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NEW BOOKS

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE
DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY, 1982-83

ALL THESE STRANGE PEOPLE
WHERE IS SAMARIA?
BAROMETER OF FAITHFULNESS
PASTORAL CLINIC
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND PRAYER
THE SERMON WORKSHOP

Charging Ministries for Changing Times

"Behold I will do a new thing!"
(Isaiah 43:19)
To get at the core of God at His greatest, one must get into the core of himself at his least, for no one can know God who has not first known himself. Go to the depths of the soul, the secret place of the Most High, to the roots, to the heights, for all that God can do is focused there.

Master Eckhart
CHANGE AGENT! WHO? ME?

D’you just hate it when the sermon or article begins with the imminence, “We live in a time of change.” Talk about flailing away at the obvious. Nothing will induce yawns and disgust any quicker. Another reason we hate to hear about change is because we hate change itself. Once we get life conversed and almost hog-tied, someone changes the rules and we have to start over without “passing Go” and without collecting $200. Our penchant for repeating satisfying behaviors makes us resist change like we resist Mormon missionaries. But like it or not, unless we want to become mere ambulatory antiquities, we must face and cope creatively with change. This is particularly true of preachers. If we transform the changing times into a game of dodgeball, our sermons may become mumbled streams and our ministry nothing more than relic dusting.

Flaming evangelist Bill Lane knows that change is necessary. Bill was mostly unemployed until he made a change. But since he changed one thing at a time, we say he gets enough calls for three evangelists. Bill’s best hellfire-and-brimstone preaching fell flat until he got himself an asbestos suit like the Hollywood stunt men wear. His stunt is literally to set himself on fire as he reaches the climax of his sermon on hell.

With this change business really warmed up. Bill made the sale. What? So what is the point of this? Everything old seem to pass away to a new outfit, in good hands. Bill the fire-eater, in the heyday of the “green weenie” award from the Wittenberg Door. When Susan has put a lot of energy on this for a church personality and the Wesleyan-Family magazine, the evang- els know that counselor and personal piety in the lives of converts. The ministerial image, says, “That of the personable, friendly, compas-

sionate, and competent pastor who is evangelist, counselor, and prophetic voice against personal vices” (Search, Summer 1981, p. 6). The other half of the job to which the Bible and the urgings of the times call pastors to do is with the pastor as change agent in relation to social structures that hinder the coming of the Kingdom and oppress people. It is not enough to be concerned with personal piety in the lives of converts. The ministerial image says, “That of the personable, friendly, compassionate, and competent pastor who is evangelist, counselor, and prophetic voice against personal vices” (Search, Summer 1981, p. 6).

Most articles on the church’s social responsibility usually turn into a shriek at about this point. The author, with pen akimbo and neck tensed against demands, orders us to dig a hole, demands that we make obscene gestures at the City Council calls us covetous to human needs and for social justice: the time has come for us to catch up. Perhaps Paul Simmons is right when he counsels the Evangelical Press Association that sometimes it may be more important to attend a Board of Aldermen meeting than to attend a prayer service.

Some years ago an evang- e should be heard. But it also illustrates another customs which help produce the _ piritual problems danger. It is possible to become so out of balance Much of the fortune of th

Dental freedom of speech, “giving for a better world” has more appeal. True freedom is to share all the chains our neighbors wear, and, with heart and hand, to be Earnest to make others free.

—James Russell Lowell

A related caution has to do with the fact that once we have the knaves of social vices, we just may find that pushing for public piety is a lot easier than praying for personal piety. But that is not all this? The plea is for a balanced ministry. Evang-

elical and social action are decently and opposite points of view. We must minister in Christ’s name and power to the whole person in the context of these times. We must vigorously pro-

claim personal salvation, and at the same time, accept what Susan B. Anthony told us years ago. “Give your heaviest raps on the head to every nobi who does injustice to human beings for the crime of color or sex.”

Woo! Woo! Woo! The Preacher’s Magazine won the 1982 “Award of Excellence” in the denominational periodical cate-

ory given by the Evangelical Press Association! This is a notable award and came the first year we entered the competition. The editor received the plaque and, to judge by the look on her face, it was a salute to Susan Downs, the assistant editor, and to the Nazarene Publishing House staff, particularly Dick Fields, Grandall Vai, Bonnie Latlin, and Bill Lakey.

The Evangelical Press Association has more than 300 member publishers and periodicals with a combined readership of over 20,000,000. We pride the recognition the EPA has given us.

Good Hands All-State is not the only outfit-in-good-hands. Much of the fortune of the Preacher’s Magazine has been in the “good hands” of Assistant Editor Susan Downs for the last three years. Susan’s talent has a natural, gentle decay, and she has assisted and guided the magazine in a way that has meant much and chal-

lenging tasks that have found their way to her desk. Susan has put a lot of energy into identifying the editors of the “new” Preacher’s Magazine. This issue is the last one which will be written by Susan’s “good hands,” Susan. Her three sons, David, are moving to Spring-

field, Mass., where David will pastor the First Church of the Nazarene. By the time this is read the Downs will be enjoying?? their first New England winter. 

mental hygiene centers, prayer placards, and the Bloodmobile.
Dear Editor:

Three cheers for Wil Spalte's article "What Do You Make of Baptism?" in the Summer 1982 issue of the Preacher's Magazine. He is certainly correct in calling it a "neglected sacrament," and his suggestions on how to make it more meaningful are good ones.

However, I was disappointed in one glaring omission. In acknowledging the cost of baptistries and their absence in many smaller churches, and in decrying the fact that "a church without a baptistry must hold baptisms in a nearby river or borrow someone else's baptistry on a Sunday afternoon," he failed to mention a perfectly obvious solution - I am speaking of Spalte's strange silence regarding sprinkling and pouring as valid modes of baptism.

If pastors would utilize these modes, and instruct their people as to their availability, there is no church anywhere, however small, whose baptism would need to be "a neglected sacrament." Sprinkling and pouring have always been valid options in the Wesleyan tradition. They are even named as such in Article XVIII in the Church of the Nazarene's Articles of Faith. Wesleyans and Free Methodists also allow a choice as to mode, although not putting it into their doctrinal statements.

Thus the neglect of baptism in the Church of the Nazarene, which Spalte so clearly describes, is rooted in the failure to adhere to the church's own stated doctrines.

Respectfully,

Rob L. Staples
Nazarene Theological Seminary

Dear Mr. Tracy:

Please let me congratulate you on the excellent work you are doing in the editing of the Preacher's Magazine. As an avid reader of the publication for many years, I am especially appreciative of its present format and content.

Sincerely,

Helen F. Rothwell
Bethany, Oklahoma

Dear Wes:

We have just received and reviewed the June/July/August issue of the Preacher's Magazine. You are to be complimented on the excellent work on the magazine. We have appreciated both the "theme" issues and now this "non-theme" issue format.

In reviewing the material, we note that under the section "The Minister's Mate," an article by Wendell Garrison has been reprinted from Church Administration titled "I Would Rather Have a Housing Allowance." As you are aware, in recent years this has been one of those hotly debated issues that has been debated around the church and, in particular, in certain parts of the country. We were asked several years ago to publicize information on both the pros and the cons of the cash housing allowance situation. A copy of the memo Church Management titled "Housing for Your Pastor: Parsonage or Housing Allowance" is enclosed for your review. As you can see, it continues to reflect the position taken by Dr. Stowe, in his book The Ministry of Shepherding, that for the most part the typical or "average" Nazarene church should continue to provide a parsonage for its ministry.

As recently as last year, we conducted an informal attitude survey on this question among district superintendents serving districts in the United States. Nearly all the district superintendents responded and nearly unanimously continued to endorse the position that the typical Nazarene church should maintain a parsonage rather than sell the parsonage and pay a cash housing allowance. Obviously, we all recognize there are peculiar and unique situations where a large church with a stable financial base can provide a cash housing allowance without a great financial impact on the future of that congregation's ability to secure a minister.

With the current economic conditions, including the depressed housing markets and the inability of several of our ministers to sell homes they have purchased, the issue is not nearly as much of a concern as it has been in past years. In several recent telephone conversations, we have noticed a recognition that the Nazarene minister typically cannot not count on any "equity return" on a housing investment since the tenure would be too short to pay anything except interest on the mortgage. At best, the minister may hope for some appreciation, but for the time being, that is a figment of yesterday's economy and not today's reality.

We continue to distribute this information at each of our Church Board Financial Seminars around the country and present this position to our church boards through various other means. We are concerned that the appearance of this particular article in the Preacher's Magazine will raise questions as to whether the "official" position of the church has changed and is shifting in the direction of a cash housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage. Obviously, that would not be the intent of the use of the article, however, sometimes perceptions speak very loudly to our ministers.

We felt you would want to be aware of the position we were taking and should you receive inquiries regarding the article or information, we will be happy to supply either you or the individual inquiring with the frame or additional information they might request.

Sincerely,

Dean Wassell
Director, Pensions and Benefits Services

Dear Wes:

Just a brief note to express my deep appreciation for your editorial in the March/April/May 1983 issue of the Preacher's Magazine. I thought it most appropriate and fitting tribute to our mutual friend, Dr. Willard Taylor, I could not have imagined, or rather I should say I cannot imagine, a better way to give tribute to him than to quote, as you have, significant statements from his writings. I want to thank you for doing that. It is very inspiring and uplifting to read those words and I think you made a very good choice in the quotations which you gave.

Just to tell you also that I appreciate the work you're doing in the Preacher's Magazine. Its quality continues to increase and improve and I just want to say, 'Thanks, and keep up the good work.'

Sincerely,

Hal Cauthorn
Traverse Nazarene College

Dear Sir:

I must confess I was shocked at your article in the December/January/February 1981-82 issue, "The Future Isn't What She Used To Be." When I wonder what will appear next? I cannot accuse your (10,000 years) when man first learned about plants. Gen. 1:29, [sic].

This is the most disturbing article I have seen in a Preacher's Magazine [sic] reading for over 45 years.

I'm no "Kook," Wes; but I think you missed it. Sincerely and prayerfully,

George M. Lile
Shawnee, Oklahoma

Dear Sir:

I just read the article on "Women's Ministries Meet Needs" and felt it was the most comprehen- sive article on the subject that I have seen.

Do you have more information that is available? Perhaps a book on the subject? I would be interested in buying anything you have on the subject.

Thanks,

Frances Skiles
Modesto, California

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DOES GOD REALLY EXPECT US TO WITNESS TO ALL THESE STRANGE PEOPLE?

by Jerry L. Appleby
Ethnic Urban Coordinator
Church of the Nazarene

TODAY, the Church of Jesus Christ is at a crossroads, facing the major task of the change necessary to meet the ethnic challenge of the 80's. Refugees, migration, and immigration are occurring at an unprecedented rate, creating an unprecedented demand for church leaders today. At issue are not only the complex changes given to us but also the tremendous opportunities afforded.

Helen Temple said in a recent prayer, "Lord, we have not always done as well as we should in taking the gospel to them. Help us to do a much better job, now that they are coming to us.

THE CHALLENGE

The complexity of our present communities is mind-boggling. There are actually four groups in the ethnic circles with which we must deal. First, there are cultural groups that are American and speak English. These would include the American Blacks and the Native American-North American Indians, etc. It is understood that many Native Americans still speak their native tongues. These people are definitely American but have both a culture and a worship style that often warrants separate churches.

Second, there are the immigrants. The U.S. Department of Immigration legally admits more than 100,000 people into the United States each year.

Third, there are undocumented persons ("illegal aliens"). The United States Census Bureau has estimated that up to 6 million such persons currently live in the United States.

Fourth, make up the fourth group. Hundreds of thousands of people have been allowed to enter the United States under provisions of the Refugee Act of 1980. Many have signed a paper listing to one such man recently who told a story of a man in leaving his native land.

He started out with his wife and four children. He was the only one that made it alive. Some starved to death, and others were killed in their escape attempt. He said they were treated no better than the homeless.

His adjustment to a new land was made more difficult by the scarcity of English, and the psychological adjustments necessary in his losses. Presently, few churches are equipped to handle such problems.

We have a large number of new languages spoken within communities. Most long-time inhabitants never learned these languages until recently. Often  we are called on to minister to people from countries in which our church has no missionary experience. As an example, we now have a growing number of God's people from various Nazarene churches across the United States and Canada. Few Nazarene American Canadians know the English language or culture. Therefore, materials are difficult to obtain and training for new converts who wish to be ministers is limited. This is only one example of the complexity of the challenge facing us right now.

The ethnic challenge is a generalized one-ethnic groups are everywhere. The ethnic complexity of Florida, Texas, and California is much publicized. However, few communities escape the influx of both documented and undocumented immigrants. The challenge is immense. Add to this the gross neglect of resident cultural groups, the church faces a task like never before known.

There has been a slowdown in "white flight." Economic conditions have made it impossible for people to move every time someone different moves into their neighborhood. Racially mixed neighborhoods are very, very common. Most larger and smaller communities are a mixture of many different racial groups. Many people now look upon this as "normal." However, it does create a complex situation for many churches. It is difficult for a church to single out one racial group among which they will minister. If they are going to reach their community, they must recognize the complexity of it.

In addition money is unavailable for new church buildings. The availability of land in which to build is increasingly difficult because they cannot afford to rent, buy, or build more land. Few churches are equipped to handle such problems.

We must not rest in the problems. We must decide: Does God want us to win these ethnic and cultural groups in America? Of course, He does! Therefore, He must have solutions available for us if we will seek them. Each community must meet its own particular needs in a unique way. Some possible general steps toward solutions to your community's problem might be found in the following:

STEPS TOWARD SOLUTIONS

1. It is important to identify the need in a community. Identification of ethnic breakdown can be partially be identified through the 1980 census. However, statistics may have changed drastically in the last two years because of the migration, immigration, and refugee influx. One should also check the Refugee Bureau, schools, churches, and other social activity centers. All of this will aid us in identifying the ethnic and cultural makeup of a community.

2. Materials can be ordered to help us in the organizational phase. For example, many helpful materials are available through the Nazarene Publishing House. These include helps on organizing ethnic congregations and forming committees necessary to put a plan to impact a community. Other helpful books to assist a church or person facing a changing community are listed on page 11.

3. Form a Mission Action Committee. A Mission Action Committee is a group of interested individuals who would like to see the church meet the needs of its changing community. They particularly need to discuss possible solutions, using the guidelines from such publications as the Mission Action Committee Extension Kit available through the Nazarene Publishing House. Of course, other denominations have similar materials to offer.

4. Offer yourself and your church to government agencies to teach English as a second language or host refugee families.

5. Recruit church people or college students who are fluent in the language of the people to be contacted. They will be effective ministers with the people in your vicinity who might not know English or prefer to have Bible lessons in their own language.

Establish a Sunday School class or a weekday Bible class in that language with possible thoughts of forming this into a congregation in the future.

6. Tie into some programs of the general church. An example of this is the Nazarene emphasis in the summer of 1980 for work in migrant camps. There is a migrant activity in the designated area during the summer. A helpful program has been developed to meet the needs of these people and offer a chance for missionary service in your community.

7. A clear teaching of God's ownership of all church facilities will help to make members want to share them with other groups. It is a dedication of those buildings for usefulness to reaching out to others that will result in God's blessing.

8. Prayer must be the means of contact with the church program from beginning to end. To reach the tremendous challenge we have before us, our prayer life is the necessary miracle. Pray that God would parallel the magnitude of the miracles that Jesus performed while He was on earth. Miracles today are dependent on prayer. These are miracles of relationships, miracles of facilities, and miracles of a breakthrough in cultural barriers. Without the prayers and the resulting miracles, very little can be done.

Many churches are very small. It is impossible for them to offer all the necessary options for meeting the challenge (through the guidance of the Holy Spirit). We can make the gospel available to all languages and cultures of North America.
Changing Ministries for Changing Communities

by Joseph N. Holloway

Lynwood, California

Pastors working in cross-cultural situations are frustrated. We have let our new field of harvest sneak upon us without preparation for effective evangelism, fellowship, and worship. Thus, initially, we suffer negative responses which develop into negative tendencies within our congregations toward whatever ethnic group we are working with.

The most common way this expression itself is in the loss of membership, finances, personnel, and purpose of mission. This leads to a flagellation of both our local churches and pastors. We need some direction in order that the church may become a facilitator instead of the anesthetizer.

We must not yield to the temptation to give up on cross-cultural ministry. It is easy to become prejudiced by our early failure in the church, and walk away from it. On the other hand, those intoxicated by their love for cross-cultural ministry may not be able to see why the church should bother with any other type of ministry.

As usual, the pastor is the catalyst for progress. It is easy for the pastor who is active within a community to be the ethical trendsetter of his parish. He sees his church as one that should reflect his community in order to be effective. He begins feeling the frustration and challenge concerning others who cannot understand his sermon, counseling, or even an invitation to church.

Children are easily gathered by the Sunday School buses, but "those" kids become the target of accusation (rightly or wrongly) when the building is damaged, classes disturbed, and worship interrupted. The only thing that is heard is debate about what to do with "them." Often the finger can be pointed at the pastor, for it is his efforts which brought "them." It may go so far as to request the pastor to stop bringing "them." On the other hand, the pastor and the congregation may be willing to try. Yet, the effort only brings damage to property, unproductive visitation with parents, and the feeling that if any adults do start visiting it will not work because they have a church that is following its traditional patterns of worship, program, and evangelism.

This program, when put together with the other traditions of the culture we seek to reach, becomes another burden. Is it not a wonder that many attempts by pastors and congregations either fail by the wayside or become a continual struggle for existence?

It is at this time that overwhelming guilt of failure takes upon permanent residence within our hearts.

How do we deal with these issues? How can a pastor and congregation sidestep these frustrations in order to have more effective ministry? There is no package of preapproved do-it-yourself gimmicks that can solve the problems while you sleep. But here are some ideas that may help.

Keep a Pioneer Mind-set

Keep the fact that you are pioneering your work constantly in your thinking, planning, and reflection. No two situations are the same. Thus, you cannot expect yours to be like some other operation. Pioneers do not think of success as instant numerical growth. Cross-cultural situations state success in terms of long-range goals.

Do not expect an overwhelming influx of new people, even if you hire an ethnic associate. Such an expectation is naive, and will lead to great frustration sooner or later—usually sooner. Remember you are dealing with a new set of norms in regard to life-styles. Therefore, do not expect every convert to begin to look, act, or think like you exactly. The good news of heart holiness is such that it will speak within the culture, rather than change your particular cultural pattern. Do not expect to be free of the burdens by hiring an ethnic pastor. This practice of having the ethnic congregation in the same facility with their own pastor may help out but it has its own problems.

Pray and Plan

The most effective preparation that can be done is prayer. Praying for patience, mercy, long-suffering, joy, peace, love, goodness, gentleness, and self-control will go a long way in terms of keeping your ministry anointed. Before you ever start cross-cultural ministry, be sure of God's calling in both the congregation and the pastor. Often there is need for at least two years of preparing the minds and hearts before the foot can go to work.

