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THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

—proclaiming Christian Holiness

inside this issue:

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF EVANGELISTS
The Editor

"HE SHALL NOT ... BE DISCOURAGED"
T. W. Willingham

THE SCANDAL OF DIVISION STREET
Harold R. Crosser

WE TRY HARDER
Floyd L. Schwanz

MINISTERING TO MEMBERS WHO ARE MOVING
Charles D. Crow

THE

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CONTENTS

- 1 The Care and Feeding of Evangelists Editorial
- 3 "He Shall Not... Be Discouraged" T. W. Willingham
- 5 The Scandal of Division Street Harold R. Crosser
- 6 The Pastor Deals with Damaged Emotions . . . C. S. Cowles
- 9 We Try Harder Floyd L. Schwanz
- 11 John Wesley on Sin (Wesleyana) Roy S. Nicholson
- 14 Ministering to Members Who Are Moving. Charles D. Crow
- 16 Cadillacs, Steak, and Mansions Practical Points
- 17 The Preacher's Wife and Her Husband . . . Ruth Ann Polston
- 20 Portraits of Paul (III)—
Prisoner of Christ J. Melton Thomas
- 21 A Letter of Love From Jerry White
- 22 The Starting Point C. Neil Strait
- 23 Looking at Our Lord in Luke Ralph Earle

.....From the.....**EDITOR**

The Care and Feeding of Evangelists



THE PEOPLE OF OUR PLANET can become greatly concerned when they realize some form of life is threatened with extinction. They write letters, organize groups, pass laws, and publish articles about the *endangered species*. When such concern is not too late, the threat ends and life is preserved.

Today's holiness evangelist should be getting the same kind of concern as other "forms of life" which are threatened with extinction. He is the forgotten man of the ministry. His work takes him away from his home and family, and he is never in one place long enough to form lasting friendships. He is denied the joy of observing the fruits of his labors, for he must go quickly to other fields for whatever harvest may be gathered.

He has very little "ecclesiastical clout." He does not sit on denominational boards, is rarely nominated to serve as a college trustee, is not elected a delegate, nor given a stipend to attend conventions. He is ignored by some, criticized by others, and must at times feel about as lonely as anyone God has ever called to preach.

All this he can accept without complaint. After all, he is doing the work he believes to be God's will for his life. He is not afraid of adversity. God has chosen him for the task, and he loves it.

But he must be wondering what the future holds when he realizes there is a growing number of local churches who never plan a revival nor call an evangelist.

Could it be that his existence is threatened, and that he is today an *endangered species* among us? It is time to take a careful look at what is happening to the evangelist.

With proper "care and feeding," he can be saved.

As a beginning, we must get back to a genuine appreciation of the value of his work. We need special times of revival and evangelism. This is not in any way a denial of the exciting wave of interest in personal soul winning. Thank God for every Christian who has finally become aware that he is a *witness!* But personal and mass evangelism go together;

they do not compete with one another. To abandon either would be like attempting to fly with one wing.

We must not forget that "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). All are in this work for the perfecting of the saints (equipping them) for the work of the ministry. Evangelists are very much a part of it.

In a recent survey, an overwhelming majority of young men training for the ministry reported they were won to Christ in revivals, camp meetings, and special campaigns. Should we abandon a strategy that has worked so well?

Planning a campaign and calling an evangelist, of course, are not enough. Special mention from time to time will keep the importance of the campaign before the people. Special times of prayer should be set aside, and the evangelist should be informed that he is the object of the love and prayers of an expectant people. Can you imagine what this will do for his own faith as he makes his plans to come?

When he arrives, is made to feel the warmth of the welcome that awaits him. He is given a comfortable room where he can have times of privacy, prayer, preparation, rest, and study. He can perform his work at peak efficiency if he is housed adequately. The church is the loser—and souls may be lost—if he is cramped unnecessarily in his quarters.

Provide well in advance for the financial arrangements. Many churches find it profitable to set aside funds each month in an "evangelism budget," so the full burden does not fall upon them at the time of revival.

Expenses of the revival, and a generous honorarium should be met without undue pressure on anyone. Set the amount of the evangelist's offering with due consideration to the fact that he does not have any paid vacation, does not receive any salary when he is unable to work because of illness, does not have his home and the utility bills provided for him, and does not work at all during certain times of the year when churches never slate campaigns.

Some churches add the social security tax to the remuneration they pay him, and some send the evangelist a check at Christmastime. If each church he served during the year were to do so, what would happen to his morale and to his depleted personal funds?

Those wishing to take a further "step of love" might offer him the luxury of a telephone call home to his wife and family at church expense. His appreciation, when compared with the actual expense of such a gesture, would be unbelievable.

And what of the type of thoughtfulness demonstrated by Pastor Jerry White? When he learned from his evangelist, Rev. Chuck Milhuff, that the family pet had been killed by an automobile, he took the time to write to the Milhuff children (see p. 21). A 10-cent postage stamp and 10 minutes of time paid for an act of love that the Milhuff family will remember as long as they live.

God has blessed the holiness movement with some faithful evangelists. May their tribe increase. May more men be called and kept busy in this vital work. Their ministry must go on in spite of the neglect that could stamp them out and silence their voices forever.

To us, the present day is cause for discouragement and despair. But the conquering Christ is undisturbed, for His throne is established forever.

"He Shall Not . . . Be Discouraged"

(Isa. 42:4)

DISCOURAGEMENT seems to be the common lot of earth's travellers, but Isaiah sang of one, the Messiah, who would not "be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth" (42:4).

The courage of the Messiah did not arise from the fact that He had had no setbacks and discouraging conditions to cope with. A cursory glance at His career reveals many moments of disappointment that would sink men in despair, but not this Man: "He shall not fail nor be discouraged."

The first dark moment of His life known to us is when the great split came in the heavens, and a third of the angels fell, led by the wisest and brightest of all created beings. It must have been a heartbreaking experience for Christ to see one-third of the angelic host, created at His hand, turn in rebellion against Him and

be "chained in darkness" until the final judgment day.

When every rebel had been brushed from the skies, life went on among the faithful. Then came the decision, "Let us make man." The angelic creative venture had only partially succeeded. Would the man-venture turn out better or worse? Knowing the possibility of a fall, God devised a plan of redemption in advance. Alas! in midmorning the possible became reality; man had fallen. God's children had disobeyed.

Undiscouraged, the Lord set up the long line of redemptive process, and a few availed themselves of it. The masses did not. Fewer and fewer became saints, and the venture almost closed with despair: "The end of all flesh is come before me," said God, but He was not discouraged. He had one family left, and brushing the others into the sea, He began again. Through the dark ages He labored on to hold the faithful steadfast.

To us the word would be "discouraging," but not to Him. He could see beyond the wreck. Then with high hopes Christ came among us—made in all things like us—revealing God in a more perfect way.

The results were limited. The multitudes came and went. Their choruses ran from "Hosanna . . . Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the



by
T. W. Willingham
Kansas City, Mo.

Lord" to the final. "Crucify him, crucify him."

He died in courage, and from His life-giving resurrection was born His Church. It flourished for a time, and then the deterioration set in. Before the death of the great Apostle Paul, false prophets and teachers had already infiltrated the group and led many astray. Even at the door stood "grievous wolves" who would not spare the flock.

Ages rolled by, and then the curtain was drawn from the future. The end period—and apostasy had enveloped the whole world—kingdoms were falling, thrones toppling, "men's hearts failing them for fear," and the dark clouds of judgment were rapidly descending. Still He was not discouraged. He knew that "a remnant" would be saved. Some would be snatched as brands from the burning and would not be lost.

We scan the whole, from the scene in heaven's rebellion to the end of all time, and think of the tragic loss. It could be that He has been viewing it as mountains of ore passing through the mills where the precious gold is refined and the piles of slag brushed out into darkness. We have been told that we have been chosen in "the furnace of affliction," and He may have been viewing the whole as a process of reclamation.

That He has harvested golden grain from the fields filled with tares, we know to be true. The gathered grain will be cause for everlasting joy, while the worthless tares so banished will bring no sense of sadness.

If it still be difficult for us to see why He will not be discouraged, we may gain understanding of His inner courage when we remember that the Highest has promised Him ultimate triumph: "He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:25), and the promise is cause for courage.

To us, the present day is real cause for discouragement. In almost every country in the world, there is insurrection and uprisings. Authority is being ignored, and the rights of others trampled under foot. Powers of all description are being challenged—church, nation, state, county, city, home—and all other forces of law and order are being defied.

To us, these conditions bring discouragement and threaten despair, but not to Him: "He shall not . . . be discouraged." He will set judgment on the earth. Rebellion will be crushed and the rebels banished. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). In this assurance, the Conqueror moves on amid the mad rush of anarchy. He is undisturbed by the tottering thrones, for His is established forever. The ravages of the evil times do not dim His vision of the city He is preparing.

No discouragement for Him! He builds on in the serenity of his own heaven amid the grandeurs of His own creation.

In thinking of Him, we must not forget our position in Him. It has been decreed that we are "heirs and joint heirs" with Him. We should share His hopes, feel His courage, be moved by His faith, and walk with Him amid the fast-crumbling civilizations of the day.

We are not left without warning concerning life's fading picture. He told us of the soon-coming night, and warned us that in the world we would have tribulation, but bade us be of good cheer, for He has overcome the world.

The outlook from His vantage point is gorgeous. Said He, "I am . . . the first and the last." "I hold the keys." There need be no fear—no anxiety: "Be of good cheer."

To one, standing in the holocaust, He said, "Come up higher, and I will

shew thee." That personal call to John is but typical of the call that will come to all: "Behold, the bride-

groom cometh; go ye out to meet him" (Matt. 25:6). Until then, "He shall not . . . be discouraged." Amen.



The Scandal of Division Street

NOT TOO LONG AGO our family went through the distractions and adjustments involved in moving. The new address is on Division Street. I prefer more romantic street names.

I discovered that Division Street is even more divided than its name suggests. Opposite sides of the street are numbered with different series of numbers. On our side we are eight hundreds, while across the way the houses are numbered in the six hundreds.

Calling a tradesman involves explaining to him about the division on Division Street. This causes many puzzled comments and questions. I don't know the answer and I don't feel responsible. But I am curious. However, no one seems to know why our side of the block doesn't correspond with the other side. The reasons have been lost from memory and one can only theorize. Why was our block divided and the next block

numbered consistently?

The division is now more complicated than ever. A crew came around the other day and lettered our street numbers on the curb in gleaming fluorescent white. The division seems to be with us to stay. It is hard to retrace human steps and undo the miscalculations or misunderstandings of the past.

A walk down "Protestant Lane" reveals a multiplicity of numbering that has little rhyme or reason. Ecclesiastically, many of us have lived on the same street for a long time. We have gotten accustomed to the varied numerals and shades of theological belief. To church people the multiplicity doesn't seem so bad. We have smug feelings about our cozy beliefs and comfortable perpetuation of religious idiosyncracies. Sometimes it is a bit disconcerting to discover that the people across the street aren't so different after all. Basic beliefs are common.

The sad fact is that the people with whom we try to communicate about salvation's plan just cannot understand the variations on Protestant Lane. Our organizational numeral system has little reason to the uninitiated and the unconverted. Having not been catechized, they cannot comprehend why so many barriers are formed to the process of evangelism.



by
Harold R. Crosser

Pastor
The Wesleyan Church
Owosso, Mich.



CALL TO SERVANTHOOD

G. S. COWLES, Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Covina, Calif

THE PASTOR DEALS WITH DAMAGED EMOTIONS

AND BEING IN AN AGONY he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44, RSV).¹

He came up behind me quietly, as I visited with people after worship, let out a shriek, and jammed his two thumbs into my ribs. I jerked violently, and whirled on him. He was beside himself with mirth over my sudden discomfiture. I was half beside myself with an avalanche of unpastoral-like reactions. The deed had startled me. I felt my face beginning to flush with embarrassment in front of all the people looking on. But my major emotion was one of stinging rage at our church's "village idiot," who delighted in such pranks. A flood of appropriate responses rushed to my mind. But in a great exhibition of self control, I bit my tongue, responded to his hearty laughter with a sick smile, and passed it off in the spirit in which it was done—as a big joke.

But it was no joke with me. The incident ruined my dinner, as numerous less-than-pious thoughts crowded my brain. My stomach was knotted, my teeth were clenched, and my ribs were sore. I thought about

calling him into my office and letting him have it right between the eyes. I considered possible texts for a biting sermon on proper regard for the person of God's man. For certain, I would ease him off the board and out of any official responsibility.

By that evening I was able to discuss it with my wife, and dramatically acted out the several possible ways I could respond. I overdid it to the point where it struck her funny. She began to laugh. This in turn made me further exaggerate my imaginary conversation with the irresponsible clod.

Soon I was laughing at myself too. With that natural discharge of tension, I was able to sleep—but not without an occasional quickening of breath in the week ahead whenever the incident came to mind.

Such an event—trivial indeed, when considering the gravity of some incidents which shock pastors—poses inevitable theological and spiritual problems for the conscientious pastor. We have lived so long with superlatives in terms of holiness theology that such nakedly raw human emotions are bound to create problems of guilt. How can a truly Spirit-filled pastor react so strongly and so automatically? From whence do these aggressive, destructive thoughts

arise? Should not I have immediately embraced the jokester and thanked God that he had become the agent of testing and blessing to me?

Theologies of the Spirit-filled life tend to be docetic. They fail to take seriously the reality of genuine human emotionality. They seek to lift us to a heavenly place where human actions and reactions will fail to really touch us.

But the overwhelming evidence is to the contrary. Pastors are people first and foremost. When they are startled, they jump. When smitten, they smart. When pricked, they feel pain. When stabbed, they bleed. When rejected, they suffer.

Further, when the emotional wound is not properly treated, it may heal in a deficient manner, or it may not heal at all. It may become a putrid infection, a growing cancer. A pastor's ministry may be crippled, or even prematurely cut short, under the impact of damaged emotions.

Let's face it, the church is not only in a battle—it is the battlefield itself. Pastors, more often than not, are the ones upon whom the full weight of the struggle descends. Pastors sometimes suffer cruel and unspeakable injury. Or they may simply sink under the accumulated weight of disappointment after disappointment.

Jesus was not made of cast iron. He was flesh and blood. His emotions were real and tender. His capacity for well-directed rage was striking. But there in the Garden of Gethsemane His transparent emotionality became vividly visible. The agony which tore at His spirit so tightened the skin on His forehead, and so raised His blood pressure that blood oozed from His pores. This is an uncommon phenomenon, as doctors will confirm, and it certainly reflects an uncommon degree of emotional stress. Therefore, it is of vital importance to me to discover how He handled His

ultimate emergency emotional crisis.

First, He acknowledged the reality of His problem. "Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me" (v. 42, RSV). Jesus faced the cup. He did not try to pretend that its bitter contents did not exist. Nor did He seek mystic flights of spiritual escape. The cup had come to Him, not by His choice or decision, but in the course of faithfully doing the Father's will. He shrank from its implications. He would gladly have had the lion's mouths stopped and the fiery furnace quenched. But no such miracle was to occur.

I find the Psalmist refreshing in the candid and unpostured way he reflects his feelings:

"Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise; for the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause" (109:1-3).

What pastor has not felt this way about his opposition at times? But note the Psalmist's reaction to those who are aligned against him:

"Set thou a wicked man over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned; and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places. . . . Let there be none to extend mercy unto him. . . . Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul" (109:6-20).

The Psalmist's first reaction to those that provoke him is just that—reaction: "Smash them, O God!" But after venting his anger, his frustration, his hostility, at some length, he finally falls breathless and spent before his Heavenly Father, and confesses psychosomatic disorders which

1. From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946 and 1952.

are all too familiar to those who have been shot at:

"I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust. My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness" (vv. 22-24).

Finally, he prostrates himself before God and cries out with a kind of primeval wail: "Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy" (v. 26). Prostrate before the Lord, there is a cathartic discharge of dangerous emotions. Then comes the healing, soothing, restorative power of the Spirit. It is a different man who is able to close the psalm with the testimony: "I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth . . . For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul" (vv. 30-31).

Do not try to draw me out into a theological debate over the Psalmist's aggressive reactions. Admittedly, they are not what they should be. If they were, then there would have been little need to pray such a prayer. It is precisely because he had a problem that he is driven to the point of such spiritual desperation.

I wouldn't venture to surmise God's attitude toward such an honest and open display of feeling. But I fail to see any indication, either here or elsewhere in the Scriptures, that our Heavenly Father cuts us off when we are emotionally distraught and perhaps given to a season of overreacting. But I do know that such potentially destructive feelings are less likely to do permanent damage—either to others or ourselves—when they are frankly faced and openly confessed in the place of prayer. Healing of troubled spirits begins at the point where we, like Jesus, pray the prayer of acknowledgement.

Second, Jesus prays the prayer of relinquishment. " . . . nevertheless,

not my will but thine be done."

Catherine Marshall relates the story of her long bout with tuberculosis. It was after being bedridden for 15 months that she acknowledged her sinfulness, repented, confessed, made restitution, and received forgiveness by faith. A spiritual transformation occurred. But her physical problem remained unchanged. She prayed unceasingly for healing. But it resulted in nothing.

One day a pamphlet was put into her hand that told the story of a missionary who had been an invalid for years. Finally, worn out with futile petition, she prayed a prayer of relinquishment. In effect, she told the Lord that she didn't care if she was sick for the rest of her life, just so long as she could continue to worship and adore Him. Within two weeks, according to the pamphlet, she was out of bed and completely well. Catherine Marshall records her reaction to this story:

This made no sense to me. It seemed too pat. Yet I could not forget the story. On the morning of September fourteenth (how can I ever forget the date?) I came to the same point of abject acceptance. "I'm tired of asking" was the burden of my prayer. "I'm beaten, finished. God, You decide what you want for me for the rest of my life. . . ." Tears flowed. I had no faith as I understood faith. I expected nothing. The gift of my sick self was made with no trace of graciousness.

The result was as if windows had opened in heaven; as if some dynamo of heavenly power had begun flowing, flowing into me. From that moment my recovery began.²

Gethsemane, Calvary, and the Cross have about them a dimension of ineffable divine mystery which forever lies beyond the range of human understanding. We grasp the day of resurrection and the triumph

² Catherine Marshall, *Beyond Ourselves* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), p. 83. Used with permission.

of faithfulness only by faith. Until then, there is no escape from the agony of spirit which always accompanies our personal Calvaries. But there is great relief, sweet assurance, and abundant confidence at the point of our total relinquishment. We lay our armor down, we quit fighting, we cease the struggle. "Nevertheless, not my will . . ."

Third, Jesus prays the prayer of fulfillment. "Not my will, but thine be done." The prayer of relinquishment is not a spiritual cop-out; it is the highest declaration of faith. It is the positive expression of the soul in the dependability and certainty of God's will being done! Though I may not understand why it is that the Cross lies at the climax of faithfulness, I do understand that it all fits

together in God's ultimate purposes. To see this, to sense this, to believe this, releases healing forces which can calm the troubled spirit and heal the broken heart.

Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane distraught, troubled, sorrowful. Jesus came out of the garden relieved, refreshed, and renewed in spirit.

Jesus set His face like a flint and walked straight ahead toward the accomplishment of His assignment. The fire grew hot, the battle raged, people all around began to fly apart. But through it all, Jesus walked with the steady eye, firm footstep, and calm assurance of one in command. He was judged a criminal. Yet He carried himself with the regal bearing and royal dignity of a king.

Faith in ACTION

We Try Harder

By Floyd L. Schwanz*

I WAS IN CONVERSATION again this morning about ministers' children who have the reputation of being undisciplined. Certainly an easy subject of conversation, through the years—"those preacher's kids." But however long the list of "exceptions" of godly ministers whose children have turned against God and the church, we should all be reminded that uncontrolled children are a shame upon our ministry.

"For a pastor must be a good man

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whose life cannot be spoken against. He must have a well-behaved family, with children who obey quickly and quietly" (1 Tim. 3:2a, 4, TLB).**

The parsonage family needs to be a clear witness and example of God's pattern for the home, especially in our society when so much pressure comes that would destroy homes and family life. It seems to me that our Christianity is proved at home with those who know us best. If the parsonage is not a place of love, joy,

**The Living Bible, copyright © 1971, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

peace, patience, courtesy, gentleness, faith, goodness, and discipline—then where? If God is not able to meet the needs of family life, then is the Sunday performance enough to make any difference?

It takes a lot of time to be a husband and father. Several friends of mine have asked how I have time for my family in such a busy schedule. And my answer has become more and more that I don't just *have* time, I *plan* it. I simply reserve at least one night each week for my family. Then if I am sitting in a committee meeting somewhere, and future dates are considered which conflict with my family night, I respond that I have an appointment that night. Of course, if other nights are available for us, and no open ones for the group, *our* night can be shifted without much difficulty. Every Christian parent makes time for his family. But in the parsonage family—we try harder.

The atmosphere of a Christian home is more easily seen and felt than explained. And a great crowd of witnesses waits to see the evidence of our spoken words when they visit the parsonage or when we take our family to visit in their homes. God has called us to be ministers of His gospel, and a part of that calling seems to be to our own family. Every Christian parent makes sure his children learn to obey the Lord's will in their lives and become productive citizens. But in the parsonage family—we try harder.

Another lesson I have been learning is that I am not "the Reverend" when I get home. I am "Daddy" and "Honey." I want to be the spiritual leader, but not so authoritarian that I cannot be a real dad and companion. It takes a generous amount of old-fashioned honesty to break down the walls until my real self communicates with each one in my family in love. Being honest means I must be willing to say I'm sorry when I know I

have been wrong. Christian parents should strive for complete openness and honesty with each other and their children. But in the parsonage—we try harder.

Not only do we train our children to be responsible for their behavior at home, school, church, and community, but we also have responsibility to teach concepts. Our children, perhaps above all others, need to know the scriptural principles we live by, and the reasons for the faith we treasure. A minister's child will be called on more frequently for answers, and therefore needs to have solid, practical concepts.

Perhaps even more important, our children should be known above other Christians as young people who *care*, who really show deep love and concern for others—both older and younger. I cannot imagine a greater *compliment to my ministry* than to have my wife and children anxious to serve those needs which surround them. Of course, every Christian parent encourages attitudes and acts of love. But in the parsonage—we try harder.

Well, we do, don't we?



THANKSGIVING

That fields have yielded ample store
Of fruit and wheat and corn,
That nights of restful blessedness
Have followed each new morn;
That flowers have blossomed by the
paths
That thread our working days
That love has filled us with delight,
We offer heartfelt praise.

Not only for the earth's rich gifts,
Strewn thick along our way,
Her looks of constant loveliness,
We thank our God today;
But for the Spirit's subtle growth,
The higher, better part,
The treasures gathered in the soul—
The harvest of the heart.

