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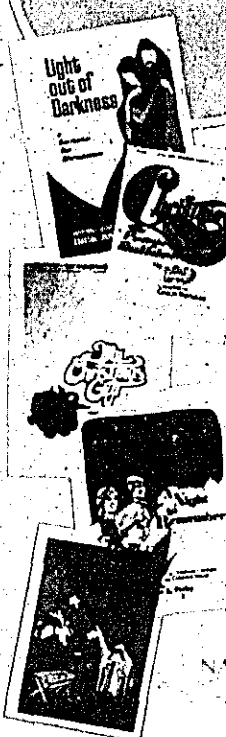
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CHRISTIAN
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Inside...

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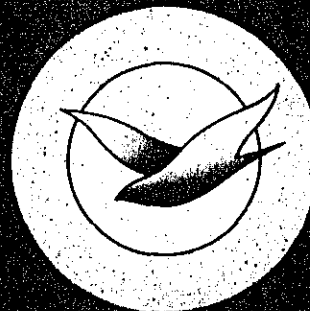
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THE
**preacher's
magazine**

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

*The Use and Abuse
of Language*



WORDS ARE TOOLS of the preacher's trade. He should use them well. But it is becoming increasingly difficult for him to resist the temptation to abuse, rather than use, these precious vehicles of communication.

Is there a subtle warning for us in a recent cartoon? It pictures Paul saying to King Agrippa, "Since my Damascus Road experience, I have been searching for an enabling vehicle that can serve as a basis for design of a plan for mission."

The better we are educated, and the more highly trained we become, the greater seems the temptation to distort our good news in meaningless jargon. We tell the story of the prodigal in words like these:

"And when he was able to establish his own identity consistent with an authentic self-image, he said, 'How many individuals comprising the total work force involved in my father's organization of domestic job activities have adequate supplies of food products at their disposal, while here I face the probability of chronic malnutrition and the debilitating effects of starvation?'" (see Luke 15:17).

We are doing no one a favor when the clarity of our message drowns in the gibberish of our language.

We should read newsman Edwin Newman's best seller, *Strictly Speaking*, in which the author raises the question, "Will America be the death of English?" Mr. Newman laments the growing tendency among us to confuse and manipulate people with vague and ambiguous words. A former president's attorney, for example, said he "needed an extension on a subpoena so he could evaluate and make a judgement in terms of a response." In other words, he needed time to think about it.

The classic case of the plumber and the scientist needs to be told and retold to preachers. It seems the plumber found that hydrochloric acid opened plugged pipes quickly and easily. He wrote to the National Bureau of Standards to ask whether the acid was a good thing for a plumber to use. An employee in the Bureau, who was a scientist, wrote:

"The uncertain reactive processes of hydrochloric acid place a pipe in jeopardy when alkalinity is involved. The efficiency of the solution is indisputable, but the corrosive residue is incompatible with metallic permanence."

The scientist was rather disturbed to receive a reply from the plumber thanking the Bureau for telling him that his use of hydrochloric acid was alright. He showed the correspondence to one of his superiors, who wrote to the plumber:

"Hydrochloric acid generates a toxic and noxious residue which will produce submuriate invalidating reactions. Consequently, some alternative procedure is preferable."

In his reply to this gem of information, the plumber wrote that he agreed with the Bureau that hydrochloric acid works just fine. Quite upset by this time, the two scientists took their problem to their boss. The next day the plumber received a telegram which contained this clear and urgent message: "Don't use hydrochloric acid. It eats holes in the pipes."

A question for the good men in the Bureau: "If this is what you meant all along, why didn't you say so the first time?" And that is a good question for preachers to keep in mind as they prepare their sermons.

The use of words to conceal rather than to reveal the truth is a very sinister and dangerous habit. This is more likely to be done unintentionally than by design, although there are some who do it intentionally. The leader of a terrorist organization defended his tactics with the explanation: "We do not want to destroy people. It is precisely because we want peaceful coexistence that we have shed so much blood."

Deliberate use of "doublespeak" to confuse the listener may be the result of several possible motives of a speaker. It may be a wish to misrepresent the truth (as was obviously the case with the terrorist), to confuse and thereby overcome objections of a listener, to impress with scholarly vocabulary (one-upmanship), to avoid taking a clear stand on either side of an issue, or perhaps because it is easier than admitting ignorance.

A preacher of the gospel must not be guilty of any of these motives when he speaks for Christ!

Unintentional concealment of truth through language is another problem, no less important than the intentional. It suggests weakness, rather than wickedness, but its consequences are no less tragic. It erodes the preacher's credibility, tarnishes the high office of preaching, and leaves the people in the pew empty and weak.

Simply stated, then, the proper use of words is to tell the truth, and in so doing to be understood. This is vital in no other profession quite so much as it is in our ministry. For the preacher of the Word, clarity is more than an asset. It is a necessity.

Wesley's advice to his preachers was sound when he said, "Though you think with the learned, you must speak with the common people." Is it too much to ask of the preacher that he use words carefully, accurately, and skillfully?

Taking terms out of limbo and bringing them into life—that is the real test of our preaching.

Skepticism has been conceded a degree of intelligence which it does not possess

The Bankruptcy of Unbelief

By Pascal P. Bélew*

THIS WRITER recently "took a fresh dip" into the psychology of unbelief and "came up" with even stronger faith in, and greater appreciation for, the teaching of the Scriptures. My observations necessitate the conclusion that for anyone interested in a satisfactory philosophy of life, unbelief is bankrupt intellectually, morally, and emotionally.

My first impression is that skepticism is conceded a degree of intelligence which it does not possess. Throughout history it has been demonstrated that "the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 14:1); and that "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:22). Confronted on every hand by reality which demands explanation, unbelief seeks to "explain it away." And in this attempt it evinces a credulity seldom manifested by the most naive professor of religion.

The world is all too familiar with the wide acceptance accorded the absurd theory of evolution over the scriptural and sensible account of creation. But it should be more thoroughly familiarized with the following statement taken from Darwin's autobiography. Said he, "The utter impossibility of believing that the

wondrous universe, including our own conscious selves, arose from nothing, is to me the greatest evidence for the existence of God."

The following ridiculous citations, taken from recognized textbooks in sociology and psychology, will serve to further illustrate the credulity of unbelief and the straits to which it is put in its efforts to explain human behavior.

Man's fear of God (says unbelief) arose from primitive man's observing the forces of nature which he could not explain, and is furthered by the inhibitions to which we are subjected in childhood; conscience is a hangover caused by the exercise of parental authority and should be replaced by intelligence; Moses, Isaiah, and Jesus resorted to the desert, because they believed that it was the home of Diety; suicide by drowning symbolizes a longing to return to the peace and quiet of the womb, while suicide by hugging a hot stove denotes a unrequited desire for love; biting the fingernails relates back to the practice of the beasts who fought with tooth and claw, and trimming the nails is the civilized method for curbing such tendency; and the joy and peace which the martyrs experienced in their suffering was a form of masochism—a passion which derives pleasure from pain.

Such, in brief, is the brilliant array of atheistic bunk that masquerades in the name of superintelligence.

*Evangelist, Church of the Nazarene.

My second impression concerns the moral implications of unbelief. I would like to turn psychoanalyst myself long enough to say that unbelief is an escape complex. It may contain intellectual difficulties, but more often it is the result of a perverse disposition. It is an attempt to avoid the obligations imposed by true religion, namely, repentance and consecration. Hence the warning, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12).

Many centuries ago it was said of those who "did not like to retain God in their knowledge" that "God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness," and "for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections" (Rom. 1:28-29, 26). And the impact of unbelief on the morals of individuals and groups in all generations since has echoed the truth of Paul's words. Reminiscent of this are these words of a modern psychologist: "Moral, religious, and superstitious factors have combined to place heavy restrictions upon satisfactory sexual expression."

My third impression concerns the emotional destitution of unbelief. The statements of skeptics themselves furnish ample proof of this proposition. Luther Burbank said: "Once obsolete, an automobile is thrown to the scrap heap. Once here and gone, the human life has likewise served its purpose. If it has been a good life, it is sufficient. There is no need of another."

Robert G. Ingersoll said: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and

barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry . . . A wreck at last must mark the end of each and all."

Bertrand Russell said: "We see, surrounding our narrow raft illumined by the flickering light of human relationships, the dark ocean on whose rolling waves we toss for a brief hour. From the great night without, a chill blast breaks in upon our refuge. All the loneliness of humanity, caught amid the hostile forces, is concentrated on the individual soul, which must struggle alone, with what courage it can command against the whole weight of the universe that cares nothing for its hopes or fears."

In contrast to these barren, desolate concepts of life, consider the words of Jesus: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). Ponder the assurance of Paul: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1). And listen to the testimony of Victor Hugo: "I feel in myself the future life. I am rising I know toward the sky. . . the nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the world which invite me. . . The tomb is not a blind alley. It is a thoroughfare. It closes with the twilight to open with the dawn."

Evil has become a way of life
In a society where the criminal
has become a liberated hero

Watching the Wicked Succeed

By William Goodman*

O LORD, HOW LONG must I call for help before You will listen? I shout to You in vain; there is no answer. "Help! Murder!" I cry, but no one comes to save. Must I forever see this sin and sadness all around me? Wherever I look, there is oppression and bribery and men who love to argue and to fight. The law is not enforced, and there is no justice given in the courts, for the wicked far outnumber the righteous, and bribes and trickery prevail." In substance, these were the words of Habakkuk around 630 B.C. (The rather loose translation is my own.)

Read the words from your local newspaper: A gasoline station was robbed and the two attendants were tied in the station. About 100 motorists pumped gas for themselves and pocketed cigarettes and left the two attendants tied. They shouted, "Help! Help! We've been robbed!" The people just looked and kept pumping. Several people entered the station. One customer looked at the tied attendant. The attendant pleaded, "Man, untie me, get the police." He put his money back in his pocket, grabbed a handful of cigarettes, and said, "Help is on the way." He filled his car with gas and drove away. The robbers took \$5,000 in cash. The public helped themselves to 400 gallons

of gasoline and \$300 worth of cigarettes. In 1964, Edmund Kemper, 15 years old confessed to killing his grandfather and grandmother. The California Youth Authority paroled him to his mother seven years later. April 24, 1973, he confessed to killing his mother, her friend, and six coeds, after which he dismembered and decapitated them.

Myron Lance and Walter Kelbach appeared on a NBC special, "Thou Shalt Not Kill," August, 1972. These men were in Utah State Penitentiary for murdering six people around Salt Lake City in 1966. Laughing and joking, the killers described their crimes in graphic detail, telling how they repeatedly stabbed a gas station attendant while the man pleaded for his life. One of the men remarked, "Did you see the way he squirmed? Wasn't that funny?" Neither killer expressed the slightest concern for their victims. Two self-confessed, arrogant killers butchered six human beings begging for mercy, while they were assured of the dignity to a fair trial and the right to live.

On August 21, 1971, eight members of the Zinken family were on the road on a weekend vacation. They pulled off the Edens Expressway outside Chicago. Pamela, age 17, and her father were looking at a road map when suddenly the car exploded into

*Police officer, Kansas City Police Department.

a shapeless mass of smoke. Five of the Zinken children were killed outright. Mr. Zinken lived a year as a vegetable before dying. They were hit by a tractor trailer driver by the name of Leonard Anderson. After hitting the car, hurling it for 130 feet, the truck continued a quarter of a mile before stopping. Anderson, not hurt, and smelling of alcohol, stumbled glassyeyed back to the scene and asked, "Did I do that?" Anderson had not slept for 36 hours and had been drinking. It took four years for the case to come to trial. The state attorney worked 500 hours on the case. While waiting trial, Anderson had been convicted of speeding and property damage in another case. Anderson was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to five years probation, not to spend any time in confinement.

In 1974, a total of 20,600 people were murdered; 452,720 were assaulted with weapons; 55,210 women were raped; 5 million were arrested for shoplifting (1 of every 60 shoppers steal). Stores lose \$4 billion yearly to shoplifters. Employees cost stores \$5.2 billion. 250,000 Americans attempted suicide—25,000 succeeded. Ten million Americans are alcoholics, directly affecting 36 million relatives. Over 1 million youth (12-17 years) have serious alcohol problems. Some 50,000 die each year in traffic accidents—28,000 are alcohol-related. There are 1,000 Americans who die daily, directly or indirectly, from venereal disease (2.5 million have gonorrhea; one-half million have syphilis). We have 30 million marijuana users and 3,000,000 heroin addicts who cost the U.S. \$15 billion in stolen goods. Fraud and embezzlement cost the U.S. over \$1.5 billion yearly. Bank embezzlement totals 10 times greater loss than bank robberies.

Tax evaders justify their crime by

blaming government for misuse. Hotel guests steal towels, silverware, and Gideon Bibles. Insurance claims are padded. Whether we talk about outright murder, the drunk driver who kills, the robber with the gun, or the housewife who shoplifts, we are talking about a permissive society—a society that is insensitive to evil that daily operates contemptuously and arrogantly in the open. Evil has become a way of life in this society of ours where the criminal has become the liberated hero.

F.B.I. Director Clarence Kelley states that greater cooperation from individual citizens is needed to turn the tide against crime. Americans must stop tolerating crime merely because to resist involves personal sacrifice, time, and effort.

Ten-year-old Carmen Colon got away from her kidnapper at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 16, 1971, and appeared along interstate 490 out of Rochester, N.Y., nearly naked, waving to stop the passing cars. No one would stop. Two days later, she was found in a ditch miles away, raped and strangled. Dr. Victor Harris, a psychologist, researched why no one stopped to help. One motorist stated, "I felt someone behind me was in a better position to help." Another, "I thought about stopping but changed my mind." It is as though we pass by scenes of evil, watching ourselves attacked, tortured, diseased, decaying; and we die, crying that somebody ought to do something about it.

When Habakkuk asked God, "How long will You let this go on? Why don't You put an end to this violence?" God gave an answer. Too often we are willing to hand back to God the responsibility that He gives us in this world. God told Habakkuk that before long the wicked would receive what they deserved. God stated that punishment would be violent

and swift as famished eagles attacking. Habakkuk was satisfied and told God that he would climb up in the vineyard tower, sit back, and watch. "Not so!" said God. "Before you sit back and watch, you have the responsibility to warn of the coming destruction and to encourage the righteous to live by faith." God pointed out that the wicked would not be interested in the message and would laugh, but that while laughing, they would be destroyed at the appointed time.

We are too prone to sit back and let somebody else do the dirty work of fighting evil. Habakkuk, so very humanly, wanted God to punish the wicked while he sat in the tower and watched. Do Christians retreat to their churches, unattached from the marketplace, to sit, watch, and wait for evil to be destroyed?

The police officer in the fight against pornography, prostitution, gambling, homosexuals, public drunkenness, child abuse, runaway children, does not hear of the fight that the church puts up. Social evils and sins have been turned over to the Health, Education, and Welfare Department. Where is the church's voice of warning to the righteous to live by faith, of the destruction that the evil causes, and of the coming apocalyptic destruction?

The church is challenged to warn the evildoer and the lawless of their coming doom. The church is challenged to stop "sitting in the tower" and go to the marketplace and support the forces of righteousness—your police department. Become vocal and let the government leaders know that you want evildoers punished. Write to political leaders, talk to them, let them know that you refuse to accept crime as a way of life. As God condemns evil, so should those that live by His law. There can be no coexistence with evil. There

can be no *detente* with evil. It is time that we fight evil just as real as evil has fought and locked us in the safety of our own homes.

You are challenged to support your police officers by letting them know you appreciate them. Help them to get better working conditions and better pay. To make police officers work at a low pay scale at a high-risk job that no one else wants is immoral. To make them work for an unacceptable salary while publicly and privately challenging and censoring them at every turn is as morally wrong as for police to strike.

God's promise to Habakkuk is His promise to us. God is going to punish evildoers. But wait! God will also punish those that insist on sitting in the tower and waiting. You are Habakkuk, and God tells you to go to the marketplace and warn the wicked and remind them that the righteous (policeman) shall live by faith.

These are days of gross, unchallenged wickedness. The problems of evil contemptuously defy human solution and directly threaten all of us. All of our dilemmas are prepared and delivered by our own sinful, greedy human race. It is our responsibility, and we are in no position to hand it back to God. We are to live by faith and go out committing our time, energy, and intellect to fight against evil.

In Habakkuk's day when destruction came, Habakkuk plugged his ears to shut out the screams of the punished, and tried to keep from inhaling the stench and smoke that rose to the tower. Habakkuk recalled how he requested that God do something about the wicked, and it was done. When God comes, it will be done. It is our time for doing until 'tis done. It will be terrible to be included with the wicked because we failed at righteous living by faith.

The construction of a sermon can make or break the impact upon the listeners

Telegrams, Wedding Cakes, and Squares

IN DAYS WHEN RAILWAYS were a chief form of travel, and boys coveted to be train engineers, when Casey Jones was a pin-up idol, and the Cannonball Express the fastest prairie horse, conductors were obliged to report fully upon every incident or accident-affecting schedules.

A conductor of Irish descent was rebuked several times by his supervisor for lengthy, "Blarney Stone" reports. The next incident revealed how much reproof had been taken to heart. He reported his train derailment and subsequent repairs with a terse

Telegram:

"Off again, on again, gone again, Flanagan."

A memorable summary and meaningful "outline" of Cannonball catastrophe.

We look in vain for a natural construction, progressive outline, and arresting divisions in many modern

sermons. The vogue for idea or topic preaching presents a theme, argues, illustrates, and finally *supports* with Bible text or passage. This has tended to supplant strong skeletons, vital vertebrae, and effective engineering in preaching technique. "Boneless wonders" abound, posing as sermons, lacking an attractive, intelligent introductory face; well-developed shoulders and hips; sturdy legs; and shapely feet of forceful application.

Forgetting that every form of life has its own essential construction, the lesson of Ezekiel's vision is overlooked. Bone to his bone before sinews and flesh, skin and breath make a sermon to live and stand upon its own feet.

The omission of adequate, attractive outlines is a disservice to the sermon, a loss to the preacher himself, and can be detrimental to the impact and abiding worth of the sermon. Thinking, memory, delivery, and appreciation are helped by well-phrased and balanced outlines. Despite ministerial jokes about

Wedding Cake Preaching

three tiers—firstly, secondly, and thirdly—with a climactic "cupid" crowning the "layers"; a sermon with divisions, heads, and main sections, photographs well and recalls easily. "Samson's Sin, Shock, and Sorrow"

may be trite and amateurish, but it sticks. Alliteration is neither intrinsic nor endemic to every text or passage, but *construction*—an ordered progress to an appropriate climax—alliterative or otherwise, is neglected, avoided, or shoddily undertaken at peril to the best preaching image.