Evaluate Resources

The way to start any sensible approach to ministry is to analyze what you have to work with. Many factors are to be considered.

1. Assess the potential program to see if it can be more of a need minister.
2. Do your people have a sense of mission toward the changing community? Do your visions develop as a singular dream of the pastor, or do the laitymen share this vision?
3. Consider the congregation's past experiences, if any, in cross-cultural ministry.
4. How are other churches in your area approaching this ministry? With what success?
5. What resources can you get to train your people to effectively work in this ministry?
6. What do you need to do to make cross-cultural ministry a reconciling tool, instead of trying to reconcile the reasons for ministry?

What is Success?

The cross-cultural church measures its effectiveness in how well the program is functioning. Thus, if the program is not running as smoothly as a Rolls Royce—or at least a Toyota—everyone gets a failure complex. Normally the approach to counteract this problem is to work harder yourself (suffering for the sake of the message). But one must search for anyone who will fill the positions that are yet untouched. Soon the new high-pressureed recruits become
The success of this type of programing is dependent upon the laity's willingness to become learners as well as teachers.

Frustrated, in most cases there is no one to train them. Most of the results are slow in coming. Some people think of themselves as suffering a kind of guilt feelings rather than spiritual gifts, yet we program becomes such a difficulty that many a good worker is discouraged, especially if they have the idea that only a picture perfect operation will succeed.

Relationships Overwhelm Program
The program we carry must come as an outgrowth of our relationships with our people. We would like to think the people, like Sunday School, missionary meetings, etc., are major relationships to our traditional programs. This assumption says that all we have to do is to carry on doing things. Yet, all too often this is not the way it works out. The key to programming in our congregations is to understand that programs are presented to make some people want to do more things, and all the rest of our laity ahead, and our work is done. We all do program well. We speak often of the international relations of Jesus, and this is exactly where we shall find our model for ministry. How is it that the people who can put themselves in the shoes of another in order to get together to work through issues in their life? This is the same attitude we must have in order to relate to those of other cultures, and to find the answers we need to reach souls lost amidst the complexities of the city.

We all know of no better text than the Bible to teach these people to do this. We must do it. Professionally, the pastor or other laymen can take courses in colleges or seminars in the field of missiology, sociolgy, and psychology. They will give a foundation to build upon, and many of our laymen are ready and willing to take the time, if pastors will encourage it. Such studies, along with solid study of the Bible, will give occasion for dialog that otherwise might not occur. We also have the opportunity for dialog. This dynamic is also available in the fellowship of the congregation.

Let the laity take the initiative in making their program an exciting one to others through experiences and reflections. In addition, bring people experienced in multicultural ministry to talk to your congregations. Visit other churches of another culture, and seek opportunities that may be available to you face-to-face with the needs. Take groups out for a visiting program which has been time to see someone else and to develop new relationships with the same frustrations. I believe that the church is the body of Christ and the church has a different set of roles for personal interaction. You may find it useful to see the same issues in the same way you do, you will find yourself frustrated.

Cross-cultural ministry becomes a new challenge to put your life under the authority of the Holy Spirit, who transcends traditions, assumptions, and expectations of each culture.

Get People Involved in Decisions
Getting the people involved with the decision-making process is easy enough if you are willing to adjust to the real needs of the community beforehand. One of the problems of churches which are in changing communities is that they tend to shelter themselves from the events going on about them. You will have to take extensive amounts of time to share one-on-one with your laity in order that they may become sensitive to the needs of those who normally would be alien to them. You must struggle through the prejudicial questions and preconceived ideas of most every person, both of your congregation and of those in the community.

Often you will find that the church will progress faster than the community in terms of acceptance of cross-cultural experiences. Therefore, if these terms for ministry are put in place together, you will find little success in building the bridge for relationships. As you can tell, this ministry takes time.

Look Out for "Used-los"
The majority of early cross-cultural experiences that a congregation will have are negative. This is because of the lack of role, modelization, and terms of ministry that qualify as success. After initial efforts the normal congregation is likely to return to more satisfying patterns. This shift in direction is local to a phenomenon we have termed the "used-up". We all suffer in this ministry, but it must continue to carry on more devastating effects in cross-cultural ministry. There is the "used-up" on a set of subconscious principles that are virtually unknown to the person. What should we do?

Our remedy is one that the Lord has demonstrated already. We speak often of the international relations of Jesus, and this is exactly where we shall find our model for ministry. How is it that some people who can put themselves in the shoes of another in order to get together to work through issues in their life? This is the same attitude we must have in order to relate to those of other cultures, and to find the answers we need to reach souls lost amidst the complexities of the city.

What I am proposing is that we change the way we understand things, or forget our feelings, or have carried with us from childhood. Rather, I would that all Christians grow become people who understand and thus become to become "all things to all men in order that some might be saved."

Talk to Each Other
John 15:15 told that he received wisdom from much counsel. When cross-cultural programs are developed, many alternatives come into being. Also, there is something to say about the supportive factor when we see someone else solve problems with the same frustrations. I believe that the church is the body of Christ and the church has a different set of roles for personal interaction. You may find it useful to see the same issues in the same way you do, you will find yourself frustrated. Are you ready for the challenge? The success of this type of programing is dependent upon the laity's willingness to become learners as well as teachers.

Best Books on Ethnic Ministries

Most of these books are available from your publishing institution.
ETHNIC EVANGELISM
An Ethnic Pastor's Viewpoint
Greg Halebian

A church growth principle which perhaps is the most controversial and yet so crucial to the task of planting ethnic churches, is this: individuals need not cross linguistic, social, class, or racial barriers in order to become Christians. This is based on, and is in line with, cross-cultural communication theories as well as on the conviction that the apostles laid no such demands on the early converts (see Acts 10). According to this theory, the biblical demands such as conviction for sin, confession, repentance, and sanctification are deemed enough hurdles for the convert to cross, and the communicator of the gospel need not add new and artificial ones to the list.

My purpose here is not to discuss the theological implications of this principle. Many have dealt with that problem already. My intention is rather to examine, within the short space allotted, the implications of this principle from the perspective of a member of a minority group, and to present suggestive ideas for the Anglic church leaders who wish to use their church as a base for winning the minorities.

This principle implies: (1) THE ANGLO CHURCH cannot and should not assume it can carry an effective evangelistic ministry to the minorities by inviting them to its own church services. Such efforts are doomed to fail from the start because the covert message involved in this approach to the target people is this: “Since you are living in America you must worship God, the way Americans do and go to God through our channels.” But there are members of ethnic groups who are enjoying church services with the Anglos. What is my response to that? Two things: first, these people are the exceptions and not the norm; secondly, I am addressing my comments to leaders who are interested in new converts.

You may find many minorities who enjoy and attend Anglo churches, but my guess is that you will find very few individuals of a minority group actually converted in Anglo church settings.

The second implication of the principle is this: (2) THE ANGLO CHURCH must look to indigenous leaders. From the outset a Christian member of the target group must be located and invited to pastor. Whether this person is a layman or a trained minister will depend on the cultural pattern of the group in question. There are, of course, exceptions to this suggestion. In situations where no indigenous leadership is available, the Anglo church can provide a local person. I know an Anglo pastor who is ministering to a large group of Jews here and doing an excellent job; however, he is an exception. As a general rule, it is better to have a less-qualified indigenous person than a well-trained Anglo pastoring an ethnic church.

It goes without saying that there are not only the guideline for the missions but also the solutions for planting churches. This situation is so unique and complex that it requires a particular set of answers.

Where Is Samaria?

by Sylvester Ballard*

There was a young Black man who returned to the United States from fighting in a war. Before reaching his home state of Mississippi, he prayed a prayer and received an unusual answer. He said, “Lord, I thank You for being with me in England, Germany, and Spain. Now, Lord, please give me a safe trip across the ocean to New York and all the way home to Mississippi. Please be with me as I go home.” The Lord said, “I have been with you in England and I cared for you in Germany, and I will protect you in New York, but I’m not going to Mississippi.”

What I think about the missionary program of the Church of the Nazarene, I sometimes feel as if I heard an answer from God like that of the Black man in this story. We feel that God will be with us to spread the gospel in South America, Mexico, Africa, and India but that He will not really help us in certain parts of our own country. Many times I have heard preachers speaking from Acts 1:8 saying that we find out that the disciples “entered into a village.”

In Jerusalem representatives home and we should start witnessing there and move out to the rest of the world. Very little is said about the possibility of what Judea and Samaria could represent in relation to our mission today.

WHERE WAS SAMARIA IN THE TIME OF CHRIST?

If a person looks at a map of Palestine he sees that Jerusalem, the place where Jesus told His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit, is located in Judaea. In other words, Jesus was telling His disciples to start witnessing in the city and then move out from there. However, Jesus specifically named Samaria. He could have said, “Go throughout the land, east, west, north, and south.” Jesus did not say that. He said “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

It is important to note that the disciples were not very interested in Samaria. Earlier in Jesus’ ministry we find out that the disciples entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. The Samaritans “did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.” And
when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, thou knowest that these people are trying to kill us. Yes, but do not be afraid of being killed for the sake of God’s kingdom, because you are not alone in this; the angels of God always guard those who belong to Him.”

For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” (Luke 9:52-56).

It was not that the Samaritans did not like Jesus or His disciples but rather they did not like Jews. The Jews were a people that were divided and were at war with each other. This a major social and religious issue. It made it very clear before He left. The disciples were to go and make disciples of all nations, to baptize them, and to teach them to obey everything that He had commanded them. This command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father.” (Acts 1:8, NIV).

We have a responsibility to minister to our Samaritans. This is a must for Spirit-filled Christians. We must witness to the poor, the blacks, and other minority groups in our country.

WHO WILL GO TO SAMARIA?

In Acts we read that Philip went down to a Samaritan’s city and proclaimed the gospel. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he performed they believed and were baptized (Acts 8:6, 12). I believe with all my heart that God will not allow us to fail in Samaria if we go there. God opened a door for Philip and He will open a door for us. However, Philip did not see the power of God at work until he went to his Samaria. God is still looking for some Philip’s who will go and be instruments for Him. He loves all people: the ones across town, the ones in the suburbs as well as the in the inner city. The Lord is looking for a person who is willing to say, “Here I am to send me” (Isaiah 69:3).

We started mission work in Africa in the early 1900s. However, the mission work among blacks in the United States (especially in the southern states) did not start until the late 1940s. Why was it easier to go to Africa rather than just across the railroad tracks?

Generally, while White Christians have had no dealings with them, the present attitude of having anything to do with the Jews became a tradition that was strong during the Roman occupation. In many cities in our country there are people who are left out of the main mission of the church for similar traditional reasons.

WHERE IS SAMARIA TODAY?

Some Christians believe that we have a Samaria in the mission of the Church of the Nazarenes. That is to say, an area of the country, a type of people that we do not have any dealings with. Many people that we have avoided for traditional reasons. They are the poor, Black Americans and other minorities. The Jews are just across the railroad track; they are close by, but we have our reasons not to take them. The other that many of the Black Americans are prejudiced against us. They are not very clean—just look at their neighborhood. Many of them are involved with crime. Check with the police department and you will find that there are many other places that the gospel is needed, so we will go somewhere else.” The list could go on.

Why are these good reasons? If the Jews were asked to give reasons for their conduct, they could have given an excellent list. However, Christ was not interested in avoiding bad situations. He was interested in changing them into good ones through the gospel. He knew that someone would come along and change this situation. He was challenging them, even as Elihu did!”? But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” (Luke 9:52-56).

Peter Wagner: I think the most important thing in my early Christian ministry was spending 16 years in Bolivia as a missionary along with my family. We worked in eastern Bolivia in general, missionary work, in evangelism, and church planting. Our second term was spent teaching in the Bible Institute. Our third term in Samaria, and to the rest of the world. In Bolivia we returned to the U.S., accepting an invitation to teach at the Fuller Seminary, in a school of World Mission. Simultaneously I became a vice-president of Fuller Evangelistic Association, which is a group which implements the mission of the church that we work out in the more academic situation.

Tracy: I want to ask you some questions, from the Wesleyan view in general, and the Nazarene view in particular. As you see the Church of the Nazarene and other Wesleyan groups, what do we have for going to work that would make us effective witnesses for church growth principles? Wagner: Wesley thought that there is a very realistic facing of the human responsibility in carrying out God’s will on earth. Certainly, that is a very important dimension of church growth. We need to recognize that the Lord of the harvest is the Lord and that He produces the harvest. As Paul says, “I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase.” He gives the increase. He ripens the field, and yet He does not reap the harvest. He asks us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers. I feel that scripturally it is legitimate to say that the world will not be evangelized unless we evangelize it. I am not trying to say that this is done by the power of God, but it is also done by human agents whom God uses. One does not have to argue that point with Wesleyans.

Especially, what should be done in connection with the Nazarene emphasis on church growth? Wagner: Well, I think there are some problems in the Church of the Nazarenes. I think that one thing that we have is that we have an emphasis on church growth in a very difficult area. The rate of growth of the Church of the Nazarene has been declining in recent years. The church is still growing, but the declining growth rate of the 70s constitutes a danger sign, which I understand leadership is taking very seriously. I feel that one thing we can speak of, on a denomination-wide basis, is that the number of new church starts has not been keeping up with past patterns. I think this is probably the major reason for that decline in growth rates, and I think that by picking up new church starts, that this can fairly easily be overcome.

Now we realize that while we start new churches we also lose some in disorganized churches every year. I think that Nazarens have to be a little more ruthless about disorganizing churches than they have been. We think they need to recognize that some churches, due to circumstances usually beyond control of the local church, are suffering terminal...
illnesses. In many cases, if proper action is taken, these churches can, so to speak, die with dignity. This needs to be recognized and I think that Nazarenes have been feeling guilty about certain local situations that they need not feel guilty about at all.

Tracy: What other counsel do you have for us?

Wagner: Somehow the system has to be reorganized. That is the homogeneous unit principle. There is a relationship between pastoral longevity and church growth to a point. Churches that change pastors every three or four years won't grow. Your "super churches" tend to have "lifetime" pastors. Those pastors do not expect to leave their churches for the rest of their lives. If not lifetime tenure, then something in the order of 12 to 15 years would be a good target. That's better than it is now.

Tracy: I think that 3 years and 1 month is our average tenure.

Wagner: That's too bad because Lyle Schaller teaches us that the effectiveness of a minister usually begins between years four and six.

Tracy: It seems to me, from my knowledge of the church growth materials, that probably the most controversial thing is the homogeneous unit concept. I think nothing in the whole movement has been more misunderstood. In fact, I know that in some places it has really been used to sanction a flight to the suburbs for the individual, without realizing that it's a distortion of the homogeneous unit principle. Would you just tell us generally it is you think we need to know about the homogeneous unit principle?

Wagner: Yes. Unfortunately, some people have taken the homogeneous unit principle and used it contrary to God's will. The homogeneous unit principle is just a tool. It is not a doctrine or a dogma. It has to be a useful instrument for world evangelization. Like any tool, people can take it and use it for good or for bad. For example, a tool from South Africa taped Dr. Ralph Winters' address at the Lausanne Conference and played it out to the group in those cultures. We must plan and build our churches to be and not country by country, but between those two extremes, people by people, church by church. Many different peoples, or as we call them, homogeneous units. We calculate roughly that there are about 5,000 gypsies in Los Angeles. These are the gypsies who have moved into the city not long, and about 5,000 gypsies about everywhere in America. Some have no existence of the people at all. We have no gypsies, and the work goes to the people. They feel common affinity.

Look at the Hispanics. Now, Hispanics are very prominent in America, but among Hispanics, Croats, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans form separate groupings and they feel common affinities for their own subgroup. Cubans do not feel very much affinity toward Mexicans; they feel much more toward Cubans. Again, third and fourth generation Mexicans living in America form a kind of people different from those who have recently immigrated, in particular the second and third generation.

All these groups have different needs. They can't be expected to reach each other. They must be evangelized, each group in their own terms. So this is more or less what we mean by the application of the principle.

Tracy: What, somewhere, then, is E-2 evangelism to have occurred. Let's assume the gypsy community in Los Angeles has no evangelical witness. Should we feel responsible for an E-2 effort here?

Wagner: Yes, definitely. The Great Commission tells us that we must preach the gospel to every creature. We must preach it, but we must preach it effectively. Now, if my church is an upper-middle-class Anglo-American church, this means that we must extend the gypsy movement into the kind of an outreach service we have, we have a no-win situation. We will be confusing the methodology with an E-2 situation. We would have to move in and either learn the language or identify with the gypsies in some way or preach to them and then allow them to form their own church. Now, happily, God has blessed and there already is a gypsy church of 300 members. And it's a church quite different from, let's say, the Church of the Nazarene. For example, in their Communion service they serve a large glass of real wine. They do a lot of things we don't.

Tracy: Our typical mistake in an E-2 situation is to be involved in a church or in there and run everything and then teach them how to do everything our way. And we've made that mistake again and again, and it is not a wise thing to do. And we've been saying that that's suffering from ethnicitus, that's the kicking and screaming kind of thing. The second option is to change the philosophy of ministry of the church so it becomes a mission, and so in a sense the church uses its human and finite abilities to dialectically understand the needs of the people who have moved into the church neighborhood. But the church will die, but at its death, it will pour out its own lifeblood to help the people socially. In case like this, not even the few dozen people that have moved in is that one church is something different to different cultures. There is another racial group begins to move in. Their accent, their appearance, their language, their interests, their way of life, it is a different church. That's what's starting at that point. Further it is simply a strategizing tool for evangelism.

Wagner: Can't you give a formal definition of what we mean by a homogeneous unit principle?

Tracy: Yes, I'd like that.

Wagner: This is a Lausanne Committee definition. "A people is a significantly large sociological group of individuals who feel a common affinity to one another." There are many groups of people who feel a very, very strong affinity for certain others. For example, we recently discovered in Los Angeles that there are 5,000 gypsies. Now those 5,000 gypsies constitute a homogeneous unit. They know each other, they have communications networks; they have their own social clubs, they have their own marriage patterns, they have their own styles of dress, and that in itself means that we need to evangelize gypsies in a way that we would not evangelize, let's say, Jews or Mexicans. It's a different homogeneous unit. Now, this is not always determined just by national origins. Gypsies don't even know where they come from, but they all speak the gypsy language.

Look at the Hispanics. Now, Hispanics are very prominent in America, but among Hispanics, Croats, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans form separate groupings and they feel common affinities for their own subgroup. Cubans do not feel very much affinity toward Mexicans; they feel much more toward Cubans. Again, third and fourth generation...
MEASURING RECEPTIVITY AND RESISTANCE TO CHURCH GROWTH

by Lyle E. Schaller
 Parish Consultant
 Yokefield Institute, Richmond, Indiana

I really have only one additional question; I would like to explore with you," declared Sam Wilson, chairman of the public committee of the 67-year-old Westminster Church. "That is church growth. We're down to 80 or 90 at worship on Sunday morning. We used to average well over 150 and our sanctuary will seat 352 including the choir. I believe God is calling our church to grow, and I want to be sure our next minister is interested in church growth.