—Author unknown

The Preacher's Magazine

Wesleyana



John Wesley on Sin

By Roy S. Nicholson*

JOHN WESLEY, the keen theologian and productive writer, left no volume of systematic theology for his followers. His teachings and conceptions are scattered throughout his voluminous works, especially in his *Twenty-five Articles of Religion*, his *Standard Sermons*, and his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*. But a veritable host of theologians from Wesley's day to the present have written much about what *they* interpret Wesley to have said, or intended to have been understood on particular subjects. Those who are interested in a careful analysis of divergent representations of Wesley's views are referred to Robert C. Chiles's *Theological Transition in American Methodism: 1790-1935* (New York-Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965). Chiles devotes especial attention to three areas of Wesley's theology: revelation, sin, and grace.

A careful study of Wesley's teachings concerning sin will clearly show that he makes definite distinction between original sin and its manifestations in specific sins. Harold Lindstrom made this pertinent observation: "An investigation of his [Wesley's] conception of sin should throw

some light on the place and purport of sanctification in his theology" (*Wesley and Sanctification*, p. 19).

The fact of sin—both original or inbred sin and outward sins—Wesley held to be indisputable. He grounded his teaching on Scripture and reason. He considered "opinions" as mere "feathers, not worth the naming" (*Works*, XII, p. 478).¹ One of his longest treatises is on Original Sin. Of its fact he was convinced, but as to "how it is transmitted," he perceived that there were inscrutable mysteries connected with it. To one correspondent who had asserted that "there are but three opinions," Wesley replied: "I care not if there were none. The fact I know, both by scripture and by experience. I know it is transmitted; but how it is transmitted I neither know nor desire to know."

Wesley's Definition of Sin

"Nothing is sin, strictly speaking, but a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. Therefore, every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin; and nothing else, if we speak properly. . . . There may

1. All references to *Works* are to *The Works of John Wesley, Complete and Unabridged, A Reprint Classic* (Grand Rapids, Mich., Zondervan Publishing House).

be ten thousand wandering thoughts, and forgetful intervals, without any breach of love, though not without transgressing the Adamic law" (*Works*, XII, p. 394).

Wesley recognized that there was a difference between deliberate and consciously willed acts, and involuntary acts and inadvertencies which did not violate the law of love. As a consequence of Adam's fall there were weaknesses in his posterity which prevented their perfect conformity to the nature Adam possessed prior to the Fall. (See Gen. 1:26-28, 31; 2:15-3:24).

For this difference, as Wesley understood it, one is referred to his words in his pamphlet, *Thoughts on Christian Perfection*, published soon after the Conference of 1759. Wesley here used his well-known method of questions and answers, and one of the questions was: "How can every thought, word, and work be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistakes?" Wesley answered:

"I see no contradiction here . . . Indeed, I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes til this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now think at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs, which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes *thinking wrong*, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption . . . Yet where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a *sin*. However, it cannot bear the rigour of God's justice, but needs the atoning blood" (*A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, pp. 42-43).

Wesley did not hold a light (or low) view of sin, for in this small treatise on *Christian Perfection* he declared: "Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ." He then immediately writes: "All men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action."

To the inference expressed that if men lived "without sin" they would "exclude the necessity of a Mediator." Wesley replied: "Far from it . . . The best of men still need Christ in His priestly office to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings (as some not improperly speak), their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds, for these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need the atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend, may appear from the words of St. Paul: 'He that loveth hath fulfilled the law; for love is the fulfilling of the law' (*Rom.* 13:10). Now mistakes and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body are in no way contrary to love; nor, therefore, in the Scripture sense sin . . . I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions . . . Such transgressions you may call sin, if you please; I do not, for the reasons above mentioned." (*Ibid.*, pp. 44-45).

"Outward sin"

Wesley sounds a very positive and clear note on what he designates "outward sin," by which he means "sin, according to the plain, common acceptance of the word; an actual, voluntary transgression of the law; of the revealed, written law of God; of any commandment of God, acknowledged to be such at the time that it is transgressed." In considering 1 John 3:9 in Sermon XIX, "The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God," he says: "But 'whosoever is born of God,' while he abideth in faith and love, and in the spirit of thanksgiving, not only doth not, but cannot, thus commit sin. So long as he thus believeth in God through Christ, and loves him, and is pouring out his heart before him, he cannot voluntarily transgress any command of God, either by speaking or acting what he knows God hath forbidden: So long that seed which remaineth in him, that loving, praying, thankful faith, compels him to refrain from whatsoever he knows to be an abomination in the sight of God" (*Works*, V, pp. 227-28).

With perfect candor Wesley acknowledges that "a difficulty will immediately occur; and one that to many has ap-

peared insuperable, and induced them to deny the plain assertion of the Apostle, and give up the privilege of the children of God." Wesley cites three cases: David, "who could and did sin; yea, the horrid sins of adultery and murder"; Barnabas, who sharply contended with Paul and forsook him "to whom he had been in so immediate a manner joined by the Holy Ghost"; and Peter (Acts 10:38; Gal. 2:11-14), who plainly acted contradictory to his previous position and convictions, as instances of the fact that "one who was undoubtedly born of God" may lapse into sin. Then Wesley asks: "But how can this be reconciled with the assertion of St. John (1 John 3:9) if taken in the obvious literal meaning that 'whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin'?" (*Ibid.*, pp. 228-29).

His observation on this question is that "So long as 'he that is born of God keepeth himself,' (which he is able to do by the grace of God) 'the wicked one toucheth him not!' But if he keepeth not himself, if he abide not in the faith, he may commit sin even as another man . . . He did not 'keep himself,' by that grace of God which was sufficient for him. He fell, step by step. First, into negative, inward sin . . . Then into positive, inward sin, inclining to wickedness with his heart . . . Next, he lost his faith, his sight of a pardoning God, and consequently his love of God; and being then weak and like another man, he was capable of committing even outward sin" (*Ibid.*, p. 230).

"From grace to sin"

With his usual attention to the logical steps from grace to sin, Wesley outlined "the unquestionable progress from grace to sin." "Thus it goes on, from step to step. (1) The divine seed of loving, conquering faith, remains in him that is born of God. 'He keepeth himself,' by the grace of God, and 'cannot commit sin.' (2) A temptation arises; whether from the world, the flesh, or the devil, it matters not. (3) The Spirit of God gives warning that sin is near, and bids him more abundantly watch unto prayer. (4) He gives way, in some degree, to the temptation, which now begins to grow pleasing to him. (5) The Holy Spirit is grieved; his faith is weakened; and his love of God

grows cold. (6) The Spirit reproves him more sharply, and saith, 'This is the way; walk thou in it.' (7) He turns away from the painful voice of God, and listens to the pleasing voice of the tempter. (8) Evil desire begins and spreads into his soul, till faith and love vanish away. He is then capable of committing outward sin, the power of the Lord having departed from him" (*Ibid.*, p. 231).

Answering a perplexing question

Before concluding this sermon (XIX), Wesley gives a "clear and incontestable answer to a question which has frequently perplexed many who were sincere of heart: 'Does sin precede or follow the loss of faith? Does a child of God first commit sin, and thereby lose his faith? Or does he lose his faith first, before he can commit sin?' I answer, Some sin of omission, at least, must necessarily precede the loss of faith: some inward sin: But the loss of faith must precede the committing of outward sin" (*Ibid.*, p. 232).

One who is truly "born of God" needs to learn "to follow that direction of the great Apostle, 'Be not high-minded, but fear.' Let us fear sin more than death or hell. Let us have a jealous (though not painful) fear, lest we should lean to our own deceitful heart . . . Even he who now standeth fast in the grace of God, in the faith that overcometh the world, may nevertheless fall into inward sin and thereby 'make shipwreck of his faith,' And how easily then will outward sin regain its dominion over him! Thou, therefore, O man of God! Watch, that thou mayest pray without ceasing, at all times, and in all places; pouring out thy heart before him! So shalt thou always believe, and always love, and never commit sin" (*Ibid.*, p. 233).

A study of Mr. Wesley's views on the power of sin, from which believers may be delivered; and the practice of sin, which is inconsistent with faith in Christ, and therefore must be avoided; and the sin which exists in believers but does not reign in them after they are regenerated, but from which they may be fully saved (cleansed); and what he taught that being saved from all sin involved, must, by lack of space, await subsequent treatment.

There is a tremendous upheaval in the lives of families who move, creating reactions that are similar to a death in the family

Ministering to Members Who Are Moving

WHEN DOES THE MINISTER let go of his responsibility to a family that is moving to another community? All too often a minister ceases to be actively involved in the life of a family as soon as they let it be known they will be leaving.

This is an understandable reaction. The work of a pastor is filled with the tasks of finding new prospects, contacting them, getting them to visit the church, inviting them to accept Christ as their Saviour, and incorporating them into the fellowship. Added to that are the time-consuming tasks of administration, building programs, maintaining the existing physical plant, financing, public relations, the regular services, preparing sermons, working with department heads, board meetings, Sunday school staffing, and overseeing any special areas of ministry the local congregation may have in operation.

The programs and ministry of a local church should aid in accomplishing two objectives: (1) to seek out the lost, and add new believers to the congregation, or (2) to build up the faith and effectiveness of the established membership.

Unfortunately those two objectives and the many time-consuming obligations of the pastorate combine to work against investing much time in families that have

declared their intention to leave the fellowship. The tendency is to have a farewell, say a lot of nice things, and let them go.

Consider for a moment the tremendous amount of upheaval involved in such a move. All of the things that the individuals in the family have come to accept as normal will change. Actually, moving creates many of the same reactions that are caused by a death. Each member of the family will undergo some of the trauma of identity crisis.

Persons involved in the decision to move will adjust more easily.

The move may have been brought about by a promotion of the husband in his job—in which case he will have the excitement of new responsibilities to help him adjust.

If the wife has played an active role in the decision, she will have an easier time. Many times, the husband must precede her to the new community to begin work. This leaves her with all of the packing, and later the unpacking. While she is packing she must care for her children who are nearly always upset by the process. It is a very heavy burden and she needs support.

The very young children may well adjust the best. Most of their relationships are within the home and will move with them. Yet it is still a confusing time, and one in which they may receive less attention than they need.

School-age children, up to the teens, make friends quickly and have few fears about the consequences of the move. An exception to this would be the child who has moved before and experienced problems.

Teen-agers need special attention.

They have been reaching outside the family for their closest relationships. Depending on age and maturity, they may be dating or "going steady." In many cases the move will directly affect the choice of a mate. That is a serious matter and may cause hostility toward parents because of the decision to move.

As a family, the move will determine their financial future. The available housing may prove unsatisfactory. The schools may be better or worse. The opportunities for entertainment will be different. And even more important, the church may be drastically different from your local congregation.

As their pastor, you need to counsel with each moving family. In terms of spiritual and emotional impact, this event is as significant as a marriage or a death in the family. You easily recognize your responsibility to counsel with families in these circumstances.

Your wise and honest counsel at this important time in their life may mean the difference between them finding another church of your denomination, or putting it off and eventually slipping back into sin.

1. Take the initiative. Call and make an appointment to visit with them. They may be too busy to call you, or may even assume you would not be interested.

When you arrive, get to the point. They are busy and the move is uppermost in their minds. They will most often be very open in talking about the move.

2. Listen for areas of need. The problem areas should surface. Many moves are prompted by a desire to escape a bad situation. In such a case you may be able to help them correct the situation and keep them in your fellowship.

It may come out that certain members

of the family need individual help. You cannot help until you discover the need.

Legion are the persons who have said to me, "If I can help, give me a call." Rarely have I called. Those who have made a lasting impression on my life are the ones who have listened for my needs and then followed through.

3. Consider giving them something to tie them to the church and help them in their move.

A new copy of your church directory will have special meaning in a distant city. If you don't have a directory, a copy of the names and addresses of your church families will be invaluable to them for keeping in contact with old friends.

I heartily recommend the little book, *Moving?* by Eldon Weisheit. Order one today for yourself. It is designed to be given to moving families. Dealing with the problem areas of moving, the author supplies strategies for coping with individual situations. The book concludes with "Devotions for the move" and several pages for addresses.

4. Follow through. Find out their new address and contact the nearest pastor. Your denomination may have a service to handle this for you. If so, get the information in before the move so the new pastor can help them get settled.

You love each family in your congregation. You have had the joy of seeing many of them accept Christ and join the church. Don't let them slip out of town and out of the church—and perhaps even away from Christ.

Far too many are lost in the process of moving. You may not be able to save them all, but let them remember you as the pastor who loved them and cared for them—even as they were leaving.

On one of Dwight L. Moody's trips across the Atlantic, a fire broke out in the hold of the ship. The crew and some volunteers stood in line and made a human chain to pass the buckets of water.

One man who knew Moody came to him in high excitement and shouted, "Let's go to the other end of the ship and pray!"

"No, let's pray right here," replied the renowned evangelist. "That way we can help pass the buckets too."

—Selected



by
Charles D. Crow

Department of Evangelism
Church of the Nazarene

Practical Points

that make a difference

Cadillacs Steak, and Mansions

Our speaker last night was a great guy. He had "made it" as a Christian, businessman, and churchman. He speaks successfully to thousands, and shares his experience which is confident, "catching," and contagious. I was challenged to the depth of my being—but my later meditations brought home a little uneasiness about some fundamental questions.

Am I to take the "riches of the Word" as a sign that I can have anything I want if I am willing to pay the price? Will God bring material prosperity to me if I double my tithe? Is the authentic Christian community to be a "cult of prosperity"? Does the history of the Church authenticate such a point of view? (Francis of Assisi didn't think so.) Is Rev. Ike right, after all, and the dollar bills will flow down like "rivers of living waters"?

You know, Son, it seems to me that it is a matter of priorities. I am not sure that I want to pay the kind of price that will assure me of a Cadillac, a steak every evening, and a mansion. They may come at the expense of other values. I'm not sure that the teachings and life-style of Jesus were talking like this at all!

Surely Jesus was not against wealth. He did not censure money—only the love of money. There have always been a few in the history of the Church who had much and gave greatly. The church needs them. They have come both "by night" and by day. I am not

knocking it, for I could use a little more myself.

But without apology, there is another side of the coin—the way of the Cross. And thousands in "that day" will feel that the wealth of His grace has been theirs for a whole lifetime because of following Him!

My guess is that our speaker would have been successful with or without Christ, because of his drive and motivation within a framework of talented endowments. I am also sure that his Christian witness will bless thousands, and I hope he keeps it up—but with an eye consistently on the Cross. It is not that way for all—and God never intended that it should be.

Son, you are starting out well—integrity is still the word. If it is God's will that you be wealthy, I hope that you will pay the price for the Kingdom's sake. But if He should lead you another way, you are wealthy still.

Love,
Dad

Effective Praying

"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt. 6:7).

It is not the arithmetic of our prayers—that is, How many?

It is not the rhetoric of our prayers—How eloquent?

It is not the geometry of our prayers—How long?

It is not the music of our prayers—How argumentative?

It is not the method of our prayers—How orderly?

But how fervent and how believing are our prayers.

—Selected

NOVEMBER

NAZARENE

FOR
PASTORS
and LOCAL
CHURCH
LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission

EARL C. WOLF, Executive Director
DON WILDE, Office Editor

General Superintendent Coulter



Subservience in Leadership

Today, more than ever before, attention is being given to the role of the leader. This emphasis is vital and necessary. New techniques have been developed. New methods of motivating people have been discovered. The Church can profit from a proper understanding and application of those principles which have been tried and tested and proved to be effective in other worthy fields.

Yet with all the available books, courses, and seminars there is often a basic and fundamental lack. The essential ingredient in leadership is too often overlooked. The fact is that at the very center of true leadership there must be a deep sense of subservience.

Subservience and leadership are not really contradictory. If they are held in proper balance, they provide the foundation for usefulness, accomplishment, and genuine service.

No leader in the Church can be trusted who does not feel a deep sense of accountability to God and the people whom he serves. The desire to control, to direct, to achieve must be kept fully committed to the will of God and the members of the body of Christ.

Most disastrous chapters have been recorded in the life of the Church by ministers who forgot that great privilege requires a deep subservience. He who serves best is one who is aware of the deepest obligations. He is not a swaggering, arrogant, independent operator driving toward the accomplishment of his own aims and objectives whatever the cost.

Dr. Samuel Young has often quoted John Wesley to the effect that a preacher's greatest protection is his dependency on the church. When wealth or position remove the necessity of dependence on the people, even preachers are liable to become arrogant, thoughtless, and irresponsible.

Jesus himself lived by this rule. Paul's words are a constant reminder of His attitude. "Let your bearing towards one another arise out of your life in Christ Jesus. For the divine nature was his from the first; yet he did not think to snatch at equality with God, but made himself nothing, assuming the nature of a slave: Bearing the human likeness, revealed in human shape, he humbled himself and in obedience accepted even death—death on a cross" (Phil. 2:5-8, NEB).*

What better example of leadership could we find than this—leadership with subservience!

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Recently a youth group put on a "love fast." They paid \$2.00 each to sit at a table with only rice and water before them. They were to see a film on world hunger and pray for those with not enough to eat, while the money saved from their "fast tickets" would go to help feed some of the hungry.

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What were the feelings of those who had all they wanted to eat? Did they wonder why they were so favored? Did they immediately want to share with those who had none?

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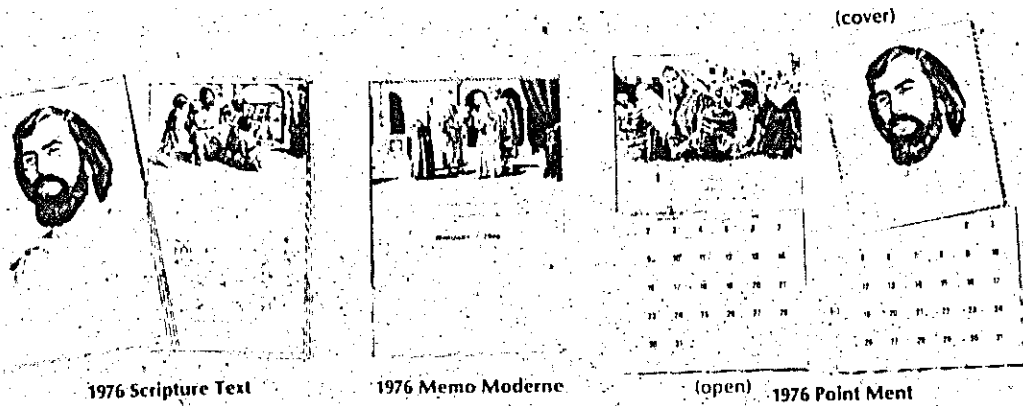
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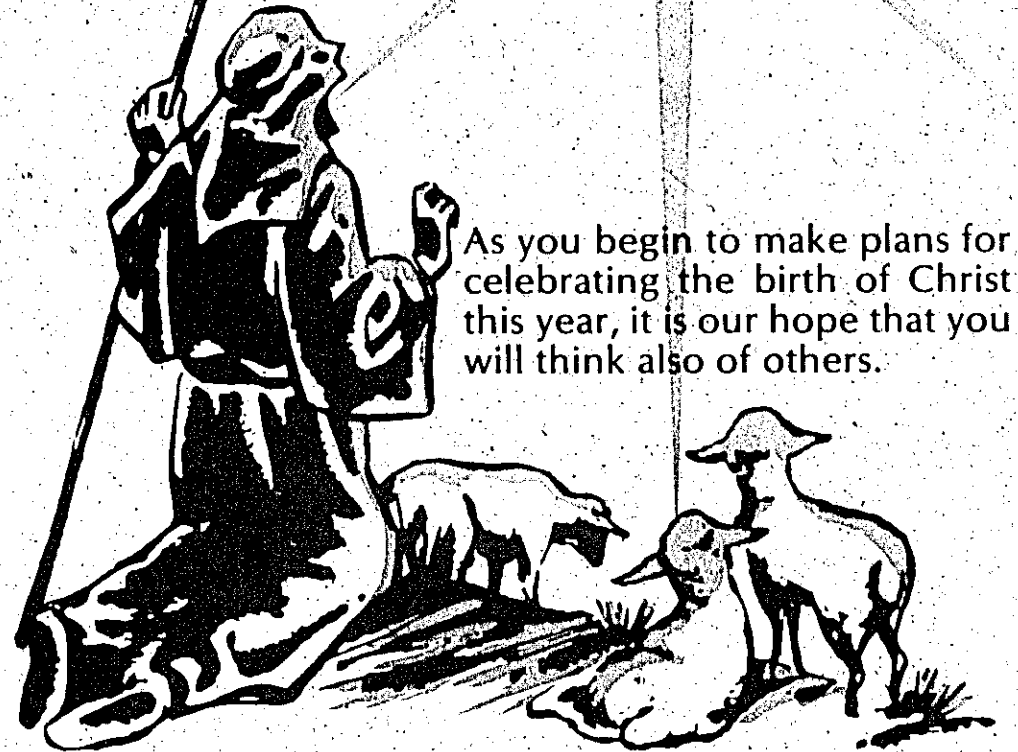
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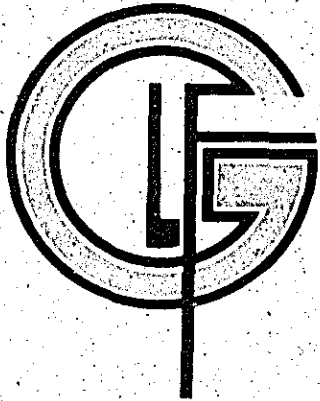