The natural outlines of scriptural texts and stories belong to every preacher. Who could really improve upon the construction of the parable of the sower—the stony, shallow, stilled, and sincere hearts? Or the progression of Romans 6:22:

Freedom from sin, now

Fruit unto holiness, increasingly

A final destiny, eternal life.

Or the exquisite simplicity of Luke 22:31-32:

The wisest prays for the most foolish.

The strongest can become the weakest.

The weakest can become the strongest.

And again the ever familiar story of Naaman, the Sunday school teacher's standby with a happy ending:

A husband with a liability

A home with a burden

A young believer with a testimony

A king with a problem

A prophet with a message

Servants with courage, and

A seeker with faith.

Complete originality is beyond attainment by the most eminent preaching genius, for there is nothing new under the sun. We are all an

amalgam of heritage, environment, assimilation, education, association, inspiration, and down-to-earth, solid, hard work. Every preacher's treatment of a text is his own. It may not be brilliant, scintillating, revolutionary, or mouth-opening to the people in the pew. But it should bear the imprint of an individual gift from God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, and a due construction for the type of sermon preached. We invite the appellation "Squares"

by appealing for "meaty" sermons, pulpit meals with appetizer, main course, and dessert; but much prefer this to the comment "My soul loatheth this light bread." Square or no square, able construction stands the test.

Does the introduction contain the main sermon idea in statement or inference as a human face indicates the whole of personality?

If the rest of the sermon were lost or blotted out, does the application capture and apply to the hearer the full thrust of truth preached?

Ponder these gems: "A certain man had two sons." "Go thou and do likewise."

And between the opening of the battle for the mind, and the closing contest for the capture of the will, the sermon largely stands or falls by

Construction!

Big business in the national economy. God's business in the preacher's exposition:

We may test our growth in grace by our expertness in detecting the voice of our Lord. It needs a good ear to catch the voice of the Lord in our sorrows. I think it requires a better ear to discern the voice amid our joys. . . . Discernment is succeeded by obedience. That is the one condition of becoming a saint—to follow the immediate call of the Lord. And it is the one condition of becoming an expert listener. Every time I hear the voice and follow, I sharpen my sense of hearing, and the next time the voice will sound more clear.

—John Henry Jowett



by
Albert J. Lown

Nazarone evangelist
London, England

Making Hospital Calls Count

By C. D. Hansen*

AS I LISTENED to the hospital chaplain speak at the ministers' seminar on hospital calling, I was shocked to learn of the abuse by the clergy in the hospital. In chagrin I asked, "Do ministers really do these things?"

To which he replied, "Not only these, but worse."

I learned that there is a code of ethics for ministers to follow. He was kind enough to share it with me. I offer it here for the benefit of every pastor.

These are some things to avoid when visiting a hospital:

1. Do not stay too long. Short, frequent visits are the best.

2. Allow no alarm, horror, or sorrow to appear in your face or in your voice.

3. Do not give sympathy in a way that will harm the patient. The sufferer should be made to realize that you share his pain; but if you dwell on his feelings, you can unman him.

4. Do not go to the sick room with body odor; a loud voice; nervous, jerky movements; or a disheveled appearance.

5. Do not jar the bed in any way. Do not lean on it or sit on it, even if the patient asks you to.

6. Do not stand or sit in a position which requires the patient to strain himself to see you.

7. Make no apologies—for your deficiencies, the fewness of your visits, or anything else.

8. Be careful of the handshake.

*Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Lowell, Ind.

Rough treatment can unnerve a person who has just had surgery.

9. Do not choose topics that require close or prolonged attention, or that are out of the range of interest of the patient.

10. Do not talk of depressing or alarming subjects.

11. Do not take part in the treatment or practice of any special psychotherapeutic technique.

12. Do not let yourself be drawn into any discussion with the patient or his family about the value of the doctor's treatment.

13. Do not tell any lies to or about the sick person.

14. Do not whisper or speak in a low tone to a nurse, to a member of the family, or to anyone else in the room or near it if there is the slightest chance that the patient will see you or hear you.

15. Do not walk on tiptoe unless patient is dozing or asleep, or unless you know on reliable authority that the patient prefers you do so. Many patients are irritated or alarmed by it.

16. Do not allow yourself to become insulted or more than momentarily irritated by the patient.

17. Do not play favorites. In a parish or in a hospital, a minister's influence is dwarfed if he seems to concentrate his interest on a few.

18. Do not argue; listen!

19. Do not carry parish gossip. People try to draw it out of us by shrewd questions.

20. Do not preach about the sick or repeat stories about them.

As Christ came into the world and served, even so should we go into the world and serve

The Pastoral Leader in a Mission-oriented Church

By John P. Ragsdale*

ACCORDING TO THE Great Commission, we should seriously question whether a church can be less than mission-oriented, yet an examination of local congregations reveals this sad reality. The pastor is generally a key person in the establishing of the overall character of the congregation. Our very position provides the avenue through which to influence the establishing of local church policy and the setting of priorities. The cumulative impact of our messages will reveal our own spiritual orientation and the existence of overriding issues in the local church. Overly concerned with internal problems, we may create an introspective atmosphere which can deter effective mission outreach. When our people are thinking about their own problems and are directing their energies to solving these problems, they may have little impetus left to attain a wider outreach. This is not to argue that local problems should be neglected, but rather that a healthy balance must be maintained.

Incessant evangelistic preaching needed by the unregenerate lacks the deepening emphasis which spiritual growth requires. Spiritual growth will

*Academic dean, United Wesleyan College.

in itself provide a thrust for effective outreach. Generally, churches which emphasize the importance of extended outreach through mission organizations will also have vital local programs for church growth. For this reason, I believe, we should preach specifically and with some regularity on the commission of Christ to believers. We should also give direct attention at least once each quarter to the mission organizations of the local church—including the youth. There should be active involvement by the mission organization in the public worship experience.

Too often the mission organization is relegated to an inferior position in the church's program. Its vigor often depends on a single moving spirit in the church, and it may suffer from a lack of freshness in leadership and ideas since its leaders often repeat year after year in the same position. This practice may not be detrimental, but it may stifle growth and innovation. While many organizations are content with a monthly weeknight meeting including a devotional and some practical work, I believe the emphasis of the mission organization work meeting should be

to work. A really effective involvement results from well-planned work meetings. Hastily conceived projects or voluminous but quickly done work will not prove very useful to the extension of the work. For the most part, field outreach is very appreciative of the continued quality support of local organizations, and the results of their labor are scattered the world over and are acclaimed by church leaders of every land.

A significant aspect of the mission organization is its involvement in a monthly prayer meeting where the mission emphasis receives its proper place in the devotional life of the church. This prayer meeting should be the most interesting, varied, and spiritually stimulating time in the monthly calendar. A key axiom for such a meeting is "Keep it moving." Thorough consultation with guest speakers to determine how their presentation and the usual church program could best be meshed is of critical importance. If possible, we should visit one of their services in another location before they come to our church. Let us remember the guest is the stranger; let us make him welcome.

A truly inspiring time in the church can be experienced during a

well-planned and -executed missions convention. The involvement of all mission-oriented organizations in this special time greatly enhances its effect on our church. A plan to develop regional conventions with the pastors, mission organizations, and special speakers involved in a round robin arrangement utilizes the efforts of all to the best advantage. In this way, four or more churches can have the benefits of a guest missionary speaker, and regional rallies for mission organizations and youth groups provide an exciting time for the church. Participation in subscription campaigns, fund raising, reading programs, work projects, gifts, and public services can make the mission organization a vital force in the church.

Out of this program we develop an awareness of the church's mission. Young people are motivated to devote their lives to the Lord's service both locally and around the world. Committed church members become more effective in serving the church and in reaching their community. The spirit of the entire church is enlivened by a consciousness of others' needs. As Christ came into the world and served, *even so* should we go into the world and serve.

Ever slip from your bed in the wee hours of morn
And steal off to the hills or a mountain,
Just to spend time communing with nature and God,
And take strength from the life-giving Fountain?

Jesus did it, you know, rising long before day,
Praying thus 'til the multitudes found Him—
Then He'd teach them, and feed them, and send them away,
And no foe had the strength to confound Him!

—Roy McCaleb

Statistics never tell the whole story—
but let us never permit ourselves to
hide behind this axiom as a cop-out

True and False Liberation From the "Numbers Game"

IN HIS ATTITUDE toward statistics, a minister should avoid two extremes. One is to assume a grand and lofty liberation from numbers. This pastor will pose as so ultraspiritual that he would never think of grovelling in abject terror before the Sunday school attendance board. In fact, he can enjoy the days with his favorite sports and cronies and sleep like a baby at night, right in the midst of very measurable disintegration. He is so determined to see only the tangibles and is so intent on believing that spiritual growth is taking place behind and beneath the visible, that he refuses to take seriously the spreading emptiness of church pews.

Let's not be ashamed of applying just a little Yankee business sense to the work of the Lord. If we do, we will not despise or scorn the quantitative yardsticks overmuch. After all, statistics do mean people. That

number on the Sunday school attendance board doesn't tell how many flies have gotten in, but how many people are there. Declining figures simply mean disappearing people—boys and girls and fathers and mothers; real, live, God-created, God hungry, Christ-redeemed, eternity-bound people.

There is a correlation in the long run between success and statistics. By what imaginable criteria could a man's ministry be called successful if he doesn't reach people and if his work with them isn't constructive? If he does reach people, and if his ministry is constructive, surely that kind of success will be reflected in quantitative terms over the long haul. Not all of his converts will join the Baptists or backslide or move away or go to heaven too soon in a car accident. If this superspiritual, lofty-minded reverend, who scorns anything that smacks of institutionalism, who saves his finest sarcasm for the ecclesiastical machinery, who resents the "busywork" of having to send reports every month—if this ultraholy Joe leaves every pastorate smaller than he finds it, and every treasury emptier, he can talk about a spiritual concept of success ever so piously, but nobody is going to be impressed.

The danger of this extreme is what we need to nail down first. There is a



by
Richard S. Taylor

Department of Education
and the Ministry,
Church of the Nazarene

truth in saying that statistics never tell the whole story, in either direction. But, while at times we need to take comfort in that fact, let us never permit ourselves to hide behind it as a cop-out. There were times when Jesus didn't sleep either.

But having made up our minds to go after people and work constructively with them, we may now safely turn around and think about avoiding the other extreme. This is the nervous insecurity which panics and goes into a tailspin because of temporary setbacks and mysterious stalemates. And lo—the district assembly approacheth around the corner, and we relish it not, and there seemeth to be no decent way of breaking a leg so we won't have to go.

And that assembly will be 10 times more frightening if it is one's first, and if one was introduced at the district camp meeting as the new pastor of Fourth Church, fresh from the seminary or whatever, and everyone turned to see this highly trained, "raring to go" genius, and during the next 10 months all one manages to do is rattle a few "skeletons in the closet," and be called "our little preacher" by the doting grandmothers.

About that time, the young minister will hanker for the ivory towers and cloistered halls. No!—*about that time he will discover how deeply*

grounded is his commitment to the ministry in the first place.

Whether or not a man is completely deflated and even defeated by periods of apparent failure will be determined by the certainty of his call, his faith in God, his crucifixion of self, his love for Jesus Christ, and his steadfast loyalty to the will of God. If these qualities are shaky, he will be.

The remedy is not turning tail but digging down until he knows without a shadow of doubt that God is on the throne, that God will give him full tides as well as ebb tides, that God can and will teach him which keys to turn and which handles to get hold of, and that he really does want God's presence and approval more than the praise of men. Then he will learn to be more concerned about his people than his own image. He will neither despise statistics nor be cowered by them.

It makes a big difference whether the depression of declining statistics is the embarrassment of our own vanity and our wounded ego, or whether it is a spiritual burden, the kind we can pray clear through until we become bigger and better men, with at least a revival of one. Then perhaps God can begin thinking about trusting us with wider blessings.

The Minister—A Bugler

The minister of Jesus Christ is many people—among them, a bugler. He calls his peers to battle by the use of simple instruments like words.

He intensifies in all his hearers their awareness of the side they are on—impacting them with morale, without which no army is worth the price of its insignia.

The minister reminds his hearers of the martyred witness of earlier faith-filled comrades, as the bugler does with taps.

He summons people to alertness the way the bugler does with reveille.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

Social Security: Cause for Concern, Not Alarm

By Dean Wessels*

THE NEWS MEDIA spotlighted 1975. It was the first year the Social Security System reported a deficit. Social Security authorities predicted benefits would exceed receipts by \$3 billion during 1975.

A number of respected publications have carried articles on the subject. Network television has documented it. Frightening possibilities were discussed. Some commentators forecast doom and bankruptcy.

Church board members ask what these forecasts really mean. Are pastors' and parishioners' benefits jeopardized? Talk of better prospects in commercial retirement funds is more common. One ministerial journal carries a paid advertisement regularly from a clergyman in the West who for \$10.00 promises to tell you how to get out of the program and collect your funds.

This desire to get out of Social Security is more than passing thought for new ministers. Clergy are a unique occupational group. For proper cause (during the first two years of ministry) a minister may option out of Social Security. *The only cause that is acceptable to the federal government is conscientious objection or religious principle—not for personal, political, or economic reasons. Once out, there is no way back into the program.*

Social Security trust funds were at \$46 billion in January, 1975. Fed-

*Executive secretary, Department of Pensions, Church of the Nazarene.

eral officials agree that this reserve will sustain the system into the early 1980s. You need not have any worry during the rest of this decade.

Corrective action is, of course, necessary. Without legislation the present reserves will be depleted in a few years.

Legislators have a strong desire to correct the problems. You might wonder how such an assumption can be made in the face of congressional indecision in other areas. There are three reasons for toning down sensational predictions.

Social Security is the most favored government program. It is appreciated in every political sphere. The problems are an issue which most congressmen and senators will earmark for attention. In fact, the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee have already begun studies.

Second, the liquidation of Social Security would be a dangerous omen on the world scene. Legislating Social Security out of existence could do serious damage to the dollar abroad. Such a move would be a public declaration against the value of the American system.

Third, the alarmists speak of a possible death of Social Security. They do not seem to realize the paradox Congress is in. This is not a strong partisan issue. Almost everyone wants the problem solved. To ignore the Social Security problem

would be political suicide for the legislators' careers. The nation *will* elect those who *will* work on the problem.

Looking from another angle, it is ridiculous to worry about loss of benefits due to bankruptcy. Such a point of view would be accurate only if Social Security was a private plan. A bankruptcy of Social Security is a bankruptcy of the federal government. Social Security is no small expenditure. Such a bankruptcy would topple the dollar. Money would be worthless, and also private investments.

Only God can know the future. Anything is possible. Yet, it is prob-

able that the Congress will act for the general good of the nation in an issue such as this.

Believers are in a special position. Their hope is not in Social Security benefits. They are concerned, not alarmed. Through these problems it is the Christian's task to show a supernatural perspective. Pray for your legislators and leaders. But your "hope is . . . on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

Of all people alive, the saints may have the greatest confidence in the future. Everything is looking up! In fact, the Church is looking up too—for His return!

Practical Points

that make a difference

Teamwork Makes the Difference in Staff Relations

Dear Son:

Staffing a church will keep a pastor on his toes. Our pastor has the experience, skill, and compassion to make his staff a team effort. It is so easy to go one's way and forget that there are others working with you.

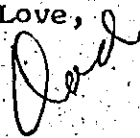
Our former pastor gave his staff fits. In the first place, he looked upon them as employees rather than partners. When the board added a minister of education, the pastor left him alone without a job profile, staff meetings, and personal encounters. The new staff member was like a boat without a rudder, wondering what his task really was. When he finally began to step out on his own, our pastor immediately resented his leadership.

As a result, our minister of education stayed only six months, following the path of the one who had left six months before. We were grieved, the pastor's image was damaged in the eyes of his church leadership, and the young man who left was confused concerning his mission.

However, Pastor Johnson knows how to integrate his team into a working complex for good. The staff loves him, feels with him, and shares both responsibility and the fruits of victory. Our pastor will not allow anything to come to him without comparable gifts to his team. He supports them from the pulpit and lets everyone know that in a measure his success is dependent upon his staff. If there are any tensions (and I expect there are at times), we never know it.

By the way, Son, did you take a course in multiple staffing in college or seminary? If not, do your homework before you hire your first. It will pay off in great dividends for the Kingdom.

Love,



The Preacher's Magazine

NOVEMBER

NAZARENE

+

CUS

FOR PASTORS and LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission

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

General Superintendent Lewis



The Minister

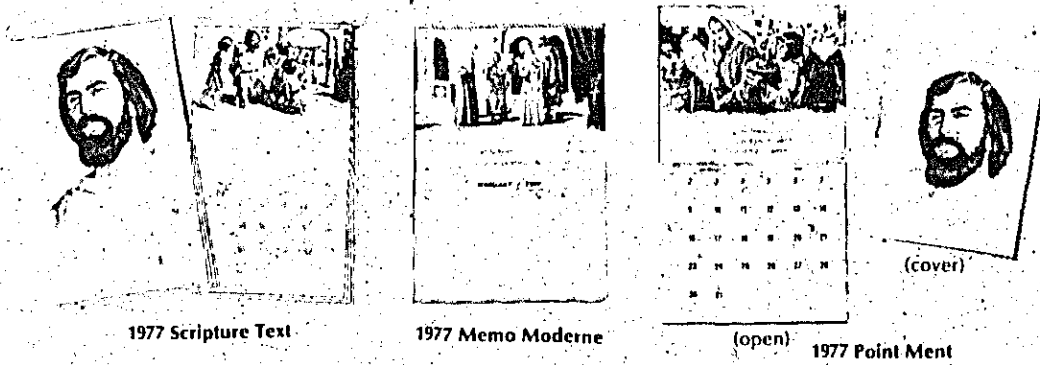
WHEN WE WERE ORDAINED (the same applies when licensed), we were given the confidence of the church. Such confidence has to be earned and merited. The Church of the Nazarene depends to a great degree on its God-called, sanctified ministry. Wrapped up in denominational confidence are some expectations. By this I mean the right of the church to receive from you as a minister the orthodoxy, the deportment, the service inherent in the doctrine, faith, and structure of the church.

Implicit in the act of your acceptance of ordination is your determination to "measure up" to these expectations of the church. The church expects you "to be in all things a pattern to the flock." The church demands that its ministers be "sanctified wholly by the baptism of the Holy Spirit." The church requires the ministers to have a strong "appreciation of both salvation and Christian ethics."