The seven members of this committee had been interviewing the Rev. David Morrison for nearly an hour when Sam asked his question. It was increasing, obviously, that the other members of the committee were favorably impressed with David. Unless something unexpected developed, it appeared they were prepared to recommend the congregation extend a call to Rev. Morrison to become their next pastor.

"I'm very committed to the concept of church growth," replied David. "The congregation I am now serving had 142 members when I arrived six years ago. We now have 236. During those six years we received an average of nearly 20 members a year, keeping up on church growth literature. I think my record demonstrates that I have an active interest in church growth."

"Your record is one of the reasons I voted to invite you to come for an interview," affirmed Joan Clayton. "I'm with Sam. Our church has to reverse this decline of recent years and begin to grow. When I read your dossier, I decided maybe you're the minister we've been looking for."

"One of the reasons I feel God may be leading me to come to Westminster is that I am very much interested in church growth," continued David. "I believe the Lord has given me some special talents in that area and I think Westminster has the potential for significant growth in the years just ahead. That's why I accepted your invitation to come for an interview."

"Well, I guess that just about clinches it," concluded Sam Wilson. "Does anyone else have any questions?"

"Yes, I have one," said David to the surprise of Sam, who had not even thought about the candidate's right to ask questions during the interview.

"What's the degree of receptivity among the folks here at Westminster to the idea of church growth? Some congregations this size show a lot of resistance to church growth. What's the picture here?"

"I don't know how in the world you could measure that," replied Sam. "But I think we can assure you of our sincerity. We all want this church to grow!

David raised an extremely significant question, but he did not receive a satisfactory response. Do the members of Westminster truly want to see that congregation reverse the numerical decline of recent years and become a larger congregation? What questions could David Morrison have raised that might have been more accurate assessment of the receptivity, or the resistance, to church growth?

While they're far from infallible, there are some questions David might have asked to shed light on the degree of receptivity or resistance to numerical growth at Westminster. If he had raised these questions, David might have raised objections including any potential benefits and drawbacks on which to assess what he had heard during that interview.

"What is the median tenure of today's members? One-half of today's members joined before a certain date and one-half joined since that date. What is the date?"

In the long-established congregation, that date is often a predictor of the church's receptivity to new members. If the date is less than 7 years ago, it is probably a congregation with a high degree of receptivity to new people. If the date is 12 or 15 years ago, the level of receptivity and resistance to new people is probably near average. If, however,
“If more than one-half of the members joined the church less than seven years ago, the congregation is probably highly receptive to new people.”

more than one-half of today’s members have been members of the church less than seven years. It often suggests a deterioration of the ability to reach, attract, and assimilate new members. At Westminster, the median tenure date was 18 years ago. That might have warned David not to take Sam Wilson’s assurances too literally.

2. WHAT IS THE AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP? The second best predictor of an openness to church growth often is the average attendance at Sunday worship. The larger the average attendance, the greater the receptivity of that congregation to new members. The smaller the number, the greater the resistance. A 700-member congregation must receive 50 to 80 new members annually to remain on a plateau. Such a large number usually means the congregation has at least an average level of competence in reaching, attracting, and assimilating new members. The regular “practice” of reaching and including new people tends to increase, or at least maintain, that level of attendance. By contrast, the congregation receiving only 2, 3, or 4 “outsiders” annually has little chance to practice and improve its skills in effective evangelism.

Many smaller churches tend to be closed fellowship groups that do not make room for newcomers. This natural, institutional resistance to growth in the small church is one reason a third of all Protestant congregations in America are growing, the average for all American churches is 45 people in attendance at the Sunday morning worship service.

Perhaps of even greater significance is the tendency for many congregations to find and remain at a plateau in size. There are three different size congregations that tend to display considerable resistance to growth. The most numerous are the thousands of small churches that average less than 35 at worship. The second largest group is composed of churches that average 40 to 85 at worship and remain on that plateau for decades after decade. Many once were larger, but gradually, attendance declined and eventually leveled off on this plateau. Westminster Church fits into such a category. The third plateau is the congregation averaging 200 at worship and served by a full-time pastor, but no other program staff. This size has sometimes been a barrier to additional program staff assistance; it is to grow and sustain that growth, but too often the members believe they have saturated the territory. Sometimes the attendance climbs up to 220 or so, but a few years later it is back to the 175 to 200 plateau.

3. WHAT HAS BEEN THE TREND? A third and closely related factor that suggests the likelihood of resistance to church growth is the trend of average attendance at Sunday morning worship for the past dozen years. If the attendance is up, that often means receptivity. If it is down, or the same year after year, that often suggests a significant degree of resistance.

4. HOW MANY NEWCOMERS? How many new members have been received annually for each of the past 10 years? In a long-established congregation, do over 60% of the new members received by baptism, confirmation, profession of faith, restoration, and transfer. If that figure is less than 12% of the membership in urban churches, it usually suggests considerable resistance. Remember, this is the gross not the net figure for new members being received. For our purposes, this often is a more revealing figure than the annual net increase.

5. WHO ARE THE POLICYMAKERS? The attendance yardstick for measuring receptivity or resistance to church growth is the membership circle. First, it is necessary to discover the median tenure of the membership as described earlier. At Westminster Church this was 16 years. Second, it is necessary to discover the median tenure of the leaders who function as policymakers. This is only a fraction of the total number of workers and leaders and is restricted to those who influence, either officially or unofficially, the direction of the church. At Westminster Church one-half of the 16 members who fit into this category had been members at Westminster for more than 21 years.

The basic generalization is that when the median tenure of the policymakers is longer than that of the membership, that usually indicates resistance to the assimilation of new people and resistance to acquiring people who are not like themselves. When the median tenure of the policymakers is less than that of the entire membership, that often suggests a receptivity to new members.

6. HOW OLD IS THE INSTITUTION? New churches are more likely to be growing than are long-established congregations. But growth has been around 200 roles. When the median tenure of the policymakers is longer than that of the entire membership, that often suggests a receptivity to new members.

Second, the longer the congregation has been in existence, and especially if it has been in existence for 50 or more years, the better the receptivity to church growth. That is one reason David Morrison should have noted that Westminster Church is 67 years old.

7. STAFFING. While it is more obvious in the larger congregations, one of the key variables in measuring the potential for growth is the quantity of program staff. This is especially significant in churches celebrating their 50th birthday. Most of these long-established churches are staffed either for existing or a plateau in size. They simply do not have the number of staff members necessary for growth. A simple rule of thumb is, for example, the long-established congregation averaging 200 at worship needs two full-time professional staff members (or the equivalent in part-time staff) to remain on a plateau in size and three to grow, in addition to part-time music, clerical, secretarial, and custodial staff. It should also be noted that most of the thousands and thousands of congregations that share a pastor with other churches do not have the number of staff members necessary for growth.

In a smaller congregation, such as Westminster Church, the staffing question first will focus on the addition of secretarial help. Would Sam Wilson be willing to add a half-time church secretary if and when the average attendance climbs back up to 135? Would the church be willing to take on a second full-time minister, perhaps in the area of evangelism or church growth, when attendance first reached 200? These are two questions David Morrison could have asked to test the receptivity or resistance to church growth.

8. HOW IS THE GROUP LIFE? One of the most complex, but also one of the most revealing questions, is “what is the group life of the congregation.” This question has four facets.

First, how many organized face-to-face adult groups are there? Usually will have six or seven adult groups (choirs, classes, and other organizations) per 100 people.

Second, how many of these organized face-to-face groups are growing in recent years? Declining churches usually reveal a decrease in the number of these adult groups.

Third, when were the last two, three, or four groups started? When did groups usually create a new face-to-face adult group? It is not only the number of adult groups that the ratio usually grows seven, eight, or more new groups are organized annually.

Fourth, and most subjective of all, is what is the nature of these groups? Are they vital and vigorous groups that members look forward to attending? Or are they struggling groups that many of its members attend largely out of a sense of duty?

9. CUT BACK OR EXPAND? Closely related to the above question is another significant issue that closely reflects receptivity to church growth... the “cut back/expansion syndrome.”

Which has been the basic pattern in recent years to cut back on the number of groups or to cut back on the budget or to increase it? To cut back on paid staff or to gradually increase it as the congregation grows? To cut back from one to one, or to add an alternative service Thursday night or Saturday morning, or to add a choir or expand the number? To merge two adult classes or to create a new one? To reduce the number of staff members or to hire a new one? To organize a new one for younger women? To cut back on events and activities directed at non-members, or to increase them?

10. WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES? Another revealing question David might have asked the committee in determining their receptivity—and the church’s—to growth could have been, “What do you folks believe should be the top priority of your new minister?”

First, what is your priority? He might have heard responses such as, “Visit every member’s home at least once,” or “Call on all the shut-ins as soon as possible,” or “Help us get our budget balanced,” or “Work with the youth,” or “Rebuild the Sunday School,” or “Try to heal the split in the church over the last minister’s departure,” or “The first priority should be on sermon preparation and getting ready to lead worship—that is the primary reason we exist,” or “See what can be done to win back the young people who are all normal, predictable, and common demands on the time and energy of a newly arrived minister. They also reflect a resistance to church growth.

Or, David might have heard responses such as “Getting our evangelism committee organized and functioning,” or “Call on as many prospects as possible,” or “Organize a new class or group,” or “Organize a new adult class in the Sunday School,” or “Help the women’s organization grow,” or “Get a new director for the youth or recreation programs,” or “Cultivate the people in the community who are not coming to church. These responses suggest a much greater receptivity toward church growth.

11. WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF SELF-ESTEEM? Last, but not least, there are small churches that typically raise questions for assessing the receptivity or resistance to church growth, is the level of congregational self-esteem. If the congregation often produces a pervasive selfdoubt, if the church leaders are consumed with perpetuating patterns to exist. The first, and more widespread, is for the congregation to see itself as small, weak, diminishing, unattractive, frustrated, powerless, and with a limited future. This low self-image often produces a pervasive sense of policies and decisions that inhibit church growth.

By contrast, some congregations view the future with hope, they are conscious of their strengths, resources, and gifts. They see themselves as vehicles for God’s Kingdom, as a significant issue that clearly reflects receptivity to church growth... the “cut back/expansion syndrome.”
and they are convinced God is at work in His Church and, therefore, all things are possible. This strong self-image usually produces a favorable climate for growth.

While it is not always easy to determine the level of self-esteem, frequently this is a very significant indicator of the receptivity or resistance to church growth.

"WHAT IF..." What if David Morrison concludes there is a low degree of receptivity to church growth at Westminster—or even worse, a high level of resistance—but that God is urging him to accept the call to become the next pastor of this 67-year-old congregation? What should he do? How should he arrange the priorities on his time and energy in that first year or two? Can he change the situation?

If David does find himself in this congregation where there is considerable institutional resistance to church growth, he might consider a three-part strategy designed to change the organizational context and increase the receptivity to church growth. The first step would be to organize a serious study of the New Testament that would include 60 to 150 leaders from Westminster. These members would covenant together to engage in a 30- to 40-hour study of the New Testament definition of the nature of the worshipping congregation and of its evangelistic role. It probably would be wise for David to serve as the leader of that study group and, it should be organized within the first several months after his arrival.

The second step would be to encourage the participation of at least 20 leaders at Westminster in a series of seminars on church growth. In these events church leaders would be exposed to some of the basic principles of church growth. It usually is more effective if this learning experience is led by an outside authority and includes persons from other congregations. Members get a chance to hear "growth" from an outside source, and the experience shared by other churches helps members see they're not the only church concerned with growth.

The third step would be to plan a congregation-wide event that would enable all of the members at Westminster to be introduced to church growth principles. This might be a planning weekend seminar on church growth at Westminster or it might be in the form of two or three evening programs in which a series of church growth films were shown and discussed.

This three-part strategy is an effective response, when the assessment of the congregational response to church growth reveals a high degree of resistance. The beginning pattern is to reduce that resistance and begin building a new consciousness for growth.

From Church Growth America, May-June, 1983. Used by permission.

THE RIGHT TIME FOR TIME OFF
by Larry Haffey
Pastor, Montrey Church of the Nazarene, Lubbock, Texas

Two days before Christmas, I was exhausted, discouraged with work, taking my frustrations out on the members, and causing friction in my family. December had been a positive note, when our church experienced an inspiring revival. But, after that first week—one member arrested for child abuse, a death, a couple of fractured marriages, illness, and the special demands of the Christmas season had pushed me to my limit.

The outlook for the immediate time after Christmas didn't look any easier. I could see endless lists of labor and more frustration looming. Each day in the month, I had considered a few days off after Christmas or, maybe the possibility of going on a short trip. Now that seemed impossible.

One morning during my time of meditation, my outlook concerning the time off changed. I knew what I must do in order to follow the Lord's guidance. The day after Christmas our family packed and the next morning left for a five-day vacation.

During that five days away, I began to visualize my church in a whole new perspective. Problems looked more soluble, people more lovable, and I had a newfound enthusiasm for the year ahead.

During the revival which I mentioned earlier, the evangelist said that he found no sympathy in his heart for ministers who weary complain about weeks of effort without time off. I agreed, for in a previous career as an engineer, I learned that costly mistakes were often made by men who had worked too long at a task. Very few businesses involved in critical work permit an employee to work long weeks with no day off.

In this enlightened age, we have come to understand more about the limits of the human body, hence there has been encouragement for us to take periods of rest. But we ministers somehow have the notion that we must continue on in our tasks, laboring long hours with no time off, to prove our commitment to the Lord. I believe that there are definite times when we must stop and change scenery, or we risk destroying everything we have accomplished.

As we pray, let us ask God to show us the right time for time off.

WHERE IS YOUR CHURCH IN THE LIFE CYCLE?
by Jere Allen and George Bullard

Every church that has ever existed has had a life cycle and various stages of development and change. For many churches, this life cycle and its stages tend to follow the stages of community development and change.

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LIFE CYCLE AND STAGES OF A CHURCH

Birth | Development | Maturity | Decline | Death or Re-Development

22
Birth

Churches begin with a birth which represents the initial living out of a dream which could be in the hearts of individuals or in the minds of a group of people. The people gathered to form the church have a goal, expectation, or purpose for the church. The birth of a church happens with a goal, expectation, or purpose. There are several variables which influence the birth of a church. Particularly when a church is a neighborhood church, as opposed to a special purpose church, it will reflect what is occurring in the community around it.

Many new churches will experience some initial numerical growth and then plateau for a while. This early pattern of start-up growth will be the pattern of growth for many new churches for most of its history.

The birth period of a church continues for several years after the church has been constituted as a church. (1) Constituted as a church, (2) moved into a permanent building, (3) staffed with several different pastoral personnel. There will be many variations of this theme, with the above three as guidelines to follow.

Development

As a church enters the development stage, it wrestles, with its spiritual norms and beliefs, and seeks to discover which is important to it as a congregation. A spiritual and programmatic theme will begin to emerge for the church. A set of objectives will be commonly agreed upon by the pastor and members of the congregation who have been attracted to the church.

When the church discusses its mission, questions are asked like, "How do we obtain a certain piece and stability, what will be our motivating spiritual objectives as a church?" The church will be made possible by the numerical growth which marks the development stage. The church will now begin to take on permanent objectives but also about building a second and maybe a third building unit, plus the hiring of staff members. The motto may be, "Building the Church at the beginning of the Church.

Today, as the end of the development stage, the exact details of the founding will take shape in an environment within the new church community. This period may last as long as a generation. It will probably take a long time in stability in the life of the church community around it.

Maturity

The problems of the church in the traditional sense is its period of maturity where it is working out the work which the original dream of the congregation was conceived. A church may be at or near its numerical height, have completed or be within building a new structure, and have completed the work of its master plan for its facilities and property, and have a staff member to carry out its mission within the place of the church community.

The charter members of the church are now in retirement or have died, and the community around the church is either continuing its period of stability, or is showing signs of transition in programming. This period of transition in the community may not have obvious rami-
fications on the church. The old church will tend to occur several years behind the same cycle. A new church experiences transition does not mean that it will immediately see internal situation occurring. A church is more of a controlled environment than the community around it.

Decline

The second half of the life cycle of a church is a time of decline. The life of the church comes to the point of ethical death, the more limited are its options and possibilities for continued growth.

It must be emphasized that a church does not have to die of natural causes; it may go through a period of decline and even death, as well as find themselves living in new forms and with a new sense of purpose, but the death will be without resurrection. If a church takes a two-gorged approach. It continues to maintain a quality pro-
gram and structure which is not affected by the church's programs. The church is open to this second phase of program and structure during the developmental and fellowship but without success.

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Emotions of the Second Half of a Church Life Cycle

A few words need to be said concerning the emotions a church will experience during the second half of its life cycle, because this is the situation of many churches in changing communities.

The emotions with which a church in a changing com-
munity must deal are similar to those experienced by individuals who feel they are dying, as explained by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in "On Death and Dying." Let's briefly examine the stages of death really along-
ning with a church in changing communities.

The first phase or stage is that of denial, independence, and isolation. This stage where the characteristic of possible household mobility began to affect the active mem-
bers. Internal conflict resulted in the loss of some mem-
bers, and a negative tone and or negative image for the church.

The church has become a "staid church" which resists change, holds on to organizational patterns, treasures the future, and tucks direction.

One or two of the above issues can be present in a declining church along with undetermined issues of which a particular church will be aware.

As a church begins to decline, it reaches the first of several plateaus of evaluation, at which the church may choose to dream a new life for its future. This point of evaluation many times comes as a numerical plateau following a period of decline. If the church chooses this opportunity as a time of positive reflection upon its failure, it can recycle itself numerically and institutionally.

Sometimes, a church in several opportunities for redefining its dream to pass, it will experience opera-
tional or spiritual confusion as the church is not equal to its goals. This can bring about major periods of reorganization. The result may be, the ministerial staff, and others of a set of issues to be con-
tinued, the organizational patterns will not work. This is usually an urgent and leads primarily to negative results.

Further decline and missed opportunities may bring about the key matters such as, "Is this a good idea to continue this way?" By this time, even Sunday services will become much less important, in attendance, building maintenance tasks of a minor and major type will not be done, and the church may be less involved in programs or in the community and losing in the church's mission.

Redevelopment or Death

A church that takes advantage of a point of evaluation will be like a transitional community which is in its own Najem,1 and can work a transitional program model for its future build-
ing on its master plan for its facilities and property, and have a staff member to carry out its mission within the place of the church community. The charter members of the church are now in retirement or have died, and the community around the church is either continuing its period of stability, or is showing signs of transition in programming. This period of transition in the community may not have obvious rami-
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Notes


3. ibid., p. 16.
An interview with Rev. Charles Johnson, Pastor, Fitkin Memorial Church of the Nazarene, Meridian, Mississippi.