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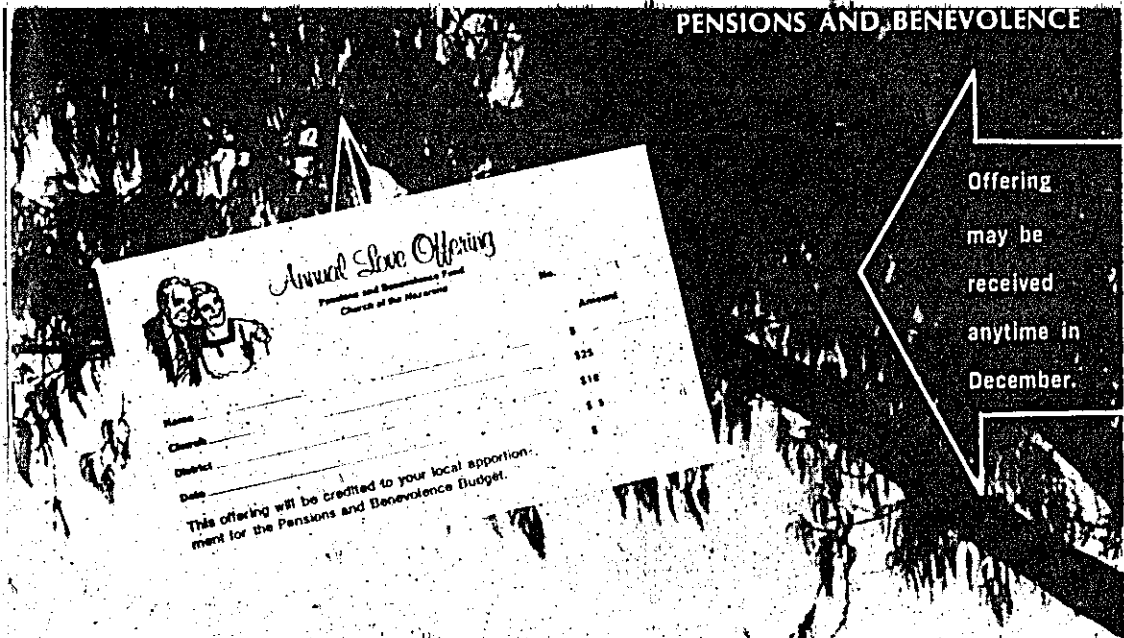
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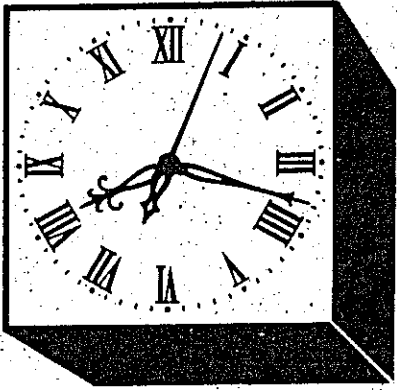
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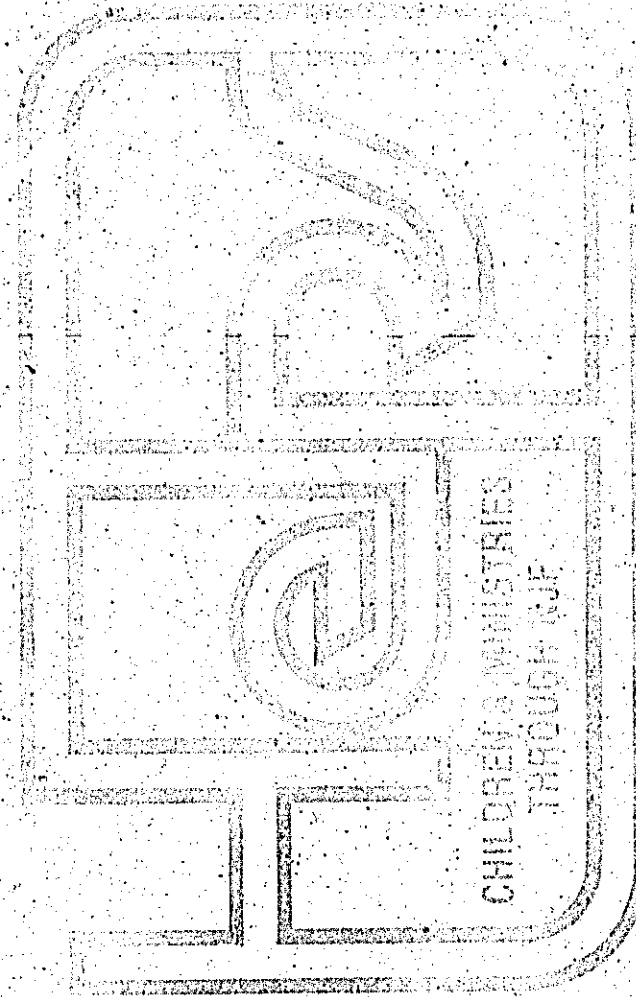


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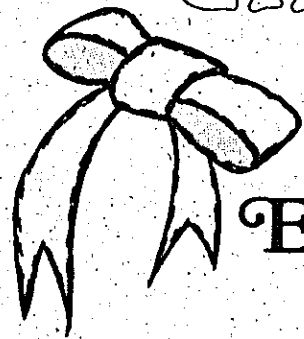
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The Preacher's Wife and Her Husband

BOOKS, BOOKS EVERYWHERE! *How to Make Your Husband Happy, How to Keep Your Husband Loving You Forever.* Seminars in every convention provide more and more material for the aspiring wife.

There is probably no other occupation in which a man engages that a wife is more considered than a minister. A young couple from our church were in Ashury Theological Seminary. Just prior to graduation, they received word that the church board from a certain church was coming to interview them on a given day. The wife was perfectly prepared. Her house was in order, her hair fixed, her good dress on, the baby checked out for the day, and some refreshments prepared.

But the board didn't come, so our friends decided they were not up for consideration. Several days later, the doorbell rang and there stood the dignified church board. The wife's hair was in rollers. She was still in her housecoat. Her house was a mess, and after she had offered coffee, she discovered she was out of it. One of the questions asked was, "Do you play the organ?" She said, "No, and I don't sing either." That was the last of the board—she wasn't sure just which reason it was.

It's about time the pastor's wife

accepted her own real self and stopped trying to compare herself with singers and players.

Let's talk about the things that do count as a preacher's wife—the things that can really make or break her husband's ministry.

A man strongly reflects his wife's estimation of him. Every man needs one person to give him permission to be the person he wants to be. Since it must be someone very important to him, the logical person is his wife.

Many wives have unknowingly taken from the man that permission. They do it by challenging his ideas, his methods, his decisions. This can have such a negative effect on the man's self-image that he feels incapable of making strong, powerful, and important decisions. Little things like telling him where to turn the car, where to make calls, how to handle people, soon make him insecure and unstable. There are many women absolutely unaware that they control a conversation in their husband's presence, and answer questions directed to him. A Christian woman knows well her scriptural role is to submit to her husband "as to the Lord" but he seldom gets treated like the Lord.

I was on my way to my Women's Fellowship to speak on this subject

one day, and passed through my husband's study. His head was bowed at his desk, and just as I passed by the scripture "as to the Lord" went through my mind. I knew if it were the Lord seated there I wouldn't pass without a good deal of love and affection. I got on my knees and to his surprise, I filled him full of my womanly pride and love for him. It made a much better object lesson than all my well-prepared material.

A noticeably happy and affectionate pastor and wife help promote happy couples in a church.

I have found through trial and error that a pastor (or any man) does not want an executive for a wife. She may be a fantastic Sunday school teacher, and have the erroneous idea that her husband's greatest pride will be in her teaching, but not so.

If you're a teacher, leader of a Bible fellowship, or missionary president, put your paper work away when he crashes the door. He's home. Don't be on the telephone counseling with Sister Burden while he's home—any more than necessary. He's home! Don't let him catch you with housecoat on and hair in disarray. He's home!

I didn't know this for a while. When I found out, oh, how the papers flew. My lessons went under the bed. Mrs. Burden was bid "good-bye." I scooped myself up into a calm pose as if I'd been sitting there waiting to spring at him all day when he came in the door. It surely made his coming home, and the hours spent there, a lot more fun.

Your congregation may be just about as interested in what your husband has to say when he's preaching as you are. Here are a few things to ponder.

1. *Where do you sit in church?* I think the preacher's wife should be in the front row. It's an indication of how important you think souls,

preaching, and people are. If it's not life and death to you, it won't be to them.

2. *How do you listen?* Do you take your Bible, pen, and notebook with you to every service, mark your Bible and keep notes? You can set the pace for the importance of the preached Word. It's the highlight of his week. He has lived for this hour. Don't flub it for him.

3. *How available are you to people?* Do you head for the foyer with him at the close of the service and make every person feel special with your warm touch and handshake?

4. *How many services do you attend?* If every service isn't important to you, it won't be to your people. You are a pacesetter. You must be 100 percent, for many laymen to be 50 percent.

5. *How excited are you about your husband's preaching and all the agencies of the church?* I am not a bit humble about my husband's preaching. I think he's the greatest, and I say so.

6. *How much have you released your husband's time?* Do you whine when he's out late, or go to sleep before you have a chance to hear about the "spoils" he's coming home to tell you. A possessive wife is a miserable one.

7. *Do you make him feel he's a good provider?* A "poor-me" attitude from his wife sows seeds of discontent, and makes him wonder if he's really called, or should he look over his shoulder to secular work.

8. *How seclusive are you about your friends?* Do you include all in your circle of love, yet stay willing to "know no man after the flesh"? Loneliness can be a silent tear to a pastor's wife, but she can break the lonely spell by giving herself away.

9. *Do you keep yourself motivated?* Do you purposefully, after Sunday, make notes of needs you

were aware of that you could meet? If you make the phone calls or appointments immediately, you cannot back out of it.

10. *Are you 100 percent positive* about the total life of the church—in

your words, thoughts, actions, and reactions?

If you can answer in a positive manner to these 10 questions, you sound like a pastor's wife anyone would like to meet.

Prayer or Fasting

By Michael Sellars*

THE DISCIPLES CAME to Jesus with a very earthy problem. A neighbor had brought a demented child, with the hope that he might be cured, but the Master's men had failed. Disquieted in their spirits, they returned to Jesus to find out why.

No dilemma is more contemporary than man's inability to solve the problem of evil in his life. In our struggle to conquer sin we usually follow one of two extremities—depending entirely on ourselves, or depending entirely on God. Neither of these is the answer that Jesus gave.

The humanistic gospel of self-sufficiency reached its peak around the Renaissance. Glib verbalism about being "the master of my fate and the captain of my soul" offered moments of hope to struggling sinners, but was diametrically opposed to the teaching and testimony of the New Testament Apostles. Multitudes still believe we can rid ourselves of depravity by analyzing and educating. But, as was true with the frustrated disciples, our strength is no contest for our weakness.

The other extremity is to rely entirely on God, making of Him a sort of cosmic bellhop catering to our every whim. It is important to remember that God never did anything for Israel that they could do for themselves. Expecting God to endorse our laziness often leads to the futility that cries, "I can't help it, that is just the way God made me."

Amanda Smith; that great woman

*Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Rockdale, Tex.

whom God used in such an admirable way, once found that she was unable to hear in one ear. She was anointed and asked God to heal her. She persevered in prayer, but only grew worse. One day she went to see her doctor and discovered that he need only remove a little wax and she could hear again. Old Amanda said, "The trouble was that I wanted the Lord to wash my ears for me." There are plenty of people who want God Almighty to wash their dirty ears or cleanse their hands.

Jesus saw this pattern and explained that some problems in life are solved only by the alliance of human endeavor and divine power. This was one of those special problems, and "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

To pray is to solicit God's total effort. To fast is to immerse oneself into total identity with the problem, thus producing an amalgamation of human effort and divine power. Using this formula, God took a sandy Cephas and created a rock-like Peter. He found a lustful Augustine and formed a celebrated saint. He struck a blaspheming Saul and brought to the world a transformed Paul.

At one point in his "Story of Man," Michelangelo painted the arm of God reaching downward and the hand of man extended upward. A great chasm lay between. To complete that thought, he might have placed a lightning bolt connecting them and labeled it *faith*. In those special cases, about which the disciples asked, it is faith that links the power of God with the effort of man.

Portraits of Paul

III. Paul, Prisoner of Jesus Christ

It is a bit startling to think of Paul as a "jailbird." Yet he was probably in prison enough to qualify for such a term. Acts 16:19-40 is a fine example, and Eph. 3:1 has Paul giving himself this designation, "I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles."

If we seek Paul's viewpoint, however, we find that he does not seem disturbed by his prison experience. Rather he glories in it. He makes it useful. He exhorts Timothy not to be ashamed of him as Christ's prisoner.

There are meaningful etchings of the profile of Paul which are seen in clear relief in his prison experiences.

One of these is the past which brought his experience into sharp focus. Through these experiences he remembers the madness of his pre-conversion days, "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committed them to prison" (Acts 8:3).

He recalls these things at his own trials, and thinks of them as background for accounts of his dramatic conversion. Typical is Acts 22:4 where he recalls, "And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and

women." With pathos he remembers, "... many of the saints did I shut up in prison . . . and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them" (Acts 26:10).

Paul's prison experiences seem to point up the fact that our deeds may become our undoing. They illustrate the fact that reaping follows sowing. They recall the Hamans who hang on their own gallows. They point out that sometimes the past is responsible for the present—or at least adds understanding to it.

The experience of Paul as prisoner points to the proofs which indicate his experience had usefulness.

You see, Paul made use of his prison time. One thing he did was write his Epistles, so that some are known as the Prison Epistles. During this time, also, Paul served his friends as they came to him. "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him" (Acts 28:30-31). Best of all he was forward to win the jailors themselves to Christ—as the one at Philippi illustrates.

What an example for us! An example to make of life's disappointments, God's appointments. To turn life's rough tables into places for serving.

Paul, as prisoner, was brought to a position which made his experience contribute to understanding. Even our Lord understands, because He has become a part of what it means to be human—"For in that he him-

self hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:18)

Paul needed to understand others. Otherwise his tremendous drive would make for impatience with their ineffectiveness and failures. It is significant that as he wrote on behalf of a youth entailed with the law he should speak of himself as "prisoner of Jesus Christ" (Philem. 1).

We, too, understand others as God leads us through suffering such as they have. We, too, as our Lord, learn obedience by the things we suffer.

There is one other thing to be seen relative to Paul's prison time, and that is that there was a Person who made his experience bearable. Even as in other places he is servant of the Lord, so here he is prisoner of Jesus Christ. Not prisoner of the Romans, or even of the Jews, but of Christ.

The fact that the Lord places, or allows us to be placed, makes that place, though difficult, an experience that can be borne. It goes beyond that. Where the Lord places us can be high adventure, and sweet romance. Such experience prompted C. F. Butler to write:

Since Christ my soul from sin set free,

This world has been a heav'n to me;

And mid earth's sorrows and its woe

'Tis heav'n my Jesus here to know.

Oh, hallelujah, yes, 'tis heav'n,
'Tis heav'n to know my sins for-giv'n!

On land or sea, what matters where?

Where Jesus is, 'tis heaven there.

A Letter of Love—

DEAR CHIP AND MELINDA:

Since you don't know me, I guess I'd better introduce myself to you. I am the pastor of El Paso, Texas, First Church. I went to seminary with your daddy, and your daddy just held a revival in my church.

I have two reasons for writing to you. First, I want to tell you how sorry I am that you lost your dog, Moses. I was with your daddy when you phoned him, and he was very sorry too; he really wanted to be with you then, but it was not possible. I don't know why God takes some of the things we love so much, but I do know that He loves you and He loved Moses, and He is doing what is best for us all.

Second, I want to thank you and your mother for sharing your daddy with us in our church. We had a wonderful revival (about 95 people came to the altar). You would have been very proud of your daddy if you could have been here. God is using him in a wonderful way.

I have a boy and a girl too. My daughter, Christal, is 10 and is in the sixth grade. My son, Brad, is six and is in the first grade. I hope you can meet them sometime.

Take good care of your mother, and when you talk to your daddy on the phone, tell him Hello for me, and stay true to Jesus.

I hope to get to meet you someday.

Your friend in Jesus,
JERRY

Editor's note: The above letter is an example of the extra touch of love that can make the Christian way so full of pleasant surprises. It was sent by Pastor Jerry White to the children of Evangelist Chuck Millhuff.



by
J. Melton Thomas
Evangelist
Mt. Vernon, Ohio

THE STARTING POINT



By C. NEIL STRAIT

Pastor, Taylor Avenue Church of the Nazarene, Racine, Wis.

Don't Be Afraid

Here are some thoughts from Isa. 43:1-3, and support for the admonition, "Don't be afraid" (TLB).¹

1. The ransom of God has purchased us—"Don't be afraid, for I have ransomed you" (v. 1).

2. The friendship of God insures His presence—"I have called you by name; you are mine" (v. 2).

3. The power of God protects us—"I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up—the flames will not consume you" (v. 2).

Isaiah 41:10 is a perfect summary of this whole thought: "Fear not, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed. I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."

Pentecost Explained

Rev. A. J. Lown, British preacher, has thrilled many an American listener with his scholarly exposition of Scripture. Here are some comments from Acts 2:14-21—

1. The misunderstanding of Pentecost rejected—"But Peter, standing up with the eleven . . ." (v. 14). Rev. Lown points out that drunken men (the misunderstanding at Pentecost) do not stand, especially early in the morning.

2. The manifestation of Pentecost claimed—"This is that which was

¹ The quotes from Isaiah are from *The Living Bible*, copyright © 1971, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

spoken by the prophet Joel" (v. 16).

3. The ministry of Pentecost is defined—"I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh . . ." (v. 17).

The Preacher's Heart

In the twilight of his life, E. Stanley Jones wrote these words from his beloved India, where he had gone to await his death:

"I have often said half-jokingly that when I get to heaven, I will ask for twenty-four hours to see my friends, and then I shall go up to Him and say, 'Haven't you a world somewhere which has fallen people who need an evangelist like me? Please send me there.' For I know no heaven beyond preaching the Gospel to people. That is heaven to me. It has been, is, and ever shall be."²

Oh, that every preacher had such a wholesome concept of preaching, and that his heart was aflame with the gospel, and the compulsion to tell it!

Some Thoughts on Life— in Christ

Another few thoughts from the mind of A. J. Lown, this time from 2 Cor. 2:14-17.

1. Life as a victory pageant. "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (v. 14).

2. Life as a perfume. "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ" (v. 15).

3. Life as a postman (delivering

² E. Stanley Jones, *The Divine Yes*, Abingdon Press, 1975, book jacket. Used with permission.

letters). ". . . and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (v. 14).

A Drama in Four Acts

Many of us have profited from the talented mind of Dr. James S. Stewart. Here are some good starting points from 2 Tim. 4:11, from a sermon he titled "A Drama in Four Acts."

1. Act I, Recantation
2. Act II, Remorse
3. Act III, Restoration
4. Act IV, Reparation

Help from Psalm 23

Dr. Donald Macleod, Princeton Theological Seminary, shares these thoughts from Psalm 23:

1. Satisfaction—"I shall not want" (v. 1). ". . . belonging-ness versus human loneliness . . . The Shepherd's care is my possession because I am possessed by it."

2. Renewal—"Green pastures," "still waters" (v. 2), and "restores my soul" (v. 3).

3. Realism—"Enemies are real, but there is a Presence which is more real."

4. Optimism—"Darkness and death are constant and unavoidable realities. Encounter then we must, but 'goodness and mercy' are on the winning side."

The Sacrament of Preaching

Here's a word about preaching and the integrity of the person, from David H. C. Read: "It is part of one's belief in the sacrament of preaching that no human being is beyond reach; and it ought to be part of the strategy of the church not to dismiss any human being as psychologically immune to the gospel" (David H. C. Read, *Sent from God*, Abingdon Press, pp. 47-48).

IN THE STUDY



Looking at Our Lord in Luke

November 2

THE POWER OF EVIL (22:3)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 22:1-6

INTRODUCTION: Satan is mighty, but God is almighty. This is the consolation that we have in this world where evil is rampant.

Nevertheless, we need to recognize the presence and power of evil. It is a sinister force that poses a constant threat to us

both individually and collectively. If we are aware of its existence and nature, we can be on our guard against it. "Forewarned is forearmed."

I. THE POWER OF JEALOUSY (vv. 1-2)

The chief priests and scribes—the religious rulers of the nation—were trying to bring about Jesus' death. We are told that Pilate recognized their motive as envy (Matt. 27:18). They were jealous of His growing popularity, as evidenced by

the large crowds that followed Him. This was a threat to their own authority. So they wanted to get rid of Him by death.

The "for" introducing the last part of the second verse seems odd on the surface. The idea is that they had to "seek" an opportunity to seize Him "in the absence of the multitude" (v. 6). For they were afraid that if they openly arrested Him during the feast time, the large crowd of Passover pilgrims from Galilee would mob them. So they had to contrive some way of catching Him secretly.

Jealousy is a powerful emotion. It can be a good thing, as when God watches with jealous concern over His people, to protect them from evil. But it can also be one of the most destructive forces in life. Only God knows how many murders have been due to jealous hate. We cannot allow ourselves to become jealous of others. Perfect love, through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, is the only thing that will effectively guard against any feelings of evil jealousy toward other people.

II. THE POWER OF SATAN (vv. 3-4)

We are told that Satan entered into Judas. Jesus had chosen Judas as one of His 12 apostles to go out and preach the Good News of the Kingdom. How could this close follower of Christ allow Satan to enter his heart and lead him to do such a dastardly deed?

Ultimately everyone is going to be dominated by divine power or demon power. Our only safety lies in our surrendering entirely to the lordship of Christ, so that we may be filled with the Holy Spirit. By complete, continuous obedience to the Spirit, we are guarded against the entrance of Satan into our hearts. Being constantly filled with the Spirit is the only safe way to live.

III. THE POWER OF MONEY (vv. 5-6)

When Judas Iscariot made his offer to betray Jesus secretly to the chief priests and captains of the Temple Guard, they were glad and agreed to give him money. "He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present" (v. 6, NIV*).

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This was difficult while the Passover celebration was going on with hundreds of thousands of pilgrims crowding the streets of Jerusalem and the surrounding countryside.

The power of money is immeasurable. The Bible declares that "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Tim. 6:10, NIV). Every day the truth of that statement is demonstrated in colossal fashion. It would be impossible to count all the crimes that were motivated by desire for money. But at the top of the list would be Judas' heinous betrayal of the Lord who had chosen him as an apostle.

November 9

THE LAST PASSOVER (22:15)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 22:7-20

INTRODUCTION: This chapter begins by saying, "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover." In the Old Testament it is stated that the one-day Passover was to be followed by seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:5-6; Num. 28:16-17). But by the time of Christ both names were applied to the whole period. We know this from Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, who writes: "This happened at the time when the feast of unleavened bread was celebrated, which we call the Passover" (Ant. XIV. 2.1). So here we read in verse 7: "Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed" (NIV). It would be Jesus' last meal with His 12 apostles.

I. THE PASSOVER PREPARED (vv. 8-13)

Jesus told Peter and John to go into



By Ralph Earle

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Jerusalem and prepare the Passover meal for that night. The Jewish regulation was that it must be eaten between sunset and midnight, and by a group of not less than 10 or more than 20 persons. Jesus and the Twelve fulfilled both conditions.

The two disciples asked, "Where?" Jesus said that when they entered the city they would see a man with a pitcher of water on his head. This seems to have been a prearranged signal between Jesus and the owner of the house where they would eat the Passover. The man would be quickly spotted, since men never carried water jars on their heads; only women did.

The reason for these cryptic directions was that Jesus did not want Judas to know where He would eat with His disciples. For had Judas known, the arrest of Jesus would have taken place in the Upper Room. The Master wanted to have an uninterrupted last evening with His disciples around the table.