The church must have ministers who will always be students, especially of the Word of God. The church has faithfully provided for adequate education, and urges continuing study for all of its preachers. The church also requires that our ministers be examples in their marriage relationships in harmony with the Scriptures.

The Manual is, for the minister, an essential tool. It is the framework in which he works to build the kingdom of God. The strength of the church lies in its basic beliefs, its faith in its ability to govern itself. The church needs no ministers of dissension, but men and women who are able to preach the doctrines and lead their people "into the reality of redemption."

So in this hour of uncertainty may our "product" as ministers of the Church of the Nazarene be strong in the knowledge of God's Word, in faith, in personal experience of full salvation, and in love with the wonderful church which we serve and to which we belong.



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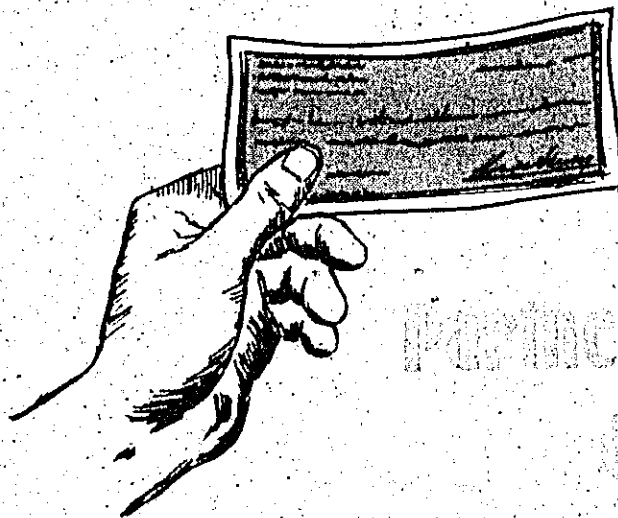
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Each Tuesday join our Department of Evangelism office staff in prayer for the week's current revivals, posted on our *McCULLOUGH MEMORIAL PRAYER BOARD.

Write to the Department and secure individual PRAYER PARTNER CARDS for your people who wish to join us as Prayer Partners (wonderful ministry for senior adults).



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Church of the Nazarene

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The program adopted last January by the Department of Home Missions in session in Kansas City fits in well with the quadrennial theme "Lifting Up Christ" announced at the General Assembly in June.

1976—The Year of the New Church is part of the four-year quadrennial emphasis proclaimed by Dr. Eugene Stowe for the Board of General Superintendents Sunday evening, June 20, in Dallas.

Lifting Up Christ through new churches is a fitting and necessary introduction to a quadrennium when the church hopes to number 1 million members by 1980.

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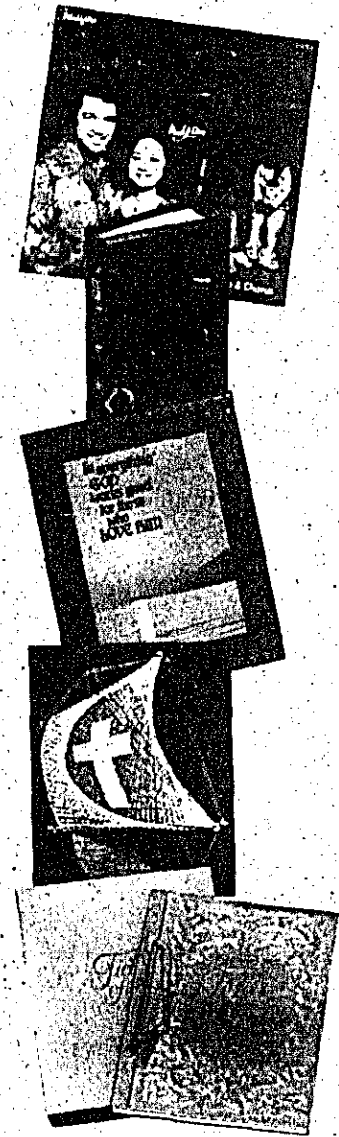
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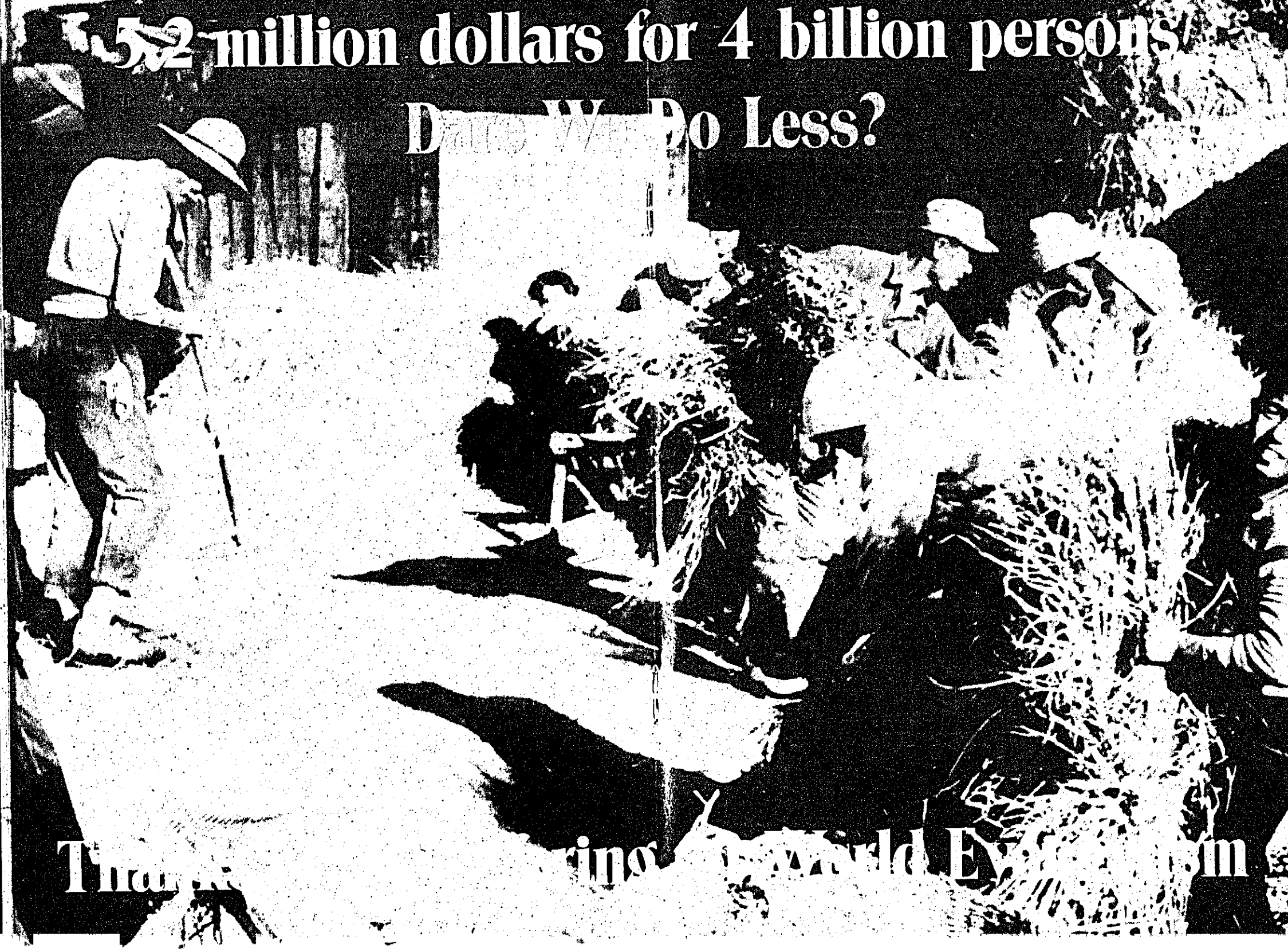
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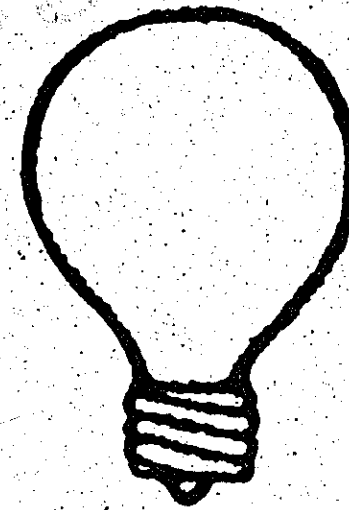


From the Quadrennial Address of the Board of General Superintendents

"To provide fresh spiritual motivation and intellectual stimulation for every pastor in Europe, Britain, Canada, and the United States, the Board of General Superintendents will sponsor a series of Pastors' Leadership Conferences on the campuses of our colleges in 1976-77. This is the major opening thrust of a program of continuing education which will involve every Nazarene minister. Under God, may it launch our church into the most productive period of her history."

What is such a bright idea?

Why, that your church should consider participating in the annual Christmas Love Offering for our retired ministers and their wives. This offering can be received anytime in December, and will be applied toward your Pensions and Benevolence Budget. Give your church the privilege of sharing their love. Clip, complete, and mail the coupon below.



Please send _____ free annual Christmas Love Offering envelopes to be used in our church during December.

Church _____ District _____

Name _____

Address _____



Here in North America we are abundantly blessed with everything we need: housing, food, clothing, jobs, and the freedom to worship in the church of our choice. Especially, at this time of year when we gather with family and friends to give thanks to our Creator for the blessings of the past year, we will all have the opportunity to attend services at our respective churches and then enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. We do praise God for His wonderful spiritual and material blessings!

At this harvesttime, may we also think of the many people in other lands who do not have as much as we do, or who do not know, as yet, our loving Lord. Because of the gifts of our people in the Church of the Nazarene, missionaries have been able to go to distant fields to tell others of the love of Jesus Christ and how He can make their lives into "something beautiful" when they let Him have control.

Let us not hesitate to GIVE this THANKSGIVING 1976, so that others may hear the Good News of salvation, accept Christ, and know that "He will shew them the path of life; in His presence is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11, adapted).

GENERAL BOARD REPORT

Bring the 1976 General Assembly into your local church with this colorful depiction of the 15 departments, auxiliaries and commissions that make up the Nazarene General Board. Set in a professional TV newsroom, the film highlights the work of each department executive and staff in unique settings. Dr. Eugene Stowe speaks for the Board of General Superintendents in looking toward the quadrennium of "Lifting Up Christ".
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(C) Commissioned (R) Registered ♦ Preacher & Song Evangelist ♦ Song Evangelist
*Nazarene Publishing House, Box 527, Kansas City, Mo. 64141.

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 TAYLOR, CLIFF. (R) Family Evangelist, 2469 Sacramento Dr., Redding, Calif. 96001
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THE PREACHER'S WIFE

A Parade of Preachers' Wives

IT'S PARADE TIME. Homecoming football parades decorate city and town. Thanksgiving Day parades will march through the cities of Toronto, Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles, and many others. Let's sit back and enjoy a different kind of parade—a parade of preacher's wives.

Here they come—ministers' wives of all the ages—from the wife of the first Old Testament priest to that trembling, uncertain pastor's wife of 1976. See them, in your mind's eye, as they march back and forth through the parsonage doorways—out into a world that needs the story of salvation, back into the parsonage to help those who live there, and finally, on into the eternal city of God.

Let's take a closer look at some of these ladies as they pass by. Perhaps we can ask them a few questions. Here's one whose name tag reads: Katharine Luther, Germany.

"Katharine, what preparation did you have for being a minister's wife?"
 "A minister's wife? I really did not prepare for that role. I became a nun in a monastery where I helped till the fields and learned the meaning of prayer. These became assets in my later life as a minister's wife."

"Did you do much entertaining?"
 "I tried to help all those who came our way. In addition to our own children, I cared for 10 other children of relatives. Students from Wittenberg also boarded in our home. Sometimes I would set up extra cots so that we could take in more of the homeless who came to our door."

"You must have had a tremendous food bill."

"With hard work and God's providence we were able to manage. I looked after the orchard which supplied our family with fruit and nuts. I also had a fish pond and a barnyard with hens, ducks, pigs, and cows."

"So your advice, Mrs. Luther, would be to work hard and put one's whole self into this job of being a minister's wife. Thank you so much for sharing with us."

Here comes a slim and graceful lady, dressed in the fashions of seventeenth-century London. Her name tag says: Susanna Wesley.

"Susanna, how did you get along with children in the parsonage?"

STEWARDSHIP

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by
Frances Simpson

Pastor's wife
 Linwood Church
 of the Nazarene
 Wichita, Kans.

"It was a busy but rewarding task. We had a large family and a small income; but I was determined that my children should have a good education. I set up my 'household school' and began to train my children by a rather strict method as soon as they were born."

"Mrs. Wesley, did giving birth to 19 children, caring for their education, and tending to all the other responsibilities, leave you any time for private devotions?"

"I spent no more time in recreation in one day than I spent in private religious duties. I set aside two hours of each day for private devotions."

"So your admonition would be to pray much and give time to the children. Thank you, Mrs. Wesley."

Here comes a beautiful lady with dark hair, queenly, and dignified. Emma Moody is the name.

"Emma, as a minister's wife did you find it difficult to do the things you wanted to do?"

"The thing I wanted most to do was to be a helpmate to my preacher husband. I made a home away from home for him, shielding him from interruptions, doing all in my power to free him for the work he was doing—a work in which I took great pride and interest. He leaned very heavily on me. I never let anyone know how much."

"So you feel that a minister's wife

should be a special helpmate to her husband. Thank you, Mrs. Moody."

Let's interview one more. Her name is Lula Schmelzenbach. Let's ask her a touchy question.

"Lula, did you have nice parsonages?"

"For the first two years of our marriage, our parsonage was a covered wagon. Later we were able to purchase land for our first mission station in Africa and build our home."

On and on they go—preachers' wives from cities and towns, villages and country, jungles and bushveld. Here's one I know well. What a help she's been to me. There's another I recognize. Her husband still pastors a small church, but how her influence reaches out in the lives of her children.

Ministers' wives all over the world are working with their husbands to proclaim the good news of Christ and to build His Church. One may roast corn on an open fire. Another will prepare a five-course dinner. One may sweep out a single, one-room hut. Another will vacuum yards of carpet in a large parsonage. The rewards and blessings are the same. Each can personally claim God's promises, and experience the leadership and power of the Holy Spirit.

Hey, wait a minute! Let me in line.

Altitude in Attitude

As a sponge soaks up fluid, so our children soak up the attitudes involved in whatever we say or do in their presence. If we speak ill of our neighbors, our children will think as we do about them. If we condemn the preacher, the church, the school, or our children's teachers, our children will lose faith in them.

How vitally important that we, as parents, follow the course that will give them altitude in attitudes. Our children will reflect in their mature years what we reflected immaturely while they were growing up in our homes. Loyalty, faith, and moral practices are observed better than said. What you would that your children would be, do ye in conversation and practice in the home.

—Selected.

Wesleyana



John Wesley Answers Questions About

Predestination, Sinlessness, and Imputation

By George E. Felling*

I HAVE RESPECT for the person who opens himself to weighty questions, and even greater respect for the person who is willing to expose his own heart by forthrightly answering those questions.

John Wesley was, first of all, a man of one Book. The Bible was final authority. Second, Wesley was a man of wide reading and careful research, so his convictions and opinions had the advantage of some "sources" behind them. Third, Wesley was a pragmatic man, a man who observed himself (and sometimes changed his judgments!) and others and charted those observations. Fourth, Wesley was devoted to evangelism and growth (both individual Christian growth and growth of his societies—churches). Wesley was not interested in mere organization or doctrinal debates. Finally, Wesley sought to help people on every level of life—physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Probably Wesley's *Letters* reveal all these characteristics better than either the *Journal* or his *Sermons*.

*Editor, *The Wesleyan Advocate*.

should these latter two be taken separately. For these reasons, I share the letter below, written to the Reverend Mr. Plenderlieth, May 23, 1768. Three topics of continuing interest are discussed in a real situation. Written exactly 30 years after his Aldersgate experience, the views expressed are seasoned and therefore merit our careful consideration. These three issues are currently important and often demand some careful statements. I think you will read this letter with profit. Neither Wesley nor I would insist on concurrence with every statement. The letter follows:

May 23, 1768

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Some years ago, it was reported that I recommended the use of a crucifix to a man under the sentence of death. I traced this up to its author, Dr. Stennett, an Anabaptist Teacher. He was charged with it. He answered, "Why, I saw a crucifix in his cell;" (a picture of Christ on the cross) "and I knew Mr. Wesley used to visit him; so I supposed he had brought it." This is the whole of the

matter. Dr. Stennett himself I never yet saw; nor did I ever see such a picture in the cell; and I believe the whole tale is pure invention.

I had for some time given up the thought of an interview with Mr. Erskine, when I fell into the company of Dr. Oswald. He said, "Sir, you do not know Mr. Erskine. I know him perfectly well. Send and desire an hour's conversation with him, and I am sure he will understand you better." I am glad I did send. I have done my part, and am now entirely satisfied.

I am likewise glad that Mr. E. has spoken his mind. I will answer with all simplicity, in full confidence of satisfying you, and all impartial men.

He objects, first, that I attack predestination, as subversive of all religion, and yet suffer my followers in Scotland to remain in that opinion. Much of this is true. I did attack predestination eight-and-twenty years ago; and I do not believe now any predestination which implies ir-respective reprobation. But I do not believe it is necessarily subversive of all religion. I think hot disputes are much more so; therefore, I never willingly dispute with any one about it. And I advise all my friends, not in Scotland only, but all over England and Ireland, to avoid all contention on the head, and let every man remain in his own opinion. Can any man of candour blame me for this? Is there anything unfair or disingenuous in it?

He objects, secondly, that I "assert the attainment of sinless perfection by all born of God." I am sorry Mr. E. should affirm this again. I need give no other answer than I gave before, in the seventh page of the little tract I sent him two years ago.

I do not maintain this. I do not believe it. I believe Christian perfection is not attained by any of the

children of God till they are what the Apostle John terms fathers. And this I expressly declare in that sermon which Mr. E. so largely quotes.

He objects, thirdly, that I "deny the imputation of Christ's active obedience." Since I believed justification by faith, which I have done upwards of thirty years, I have constantly maintained that we are pardoned and accepted wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for us.

Two or three years ago, Mr. Madan's sister showed him what she had written down of a sermon which I had preached on this subject. He entreated me to write down the whole, and print it; saying, it would satisfy all my opponents. I was not so sanguine as to expect this: I understood mankind too well. However, I complied with his request. A few were satisfied; the rest continued just as they were before.