Jerry Appleby: Charles, would you tell us a little about your early connection with the Gorman Memorial Church in Orlando and the influence that brought you to salvation and the church.

Charles Johnson: First of all, it wasn’t Gorman Memorial Church of the Nazarene; Gorman came after me. The man who was most influential in my life was C. R. Smith. He was a member of the Central Church of the Nazarene in Orlando. I was 12 years old and C. R. Smith sold appliances in the Black community. I began to work with him at 12 years old, and I watched his life. I watched him for several years. I watched and saw people of the Black race accept his goods and then when it came time to pay, some of them turned around and cursed him. They called him everything. I watched him do what Christ did. He was White, and during those years he could have done anything and probably got away with it. But he turned and said, “I love you anyway,” and walked off. I watched him and I, a little boy sitting in the car, was very wrong with those customers. I wanted to go up there and drag them out by the ears. But C. R. would always say to me, “No, that’s not the way. God’s way is the best way.”

Appleby: Were you filled with prejudice and bad feelings toward Whites during those years?

Johnson: In those early years I saw the Ku Klux Klan drag people down the street behind cars. I saw them beat them. I saw people maimed by the Whites. As a result, Mother taught me fear. She taught me hatred. I had built a hatred in my heart for the White race because of all the things I had seen happen. But C. R. Smith was one that began to start the change in my life as a boy.

Appleby: Did you come to the Lord under his ministry?

Johnson: No. C. R. Smith saw the needs in the Black community. He was a loving man. He contacted the Church of the Nazarene Home Missions Department, and they in turn sent in Warren Rogers for revival at an old school building there. The sponsors were C. R. Smith and Earl Gorman. They sponsored this revival, and because C. R. invited me to that revival, and because of his life, I went out to that revival. I never wanted to know what the white man said, as I was prejudiced. That’s where, under Warren Rogers’ message, I found Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. I was 18 years old.

Appleby: Then you went on to study for the ministry, didn’t you?

Johnson: Right. We had a Bible college in Institute, W.Va. I was married at an early age. I married when I was around 18 and bought some goods from different stores. I had a lot of bills to pay. C. R. said, “Give me your bills. I want you to go to Bible college.” I’ll pay them. You don’t worry about them.” He took those bills and paid my bills for me. I went and studied at the Bible college.

Appleby: You want to Meridian, Miss., some years ago. How long have you been in this church?

Johnson: It was 21 years last July.

Appleby: Did you face a lot of racial prejudice at that time?

Johnson: Words cannot express the kind of racial prejudice that I faced in Meridian.

Appleby: You felt the needs of the Black community. Is that what led you into becoming a champion of the Black cause during those days?

Johnson: As I lived in Meridian, I saw the things that were happening to the Blacks in that area. They had no jobs. They were paid only $2.50 or $3.00 a week. Families were living on $15.00 a week and prices were very high even then. People had four or five children. They would go down to Woolworth’s to buy, but they couldn’t eat there. They couldn’t work there. They could work only as janitors or cooks in the White lunch counters. I saw this all over from the banks to the telephone companies. They could put their money in the banks, but they couldn’t work there. They could have a phone, but couldn’t work at the phone company. So, I organized the Meridian Action Committee and from that I went to the different stores and asked for jobs. When they turned us down, we had to picket them. We didn’t ask for anything unreasonable. I felt some of the Black leaders were unreasonable. But I believed in a person could buy at a place, he ought to be able to eat at the place. He ought to be able to have a job there. As a result we got jobs for our people all over.

Appleby: This was a time in America’s history when there was violence and a lot of confrontation in Mississippi. You obviously were involved in some of this, weren’t you?

Johnson: Correct.

Appleby: Do you feel that maybe the civil rights movement wrongly used you in your position and influence, or were things mostly positive between you and other elements of the civil rights movement?

Johnson: It wasn’t the fact that they used me. It was the fact that the wrong was there. I still don’t understand how a fellow like me who want to Mississippi afraid to look out the door could become a leader in the face of all the prejudice and the threats of death. I had threats of death every night. In one case the chief of police kept me from being killed. A Black person had called me to come out to a certain place where there were beatings and some Black people in slavery. But the Black person had been paid by the Klan. The chief of police had an infiltrator in the Klan who warned him to keep me at home. As a result, my life was spared. I used to have to have police protection around my house every night.

Appleby: Are you not sorry for your involvement in these activities?

Johnson: Oh no, no, no.

Appleby: You don’t feel you were doing wrong by leading civil rights activities?

Johnson: No, no. I feel that somehow God ushered me into that situation.

Appleby: So it was the same Holy Spirit that empowers you now that was empowering you then to lead the people in the work you were leading them.

Johnson: We did not do any violence. We did not participate in any wrongdoing, because I kept above that. They could not put a finger on anybody of my

Sometimes being a change agent is tough.
group because I did not have the radical element that was hiring Black power for gain, I did not have them in my group. We were positive in our approaches and we went for what we felt was right. I went for what I felt led me. I don't know how I changed from being scared to that position. I don't understand how I can work for the Holy Spirit or the Lord with me, I called me out of it just as vividly as when I first got saved.

Appleby: You were called out of the activist movement into another line of ministry?

Johnson: Yes, I was. I'm talking about the Mississippian--District. That was in 1975. We had attended that district assembly and were on our way back from Jackson, Shirley and I, and the Spirit of God was so close in to us, so much in our hearts, saying, "It is time to come out of this leadership role." This role had gotten me honored in the mayor's office, the governor's office, this status, I would lose that kind of connection. But I had to make the commitment to God. We pulled out on the side of the street. My wife could tell you how I made that commitment. I said, "Yes, Lord, I will come out." I drove right to town with the same fervor and power of the Spirit. I called a news conference and stepped out. I haven't been able to go back.

Appleby: But you haven't stopped working to further, the civil rights and economic development of your people.

Johnson: Oh no, but I am doing it in another vein.

Appleby: Tell us about that vein.

Johnson: Well, it focuses on job training. Many of our people are not trained to take jobs that are open. We have a program to prepare the people for the kind of job they can fill. For example, a businessman says, "We need some secretaries. Give us some." We find secretaries for him, train them, say, "I will take some Blacks, give us some tellers. Give us some bookkeepers. We need some knowledge, and we'll take them." They say, "We want a person that can be trained, a person with a good attitude, a person that is motivated, a person that has good work habits." We did not have this. So I wrote a proposal, I got an appropriation, and I got funded for $500,000. Now I'm training people to work as secre-
taries, sales persons, bank tellers, etc. I get them motivated and then train them. And now I say, "There is no need for a picket line. You've got a financed program." Ha! Ha!

Appleby: You decided to work within the system.

Johnson: I work within the system now.

Appleby: It's working?

Johnson: It is working.

Appleby: Are you people fairly happy with this sit-
uation?

Johnson: They are working within the system and they are happy. I brought industry and the people together. I brought industry in for advisory council and I sat in on the meetings and I took my receipts. I brought them in and said to them, "Now this is what industry wants. This is the kind of leadership we want to see." They introduced me in 1974 and I feel like we need to bring up what we want to become what industry wants." It is working.

Appleby: Do you feel that the Holy Spirit is guiding you as much as this in as He was in the civil rights movement?

Johnson: I'm glad you asked that. My whole life is ordained by the Holy Spirit. Everything I do is the Holy Spirit. Because this is how it happens. It's miraculous how it happens. How I got more than half a million dollars from the government, it's miraculous.

Appleby: Is the Mississippian District of the Church of the Nazarene a predominantly White district?

Johnson: Yes, it is.

Appleby: Someone could not think that a Black church or a Black leader, especially one that has been involved so heavily in the civil rights movement, could come into prominence on a predominantly White district. What are some of the steps that made this possible?

Johnson: Well, it didn't just happen. The district had to have the kind of leadership that would promote reaching out to people such as me. It was through the leadership of Talmadge Johnson who is presently district superintendent of the Tennessee District. Talmadge reached out to me when I was ostracized. I was set aside; I was aborted in a way. But Talmadge Johnson, when he became district superintendent, made a personal appeal to win me back to the Church of the Nazarene. I was in the district but not of the Church because I was ostracized. I was put aside because I had just cut them out to die. Talmadge reached out his hand to pull me back into the fold. So I don't think it was so much a district and the people changing as their leader-
ship making the change. The leadership had to do it.

Appleby: Were the people wise enough in the Spirit to follow his leadership?

Johnson: They were skeptical in the beginning, but he didn't let that impede him. He kept going toward the goal and that was to win me. As a result, the people began to understand me. Many were prejudiced only because they didn't know me. As a result, I attended most of the district meetings; I attended anything that happened. They finally be-
gan to warm up to me because of the leadership of Talmadge Johnson.

Appleby: Has this brought you into acceptance throughout the Church of the Nazarene?

Johnson: Once Talmadge got me back into the dis-
trict on what the Holy Spirit told me, then he took his church, his choir and began to show us. My people loved Tal-
madge because of the fact they saw what he was doing. They saw what he was doing when they had the Conference on Evangelism in Oklahoma City. They saw firsthand how Blacks doing anything, Talmadge arranged for my choir and my wife and me to sing on that program of the Con-
ference. That was the beginning of time on people began to warm up to us. He was responsible for the chewing of Black and singing at the General Assembly there, and for the choir going to Kansas, City to sing in 1980. That's how it began. We receive more acceptance now than earlier.

Appleby: Does your experience on a predominantly White district now make you feel that Black church-
can exist on this district, or do we need to go back to a Black district that would be separate from the Whites?

Johnson: Now that is a question I have to answer in two ways. First, when I am at that district assembly now I am treated so greatly. When I don't get there, they begin to inquire and call me to, "Come on. We want you here." I am welcomed on the Missis-
issippi District. I am welcomed and I don't realize that I am Black until I pass a mirror.

Appleby: Maybe you don't realize we are White.

Johnson: That's right. I don't realize it. I see a person as a person, thanks to God the Holy Spirit. I don't see race or status. I see that we are all equal.

Appleby: So are you saying if the leadership will lead our people to feel the feeling, then Blacks and Whites can exist on the same district in love and cooperation?

Johnson: I believe that wholeheartedly. There is a problem. This is the second part of the answer to that question you asked me. First, I believe that the leadership can be the same on the same dis-

Appleby: I believe that if the leadership is right, if the leadership is right, that's where it all hangs the threat. The leadership had to show that love would win. I think it did that. I will never forget him as long as I live.

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Helping New Converts Change Life-styles

by Wilbur W. Brannon
Director of Pastoral Ministries,
Church of the Nazarene

Conversion is something like a train moving out of a tunnel. The locomotive has come out of the darkness. But the long line of cars behind us, representing our past experiences, thought patterns, and personal habits, has not yet reached the exit. That's why new converts are often disappointed in their performance as parents, or as youth among friends. Old ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving still persist in spite of a newfound life in Christ.

The temptation is to accept old habits as normal and stop the train in the tunnel. Progress is stymied. Spiritual growth is stunted. When this happens our shepherd's heart tells us that one of our flock is in danger. We have three courses of action: (1) we can rationalize the action and accommodate the situation; (2) we can explain the ideal of perfection to the despair of the new convert; or (3) we can uphold the holiness ethic and demonstrate that there is still more excellent way.

We take one of our primary functions as pastor if we remain silent and permit the moulting of a profession of faith without experiencing a life-style that reveals a change in whom we have placed our faith.

St. Paul was speaking as a change-agent himself, as well as for Apollos, when he said, "We are simply God's agents in bringing you to the faith..." (1 Cor. 3:5, NEB). It wasn't enough for those early converts to have "believed"; they needed further change if they were to be given witness to "the faith." We can only make the problems of an unchanged life-style when we delay action, thinking it will go away. There are social implications in the gospel which we must not neglect. We can now see 35 years ago. But we have our blind spots.

What is a Christ? Are we projecting our congregations? Too often we perceive the very thing we say we are dedicated to seeing Jesus live in and through us. But when we see each other do we see Jesus? Our people have a right to expect to encounter with Christ when they meet us as their shepherd. Then the Impression of Christ they take from us must be passed along to those in the world.

What are we saying to our congregation about marriage and the family when our churches host weddings indiscriminately? Does divorce matter? Have we endorsed it with or without participating in a ceremony by which you share with me? Is there any such mastery to be interpreted by this system's holiness ethic? Again, what does that do to the image of Christ as seen by our people and those beyond the church? That is the critical issue. Would Jesus Christ recognize himself?

What do children have a right to expect from their parents who have become Christian? What happens when the child's image of Christ is distorted in an environment of abusive and vulgar language? Do we invite Jesus to enjoy our diversiforous entertainments? Why? When we have Him approving what is spiritually unacceptable?

For the new Christian the issues are not always clear. This isn't his or her first time at the plate. As parents we are to be blamed if we do not give protective guidance through the developmental changes that are prerequisite to spiritual growth. The not and shall not are for the shepherd's benefit. They are for the protection of this Christ-child.

Conversion makes the conscience sensitive to things that are wrong, but it does not automatically abolish ingrained thought patterns and personal habits. I heard a mature Christian testify recently. He admitted to being a compulsive liar before his conversion. Afterwards, he once again found himself "out-bragging" his fellow sales persons by false statements. The Holy Spirit was quick to correct him. Immediately, he stopped and said, "I'm sorry. What you've told isn't the truth. I've been habits that are a habit of a lifetime."

Many are received into the membership of the church in ways that permit an alarming relaxation of Christ's discipline. Sin is now in Christ should conflict with the toness of our individual life.

To compromise those disciplines is to lose our freedom. But to use our freedom to accept Christ's life to be released through the old ways.

The person who is trying to find his way as a new Christian naturally looks to the pastor as a point of reference for ethical decisions. He or she is expected to be a model. What is an instructor on the Christian life? To emulate and proclaim the ethical implications of being Christian is an integral part of the pastoral function. We must transfer the underlying principles of holy living to the new Christian.

The practical question is "How can I, as a pastor, help the Christian change from a pagan life-style to a holy living life-style?" Here are the best ways to help a person change is through another person. St. Paul was a good example of this. He sought to change people in Ephesus by delegating spiritual assignments to Timothy. We should work with those whose positive influence and nonthreatening approach will be received without resistance.

There are several areas in which change needs to take place. In matters of faith, you don't just believe everything you hear. Is that the way you act? It's not acceptable to believe you can get along with anything. That's eliminated when Jesus is our love is our aim (1 Cor. 14:1, RSV). A new Christian, however, is confused when his mean reaction was not what he meant by it. It is easy for him to wonder about the meaning of his newfound faith. Or maybe give it up and wonder if he ever had it.

It's the task of the pastor to help the convert understand that the Holy Spirit is faithful to us. He knows and leads ineziners.Mainly we can be of this faithfulness, and under pressure and allow His love to govern his reactions.

The time comes where we know God wants is to set ourselves as up a few unto ourselves. This is to contradict faith to faith.

How can we facilitate change from a World and non-by-streets of the How can we facilitate change from a World and non-threaten the church. We need to understand the world in which we are leading the church. We need to understand the church in which we are leading the world. We need to be a good minister of Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 4:8).

III. Self-discipline

Another way to facilitate these kinds of changes in our people is to "train the godly" (1 Tim. 4:7). We pastors are to "labour and struggle, because we have set our hope on the living God..." Through self-discipline—perhaps only in this way can we be examples in speech and conduct, through love, faith, and holiness. What are our family priorities saying to the families trying to conform? The discipline necessary for self-control, the character is the same discipline required to safely exercise our gifts. Above all we must not bully, whip, or run down people. In step in personal discipline is taken when we examine ourselves and our teaching. (1 Tim. 4:12-16)

IV. Due Regard for Persons

Perhaps the most important way to facilitate change is to regard with ultimate value the people who need to change. And aren't we all in the process of changing? Especially Pastors! We can't afford to become paralyzing or frozen in meaningless religious forms and categories of thought.) More than anything, our people must know that we, as pastors, need to wonder how to treat the elderly, the young, the opposite sex, and those who are different from us. In can we can see ourselves as a relationship of life that is pure and honorable. The community of believers is built up.

We can be quite convincing, yet just anything we hear (1 Tim. 5:19). Rather, we will the best construction on the other person's model. Whether he be a common laborer or corporation executive, we will treat him with respect.

V. Right Sense of Values

Another way to initiate change in the moral conduct of people is to teach the disciplines of the faith. Faith and a good conscience are the ultimate weapons in this kind of warfare. How can we be aware of the enemies of faith? (1 Tim. 1:12-16).

II. Strong Teaching

In the life of the enemy of faith:

- (1) Devotion
- (2) Amazing relationships
- (3) Modesty
- (4) Humility
- (5) Industry
- (6) Love
- (7) Holiness (cf. 1 Tim. 2:8-15)

At the heart of the issue is a sound faith. As Wesleyans, we have been too timid in reiterating the New in God's grace which changed him from a profane, self-righteous enemy of Christians into an example to the believers.

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- (2) Amazing relationships
- (3) Modesty
- (4) Humility
- (5) Industry
- (6) Love
- (7) Holiness (cf. 1 Tim. 2:8-15)

At the heart of the issue is a sound faith. As Wesleyans, we have been too timid in reiterating the New in God's grace which changed him from a profane, self-righteous enemy of Christians into an example to the believers.
HAD A GOOD FATHER, BUT HE TURNED OUT TO BE A BAD KING.
His name—Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, a good king, ruled late in the period before the Babylonian captivity. In his reign there was something of a religious revival in Judah, but he died prematurely doing battle with the Egyptians.

Jehoiakim was one of his sons, first succeeded him as king. But it was only three months till the Egyptian Pharaoh, who had defeated Josiah, meddled in Judean politics, deposed Jehoiakim, and set on the throne Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah.

This new king, in contrast with his father, was a wicked man. Not only that, but he had a taste for luxury. While imposing duties to pay tribute to his Egyptian bosses, he was also building himself a sumptuous palace. It was decorated with cedar and red coloring—just the height of fashion in those days. In addition, it was built largely with unpaid slave labor.

It was this Jehoiakim to whom God spoke through Jeremiah about his disregard for the poor and needy, "Woe to him who builds his house without righteousness and his upper rooms without justice, who uses his neighbor's services without pay and does not give him his wages" (Jer. 22:12, NASB).

"Jehoiakim was rebuked by God for hisidity, it is true, but he would also experience tremendous judgment because of his oppression of the poor (vv. 18-19).

But what does this history lesson have to do with us who live almost 2,600 years later?

According to the World Bank, there are almost 800 million "absolute poor" in the world, two-thirds of them in the four countries of India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, where they have a per capita income of $1 a day or less. According to the World Food Council, one-third of the world's children die of malnutrition and disease before they are five years old.

Even in our land of plenty, there is a great deal of "relative poverty." Approximately 25 million Americans live below the government-regarded as the poverty line.