Peter and John went into the city and followed Jesus' directions. They found "a large upper room furnished" (v. 12) and made the necessary preparations for the Passover (v. 13). This would involve getting a Passover Lamb, having it slain by a priest, and roasting it. They would also have to provide the other ingredients for the meal—bitter herbs and unleavened bread, together with grape juice (commonly called "wine").

II. THE PASSOVER PARTAKEN (vv. 14-18)

Jesus and His twelve disciples reclined on couches around the table, according to the custom of that time. The first thing He said was: "With desire I have desired"—a Hebraism meaning, "I have eagerly desired"—"to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (v. 15). This would be His last time until the Passover was fulfilled in the coming of His kingdom (v. 16).

Following the specified directions for the Passover meal, Jesus "took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves" (v. 17). He was acting as the head of the household in distributing the bread and wine. Probably this was the third cup of the Passover, passed around after the lamb had been eaten. The fourth is generally

thought to be the one connected with the Lord's Supper (v. 20). Christ was following the ceremony the Jews had used annually for over a thousand years.

III. THE PASSOVER REPLACED (vv. 19-20)

The Last Supper became the Lord's Supper. Comparing the four Gospel accounts, it would seem that Judas Iscariot left before this change was made.

Now Jesus gave salvation symbolism to the bread and wine. Taking a loaf (biscuit-sized), he gave thanks and broke it. Then He probably passed it around, letting each one break off a piece. Among the people of that part of the world, even today, eating together is a sign of friendship and fellowship. If you "break bread" with a person you cannot harm him.

As He passed the bread, Jesus said, "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." So the Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death on the cross. And just as the bread we eat becomes a part of our body, so we are to partake of Christ's nature and become like Him.

Taking the cup, He said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." The red grape juice symbolized the blood of Christ, our only hope for salvation.

"Testament" should be "covenant." In those days the most solemn covenants were sealed with blood. That is what Christ did.

Our word "testament" comes from the Latin *testamentum*, which means a "will." But the Jews, unlike the Greeks and Romans, did not make wills. They often, however, made covenants, and that is what the Greek word means.

Rather than speaking of our Bible as divided into Old Testament and New Testament, it would be more accurate to say Old Covenant and New Covenant. The "New Testament" gives us God's new covenant with us in Christ, sealed by His blood (cf. Heb. 8:8-13).

In Christianity, the Lord's Supper has replaced the Passover meal of Judaism. Their celebration looked back to the exodus from Egypt. Our Lord's Supper looks back also, to Calvary, but it looks forward too—to the second coming of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26).

November 16

THE MAN WHO MISUNDERSTOOD HIMSELF (22:33)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 22:31-34, 54-62

INTRODUCTION: Often we feel that others misunderstand us, and this hurts. But the saddest fact is that often we misunderstand ourselves. The truth is that only God understands us fully. So we need to turn to Him in order to get a proper appraisal of ourselves.

I. JESUS' WARNING (vv. 31-34)

The words of verses 31 and 32 are found only in Luke's Gospel. They reveal the gentle side of Jesus, His tender loving care for His own. With great concern He said to Peter (addressing him by his familiar given name): "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you all"—"you" is plural in the Greek—"as wheat." Then He switched to the singular: "But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have returned to me, strengthen your brothers" (NIV).

Instead of saying, "Thank you, Lord, for the warning; please help me not to fail," Peter asserted: "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death" (v. 33). We probably should not say that the leading apostle was speaking in a boasting, bragging spirit. We should give him the benefit of the doubt. Spontaneously, and probably with full conviction, Peter declared that he would die with Jesus rather than desert Him. He meant it, too. But common sense and humility should have told him that Jesus understood him better than he understood himself. He should have taken warning.

In any case, Jesus countered with a straightforward prediction: "Before the rooster crows today you will deny three times that you know me." Where were Peter's ears? Why didn't he listen?

Perhaps we should be asking ourselves, Why don't I listen? Too often we ignore the warnings given to us, and so we fail. We stride forward when we should kneel and pray.

II. PETER'S FAILURE (vv. 54-62)

The first mistake that Peter made—

after failing to heed the Master's warning—was to follow "afar off." But the other side of the coin is this: We should give Peter credit for at least following Jesus to the high priest's house; that is more than the other disciples did.

The second mistake he made was to sit down among the servants of his Master's enemies (v. 55). Because he was with them around the fire in the courtyard, the flames lighted his face and a maid recognized him.

The third, and most serious mistake, of course, was to deny that he knew Jesus. Little did he dream that he would ever do this. But Peter did not know his inner weakness. And we usually do not recognize ours until we are shown it by the Lord—if we are willing to listen to His voice—or some tragic circumstance reveals it.

Luke adds a very poignant touch, not found in the other Gospels: "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter" (v. 61). We may be sure that there was in that gaze a mixture of sorrow, disappointment and tender love. It broke Peter's heart; he "went out, and wept bitterly," with tears of sincere repentance.

It often takes a traumatic experience to bring us face-to-face with ourselves. When everything goes smoothly, we tend to lead superficial lives. But heartache and heartbreak drive us to our knees and to the depths of self-examination and dependence on God.

November 23

THE INNOCENT MAN WHO WAS EXECUTED (23:4)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 23:1-25

INTRODUCTION: During the night Jesus was subjected to an informal hearing at the high priest's house (22:54-65). Then we read: "As soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes"—the three component parts of the Sanhedrin—"came together, and led him into their council" (22:66), that is, a regular meeting of the Sanhedrin: It was against the law for this body to conduct a trial at night.

They got right down to business with

the question, "Are you the Messiah? Tell us" (v. 67). When Jesus countered the query, they asked still more pointedly, "Are you then the Son of God?" (v. 70). Jesus' reply was, "You are right in saying I am" (v. 70, NIV). This was all they needed: He was guilty of blasphemy on His own testimony.

I. THE FIRST DECLARATION OF INNOCENCE (v. 4)

"The whole multitude of them"—that is, the Sanhedrin—"arose and led him unto Pilate." Knowing that the charge of blasphemy, on which they had condemned Him to death (Matt. 26:65-66), would mean nothing in a Roman court, the leaders proceeded to bring against Jesus a three-fold political charge: subverting the nation, forbidding the payment of taxes to the emperor, and claiming to be a king. These were all of them very pertinent matters to the Roman government.

Pilate questioned Jesus and then returned to report to His accusers, who were remaining outside the courtroom (John 18:28). To the chief priests and the people he said, "I find no fault in this man" (v. 4). But Pilate was not interested in whether Jesus had any personality faults. The Greek word does not mean "fault" but "cause for punishment," or "crime." What Pilate really said was, "I find no basis for a charge against this man" (NIV).

II. THE SECOND DECLARATION (v. 14)

Angered by Pilate's attempt to justify Jesus, the chief priests renewed their accusations against Him. They accused Him of stirring up the people throughout the land of the Jews, beginning in Galilee and reaching to Jerusalem (v. 5). When Pilate learned that Jesus was a Galilean, he sent Him to Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee; who happened to be in town at the time. This incident (vv. 6-12) is found only in Luke's Gospel. Probably Pilate hoped to turn over to Herod the responsibility of making the decision regarding Jesus.

But the attempt failed. Herod sent Jesus back with no verdict. So Pilate called together the religious leaders again and informed them: "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the

people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him" (v. 14, NIV). He added for good measure, "Neither has Herod" (v. 15).

III. THE THIRD DECLARATION (v. 22)

Pilate proposed to punish Jesus and then release Him (v. 16). But the people, urged on by the chief priests, asked for Barabbas, a murderer and insurrectionist, to be released (vv. 17-19). When Pilate pleaded further with them to spare Jesus, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him" (v. 21).

So the third time Pilate said to them: "Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore, I will have him punished and then release him" (v. 22, NIV). But the voices of the chief priests and people prevailed. Barabbas was freed and Jesus was led away to be crucified.

Never in history was there a worse miscarriage of justice. Three times Pilate as judge publicly pronounced Jesus not guilty. But he "caved in" under pressure and executed an innocent man. Ever since that Pilate has been condemned at the bar of universal conscience. Worse still, he stands forever condemned at the judgment bar of God for failing to do his duty.

November 30

NEVER TOO LATE IN LIFE (23:43)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 23:39-43

INTRODUCTION: "While there's life, there's hope." This familiar proverb seems to be validated by our scripture lesson today. If ever a case seemed hopeless, it was his. But rescue came just in time. The gospel is the Good News of salvation. Our responsibility is to get it to people before it is too late.

I. A REBELLIOUS ROBBER (v. 39)

"One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: 'Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!'" (NIV). The two men crucified with Jesus are called "thieves" in the other Gospels. But the Greek word is not *kleptai* from

which we get "kleptomaniac." Rather, it is a word which means "robbers," a much stronger term. Furthermore, the Greek word was used in that time in Palestine especially for guerilla insurrectionists against the governments. "Bandits" would be a good translation.

Luke calls them "malefactors" (KJV) which is the Latin equivalent of the Greek "evildoers" (*hakourgoi*). Today we would call them "criminals."

One of these two men was a hard character. He kept hurling insults at Jesus: "If you are the Messiah, why don't you save yourself and us?" He was a Jew, an active militant rebel against Roman rule.

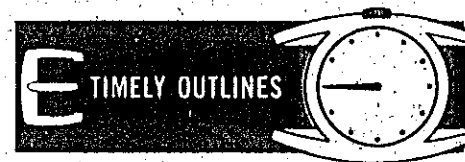
II. A REPENTANT ROBBER (vv. 40-42)

At first this second robber joined his companion in railing against Jesus (Mark

15:32). But he evidently became impressed with the conviction that the Man on the middle cross was innocent and was what He claimed to be. So he rebuked his companion in crime (v. 40). Then he turned his head as best he could and said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (v. 42).

III. A REDEEMED ROBBER (v. 43)

The man's request was more than granted, as is true of God's grace. Jesus answered him, "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The man was assured of his eternal salvation, then and there. Repentance and faith in Christ always bring forgiveness and reconciliation to God—even in the last moments of life. We should not give up on hard cases.



God Is Able

SCRIPTURE: John 6:5-14

TEXT: "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" (6:9).

INTRODUCTION:

1. The word *responsibility* has been defined as "man's response to God's ability."

2. It is not what our life appears to be among so many, but what God can make it.

3. All lives must wait for that touch of the Master's hand.

I. THE NEED WAS GREAT—"When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a *great company*" (v. 5).

A. The spiritual need of man is great.

B. Our needs are always greater than we can provide.

C. Thus, our dependance must lean heavily upon God.

D. Our great need and insufficiency gives God his great opportunity.

II. WHAT THEY HAD WAS SMALL—"Five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" (v. 9).

A. Even with small evidence, we may have great faith in God.

B. Even with small beginnings, we may have a large vision for souls.

C. Even with a morsel of God's bread, we may feed the hungry multitudes around us.

III. ONLY CHRIST CAN MAKE WHAT WE HAVE MEET THE NEED—"And when he had given thanks, he distributed . . . as much as they would" (v. 11).

A. What we have will always be small unless God can touch it. "Jesus took the loaves."

B. Jesus must first have possession with our consent.

C. It is God that meets the need and gives the increase. "They were filled" (v. 12).

D. God always blesses us in return with more than we give. "They filled twelve baskets" (v. 13).

J. WALTER HALL, JR.

A Seeking World

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 6:24-34

TEXT: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (v. 33).

INTRODUCTION:

1. Men are groping for life's true satisfaction.

2. They seek for the physical provisions to satisfy the seeking heart.

I. SEEK GOD EARLY

A. "Those that seek me *early* shall find me" (Prov. 8:17).

B. How early?

1. Before sin has left its devastating scars.

2. Before God's tender voice grows faint.

3. Before you grieve His Holy Spirit.

II. SEEK GOD EXPECTANTLY

A. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find" (Luke 11:9).

B. Seek, knowing that He may be found.

C. Seek, knowing that He can meet your very deepest need.

D. Seek, knowing He is waiting for you.

III. SEEK GOD EARNESTLY

A. "He is a rewarder of them that *diligently* seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

B. His reward is for the earnest seeker.

C. His reward is for those who have but one desire—to find Him.

IV. SEEK GOD ENTIRELY

A. "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with *all your heart*" (Jer. 29:13).

B. A heart-centered search.

C. A determined search.

D. An entire (undivided) search.

V. SEEK GOD EXPEDITIOUSLY

A. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found" (Isa. 55:6).

B. We must seek the Lord while He is available.

C. It may be spiritually fatal to wait for "a convenient season."

D. We must respond while His presence is near.

E. "Behold *now* is the accepted time" (2 Cor. 6:2).

J. WALTER HALL, JR.

Outlines for Pentecost

By Derl G. Keefer

Gift of the Holy Spirit

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:38-41

TEXT: "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (v. 38b)

The gift of the Spirit:

I. Is preceded by genuine repentance (v. 38)

II. Is promised to all generations (v. 38)

III. Produces genuine revival (v. 41)

After Pentecost— The Striving Fellowship

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:42-47

The fellowship striving:

I. To learn (v. 42)

II. To communicate (v. 42)

III. To be open (v. 43)

IV. To help (vv. 44-45)

V. To worship (v. 46)

VI. To grow (v. 47)

Living Expectantly

SCRIPTURE: 2 Pet. 3:11-19

TEXT: "You ought to live holy and godly lives" (2 Pet. 3:11b, NIV).*

Holy people live expecting:

I. A new life (v. 14)

II. Godly patience (v. 15)

III. Godly security (v. 17)

IV. Stability (v. 16)

V. Growth (v. 18)

VI. His Coming (v. 12)

VII. A new home (v. 13)

Victory After Pentecost

SCRIPTURE: Gal. 5:16-25

TEXT: "Since we live in the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25, NIV).*

*From *The New International Version*, copyright © 1973 by New York Bible Society International. Used by permission.

- I. Victory Needs Adequate Power (vv. 16-18)
 A. Power comes by action
 B. Power comes by desire
 C. Power comes by love
- II. Victory Needs Freedom from Works of the Flesh (vv. 19:21)
 A. Freedom from impurity
 B. Freedom from wrong attitudes
 C. Freedom from wrong outward actions
- III. Victory Needs the Holy Spirit
 A. Victory is in the fruit of the Spirit
 B. Victory is in step in the Spirit
 C. Victory is living in the Spirit

AT THANKSGIVING—

*Count your blessings instead of your crosses,
 Count your gains instead of your losses,
 Count your joys instead of your woes,
 Count your friends instead of your foes,
 Count your courage instead of your fears,
 Count your health instead of your wealth,
 Count on God instead of yourself.*

What Is Real Thanksgiving?

It is the Pilgrim Fathers giving thanks in 1621, not because they had so much, but because they had come through drought, starvation, and death.

It is Abraham Lincoln issuing the first general Thanksgiving Proclamation, October 3, 1863, during the darkest days of the Civil War.

It is Job saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

It is John Wesley dying, singing, "I'll praise . . . I'll praise."

It is a woman in a charity hospital dying of malignant tumor, whispering, "The Lord has been so good to me."

—Selected

Church members are like automobiles: they start missing before they quit.

"Why don't you come to church?" asked the minister of a non-churchgoer.

"Well, I'll tell you," said the wisecracker. "The first time I went to church they threw water in my face; the second time they tied me to a woman I've had to keep ever since."

"Yes," answered the minister, "And are we going to have to throw dirt in your face the next time you come?"

BULLETIN BARREL

COUNTERFEITS

- Q. Did you ever see a counterfeit 10-dollar bill?
 A. Yes.
- Q. Why was it counterfeited?
 A. Because the 10-dollar bill was worth counterfeiting.
- Q. Was the 10-dollar bill to blame?
 A. No.
- Q. Did you ever see a scrap of brown paper counterfeited?
 A. No.
- Q. Why?
 A. Because it was not worth counterfeiting.
- Q. Did you ever see a counterfeit Christian?
 A. Yes, lots of them.
- Q. Why was Christianity counterfeited?
 A. Because it was worth counterfeiting.
- Q. Was Christianity to blame?
 A. No.
- Q. Did you ever see a counterfeit unbeliever?
 A. No, never.
- Q. Why?

HERE AND THERE AMONG BOOKS

Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from your Publishing House

Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism

By Charles Edwin Jones (The Scarecrow Press, 1974. \$8.00.)

This book represents ATLA Monograph Series No. 5. Dr. Jones has used the tools of computerized statistics in his analysis to write a very useful sociology of religion. Nazarenes particularly will enjoy his insights concerning the history of their church in its beginnings through 1930. Its value lies in showing the development of the holiness movement within the broad framework of American denominational history. Dr. Jones, after serving in library positions in Bethany College, the seminary, and Park College, is now cataloger for history at Brown University. The study was published under the supervision of Drew University Library.

OSCAR F. REED

Books received:

His Deeper Work in Us

By J. Sidlow Baxter (Zondervan, \$2.95.)

An inquiry into New Testament teaching on the subject of Christian holiness from a "reformed perspective." There are many fair insights from a writer who sees the holiness imperative from a different theological perspective.

A Study Guide to Acts

By Curtis Vaughan (Zondervan, 1974. \$1.95.)

A guidebook for discussion and appli-

cation. Good insights from exegetical study.

What Bible Can You Trust?

By Multiple authors (Broadman Press, 1974. \$2.50.)

A discussion of the various translations and paraphrasing.

Success, Motivation and the Scriptures

By William H. Cook (Broadman Press, 1975. \$3.95.)

An attempt to relate success and positive motivation to the power of God and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Church, the Body of Christ

By John MacArthur, Jr. (Zondervan, 1973. \$1.25.)

Essence of Christianity. Two Essays
 By Andres Nygren (Eerdmans, 1973. \$1.95.)

Originally published in Swedish in 1922. The famous author of *Agape and Eros* gives a good deal of background for his better-known work.

Plain Talks on Exodus

By Manfred G. Gutzke (Zondervan, 1974. \$2.95.)

Christian Ethics for Black Theology
 By Major J. Jones (Abingdon, \$4.50.)

The book seeks to suggest ethical foundations necessary to build a new creative relationship between black and white people in America.

Seven Questions Jesus Asked

By R. Benjamin Garrison (Abingdon, 1975. \$2.75.)

A Theology of Death

By Ronald C. Starenko (Concordia, 1975. \$2.50.)

The author discusses the issues of death to help pastors and Christians to stand on their faith and see death realistically.

Preachers' Exchange



•FREE to all Nazarene pastors, active or retired: Lovely efficiency apartment completely furnished, air-conditioned, all utilities paid (for one or two weeks). For reservations write: Mr. & Mrs. Dwight Flaningham, 421 E. Johnson St., Lake Wales, Fla. 33853. NO PETS, ADULTS ONLY PLEASE.

WANTED—Vols. 1 and 2 of bound copies of *Christianity Today*. Will pay \$20.00. Rev. Clayton J. Schletewitz, 400 N. Sunset, La Puente, Calif. 91744.

WANTED—Used set of *Pulpit Commentaries*, edited by Rev. Spence and Rev. Exell. E. A. Rothgeb, 1615 54th Blvd. W., Palmetto, Fla. 33561.

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COMING
next month

- **The Power of the Personal**
If the only true gift is a portion of yourself, Christmas should be an opportunity to prove it.
- **The Pastor Deals with Hurt Feelings**
A closer look at the elder brother brings a deeper appreciation for his father and ours.
- **Will the Perfect Parent Stand Up**
The pastor's wife does not find it easy to be the perfect parent, but she can make it.
- **The Baby Nobody Wanted**
It is unbelievable, but true—a baby abandoned in a laundromat! It brings thoughts of another Babe.



The need for self-esteem is so basic in the human personality that most other needs shrink by comparison. Alfred Adler, the Austrian psychologist, brought attention to this principle before his death in 1937, and more recently our own Dr. James Dobson has emphasized it in his book *Hide or Seek*. We live in a society in which the individual is a victim of a value system which makes inordinate demands for beauty, intelligence, and success. Most of us have very little of any of these qualities. Our hope, then, must come as we look to the hills of full commitment to Christ, from whence cometh our help. The sinful self is crucified. The redeemed self lives, but it is Christ "living in me" that causes me to declare with Paul, "Nevertheless I live!" One brother expressed it so eloquently: "I'm black and I live in a ghetto, but I'm SOMEBODY, because God don't make no junk!" Self-esteem rooted in faith. Faith, not in ourselves, but in Christ, without whom we are nothing. Self-acceptance because God accepts us, and having loved Him with all our hearts, we love our neighbors as we love ourselves. Dr. Cowles writes to this point (p. 6), and so does Dr. Willingham (p. 3). To find this secret should enable us to avoid the scandal of "division street" (p. 5), and let God speak to this unwashed generation through us.

Yours for souls,

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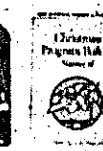
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—proclaiming Christian Holiness

inside this issue:

THE POWER OF THE PERSONAL

The Editor

THE HOLINESS STREAM

George E. Failing

THEIR DARKEST HOUR WAS THEIR FINEST

Ralph F. Pyncheon

A MISSIONARY OR A MISSION FIELD?

Neil E. Hightower

WILL THE PERFECT PARENT STAND UP

Ruth Ann Poletan

THE BABY NOBODY WANTED

William J. Turner

THE

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

DECEMBER, 1975

VOLUME 50 NUMBER 12

CONTENTS

- 1 The Power of the Personal Editorial
- 3 Servanthood: Pastor Deals with Hurt Feelings C. S. Cowles
- 6 Christmas Beyond Bethlehem Forrest W. Nash
- 7 Portraits of Paul: IV. The Missionary J. Melton Thomas
- 9 The Holiness Stream (Wesleyana) George E. Failing
- 10 When Evangelism Loses Its Appeal Practical Points
- 11 Their Darkest Hour Was Their Finest Ralph F. Pyncheon
- 13 Lost Christmas (poem) Rachel Van Crems
- 14 A Missionary or a Mission Field? Nell E. Hightower
- 16 Idea Sparks: Stewardship Asa H. Sparks
- 17 Will the Perfect Parent Stand Up Ruth Ann Polston
- 19 Some of the Pastor's Mail at Christmastime Edwin Alexander
- 20 The Baby Nobody Wanted William J. Turner
- 21 Pastor's Christmas Prayer Derl Keeler
- 21 Living Christmas Tree Doris Sanford
- 22 The Starting Point C. Neil Strait
- 23 Looking at Our Lord in Luke Ralph Earle
- 28 Yearly Index

.....From the..... EDITOR

The Power of the Personal



THE ONLY TRUE GIFT is a portion of yourself," wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson. He must have been thinking about the greatest Gift in all of human history, for the Babe of Bethlehem represents the ultimate in giving. He is God himself come to be among us. He is Immanuel, "which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

Indeed He is the Messiah, sent from God. He is Master and Lord, as Mary Magdalene so eloquently expressed it when she called Him "Rabboni!" He is the Christ, as every Christian knows. He is the Son of Man, as He so frequently called himself. He is the Son of God, as the unbelieving centurion acknowledged when he saw Him die on the cross.