As long as Mr. E. continues of the mind expressed in his "Theological Essays," there is no danger that he and I should agree, any more than light and darkness. I love and reverence him, and not his doctrine. I dread every approach to Antinomianism. I have seen the fruit of it over the three kingdoms. I never said that Mr. E. and I were agreed. I will make our disagreement as public as ever he pleases; only I must, withal, specify the particulars. If he will fight with me, it must be on this ground; and then let him do what he will, and what he can.

Retaining a due sense of your friendly offices, and praying for a blessing on all your labours,

*I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother
and servant,*

JOHN WESLEY

(Works, 12:245-47)

Discovering Solutions

Compiled by
Raymond C. Kratzer*



Church Leadership Misfits

This problem often inhibits the growth of a church, and persons involved many times are among the most loyal and dedicated of the congregation. But insight is lacking, and often feelings are apt to be hurt unless great caution is exercised. When a pastor figuratively points a finger at a seeming misfit among his church leaders, he must observe three fingers pointing back at himself as possibly being remiss in his leadership at times. He must remember that often it takes time to adjust to an office in the church. Mistakes can be made, but learning can take place. Patience and guidance should be invoked to assist persons in newly assigned positions, rather than criticism for failures.

Temporary appointments for a short

Publicize Contacts

"Nothing succeeds like success!" "Enthusiasm is contagious." Trite, but true phrases when applied to visitation. Encourage your people who are calling and making contacts each week. You may want to inspire those who are simply not doing anything in the area of visitation by trying these ideas:

1. Place a permanent board in the foyer that lists the names of those involved in the visitation program. Post the number of contacts made each week by each person.

2. In the church newsletter list the number of contacts made by each person.

3. In a public service occasionally recognize the teachers and others who are doing exceptionally well in outreach.

time is a good preventative as you seek a ministry that will fit certain persons. Misfits waste energy—theirs and others. Consequently we need to study how we may harness potential to fit ability. This is not always clear, and one needs to pray and solicit God's guidance while exercising patience.

When glaring misfits appear, prayer is a vital ingredient for their reassignment, lest feelings be hurt and the total church program injured. Be alert daily for an opportunity to change the situation. Strive to find a place where they might fit by going through the proper channels such as the church school board, NYPS, and NWMS councils. Be sure that no assignment is for more than one year. This can be implemented by an annual installation service.

A change of assignment is always better than removal from office with no task to do. A sagacious pastor can find a way to place every member of his church in some job: teacher, officer, committee, visitor, usher, secretarial assistant, choir, prayer warrior. Some could be a part of a "minuteman brigade" to pray for special needs upon notification by phone.

*Superintendent, Northwest District, Church of the Nazarene.

4. Send letters of appreciation to those who are involved consistently in the visitation program. Send letters of congratulations to teachers whose class attendance and enrollment have increased as a result of their consistent contact work.

5. Place an 8½ x 11 poster on the door of each Sunday school classroom and department listing the teacher's name, and the enrollment of the class. Dates for an entire month are written in. Space is provided to post each week's attendance, and the number of contacts made by the class teacher and members each week. At the bottom of the poster are these words, "Watch our progress because of our work!"

BETTY B. ROBERTSON

THE STARTING POINT

Realized Forgiveness

Maxie Dunnam points out this interesting thought in his book *Barefoot Days of the Soul*, in commenting on Nathan's words to David, "You shall not die." "That word," says Dunnam, "now has the flesh of God wrapped around it," as he quotes John 3:16.

The Promise of Spring

There is another thought in the book mentioned above that may be a good "starting point" for you: "Our days are wintry, frigid, and forlorn, no promise of the life and warmth of spring, until we become personally aware of God's forgiveness" (Abingdon Press, 1975, p. 42).

Resurrection, Here and Now

Here's something that Alec Gilmore says in his book *Tomorrow's Pulpit* that is stimulating: "An appreciation of the preaching of the Early Church is crucial, not in the sense that we must tell the story they told, but rather in the sense that as they pointed to the activity of the risen Lord in their generation, so we must be prepared to point to the activity of the risen Lord in ours" (Alec Gilmore, *Tomorrow's Pulpit*, Judson, 1975, p. 49).

Two Questions from Paul

Perhaps you have discovered them, but if not, they are worth considering. When

Paul was encountered on the road to Damascus and came to an awareness of his spiritual lostness, the first question he asked was "Who are You, Lord?" And when he received the answer that it was Jesus, his second question was "What shall I do, Lord?"

Alec Gilmore comments about these two questions by saying: "It is the natural reaction of a lost man. He wants a reassurance that the power that has brought him this far can take him further, and so he must learn to recognize that power and to be able to identify with it" (p. 37).

The Four Gardens

Here's a thought, either for a sermon or for a series—the four gardens of the Bible.

The first, of course, is the Garden of Eden where the key word would be *disobedience*.

The second garden is the Garden of Gethsemane, where the key word would be *obedience*, pictured so beautifully by Christ's words, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

The third is the Garden of Resurrection. Perhaps the key word is *victory*.

The final garden is the Garden of Paradise pictured in the Book of Revelation. The key thought surrounding this garden is *peace*.

What the Pew Expects from the Pulpit

T. R. Glover gave us these words to ponder: "I don't give tuppence for the man who goes in the pulpit to tell me where my duty lies; but I'll give all I have to the man who tells me whence my help comes."

Colossians and the Cross

The Book of Colossians gives us a good interpretation of Calvary, and God's love expressed through Christ.

Colossians 1:6, in *The Living Bible*, is a good summary of Calvary. It simply interprets it as "... God's great kindness to sinners." This is a refreshing way of seeing the Cross, for Calvary is a response of love, more than a rule of logic.

This "kindness to sinners" is spelled

out in verses 13 and 14 (TLB)* in these three expressions:

1. There is rescue in the midst of rebellion—"For he has rescued us out of the darkness and gloom of Satan's kingdom" (v. 13).

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2. There is freedom in the midst of our bondage—"who bought our freedom with his blood" (v. 14).

3. There is forgiveness in the midst of our transgression—"and forgave us all our sins" (v. 14).

All of these expressions show us "God's great kindness to sinners."

IN THE STUDY

Seeds for Sermons

November 7

SEEKING LIFE'S HIGHEST GOAL

TEXT: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

We live in a goal-oriented society. Salesmen in industrial organizations are given quotas to reach. Churches are given goals to realize in attendance drives. Workmen are given bonuses if certain levels of production are achieved. However, the highest goal that we can realize is related to giving top priority to seeking God's kingdom and discovering our place in His kingdom program. This challenging statement of Jesus involves four basic principles, as follows:

I. WE ARE TO SEEK HIS KINGDOM IN PERSON—"Seek ye."

The Lord deals with us in a personalized, individualized, and customized manner. He does not work with us in wholesale amounts or carload lots, but in person-to-person, one-to-one relationship. He is on a first-name basis with each of us, even though there has been no formal introduction. He invites us to come to Him just like we are, and wants us to be ourselves as we pursue His will for our lives.

II. WE ARE TO SEEK HIS KINGDOM WITH PRIMACY—"Seek ye first . . ."

Our number one concern is to set our attention and affection on things that are above. We can be assured that we are putting first things first when we get hooked on one supreme interest—seeking His kingdom first. All other considerations are given a secondary or incidental place in comparison with this one controlling desire. We can be sure that we are majoring in majors and minoring in minors when we give Him absolute sway in our lives.

III. WE ARE TO SEEK THE KINGDOM WITH PURPOSE—"The kingdom of God, and His righteousness."



By C. Neil Strait

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



by Mendell Taylor

Professor of History of Christianity, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City

The word *righteousness* can be classified in several ways. We can think of it as "right-use-ness" or "right-related-ness" or "right-mindedness." In each reference the main thrust is to be so much like the Lord that those who see us can also see Him. We want the qualities which characterize His life to be incorporated into our nature. We want His image and likeness to be reflected in and through us. Our motto is: "My desire, to be like Jesus; My desire, to be like Him."

IV. WE ARE TO SEEK HIS KINGDOM TO GAIN THE RICHEST PROFIT—"and all these things shall be added unto you."

We do not need to take thought of tomorrow, because all of life's necessities will be brought to us by His system of addition. The motive of personal gain should never enter our mind as we seek first His kingdom. However, many amazing returns will come as a by-product of our putting Him first. Out of His heart of love and hand of plenty, we will receive bountiful benefits because He holds first place in all of our planning.

CONCLUSION: If we make His kingdom an end in itself, then we will gain many times more than we deserve. However, if we make these gains an end in themselves, we will end up poverty-stricken in the spiritual realm.

November 14

THE SPLENDID WAYS OF DEALING WITH TRUTH

TEXT: "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15).

This particular verse is treated in various ways by those who make translations of the same. All of these approaches blend together in a beautiful harmony as truth is presented in its best attire. Truth is to be tempered by love; truth is to be saturated with love; truth is to be leavened by love. Love is to be a Siamese twin with truth. Love is to be interlocked with truth so that the two are inseparable. Love is to be married with truth so that the two become one. The three

translations which apply to this verse are as follows:

I. THE REGULAR TRANSLATION DECLARES THAT WE ARE TO SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE.

Under the guise of being realistic, a person may speak out in a way that is referred to as being brutally frank. These words are always sharp and cutting. They leave wounds and hurts. Nevertheless, the person inflicting these lacerations will justify his damaging words by saying that he was speaking the truth in an objective and honest manner. This procedure can produce irreparable damage. On the other hand, we can be sincere and honest and still baptize our truth-conveying words with love. This means that the words are spoken, not to be destructive, but to be constructive; not damaging but edifying; not critical but helpful. When we put the bridle of love on our tongues, our conversation will be properly controlled, corrective, and uplifting.

II. A MARGINAL NOTE SAYS THE WORD "SPEAKING" IN THIS TEXT SHOULD BE TRANSLATED AS "HOLDING."

If we hold the truth without love, we can be cold, critical, intolerant, and judgmental. In this type of situation, misunderstandings and animosities poison one's attitude towards those who do not agree with his position. One can consider himself so dead right that he is death on all who do not agree with him. We are to hold certain truths as final and fundamental, but that does not justify us in condemning everyone else as heretics and rebels. When we hold the truth in love, we will be thoughtful and respectful of the other person and be magnanimous in our spirits and our regard for those with differing opinions.

III. THE GREEK WORD (*aletheuontes*) USED HERE IS LITERALLY TRANSLATED "BEING" THE TRUTH OF LOVE.

This means that we are to be the embodiment of truth and of love. When these two are ingrained in us, we will believe truths that we will stand by regardless of the circumstances, but we will be approachable enough that we can be friendly with those of a different persuasion. When we take a stand against

something we deeply deplore, we must do so in a spirit of kindness and concern for those who make up the opposition. Those truths that are a part of our lives we affirm in a fearless manner, but we transmit them to others with the tears of loving-kindness.

CONCLUSION: There will be differences regarding what the truth is; but if we maintain the spirit of love in the midst of those differences, we will always display a biblical stance.

November 21

THE BEST WAY TO SAY "THANK YOU, JESUS"

(Thanksgiving Sunday)

TEXT: "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

We are all tenants on the Lord's great plantation, the earth. From His fountains we drink and from His granaries we eat. Our survival physically and spiritually depends on the benefits He bestows upon us. He has a three-fold claim to our lives, because we are His by creation, by preservation, and by redemption. This brings us to the first consideration:

I. THE BLESSINGS WE HAVE FREELY RECEIVED FROM THE LORD THAT WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR

The Psalmist gave us this admonition: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (Ps. 103:2). If we tried to make a list of these blessings, we would run out of time, and there would not be enough space to contain a complete rundown of the same. So we conclude whatever list we make with these words: "And other items too numerous to mention." A brief inventory of what we have freely received to be thankful for is as follows:

1. He has set us up in this business of living with plenty of assets to make a go of life.
2. He has supplied our world with sunshine and rain, soil, and mineral resources to make it possible for us to have food for survival.

3. He has entrusted to us a fantastic thinking center called the brain that enables us to be creative, interpretative, and evaluative so we can be resourceful, inventive, and productive.

4. He has surrounded us with a huge oxygen tent so the right amount of oxygen is available for making fire power to cook food, run machinery, and operate space missiles. At the same time the right amount of oxygen is in the mixture of the atmosphere to bring into our bodies, by the breathing process, what is required to maintain normal living. (If oxygen were cut off from the brain for five minutes, the victim would be nothing but a vegetable.)

5. He has given us the capability of feeling as much at home in the realm of the invisible, the eternal, the supersensory, as we do in the world of sight, touch, and taste.

6. He has endowed us with spiritual facilities which enable us to appropriate the measure of grace which He provided by the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

7. All of this, plus other items, too numerous to mention, and then heaven too.

II. THE BEST WAY TO SAY, "THANK YOU, JESUS," IS FOR US TO GIVE OURSELVES AS FREELY TO HIM AS HE HAS GIVEN HIMSELF TO US.

In the light of His bountiful bestowments to us, the only way for us to show our gratitude to Him is to give to Him everything we have, everything we are, everything we hope to be. Let Him know that we are His without reservation and without any strings attached. That we belong to Him at the level of an all-out surrender to Him. That we are His in total commitment. That our time, our talent, our treasure belongs to Him, and He can claim any or all of these assets with no questions asked.

CONCLUSION: Freedom at the highest level of operation becomes ours when we recognize that freely we have received all things from Him, and in return we give all things to Him and take our hands off completely. In an age when so much of life is geared to be disposal, it is wonderful to be at the disposal of the Lord.

PERSONALIZED RELIGION

TEXT: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory . . . among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory . . . Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:27, 29).

The Lord deals with us in such a personal way that we can refer to our encounters with Him as a person-to-person relationship. He often customizes a service with us in mind so we can receive a maximum of benefit from the same. He so tailors His answers to our prayers that He monograms the answer with our initials to let us know it would not fit anyone else. He personalizes His approach to us to the degree that we can use personal pronouns in describing our relationship with Him. In applying this procedure to the above passage, we come out with the following propositions:

I. CHRIST FOR ME—"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory . . . among the Gentiles." This lets me know that doing things in my behalf caused Him to give His life for me on the Cross. He is for me to the extent that He becomes my Substitute and Sacrifice. His atonement for me means that I am Christ purchased. In order for this provision to be effective in my life, I must take Him by faith as my Saviour. This lets me know that Christ for me is my only acceptable standing before God.

II. CHRIST IN ME—"Christ in you, the hope of glory."

After dying for me, Christ in me is Christ living again, and He lives in my heart. He moves from the realm of being my Sacrifice to the area of being my Sufficiency; from the area of my being Christ-purchased to the area of my being Christ possessed. I am now in a position to prove that He is a risen Saviour by the fact that he indwells in my life.

III. CHRIST THROUGH ME—"worketh in me mightily."

This means that He is not only living in me, but He is speaking by my life. At this point, He becomes my Supply for service. He becomes my only real Power

for spiritual fruitfulness. I am not only Christ-possessed but Christ-permeated. I am now in a position to transmit Him. He is not only present with me, but He is preeminent in all my thoughts, words, and actions.

CONCLUSION: As we make our pilgrimage with the Lord, it is a wonderful discovery to find that He is for us, but it is more wonderful to realize that He is anxious to be in us, and most wonderful to know that He is ready to live His life through us. This progression takes us from the place where we are purchased by Him, to the point that we are possessed by Him, and then to the level that the influences which radiate from our lives are permeated by Him.

By
Ralph Earle

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



Gleanings
from the Greek

I Corinthians 15:35-58

"Fool" or "Foolish"? (15:36)

Four different Greek words in the NT are translated "fool" in the KJV. *Anoetos* (6 times) and *asophos* (only in Eph. 5:15) are mild terms. The first means "thoughtless," the second "unwise." A third word, *moros* (accusative, *moran*) sometimes has moral connotations. It occurs 13 times in the NT.

But the word here is *aphron* (11 times). It literally means "mindless" or "senseless." Arndt and Gingrich define it as "foolish, ignorant" (p. 127). Bertram writes: "In 1 Cor. 15:36, Paul is not pronouncing a definitive judgment with his *aphron*. It is a rhetorical appeal for true

understanding. To cling to the negative view is to adopt the position of the *aphron* which is close to that of ungodliness" (TDNT, 9:231).

In view of all this, "Thou fool" (KJV) or "You fool!" (NASB)* seems a bit too harsh. A better rendering would seem to be "you foolish man!" (RSV)** or "How foolish!" (NIV)***

"Quickened" or "Come to Life"?

(15:36)

The verb is *soopoieo*, from *poieo*, "make," and *zoos*, "alive." So it means "come to life" (RSV, NASB, NIV). Of the 12 times this verb occurs in the NT, it is translated "quicken" nine times (see v. 45). But that is obsolete terminology.

"Corruption" or "Perishable"?

(15:42, 50)

The Greek word *phthora* does mean "corruption" or "destruction." But Arndt and Gingrich note that in the world of nature (including the human body, as here), it signifies "perishable." Here it means the "state of being perishable," and in verse 50 "that which is perishable" (p. 865). Today the word "perishable" (RSV, NASB, NIV) conveys the sense better than "corruption."

"Natural" (15:44)

This verse is the crucial one in answering the second question of verse 35: "With what kind of body will they come?" (NIV). Here Paul says: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

What is meant by "natural"? The Greek word is *psychicos*, "psychical." But what does that mean?

Abbott-Smith says that *psychicos* means "of the psyche (as the lower part of the immaterial in man), EV, natural" (p. 489). Arndt and Gingrich present it this way: "pertaining to the soul or life, in our literature always denoting the life of the natural world and whatever be-

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

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longs to it, in contrast to the supernatural world, which is characterized by *pneuma*" (p. 902). They translate here "a physical body" (cf. RSV). They also suggest "physical" in verse 46.

Schweizer writes: "The psychical is neither sinful as such nor does it incline to the *pneuma*. But it is corruptible and finds no access into God's kingdom, v. 50" (TDNT, 9:662).

Commenting on verses 42-44, Robertson and Plummer (ICC) say:

"Hitherto the answer to the second question [of v. 35] has been indirect: it now becomes direct. The risen body is incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual. It is quite obvious that the corpse which is 'sown' is none of these things. It is in corruption before it reaches the grave . . . it is absolutely powerless, unable to move a limb. The last epithet, *psychicon*, is less appropriate to a corpse, but it comes in naturally enough to distinguish the body which is being dissolved from the body which will be raised. The former was by nature subject to the laws and conditions of physical life (*psyche*); the latter will be controlled only by the spirit (*pneuma*), and this spirit will be in harmony with the Spirit of God. In the material body the spirit has been limited and hampered in its action; in the future body it will have perfect freedom of action and consequently complete control, and man will at last be what God created him to be, a being in which the higher self is supreme" (p. 372).