Dr. George Sweeting, president of Moody Bible Institute, in an article entitled "Our Response to the Poor: A Barometer of Belief," (Christianity Today, September 5, 1980, pp. 22-24)

"In God's Word to Jehoiakim (Jer. 22:13-16), there are at least two factors that should influence our attitudes and actions regarding the poor. Notice first the implied relationship between poverty and justice. The king was condemned because he built a house unjustly. Since he did not pay the service of those who built his palace, he was oppressing the poor. An earlier word from the Lord exalted him: 'Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the oppressor. Also do not mistreat or deny justice to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place' (Jer. 22:3, NASB).

Justice for the poor is clearly advocated all through Scripture, but it is a particular emphasis of the prophets. Listen to Isaiah's rebuke, directed to religious people who nonetheless oppressed the poor: "The Lord enters into judgment with the elders and princes of His people, Is it you who have devoured the vineyard; the plunder of the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing My people, and grinning the face of the poor?" declares the Lord God of hosts" (Isa. 1:10, NASB).

Amos, farmer and herdsman turned blunt preacher of justice, complained bitterly on God's behalf against those who "impose heavy rent on the poor and exact a tribute of grain from them" (Amos 5:11, NASB).

Another person, considered that some minor points of difference were not essential, would look to the person who was first upon adherence to them, an extreme commitment. And this in turn leaves the first person open to a counter change of being liberal.

All of this points to the rather unclear and even ridiculous nature of such a decision. Could we not see the entire subject from a different perspective?

In our instance we could well begin with the simple fact of our Nazarene name. Sometimes a person may correctly suggest that this or that person is a real Nazarene, implying that someone else is not a Nazarene, when in fact he or she may be one. What is probably being implied is that although the latter person is in the membership roll somewhere, the spiritual facts of his life do not adhere to the standards of conduct of the church as set forth in our Manual.

In between the two extreme views is the great core of those who love the church, strive by its standards, have experienced God's grace in two definite spiritual works, and who pray the prayers, pay the bills, and attend the services. Among the ministers to the gold coin of devoted men who preach the full counsel of God, support the church's program, and are loyal to church leadership. Extreme groups do not share the recognition accorded either to a conservative or liberal label. In many instances they are out of step and could be out of grace. Their usefulness to the Kingdom is limited. By being convinced they fail to be a living or of doing the spiritual work, God's work, or of serving God. They must cut their ministry down to serve their own standards. They are the non-essential who continue to be in the future.

Our founder's emphasis was "to the right not to the left, but Jesus only." This continues to be our guiding principle to this day, and shall continue to be in the future.

A complimentary subscription to the Preacher's Magazine is sent to all ministers in the Church of the Nazarene from the Nazarene Publishing House.
Honoring Our 75th Anniversary Year!
A MOVING STORY OF HOW CHURCHES ARE BORN TODAY

First you laughed at "Planned Parenthood for Churches"—then you got the message. "A CHURCH IS BORN" is even funnier, and its message is even more potent—church planting does not weaken or divide the ministry of the local church; it multiplies this ministry. In fact, the Lord gives special blessings to congregations that sponsor new churches.

Keep Your Congregation Growing in 1983

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20 Minutes of Mission That Can Change Your Church Forever!
Every Paul...

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Pastor, help your laymen
to become better
educated Christians
Recommend

Nazarene Bible College

Is There Hidden Giving Power
in Your Church?

Seated in YOUR congregation on any Sunday morning may be "Hidden giving power people" whose giving assets are unknown even to them...because they think only in terms of cash gifts. But they actually can give more, can give through plans which provide them with additional income, plans which help them make use of government approved tax benefits, plans that can solve their money management worries, and plans that can bring lifetime satisfaction, as they have proven part in helping fill the Great Commission. It can all happen through the HORIZON'S Planned Giving Programs, helping congregations discover their own giving power.

Hidden Planned Givers may be...

...dedicated people who have never written wills who would cherish the opportunity to plan ahead for the church while still providing for their own...

...stockholders who could turn unproductive investments into additional annual income...

...members who hold real estate which they never plan to...

...people who have few if any heirs, who need to know God can use their resources to enhance their Heavenly family.

Your church can begin here:

Rev. Crew: Please send me information about how my church can benefit from the HORIZON'S Planned Giving Program. I am especially interested in the items checked at left.

NAME

POSITION

ADDRESS

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Recommended:
Adapt for Church Newsletters

BILLY GRAHAM

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MORE EFFECTIVE

(Prepared for your Media Resource Notebook by Media Services)

TELEVISION IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION...

VIDEO TAPE ALLOWS US TO USE IT TO BUILD THE CHURCH!

WHY USE VIDEO TAPE?

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The "real-life" effect of the medium provides the potential for interest, involvement, and learning retention by the audience.

CONTEMPORARY CONTENT

Ease of production and duplication allows the media to keep pace with the fast-moving issues, events, and persons. Whatever is recorded can be shown immediately.

LIMITLESS USABILITY

Play, fast-forwarding, rewinding, and other features provide the user with tremendous flexibility of use. The videotape can be stopped for discussion, rewound or fast-forwarded for reviewing/previewing materials, etc.

EXTENSIVE VARIETY

Video tape resources are designed and produced for a great variety of purposes: entertainment, instruction, information, etc. This variety assures the possibility of finding a videotape resource for your specific need.

GROWING AVAILABILITY

The growing popularity of the videotape medium makes equipment and resources readily available in most every community.

TYPES OF VIDEO TAPE?

INSTRUCTIONAL

Provides instruction in specific areas. Effective for use in Christian Education, Teacher Training, Continuing Education, and much more.

INFORMATIONAL

Disseminates valuable information directly to the viewer: for example, statements by general/district church leaders.

ENTERTAINMENT

Special programs for the family, children, teens, or other groups can be rented/recorded for use during special events.

YOUR OWN

A videotape camera with your recorder/player will allow you to produce your own videotape resources. Services and other church events can be recorded for evaluation, ministry to shut-ins, or local church records.
FORMATS FOR VIDEOTAPE?

There are primarily three videotape formats in use today. Each of these are incompatible with each other, requiring their own specific machine and size of cassette.

1/2" BETAMAX

This small 1/2" format provides three record speeds: Betax, Beta II & Beta III. This format, which is much less expensive than the 1/2" U-Matic, has equipment available from Sony, Zenith, Sanyo, Toshiba, and Sears.

1/2" VHS

By far the most popular videotape format, VHS offers three record speeds and is comparable in cost to the Betamax system. Sony, Sanyo, JVC, Hitachi, Magnavox, and General Electric are among the brand names that utilize the VHS format.

PREPARATION & PRESENTATION?

EQUIPMENT

The necessary equipment can be purchased or rented from many appliance, department, or electronic stores in your community. There may be people in your congregation who would be willing to loan the church their personal video equipment. Investigate to find the most reasonable source for your equipment needs.

VIDEOTAPE RESOURCES

There are many Christian and secular sources for videotape resources. For information on the NAZARENE VIDEOTAPE LIBRARY and other videotape sources write to: VIDEOTAPE PRODUCTIONS, NAZARENE COMMUNICATIONS, Box 8111, Kansas City, MO 64131.

PRESENTATION

Preview your material and be prepared well ahead of time. Be sure to have enough TV sets and have them situated for easy viewing. "Rule of Thumb" is to add five to the diagonal inch of the TV screen to determine how many people can comfortably watch the one set. If necessary, be prepared to introduce the videotape, answer questions, and facilitate discussion.

(For further information on videotape equipment and resources see your Nazarene Publishing House AUDIOVISUAL CATALOG or contact VIDEO PRODUCTIONS at Media Services.)

CRADLE ROLL PARENTS  ADULT MINISTRIES

DATES: April 10—May 15, 1983

Be sure your church is involved!

IN SEARCH OF YOUNG FAMILIES

DESIGNED...

• to meet needs
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IT IS...

EVANGELISM

IT IS...

MINISTRY

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Yours for the asking: WOMEN'S MINISTRIES MONOGRAPH CLM 48. WOMEN'S MINISTRIES HAPPENINGS (Quarterly Newsletter & Idea Exchange).
For Mission-Minded Pastors
Who Believe Prayer Makes
a Difference

Prayer Mobilization Line
816-444-0588

For a hotline to prayer requests and answers fresh from the mission field, call this number.

In less than three minutes, you'll be briefed on some of the most urgent needs, and share in the victory of answered prayer.

You can print these requests and answers in your church bulletin, newsletter, or make them part of your pastoral prayer.

Prayer line really does make a difference. One thousand call in each month, because they believe that.

One big answer to prayer came this year when Venezuela registered the Church of the Nazarene—opening the door for missionaries William and Juanita Porter to begin a mission work there.

The Prayer Mobilization Line is updated each Wednesday and Friday afternoon. When urgent needs arise, special updates are recorded.

PASTORS, What are your goals for your church during the SIMULTANEOUS REVIVAL campaign of 1983? The first step toward achieving them is to set them and then use them as motivation for you and your people.

Your main goal will be the goal of the One who came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). All other goals will flow out of this—a burning desire to see the lost saved by the mercy and power of Christ. Such a desire must be coupled to definite planned action to seek the lost in the community. This is why it is essential that you set attendance, conversion, and membership goals for your Simultaneous Revival.

Evangelism Ministries
Church of the Nazarene
PASTORAL MINISTRIES PLANS CONET

CONET means a COounseling, COmmunication, Continuing Education, and COmmunication NETwork for pastors. The concept originated with a group of Nazarene Helping Professionals. Their stated purpose was to "provide a ministry to professional ministers and their families." High on the agenda is to have a "Heart-Line" (or Hot Line) for crisis intervention, counseling, referral, and professional consultations. The pastor would be able to call with the assurance of absolute confidentiality. A referral system is maintained, which would make available supportive counseling nearby.

WE ASKED FOR IT!

Remember last May when you received the Pastoral Ministries Survey that requested your response to 22 areas of need ranging from professional skills to personal family relationships? You probably wondered if anyone would really be interested in your responses, or if this was just one of those "Information for Information's sake" titbits that Kansas City thought up. Whatever your reaction, we asked for your response and you gave it to us.

As of August 1 there have been 1,955 survey returns received at the Pastoral Ministries office, which is approximately a 40 percent return. Listed below in order are the top 10 areas of most need felt of Nazarene pastors according to their respondents.

1. Equipping Laymen (Disciple-ship)
2. Finding Enough Time for Real Personal Growth
3. Financing the Local Church
4. Making Pastoral Servantship
5. Church Administration
6. Maintaining Personal Motivation
7. Church Renewal
8. Reducing Pressures on My Marriage
9. altar Calls
10. Sermon Preparation

With this information it is now possible for Pastoral Ministries to begin developing programs and materials which can be geared specifically to these needs. Of great significance will be the new VIDEONET program which will provide missionaries on a monthly subscription basis containing material pertinent to these and a host of other areas of interest. The prime objective of VIDEONET is to provide a communication/education tool that will effectively help pastors to fulfill their task of ministry.

But we're still going to need your help. You will need to continue the dialogue process and let us know your interests and what you need the feel for continued help. So keep talking to us. We're asking for it!

PASTORS' SUPPORT GROUPS

One of the difficulties experienced by many pastors is the feeling that for them there is no one to turn to for support or advice in times of personal struggle or conflict. Problems that arise within the church, the family, or the individual's own being are the most difficult when they have to be faced alone. Even though our church structure has provided for a district superintendent to function as a "pastor to pastors," there are factors that may make it difficult, if not impossible, for a pastor to share openly with his leader.

As a result of this state of need expressed by so many pastors, there are developing today across the denomination pastoral support groups whose primary purpose is it to provide an atmosphere of openness and concern where a pastor may share his struggles with his peers in whom he can trust and from whom he can expect sound counsel. Those who have been fortunate enough to become a part of groups such as these have discovered an entirely new dimension to their pastoral experience—God's loving concern being expressed directly to them through their fellow pastors.

On page 46-47 you will find material in case-study form that may help you and your fellow pastors to develop dialog that can lead to even deeper discussions of your personal needs and struggles. This material is to be used as a communication/education tool that will effectively help pastors to fulfill their task of ministry.

A note to all District Boards of Ministerial Studies:

Pastoral Ministries wants to be able to present a Certificate of Completion to a student enrolled in the Course of Study who has completed the entire course and its requirements.

A note all District Boards of Ministerial Studies:

Pastoral Ministries students must complete their Certificate of Completion in the course of study within the time specified for their program.

A note to all Class/Seminary Students:

Those who feel that they are ready to complete the course may do so by submitting the required materials to their District Board of Ministerial Studies.

A note to all Class/Seminary Students:

Those who feel that they are ready to complete the course may do so by submitting the required materials to their District Board of Ministerial Studies.

A new course has been added to the MUSIC MINISTRIES PRO-GRAM:

487. MANUAL Church of the Nazarene
487B. HANDBOOK ON THE MINISTRY, 1982 edition
487C. Power Through Prayer, E. M. Bond
487D. Dry Bones Can Live Again, Robert E. Colman

The requirement to take this course will be met by anyone graduating after the 1982 Assembly Year.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1982-83—The Year of the Young

January 3-5, 1983
February 27-28, 1983
May 20-21, 1983
June 13-14, 1983
June 20-21, 1983

Events for Young Adults

1983-84—The Year of the Diamond Jubilee

August 29—September 4, 1983
September 13-14, 1983
September 19-20, 1983
October 4-5, 1983
October 11-12, 1983
October 19-20, 1983
October 26-27, 1983
December 26—January, February

1984-85—The Year of Church Growth

Good Friday 76,000 New Nazarenes
August 27—September 2, 1984
September 16-17, 1984
September 21-22, 1984
September 26-27, 1984
October 3-4, 1984
October 10-11, 1984
October 21-22, 1984
October 28-29, 1984
November 4-5, 1984
November 11-12, 1984
November 18-19, 1984
November 25-26, 1984
December 26—January, February

Pastoral Ministers and Media Services

We are now developing specially designed videotapes, available on a monthly subscription basis to all pastors and district leaders in the Church of the Nazarene. The cost for receiving the monthly tapes will be $10.00 per month for rental or $20.00 per month for purchase (VHS format). Every month pastors will receive sermon suggestions, preview of new books and audiovisual ideas on topics ranging from worship suggestions and counseling techniques to building usage and communication resources. Included as well will be monthly emphasis in such areas as finance, church administration, mission education, and Christian education. Of special interest will be segments dealing with the church's perspective on current events and issues like: The Chemical Revolution (Drugs and Alcohol); Abortion: A Christian Perspective; The Economy—Present and Future Effects; The Church and Politics; Disarmament—Pray for Peace or Conflict; and The Church and Justice. These tapes will be useful for individual study and enrichment as well as to group situations like Sunday School classes, small-group Bible studies, counseling sessions, board and committee sessions. Plan to include this tremendous communication and training tool in your budgetary considerations. You'll be hearing more about—VIDEUNET.

PENSIONS AND BENEFITS SERVICES

Serving those who serve throughout their ministry
Simultaneous Revivals ORDER BLANK

For additional information, consult special descriptive brochure sent to all pastors. Check the dates for your district's participation and order these supportive materials well in advance.

Date

Please send the following promotional material for our Simultaneous Revival Campaign as indicated below:

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<td>&quot;Posse the Promise&quot; Pin</td>
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Church location

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Insight, inspiration, information in one convenient volume.

THE MINISTERS MANUAL

A businesslike method to recognize individual giving

Contribution Receipt Form

An important reference for regular contributors when figuring their income tax. Space is provided for listing in money given through the various departments. Be sure your treasurer has information about this form. 30 x 6". Pad of 100 for $1.85.

Order NOW While Ample Stock Is Available.

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Professional advice for preparing a money-saving tax form.


Provides the pastor and evangelist with complete necessary information in non-technical language relevant to his profession.

Areas covered in this handy book include housing exemption, self-employment, gifts and donations, the working wife, retirement. Tax laws are revised and updated by the reputable firm of Price Waterhouse and Company, through October 1982. Shows sample tax forms. Index. 8 1/2 x 11 format. 88 pages. Paperback. $4.95

NOTE: Available December 15, 1982

HELPS 100 PERCENT

My church giving 10 percent for missions is like my giving the tithe to the church. It is my first financial priority.

Just as tithing was never meant to be a maximum standard for Christian stewardship, so being a 10 percent church "for missions" was never meant to be a maximum standard for congregational stewardship "for others."
Rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught...

Colossians 2:7

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WORLD MISSION MAGAZINE

It Tells the Story of Nazarene Missions

- Easy to read
- Easy to remember
- Every home in your church should have it

NEW PRICE—beginning in January, 1983—$3.00 per year when subscribed through your local church.

- If this is your major campaign year, secure all subscriptions for one year.
- If you are getting interim subscriptions only—enter them for one year. Keep a record of all that should be renewed next year.
- If you have a literature fund—include World Mission with Herald and Bread in your distribution.
- If you have a unified campaign, World Mission is now on same annual basis as Herald and Bread.

URGE your NWMS Subscription Campaign manager to start her subscription campaign EARLY. Collect subscriptions 2 MONTHS before current subscriptions expire. Send all renewal subscriptions to the Nazarene Publishing House 1 MONTH BEFORE they expire. Then no one will miss an issue because their address was pulled from the list.

REMEMBER: ANNUAL Subscription $3.00 per year; Beginning in JANUARY, 1983.

PUT "WORLD MISSION" IN EVERY NAZARENE HOME
Laziness, poor harvest, and enemy invasions were causes for poverty in Old Testament times. But, according to the prophets, injustice was often the cause of poverty and especially of its continuation. The wealthy used their power to misuse others, leading to poverty. Then, because they were poor, these people became the helpless victims of ongoing oppression. The most likely objects of injustice were the orphans, widows, and aliens in the land. These helpless poor were often victimized by the better-off members of society and kept in their misery, rather than being helped out of it.

In relating justice and poverty, we must also notice that God declares himself to be the Just Helper of the poor. God takes the part of those who humbly speaking are helpless. He is "a father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows" (Ps. 68:5, NASB). "The Lord performs righteous deeds and judgments for all who are oppressed" (Ps. 102:6, NASB). God helped the poor through His law, which had special provisions for the poor and oppressed in the land (see Exod. 22:21-24). When the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ, announced His mission, He quoted from Isaiah 61: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor" (Luke 4:18, NASB).

Because He was a God of justice, He expected His people to do justice and that meant being concerned for the well-being of the poor.

But leaving Old Testament times, the Church has been on the side of justice for the poor—"that is, when it has not been blinded to this aspect of biblical truth. The New Testament Church cared for the poor in her midst. Paul took up offerings among the Gentiles for the poor in Jerusalem. A Christian church in Rome was broken into with the demand that the Christians produce their treasures. Laurentius, the overseer, pointed to the widows who were being cared for, the sick who were being nursed to health, and the poor whose needs were being met. "These," he said, "are the treasures of the church."