He is "very God and very man," as the theologians describe Him. Not part God and part man, not a hybrid mixture of the human and the divine, not merely the nearest facsimile of deity that can exist in human flesh. He is God. And He condescended to take upon himself "the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7).

He comes where we are, so we may go where He is.

He is Immanuel. God is with us, and the most exciting aspect of Christmas is that it is so personal. The truly genuine gift is a portion of yourself, and the sages since the beginning of time have recognized in the Incarnate Christ the greatest Gift of all.

The Christian way to give begins with giving yourself. The meaning of stewardship, in its real sense, is the commitment of self first and foremost, with the gifts of time and talents and treasures a natural consequence. On Christmas Day and every day, it is important for the Christian to remember this and to be very much aware of the power of the personal.

A Christmas greeting card is a case in point. It is appreciated by the recipient, for someone has cared enough to address it and mail it. But it

is appreciated even more when someone has cared enough to write a personal note along with the printed verse. The personal touch makes the difference.

The small son is delighted, of course, with the bicycle his father gives him. But especially cherished are those moments the father gives of himself, teaching the boy to ride, sharing his excitement, being near enough to listen, and getting to know him better.

This is why an oil painting is worth infinitely more than a mechanical reproduction. The original is more than just a picture to enjoy. In it there is much more than a blending of shapes and colors to capture and preserve an experience on the canvas. It represents the skill, the energy, the time, the concentration, the effort, the training, and the very life of a person. The artist has given a portion of himself.

This is why a young pastor without much experience and with a minimum of training can be used of God in the care of souls. He is appreciated and he is effective, even in his first charge, by those who are lifted and inspired by him more than by his methods. He may not know just what he is supposed to say to someone who has seen a loved one die, but he is there, and he cares, and that matters most.

There is a new wave of interest among us in the power of the personal touch. One church has a group working every week seeking ways to express their care. They note news of tragedy in the papers, and write notes of sympathy. They see news of triumph and send words of congratulations. They are not satisfied to repeat empty clichés as they shake the pastor's hand after a Sunday sermon. They go home and write a letter telling him how much he helped them. They write a note to the choir director to express appreciation for music that was of special blessing to them. They are a giving group—and they are giving a portion of themselves.

Our first Christmas as a young professor in the seminary brought a pleasant surprise. We answered the knock on the door, and there stood one of the general superintendents of our church. Tall and handsome, a warm smile on his face and a gift in his hands, he had come to greet us. Our family would have appreciated his gift if he had mailed it—but somehow when he brought it, we received much more than just a gift. He was giving a portion of himself and his family to us.

Another friend for many years wrote a brief letter every time he heard anything of interest about us. Always, there was a note of appreciation. There were words of congratulation even for the slightest accomplishment. There was Christian love in every letter. That friend is in heaven now, and we miss him here.

For every person who writes a personal note, there are thousands who think about it but never do it. For everyone who presents gifts at Christmastime which include a portion of himself, there are many others who would agree that it should be that way. The question is, Will we make it that way?

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel [or Immanuel, Isa. 7:14], which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

The Giver is also the Gift. That is Christmas. And that should remind us to never underestimate the power of the personal.



CALL TO SERVANTHOOD

C. S. COWLES, Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Covina, Calif.

THE PASTOR DEALS WITH HURT FEELINGS

Now his elder son . . . was angry (Luke 15:25-32).

I am drawn to the elder brother because few others are. I will agree that his attitude leaves something to be desired. But I do not see textual foundation for the common practice of roundly condemning him to perdition. To the contrary, the father seeks him out, entreats him, and addresses him as Son. That is not the language of estrangement and lostness.

What we do have here, however, is a vividly portrayed example of massive ministerial hurt feelings. The elder brother, faithful in the Father's house, has been dealt a staggering blow to the ego. He has been a victim of inexcusable oversight. The musicians have been engaged, the dancers notified, the robe ordered, the ring selected, and the fatted calf killed. But, unaccountably, somebody forgot to stamp his invitation. Nobody thought to phone. He was utterly bypassed, forgotten, ignored. If anyone in the world had a legitimate right to be properly outraged, it was he. I feel for him.

Recently I heard about a young woman who was called out of the graduation line at rehearsal in one of our colleges. She was informed that a last-minute check had disclosed that

she lacked one unit necessary to graduate. A further investigation revealed that she had been misadvised by her freshman class counselor, and that the error had gone undetected to this point. There was no recourse except to postpone graduation for at least another semester. Now when I tell you that she left that campus never to return, and is today exceedingly bitter about the whole thing, I think that we can understand.

Several months ago I read the heartrending story of Gordon "Buzz" Aldrin, the second man on the moon.

After the celebrity tours had been completed, Aldrin found himself out of a job in the space program. So he resumed his career in the Air Force. But, to his dismay, he was assigned as flight director at a pilot's training school—a very low echelon position. Further, the high command passed him over when he was reviewed for what would have normally been an almost automatic promotion. It became clear to him that the law of the chicken coop was in operation—that is, if one rooster flies too high, the others make sure that he has no soft place to land. This blow plunged him into a severe depression which led to

a period of hospitalization which further damaged his possibilities for a real future in the Air Force. When I read further that he had decided to take an early retirement, I was with him all the way. Who would want to devote one more day to serving an institution which treated its faithful and distinguished servants in such an offhand manner?

There is a kind of inner logic that always accompanies hurt feelings. There are gross inequities in life—and in the church. There are absolutely unjustifiable events which do sweep people under. There is an irrational element at work in the affairs of men. Most often, the person who has been plunged into the brackish waters of hurt feelings *really has been hurt!* No matter how trivial the cause may seem to the person standing on the outside, from the perspective of the victim, he suffered a stunning blow.

Hurt feelings find fertile soil during times when we are under unusual stress anyway. "Thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends," reports the elder brother. But what he neglects to tell us was that he hasn't asked for a kid in a long time. He hasn't planned any parties lately. He has become so engrossed in his labors in the father's kingdom and so consumed with the endless demands upon his time that he hasn't made provision for seasons of merrymaking with his friends. It has been a long time since he played a round of golf, took a day off, frolicked with his family, laughed at a good story.

Consequently, he was abnormally uptight, lacking in good humor, and unable to savor the moment. He was always on the run, always straining ahead, always driven. When he did come home, it was probably after dark—for the party was already well under way.

Stress shortens patience. Fatigue plays havoc with the nerves. That resilience which normally would have enabled him to roll with the punch was missing. His emotions had become so taut that the slightest incident would have been enough to set him off.

A pastor with two decades of distinguished service to the church was being interviewed by another church's board. The church which was considering him was much smaller than the one which he had organized and built up. After the meeting, a leading board member took him aside. He complimented him upon his fine presentation and applauded his obvious professional competence and spiritual stature. But he went on to confidently inform him that the church would not call him. When the astonished pastor asked why, he was told that he was too old. The church needed a younger man. How old was he? Forty-four!

With that, the pastor went home, resigned his church, and departed into secular business. One thoroughly audacious, thoughtless, and unkind remark by a virtual stranger—which would undoubtedly have been shrugged off earlier—became the straw which broke the camel's back. Perhaps it came at a time when he had been already suffering some painful ego-shattering and spirit-crushing blows in his ministry, and it was simply more than he could handle.

A great pastor of national prominence a couple of generations ago told a conference of ministers that "no pastor is to be held entirely responsible for all that he says and does, when the fires are burning low." How prophetic he was. For shortly after he spoke those words, a group of young laymen—many of whom he had baptized as infants—mounted a campaign against his

leadership and succeeded in bringing his 35 years of spectacular ministry in that church to an inglorious end. It is said that he died two years later, a bitter and broken old man. He never recovered from that blow.

Let you assume that I am being too sympathetic toward the elder brother and making a case for hurt feelings, may I assure you that I am not. All I am trying to do is to face up to something that has destroyed countless faithful servants in the Father's household and has crippled the effectiveness of many more. Furthermore, I have been faithful long enough to know that disappointments do come, disillusionment does arise, and hurts do have the power to cut deeply.

Unless we can find a way within the grace of God to deal creatively and positively with these hurts, they have the potential to bring the carefully built ministerial career of a lifetime down in sudden ruins. Under the shock of a shattered ego, men often do strange and uncharacteristic things. They will impulsively resign their church, abandon their wives, engage a lawyer, write a biting tract, have a nervous breakdown or a heart attack. Some may even take more extreme action.

I had lunch with him on a Tuesday. My friend was a highly regarded evangelist, educator, and now a clinical psychologist with an earned doctorate in this field. He had pioneered experimental ministries along the counseling line in his denomination, which intrigued me. That was why I had sought him out on that particular day.

The following Saturday he purchased the first handgun he had ever owned and blew his brains out. I discovered later that he had run into some difficulties in regard to his counseling program. His own clinic had just been voted out of his church.

He felt somewhat rejected by his ministerial colleagues. None of this was visible to me, or even to his wife. But apparently it had been working deep within him, and had comprised a hurt which he could not handle. After giving a dedicated lifetime to helping others in Christ's name, he could not cope with his own deep disappointments.

I have come to believe that no man, regardless of how spiritual, is entirely immune from such hurts. Everyone has a sensitive nerve somewhere. And sooner or later, that nerve will be struck. For everyone who yields to a destructive impulse under the despondency of a moment, there are more who just sink into a stagnant pool of their own psychic bitterness which sours their spirits and cankers their attitudes. Such ministers radiate to all with whom they come in contact, "Unclean! Unclean!"

Whatever I have said in trying to understand the reason for the elder brother's explosive outburst, I must hurry on and say that it is a very bad scene. There is nothing that is attractive or winsome about his attitude. It is a repugnant and repulsive display. We are ashamed that we have been witnesses. We are embarrassed for him. We are ambivalent in our response to him. We are drawn by compassion to the wounded spirit that needs healing. And yet we are repelled by the stench of the infection and corruption. When this kind of attitude becomes a permanent fixture in a minister's personality his usefulness in the kingdom has almost certainly come to an end.

Therefore, there is no question more important for the minister who has suffered a blow that has him reeling than that of the Apostle, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24).

Thank God there is an answer.

Help comes from our parable. "Therefore came his father out, and entreated him" (v. 28). He senses our disappointment. He feels our distress. And He takes the initiative. He comes to us. He seeks us out. He "entreats" us, comforts us, calms us. He restores our spirit, reaffirms our confidence, readjusts our perspective. What a beautiful description of the quiet healing work of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, he continues to call us "Son." Praise God! He no more casts us out because we have fallen victim to less than laudable attitudes, than we turn our children out when they throw a fit. There is something in His tone of voice which stops us short, gives us insight into our own ugliness of spirit, and lets us know that this is not appropriate behavior for His chosen and choice servants. But that very chastening itself lets us know that He is very near.

"Thou art ever with me" (v. 31). What difference does it make if we have been rebuffed by the mayor, when the President has taken us in! What difference does it make if we have been voted off the city council when we have already been elected to the Senate of heaven! "All that I have is thine" (v. 31). Think of it!

Hurts will come. But if we will let our Heavenly Father entreat us, minister to us, restore our sense of perspective, put our great disappointment in the light of eternity, then we can be healed. We may even discover that our own dark night of the soul will enable us to be more sensitive, empathetic, and compassionate in our ministry to others who also are passing through deep waters. "If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation" (2 Cor. 1:6, RSV).*

*From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946 and 1952.

Christmas Beyond Bethlehem



Once again we travel back across the centuries and eastward to Bethlehem. There in the life of the Christ Child we behold the divine significance of things—God's love giving that which in turn would be given back as an atonement for our sin. Time contains only a small part of the Christmas meaning. We must go beyond Bethlehem—even to the court of the eternal God. There we behold the eternal Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. So our human longing has its hope realized in eternity. So let the angels sing, let the shepherds go now even unto Bethlehem. Let the wise men leave their seeking footprints in desert sands as they follow the star to Him. For the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. No, not created by God, but begotten by Him. The mystery of the Eternal—redemptive and glorious!

This is the meaning of Christmas.

—Forrest W. Nash

Portraits of Paul

IV. Paul, the Missionary

Someone has said, "God had only one son, and of him He made a missionary." And thus Jesus came, Friend among strangers, Sheep among wolves, Light in the midst of darkness. He came as a missionary.

Of us, He would make missionaries. He told us to go to all people—everywhere. He would not let us be isolationists. He would not be content that we go only to our own. He has constantly projected our sights to new horizons. He stirs us with a divine discontent. If we are sensitive to it, it shall be said of us, as it was of Barnabas and Paul, "... they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed" (Acts 13:3-4).

In such a framework it is not surprising to find that Paul was a missionary. So determined was he to reach all the world that he said, "So have I strived to preach the gospel,

not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation" (Rom. 15:20).

The record of Paul's first missionary effort begins in Acts 13. Here is recorded Antioch as his home church. They are his human ordainers, but they are only concurring with the Holy Spirit. He has been designated. He is selected. He goes forth. The things to which he was sent—is indicated in the subsequent events.

The first section (13:6-12) reveals that he, as all missionaries, was sent to do battle with sin and with Satan. Pictures of missionaries of another day are rapidly vanishing. It is still true, however, that they battle ancient superstitions, concepts, and forms of worship. In Paul's case it was sorcery. Today's missionary still contends with magic, witchcraft, the black arts, voodooism. They deal with people who worship their own fears. They lead people from the worship of the natural world, with all that involves.

Paul ran head on into a force that is found worldwide now, even as it was then. He denounced Elymas, the sorcerer, as being "full of all subtilty" (v. 10); "a false prophet" (v. 6). He inquired of him, "Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (v. 10). This same falseness



by
J. Melton Thomas
Evangelist
Mount Vernon, Ohio.

maintains today. It is evidenced in the witch doctor, in those who, by any means, would exploit, and even in false teachers of Christianity.

Certainly like Paul, today's missionary becomes *engaged in conflict with the devil himself*. Paul pointed out that Elymas was a "child of the devil" (v. 10). So whether in Antioch, from which Paul was sent, or at Salamis, where the cited encounter took place, the source of the opposition is Satan. And as then, so now. Whether at the sending area, or in the area to which the missionary is sent, the disturber of righteousness is still the devil.

These scriptures (Acts 13:14-52) say another thing about missionaries. *They are sent to proclaim a message*. It is not enough to root out some negative elements, even evil. Paul was not content to point at many false gods. He went on to proclaim a God of might, and power, and love. Such was the message here.

It was a message of *salvation*, "To you is the word of this salvation sent" (v. 26). It was a message of a *resurrected Christ*, "But God raised him from the dead" (v. 30). It was a message of *forgiveness*, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (v. 38). It was a message with *no restrictions*, "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation to the ends of the earth" (v. 47).

A modern counterpart of Paul's experience is given by Dr. G. B. Williamson. Speaking of R. H. Ingram, veteran missionary to Guatemala, he says, "Journeys on foot or horseback could be taken, strange languages could be mastered more easily than to penetrate this darkness, abolish the prejudice, and emancipate the slaves of a religion which was a mixture of degraded Christianity,

and the ancient concepts of deity known to the aborigines. They knew much about penances, pilgrimages, images of saints, and a plaster-of-paris Christ, confined and enshrined. But knowledge of a Saviour who is alive forevermore, whose Spirit comes to men to regenerate and cleanse their hearts and transform their lives, was as foreign to them as to those who never heard the name of Jesus spoken."

Every missionary is to speak the name, spread the news, and herald the message.

Paul's experience tells one more thing about missionaries. *They are to advance, that they may expand*.

Such has always been the pattern. Isaiah said it thus, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes" (Isa. 54: 2). Jesus talked of the other sheep, not of the parent fold. He felt the impelling urge to visit more cities—and yet more. Paul, as already noted, wanted to find the places where the Name had not been named.

So the call continues—enlarge, advance, expand. Enlarge the force, the influence, the effectiveness of present fields. Paul was always returning to strengthen existing work. Advance the methods adaptable to given areas, knowing we are not called to present Western culture but a universal Christ. Expand the base of operation by entering new fields, by finding those pioneer places to announce the Name.

Such was the method of Paul the missionary. It would be hard to improve on it today. The call for missionaries is still heard. There is still a place for those who go as missionaries. There is still a place for others to support those who go, by studying about, praying for, and giving to missions.

Wesleyana



The Holiness Stream

By George E. Falling*

Dr. J. C. McPheeters, in an old issue of the *Herald* (then the *Herald of Holiness*), addressed himself strongly to the need for the revival of the teaching of the holy life.

"The holiness stream," as Dr. McPheeters writes, "is like the waters of an artesian well, which if capped at one point will break forth in a living stream at another. The doctrine of holiness so dearly esteemed by John Wesley and the early Methodists is not the dead issue which many would have us believe.

"Dr. L. Roy Smith, in an editorial in the *Christian Advocate*, then the national Methodist weekly, in a brief review of the new book, *The Path to Perfection*, by W. E. Sangster, the great Wesleyan preacher of England, says: 'Let it not be forgotten that all of the denominations, sects, and fanatics who teach this doctrine received it originally from Methodism. That they have perverted and distorted it may go without saying. But that there is a vital core in the teaching none can deny. Our preachers can do no better than to make an entirely new and careful study of this

whole question, for the things that once made Methodism distinctive might so do again.'

"Here are words for Methodists to ponder well: 'The things that once made Methodism distinctive might so do again.' The thing which Dr. Smith is talking about is referred to in the preceding paragraph of his editorial in these words: 'So dearly did Mr. Wesley esteem the doctrine of holiness that he once said, 'If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders, either directly or indirectly, speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he shall continue in the society. Because he that could speak thus in our congregations cannot be an honest man.'"

"We believe that the thing which made Methodism distinctive in the early period of her history can again make her distinctive today. What would happen, if present day Methodists should place the same emphasis upon holiness as did John Wesley and the early Methodists? We believe that the same things would happen in our day, as happened in their day, only on a much larger scale. There doubtless would come a worldwide

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revival, which would mean, not only the individual regeneration and sanctification of vast multitudes, but social redemption in vast areas of life over the whole earth. Holiness is the answer to the need for a dynamic, conquering faith which attempts great things for God."

The various denominations, including our own, that include in the Articles of Religion, biblical emphases on entire sanctification, by crisis and process, stand true to the Wesleyan emphasis. More importantly, we believe that holy love is the very essence of the Triune God—whose attributes include eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence—who creates and sustains all things. Whatever God does in justification, in regeneration and growth, He does with the purpose of producing a holy man. Eternal life is not simply living forever; it is living in the likeness and presence of God—forever.

Everyone understands that as long as we are mortal, there will be infirmities that cling to us. These infirmities, John Wesley taught, also required the atonement in the sense that our thoughts and activities are unconsciously influenced by "this present evil age." But volitionally, up to the full measure of our faith and apprehension of the full benefit of Pentecost, we may be holy now. We dare not be content with less. Christlikeness must become a passion with us. Then we will be in "the holiness stream" where living waters flow; multitudes of unbelievers and believers alike will come to us to inquire the secret of a commitment that makes us holy and happy, patient and courageous.

Are we—you and I—really in "the holiness stream"? If not, let's preach it until we believe it, then preach it because we believe it. And let's do all this in the lowly Spirit of Christ.

Practical Points

that make a difference

When Evangelism Loses Its Appeal

Dear Son:

You know my interest in evangelism, and its relationship to the Body of Believers. For years, your mother and I have answered the appeals of our pastors with time, money, and a spirit of urgency. We are sold on the fact that it is of the nature of the Church to grow—and that we are to be an instrument in that growth.

But frankly, I am weary of all the talk from the pulpit. I have a "sneaking suspicion" that if our pastor talked less, and allowed the Spirit to gradually work through the organization, we would obtain better results. So much can be done behind scenes on a one-to-one basis, without using the pulpit as a "sounding board."

We hear so many things about the urgency, skill, methodology, and organization of evangelism—and that is good. But it is good only if from the heart of the pulpit comes the Word. When my pastor shares God's Word with me, the first thing I want to do is to tell another. Isn't that the heart of evangelism?

Son, just don't say you are evangelistic, or tell your people to be evangelistic; but quietly do it! See if the sharing of the Word might become both the foundation and background of New Testament evangelism.

My pastor preached from 1 Cor. 4:16 and 11:1 yesterday. I was so moved by the challenge to follow Christ that I shared Him with another this morning.

Love,
Dad

The Preacher's Magazine

The hour we may have considered to be our worst could well turn out to have been our very finest

Their Darkest Hour Was Their Finest

By Ralph F. Pynchon*

Pressure Produces Power

In physics it is an axiom that pressure produces power. Progress in the natural and the spiritual alike is dependent on the interplay of counteracting forces. The dialectic philosophy of history is true, at least, at this point. Intensive heat is required to separate the dross from the gold. The application of this principle holds in the spiritual also. The hour when the mills were grinding the hardest was the hour when our experience received its finest edge. The hour we may have considered to be our worst, in retrospect, could well turn out to have been our very finest.

Since example is more effective than precept, let us examine a couple of case histories from the New Testament to prove our point.

The Apostle Peter

Most of us can identify with this disciple. The whole rhythm of his life and his responses to its ebb and flow, his actions and reactions to its high moments and its low, present an all-too-familiar pattern to us. We have "sat where he sat."

If we were asked to name the high moment in Peter's life we would almost certainly point to Pentecost. Acting as the acknowledged spokes-

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man for the little band of Spirit-filled Christians, he delivered a message that swept 3,000 souls into the kingdom. But was this his finest hour?

To be sure, the man who had quailed before a little maid in the court of Caiaphas was now thundering out a message of hope with great boldness. He was now confronting fearlessly the same men who had cried out for the crucifixion of Jesus. He had unhesitatingly donned the mantle of leadership when that leadership was most urgently needed.

But it must be pointed out that Peter's stand here was but a result of all that had preceded it. He was now riding on the crest of a wave of momentum which had been generated by the two greatest events that ever shook or shaped the history of man. The reference is to the Resurrection and Pentecost. Peter was now coasting, so to speak, on the emotional uplift of these events. This was not the battle; it was the victory celebration.

It is the writer's belief that we must go back to the heartrending tension of the harrowing moments during the trial of Jesus to really determine Peter's finest hour. The real man comes into view during and after the terrible hour of sifting which occurred in the court of the high priest.