F. Godet, in his two-volume *Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, has the best discussion of verse 44 that we have found. He translates the first half of the verse, "It is sown a psychical body, it is raised a spiritual body," and then comments: "The terms *animated* or *animal* body are the only ones in our language by which we can render the term reproduced in our translation by the Anglicized Greek term. The meaning of the epithet is clear; it denotes a body, not of the same substance as the soul itself—otherwise it would not be a body—but formed by and for a soul destined to serve as an organ to that breath of life called *psyche*, which presided over its development. Neither,

consequently, is the *spiritual* body a body of spiritual nature—it would still less be a body in that case—but a body formed by and for a principle of life, which is a spirit, and fully appropriated to its service" (2:413).

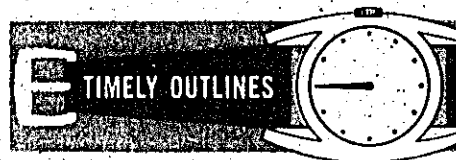
Then comes a very beautiful description of the change that will take place in the resurrection:

"The law of the beings belonging to nature is to revolve uniformly in the same circle; the privilege of spiritual being is to surmount this iron circle and to rise from the natural phase, which for it is only the means, to a higher sphere which is its end. This contrast arises from the wholly different mode of being possessed by the soul and the spirit. The soul is only a breath of life endowed with a certain measure of power, capable of taking hold of a material substance, subjecting it to itself, converting it into its agent, and using this organ for a fixed time up to the moment when it will no longer lend itself to such use. The characteristic of the spirit is that it possesses a life which is constantly being renewed. . . . In a new order of things, after extracting from the body an organ adapted to its nature, it will perpetually renew its strength and glory. Such a body will never be to the principle of its life what the earthly body so often is to the inhabiting soul, a burden and a hindrance; it will be the docile instrument of the spirit, fulfilling its wishes and thoughts with inexhaustible power of action, as we even now see the artist using his hand or his voice with marvellous freedom, and thus foreshadowing the perfect spiritualization of the body. If any one should deny the capacity of matter thus to yield to the action of the spirit, I should ask him to tell me what matter is; then, by way of showing what spiritualized matter may be, I should invite him to consider the human eye, that living mirror in which all the emotions of the soul are expressed in a way so living and powerful. These are simple foreshadowings of the glory of a resurrection body" (2:413-14).

"Immortality" (15:53-54)

The Greek word is *athanasia* only here and in 1 Tim. 6:16, where it is applied to God. It comes from alpha, negative,

and *thanotos*, "death." So it literally means "deathlessness." Bultmann writes: "The OT has no equivalent for *athanasia*," and adds: "In 1 Cor. 15:53f the incorruptible mode of existence of the resurrected is called *athanasia* as in Hellenistic Judaism, the thought being not merely that of eternal duration but of a mode of existence different from that of *sarx* [flesh] and *haima* [blood]" (TDNT, 3:24).



Thanksgiving Outlines

Giving Thanks to God

SCRIPTURE: Ps. 92:1-15

- I. Thank God for His love (v. 2).
- II. Thank God for His faithfulness (v. 3).
- III. Thank God for His working in our lives (v. 4).
- IV. Thank God for His strength (v. 9).
- V. Thank God for His Holy Spirit (v. 10).
- VI. Thank God for His righteous people (vv. 12-14).
- VII. Thank God for His Rock of Salvation (v. 15).

Thanksgiving Proclamation

SCRIPTURE: Ps. 26:1-12

Thanksgiving proclaimed in—

- I. Trusting God (v. 1)
- II. Examination of the heart (v. 2a)
- III. Trials of life (v. 2b)
- IV. God's love (v. 3a)
- V. Truth (v. 3b)
- VI. Righteous living (vv. 4-7)
- VII. Integrity (v. 11a)
- VIII. Redemption (v. 11b)

Thank God

SCRIPTURE: 2 Cor. 2:12-17

Thank God—

- I. Who still leads us (v. 14a)
- II. Who gives us triumphant victory (v. 14b)
- III. Who gives us His sweet presence (v. 14c)
- IV. Who gives us salvation (v. 15)
- V. Who gives us real life (v. 16)
- VI. Who gives us opportunity to speak for Him (v. 17).

Thanks Be to Our God

- I. Who gives us victory in Christ (1 Cor. 15:57)
- II. Who gives us direction in Christ (2 Cor. 2:14)
- III. Who gives us earnestness to serve Christ (2 Cor. 8:16)
- IV. Who gives us His indescribable Gift—Christ (2 Cor. 9:15).

—DELL G. KEEFER

Come Before Winter

TEXT: "Do thy diligence to come before winter" (2 Tim. 4:21).

INTRODUCTION: Daniel Webster defines a friend as "one attached to another by esteem, respect, and affection."

It was out of that sense of friendship that Paul wrote these words to Timothy. "Do thy diligence to come before winter." Why is this true?

Because on at least two other occasions in this book, Paul urges Timothy to come to Rome: In 1:4 he says he has been "greatly desiring to see thee." In 4:9 he says, "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me." And then in the closing verses he writes, "Do thy diligence to come before winter."

I. PAUL'S REQUEST: "COME BEFORE WINTER"

Because of their close friendship, Paul made a request of Timothy that he wouldn't have made of one who was not

a close friend. I see urgency in his request.

A. An urgent request

Not only did he long to see Timothy, but he needed some help. He didn't just ask Timothy to come, but to bring some things with him.

1. Bring the books (v. 13); perhaps a small traveling library.
2. Bring the parchments (v. 13); probably his legal papers—perhaps to prove he was a Roman citizen.

3. Bring the cloak (v. 13). The little dwelling where he lived let the air through the cracks in the walls, and he was cold. Winter was approaching and he wanted his coat. "Come before winter."

4. Bring John Mark (v. 11). What a change in heart. It was John Mark who had so sorely disappointed Paul at an earlier date and eventually caused the separation of Paul and Barnabas. Now Paul wants Mark.

This is an urgent request because Paul knew that before long the winter storms would make travel hazardous. So he urges Timothy to make the trip soon.

B. A revealing request

In verse 10 Paul tells Timothy that Demas, Crescens, and Titus have left. The only one remaining was old Dr. Luke. Paul's request reveals a great hunger for real fellowship. Paul is a prisoner without human hope, and he's hungry for someone to talk to, so he pleads with Timothy, "Come before winter."

He was hungry for his books, for his coat, for fellowship. Have you ever been hungry? Really hungry?

II. OUR PRAYER: "COME BEFORE WINTER"

There is another type of hunger that consumes the human spirit like a cancer, and leaves spiritual barren places on God's green earth. That's a hunger for God.

A. A prayer of hunger

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst" (1 Cor. 4:11).

I don't know about you today, but I'm hungry for God. When we really get hungry, our prayer becomes the plea "O God, come before winter. Don't let us labor

through the icy months ahead without a new touch from You."

B. A prayer of friendship

Of all the friends we ever hope to have, none can be so true as Jesus. I join Paul in his request of a friend when I say, "Jesus, come before winter." And like Paul, I want something. I'm so hungry for fellowship with Friend Jesus that I can pray in the words of Paul, "Come before winter! O Lord, let us sense Your presence. Let us know revival."

III. GOD'S INVITATION: "COME BEFORE WINTER"

There is a third vantage point from which we can view these words: the viewpoint of God. For shrouded in these words can be seen God's invitation to you.

You who are lost. You who have wanted to accept Christ for years. You who have put it off time and time again. You who have heard so often the words of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

Now apply the words of Paul to that verse and hear the urgency in that request, "Come before winter."

CONCLUSION: The trees are almost bare. December is nudging November into history, and winter will soon be upon us. Jesus stands before you today with the invitation of a friend, "Come before winter."

TIM STEARMAN

BULLETIN



BARREL

In too many instances, the politician's bumper stickers last longer than his promises.

One great difference between the people of God and those of the world is in their attitudes toward material things: God's people use them; the world worships them.

How Much Shall I Give This Year for Missions?

(A little argument with myself)

1. If I refuse to give anything to missions this year, I practically cast a ballot in favor of the recall of every missionary, both in the home and foreign fields.

2. If I give less than heretofore, I favor a reduction of the missionary forces proportionate to my reduced contribution.

3. If I give the same as formerly, I favor holding the ground already won, but I disregard any forward movement. My song is "Hold the Fort!" forgetting that the Lord never intended that His army should take refuge in a fort. All of His soldiers are under marching orders and commanded to "Go."

4. If I advance my offering beyond former years, then I favor an advance movement in the conquest of new territory for Christ.

Resolved: I do believe in greatly increasing the present missionary program; therefore I will increase my offerings to missionary work.

—Selected

He dropped a quarter in the plate;
Then meekly raised his eyes,
Glad that his weekly rent was paid
To mansions in the skies.

"But must I keep giving and giving again?" "Ah, no," said the angel whose eyes pierced me through.
"Just give till the Master quits giving to you!"

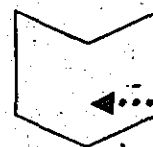
He who thanks but with the lips
Thanks but in part;
The full, the true thanksgiving
Comes from the heart.

Thanksgiving—

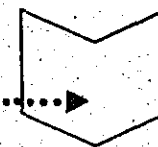
He enjoys much who is thankful for a little.

Thanksgiving is possible only for those who can take time to remember.

Our despondent moods are, for the most part, moods of ingratitude.



HERE AND THERE



AMONG BOOKS

Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
your Publishing House

A Thirst for Meaning

By Calvin Miller (Zondervan, 1976. 128 pp., paper, \$1.75.)

Is God dead in Georgia? In your state? He may as well be if you as a Christian do not proclaim your faith in Him. This book was written for the Christian who has been somewhat reluctant to defend his faith because of an intellectual inferiority complex. Other Christians have retreated when skeptics met them head-on with their painful sarcastic sneers. The author states that too often we not only are reluctant to defend our position, "most of the time we have refused even to acknowledge it."

This is a feast day for the skeptic, since "his greatest triumph is in the siege of weaker intellects." Those who act as if their faith is nothing or meaningless, provide the exact target for which the skeptic searches.

Christians need not be "naked in the day of grace." This book clearly shows the real importance of knowing the *Who* of one's faith, the *why* of faith, and *how* to defend it. Would you allow someone to challenge your wife without supporting her? Not as long as love is present. Does not faith in God imply a present love? This book comes to your defense.

THOMAS G. TINKER

The New Compact Bible Dictionary

Edited by T. Alton Bryant (Zondervan, © 1967; 17th printing, 1976. 620 pp., paper, \$2.25.)

Convenient paperback gives a concise and adequate explanation and definition of words, persons, places, objects, and events in the Bible. Up-to-date treatment of recent finds in the Holy Land such as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Extensive photo coverage of Bible places and objects. Over 250 photos and illustrations, as well as maps. Handy for the lay reader, pastor, teacher, and student.

REPRINT—

Revivalism and Social Reform

By Timothy L. Smith (Peter Smith Publishers, 1976. Clothback, \$5.50.)

Pastors will be pleased to know that this book is back in print after a couple of years out of print.

We sense a new set of Beatitudes which has been adopted by the neo-Christians of our day, which begins, "Blessed are they that tolerate everything, for they shall not be made accountable for anything."

Preachers' Exchange



WANTED: *Thine is the Kingdom*, by James Stewart. Terry Read, Box 1323, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, W.I.

WANTED TO BUY: Copy of Wiley's *Hebrews*, and wanted to trade: a 1944 *Manual of The Church of the Nazarene* for a 1948 *Manual*. Edgar S. Campbell III, 2521 Wisconsin S.W., Huron, S.D. 57350.

WANTED: Part or complete set of magazine, *Pastoral Psychology*, from Feb., 1950, to Oct., 1972. State price. Rev. Roger Moore, Chaplain's office, Nova Scotia Hospital, Dartmouth, N.S., Canada.

WANTED: New Testament set of *The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary*, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company. Bruce H. Cheney, P.O. Box 97, Seal Cove, Grand Manan, New Brunswick, Canada. EOG 3BO

Wesley's words—

"Let us agree to differ."

This statement points to the outcome of the doctrinal differences between Arminian John Wesley and Calvinist George Whitefield. Both had been in the Holy Club at Oxford University, and both were ordained Anglican clergymen. Their friendship was such that within months of his Aldersgate Street conversion, Mr. Wesley joined Mr. Whitefield in Bristol, and the two preached in the fields and streets of this city.

Yet their friendship was eventually threatened because of their opposing theological beliefs. Later they went their separate ways. Mr. Whitefield traveled extensively in America, while Mr. Wesley remained in the British Isles. Eventually they were reconciled, and it was to Mr. Whitefield that the words "Let us agree to differ" were said.

Brothers in Christ need not always have the same theology.

—Submitted by Robert Emsley

• Back to Bethlehem

Somewhere along the way, Santa Claus, Scrooge, Rudolf, and the "Grinch" have intruded into the true meaning of Christmas.

• The Holiness Pastor in Crisis Ministry

Some of our most effective ministry comes in times of crisis and emergency. How do we measure up?

• Some Pitfalls of the Youth Ministry

Employing a youth minister may not solve all the problems of a church. Sometimes it creates a few.

• Small Church—Big Plans—Multiple Staff

An expert in this field discusses some questions relating to the multiple staff ministry.

COMING
next month

A "rediscovery" can be as exciting as a fresh, new experience. Lately, John Henry Jowett's keen insights have been attracting attention. Last week this writer was a guest in a home where the morning devotional period centered in Jowett's one-page commentary on faith, from a "new" paperback edition of an old publication brought back to life by First Church of the Nazarene in Pasadena. Several weeks before this month's edition went to press we had found a gem too precious to be kept a secret—and you have read it on page 9. It is indeed amazing how fresh and relevant ideas can be, even long after they have been expressed. And the best example of all is God's Word. There is not a "new" problem it ignores nor a "new" issue to which it does not speak. Our aim is that this month's magazine find the ideal balance between the new and the old, between theory and practice, and between the tough mind and the tender spirit.

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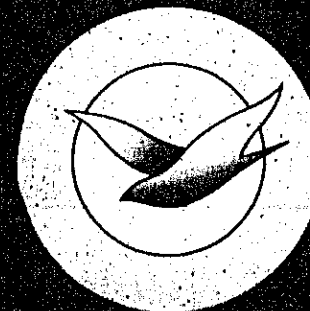
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.....From the.....**EDITOR**



Back to Bethlehem

THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE is distorted almost beyond recognition when it becomes a story of fantasy rather than truth. Since the time of the Bethlehem advent, we have slowly moved away from its glorious truth. We are allowing it to become a dream world of exotic but useless ideas.

Slowly but surely, the celebration of the birth of our Lord Christ is becoming cluttered with confusion. We are preoccupied with how many shopping days remain, or how we plan to spend our "holiday." Worst of all, there are thousands who see Christmas as a time to make sure there is plenty of liquor on hand for the occasion.

We sing songs about a "White Christmas" with glistening treetops and jingling sleighbells. We tell stories about how Santa was sick with a cold and stayed in bed, or how "Chris Kringle" got started in the Santa Claus business. We talk about a Grinch who stole Christmas, or a Scrooge who hated it.

These attitudes suggest a tendency to accept substitutes, and Christmas substitutes are not good enough for the Christian. In this day, with a new generation in revolt against everything that smacks of the "phony," why not begin a revival of reality?

It is time to go "back to Bethlehem" for a long look at the real Christmas.

Luke records the words of the shepherds, who were the first to hear about the Christmas event, and they are appropriate words for our time: "... let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us" (Luke 2:15b).

Back to Bethlehem, Christmas emerges as a story of opposition and adversity. Mary brought forth her Child in a stable, of all places (v. 7). The Holy Child, God's own Son, lay in a manger. The weary parents were denied a room in the inn that night.

Thus the inspired author, Dr. Luke, captures a graphic scene. Here is a picture of disappointment. There is a quality of adversity and opposition in the experience of Joseph and Mary on that first Christmas night.

Luke, the good physician, would sense the adversity in the situation. It was something with which he was familiar. He had doubtless

observed it in the lives of his patients. More than the other Gospel writers, he seemed to be sensitive to the hurts people faced.

People out there in our pews know about adversity. The student who fell behind in his studies because of illness and then had his car damaged beyond repair in an accident knows. The pastor's wife knows as she battles with the effects of cancer and tries to toil on at the side of her husband. Most of those who live around us know about it. And Christmas is for them. Jesus knew it too, if you believe in Bethlehem.

Back to Bethlehem, Christmas is a *story of evangelism and missions*. "... they made known *abroad* the saying which was told them concerning this child" (v. 17). The most natural result of experiencing what Christmas means is to tell about it. It affects people that way. The shepherds went "glorifying and praising God," and the people marvelled at what they heard.

Luke writes about this facet of his faith, for he is the one who remembered Jesus as saying to him and his companions, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men" (Luke 5:10b). Matthew's account was that Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19b). Do you suppose there is something significant in the fine distinction between being a "fisher of men" and "catching men"? Those who have fished would realize a vast difference between being a "fisherman" and catching fish! Luke's story of Bethlehem emerges as a story of *catching* souls with the power of the gospel.

Back to Bethlehem, the story of Christmas is clearly a *story of joy and praise*. It is seen in the message, and it is seen in the messengers. These were "good tidings of great joy" (v. 10), and the best news ever published. So much so that a "multitude of the heavenly host" (v. 13) came to praise the God of heaven.

Why should Christmas be anything but a time for joy and praise? We miss the real spirit of Christmas if we allow the cares of this occasion to overburden us. This is no time for trudging wearily in search of something for "that person who has everything." It is not a time for gloomy complaints or grumpy moods. It is a time to sing with Isaac Watts, "Joy to the world, the Lord has come!"

The most joyful life of all is the sanctified life, and one of the most joyful times in that life should be Christmastime.

And if you go back to Bethlehem, you will see the Christmas story as the *story of redemptive love*. It centers in the good news that we now have "a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (v. 11). It means that God gave us His only begotten Son that we might have everlasting life. This is God's way of saying, "I love you, world."

O Lord, take us out of the world's mold of dreams and make-believe, and bring us into the reality of this holy celebration we call Christmas.