One of the decisive turning points in the ministry of John Wesley was his willingness to preach to the poor, even though that meant preaching outside the sacred walls of churches, where the poor were not welcomed. This "field preaching" was a radical adjustment for Wesley, the high
church Anglican. He was willing to do something naturally repugnant to him in order to reach the poor. For the poor miners of Bristol and elsewhere he set up free dispensary, a kind of "free pew." The Methodist Church was founded by abolitionists concerned about injustice and slavery. The Free Methodist movement began, among other things, over the principle of "free pews." Large sections of many churches were removed, while the pew, rental, thus discriminating between the rich and poor. A significant method was founded of the afflicted and needy—"the poor in spirit." Among other things, over the sight share His values were the abolishment of slavery. Concern did not merely preach them but also did something to them. He who could pay tress, and kept himself unshackled by the world. When Jesus, the Divine Son, looked on the hungry multitudes, He experienced compassion and did not merely preach them a sermon, but He arranged for them to be fed. In His Matthew 25 parable of the sheep and goats, the goats are judged because they did not respond to the needs of the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, and the imprisoned. The King of kings says: "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me." According to the apostle John, "Whoever has the world's goods and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:17, NASB.)

To know God is to share His compassion over human hearts. When Jesus, the Divine Son, looked on the hungry multitudes, He experienced compassion and did not merely preach them a sermon, but He arranged for them to be fed. In His Matthew 25 parable of the sheep and goats, the goats are judged because they did not respond to the needs of the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, and the imprisoned. The King of kings says: "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me." According to the apostle John, "Whoever has the world's goods and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:17, NASB.)

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To know God is also to share His distaste of worldly materialism, which threatens us all in America. Materialism emphasizes self-centered acquisition of things, not the unselfish sharing of them with others. We have often been told that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of sexual immorality. While that was part of their problem, there was more to it than that, according to Ezekiel: "Behold, this was the guilt of Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, excess of meat, and drunkenness, and carousing, and idleness, she did not labor nor did she prepare for her own needs. "To know God is also to share His values. It is thus to be more concerned with people than with things, giving with than with getting, wholeness and peace than with material or military might, with what is right than with what is expedient and convenient. General Omar Bradley has said we have "a nation of nuclear giants, but ethical infants. We have become more about living, more about war than about peace." If this is so, it could be the cause we do not know God and thus do not really share His values.

But if God's Word implies that those who know God (and what they know Him to be) should be concerned about the existence of sin in this world, nobody who really cares has any simple answers. A response to poverty today is an extremely complex matter. But can we not all be open to God about what He wants us to do in our own situation? He may not ask us all to respond in the same way, but there are some things for us to do about that. Can we not become better informed about poverty, as unanswerable as that kind of investigation is?

Can we not work to better the conditions of the poor in our own area? Can we not be involved in attempts to influence public policy and church policy in line with a priority for the poor? Can we not extend ourselves to further the cause of reaching the gospel to the poor?

It is Senator Mark Hatfield, who reports asking Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the question: "Do you know a poor person who has died?

The Company Man who came into being during the industrial age. "He sees loyalty, modesty, security, family atmosphere, the getting on with the job. Has he not worked and he must include good leadership in his business and his family atmosphere. He does not individualize his business and his family atmosphere. He does not think of being Darin of the whole team. His career is Within the structure of his employees. What is important for success as a leader must include understanding the whole person.

Brain work has been replacing physical work. That has called for a new kind of management. More education means a larger variety of ways people think, and that has brought into being a value system that says, "No leadership has a right to tell me what to do without a reason. You understand it and account for it, you are not going to be a leader, especially of younger people. Your career will be more oriented to sell than to institutions; or to winning. They want a sense of identity and belonging. That is a frustration for many people who wanted to be leaders who could make these people feel challenged and fulfilled instead of "losers."

Never before has leadership been more different for men before; our society been so flexible and volatile.
How Your Church Can Change Its Image in the Community

by John C. Oster

Why change a baby’s diaper? One good guess is that you change a baby’s diaper because certain conditions have changed relative to the baby and to the diaper. Unless changes are made, the diaper will soon become a health hazard to the baby. The same is true of church life. If church life is a laboratory of the social changes that once is likely to turn sour and be a source of irritation with results that are detrimental both to the baby and to his community environment. Why change the image of your church? A community is like a laboratory where church conditions have changed. A church is like a laboratory where church changes demand constant attention. Let’s start with the building itself. If the only knowledge of your church were its physical appearance, would you agree that it was like that?

Admittedly, location and architecture are important, but the pastor is unlikely to have any immediate control over these elements unless he is just entering into a building program. In this case, a copy of Church Building Sourcebook 2 will help him understand how to find the best locations, how to make advantage of an existing location, and how to use building design as a theological statement. It provides an image of what your church is like, but the church is not how to build a building, but how to make the best of what you have, then read on.

The physical building should be neat, in good taste, free from paint, and well-lighted, and properly identified. The pastor is unwilling or unable to achieve this. He should take pack his Bible and catch the next train out. This image will get the lie to everybody he says.

If the present location is over-run with weeds and in need of paint and a good sign, then his household will be the neighborhood will be even greater when you get it all fixed up and your new image will be the talk of the neighborhood.

Keeping that image alive and up-to-date also requires adequate lighting. The name of the church should be lighted all night, every night. When the church is in use for an evening service, there should be an abundance of light in the parking areas and around the church. Light has very significant symbolism for the Christian church and it also helps you see better.

The building is important, but do not confute the being with the church. We are really talking about in this article the Church without walls, it too, has an image and it is absolutely necessary that the image be real and really be one and the same. Don’t try it for anything but the church and to the church. This is the image of the church to the diaper. Unless changes are undeniable made, the soft, sensitive image of the church is going to grow greater, and for more and more and more of us, growing hunger within is not so much for the things of the mind and spirit as for junk food placations.

Admittedly, the foregoing includes a bit of tongue in cheek, but the fact of social change is undeniable. In the midst of this change, you should be thought of in the same way that it was thought of the last time anybody thought about your church. Most people haven’t heard from you in five years, that’s right, they know who they remember you—that’s the way they think you are now.

On the other hand, the image of your church may be accurate. But whatever the case, it is what you should be, and what you are, should be the image that you desire.

The following points are a necessary basis for church people to get into the habit of putting their image before the world. The media only in the immediate time period and the same doesn’t mean do something.

1. Coverage: Newspaper and broadcast media are sources of attention, and you’re not alone, one is going on.

2. Credibility: In these days of suspicion, everybody is a suspect. People at large have a habit of judging you by the company you keep. The way they will be able to judge you is not at the media. People everywhere are interested in what such people are doing. If that interest results in media coverage, the church is a relevant part of community life, so much the better.

3. Cost: Unless you have an unlimited budget, which you don’t, you must create a strong relationship with your own communications media to saturate your community. It only makes sense to use an engine that’s already there. Legitimacy begins with your work, or the business you put out, and your advertising cost less potential contact than any other method you could devise. Newspapers appreciate paid ads (after all, they make their bills too). An occasional paid ad will help maintain good relations with the newspaper and will produce results. If it does not produce results, work with your local advertising professionals to produce an ad that will produce results. That’s what they are for. Businesses don’t advertise for charity, you know; they advertise because it produces results. Approached in this way, advertising will produce results for you also.

In presenting your church before the community through the news media, remember that there are certain things that editor are looking for and these things are broad and large are what readers look for. This list has been helpful to me:

- Timeliness. News is news only in the immediate time period after it happens. Don’t attempt to report or live at state experience. If God is blessing you now, now is the time to tell about it.
- Community Impact. People in your neighborhood are not much interested in what your church is doing around the world. They are interested in what your church is doing right around the corner.
- Personalities. Get the mayor, the governor, some other well-known person involved in some activity of the church. The people everywhere are interested in what such people are doing. If that interest leads to media coverage, the church is a relevant part of community life, so much the better.

Consequence. If your church is not in the business of making a difference, you had better reexamine your reason for being there at all. Christ came to make a difference, folks. His church exists to delete that difference. That difference is expressed in changed individual lives and it is expressed in changed communities, which are made up of these changed individuals. Do not be content with anything less than impacting your community with the consequence of Christ.
Advice for the Not Yet Perfect

By Clarence Bence

John Wesley was both evangelist and pastor. In his journals and sermons, we see a person of almost unlimited energy, who repeatedly calls his listeners to press forward to new levels of spiritual experience. He is not interested in detailed descriptions of how Satan attacks our peace, our joy, our faith, and finally our hope of ever being restored to the image of Christ. In despair of not attaining the goal, the Christian becomes fretful and God "thus delaying his coming." And envious of those whom he judges to have already attained the prize. Hence the strange irony—"the very pursuit of holiness can become a detriment to those who are on the way." So appealingly, Wesley's response is not to push for immediate results. He exhorts the believer to hold fast to what he or she has already attained.

The present gifts of God, and to understand what we have already received, because what we have not received.

Wesley then proceeds to give detailed descriptions of how Satan attacks our peace, our joy, our faith, and finally our hope of ever being restored to the image of Christ. To satisfy the desire of not attaining the goal, the Christian becomes fretful and God, "thus delaying his coming," and envious of those whom he judges to have already attained the prize. Hence the strange irony—the very pursuit of holiness can become a detriment to those who are on the way.

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The awareness of the sin that remains in one's life leads one to rely on the grace of God, who has done so great things for you already, and will do so much greater things than these. As to the delay in God's sanctifying work, Wesley offers this thought-provoking comment, "He cannot be straightened for time, wherein to work whatever remains to be done in your soul. And God's time is always the best time. Therefore be thou [reluctant] for nothing." While Wesley never directly addresses the concept of "holiness or hell" he comes close in his concluding words.

Thus, being tiled with all peace and joy in believing, press on, in the peace and joy of faith, to the renewal of thy whole soul in the image of that to which created thee! Meanwhile,
OUR HOPE IS IN THE COMING OF THE LORD

Choral Readings for Advent

by Donna Fletcher Crow

Service 1

Four Sundays before Christmas

The People Plead for a Savior

Leader 1: The people who walk in darkness will see a great light.
Leader 2: Those who live in the land of the shadow of death will shine in the Lord.
Leader 3: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.
Leader 4: The government will be upon his shoulder.
Leader 5: And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Chorus 1: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 2: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 3: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 4: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 5: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

With a song in their heart, they sing:

Chorus 1: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 2: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 3: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 4: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 5: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Prayer

Pastor: Our Father, as the early Christians prayed, "Even so, Lord, Jesus, come quickly." we pray you will come to the hearts of all who will hear us.

Congregation: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Service 2

Three Sundays before Christmas

The People Desire a Leader

Leader 1: And, behold, a voice in the desert shall cry, "He that maketh man to drink water shall be rewarded; and he that leadeth this people up to the knowledge of the Lord shall be blessed.
Leader 2: Let us go to him, that we may learn of his goodness:
Leader 3: For he is the Lord our God, and shall lead us by the waters of Brass.
Leader 4: And he shall make his voice to be heard like a voice of one crying in the wilderness. He shall say, "Fear not, for I will create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, neither come into mind.
Leader 5: For I will be for a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Voices 4 and 5: O come, and set thy people free.

Chorus 1: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 2: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 3: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 4: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 5: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Prayer

Pastor: Father, hear us, we turn to you, we cry to you, we bow down and pray to you, we do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Congregation: Let us come to the Lord.

Service 3

Two Sundays before Christmas

The People Cry for Peace

Leader 1: The Lord's prayer must be our prayer. We have been taught to pray: Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...
Leader 2: The Lord's prayer must be our prayer. We have been taught to pray: And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors...
Leader 3: The Lord's prayer must be our prayer. We have been taught to pray: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...

With a song in their heart, they sing:

Chorus 1: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 2: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 3: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 4: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.
Chorus 5: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Prayer

Pastor: The Lord is the one who brings peace to our heart. He is the one who brings us to the knowledge of the Lord. He is the one who brings us to the knowledge of the Lord. He is the one who brings us to the knowledge of the Lord.

Congregation: Come to us and heal our wounds.

Unison: Amen.
The People Receive the Promise

Leader 1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Leader 2: And the Word was with us (verse 3:1). 

Leader 3: We have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God. 

Leader 4: And we have the promise of God. Leader 5: And He has given us the Spirit of His Son (verse 3:2).
Come Alive, Francis of Assisi

by J. Kenneth Grider

Miracle Sunday

by Judy Cummins

You need, Brother Francis. We need you in great part because we have such a shortage of saints. We have more evangelists than saints, more theologians than saints, more perhaps all of Christ's workers than saints.

To be a saint, we realize, is a matter of costs and costs and costs. It costs because our person can't be one without discipline, and we find it easy to neglect our spiritual disciplines these days. It costs because a person can't be a saint without relinquishing that keen-edged joy for the things of this life which commandeer so many of us. It costs because, to be one, a person can enter into that self-nourishing experience in which one really is a poor and needy creature.

We need you these days, Francis, to demonstrate to us what a saint is really like. We need you to live out, in your daily life, the kind of concrete and costly discipline to Christ which is the credence of such a Christian.

You did so well at being a saint that the church set a day to indicate your model and your spirit are still in our thoughts after these 800 years. Because of what you said and did, some have called you the "second Christ." Some, the "Third Christ." Some the "last Christian." Accolades like that would be too much for any of us Christians these days. I suppose Mother Teresa, who ministers to the little people, the unpeople, of Calcutta, is as much of a saint as we have.

We need you to model the life that is lived undividedly for Christ, without special regard for any of the wealth that is worldly. Born to material wealth, you renounced it and accepted real poverty. Indeed, you pursued poverty.

We welcome the way in which you sought to implement, literally, the teachings of Jesus—and the way you sought to emulate the life that He himself lived.

We remember that, when you started the order, you called it your members Friars Minor, because you were to be, yourselves, a lot of little people who would emulate Christ's life, and not seek power or prestige.

We recall that you did not even want, at first, to draw up any rules for spiritual formation, for these minor, lowly friars, because you felt that Jesus had already given the rules, in His teachings, and in His life.

Right now, Francis, the poor are in our caring concern. In many nations, millions of the poor do not go any more to their work-places. They are not needed in their work-places. And the gas bills and other bills continue to pile up. And the landlord becomes anxious about his rent money. Young fathers cannot earn what they are accustomed to earning, and tend to be discouraged. Young mothers are at times introducing a sound of weeping into the songs they are singing to their children, for many of them are feeling acutely what it is like to be in want.

You could help us, if we, feel right at this time. You could help us to bear up under the burdens that we are bearing. You are practicing in this, while we are not. You could show us how to wrest from these times of scarcity, lessons about dependence on God, about putting first things first, about being thankful for little benefits that somehow bouncing our way once in a while. Loving all of nature as you did, including its birds and its beasts, you could help us to be ministered to by its beauty and its simplicity, and by the unwor-ked life of its animal.

In 1984, the Methodists are to celebrate the 200th anniversary of their official work as a denomination in America. In 1983, the Nazaarenes are to celebrate the 75th anniversary of their official organization at Pilot Point, Tex., in 1908. The year 1982 is, to us, also an important anniversary. It is the 800th anniversary of your birth—to a life of only 44 years (1152-1232).

We celebrate this 800th anniversary with a thankful appreciation of the kind of life that you lived. We also celebrate it with the hope that, if you cannot bless our so-nearly world as a saint who walks among us again, God might give us our way with individuals who, like you, will stand in their "likeness" as truly Christed persons.

My family and I were getting ready for church this morning. There was the usual hustle and bustle to get there on time. (Of course, my husband had left early, so, as he says, "I can pull myself together before church begins.") I know that as a minister he does need that extra time with just he and the Lord. Like I say, I know that intellectually, but sometimes emotionally. I feel like it is a "cop out" because he knows what is going to happen with three teenage daughters and a 10-year-old son to get to church.

Thirty minutes to take-off time.

Mom, Crystal has the door locked and won't let me in the bathroom.

"Crystal, let your sister in."

Fifteen minutes to take-off time. Mom, Crystal still won't let me in the bathroom.

A walk from the bathroom.

"Mom, my life is ruined, just absolutely ruined."

"Honey, open the door so we can talk about it."

As the door opens slowly, there stands Crystal, tears streaming down her face, "My hair won't curl right."

"Here, let me help you."

That crisis over with we start again. Ten minutes to take-off time. "Oh, Mom," cries 15-year-old Debbie, "I will never make it.

"Debbie, you have been up for three hours. There is no excuse for you not being ready.

"But, Mom, you just don't understand.

"Five minutes to take-off time."

This time 17-year-old Shelley.

"Mom, surely you would not be so cruel to take off without my hair being dry."

"I smile and say, "Just watch me."

Finally, we are leaving. So, in a flurry of chores; purse, make-up, brushes, rollers, and ribbons, we are in the car. All of a sudden I remember, "Where's Chip?

From the back seats comes an exasperated sigh, "I've been in the car for 10 minutes, Mom."

"All right, good, how does everyone have his/her Bible, title, etc.? Good." So, off we go, praying on the way that the Lord will somehow redeem this day.

This morning seemed to be the usual Sunday morning not too much different from all the rest. As I was sitting in church before the service began, I was thinking back over the morning, feeling a little guilty, wondering how I could have made it better. The Lord gently reminded me of the miracle that took place earlier that morning.

Our pastor had just preached two wonderful sermons the Sunday before on "quarrelling." Not that our family needed it, with three teenage daughters we had not had a quarrel in at least 15 minutes, and that was because they were still in church.

The children were all getting dressed and suddenly, spontaneously a quarrel between the two eldest began. I sighed and thought as I put the last dish in the dishwasher, I wonder if those sermons had as much effect on our members as did on my family.

I started back to the bedroom to get dressed and a miracle took place right in front of my eyes. My eldest daughter had walked back into her sister's bedroom and said, "Debbie, I'm sorry I yelled at you." And then another miracle happened. It was almost more than my heart could stand. Debbie replied, "I'm sorry too, Shelley."

Thank You, Lord, for giving your Ordinary people extraordi-

nary days. This has been one for me and I thank You for it. Just between You and me, Lord, now it is our secret. I feel sorry for my husband because he did not get to witness the miracle that took place today while he was off "pulling himself together" before church.
Case Studies for Analysis and Reflection

Case 1: Richard and Barbara

Richard and Barbara were married in 1952. Richard is 51 years old, Barbara, 50. Richard is a lawyer and earns $70,000 per year. Barbara has been a housewife all these years and has given her energies to rearing their four children.

They are oldest to Kathy, 29. Barbara has a degree in elementary education from a Christian college, but can't get a job. Her husband is in law school, and has given full time to his studies. Barbara has worked for a department store, but with a view of "giving" and "doomed" (the no longer knows whether she is doing them some good) them money many times. They had to car e when the first baby came there was no hospitalization. Richard had to come up with the money for the hospital bill as well as the c ose for a washing machine and baby furniture.