Although Peter sought to drive the

chill from his body as he warmed by the fire, nothing could dispel the fear which held his heart in its icy clutch. Three times he had been challenged to identify himself with the Man on trial. Three times in the presence of witnesses, he had denied any relationship with Jesus, or the others who followed Him. Upon his third denial, the Lord turned and looked at him. It struck him with all the impact of a heavy Roman spear. For at that precise moment the rooster crowed a second time, and it brought the memory of Jesus' words flooding back: "Before the cock crows, twice thou shalt deny me thrice." He was now in the furnace—a furnace heated "seven times." It was certainly his darkest hour—but it was also certainly his finest.

The break could have been final. Locked in with despair, he could have gone the way of Judas. But Peter was made of essentially better stuff. He could have gone to the bottom and stayed there, but instead, he rose to the top and there remained. His spiritual recovery has served as a source of inspiration for many a beaten saint.

It is noteworthy that when the Lord tested Peter in regard to his love after the Resurrection, He put the question three times: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" As many times as he had denied, he was made to affirm. He then received his commission back, "Feed my lambs . . . feed my sheep."

Saul of Tarsus

Now let us look at another apostle. Saul of Tarsus, as he was known before his conversion, was a spectator at the stoning of Stephen. Moreover, the Scriptures tell us he was "consenting" to the death of the first martyr of the Church. The sight of Saul, the vindictive persecutor, as he stood scowling on the radiant

Stephen, was not a pleasant one. An onlooker would have said there was no hope for this proud young Pharisee. Most certainly it was a dark hour for Saul.

But it could well have been his finest. For the first time, it was given to Saul to see the triumphant passage of a Christian. He knew in his own heart that he could not die this well. An incipient rebellion of which he himself was scarcely aware began to brew. This conflict below the level of his conscious mind drove him to still more violent acts of madness. But it was no use. Nothing could calm the storm that raged within.

From this moment on, all of Saul's finer instincts began to clamor for recognition. One cannot read the Epistles which he later penned, without getting the impression that their author was a greathearted and compassionate man. His zeal to destroy these Christians whom he regarded as heretics had completely warped his nature. It had made him false to the man he really was. Sin does that to all of us. We believe his awakening began as Stephen died under the hail of stones. His experience on the Damascus road was anti-climactic. The pricks of a festering conscience only prepared him for his meeting with the Lord. And so we read: "And Saul was consenting to his death." A dark hour? Yes, but certainly it seems that it was also his finest.

A personal testimony

With an apology for what seems an intrusion, the writer would like to testify. He too once passed through a very dark hour. At the time there seemed to be only the agony of hopelessness and despair. But as it turned out, *this hour proved to be his finest.*

Caught in the steely grip of a strong temptation which could have meant a permanent shipwreck, he was enabled to fight his way out of

the boiling tides of confusion and turmoil back to solid ground. Using the medium of a false cult, Satan made a high bid for his soul. The mental stress was so severe it made the burden all but intolerable. The enticement, the doubts, the questionings, turned the mind into a raging battleground.

Those who are skeptical about the reality of the demon world should pass through such an experience. The thing grew, and then one night the climax came. A decision had to be made. It was made; made for God and sanity and truth. But Satan does not give up easily. The powers of darkness descended in fury. Fear was added to torment.

Hell has a music of its own. The writer heard it that night. Ringing

in his mind through the long hours was the peculiar chanting sound of the cult as they sang their prayers to the weird strains that accompanied them. It was the song of demons reluctant to loose their weakening grip.

Even the longest night must end. Just as dawn filled the room with its welcome light, the Lord came with this comforting promise: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." And, all praise be to God, it did come! It did come! The temptation lost its hold and the darkness rolled back. Hell's music grew faint and faded away. Peace came, and the tumult died. The darkest hour had passed, and having passed left only victory in its wake. It was unquestionably our finest.

Lost Christmas

Why wait till Christmastime again is here?

Why spend those precious hours in hectic ways
Doing the things that you could do all year

And let the noise of whirl of festival days
Drown out the angels' song? Why not take time
To lift the eyes to candles in the sky;
To walk some silent night, while carols chime,
And hear the hush of wings brush softly by?

Take time to meditate; to catch the spell

Of childish trust, that simple faith you knew
When love was everywhere, and all was well . . .

The gift you lost may now come back to you.
Seek not for Christmas in the busy mart.
But cradled somewhere in a trusting heart.

—Rachel Van Creme
Source unknown

We may excuse ourselves for the lack of a personal mission by pleading we don't know what to say. But a doomed man in a burning building knows what to shout to others in the building

A Missionary or a Mission Field?

FOR AS THE HUMAN BODY apart from the spirit is lifeless, so faith apart from works of obedience is also dead" (James 2:26, Amp. N.T.).¹ "For Demas has deserted me for love of his present world, and has gone to Thessalonica" (2 Tim. 4:10, Amp. N.T.).

Every Christian is either a missionary or a mission field. Many would like to live in the half-zone exposure of a little spiritual passion and a little spiritual drag. But Christians cannot, in the light of their Lord's two final commands to "go," and to "tarry." As faith is dead without works so a missionless Christian has become a mission field.

The Church was born in the fire of evangelism, and it cannot stand the smoke of passionless, missionless re-

1. *The Amplified New Testament*, copyright 1958 by the Lockman Foundation, La Habra, Calif.



by
Neil E. Hightower

Superintendent
Canada Central District
Church of the Nazarene

ligion. Jesus said: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains by itself alone" (John 12:24, Amp. N.T.). Something of us needs always to be dying for lost souls.

We may excuse ourselves with the thought that a minority religion, such as today's Christianity, doesn't count much in influence. But history is punctuated with great causes that succeeded only by the skin of the teeth. One example is that of Patrick Henry's resolution in the Virginia House, defying the hated Stamp Act. It passed by the margin of one single vote. And how could we forget that New Testament Christianity was but a "drop" in the Roman Empire's "bucket"!

The choice before believers today is the same as before the Early Church—demonstration or desertion. Chief among the disciples who chose the latter is Demas. Something happened within Demas, and his actions externally reflected the crumbling of his inner defences. We can only guess at the details—but in that educated guess, we gain much spiritual instruction.

I. THE DECLINE OF EVANGELISTIC PASSION

Somewhere along the way in far-

ranging travels with the Church's great missionary-apostle, Demas allowed the sentinel fires of evangelism to die down.

This reflects itself in the loss of evangelistic imperatives. The haunting drive, created by the awareness of souls without Christ being eternally lost, is blunted.

Next it is reflected in the cooling of evangelistic fervency. Church members become a little disturbed about an unusual stir at the altar. We begin to be enamored by the progressive and educative factors of the gospel.

Finally, we begin to note the emptying of evangelistic priority. The church begins to multiply its ministries, providing for everything from the cradle to the grave, until its priority in winning souls from hell is second-rated. Priestly duties begin to override the prophetic proclamation of the pulpit. We begin to find it easier to "walk around on the other side" as did the priest in the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Vance Havner defines this in his colorful way: "I think preachers are getting lost in a multitude of smaller duties. The preacher has a peculiar place in the economy of God. He is in danger of becoming so involved with secondary affairs that he loses his prophetic gift. The devil doesn't care how great a success a preacher is in any other field, if he can just kill the prophet in him."

II. THE DESERTION OF EVANGELISTIC MISSION

Not alone is decline of passion for souls the bane of preachers, but it is a deadly poison that harms the spiritual heart of the body of Christ in general. And from decline there is but a slippery step to desertion. Somehow, for Demas, it became easier to go to Thessalonica than to stay at Rome and face the ridicule and

persecution that association with St. Paul was bringing.

Perhaps Demas began to feel that Paul wasn't as intellectually stimulating as the Gnostic heretics he was fighting. These philosophic eclectics were so sure of themselves, and they certainly had plenty of "racy" speculation to attract interest. They specialized in the dualism between matter and spirit; and it was so simple to believe that all matter was evil and all spirit good. This ought to teach us something in our day. When we begin to preach petty notions, and to major on minors, we have scuttled our mission.

Going to some favored "Thessalonica," however attractive it may be evangelistically, when that isn't God's will for us, is desertion and deflection from our mission. St. Paul must have felt some frustration on his second missionary journey, when he was forbidden by the Holy Spirit on two different occasions to preach the Gospel in places that were evidently upon his planned itinerary for evangelism. Surely there were no more needy places than the province of Asia and Bithynia, but apparently God wanted Paul and his party in Troas.

When we put self-interests and worldly care above invasion of the world with a rugged Gospel, we have deserted Christ. Separation from the spirit of the world is required for evangelism.

CONCLUSION

Christians without a consuming evangelistic mission are sentinels asleep at their post.

Alas for poor Demas, who has been the text of a thousand sermons. We cannot know whether he awakened or not. But we can profit from his example.

We must maintain our priority of love centered in Jesus, not this pres-

NAZARENE FOCUS

FOR
PASTORS
and LOCAL
CHURCH
LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission. | EARL C. WOLF, Executive Director
DON WILDE, Office Editor

ent world. We must not allow our evangelistic passion and sense of mission to cool or decline. We must do what Paul counseled young Timothy: "Stir up the gift of God that is in thee."

This is the metaphor of the sentinel on duty in the night hours, pausing periodically to rake the coals of his sentry fire, and throwing on a few sticks of wood.

Or it is the metaphor of the shepherd watching his sheep through the night, and in the chilling night hours stirring afresh the fire and rekindling the blaze with fresh fuel.

Whichever the metaphor you choose, the truth remains the same. Love feeds whatever fires it. What drives you to perpetuate spiritual

life? Love of this present world, or love for Jesus Christ?

Love also is particularly careful to keep itself rekindled. The master passion of our Lord was: "I must work the works of him who sent me." That demonstrates a mission that reaches beyond this present world. How does your personal translation of the mission of the Church measure up?

We may excuse ourselves for the lack of a personal mission with the familiar cry, "I don't know what to say." But a doomed man in a burning building knows what to shout to the other doomed men in the building.

A missionless Christian has become a mission field.

IDEA SPARKS

BY ASA H. SPARKS
Pastor, Church of the Nazarene,
Vandalia, Ohio



Stewardship

1. Perhaps the answer for you is to prepare a budget for next year, listing your anticipated expenses. From this, figure how much you will need per Sunday on a base; then each month add in special needs such as revivals, Thanksgiving offering, etc. This gives a fairly accurate figure. Publicize the results.

2. For your next raise, ask the board to help you by giving a raise in the areas where it really counts. These are called the tax-free benefits. Those you may have overlooked include car allowance, furniture allowance, books, office supply allowance, and entertainment. The congregation may pay for your health and life insurance, social security taxes, and

pension contribution. Every dollar paid in this way equals \$1.20 in cash salary—or more.

3. Have you begun the Stewardship Honor Roll? List in the bulletin the names of all those who have agreed to tithe for the coming year.

4. Your church has had building funds before, so why don't you call it the "progress fund," or the "development fund"? For tracts, bulletin covers, and programs on other stewardship materials, try the Nazarene Publishing House.

5. Send a "Take-Your-Choice Letter" with three possible paragraphs. One of thanks for good stewardship, one for fair stewardship, and one for no giving. This should be sent with your quarterly giving receipt.

6. We do not make a big push in most churches for an offering at Christmas-time. If you are not following a special Christmas offering program for your denomination, you may like to make a gift list for the church—small items that people could buy for their church at Christmas.



General Superintendent Lewis

MY CALL to preach was very real. There is no doubt in my mind but that it was from God. It was a great compulsion which stayed with me, overshadowing my life. It had a great bearing on my decisions. It pursued and possessed me. It was pleasant, though domineering. It was warm and had a glow about it. I felt good in contemplating doing it. I had the assurance that God was "in it" with me. I knew He would be my Ally in whatsoever I must do to answer that call. Together we would win.

I had a sense of awe in the fact that He had chosen me. I sensed it was big, lifelong, and important. These impressions, convictions, and certainties were all wrapped up in my call to preach. I realize now that they furnished the dynamic that drove me to secure an education and spend years in preparation for my task. Furthermore, they did not lessen in intensity. They were and are part of "the call." It must ever be so for us all.

In the church we believe in a divinely called ministry. Our men are "marked men." You are the "set apart" ones. You have an awesome assignment. The *Manual* says, "The perpetuity and the efficiency of the Church of the Nazarene depend largely upon the spiritual qualifications, the character, and the manner of life of its ministers" (page 219, paragraph 401). Here is the admission that the church rests its present and future in the hands of you God-called men. What a tremendous burden is placed upon us by God and the church.

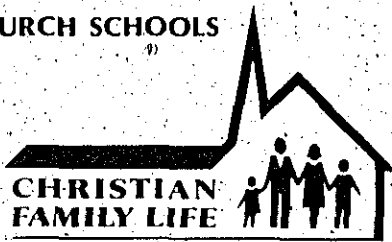
Let us look to our call. Let us allow it to rush through us again in memory and in reality. Its fresh strength will do us good. The call—the great call that changed and trans-

formed our lives—is with us today. It still changes and transforms us. It motivated us greatly when it was new, and its power is still ready to propel us into great, inspired, fervent ministry. Don't allow its beauty to fade. Don't let its voice grow weak and its light become dim. It is the whole reason we are here in our pulpits and out among our people.

The call to preach, brethren—the call God gave to men in the Bible—came to us, and we joined them in obeying God! It is our obedience to that call that keeps us able and willing to preach the whole truth without fear or favor, for it is to God we answer in the last day. We are His servants. We are the shepherds of His flock. We are the voice of eternity calling. We point the way. We set proper value guides for people. We condemn sin. We proclaim righteousness. We are forever answering the call to preach. It is God's voice we listen for in commendation. We receive our recompense from Him. He walks with us and gives us strength, counsel, and peace.

Yes, the call is strong and clear even today. All through these years it has remained constant and mighty. It is divine and will last as long as our lives, and it is well that this is so.

CHURCH SCHOOLS



"Monday Night Is Family Night"

(A denomination-wide plan for family togetherness and enrichment at home one night a week)

How may pastors implement this emphasis in the local church?

1. See suggestions and plan for this spiritual emphasis in your *Pastor's Handbook* and the four quarterly issues of the *Family Guide*.
2. Present the plan to and get consent of church board.
 - Elect CFL committee of at least six persons.
 - Elect CFL committee chairman.
 - Elect CFL publicity chairman.
3. Conduct a church family survey. Printed survey cards available.
4. Plan early for the Starting Point Commitment Service for Family Altar Sunday, first Sunday of January (or a dinner meeting to fit your calendar).
5. Encourage church-wide participation.

For further information write:

John B. Nielson
General Director
Christian Family Life
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, Mo. 64131

LOOK!

**MEMORIAL ROLL STATISTICS
Thru 1974**

**41,185 Certificates
\$1,030,000**



Mrs. Reeford Chaney
General Council Member

PASTOR, you have every right to rejoice! "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" in our missions endeavors. You have played a vital role in making our glorious history over the past six decades. Glance at the progress in giving through the MEMORIAL ROLL listed below, and I know your heart like mine will sing praises unto the Lord. We cannot retreat! But may we remember the words of Mrs. Gordon Olsen when she said, "The task ahead is never as great as the Power behind us."

YEAR	CERTIFICATES	AMOUNT
1928	21	\$ 525
1937	35	875
1947	204	5,100
1957	401	10,025
1967	2,145	54,198
1974	4,343	113,966

The total amount raised for medical and retirement needs in 1974 was \$247,095.26. Of that amount, \$113,966.78 came through MEMORIAL ROLL giving.

We now stand on the threshold of our seventh decade. May our work for missions continue to evoke PRAISE and THANKS for what GOD is doing through us.

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Printing Press	200
Support for Needy Bible Students, Scholarships \$90	450
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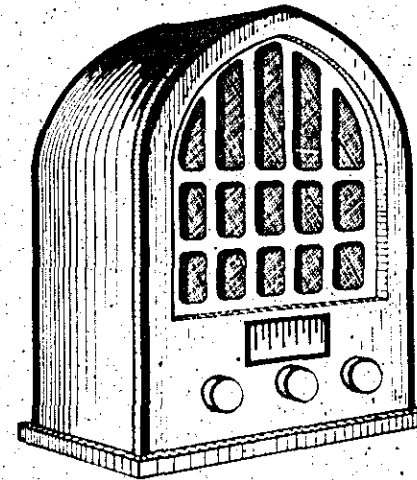
In 1974 Nazarenes contributed \$906,655.51 for World Missions Approved Specials. One hundred percent of these funds were sent to the fields for their intended use. For a list of Approved Special projects for 1976, write or call:

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As our thoughts turn to another Christmas season, it is our hope that every local church will remember the evangelists who served them this year. Your gifts to these who have answered the call of God to full-time evangelism will be a blessing to them and their families during this period when their income is relatively curtailed. Be sure to consult your church board about the Department's CHRISTMAS LETTER.



Perhaps your church might remember a RETIRED MINISTER or his WIDOW this Christmas. Slip a little something into their stocking.

Dean Wessels

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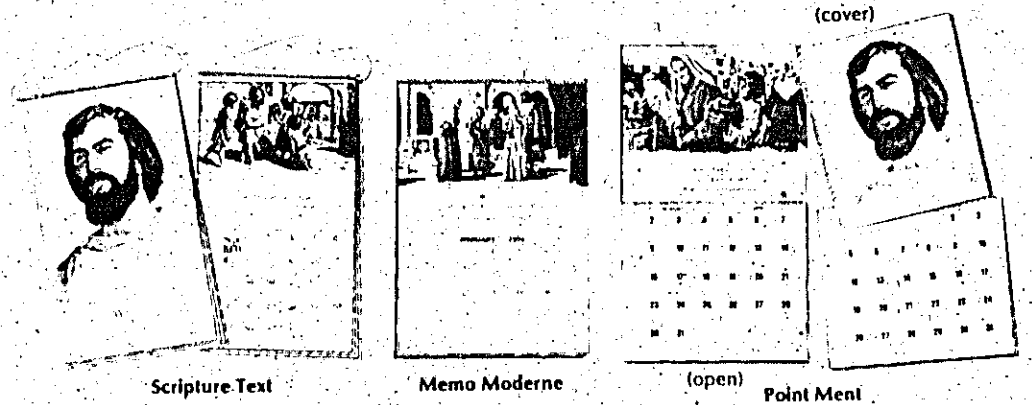


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THE
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February—March, 1976



Unit 115.3a, Studies in Holiness

See Registration and Order Blank on page 16N

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Bible Sunday

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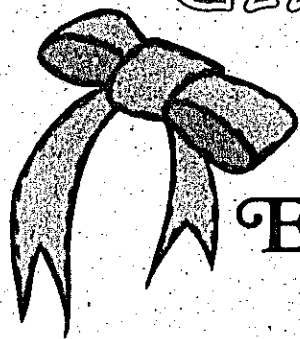
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Will the Perfect Parent Stand Up

(The Minister's Wife and Her Children)

WE ALL STARTED OUT to be the perfect parent. Perfect parents ought to produce perfect children. We have all the answers until Junior breaks the sound barrier, and every month we get a little quieter, a little less verbal, and much more humble.

Not only do we want to raise Junior for the Lord, but we have the basic yearning to "produce after our kind."

The old adage, "Hindsight is better than foresight," is certainly true. It takes a heap of growing not to buckle under the pressure of consciously or unconsciously trying to make Junior the model of perfection to the satisfaction and approval of our parishioners.

How do we cause the child raised in a minister's home to feel like he's in a normal home? How does he face the usual P.K. image among his peers? How does he find God for himself? Does he become a carbon copy of his parents, his church examples, or become a hero-worshipper of some Christian athlete? In search for his own identity, does he shuck it all and look "outside" where it seems to be happening?

We wore James 1:5 rather threadbare, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God." The teen years were especially stimulating to our faith. If Mom and Dad can agree perfectly on the decisions made, it's a big help. We couldn't always manage to do

that. I was a stronger disciplinarian than my husband. I was more nit-picky about unimportant things. He reserved his strong judgments for moral issues. I learned through trial and error that his judgments were usually best. As the head of the home he had a more direct line in his chain of command—which I learned (very slowly) to respect. God's chain of command is for a husband to rule his house, love his wife, and for a woman to submit to this leadership. When a wife submits to it, a husband must take it. In fact, he must take it anyway. As a Christian, she'll come under, or wreck her home, her husband's self-image, and her own nerves.

The most important thing at any age is to keep the communication lines open. Our daughter thought it was in the Bible that you had to tell your mother everything. I never told her differently. By the time she found out for herself it wasn't, she had already formed the habit. Our son had a great communication with his dad, and although there were some things withheld, I was always grateful that he stretched his six-foot frame across the end of our bed every night when he came in and gave us accounts of the evening (in part).

Both of the children were saved when very young, at home. Jesus Christ was very natural at our house.

My husband kept late hours calling. He usually gave the whole family accounts of miracles—for which the children learned to rejoice with us.

We didn't have heavy, long devotional times. I kept a notebook of favorite scriptures and we learned one verse each morning at breakfast. We memorized and applied it to some situation they were having at school. Sometimes we were on one verse for three or four days. I asked them how it worked for them when they came home. They learned to depend on scripture for every occasion. When they found a new situation they asked me if I had a scripture for it.

Being saved young didn't make them saints. We spilled plenty of tears, stretched every promise, and prayed again and again that the "principle might be formed within." Our son traces his doing real business with God to his senior year.

I wish I could say it was something I had done. When I observe their devotion today, I am very humbled, and both my husband and I walk softly, giving praise to God, for to Him and Him alone do we owe this debt.

Many ministers struggle with the guilt of leaving their children so much, or are under a false sense of obligation to never leave them. I think we were the other extreme. God dealt with us when they were babies—that we were to give them back to Him and live with a sense of detachment. This evoked some criticism, but God proved His faithfulness. What He asked of us may not be what He asks of another.

Our son was teaching a class of young adults recently when someone asked, "What was it like growing up in your home?" He said, "It was a sacrifice all the way, and I'm part of the sacrifice—and I'm glad of it. I never knew it was sacrifice until I

was older. If I had seen an image of self-pity instead of joy, it would have turned me off."

I believe it's not the quantity of time spent with your children, but the quality that counts. Do they feel rushed in your presence or do they feel they're the most important person in the world at that moment?

Our visitation pastor wakes his two boys early and jogs with them. Then they go out for breakfast together. He sees very little of them until the weekend, but the times together are very special. A teacher asked his sixth-grade boy, among the others in the class, "What one thing would hurt you more than anything else in the world?" Most every child in the room said, "For my parents to split up." His son said, "For my dad to quit the ministry."

This impressed the teacher so much she called his father. Someone is making a very good imprint of Jesus Christ.

One of the common sins of parents is to withhold approval when the child fails to come through properly. Withholding approval from a child because he isn't satisfying you is like refusing to shine a light into a dark room because it's too dark. To withhold approval is to short-circuit the flow of love into a child's life and deprive him of the opportunity to be inspired and restored to the fold of love and acceptance once more. Approval is like unleashing an atom.