Let Christmas bring out the best in us, as it did in the shepherds who hurried into the village to tell others the good news. Let it move us as it did the wise men who came with rich gifts to worship Your Son.

We bring You our richest gift. We give You our lives, our souls, our all.

Amen.

The "Lion of Lincolnshire" made his mark as a Wesleyan teacher, theologian, and preacher of the Word

William Cooke— A Model for Holiness Preachers

A FEW YEARS AGO, an item in a secondhand theological catalogue caught my attention: "*Christian Theology*: 760 pp., W. Cooke (Methodist)." A Methodist theologian called Cooke? Watson I knew, Pope I knew, but who was Cooke? Somewhere in the back of my mind I connected a Cooke with William Booth—a vague remembrance of these two names together—but no recollection of who Cooke was. I bought the volume which was my first real introduction to Dr. William Cooke, Methodist New Connection preacher and scholar. Since then I've come to know and love this nineteenth century English Arminian theologian and would like to introduce him to readers of the *Preacher's Magazine* who have not already made his acquaintance.

William Cooke was born at Burslem, Staffordshire, England on July 2, 1806. The son of a Methodist

home, Cooke was converted while a teen-ager, became a local preacher, and at age 20 was appointed a regular minister in the Methodist New Connection church.

A word of explanation here about the M.N.C. This movement, the first serious break in the ranks of the Wesleyan Methodists, was organized in Leeds, England, in August, 1797, six years after John Wesley's death. Methodism's founder and Methodism's first radical reformer were both born in Epworth, Lincolnshire: John Wesley in 1703 and Alexander Kilham in 1762. An enthusiastic and strong-minded individualist, Kilham was impatient with Methodism's ties with the established church; arguing it was inconsistent that a Methodist preacher could lead a man to Christ, yet did not have the authority to administer the Lord's Supper to him in a Methodist chapel. In the 1795 Methodist Conference, Kilham was expelled for his radicalism, but many Methodists agreed with him; and when he and three other expelled preachers organized the M.N.C. church two years later, 5,000 Wesleyans joined them. This was the movement in which William Cooke was appointed a minister in 1828.

Cooke was a diligent student, taught himself Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and read widely. He was soon



by
Herbert McGonigle

Pastor
Church of the Nazarene
Leeds
Yorkshire, England

recognized as the most able and scholarly preacher in the Connection. On three occasions—1843, 1859, and 1869—he was elected president of the M.N.C. Conference. In 1845 he was made editor of the M.N.C. magazine and conference book steward. This necessitated his living in London, and for the next 25 years; among other engagements, he opened his home to help prepare young men called to the ministry.

Thus began the lifelong friendship between Dr. Cooke and William Booth, the M.N.C. minister, who with his wife Catherine, began the mission that was to become the Salvation Army. Booth commenced his theological training in Cooke's home in 1854, and as the historian writes: "William Booth, the fiery preacher of revivalism in Lincolnshire, became all at once a humble student in Camberwell, surrendering himself to the domination of a Rev. Dr. William Cooke, theologian. From excited prayer meetings, from furious preachings, and from the popularity and hero-worship of tea parties, this lion of Lincolnshire suddenly abased himself to the schoolroom and opened Greek and Latin grammars with a valorous effort to acquire the habitual meekness of a divinity scholar."¹

Cooke wrote much, mostly on theological subjects, and engaged in a number of interesting public controversies. The most important of these was with Joseph Barker, a former Connection minister turned Unitarian. For 10 nights, he and Cooke argued the pros and cons of the divinity of Christ and kindred subjects. Barker retired from the combat, and the organizers recorded their thanks "in being assembled, on this occasion, to celebrate the late triumph of truth and testify their gratitude to the Rev. W. Cooke for his very able defence of Christianity and exposure

of infidel sophistry."²

Among Cooke's many published works, mention must be made of *The Deity, A Survey of the Unity of Sacred Truth, The Shekinah, and The Testimony of the Ancient Jewish Church*. This last volume arose out of a controversy with another Unitarian, Dr. F. R. Lees, and had to do with the importance of the "Memra" in the Targums and its relation to the New Testament doctrine of Christ.

Following his death in 1885, the Minutes of the M.N.C. Conference inserted the longest obituary given to any of its members: "As a preacher, Dr. Cooke was eminently popular . . . his natural abilities were of a high order . . . His desire and effort was to save souls, and God gave him seals to his ministry in every circuit . . . He gave himself continually to prayer, prosecuting his studies, preparing sermons, and preaching in the light and power which come only from habitual communion with God. He leaves as a precious legacy to the Church an unblemished reputation, the splendid fruit of great labour as a preacher and author."³

Cooke's most important literary work was his *Christian Theology*, more than 700 pages of closely argued biblical, dogmatic, and systematic theology, ranging from "The Attributes of God" to "The General Resurrection." Here is a veritable thesaurus of Christian scholarship, of particular interest and delight to the holiness preacher. Something of the dogmatic flavor of this work may be gauged from the preface. "From necessity, and not from choice, the work is controversial throughout. The author felt it a sacred duty to meet without reserve the objections which Infidelity, German Neology, Unitarianism, Formalism, Universalism, Popery, and other systems of error oppose to the precious truths of the gospel and thus to furnish a de-

fence, as well as an exposition, of doctrinal Christianity."

Here are a few examples of his storehouse of Arminian theology. On original sin and depravity, Cooke writes: "The case is not that Adam's sin is imputed to us as *ours* for this notion alike contradicts our personal identity and moral consciousness and the principles of the divine government revealed to us in the holy Scriptures but the case is that, from our relation to Adam, we are subject to natural and moral evils resulting from his apostasy . . .

"The proceedings of divine government never make one man accountable for the sins of another, yet permit the effects of one man's transgression to involve suffering and woes upon others . . .

"The various names applied to our depraved condition imply that it is natural and hereditary. It is called emphatically 'Sin'; sin, so full of activity and energy that it is the life and spring of all others. 'Indwelling sin,' sin which is not like the leaves and fruit of a bad tree that appear for a time and then drop off but like the sap that dwells and works within, always ready to break out at every bud. The 'body of sin' because it is an assemblage of all possible sins in embryo. 'The law of sin' and 'the law in our members' because it hath a constraining force and rules in our mortal bodies as a mighty tyrant in the kingdom which he hath usurped. 'The old man' because we have it from the first Adam; . . . 'the flesh'

as being propagated by carnal generation . . . and 'concupiscence,' that mystical Jezebel who brings forth the infinite variety of fleshly, worldly and mental lusts which war against the soul. He who lives under its influence is called the 'natural man' and as such he receiveth not the things of God."⁴

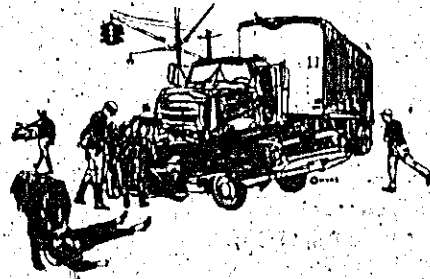
One final extract to illustrate Cooke's teaching on Christian holiness. He argues that the born-again believer is "already sanctified in an important degree"; he is separated from the *practice, love, and guilt* of sin. "Sanctification as we have said includes two ideas—namely separation from an inferior or sinful use and dedication to a holy religious use. The believer is sanctified already in a great degree because he is separated from sin and dedicated to God. Now apply the adjective *wholly* or *entirely* to this explanation of the word and we have the nature of the doctrine expressed. To be sanctified *wholly* is to be *wholly* separated from sin and to be *wholly* dedicated to God . . . In the possession of this blessing the believer keeps the law under which he is placed in the economy of grace . . . His will is lost in the will of God and all the graces of the Holy Spirit abound in his heart and are exemplified in his life."⁵

1. Harold Begbie, *Life of William Booth*, 1:175.
2. Samuel Hulme, *Memoir of the Rev. William Cooke, D.D.*, p. 69.
3. *Minutes of the Methodist New Connection Conference, 1885*, pp. 9-13.
4. *Christian Theology*, pp. 238-45.
5. *Christian Theology*, pp. 453-79.

Christmas celebrates the entry of the Eternal into time, the heavenly into the realm of the human. Aaron N. Meckel has reminded us that when God wanted to give us music, He didn't hand us a book of scales. Rather, He wrapped a song in feathers, set it on a bough, and bade it sing. At the first Christmas, God wrapped His glory in the tender loveliness of a little child and offered himself to the humanity that so needed Him. —John A. Knight

Some of our most effective ministry comes in times of crisis and emergency. How do we measure up?

The Holiness Pastor in Crisis Ministry



SOME PASTORS MAY enjoy emergencies. Ego trip, or sincere desire to serve humanity—whatever the motivation—I confess I fail to share an enthusiasm for dashing off to the emergency room of the local hospital, or to the scene of a domestic tragedy, or to the bedside of a dying person.

If after 20 years in the pastoral ministry, my reaction to the telephone bell in the wee hours is not really panic, at least on the lonely ride to the hospital I will admit that my stomach tightens into a knot that feels just like a question mark.

Every crisis is unique. There is always the element of uncertainty involved. But the holiness minister does have tremendous resources

available for crisis ministry. He will do well to prepare himself to the best of his capabilities.

He will, of course, depend upon the infilling of the Spirit. Then with diligent application, in due time, he can become proficient in crisis ministry. Even though he does not enjoy others' misfortune, he will come to derive deep satisfaction from the sense of being an instrument of God's grace in the time of someone's deepest hour of need.

How to prepare for emergencies may well be a matter of individual opportunity and capability. Certainly classroom preparation in pastoral care is valuable. Case studies and texts are available. The minister's personal experience becomes his most valuable tool.

To get the greatest benefit from personal experience, each crisis incident should receive a thorough "post-mortem," and if possible be discussed with another minister. Situations can be analyzed and catalogued for future need.

An essential preparation is a clear thinking through of a personal philosophy of crisis ministry itself.

Beyond just learning what to do or say, the reasons for doing are of vital importance in adding or detracting from the overall ministry.

While being aware of the approach other ministers take, we should chart our own course. Our ministry must be scripturally sound, Christlike in spirit, neither copying others nor reacting against their actions.

The extreme solution-postures in crisis ministry could probably best be summarized in one of two positions, neither of which is ours, but both of which can speak to us.

On the one hand the liberal or existential-trained ministers will approach crisis ministry with their vaguely Rogerian-psychological stance which says: *I nor anyone else really knows the need of this person in trouble. So my role is to confidently support him, be open, non-judgmental, with no message other than the (usually ethereal) love of God.*

The opposite extreme position might be termed superfundamental. It says: *No matter what the appearance of the crisis, it is a spiritual need that can only be truly met by doing the work of an evangelist—complete with sermon and altar call.*

The faults of both of these philosophies are obvious. The soft and winsome sympathy of the former will never come to grips with sin and darkness. The harsh insensitivity of the latter will often convey the message that souls are more important than people.

Yet these extreme positions can speak to the minister hammering out his own philosophy of crisis ministry. He must be loving to everyone. He must, above all, be honest and faithful to God and the Bible. Only the indwelling Holy Spirit can enable the minister to approach any crisis with the quiet confidence that he will be effective, faithful to God, and genu-

inely loving and kind to man, without compromise.

Some practical principles that have gone into my personal philosophy of crisis ministry are so simple that I hesitate to share them:

1. There is no occasion when I should be unkind or rude.

2. In the moments I have before I minister, my thoughts must be centered on the fact that God is going to meet a person's needs through me—not so much in my words, technique, or wisdom, but by His Spirit in me.

3. Often I must *not* say immediately what needs to be said, but wait until a later time—in broad daylight, or after a few hours have given perspective to harsh words. Then I may present the spiritual confrontation.

4. I do not have to explain everything for God.

5. Just *being there* is often the most eloquent speech I can make. My sympathy or the loan of my calmness and strength may undergird a beloved parishioner when words seem especially empty.

Our most valuable contacts with the people we serve may come during the times when they are in extreme stress. When we minister to a person by the Spirit of God in his hour of deep need, we usually have an open door to minister to an entire family for the duration of our ministry.

As a related postscript to this matter, we should also be alert for the opportunity to minister to strangers who are in any way connected to the situation. Words of concern to the patient in an adjoining bed—including him in a brief prayer—can often be the means of opening doors to God and the church.

Just as sure as you are a pastor, that midnight call will come—again and again! You are going to minister to people in crisis. You can be effective. By God's help, *let us really minister!*

by
Russell Metcalfe

Pastor
Church of the Nazarene
Edison, N.J.

Is the multiple staff the best answer in every case?

Small Church— Big Plans— Multiple Staff



IT'S A STRANGE FEELING to be both excited and filled with anxiety at the same time. Nevertheless, this is the quandary in which I find myself periodically when I see churches in marginal financial condition employ one or more staff members to work with the pastor. When that church has adequately surveyed its needs and potential and finds that God appears to be leading in the direction of adding staff to multiply ministry, I am thrilled. However, when a church feels nothing is moving, so they employ an associate to "help them out," I have concern for them and for that associate.

Every church already has elected to its highest offices the potential for a multiple-staff ministry in that local church. A discipling pastor can take the persons elected to major church offices, and by God's grace enable

them to become effective associate ministers. By their vote, the congregation has already acknowledged their leadership influence and potential for ministry in that body. Additionally, each of these leaders has his or her own unique opportunities and modes of ministry. By regularly sharing vision and prayer burdens, carefully developing objectives, organizing total resources, delegating appropriate responsibilities, and supporting each other through mutual encouragement, the church utilizes the leadership potential it already has.

If these staff members are insufficient in number or capability to carry the load of the church where you serve, think of the other local members already in the Lord's employ. How about the leaders in other important areas of the church? Can these work with other staff members and with the pastor on a continuing basis as a parttime (usually unpaid) member of the staff? The capital assets and investment opportunities of the church are much more than monetary. The chairman of the stewards may be limited to certain activities by virtue of his office, but that does not mean that as a member of the church he is limited to serve only within the confines of that elected

office. The church has already recognized his leadership abilities. His voice is respected in the church. When a pastor performs his equipping ministry, this lay leader can become a minister too.

Is your church fortunate enough to have a congregational song leader? Perhaps he's not the best in the denomination. But is there potential for improvement? Are there people in the community who could help this person with a better understanding of the role of music in worship and Christian nurture? Is there a community college or university in the area where this person could increase the technical aspects of ministry? Could funds include some good books on the ministry of music? Can you,

the pastor, help this person to see that the ministry of music is both to and through others?

Perhaps we have missed it when we think of the good fortune of the large church which can "afford" to hire associates to minister to the church. Even the large church which has the philosophy of a professional staff "working in their stead" is seriously hampered in its potential for ministry and growth. Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus indicates that there are several calls for one purpose—that of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. You have a multiple staff with multiple gifts and calls for one purpose! How are you ministering? How are they ministering?

Employing a youth minister will not solve all the problems of the church. It can even create a few. But properly performed, this ministry can be a real blessing.

Some Pitfalls of the Youth Ministry

By David MacDonald*

IN THE seventies, with an increasing awareness of the value of multiple-staff ministries, the minister of youth has assumed a more prominent role in thinking of many pastors and congregations. The benefits can be many for those who approach this field with well-thought-out programs and methods, as well as spiritual priorities. However, experience has taught that there is a second side to

*Minister of youth, Church of the Nazarene, Columbus, Wis.

the coin, which demands attention. The following observations involve very real situations with which the minister of youth must be prepared to deal.

1. The program and experience of the youth can easily become centered around the youth minister instead of Christ. When the youth minister leaves, the experience of the youth as well as the program can virtually come to a stop. This is due to the emotional make-up of this age level.



by
**Chester O.
Galloway**

Professor of
Christian education
Nazarene Theological
Seminary

The transition from one youth minister to the next can be very difficult.

2. It is possible for the youth to become accustomed to having everything done for them, and as a result develop no creativity or responsibility for a share of their own planning and programs.

3. Youth can become conditioned to believe that they are "special," require special programming, and a special type of person to work with them. This is partially a result of the current secular emphasis on youth. The youth may begin to believe that they really are special, and if the designated worker fails to meet their expectations, they may reject him as being unable to "communicate with teens." It can become an unspoken "give us what we want, not what we need, or we will tune you out."

4. A full schedule of youth programming where youth have all their own meetings separate from the regular church services and programs, tends to isolate the youth from the mainstream of church life. When these same teens become young adults and are expected to take an active, creative, positive role in the church, they may find that they are unprepared for such a role. Many are lost to the church during this period of transition.

5. Popular youth programming of today tends to be entertainment-centered, its goal being to attract youth and build and maintain large youth groups. Entertainment-centered programs appeal to large numbers, while spiritually centered programs tend to appeal to smaller numbers. Success, as too many see it, is measured by

the world's standards of numbers and excitement. Once caught in the entertainment trap, it is most difficult to escape. Attitudes and conditioning formed in the teen years will carry over in degree to the adult years. A church with an exciting and entertaining program has great appeal, but spiritual results do not come from nonspiritual causes.

6. Problem areas include self-discipline, group discipline, respect for the authority of the Bible, respect for the man called of God and for the office of pastor, accepting responsibility, a right view of standards, and creative use of intelligence.

7. The person who would work with teens on the pastor-person level is *not* a baby-sitter. He is called of God to be a *spiritual leader*, not a social director. It is a trick of Satan to divert us from our real purpose and goal—that being to make disciples out of our teens. The church's greatest need in the teen area is not for lively programs or large numbers of activities, or even large numbers of teens in attendance, but for Spirit-filled youth with a sound understanding of what God has provided for them through Christ—namely, forgiveness, cleansing, and power to live for God and others.

The youth ministry is not a cure-all solution for our youth problems. It is false to think that a youth minister can do in a couple of hours a week what parents and home have failed to do in 13 to 16 years. But God help our youth ministers, for theirs is a task and responsibility that only eternity will properly evaluate.

Pastor, Go Home

By William L. Coleman*

A SEMINARY PROFESSOR who had spent several years as a pastor was asked what was the biggest difference between the two jobs. He replied, "I no longer feel the guilt and the pressure." Many former pastors say the same thing. They are relieved to be rid of the pressure.

The modern pastor has far more demands on his time, knowledge, and expertise than his grandfather predecessor 70 years ago. Maybe it would be wise for our lay leadership to evaluate the pastor's role and help him turn it into a reasonable calling. Does it make sense for him to work six days and five nights? Is it realistic for him to labor 60-70 hours a week? How many weeks does a pastor sacrifice his day off and deny the very principles of Scripture?