John, 22, dropped out of college to take on the "no nuclei" cause full time. He works for a leftist newspaper, never goes to church, and seldom com municates with his family. He married once, but was divorced six months later.

Steve, age 20, never got interested in high school or church. He spent his teen years tuning his guitar and playing for a not-quite-successful rock group. Once a week he cleans a half-mile to the youth hostel. Now he has moved into a commune. He often calls home for money and if Richard and Barbara don't give him the money, he threatens to cut off communication forever or to take up drug dealing if they fail to send any money.

Davy, 17, is a bit unusual. He goes to church sometimes. He is also into poetry and yoga. He is very thin and seldom eats. He goes to a private Christian high school. But Richard is worried be cause David thinks Anita Bryant is "perfectly awful." He plans to enter a Christian college in a few months. The tuition alone is $1,000 per year. Work? David wouldn't know how to get it. He can't find the money somehow.

Richard's father is dead. His mother, age 79, has moved in with him and Barbara. A great many tensions have resulted. Richard's mother feels quite free to criticize Barbara. After a clash (the mother) locks herself in her room and won't talk to anyone but her son, Richard thinks Barbara "very Christian" about the whole thing, most of the trouble would be avoided.

Barbara's parents are alive, but they are in very poor health. They can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community. It is, of course, very expensive. After a month her parents can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community. It is, of course, very expensive. After a month her parents can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community. It is, of course, very expensive. After a month her parents can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community. It is, of course, very expensive. After a month her parents can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community. It is, of course, very expensive. After a month her parents can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community. It is, of course, very expensive. After a month her parents can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community. It is, of course, very expensive.

Richard and Barbara have hired a housekeeper to look after them. Barbara feels guilty about asking Richard to support her parents since she doesn't work. But she bitterly reasons that she owes it him for what she has to put up with from her mother. Richard has become irritable, nervous, and is nursing an ulcer. The few firms business has dipped, and the boss has just hired his son starting him with the same rank as Richard.

Here is Richard at 51 earning $70,000 per year. He should be on easy street. Everyone thinks he has money—especially the church finance committee. But if he lost his job, he would be unable to meet current expenses four months later.

One day Richard and Barbara stop by the pastor's study. "Do you have time to talk with us?" he asks.

Analysis and Reflection

1. If you were to role-play the counseling session which begins just as the case study ends, which character would you choose to play? Why?

2. What would Richard say was the "real" problem in his life? What would Barbara say? If the pastor asked them to list their three biggest problems, what would each list?

3. What do you, their counselor, think the central problem is? Is there a central problem?

4. If you were to advise Richard and Barbara and couple to take one step toward working out the problem, what would it be?

5. Which of the following do you think will happen first in Barbara's life? Richard's life?
   a. Initiate a divorce
   b. Be divorced by the spouse
   c. Suicide
   d. Nervous breakdown
   e. Serious physical illness
   f. Run away, just disappear
   g. Begin drinking
   h. Other

6. Think of your Sunday morning service last week. Mentally review the music, prayers, announcements, and particularly the sermon. Suppose Richard and Barbara had attended. What would Richard's and Barbara's response have been to the various elements of the service? Would their responses be:
   a. bored
   b. inspiration
   c. disgust
   d. encouragement
   e. anger

7. If you were to prepare a service for next Sunday with them in mind, what elements would you build into the service? What would your sermon title be?

8. How could you bring the resources of the Christian faith to Richard's and Barbara's predicament? What scriptures could help? What books? What Christian truths (theology) could you apply? What devotionals, resources, other help? How could you bring the church as a "community of faith" to their rescue? What ministries in your own church are set up to deal with the kinds of problems Richard and Barbara have? Would you seek to involve Richard and Barbara in any type of service through your church? Why?

9. Who, that is, what persons in your own congregation, did you think of while meditating on this case? If you called them today, what would you try to do for them?

CASE II: Fitness for Ministry

In calling one evening on an attractive divorced, you respond to what you perceive just as the more advances and you embrace her for a moment. Soon this act is reported by her to your church board. A meeting is called and you are confronted with the report of this incident. Some board members say that your touching her in this way—the phrase used is "making erotic overtures"—casts doubt on your moral fitness for the ministry. At the very least, they say, it casts doubt on the adequacy of your judgment.

A. What would you say to the board?

B. Acknowledge the indiscretion; assure the board it will never happen again.

C. Suggest that she misunderstood your intentions, which were simply to show warmth and concern.

D. Indicate my strong feeling that she in creating a tempest in a teapot over a totally insignificant action.

E. Deny the action, suggesting she seems to be projecting her own problems upon me. Other. (Please describe.)

B. What was your objective or purpose in answering "A" as you did?

C. What was your rationale or underlying theory in answering "A" and "B" as you did?
The Ministry of the Spirit in the Life of Prayer

By Alex R. G. Deasley

Scripture: "And in the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weaknesses. For we do not know how to pray about what we should pray. But the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groanings which cannot be expressed in words." Romans 8:26.

I. BACKGROUND

The verse quoted stands out with a certain distinctness from its context as constituting the sole reference to prayer in the sustained argument contained in Romans 7:5-25. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that some English versions set them off without their surrounding contexts. The question as to what prompted Paul to speak of prayer specifically at this point will occupy us later; our immediate concern is to determine the general reference of the verses and the specific examples which might be placed within. Without attempting a thorough treatment of the eighth chapter, it will suffice to draw attention to two features which provide the general guidelines for interpretation.

Romans 8:26 is frequently (and not unfairly) described as Paul's classic statement of the ministry of the Spirit in the life of the Church. In particular, the eighth chapter stands in stark contrast to the earlier references while both deal with similar themes—deliverance from the law of sin and death (6:17-18; 8:3-4), and the new life of righteousness and holiness (6:12-13; 8:12-13). The section contains within it a developed expression of the relationship between the believer and the Spirit of God. In contrast, the verses refer to the believer's relationship with the Spirit. While Paul is mentioned repeatedly in chapter eight, he is not in this particular context. There is this peculiar comparison with the Spirit in chapter eight that the Holy Spirit is present in the context of the Spirit's ministry in the lives of the saints. Paul has continued to stress the presence of the Spirit in the lives of the saints, and the reference in Romans 8:26-27 is brought out in the context of the Spirit's ministry in the life of a believing individual. The passage begins by placing the use of the word "Spirit" in the context of the "perfect" relationship between the believer and the Spirit of God. The presence of the Spirit in the life of the believer is described as a gift of grace, a sign of the believer's adoption into God's family. The section then goes on to describe the ministry of the Spirit in the life of the believer, and the relationship between the believer and the Spirit of God is described as one of trust, reliance, and intimacy. The believer is urged to "groan" and "suffer" as a sign of their dependence on the Spirit of God. The passage concludes with a statement that the believer is "freed" from the power of sin and death through the ministry of the Spirit. The section then goes on to describe the ministry of the Spirit in the life of the believer, and the relationship between the believer and the Spirit of God is described as one of trust, reliance, and intimacy. The believer is urged to "groan" and "suffer" as a sign of their dependence on the Spirit of God. The passage concludes with a statement that the believer is "freed" from the power of sin and death through the ministry of the Spirit. The section then goes on to describe the ministry of the Spirit in the life of the believer, and the relationship between the believer and the Spirit of God is described as one of trust, reliance, and intimacy. The believer is urged to "groan" and "suffer" as a sign of their dependence on the Spirit of God. The passage concludes with a statement that the believer is "freed" from the power of sin and death through the ministry of the Spirit.
body stripped off. Rather our desire is to have the new body put on, to be changed into His likeness, that we may be like Him when He appears (1 Cor. 15:42, 43, NEB). In the absence of this, however, the believer groans, but he does not groan in a spirit of despair (Rom. 8:26). Paul concludes this section by asserting that the hope of such a final transformation is the hope in which we were saved (Eph. 1:3). Paul understands as containing an element of paradox: Paul speaks of salvation as if we were saved (as the Greek says we have been saved) and yet with a future reference ("in hope"). As Barrett expresses it, "we have not been saved absolutely, but only in hope." Yet to say we are saved in hope is not to say we hope we are saved; it is to say that we were saved with the confident expectation that the salvation God had begun in us He is able to bring to completion (Phil. 1:6). Hope is thus linked not only to faith but also to continuance, "if we hope for something we see not, we wait for it with patience." (verse 25). To quote Barrett again, "To live as a Christian is to walk by faith, not by sight. (2 Cor. 5:5). Hope is thus an essential element in the life of a Christian in God's future, rather than in the present."

C. The Groaning of Paul (verses 25-27)

The penultimate strand of Paul's progression of thought is reached in the verses that are our particular concern. The creation groans for emancipation, believers groan for redemption; and the Spirit speaks up the groaning of God's children and makes it His own. Although the word groanings does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, there is a fair inference that this idea was in Paul's mind from the start, the first clause of the sentence: "the Spirit helps us..." These beautiful and eloquent words by the Spirit are for us. Taking verses 26 and 27 as a whole, we have Paul's literal and explanatory statement (verse 26a) followed by three explanatory state- ments concerning the groanings of the creation (verses 26b-27a), a description of the answer (verse 26b), and an explanation of the result (verse 27). We may consider the paragraphs as follows:

I. The introductory statement constitutes the bridge that carries over from the groanings of thecreation to the groanings of the Spirit in the believer (verse 26a). The term weakness seems to refer not so much backward to the groaning of the believer who arise from his only partially redeemed body: and this body's groanings (v. 18), but forward to a condition of weakness that Paul is about to discuss, namely, weakness in prayer. Paul may speak of weakness in the believer because of his understanding of weakness (1 Cor. 3:19). Whatever the case may be, the Spirit helps us. According to Sanders and Headlam (p. 55), the Greek words translated "helps" are a loan word that means "to take hold of at the side so as to support;" the same term is used in the Vulgate ("assistens"). Paul's point is that in moments of deepest frustration, when prayers are not answered, it is the Spirit who creates a work of art. The "affliction of the material is, as we say, an unrelenting prayer for the release of the divine life within us."

2. A description of the answer (verse 26b). The Spirit takes what is done by the groanings of the creation too deep for words" (NASB). Paul does not say that the Spirit groans; it is we who groan in the frustration of our ignorance in knowing what to pray for. But the Spirit catches up our inarticulate groanings into His own unuttered groanings. He has no need to speak, for God "knows what is the mind of the Spirit." (verse 27) without having to be told. The suggestion made from time to time and championed vigorously by some, that Paul, speaking in tongues as a prayer language conse- quently does not fit (see Rom. 8:26). "The point is," says Barrett, "that communion between Spirit (filled with the Spirit) and God is im- mediately and divinely established."

3. To quote John A. T. Robinson "The Spirit takes them (i.e., the groanings of the creation which can be called the "groanings of the general affirmation") as it were and talks them over with God, as a result of that, he then takes them (i.e., the groanings of the creation which can be called the "groanings of the general affirmation") as it were and talks them over with God, as a result of that, the Spirit makes his own. He actually uses our groanings as a substitute for his own and it is this that is in the moments of our deepest frustration in prayer, when our groanings are not answered. Luther sees these very things as our invitation to God to do for and through us the things we desire. Likewise, in the same verse where marble or clay are an invitation to the artist to create a work of art, the invitation of the material is, as we say, an unrelenting prayer for the release of the divine shape within us."

How Prayer Achieves Its Goal

I. When Our Weakness Is Admitted (verse 26b)

No matter what cramps or inhibits our spirit when we approach God in prayer, the Spirit helps us. Rather, our desire is to have the form, that is, the content of the prayer. We then ask the question, what is the goal of prayer? Paul answers this question by saying, "This arises from the fact that prayer is to God rather than to men." The idea is to point out that God is the object of prayer, not men. The purpose of prayer is not to be heard by men, but by God. The idea of praying to God is that God will give us the strength to bear it (2 Cor. 12:9). That is a perfect instance of ignorance in prayer? should we pray for the removal of our burdens, or should we pray for strength to bear them? Luther wrote it as follows. "It is not a bad and a good sign of the future of prayer. Because God's counsel will be far excels our expectations."

II. From Exegesis to Exposition

It is a truism that there is no one way in which a passage must be treated homiletically to the exclu- sion of all others. As we have noted in Section 2-C above, that is, by taking the four statements in the order in which they come. However, what is to Paul a passing illustration may be a burning question in the spiritual life of some Chris- tian, and could therefore be approached profitably from that angle. Such an approach might yield the following:

III. When His Intention Is Accomplished (verse 27)

God's intention and purpose in this prayer is that we pray with the confidence that He will respond. This is possible, not based on our understanding that is too weak always to know what God's will is, but only when God's will is something we have found and displayed at every point, and this has made possible by giving us His Spirit who (among other things) helps us in our prayer (vers. 26). This has been the great conundrum of prayer as the divine principle. Paul's whole conception of the Christian life as one in which there is a constant, simultaneous movement of prayer and the Spirit. Our very instinct is to pray the gift of the present grace of God. And He who is God, for we can and we must pray by that same Spirit.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire. (Luke 22:42: "To love and to be loved is God's way.")

Prayer is the falling of a tear. (Luke 6:21: "When next God is near.")

Prayer is the simplest form of speech when we do not know how to pray. (Rom. 8:26: "The suppermost straws that reek.")

Prayer is the majesty on high. (Rom. 8:26: "Once, when not in the same vessel, and our groanings are not answered, it is the Spirit who creates a work of art."

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath, The Christian's native air, a seven-watchword at the gates of life, He enters heaven with prayer. (Rom. 8:26: "Prayer is the path of prayer, Thess. 1:2: "Let thee teach us how to pray.")
CAR EXPENSE DEDUCTIONS

by Paul Fitzgerald
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Regardless of how your church reimburses you for automobile mileage, how you handle your car expense deduction on your tax return can make a significant impact on your tax liability. In past years, you were able to alternate between using the actual expense method or the standard mileage rate in figuring your auto expense deductions. However, when you filled your 1981 tax return you discovered that much of the flexibility of the past is now gone. If you purchased a car in 1981, you have an entirely new way to figure the depreciation under the actual expense method called Accelerated Cost Recovery System (ACRS).

You may wish to continue to use the standard mileage rate method to compute your deduction on Form 2106. While this is the least complicated since you are only required to keep a record of the business miles traveled, it may cost you additional taxes you could avoid by using the actual expense method or the new expensing method in lieu of an ACRS.

The ACRS method of figuring depreciation will allow you to deduct the following percentages of your cost basis for a car placed in service after 1980 (regardless of the month placed in service): 1st year, 25 percent; 2nd year, 38 percent; 3rd year, 25 percent. For example, if you purchased a car without a trade-in that cost $8,000, placed it in service as late as December, and used it 60 percent for business mileage, your first year's depreciation deduction under ACRS would be $2,000 ($8,000 X 25%). If the percentage of use (60 percent) remained the same for all three years, the deductions for the following year would be $1,600 ($8,000 X 20%), and for the third year, $2,400, or a total of $6,000. If the percentage of business use changes in subsequent years, you must recalculate the basis for depreciation. There is also an alternate ACRS method under which you may use a straight-line method over a recovery period of 3, 5, or 12 years.

The IRS has also changed some of the rules with respect to how the standard mileage deduction can be used. The maximum mileage rate is only available on the first 10,000 miles per year with a reduced amount thereafter. After the taxpayer's car has 60,000 miles of business use at the maximum standard mileage rate, the automobile is considered fully depreciated, and only the lower standard mileage rate applies for miles thereafter. This 60,000 mile rule is effective for all tax years after 1978 and is without reference to the age of the vehicle.

Using special rules allowing “expensing in lieu of ACRS” may provide an even larger tax benefit for vehicles placed in service after 1981. Under these rules, a taxpayer can treat a limited amount of the cost of the vehicle as a currently deductible expense. Beginning in 1982 and thereafter, the deductible amount is the lesser of $5,000 of the cost of the vehicle; for 1984 and thereafter, $7,500; and for 1986 and thereafter, $10,000. Assuming the facts in the previous illustration, you will be able to deduct in 1982 $5,000 of the $8,000 cost as a current deductible expense and $600 under ACRS ($3,000 X 20% X 25%) plus take an investment tax credit (a dollar for dollar reduction of income taxes) of $180 ($3,000 X 6%).

A new or used car purchased by a minister for church business during a tax year may qualify for investment tax credit. Using the ACRS rules for three years property, the tax credit is 5 percent of the cost basis of the car (reduced by any expensing in lieu of ACRS as above). This is a one-time tax credit (dollar for dollar reduction of income tax) for that vehicle, which may be better than a deduction. Should the vehicle be sold prior to the end of the three-year period, only part of the investment tax credit must be returned; the full amount is never lost as in the prior law.

The tax consequences of using an automobile for church business has become more complicated under the new tax laws. However, for ministers who are willing to keep careful records and carefully analyze their expected automobile expenses, there is a very clear opportunity to reduce income taxes by making the appropriate choices. The right choice can only be the result of knowing the rules and how they apply.

(For information contained in this article is of a general nature. It is not offered as specific legal or tax advice. Each church and individual should evaluate their own unique situation in consultation with their personal legal and tax advisors.)
CHILD ABUSE

Preaching Portion: 1 Pet. 2:23

Theme: A Message After Christmas

Introduction: Child abuse is not a very pleasant subject to mention, especially after Christmas when so much goodwill has filled the air. Yet incidents of parental neglect and physical abuse, which elevate parent to God on the rise. Billboards appear saying, "Child abuse is not the worst thing that can happen to a child." Hospital signs read, "Who would hurt a little child?" There is another kind of parent that we need to think about too: Christ child abuse, spiritual child abuse. We are like new parents if Christ has been born into our hearts. The child is ours to take care and rear. Surely, no father or mother in either right mind would want to abuse this privilege. Hence the paradox—We are new parents in Christ too and need to crave pure, spiritual milk to grow up in our salvation. As fragile newborn infants we need the milk.

I. FOOD

1. Without proper food adults can die in weeks; infants without months.
2. Nourishment in Christ needs food too—spiritual food. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Deut. 8:3).
3. Messages from God's Word, the milk of spiritual food.
4. Paul, metaphor of himself: "We were gently among you, as a nurse bearing her children..." (1 Thess. 2:11.)
5. Make up our minds to eat as well as Christians. Food is basic; we need spiritual food.

II. PROTECTION

1. Jesus was in swaddling clothes for warmth, 20-30 days. Hence the need for family to protect them from hostility.
2. Philip is a basic requirement for infants.
3. The Church is something of a greenhouse, an incubator giving life atmosphere, warmth, light, and nourishment we need to grow up.
4. Churches need not to be perfect in order to be effective—greenhouses may have a few broken windows yet still give the protection a plant needs.
5. Christians who neglected the church will suffer from exposure.