In a session one day, a mother complained that her boy was impossible. After listening for some time, the counselor finally said, "Does he do anything well?"

"Oh, yes, he can make boats."

"Then start with boats," she was admonished.

Willing to give it a try, she waded through the disaster area called his room to the beginning of a new boat creation. She watched for a while and

began to tell him he must be a genius. Day after day she waded to the boat tinkerer to see the genius at work. One day he hung up his shirt. She said, "Thanks, Son, that's nice of you."

In a short while the boy was sitting beside her in church.

Take care that you don't try to make your child a carbon copy of yourself. He may know God a lot better if he has your element of trust in his decisions even though they may conflict with things which are considered "convictions" to you.

Last year 1,000 ministers dropped from the rolls of one denomination. One major cause was children gone astray. Mothers' nerves couldn't cope with the stress of a wayward child. No human being has all the answers, but there's always some place to start. You can find something to approve of in your child to close that communication gap. Maybe you can start with "boats."

Approval is the shot that brings the full power of love to bear upon any life. There is no stronger weapon than love. Don't withhold approval.

Faith in ACTION

Some of the Pastor's Mail at Christmastime—

By Edwin Alexander*

THE WRITER of the following letter is a young mother of two small children. She began attending First Church when her husband was sent to Korea. Upon her husband's return, he abruptly asked for a divorce. With her husband in Florida, no resources, two small children to care for, she learned to look up. The church helped. She prayed for a house to rent. The miracle occurred. She prayed for a job. The miracle occurred. She helps in Sunday school, and is a real booster of bus evangelism.

DEAR PASTOR:

The Lord has led me into the radiant company of His people. Praise the Lord.

The Lord has given me the fellowship of others on the selfsame journey to find Him.

He has given me a spiritual family. He

has given me sisters in the dearest sense of the word. He has given me brothers.

We worship together, work together, pray together, and are as richly rewarded in the praying as those we pray for.

I can worship the Lord alone. I can pray alone. I can know Him fully and completely in total solitude. And this is good. For most of our lives we are alone. Despite the presence of many people, we are alone.

But to pray and worship the Lord with others who earnestly, honestly, seek Him is to add new dimensions of strength and joy.

Praise the Lord for His gift of fellowship and friendship, for the miracles of work and happiness and healing that burst like stars and change the course of lives when people come together who truly love the Lord.

Thank you,
CONNIE

*Pastor, First Wesleyan Church, Topeka, Kans.

The Baby Nobody Wanted

By William J. Turner*

THERE IT WAS! Front page news! "Baby Found in Dryer in Laundromat"; and right on the heels of another similar article which stated, "Body of newborn baby found in plastic bag." The one was found in the laundromat of a small college town in southeastern Pennsylvania; the other in the great city of brotherly love—Philadelphia.

Every day there are similar articles of deserted children, abortions, of children put up for adoption before they are born. All of them say the same thing: "The baby nobody wanted."

But this is not new. Long ago there was another Baby nobody wanted. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." His mother was appointed by God the Father, the news was announced by an angel from heaven, but when He was born, nobody wanted Him.

I was in the lobby of the local hospital when the baby was found in the laundromat, and there was a clamor for that little one. Nurses were saying that one of the staff doctors was going to claim him, a receptionist at the desk said, "I'd take him," and an aged cleaning lady working in the lobby remarked, "Well, he'll have a home if I have to take him." Many pitied that little child.

But how sad for the Baby born in the lowly stall. There were no doctors to receive him, no nurses, no pretty

blue nursery, no booties for His little feet. He came to His own, but his own received Him not.

Matthew records that Joseph, "being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily." We exclaim in horror, What a father who would not accept his child! But there are many fathers today who do not want this Child either. Perhaps Joseph did not understand. He and Mary were only engaged; he did not understand the miracle workings of God. We could find excuse for Joseph, but what of those fathers today with no time for Jesus, no day for worship, no moments of prayer, and no watching with the Master. Jesus still seeks for those fathers today who will receive Him.

Matthew records another who did not want this Baby. "And being warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way" (2:12). He was unwanted by the government. We may condemn Herod for wanting to destroy this Child of God, but what have we done with Him today? One songwriter put it so well when he said, "He is more than just a swear word." It seems so peculiar that on His birthday we have parties where liquor flows, where His name is reviled, where He is not remembered at all. Our courts of justice give freedom, liberty, and justice for all, we say; but we cannot use our public office buildings to proclaim the gospel. Schools cannot be used

for revival services. We cannot offer His name above every name. How sad that the government does not want this Baby.

Still another group rejected this Baby. Matthew writes, "Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared" (2:7). These wise men had asked, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" They did not know.

Wise men today do not know Jesus. We build mighty computers, send men to the moon, launch mighty rockets and propel them miles away; yet we know so little of Jesus, the Son of God. Even so-called religious leaders often know little of Him. We pray His prayer, but do not know Him as Saviour. We pray "lead us not into temptation," and rush headlong into our selfish ways.

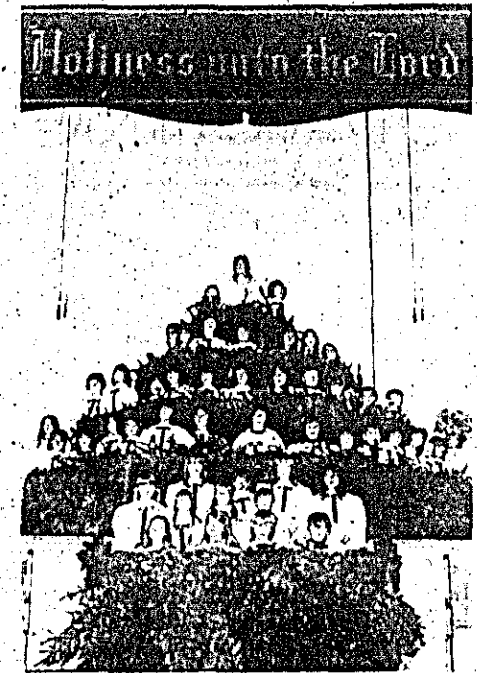
The Baby nobody wants is not found in a plastic bag, nor in a laundromat, but in churches, rituals, ceremonies.

He came unto His own, but His own did not receive Him! How sad for Him? No, how sad for them, and for us.

PASTOR'S CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Lord, we open our treasures and our gifts. Some of it is gold, and some is frankincense, and some is myrrh. For some has come from plenty; some from joy; and some from deepest sorrow of the soul. But Thou, O God, dost know the gift of love, our pledge of peace, our promise of goodwill. Accept the gift and all the life we bring. Help us to have home, children, parents, husband, wife centered around the Christ of peace. Help us not to stray from the meaning of this season, nor from Your will for us throughout our life. Amen.

—DERL KEEFER



First Church of the Nazarene,
East Liverpool, Ohio

Living Christmas Tree

DEAR DR. MCGRAW:

Last year as we were searching for our Christmas program, Rev. Oval Stone, our pastor, showed me the *Preacher's Magazine* with the Christmas Tree Choir from Thomas Road Baptist Church.*

The men of our church started immediately to make one. The local newspaper heard about it and sent a photographer and gave us front-page coverage. Enclosed is a picture.

With the tree we used a program written by Flora Hunton and one of our local women.

DORIS SANFORD

*December issue, 1973

*Evangelist, Newville, Pa.

THE STARTING POINT



By C. NEIL STRAIT

Pastor, Taylor Avenue Church of the Nazarene, Racine, Wis.

The Spies' Case

In Num. 13:27-33 we have the account of the spies after their visit to the land of giants. I share this outline from the account in *The Living Bible*:¹

1. **ATTESTING TO GOD'S POSSIBILITIES.** "We arrived in the land you sent us to see, and it is indeed a magnificent country—a land 'flowing with milk and honey.' Here is some fruit we have brought as proof. . . . But Caleb reassured the people as they stood before Moses. 'Let us go up at once and possess it,' he said, 'for we are well able to conquer it!'" (vv. 27, 30). See also verses 23-24 as support verses.

2. **A TEST OF MAN'S FAITH.** "But the people living there are powerful, and their cities are fortified and very large; and what's more, we saw Anakim giants there!" (v. 28). Also see verses 31-33. Some interesting phrases stand out in the *New American Standard Bible*: "We saw . . . we are not able to go up against the people . . . they are too strong for us . . . all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size . . . we became like grasshoppers in our own sight."²

How revealing the results—and faith—when men calculate on the basis of themselves and their power.

3. **A TESTIMONY REMEMBERED.** Caleb's testimony (v. 30) to be sure, but more: "It is a wonderful country ahead, and the Lord loves us. He will bring us safely into the land and give it to us. It is very fertile, a land 'flowing with milk and honey'! Oh, do not rebel against the

Lord, and do not fear the people of the land. For they are but bread for us to eat! The Lord is with us and he has removed his protection from them! Don't be afraid of them!" (14:7-9, *The Living Bible*).

And this story moves ahead on the possibilities of God—when they are explored and experienced.

The Word—for the Lord

Our Lord's use of, and reliance on, the Scriptures is most gratifying. We cannot miss the lesson: If the Son of God needed the Word, how much more do we!

In the temptation experience we see how Jesus used the Word in the hour of severe test.

1. **The Word—strengthening.** "It is written in the Scriptures, 'Other things in life are much more important than bread'" (Luke 4:4, TLB).

2. **The Word—speaking.** In verse 4 it was speaking to Jesus about mission, a cause, a purpose. Verse 8 speaks of service and worship: "We must worship God, and him alone. So it is written in the Scriptures" (TLB).

3. **The Word—shepherding.** The phrase, "It is written in the Scriptures," conveys this thought. And verse 12 alludes to it: "'Do not put the Lord your God to a foolish test'" (TLB).

Psalm 23:1, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," and Paul's thoughts in 1 Cor. 10:13 would add support.

Inner Simplicity

Here's a "starting point" from Charles Lindbergh: "It was not the grandeur of the Romans, but the inner simplicity of the Christians that lived through the ages."

1. *The Living Bible*, copyright © 1971, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

2. From the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971.

And it was the inner strength and simplicity of the Early Christians that persuaded their fellowmen of the deep reality in the Christ-cause.

A Final Word

Here's a closing word for this month. It's from Ian Maclaren, the great Scottish pastor. He said: "Remember, pastors,

there are burdened hearts in every congregation."

And R. Earl Allen has added this potent thought to Maclaren's words: "Many hearts share their burdens, but often heavier griefs are hidden. There are secret troubles, and tears are shed where no eye but God's sees them fall" (R. Earl Allen, *Divine Dividends*, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1974, p. 37).

IN THE STUDY



Looking at Our Lord in Luke

December 7

THE DEEP DEVOTION OF WOMEN (23:55-56)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 23:27-29, 49, 55-56; 24:1-10

INTRODUCTION: One of the earliest pictures in Luke's Gospel is of a young woman who was willing to accept the shame and reproach of being the virgin mother of the Messiah. Throughout the Gospel, women play a significant role in Jesus' public ministry, watching out for His material needs. We read of Mary Magdalene "and Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance" (8:2-3). It appears that these women were the last at the Cross and the first at the garden tomb on Sunday morning.



By Ralph Earle

Professor of New Testament
Nazarene Theological Seminary
Kansas City, Mo.

The deep devotion of women to Christ has always been a striking feature of church life. In thousands of instances they have outshone the men in their dedication and their sacrificial service. This has been especially true on the mission fields, where women have often far outnumbered the men. But it has also been true in many local churches. Thank God for the women!

I. **FOLLOWING HIM TO CALVARY (23:27-28)**
In the King James Version of verse 27 the "which" might seem to refer back to "the great company of people." But in the Greek the "which" is feminine, indicating unmistakably that it refers only to the women. They were the ones who "bewailed and lamented him."

These two verbs are strong terms in the original. "Bewailed" is literally "were beating the breast" in agonizing sorrow. "Lamented" suggests that they were wailing aloud as they followed to the cross. A woman's deep love can evoke strong emotions.

II. **WATCHING FROM A DISTANCE (v. 49)**
The women didn't dare to mingle with the men at the foot of the cross. That would not be allowed in the culture of the day. They had to stand at a distance. But they stayed and watched the agonizing

scene of suffering being enacted on the Cross. Love held them there and they couldn't leave.

III. OBSERVING HIS BURIAL (vv. 55-56)

The disciples fade out of the picture after Jesus' death, and we do not meet them again until the women looked them up on Sunday morning and reported to them (24:9). In striking contrast to this, the women stayed by and sought to show their love and devotion.

First we are told that the women who had followed Jesus from Galilee watched where and how He was buried. The men disciples evidently assumed that when He died it was all over, and so they left. Not so the women. Love held them there.

As soon as the burial was ended, the women hurried off to the market to purchase "spices and ointments" with which they might anoint the body of Jesus as a last act of devotion.

But soon the sun set and so they "rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (v. 56). The Jewish sabbath lasted from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

Mark 16:1 tells us that "when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices that they might come and anoint him." Evidently they had not had sufficient time late Friday afternoon before the sabbath began, so that they had to complete their purchases Saturday evening after the sabbath ended at sunset. But the approaching darkness prevented their getting to the tomb until the next morning.

IV. COMING TO THE EMPTY TOMB (24:1-10)

Last at the Cross, the women were first at the tomb. This shows their depth of devotion. What were the men doing? Where was Peter, who had expressed such deathless devotion to his Master? We don't know just where they were. But we know where they weren't; they were not at the empty tomb. It was only after the women called them that the men came (v. 12).

It is still true today that women are often willing to sacrifice more than men in showing their love for Christ. Who has not observed this?

We should honor our devoted women

and appreciate them. And as men we should not shirk our part of the task nor fail to show our devotion to our Lord.

December 14

BLIND TO HIS PRESENCE (24:15-16)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:13-35

INTRODUCTION: It was a dark hour for the disciples of Jesus. They had seen Him die on the Cross. And with that, all their hopes and dreams were dashed into the ground, buried with the dead body of Jesus.

But He was alive! The sad thing was that they failed to recognize Him at first when He joined them. But isn't that sometimes true of us?

I. SAD HEARTS (v. 17)

Two disciples were walking that Sunday afternoon from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a distance of about seven miles. As they talked together about what had happened in Jerusalem that weekend, their hearts were heavy and their faces sad. It hardly seemed possible. The previous Sunday they had joined the Triumphant Entry, following in that procession of believers who shouted "Hosanna!"

But now it was all over. The one they had thought was the Messiah, who would deliver them from Roman rule, was now in the grave, executed by the Roman governor. The whole sky had fallen! Their hope was all gone. No wonder they were sad.

II. SLOW HEARTS (v. 25)

Jesus had joined them on the road, but they did not recognize Him. Their hearts were so heavy, their eyes so downcast, that they did not really see who He was.

When He asked them why they were so sad, they told Him the whole sorrowful tale. They even reported the empty tomb, but saw no significance in it.

Jesus chided them for being "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (v. 25). He reminded them that the Messiah was supposed to suffer (v. 26). Then He began with "Moses" (the first five books of the Bible) and went on through all the prophets, pointing out and expounding the messianic passages (v. 27). What a treat it would

have been to have heard that conversation! But the Holy Spirit can help us to understand these very Scriptures today.

III. SEEING HEARTS (v. 31)

As they neared Emmaus, where the two disciples lived, "Jesus acted as if he were going farther" (v. 28, NIV).^{*} But they urged Him strongly to spend the night with them, as it was getting late, and He agreed to stay.

Then it happened! At the table, as He blessed the bread, broke it, and began to give them some of it, suddenly their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. Then He disappeared. They recalled how their hearts had burned within as He talked with them on the road and opened the Scriptures to them.

IV. SHARING HEARTS (v. 33)

There was only one thing to do now. They must hurry back to Jerusalem and tell the sorrowing disciples that Jesus had indeed risen. The news was too good to keep. So, in spite of their weariness from the long walk, they hurried the seven miles back to the city and shared the good news with the others. And we, too, have the Good News about the Risen Redeemer that we must share.

December 21

THE REALITY OF HIS PRESENCE (24:36)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:36-48

INTRODUCTION: The presence of Christ may at times be somewhat hidden to us. But He wants to make himself real to every one of His own. His presence can become more real to us than even that of our closest loved ones. Not that it is always so in consciousness, but it can be at times.

I. HIS PRESENCE MEANS PEACE (v. 38)

The Emmaus disciples found "the eleven" (v. 33)—with Judas Iscariot gone—meeting in an upper room in Jerusalem. Before they could say a word about what happened on the road, the apostles exclaimed to them: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon" (v. 34).

^{*}From the *New International Version*, copyright © 1973 by the New York Bible Society International. Used by permission.

December, 1975

34). With loving thoughtfulness Jesus had appeared on Resurrection Day to Peter, to comfort His heartbroken disciple.

Suddenly Jesus stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be unto you" (v. 36). It was the old, familiar greeting, in the familiar tone of voice.

II. HIS PRESENCE MEANS COMFORT (v. 38)

In spite of the testimony of Peter and the Emmaus pair, the disciples were startled and frightened; they thought they were looking at a ghost. But Jesus said, "Why are ye troubled?" Then He showed them His nail-pierced hands and feet (v. 39; cf. John 20:25). Though they could still hardly believe, they were overjoyed at the reality of His presence.

III. HIS PRESENCE MEANS ASSURANCE (v. 43)

To prove beyond doubt that He was not a ghost, but real flesh and bones, Jesus asked for something to eat. When they saw Him devouring the food, they could no longer doubt His bodily resurrection. The assurance was complete.

Then Jesus did for them what He had done for the two on the road to Emmaus. He first said: "Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms" (v. 44, NIV)—the three Jewish divisions of our Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures. "Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures" (v. 45). He showed them, too, that their Scriptures taught a suffering, resurrected Messiah.

December 28

THE ASCENDED CHRIST (24:51)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:49-53

INTRODUCTION: One of the most interesting religious sects in the United States is the Amana community, living in seven communal villages in Iowa. One of the distinctive features of this group is that the most important day of the year is not Christmas or Easter, but Ascension Day. The people all gather in their churches on that day for a prolonged celebration—all in German.

What does the ascension of Christ mean to us? We want to suggest a three-fold answer to that question.

I. AN ACCOMPANYING PRESENCE (v. 49)

Just before Jesus ascended to heaven He said to His disciples: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." The night before His crucifixion He had said to His disciples in the upper room: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 16:7). We sometimes are tempted to wish that we could have been on earth when Jesus was here 19 centuries ago. But we are really better off now. In His human body Jesus could be in only one place at one time. But now the Holy Spirit can make His presence real to every child of God everywhere all the time! That is the glory we have in Christ.

In His body He left the earth. But He is not gone. He is here!

II. A CONSTANT ADVOCATE

In 1 John 2:1 the aged apostle wrote to his fellow Christians that they should not sin. Then he added: "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Hebrews 7:25 declares: "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." The risen, ascended Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father in glory, making constant intercession for us.

III. A COMING KING (Acts 1:9-11)

The ascension of Jesus is described in the New Testament only at the end of Luke and the beginning of Acts. There we are told that as He went up into heaven two angels appeared with the thrilling announcement: "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (NIV). This is the believer's "blessed hope." But He had to go away before He could come again. And just as surely as He went, so surely will He return!

God's Gift: Too Wonderful for Words

TEXT: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15).

INTRODUCTION: If used at Christmastime, talk about the practice of giving gifts to those you love. Any other time, the background of Paul admonishing the church at Corinth on the love gift they had collected for the church in Macedonia would be appropriate. At the end of his message Paul got so blessed that he said, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift" (NIV), or "too wonderful for words" (TLB).

This gift was

I. THE GIFT OF LOVE THAT CAME DOWN CHRISTMAS

- A. The Giver of the Gift—God (John 3:16)
- B. The reason for the Gift—His love
- C. The object of the Gift—mankind
- D. The Gift—Jesus Christ, His only Son.

This Gift became

II. THE GIVER OF LIFE WHO AROSE AT EASTER—making possible:

- A. Abundant life—now (John 10:10)
- B. Eternal Life—forever (Rom. 8:23)

CONCLUSION: God gave sacrificially by giving us His Son, who in turn sacrificed His life so that you and I could have this Gift, Jesus Christ, alive in us. Truly we can exclaim with Paul, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

GENE MYERS

* * * * *

Idea

CHRISTMAS CARD POST OFFICE

Our teens are sponsoring a very worthy project again this Christmas. In order to have money for their missionary Christmas offering, they are delivering Christmas cards personally for you to your friends who attend our church. If you wish to save even more money, you may send just one card to all the members and friends of the church. The teens will place it on the bulletin board in the

foyer where everyone can see it. The teens will be in the foyer beginning December 3 to receive your cards and donations.

BULLETIN



BARREL

O LORD, HELP ME

in silence
to find peace—not just emptiness
in suffering
to find meaning—not just agony
in knowledge
to find wisdom—not just information
in routine
to find order—not just boredom
in order
to find purpose—not just conformity
in daily life
to find surprises—not just the expected
in prayer
to find You—not just my own desires
in change
to find promises—not just threats
in opportunities
to find possibilities—not just problems
in sin
to find forgiveness—not just guilt
in problems
to find hope—not just despair
in leadership
to find direction—not just power
in challenges
to find trust in You—not just personal insecurity. Amen.

—BETTY REBER

"When Christmas is over," said a merchant to a minister, "it's over, and it's our job to rid this store completely of Christmas in a day."

"Well," said the minister, "I've a bigger job—to keep Christmas in the hearts of my people for all year."

—Selected

He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree.

—ROY L. SMITH

DID YOU MYTH CHRISTMAS?

The red-suited myth stole away to his mythical home at the Pole. It was a quiet departure—no crowd such as his welcoming party three months ago. Perhaps he is now despised for the debts he caused. Maybe it is because his promises were as false as his beard.

While he was here, he was heralded as *Somebody*. He even had his picture (instead of Christ's) on my bank calendar for December 25. He was the center of attraction in most shopping centers. Children had their pictures taken with him.

I suppose it wasn't strange to most that to force belief in an imposter was so much easier than just accepting the Fact.

Well, he is gone—and if for you that was the spirit of Christmas, you *mythed* the whole thing!

Selected

Good News

A little boy in a Christmas program had but one sentence to say: "Behold, I bring you good tidings." After the rehearsal he asked his mother what tidings meant, and she told him it meant *news*.

When the program was put on, he was stagestruck and forgot his line. Finally the idea came back to him and he cried out, "Hey, I got news for you!"

* * *

Parents are people who bear infants, bore teen-agers, and board newlyweds.

Do not criticize unless you have made an effort to do the job better—and succeeded.

Persons hardest to convince they are of retirement age are children at bedtime.

The troops were being taught to jump from a plane.

"What if my parachute doesn't open?" asked one rookie.

"That," said the instructor, "is known as jumping to a conclusion."