But where is the origin of this pressure? Part of it comes from those who surround him, both the laity and his fellow clergymen. One friend asked a pastor, "Are you going to the crowning of the Bandage Rolling Queen?" When the minister explained his reluctance to attend, the inquirer replied, "But these ladies work hard every year, and this event is very important to them."

Worthy causes abound and meetings fill the air. Will you give a devotional at the Boy Scout picnic? Can you attend the special meetings across town to show support? Can

*Pastor, Evangelical Free Church, Aurora, Neb. Reprinted by permission, *Evangelical Beacon*, magazine of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

you be a judge at the WCTU poster contest?

The pressure to serve on committees is stronger than King Kong's grip. Meeting with the music committee though he cannot carry a tune . . .

In all fairness, the minister's mammoth demands do not all come from other people. Few parishioners would drive him as hard as he drives himself. Often afraid to exercise his *ex officio* status and avoid a committee or two, he plows on relentlessly. He frequently develops into a workaholic and finds it impossible to relax, even with his own family. His hobbies consist of musing over attendance charts or spending his day at a ministers' conference discussing Gog and Magog.

While counseling dozens of people on how to handle guilt, he is often unable to solve his own. As one reflective pastor put it, "I had gotten to the place where I couldn't sit down and read the newspaper at home without feeling guilty about what was left undone."

One experienced minister has told his colleagues that overwork in his first few churches may have cost him his first son, who now totally rejects Christianity. Nevertheless this same man still runs night and day.

Sometimes unsure of the boundaries of his job, he finds he must work himself endlessly in order to live with himself. Seldom content to labor

from 8 to 5, he struggles from 8 to 11 p.m.

While many of these difficulties are of the minister's own making, the laity can go a long way toward helping him solve his problem. As Exodus 18:18 explains so well, the leader and the people suffer from an overburdened chief executive.

A young couple asked for an appointment for pre-marriage counseling. The pastor's secretary returned the call and set the time for Tuesday at 4 p.m. The fiance was upset. He would have to get off work. Why couldn't they meet in the evening? What an inconsiderate minister who did not really care about the needs of his people.

But the more he thought about it, the more sense it made. His doctor was not going to check his epidermis in the evening. His dentist was not going to clean his molars in the moonlight. Yet a minister is supposed to be different.

Would it be so pagan to encourage more people to bring their difficulties to the pastor's office? Would it be unloving to confine more activities within office hours—except for emergencies?

Some congregations fully expect that a pastor will visit every member of their group. In order to accomplish this, the minister has one of two options. The first is to go out that fifth or sixth night of the week and abandon his own home. The second is to visit the women of the family in the daytime.

Ministers need correcting occasionally as everyone else. But how of-

ten do church leaders go to a pastor and say, "The Bible says that a pastor must rule his house well. We think you should spend more time at home and keep your family the fine people they are."

Instead of insisting that he maintain so many unscriptural functions, he needs to be reminded that 1 Timothy 3:4-5 is true. A side benefit of our clergy leading a normal life is that his sermons may very well improve and become the expressions of a well-rounded person.

A veteran minister was once concerned about the price his children had to pay for being P.K.'s. Wondering if they were teased at school, he asked his eldest child, "Do you find it tough to be a minister's kid?" She replied, "Oh no, just as long as you are home evenings."

There are many pastors who thoroughly enjoy their responsibilities and would not change it for anything. But once in a while they need some helpful laymen to come to their side and assure them that they want the pastor to keep his family in perspective.

After a hectic day of chasing lawyers and arguing with contractors on a building project, a minister with stomach in knots called one of his board members, "Fred, how would you like to get a new pastor? Get me out of the building business and let me do the job you called me to do."

Most churches could have a new pastor and still keep the old one. All the laity needs to do is to encourage the minister to do just his job and then, "Pastor, go home!"

Wesleyana



Wesley and Ecclesiastical Separation

By R. Larry Shelton*

ONE OF THE MOST problematic issues of John Wesley's ministry is the question of whether or not he intended to create a separate body of believers, another church. The question of whether Methodism fulfilled Wesley's ideals or deviated from them by becoming a denomination is still pertinent. A number of statements from both the early and later years of his ministry can be presented to substantiate the view that he never intended the formation of a church. On the other hand, numerous acts which he performed seem to indicate that the only direction he saw to go in performing the "chief care" of souls was away from the dead sacerdotalism of the Anglican church. His dilemma was the tension he felt between his evangelical calling and his High Church heritage. In theory he was a traditionalist, but in practice he was unable to contain his message in the old wineskins.

Wesley's ideal was to remain an integral part of the Anglican church. In April, 1790, he wrote:

*Assistant pastor, First Wesleyan Church, High Point, N.C.

I never had any design of separating from the Church. I have no such design now. I do not believe the Methodists in general design it when I am no more seen. I do, and will do, all that is in my power to prevent such an event. Nevertheless, in spite of all that I can do, many of them will separate from it (although I am apt to think not one-half, perhaps not one-third of them). These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a separate party. In flat opposition to these, I declare once more that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regards my judgment or advice will ever separate from it (Fitchett, *Wesley and His Century*, p. 403).

In 1787, he said, "When the Methodists leave the Church of England, God will leave them" (Fitchett, p. 401). He did everything in his power to prevent alienating his converts from the church. He decreed that Methodist services not be held during normal hours of worship on Sundays. He himself attended services in the Anglican church when possible and was a regular communicant at the Lord's Supper. "The Methodists are to spread life among all denominations," he declared, "which they will do till they form a

separate sect" (*Letters*, 8:211; To Thomas Taylor, April 4, 1790).

In actual practice, however, Wesley did not find it possible to fulfill his ideals for ecclesiastical unity. His primary concern was the care of souls. He saw the necessity of preserving his converts and providing for them a context for nurture. He saw the existing church as severely lacking in opportunities for Christian fellowship, prayer, study of the Scriptures, and sharing Christian experience. He thus formed the Methodist societies, and was accused of causing schism in the church and destroying fellowship (Wood, *The Burning Heart*, p. 189). He answered dryly, "That which never existed cannot be destroyed" (*Works*, 8:251). He sensed a complete lack of Christian nurture in the church, and no concern for the care of his converts. He asks:

Who watched over them in love? Who marked their growth in grace? Who advised and exhorted them from time to time? Who prayed with them and for them, as they had need? This, and this alone is Christian fellowship. But, alas! where is it to be found? Look east or west, north or south; name that parish you please: Is this Christian fellowship there? Rather, are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand? What Christian connexion is there between them? What intercourse in spiritual things? What watching over each other's souls? What bearing of one another's burdens? What a mere jest is it then, to talk so gravely of destroying what never was! The real truth is just the reverse of this. We introduce Christian fellowship where it was utterly destroyed. And the fruits of it have been peace, joy, love, and zeal for every good word and work (*Works*, 8:251-52; "A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists").

It appears then, that practical considerations led Wesley to function more and more independently of the church. In his "Twelve Reasons Against Separation" published in

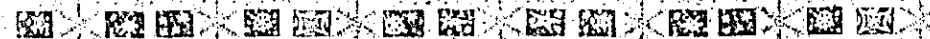
1758, he introduces a principle which governs his ecclesiastical practice. "Whether it be lawful or not, which itself may be disputed, being not so clear a point as some may imagine, it is by no means expedient to separate from the Established Church." Expediency becomes the fundamental policy of his theory of the church. Out of necessity, because of the persecution and uncooperativeness of the Anglican church, Wesley found it expedient to reject the Episcopal concept of apostolic succession. In 1784, he ordained Coke, Whatcoat, and Vasey for ministry in America. The next year he ordained helpers for Scotland. In 1787, he dedicated a number of his buildings as Dissenting Chapels. In 1789, he ordained helpers for work in England itself. These were all acts of direct separation. How can they be reconciled with his theory?

Fitchett contends that Wesley's conversion changed his entire perspective in regard to theology and ecclesiastical form: Religion became a spiritual reality, and ecclesiastical formulae and methods in their High Church forms became mere chaff in contrast to this new life. However, these new and radical concepts of expediency did not erase completely all of his heritage. The old High Church language sometimes shone through, even though he had renounced its practices. In spite of his conviction that the Anglican church had persecuted his converts and refused to allow them to worship God after their own conscience, he found it difficult to promote separation even under these conditions. Fitchett says it well:

Who studies . . . this aspect of Wesley's work, finds in it the picture of a man with an obstinate High Church bias drawing him in one direction, a bias due to birth and training and temperament; whilst, step by step, led by Providence and com-

pelled by facts, he moves on a path which leads to quite another goal, a goal undesired, but not wholly unseen (Fitchett, *Wesley and His Century*, p. 409).

How prudent it would be of twentieth-century evangelicals to emulate the gravity of Wesley's example. All too often, evangelicals exhibit a strong tendency to separate from other bodies, even evangelical ones, for the sake of "purity." We substitute the principle of isolation for that of expediency, and the posture of noninvolvement for that of cooperation and infiltration. These are questionable substitutes at best, and at no time can they be considered truly Wesleyan.



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*that make
a difference*

He Is an Organized Man— What a Relief!

Dear Son:

I enjoy sitting in my pastor's study, for he knows where he is going and why. His room is neat, well organized, and clean. His files are well stocked with interesting and contemporary materials which continually emerge as illustrative material in his sermons.

His secretary knows what she is to do on certain days, and is never at a loss for work.

Our pastor plans his days into categories of interest. We know as a congregation that he is studying and praying every morning in order to feed our souls on Sunday and Wednesday.

Christmas is not a holiday package wrapped with gay ribbon and holly. It is a time for meditating, for recalling that night long ago when Bethlehem cradled to its heart and gave mankind the Redeemer of the world.

Christmas should mean kind thinking, forgiveness, forgetting old cares, old grievances, fears . . .

Christmas is a gift transcending human understanding; imperishable glory from the very heart of Heaven to the farthest part of earth.

CHRISTMAS IS PEACE.

—selected.

We expect him to be in his study and protect that time as sanctified for a profound ministry.

His noons are taken up with administrative tasks, and he is ever present in the time of sickness. In the evenings he is making calls. He knows on Sunday night where he ought to be that week. Now we know that the task is more than one man can handle. We know that he is busy training us for the task of the Kingdom.

We constantly remind him that he must take time for his lovely wife and fine family. But he gets a great deal done. Why? Because he is a planner from the first, and organizes his materials for the sake of the Kingdom. How better is there to serve Jesus Christ?

I could go on and on. I know that sometimes his plans are interrupted. But he has the long-range view and knows the direction his judgments are leading him to—and we love him for it.

Love,
Dad

Job's Comforters in the Pulpit

By J. J. Wheelbarger*

The biblical account of Job's sufferings tells of the three friends who came to comfort him. These comforters postulated their program on three basic assumptions. (1) They assumed a spiritual superiority. (2) They assumed an intellectual superiority. (3) They assumed guilt on the part of their listener.

There is a temptation to assume a spiritual superiority when one presumes to speak for God. The three comforters thought of themselves as God's spokesmen as they came delivering what they thought (probably in all sincerity) to be God's message of condemnation coupled with demands for corrective action.

God's messengers should be intellectually competent, but it does not follow that the worshipper is intellectually incompetent—even in spiritual matters. The comforters were overcome by the brilliance of their own arguments. Job invoked a little sarcasm when he suggested that wisdom would die with the death of these three.

Our religious training helps us to recognize certain indicators as signs that something is wrong. This is helpful in Christian living. However, human weakness prevents this evaluation from being perfect. This is the basis for the biblical injunctions against judging. The spokesman for God is vitally concerned with wrong, but his humanness sometimes prevents accurate conclusions as to wrong on the part of the worshipper. The comforters evaluated Job's situation on the basis of their own concepts. These concepts were con-

*Director of Learning Resources, Trevecca Nazarene College, Nashville.

sistent with contemporary religious thought, but the evaluation was incorrect.

When the minister of today stands in a pulpit to declare God's message to the modern world, he may be tempted to make any or all of these assumptions. The comforters made the three assumptions and were incorrect on all three. Today's minister is subject to the same errors, but a realistic knowledge of his fallibility would help him avoid some of the pitfalls.



PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS

Take time this Christmas to get

A little way apart,

And with the hands of prayer

Prepare the house which is your heart.

Brush out the dusty fears, brush out

The cobwebs of your care,

Till in the house that is your heart,

It's Christmas everywhere.

Light every window up with love,

And let you love shine through,

So those who walk outside may share

That blessed light with you.

Then will the rooms with joy be bright,

With peace the heart be blessed,

And Christ himself will enter in

To be your Christmas Guest,

—Author unknown

DECEMBER

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EARL C. WOLF, Executive Director
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The Crib and the Cross

LOOKING FOR a Christmas sermon topic? Here's a good one. This is more than catching alliteration. It is really what Christmas is all about.

With all the crass materialism and shallow sentiment that have diluted the true meaning of this sacred season, the man of God must faithfully proclaim that Christmas, at heart, is a redemptive event. Helmut Thielicke observes that the crib and the cross are of the same wood. The angelic instruction concerning the Child's name affirmed this fact in the prophecy that "he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

Not only should the Advent sermon associate Christmas with Calvary, so should all the special presentations. Salvation seed should be planted in the fertile minds of Sunday school children. Their program materials should be carefully chosen with an eye to more than just poetry and platitudes. Let their songs and recitations tell the gospel truth about who the Babe in the manger is and why He came.

Then what a glorious opportunity Christmas music affords for exalting the Infant-Saviour. As the traditional carols are sung, draw attention to the salvation message which they proclaim. In selecting the special presentation which the choir will bring on Sunday night, be sure that it is more than just a collection of pretty melodies. The most important consideration should be, Does it communicate the true message of Christmas? Happily, a number of the newest cantatas climax on an evangelistic note and can well conclude with an invitation by the pastor. What better way to conclude this meaningful Lord's Day than with seekers finding salvation at the foot of the Cross?



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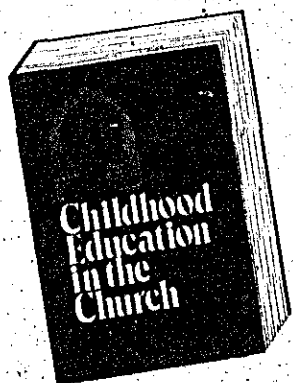
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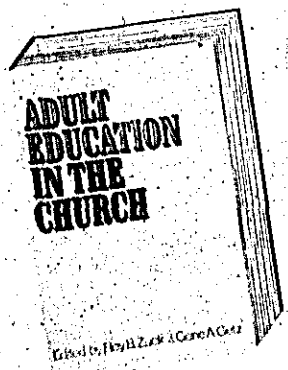
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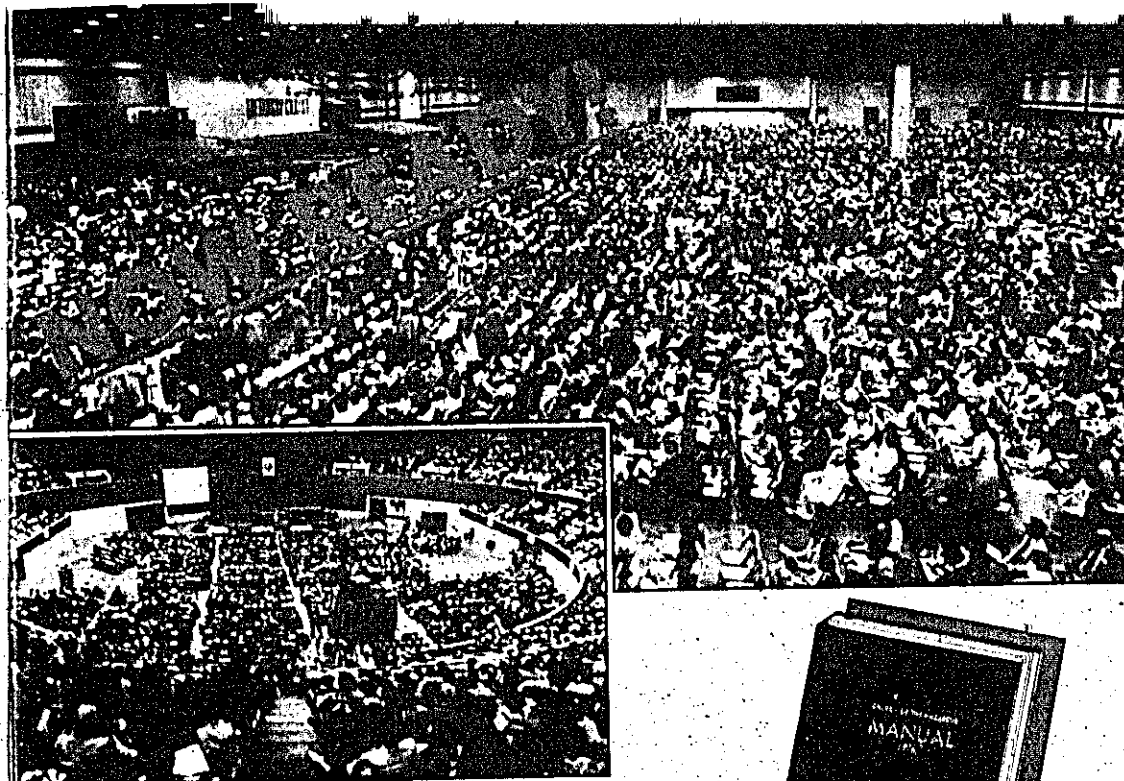
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16H



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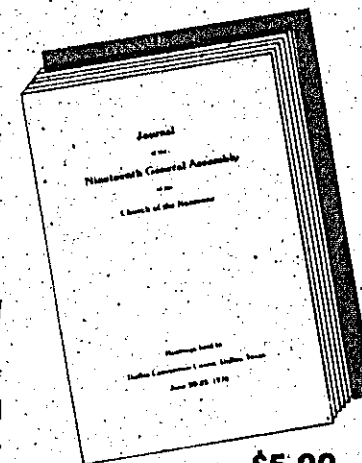
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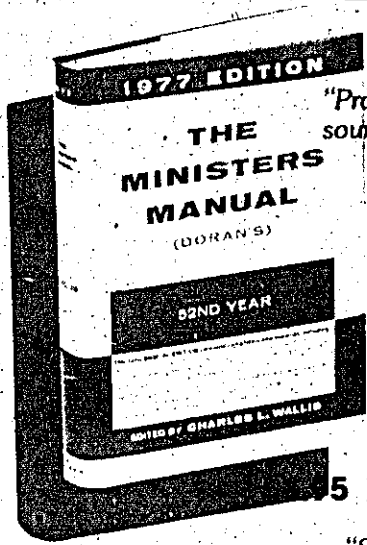