III. TRAINING

1. Mary and Joseph trained Jesus—kind in language, manners, the Scriptures.
2. Athletes, scribes, artists, cooks, musicians, train.
3. As Christians we need training in prayer, worship, love, and obedience, in areas where understanding and mystery do not just happen or come naturally.
4. There is a cost of discipleship to achieve a meaningful maturity.

Conclusion: Let's treat with care the new life God has given us. We will not be guilty of spiritual child abuse. Let's look at our spiritual growth needs: such as food, protection, and training so that we can have the best possible atmosphere to grow up healthy in our salvation.

PLAYING AT RELIGION

Preaching Portion: Mt. 11:16-17

Introduction: Jesus compared many people of His generation to children playing games on a village street. The two games they seriously played were "wedding" and "funerals." The games varied according to the moods and everyone was expected to join in since the game had been approved. But, it was just a game. Games represent childhood's state of imagination. Unfortunately, many adults are still playing games, many of which are quite sick, and seem to be repeated among themselves. There's the "Let's you and him fight" game which one well up to a tight between others to grab their own position that "people are such boils." There's the "Upstairs" game which is usually played to avoid any kind of emotional closeness. The "Upstairs" game which is usually played to avoid any kind of emotional closeness. "Where is the world you belong? Can't you ever lay your hands on it?" These games are played in countless homes and offices. They keep things in all upheaval.

Jesus was saying here that:

I. MANY PEOPLE DON'T WANT GOD IN THEIR LIFE, SHAPE, OR FORM

1. The Baptist was strict, ascetic (religious type), and people: an easy and enjoyable experience.
2. Jesus was jovial, bright, (wedding party); and men called Him every name they could think of.
3. In it, they say "fire and brimstone." If it's kind, they say "temperate." To Jesus it was comparable to children playing games.

II. IT IS TIME FOR THOSE WHO REGARD RELIGION AS A GAME TO GROW UP

1. Religion is not something that only a few people do, but something they use to get ahead, or get cheered up, or get a little teen spirit true.
2. When religion is a game it is easy to fall into lives, anonymous to every passing whom, tackling everything:
3. An enterprise always depends on name and names and women, who are not playing games.
4. The church is made great only when religion is more than a game.

III. CHRISTIANITY IS A JUDGMENT IN TRIFLERS

1. Like the foolish man who built his barn and then died, who thought that his barn was and yet was not.
2. Opportunities are not always, serenely regarded by children, but they assume high value as adults.

Conclusion: Regardless of what we are doing, God is not playing games. We are to be found and men have gone off in search of other things. We can see the arrogance, frustration of childish games. It is.

WHEN WE SEE HIM WITH OUR WHOLE HEART, MIND, AND STRENGTH THAT WE FIND HIM; THEN UPON THEM WE ARE MERELY PLAYING GAMES.

NOT EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSES

Preaching Portion: Mic. 4:1-3

Introduction: This parable tells us that evil is not just here, but here to stay. The security of evil is one of the wonders of the world. Jesus establishes the innocence of our Heavenly Father by saying "an always hath done this while men slept; Evil hath swallowed up establishment and kindness and goodness napped. Part of life's secret is found in sleepingness. Finding weeds among the roses (or the grass among the wheat), experience. No field or emitter is a field or emitter at this moment. What are we going to do when we discover the weeds? This parable positions us to:

I. LEARN TO LIVE WITH IMPERFECTION

There are no perfect people, perfect institutions, or perfect activities.

II. APPEARANCES ARE DECEIVING

1. What looks like what often turns out to be weeds. It is easy to be misjudging that all intelligent and all pleasant things advertised are deceptive. That what the world calls "glamorous (roses) often turn out to be thorns."
2. Isaiah said, "Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which does not sustain life?"
3. There is no substitute for the real things.

III. THE FRUITS ARE THE JUDGMENT

1. What comes forth from a vine is the definition of the vine. The fruit has its place among the leaves, but it is the vine to which it is attached.

Conclusion: Regardless of what we are doing, God is not playing games. We are to be found and men have gone off in search of other things. The children's games are playing and we are the parents, to those in authority. God is not playing games, but it is also snuggled within the bad plant which may take the neighbor's life too. This is the 

4. That God is Sufficient:
   (a) God depends on no one—He is able to take care of themselves. That is quite un
   (b) God does not "need" work, desires over our glory, nor our love. There is no in
   (c) God was not deposed, deprived, no less God. None of this detracts from the

IN THE BEGINNING GOD

Preaching Portion: Gen. 1:1

Theme: A Message on the Nature of God

Introduction: These simple but profound words are among the greatest ever penned. The words not only astonish; they instruct both positively and negatively. Certain things about God are secured and certain things are taught.

I. THE WORDS "IN THE BEGINN

1. The Religion of Atheism—if God was "in the beginning," then God exists.
2. The Philosophy of Materialism—which says that matter is all that is, and identities human beings as one among inanimate objects, there is nothing really spiritual in the universe.
3. The Philosophy of Pantheism—which says the words let us God exist apart from the material universe, forever.

II. THE WORDS "IN THE BEGINNING..." AFFIRM

1. That God is Self-existent.
   (a) That He cannot be revealed to another or Himself to us, but is forever unknowable to us, what God means that:
   (b) We are only going to be of that branch. After a period, and any good thing anybody else up there who can help us?
   (c) Those who believe the revelations to the God who reveals himself here at this point, and we who have to do. And it is good to know that we can be comforted and invited to God, to us and invited to come to God.

THE GOD WHO RESTORES

Preaching Portion: Joel 2:25-27

Introduction: Joel is a prophetic m-
HOPE IN A DAY OF DESPAIR

by George W. Privett

Epistles 3:14-21

Good day to you! You’ve come this far by faith, but don’t keep it. That’s the best way to travel! The men and women of Hebrews 11 did not know it, because they believed. They believed God. Hebrews 11:6. The promise of life after death. Nothing is made by persons of faith. Amos 4:12. A CBS television report located on the site of the first testing area of our atom bomb in New Mexico. As four decades have passed, a matter of concern for all who know God and his purpose for the world. The promises in the Apocalypse, Walter Cronkite mentioned the crucial problems facing us today. The enemy is a personality that is the author of the destruction. He seems to be afar, but God is near. The soldier in the war of life. He is not a personality, but a power of destruction. All the wars that we have fought in the past, there have been the actual, the real war. It’s not a real war, but a political war. It’s a spiritual war, a war of ideas. The idea of war, the idea of peace. The idea of destroying the world. The idea of preserving the world. The idea of destroying the home. The idea of preserving the home. The idea of destroying the family. The idea of preserving the family. The idea of destroying the future. The idea of preserving the future. The idea of destroying the world. The idea of preserving the world.

The Promising of Energy

The supreme lesson of life, uttered Emerson, “Is to know who you are, and to be yourself.” The gift of that word, the gift of that thought, the gift of that promise. The gift of the promise.

The Practising of Events

Edward Cornish says that if current trends continue, the following description of the church will apply to God’s people of the year 2000: more unified, more standardized, more alluring, more leisurely, less integrated by family and kinship, less oriented toward industry, longer lived. More mobile, less religious and less educated.

A CBS television report located on the site of the first testing area of our atom bomb in New Mexico. As four decades have passed, a matter of concern for all who know God and his purpose for the world. The promises in the Apocalypse, Walter Cronkite mentioned the crucial problems facing us today. The enemy is a personality that is the author of the destruction. He seems to be afar, but God is near. The soldier in the war of life. He is not a personality, but a power of destruction. All the wars that we have fought in the past, there have been the actual, the real war. It’s not a real war, but a political war. It’s a spiritual war, a war of ideas. The idea of war, the idea of peace. The idea of destroying the world. The idea of preserving the world. The idea of destroying the home. The idea of preserving the home. The idea of destroying the family. The idea of preserving the family. The idea of destroying the future. The idea of preserving the future. The idea of destroying the world. The idea of preserving the world.

The Planning of Effort

Why follow the herd in fear? Do a better thing—follow the Shepherd without doubt, the Christ. His government is as bright as his promises of God.

A plan for an effective future must begin with dreaming God’s dream and seeing His victory. To do violence to the future when we cramp it, bankrupt it, rob it, either through ignorance of God’s vision for us, or through the influence of the world. To do violence to the future when we cramp it, bankrupt it, rob it, either through ignorance of God’s vision for us, or through the influence of the world. To do violence to the future when we cramp it, bankrupt it, rob it, either through ignorance of God’s vision for us, or through the influence of the world.

Essential to our effort is to stay in the favor of God. From this, life like this and life like that. His grace and power are necessary to our effort. He does this through “His power which is at work within us” or “the power which doth energize itself within us.” Paul seems to be saying, "If you think I became carried away in my praying for you (v. 14-19), just look at the gnawed horizons set before us by the great God we serve!"

Our thesis is that the promise of God can propel the obstinate Christian into a remarkable future. What God promises, He performs; what He commands, He enables. In this "towering destruction," as F. Bruce calls the situation, the promise of God is "aboundantly," we see a mountain of promise based on the fact that God is able. His ability to carry out His purposes is not limited by human powers of comprehension. In dealing with this theme, Bashi Miller says: (1) that the idea of God’s divine providences is born out of tragedy; (2) God is able to transmute petitions into realities; and (3) God is able to bend insignificant lives into the broad channel of the divine will." As Oswald Chambers reminds us, we do not calculate without God. He tells us through His Word to "go into all the world" (i.e., we can’t do it alone, He adds, "I am with you always") (Matt. 28:20). The field of faith distrusts the promises, looks away from human inadequacy to God’s power, and cries, "He is able? Certainly, ‘Christianity is not a creed to be received; it is a power to be tapped.’ It all begins when we discover Christ as a living reality. "All my life I searched for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow," exclaims Dave Evans, "now I found it at the foot of the cross."
YAHWEH ELOHEH YISRAEL, “YAHWEH, GOD OF ISRAEL”

Yahweh is the name God revealed to Moses at the time of the burning bush incident at Mount Horeb, and was also conscripted by God Himself at that time to be the name of His people and their covenant-keeping generations.1 The frequent use of Yah as the personal name of God throughout the Old Testament Scriptures is evidence to substantiate the fact that Yahweh was the name God had given to Israel in old Testament times.2 Further, Yahweh is one of the two most frequently used divine names of the Old Testament, used perhaps even more times than the other name Elohim, “God.”

The name Yahweh (Hebrew consonants, YHWH) is spelled transliterated Jebovah in earlier English translations, with the modern transliteration Lord rendered LORD in more recent English translations such as the NAB and NASB. NIV. The rejection of the transliteration Jehovah in earlier English translations, and the acceptance of the transliteration Lord is based on two aspects of the history of the use and written transmission of YHWH called the tetragrammaton, God.

First, it was during the post-exilic period (after 538 B.C.) that this divine name was given to Israel, so that it could not be uttered on human lips lest it be profaned.3 This notion that the name of God was to be held sacred was revolutionary, and it is translated as YHWH in English Bibles. Further, the name Yahweh is traditionally used in relation to his mighty acts in behalf of his people, and suggests that the name is something not just given to the people but that such a title suggests God’s self-existence and his self-sufficiency. Further, the name Yahweh is used only in relation to his mighty acts in behalf of his people, and suggests that the name is something not just given to the people but that such a title suggests God’s self-existence and his self-sufficiency. Yahweh is often translated as God’s name in English Bibles.

Second, the Exodus narrative gives no hint as to the origin of the divine name Yahweh except, of course, that it was a direct divine disclosure to Moses. Various studies are attempts to demonstrate the occurrence of this name in non-Jerusalem sources, such as the Midrashic or the Talmud. But none has been able to show conclusively any direct connection with use and understanding of the name Yahweh. Further, the discussions on the possible Kenite origin of the name Yahweh remain tentative and inconclusive due to lack of suitable detectable evidence. Further, recent studies show the inclusion of certain scholars to identify the root of YHWH as that of y-h-w-h (or, the second spelling h-y-h), “to come, to pass, come into being;” or, also, the forms y-h-w-h (the first person who is imperfect), y-h-w (the first person imperfect), or the forms y-h-w (the first person imperfect) are to be read as “I am,” not “I shall be,” the metaphysical mistakes. The latter person reordering “I am” is the word that comes into existence.” This translation tends to place emphasis on the dynamic and direct spirituality of YHWH in His relationship with the natural and historical happenings in his created world.

Fourth, the name Yahweh was intended to be a special name to Moses and Israel from that time onward. It was to be a replacement of the name Shaptha, “God Almighty,” as clearly suggested by the statement of Exodus 5:2, 6:2, by My name, “YHWH, I did not make myself known to them.” (NASB). The point here is not so much whether or not the name YHWH was in vogue as a divine name prior to the burning bush incident, but rather, whether or not it was in use at any time in the revelation of God. The name Yahweh reveals itself and therefore becomes known in a new or different light or in a new and different way. Yahweh was himself known previously. This is therefore an interesting episode that was intently on the purpose of His showing in behalf of His people Israel. Thus, the name YHWH opens up the higher; the deeper dimensions of the divine will for the people of Israel.

The Special Covenant Name Exodus 6:3 and 24:1-8

The name Yahweh was revealed in connection with the special covenant that was established to make a covenant with Israel. Moses referred to the covenant he had made with the Tabernacle. and the people of Israel through the priestly ordinances (cf. Genesis 12:7; 15:18) and their plight under the yoke of Egypt. It had established at His own initiation and on


ew Testament Word Studies

by Ralph Earle

Hebrews

At Sunday Times and in Divers Manners

The first three words of this Epistle are polymers in kai polytopos. Kai, of course, means “and,” that leaves us the two adverbs: “At Sunday times” and “in Divers Manners.”

By His Son (1:2)

The Greek reads an who-literally, “in a son.” This emphasizes the character of the new revelation in Christ; it was a personal revelation. The previous revelations had been in a time, to a place, by a person, and had different aspects, types, and symbols. But an inspirational revelation cannot always be imperfect one. So at last God sent His Son. Only a personal revelation of a person can be a perfect revelation. Christ is the perfect revelation of God.

The Worlds (1:2)

The Greek says fou eious aiouoi—literally, “the ages.” B. F. Westcott makes this helpful comment: The universe may be regarded either in its actual constitution as a whole (he cosmos), or as an order which exists through time in development in successive stages. Then there are obvious reasons why the latter mode of representation should be adopted here (Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 8).

Dods goes on to say:

He spoke was also poly-
trapezoid, must be in a manner: in modes varying with the message, the messenger, and those to whom the word is sent. Sometimes, therefore, God speaks an institution for instance, the Ten Commandments, which sometimes by parable, sometimes in a psalm, sometimes in an act of righteous judgment. These features of previous revelations, so prominently set type manner but in modes varying with the message, and the messenger, and those to whom the word is sent. Sometimes, therefore, God speaks an institution for instance, the Ten Commandments, which sometimes by parable, sometimes in a psalm, sometimes in an act of righteous judgment. These features of previous revelations, so prominently set

many-sided application to the growing receptivity and varying needs of men (EST, 2:249).

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Case Studies for Analysis and Reflection

(continued from page 47)

seen many young ministers come to this church. It seems that I disagree with each one a little more. They come with better and better ideas every time, and they really don’t want to argue with them. And I kept quiet, I hope you aren’t that way!

A. What would be the general direction of your responsibility to him?

1. Show him that I am different by telling him about my concept of ministry.

2. Remind him that since the world is constantly changing the church must change to minimize the alienation of the people.

3. Help him to understand why my preceding sors did what they did.

4. Encourage him to continue to be open with me, indicate that disagreement can be healthy.

5. Confront him with what I believe is wrong with his arguments.

Other [Please describe.]

B. What was your objective or purpose in answering “A” in the way you did?

C. What was your rationale or underlying theory in answering “A” and “B” as you did?

Case studies and ideas adapted from the Readings for Ministry Project. [5.1.1.3.]

OT Word Studies

(continued from page 80)

The Covenant at Sinai between Yahweh and Israel has several significant features to which we will devote only briefly. First, it was established out of God’s love and compassion for Israel—indeed for the whole world ultimately.

Second, since it was a binding agreement or contract between equals (Yahweh on the one hand and Israel on the other), it is thought by many scholars to be patterned along the general lines of ancient Near Eastern sovereignty treaties.

Third, the laws and ordinances constituting the “Book of the Covenant,” which called for obedience on Israel’s part, were in effect “the way of life” Yahweh graciously promised to Israel (see Deut. 31:12-18). Moses was impressed with the importance of Israel’s laws for establishing a covenant relation between Yahweh and Israel. He has been the recipient of these statutes (Buk- him and judgments (mishpatim) as righteous as the Law (torah; see Deutonomy 5:16).

Thus there was a justified expectation that the observance of the Law was in effect an act of mercy on Yahweh’s part. The covenant of Sinai, while stressing obedience to the Law, was a covenant of grace, an unconditionally initiated covenants must be.

Fourth, “this blood of the covenant” among other considerations was a serious, binding pledge on Israel’s part to be God’s people—indeed to fulfill the conditions of Yahweh’s will.

It is from this point on that the following statement applies, following the special covenant name for God.

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It is from this point on that the following statement applies, following the special covenant name for God.
At least we are one up on the Muslims. They ask folks to leave their shoes at the portals of the mosque. We Christians, on the other hand, are liberal, sometimes out- right, that the faithful park their braves at the church door. And ever since it appears that we ecclesiastes have declared open season on the intellect.

Lately, I’ve been through one of those seasons. There was a long sitting of sermon, various products of various preachers, in which loving God with all of the mind would have unleashed several doubts about the preacher’s preparation, let alone his mental capacity. Accompanying these was uncertainty announcements of trivial matters, put as if their spiritual significance equalled that of the Second Coming, or hustled to the like. There were pastoral prayers laden with implicit doubt of the Lord’s omniscience. “As You know, Sister Johns, we have been to B. H gepersades last evening at 7:15 with double hanger. We’re grateful that she is another beauty, currently there in Room 435 as she awaits surgery at 8:00 tomorrow morning. We remember too, her afghans and will send them each.” Then, toppling off, there’s the banal chatter of those musicians who, “just must say a word” belonging (or whatever).

Some of this stuff is laughable. But it can be laughed off by people who so desperately need what we, by the grace of God, can offer. In fact, it may be quite lethal, spiritually.

It’s obverse who helped me to see this by way of his story about Friar Berthier, editor and principal writer for the Journal de Tours, a Jesuit organ aimed at debunking Voltaire and his ilk.

Friar Berthier has just gone on a carole trip from Paris to Versailles and the only plausible explanation of his malady is a veritable case of the hiccups. The latest issue of the Journal has been pirated by the very air around him. Effer to make a secret of a great joy to the conclusion of the dying Berthier. Finally a volunteer is found, a passing pastor whose philosophy is, “Advancing pastor’s philosophy is, ‘Advancing in the light of the truth is the right of all who are free, to explain the gospel or anything about Christian worship— particularly preaching.’

Let’s be honest. While fault is it, really, when someone gives away from our service saying of either the preacher or of the worshippers, “Food!”