INDEX

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The references in the index are to the month of issue and page; e.g., J-30 is January issue, page 30. The code for months is: J—Jan., F—Feb., M—March, A—April, My—May, Ju—June, Jl—July, Au—Aug., S—Sept., O—Oct., N—Nov., D—Dec.

Authors

- A**
Adams, Dennis, Time to Be Pastor, My-7
Alexander, Edwin, *Some of the Pastor's Mail at Christmastime*, D-19
- B**
Barnett, Julio H., Add Interest to Bulletins and Newsletters, Ju-20
Bowman, Allen, Knowing It by Heart, O-3; With All Longsuffering and Doctrine, F-3
Branson, Robert, Pastor as Sage, J-4
Brown, Arthur, Jr., Preaching That Provides a *Balanced Diet*, S-11
Buckmaster, Elsie E., So You're Having an Anniversary, Au-20
- C**
Carnahan, Roy E., The Five Ministries of the Church, J-12
Chalfant, Morris, Preaching to Hurt, A-11
Chilvers, Gordon, Biographical Preaching: Easier Yet Effective, A-3
Cowles, C. S., (See Call to Servanthood)
Crawford, Edwin E., Pastor's Mission, Ju-11
Crosser, Harold R., The Scandal of Division Street, N-5
Crow, Chas. D., Developing Your Soul-Winning Skills: Yourself, M-20; Ministering to Members Who Are Moving, N-14
- D**
Deal, William S., Ministerial Ethics, M-14
Duncan, Wayne E., Are You Sure, Lord? Au-22
- E**
Earle, Ralph, Looking at Our Lord in Luke (See Sermonic Studies)
- F**
Falling, George E., The Holiness Stream, D-9
Fodge, Gwon, A Prayer for My Pastor and His Wife, Au-17
French, J. K., Orders from Higher Up, 4-14
- G**
German, C. Dale, The Money Dish, Ju-17
Guess, Joe F., Hearing and Sanctuary Design, A-13

- H**
Hall, E. C., I Pray for My Pastor, J-9
Hancock, John, Minister's Temptations in an Affluent Society, O-5
Hansen, C. D., Personalities of Revival, Jl-10
Hayslip, Ross W., A Preacher's Preacher, J-3; Insidious Indifference, M-9; "Make It Brief, Brother!" F-18; Put It in the Package, A-22; Talk with Your Wife, O-17
Hightower, Nell E., A Missionary or a Mission Field? D-14; Creating a High Level of Trust, S-8; Ennoble the Work and It Will Ennoble You, F-15; What Do You Pity? Jl-8
Hutchens, Michael, Spottass Campaign, M-17
- I**
Ireland, Herb, God's Pattern for Church Board Members, My-9
- K**
Keeler, Derl, *Pastor's Christmas Prayer*, D-21 (see also Timely Outlines)
- L**
Larson, Joseph T., How Much Do We Love People? Au-15; Importance of Sermons in the Bible, F-19
Lee, Earl G., Guidelines for a Young Pastor, S-17
London, H. B. Jr., Different Enough to Make a Difference, A-17
Lorenzen, Paul, Follow-up Evangelism, Part 6, The Results, J-18
Lown, Albert J., The Sacrifice of Jesus, O-15
- M**
Maner, Robert, How Shall We Evangelize? F-9; Living with Inflation, O-20; Whatever Happened to Brother What's-His-Name? Ju-15
McGonigle, Herbert, The Pastor as Preacher, Au-3
McGraw, James, (see Editorials)
- N**
Nash, Forrest W., Christmas Beyond Bethlehem, D-6
Neilson, Joseph E., Complementary Concepts for Conversion, F-11
Nelson, Bob C., Please, Pastor, Practice Patience, J-8
Nelson, Robert D., You as a Church Board Member, F-5

Nicholson, Roy S., John Wesley on Sin, N-11
Nixon, David, Christ in the Pulpit, My-8

- P**
Parrot, Lora Lee (see Preacher's Wife)
Peterman, D. R., Dreams and Goal Setting, S-6
Polston, Ruth Ann, Be Your Radiant Self, My-15; The Lonely Preacher's Wife, M-18; The Preacher's Wife—God and Himself, O-18; We're Going to the Evangelistic Field, J-17; We've Come a Long Way, Brother, F-17
Price, Ross E., Breaking Ground for a New Church Building, M-23; The Continuity of Saving Grace (sermon), F-26
Privett, George Jr., The Minister and His Fellow Ministers, O-13
Pyncheon, Ralph F., *Their Darkest Hour Was Their Finest*, D-11
- R**
Riley, David, The Life of a Pastor's Shoe, Au-6
Robertson, Betty, It's Tomorrow, My-14; Summer-time Ministries for Children, A-18
Roland, Frankie, These Are My People, J-21
Ross, Mike, Reordination, My-17

- S**
Salisbury, Lyman, A Burial Service, Jl-26
Schwanz, Floyd L., We Try Harder, N-9
Sellars, Michael, *Pastor Jones, Superstar*, S-18 (see also Timely Outlines)
Shelton, R. Larry, Wesley and Biblical Interpretation, D-8
Showalter, Keith, Congregational Singing Can Be Exciting, A-6
Sparks, Asa H., Preaching and Pastoral Care, O-21; Stewardship, D-16
Sparks, Carlos H., Mostad Played the Tuba, S-9; The Letter, M-3; The Saturation Point, Jl-6
Statt, Arthur J., The Lord Does Care! S-14
Strait, C. Neil, (see Starting Point)
Sutter, Stanley, Discovering Aged America, O-14

- T**
Tarrant, David J., The Significance of the Sacrament, S-20
Thomas, J. Melton, Portraits of Paul: A Servant, Jl-19; Brother Beloved, Au-12; Prisoner of Christ, N-20; The Missionary, D-7
Tromble, Wm. S., Is the Folk Service a Useful Avenue of Worship? Ju-8
Turner, Wm. J., The Baby Nobody Wanted, D-21; Pentecostal Power, M-7

- V**
Volk, Harold L., *A Christian—Not a Church Member*, My-12

- W**
Weatherford, Fred J., Calvary Disseminates Redemption, M-6
Wenger, Fred G., The Miracle? J-20
Wesley, Charles, Awake, Thou That Sleepest, Au-10
Wetmore, Gordon, The Workshop, F-13
White, Jerry, A Letter of Love, N-21
Williams, Merrill S., To Read or Not to Read, Ju-5
Willingham, T. W., God Is Not Governed by His Power, Jl-14; He Shall Not Be Discouraged, N-2
Wiljer, Dan W., When the College Team Comes to Your Church, Au-14

Wood, Donald, John Wesley on the Observance of Communion, S-15
Wordsworth, E. E., Basic Aspects of Pentecostal Experience, My-21

Titles

(Items in capitals refer to departments)

- A**
Add Interest to Bulletins and Newsletters, Julio H. Barnett, Ju-20
Are You Sure, Lord? Wayne E. Duncan, Au-22
Awake, Thou That Sleepest, Chas. Wesley, Au-10
- B**
Baby Nobody Wanted, The, Wm. J. Turner, D-21
Basic Aspects of Pentecostal Experience, E. E. Wordsworth, My-21
Be Your Radiant Self, Ruth Ann Polston, My-15
Big "If," The (editorial), J-1
Biographical Preaching: Easier Yet Effective, Gordon Chilvers, A-3
Breaking Ground for a New Church Building, Ross E. Price, M-2
Burial Service, A, Lyman Salisbury, Jl-26
- C**
Call to Servanthood, C. S. Cowles, Inside or Outside the Church? My-3; Preaching That Connects, Au-7; Priority of Preaching, Jl-3; The Pastor: A Man of Great Significance, M-10; Man Between the Times, A-8; Slave or Servant? Ju-3; The Pastor Deals with Conflict, O-10; The Pastor Deals with Damaged Emotions, N-6; The Pastor Deals with Hurt Feelings, D-3; The Pastor Deals with Resistance, S-3
Christ and the Empty Tomb (editorial), M-1
Christ in the Pulpit, David Nixon, My-8
Christian—Not a Church Member, A, Harold L. Volk, My-12
Christmas Beyond Bethlehem, Forrest W. Nash, D-6
Communicating Christ (editorial), Jl-1
Complementary Concepts for Conversion, Joseph F. Neilson, F-11
Congregational Singing Can Be Exciting, Keith Showalter, A-6
Creating a High Level of Trust, Neil E. Hightower, S-8
- D**
Developing Your Soul-winning Skills: Yourself, Charles D. Crow, M-20
Different Enough to Make a Difference, H. B. London, Jr., A-17
Discovering Aged America, Stanley Sutter, O-14
Dishpan Devotions, Nita Crawford, Jl-17
Dreams and Goal Setting, D. R. Peterman, S-6
- E**
EDITORIALS
James McGraw, Beyond Bitterness, S-1; Care and Feeding of Evangelists, N-1; Christ and the Empty Tomb, M-1; Communicating Christ, Jl-1; In the Stream of the Spirit, My-1; Life-Style of Leadership, Ju-1; Preaching the Gospel to the Poor, F-1; Power of the Personal, D-1; Strategy of the Slingshot, A-1; The Big "If," J-1; The Gift of Tears, Au-1; Why Stoop to Be King? O-1
Ennoble the Work and It Will Ennoble You, Nell E. Hightower, F-15

F
Five Ministries of the Church, Roy E. Carnahan, J-12
Follow-up Evangelism, Part 6, The Results, Paul Lorenzen, J-18

G
Gift of Tears, The (editorial), Au-1
God Is Not Governed by His Power, T. W. Willingham, JI-14
God's Pattern for Church Board Members, Herb Ireland, My-9
Guidelines for a Young Pastor, Earl G. Lee, S-17

H
He Shall Not . . . Be Discouraged, T. W. Willingham, N-2
Hearing and Sanctuary Design, Joe F. Guess, A-13
Holiness Stream, The, George F. Failing, D-9
How Much Do We Love People? Joseph T. Larson, Au-15
How Shall We Evangelize? Robert E. Maner, F-9

I
I Pray for My Pastor, E. C. Hall, J-9
Importance of Sermons in the Bible, Joseph T. Larson, F-19
In the Stream of the Spirit (editorial), My-1
Insidious Indifference, Ross W. Hayslip, M-9
Is the Folk Service a Useful Avenue of Worship? Wm. S. Tromble, Ju-8
It's Tomorrow, Bolly Robertson, My-14

J
John Wesley on Communion, Donald Wood, S-15
John Wesley on Sin, Roy S. Nicholson, N-11

K
Knowing It by Heart, Allen Bowman, O-3

L
Letter of Love, Jerry White, N-21
Letter to Charles Wesley, By his mother, My-6
Letter to the Editor, Anonymous, M-13
Life of a Pastor's Shoe, David Riley, Au-6
Life-Style of Leadership (editorial), Ju-1
Living with Inflation, R. E. Maner, O-20
Lonely Pastor's Wife, The, Ruth Ann Polston, M-18
Lord Does Care, The, Arthur J. Stolt, S-14

M
"Make It Brief, Brother!" Ross W. Hayslip, F-18
Minister and His Fellow Ministers, The, George Prilvett, Jr. O-13
Ministerial Ethics, Wm. S. Deal, M-14
Ministering to Members Who Are Moving, Charles D. Crow, N-14
Minister's Temptations in an Affluent Society, John Hancock, O-5
Miracle? The, Fred G. Wenger, J-20
Missionary or a Mission Field? A. Neil E. Hightower, D-14
Money Dish, The, C. Dale German, Ju-17
Most Played the Tuba, Carlos H. Sparks, S-9

O
Orders from Higher Up, J. K. French, F-14

P
Pastor as Preacher, The, Herbert McGonigle, Au-3
Pastor as Sage, The, Robert Branson, J-3
Pastor Jones, Superstar, Michael Sellars, S-18

Pastor's Christmas Prayer, Derl Keefer, D-21
Pastor's Mission, The, Edwin E. Crawford, Jr., Ju-11
Pentecostal Power, Wm. J. Turner, M-7
Personalities of Revival, The, C. D. Hansen, JI-10
Please, Pastor, Practice Patience, Bob C. Nelson, J-6

POEMS
Easter Message, Unknown, M-19
Failure, Phil Cory, O-16
Indifference, G. A. Stoddard, M-29
I'm Looking—Where Is It? Phil Cory, Au-16
Lost Christmas, Rachel Van Creme, D-13
Pastor? Stanley Sutter, S-13
Seven-Day Week, Edward F. Cox, S-19
Thanksgiving, Unknown, N-10
Portraits of Paul, J. Melton-Thomas, Paul, a Servant, JI-19; Brother Beloved, Au-12; Prisoner of Christ, N-20; The Prisoner, D-7

PRACTICAL POINTS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE
A Vow to Remember, F-16
Cadillacs, Steak, and Mansions, N-16
He Caught a Vision . . . , A-15
He Planned Well for His Evangelist, M-16
Hostility Is a Door to Service, JI-16
It's Easy to Feed a Preacher's Ego, S-1
Our D.S. Practices What He Preaches, My-16
Political or Political, O-16
Prayer Requests—a Sweet-smelling Savor, Au-16
We Worked our Hearts Out for Him, Ju-16
When Evangelism Loses Its Appeal, D-10
Prayer for My Pastor and His Wife, Gwen Fodge, Au-17

PREACHER'S WIFE
Crawford, Nita, Dishpan Devotions, JI-17
Parrott, Lora Lee, Facts About Pastors' Wives, The, A-20, My-18, Ju-18, JI-18; Interview with Rosemary Green, Au-18
Polston, Ruth Ann, Lonely Pastor's Wife, The, M-18; Preacher's Wife and Her Husband, The, N-17; Preacher's Wife—God—and Herself, O-18; Will the Perfect Parent Stand Up, D-17
Roland, Frankie, These Are My People, J-21
Preacher's Preacher, A, Ross W. Hayslip, J-3
Preaching That Provides a Balanced Diet, Arthur Brown, Jr., S-11
Preaching the Gospel to the Poor, (editorial), F-1
Preaching to Hurt, Morris Chalfant, A-11
Put It in the Package, Ross W. Hayslip, A-22

R
Reordination, Mike Ross, My-17

S
Sacrifice of Jesus, The, Albert J. Lown, O-15
Saturation Point, The, Carlos H. Sparks, JI-6
Scandal of Division Street, The, Harold R. Crosser, N-5

SERMONIC STUDIES
Earle, Ralph, Looking at Our Lord in Luke: 3—5, J-24; 5—7, F-23; 8—10, M-25; 10—11, A-24; 11—13, My-24; 13—14, Ju-24; 15, JI-22; 16—17, Au-25; 18—19, S-24; 19—21, O-25; 22—23, N-24; 23—27, D-23
Price, Ross, The Continuity of Saving Grace, F-26
Tarrant, David J., The Significance of the Sacrament, S-20

Timely Outlines
Braymer, Merrill, Gates to Life, O-29
Chason, Robert L., The Choice That Determines

The Preacher's Magazine

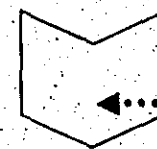
Your Destiny, My-29; The Death of the Righteous, My-29; The Faith of a Harlot, My-29; Hannah, a Model Mother, My-29; Sermon Starters, JI-27
Cline, Jerry, Revival, S-24
Hall, J. Walter, Jr., God Is Able, N-28; A Seeking World, N-28; Sermon Topics for the Love Chapter, JI-28
Keefer, Derl G., Crowds at Easter Time, M-28; Finding the Truth About the Holy Spirit, Au-29; Ideas for Sermon Series (Galatians, James, 1 & 2 Peter), JI-28; Outlines for Pentecost, N-29
Myers, Gene, God's Gift: Too Wonderful for Words, D-29
Runyon, D. L., Attitudes Toward Death, O-30
Sellars, Michael, His Holiness Is Sick, JI-27; Sanctify the People, My-29; What Hurts the Good Name? JI-26
Thomas, J. Melton, Mini-Messages from Malachi, Ju-28
Vail, Paul N., Keep Me, O Lord, Au-30; Responsibilities to Grace, J-28; Stricken of God! How Long? S-29
Significance of the Sacrament, The, David J. Tarrant, S-20
So You're Having an Anniversary (Church Archives), Elsie Buckmaster, Au-20
STARTING POINT, The, C. Neil Strait (see index each issue)
Strategy of the Slingshot (editorial), A-1
Summertime Ministries for Children, Betty Robertson, A-18

T
Talk with Your Wife, Ross W. Hayslip, O-17
The Letter: An Easter Message, Carlos H. Sparks, M-3

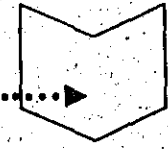
Their Darkest Hour Was Their Finest, Ralph F. Pyncheon, D-11
These Are My People, Frankie Roland, J-21
Time to Be Pastor, Dennis Adams, My-7
To Read or Not to Read, Merrill S. Williams, Ju-5

W
We Try Harder, Floyd L. Schwanz, N-9
We're Going to the Evangelistic Field, Ruth Ann Polston, J-17
We've Come a Long Way, Brother, Ruth Ann Polston, F-17
WESLEYANA
Awake, Thou That sleepest, Charles Wesley, Au-10
Holiness Stream, The, George E. Failing, D-9
John Wesley on Communion, Donald Wood, S-15
John Wesley on Sin, Roy S. Nicholson, N-11
Letter to Charles Wesley, By his mother, M-6
Wesley and Biblical Interpretation, R. Larry Shelton, O-8
Witness of the Spirit, Roy S. Nicholson, Ju-13
Wesley and Biblical Interpretation, R. Larry Shelton, O-8
What Do You Pity? Neil E. Hightower, JI-8
Whatever Happened to Brother What's-His-Name? R. E. Maner, Ju-15
When the College Team Comes to Your Church, W. Dan Witter, Au-14
With All Longsuffering and Doctrine, Allen Bowman, F-3
Witness of the Spirit, Roy S. Nicholson, Ju-13
Workshop, The, Gordon Wetmore, F-13

Y
You as a Church Board Member, Robert D. Nelson, F-5



HERE AND THERE



AMONG BOOKS

Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from your Publishing House

Aging, the Fulfillment of Life
By Henri J. M. Nouwen and Walter J. Gaffney, photographs by Ron P. Van Den Bosch. (Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1974. \$6.95.)
The prologue and epilogue of this enlightening text read like poetry. The comparison of life to the wagon wheel which rests, leaning against a birch tree in the white snow, tells of the fulfillment of the life cycle . . . the spokes of our lives having made their full turn.
Henri J. M. Nouwen is a Dutch priest-
December, 1975

psychologist who has written a number of books on ministry and is presently on the faculty of the Yale Divinity School. Walter J. Gaffney is involved in community action programs in New Haven, Conn.
The presentation is divided into two main sections: "Aging as a Way to Darkness," and "Aging as a Way to Light."
DARKNESS is realized through the experiences of rejection the author calls segregation—the rejection by society; desolation—the rejection by friends; and

loss of self—the rejection of self. In a civilization in which being is less valuable than having, many people start experiencing themselves as old when institutional arrangements such as retirement and Social Security place them outside the circle of those who primarily identify themselves with what they do, have, or can acquire.

LIGHT does not seem to be so well documented as the darkness. Light does not seem to fit in the computers and tabulation machines of the profit-makers. For the fortunate minority, the Light is formed by *hope, humor, and vision*. When hope grows, we see that we are not worth only what we achieve, but what we are, that while life might lose in use it might win in meaning. Humor is defined as knowledge with a soft smile. And vision is brought about by hope and

humor. "Whoever has learned to live in the Light is no longer worried by the problem of whether the Light will still be there tomorrow."

And so, young and old embrace each other in the realization that, after all, old age is not the last segregation. It is revealed to us that ultimately we are not divided between young and old, but all united as children of the Light (Eph. 5:8).

This very readable book is punctuated by photography illustrating picturesque concepts of aging in life. It concludes with the triumphant message that "the body of Jesus has become the sign of hope and new life for many who bear their aging lives in patience. The Son of Man grew into the fullness of the Son of God. He was the light that came into our darkness and revealed to us that the turning of the wheel is not a return to the cold ground, but one step forward in the history of salvation."

JOHN R. DAVIDSON

Preachers' Exchange



WANTED: One good set of the *Letters of John Wesley*, Epworth Edition, Gary M. Noyes, 11837 London Street, N.E., Blaine, Minn., 55434

WANTED: *Living Messages from the Canaan Journey*, by E. W. Black, Rev. R. E. Rogers, 5229 Swift Road, Sarasota, Fla. 33581

WANTED: *Selected Sermons*, by T. DeWitt Talmadge (in volume set or just some volumes), Leon Chambers, 609 Magnolia, Ave., Gadsden, Ala. 35903.

FOR SALE: *Sermons That Search the Soul*, by E. E. Shelhamer, \$3.50; *Abraham the Jew*, by Harry Jessop (paper), \$2.00; *Cardinal Elements in Sanctification* (Studies in Holiness, Vol. 1), by S. S. White (paper), \$2.50; *Eradication, Defined, Explained, and Authenticated* (Vol. 2) by S. S. White, \$2.50; *All Out for Souls*, edited and compiled by R. V. DeLong (This contained the gist of addresses given in 1947 in Kansas City. Most are now deceased.) \$2.00. E. Ellsworth Nothstine, P.O. Box 100, Lowndesville, S C 29659

COMING next month

• Fifty Golden Years

Next month we celebrate our fiftieth anniversary. It was January, 1926, when Editor James B. Chapman put together the first issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*.

• The Prayer Life of the Pastor

E. E. Wordsworth contributed an article in the first issue, and his pen still strikes the fire for Christ and holiness.

• Learning the Secret of Victory

Another early contributor, W. B. Walker, writes again for one of his favorite magazines.

• The Camp Meeting and the Mourners' Bench

A nostalgic look at early "Wesleyana" offers some interesting facts about holiness history

The sharpest mark of maturity is to recognize how much better it is to give than to receive. There are some persons who have lived several years without ever discovering this. There are many, alas, who will live out their lives and die without ever discovering it. But the Christian soon learns about it, because this is what his faith is all about. As a babe in Christ, he is quite excited about what God has "done for him" and how sweet it is to enjoy the "benefits" of salvation. Then he begins to grow in grace, and he discovers the joy of giving as only *agape* love can compel a person to give. He sees this as the heart of the Christmas spirit (p. 1), and his secret for coping with his hurts and disappointments (p. 3). His greatest thrill is in watching his parishoners discover it (p. 19) as they continue in the stream of holiness (p. 12). Those of us here in the editorial office find these thoughts tend to make our labors joyful, sending our pages your way with something of ourselves in every line. Our prayer is that you may find, in receiving these morsels, some small portion of blessing we have had in giving them. This is our way of saying, "Merry Christmas!"—and may these be good days for you and yours.

Yours for souls,