plight
Of souls far off in sin;
Help me to love, to pray and go
To bring the wand'ring in.

From off the altar to Thy heart
Take thou some flaming coal,
Then touch my life and give me, Lord,
A heart that's hot for souls.
A fire of love, O Flame Divine,
Make Thy abode in me.
Burn in my heart, burn forever;
Till I burn out for Thee.

—Selected

A little girl, walking with her father on a starry night, absorbed in contemplation of the skies, on being asked what she was thinking, replied: "I was thinking that if the wrong side of heaven is so glorious, what must the right side be!"

—Selected

The pioneers who blazed trails now have descendants who burn up the roads.

BULLETIN BARREL

My neighbor is a fiddler—
With a little mental quiver—
He jogs five miles with gusto—
Then drives five blocks to work.

Lord, when the night is long and dark—
And my way but a shrouded lane—
Let love and faith plant lights of hope—
Like porch lambs in the rain.

—Ira K. Fowler

The Preacher's Magazine

March—April, 1976
Christian Personal Ethics
By Carl F. H. Henry (Baker Book House, 1957. 316 pp., $7.95)
Baker's edition of C. F. H. Henry's Christian Personal Ethics is a welcome
addition to their library of paperbacks. Though it represents a mass of material
on ethical alternatives with a strong af-
fection of Henry's interpretation of the
Christian ethic, it is not "easy reading." It is rather for the resource material of a
minister or student. It is a welcome al-
ternative to situation ethics and its in-
cipient antinomianism.
Oscar F. Reed

The Message of Jonah:
A Theological Commentary
By Terence Fretheim (Augsburg Publishing
House, 1977. 144 pp., $4.95)
Professor Fretheim has rendered a valu-
able service to pastors and evange-
lists who wish to preach from Jonah. This
is no mere "this Hebrew word doesn't
mean what you think it does" approach.
Rather, true to the subsite, Fretheim has
explored the theological significance of
the book of Jonah.
Fretheim is a believer with courage to
believe that tough, serious questions
about text, history, the fish, the worm, or
anything else can never diminish the sav-
ing truth of Jonah. Ministries will es-
specially appreciate the honest effort to
consider one's 20th-century responsibil-
ity for mission in light of the message of a
biblical book. All in all, this is a provoca-
tive and useful book to be highly recom-
mended.
Charles D. Bessell

The New Bible Dictionary
Organizing editor: J. D. Douglas (Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1.244 pp., cloth,
$14.95)
Now in its 11th printing, this won-
erful A to Z storehouse of biblical know-
edge gives easy access to background
information on the Bible and its teach-
ings. Subjects range from the people and
places, the geography, history, customs,
and culture of the Bible lands and times
to clear studies of the great doctrines of
the Christian faith. Introductions to each
book of the Bible are given. Included in
the 2,300 items are 237 specially prepared
drawings, 17 beautiful 4-color maps, 41
brilliant reproductions, and 33 outline
maps and plans.

Plain Talks on Romans
By M. C. Gutske (Zondervan, 1976.
$3.95)
This is another of the growing material
on biblical theology which in turn and
toes the point. Dr. Gutske has written 69
briefs from Romans. It ought to be valu-
able for both devotional material and midweek service help. It is an addition
to his 11 other books from the New Testa-
ment of the same character.

Preachers' Exchange

The Parables He Told
By David Redding (Harper & Row Pub-
linters, 1971. pp., paper, $4.95)
An outstanding resource for preaching.
Well written, incisive, well researched.
Excellent illustrative material. Every
pastor ought to read it. The print is dif-
cult to read, but the content is well
worth the effort. Originally copyrighted
James Mundenford

The Biblical Authority
236 pp., paperback, $4.95)
I highly recommend this book to pas-
tors. It reviews the "battle over inerran-
cy" with scholarly insight, acknowledging
that many evangelicals use the scripture
to "bolster up unbiased behaviour behind
a cloak of impeccable orthodoxy." On
the other hand, it exposes the tendency
of both liberals and neoorthodoxy to make
private interpretation.
This is one of the best I have read on
the subject. It concludes that the Bible is
our infallible authority in all that has to
do with salvation, faith, and life. It then
encourages us to "study it even more thor-
oughly, obey it ever more humbly, and share it ever more gladly.

Millard Reed

Preparating for Platform and Pulpit
By John E. Baird (Baker Book House,
1977. pp., paper, $3.95)
An excellent text for would-be preach-
ers. This author is thorough, practical,
and well-organized in the subject matter
presented. Especially helpful: "Projects
and Assignments" section at end of each
chapter; practical points such as the con-
tent presented on pages 60 and 61.
The easy-to-grasp format of the text makes it
enjoyable reading as well as instructive.
Sound advice throughout; no bizarre
recommendations from the author. Fan-
tastic appendix provided.

J. Grant Swann, Jr.
March—April, 1978

FOR SALE: I set of Barnes' Notes (27
vols.), good condition, $35.00; 1 set
Handful of Purpose (12 vols.), $10.00.
Harry W. Glassy, 300 N. McLean St.,
Kittanning, PA 16201. Phone: (412) 548
7507.

FOR SALE: Permanently bound volumes
of Preachers' Magazine for 1858 through
1969. Also loose-leaf bound for 1969
through 1975. Ralph Thompson, 1114
Linwood Dr., Carter Lake, IA 51110.


WANTED: Used copies of *Praise and Worship* hymnals (fair condition) for home mission church (donation or reasonable price). Henrietta Griffith, Kentucky Mount Bible Institute, Van Cleave, KY 41385. Phone: (606) 666-7867.

WANTED: Seminary student desires a complete set of Mendell Taylor's *Fifty Years of Nazarene Missions* (3 vols.). Also back issues of *Christianity Today* from oldest issues to 1974. Send list and prices to Steve Blankenship, 1304 E. 83rd St., Apt. 2, Kansas City, MO 64131.


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- Re: Whatever Happened to 'Church Music'? A church musician writes a sequel to the August editorial.
- Preaching in the Atomic Age: He who through past centuries kept the doors of power closed is now allowing them to swing wide.
- Thou Shalt Not Covet Thy Neighbour's Church: Nor his TV ministry.
- The Multiple Staff: Far from being a 20th-century phenomenon, the multiple staff is of New Testament origin.

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