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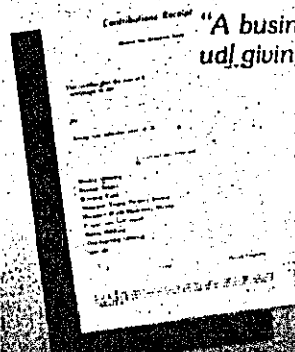
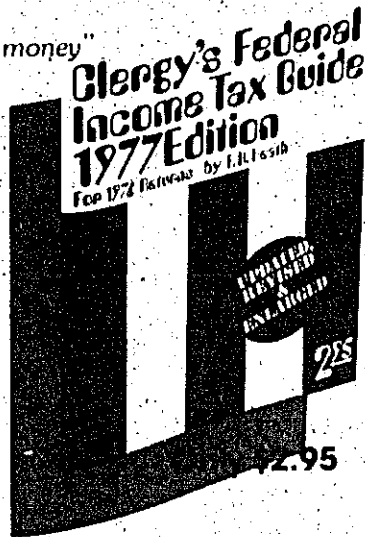
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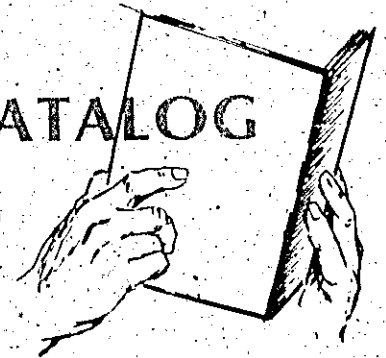
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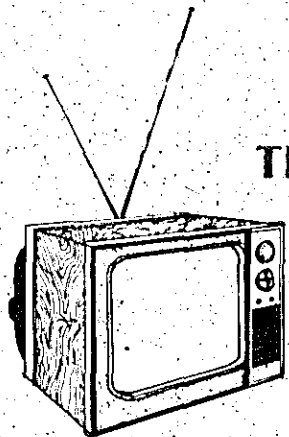
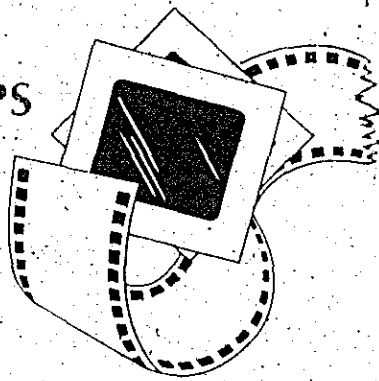
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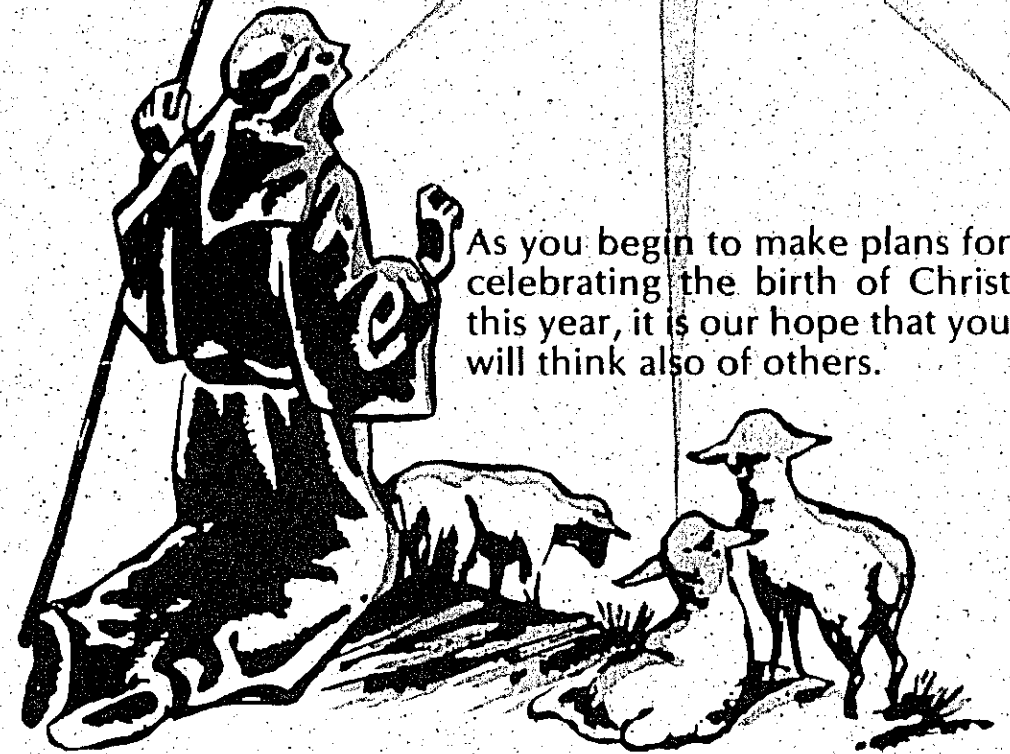
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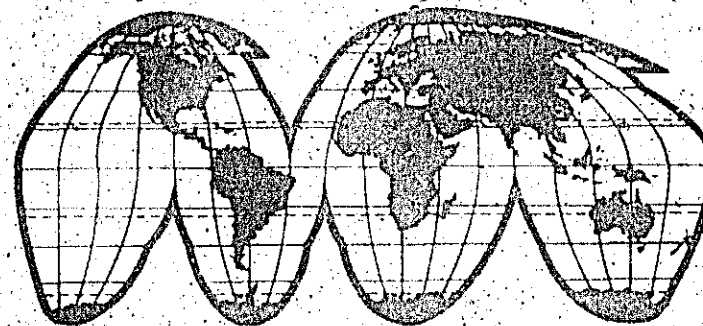
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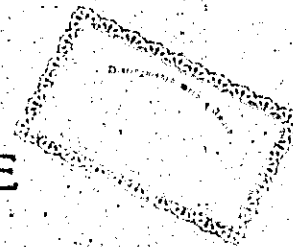
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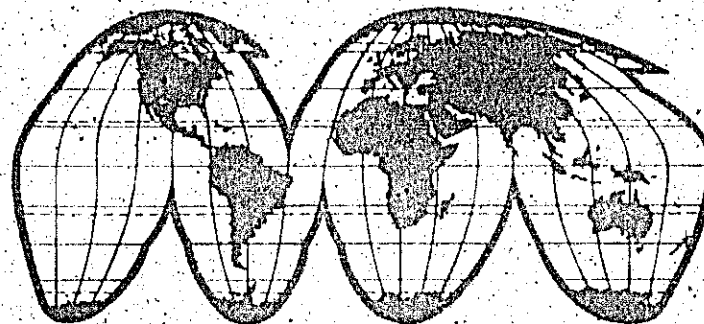


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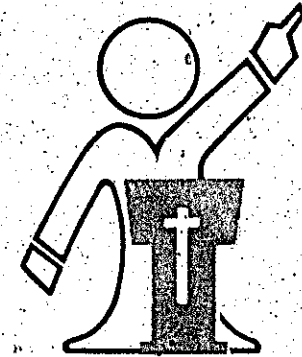
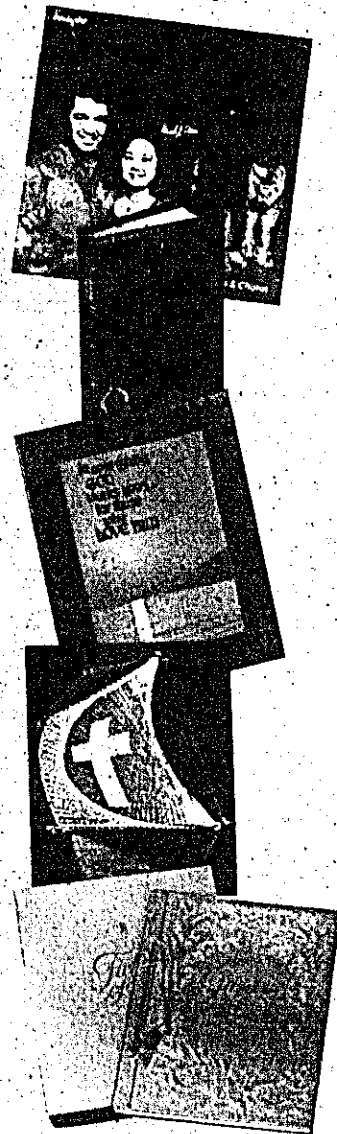
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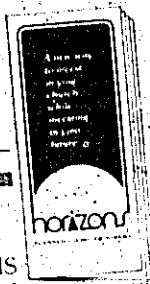
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JAYMES, RICHARD W. (C) 321 E. High Ave., Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311
JEFFERIES, A. G. (Retired) 350 Pearl St., Apt. 306, Eugene, Ore. 97401
JETER, H. L. (C) 2345 Johnstown, Florissant, Mo. 63033
●JEWETT, LARRY & PATRICIA. (C) R. 4, Box 265, West Monroe, La. 71291
JOHNSON, EDWARD J. (R) Rte. 1, Clearwater, Minn. 55320 (full-time)
●JOHNSON, RON. (C) 3208 Eighth St. E., Lewiston, Ida. 83501
JONES, CLAUDE W. (C) R. 4, Box 42, Bel Air, Md. 21014
JONES, FRED D. (R) 804 Elissa Dr., Nashville, Tenn. 37217 (full-time)
KEALHER, DAVID. (C) 316 Dufur, Nampa, Ida. 83651
KELLY, R. B. (Retired) 4706 N. Donald, Bethany, Okla. 73008 (full-time)
KEMPER, MARION W. & MRS. (Retired) 2910 Harris St., Eugene, Ore. 97405
KENNEDY, GORDON L. (C) P. O. Box 52, Gibsonburg, Ohio 43431
KESLER, JAMES. (R) Box 191, West Lebanon, Ind. 47991 (full-time)
KLEYEN, ORVILLE H. (Retired) 1241 Knollwood Rd., 46K, Seal Beach, Calif. 90740
KOH, CHARLES A. (C) R.D. 2, Box 298, Brookville, Pa. 15825
KRATZ, ELDON & KAY. (R) 814 Grant Terr., Olathe, Kans. 66061 (full-time)
LAING, GERALD D. (C) 2417-2 E. Jolly Rd., Lansing, Mich. 48910
LAMAR, CLINTON. (C) Rte. 1, Maquoketa, Ia. 52060
LANIER, JOHN H. (C) West Poplar St., Junction City, Ohio 43748
LASSELL, RAY. (C) R. 2, Box 55, Brownsburg, Ind. 46112
●LAW, DICK & LUCILLE. (C) Box 481, Bethany, Okla. 73008
●LAWHORN FAMILY, MILES. (R) P.O. Box 17008, Nashville, Tenn. 37217 (full-time)
●LAXSON, WALLY & GINGER. (C) R. 3, Athens, Ala. 35611
●LECKRONE, LARRY D. (C) 1308 Highgrove, Grandview, Mo. 64030

●LEICHTY SINGERS. (C) Rte. 1, Hicksville, Ohio 43525
LEMASTER, BENJAMIN D. (C) Box 1868, Fresno, Calif. 97318
LEONARD, JAMES C. & FLORICE. (Retired) 150 Valley View Dr., Johnstown, Ohio 43031
LESTER, FRED R. (C) 328 Meadowbrook Lane, Olathe, Kans. 66061
LIDDELL, P. L. (C) 3530 W. Allen Rd., Howell, Mich. 48843
●LIGHTNER, JOE. (C) 4335 Raven Pl., Springfield, Mo. 65804
●LINDER, LLOYD P. (C) 1018 Cedar St., Elkhart, Ind. 46514
LINEMAN, HAZEL FRALEY. (C) 10 S. Third St., Bradford, Pa. 16701
●LOWMAN, LANE & JANET. (R) c/o NPH (full-time)
LONG, WILMER A. (R) R.D. #2, New Florence, Pa. 15944 (full-time)
LOWN, A. J. (C) c/o NPH*
●LUSH, RON & MYRTLEBEL. (C) c/o NPH*
LYNCH, DON. (R) 5020 E. Southport Terr., Indianapolis, Ind. 46227 (full-time)
LYONS, JAMES H. (C) 1011 W. Shaw Ct., No. 1, Whitewater, Wis. 53190
MacALLEN, LAWRENCE J. & MARY. (C) Artist & Evangelist, 41808 W. Rambler Ave., Elyria, Ohio 44035
MADISON, G. H. (Retired) 508 Shelby Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37206
MANLEY, STEPHEN. (C) 1778 S. 350 E., Marion, Ind. 40952
MANNING, C. M. (C) Box N, Maysville, Ky. 41056
MARTIN, PAUL. (C) c/o NPH*
MARTIN, VERN W. (C) Route 1, Caldwell, Ida. 83605
MAYO, CLIFFORD. (C) Box 103, Alton, Tex. 79220
●McABEE, JAMES. (R) 410 Freeman Ave., Seymour, Ind. 47274
McCLURE, DARL. (C) R. 3, Box 500, Kenwood Plaza, Bryan, Ohio 43506
McDONALD, CHARLIE. (C) R. 1, Box 308, Dale, Tex. 78616
McDONALD, G. RAY. (R) 321 Curran, Brookhaven, Miss. 39601 (full-time)
McKINNEY, ROY T. (C) 2319 Wakulla Way, Orlando, Fla. 32809
●McNUTT, PAUL. (C) 215 W. 68th Terr., Kansas City, Mo. 64113
McWHIRTER, G. STUART. (C) c/o NPH*
MEEK, WESLEY, SR. (C) 5713 S. Sharlet, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73109
MELVIN, DOLORES. (C) R. 1, Greenup, Ky. 41144
●MEREDITH, DWIGHT & NORMA JEAN. (C) c/o NPH*
MERRELL, RICHARD L. (R) Box 20286, Minneapolis, Minn. 55431 (full-time)
●MERRITT, HERBERT & MRS. (C) 7401 Belinder, Prairie Village, Kans. 66208
MEYER, VIRGIL G. (Retired) 3112 Willow Oaks Dr., Fort Wayne, Ind. 46807
●MICKY, BOB, IDA MAE, & MARCELLA. (C) Box 1435, Lamar, Colo. 81052
MILLER, MEL. (C) Bible Expositor, 226 W. Northrup St., Lansing, Mich. 48910
●MILLER, RUTH E. (C) 111 W. 45th St., Reading, Pa. 19606
MILLHUFF, CHUCK. (C) c/o NPH*
MONTGOMERY, CLYDE. (C) 2517 N. 12th St., Terre Haute, Ind. 47804
MORRIS, CLYDE H. (C) 101 Bryant Lake Rd., Nitro, W.Va. 25143
MQUILTON, M. KIMBER. (Retired) 19562 Winward Ln., Huntington Beach, Calif. 92646
●MULLEN, DeVERNE. (C) 67 Winstead, Newmarket, Ont., Canada
●MYERS, HAROLD & MRS. (C) 575 Ferris, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49504
●NEFF, LARRY & PATRICIA. (C) 625 N. Water St., Owosso, Mich. 48867
●NELSON, CHARLES ED. (C) Box 241, Rogers, Ark. 72756
NEUSCHWAGER, ALBERT. (C) c/o NPH*
NICHOLAS, CLAUDE. (C) 3394 Hammerburg Rd., Flint, Mich. 48507 (full-time)
NORTON, JOE. (Retired) Box 143, Hamlin, Tex. 79520
ORIHODO, DALE M. (C) 2936 Leesburg Rd., S.W., Washington Court House, Ohio 43160
OVERTON, WM. D. (C) Family Evangelist & Chalk Artist, 798 Lake Ave., Woodbury Heights, N.J. 08097
PALMER, JAMES. (C) 639 S. Home Ave., Martinsville, Ind. 46151
●PARR, PAUL G., & THE SONGMASTERS. (C) Rte. 1, Box 1674 Whitetown, Ind. 46075
●PASSMORE EVANGELISTIC PARTY, THE A. A. (C) c/o NPH*
PECK, JOHN. (R) Box 695, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80901 (full-time)

PECK, W. A. (C) R. 2, Box 65A, Malden, Mo. 63863
●PEMBLE, AL, FAMILY TEAM. (R) Box 605, Sidney, Mont. 59270 (full-time)
PERDUE, NELSON. (C) 3732 E. Rte. 245, Cable, Ohio 43009
PHILLIPS, GENE E. (C) 800 E. Quincy Rd., Rte. 2, Griggsville, Ill. 62340
●PICKERING, R. E. (R) P.O. Box 20572, Orlando, Fla. 32814 (full-time)
PITTINGER, TWILA. (C) 413 N. Boyman St., Mansfield, Ohio 44903
●PITTS, PAUL. (C) 2213 Knoll Dr., Dayton, Ohio 45431
●PIERCE, BOYCE & CATHERINE. (C) R. 4, Danville, Ill. 61832
●PORTER, JOHN & PATSY. (C) c/o NPH*
POTTER, LYLE & LOIS. (Retired) 14362 Busford St., Sp. No. 133, Westminster, Calif. 92683
POTTS, TROY C. (Retired) 2952 Cameo, Dallas, Tex. 75234
●POWELL, CURTICE L. (C) 2010 London Dr., Mansfield, Ohio 44905
POWELL, EARL. (R) 1613 Hickory St., Flatwood, Ky. 41139 (full-time)
●POWELL, FRANK. (C) Rte. 4, Okaloosa, Ia. 52577
●QUALLS, PAUL M. (C) 5447 Lake Jessamine Dr., Orlando, Fla. 32809
●RAXER, W. C. & MARY. (C) Box 106, Lewistown, Ill. 61542
RAYCROFT, R. N. (C) c/o NPH*
REED, DOROTHY. (C) P.O. Box 32, Danville, Ill. 61832
REEDY, J. C. (C) 449 Breesee Ave., Bourbonnais, Ill. 60914
RHAME, JOHN D. (R) 1712 Good Hope, Cape Girardeau, Mo. 63701 (full-time)
●RICHARDS, LARRY & PHYLLIS (COULTER). (R) 2479 Madison Ave., Indianapolis, Ind. 46203
RIDEN, K. R. (C) c/o NPH
ROACH, DOUGLAS F. (C) 304 Tanglewood Dr., Yukon, Ohio 73099
ROBERTSON, JAMES H. (C) 2014 Green Apple Ln., Arlington, Tex. 76014
●ROBISON, ROBERT & WIFE. (C) Healers, W.Va. 26627
RODGERS, CLYDE B. (R) 505 Lester Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37210 (full-time)
ROTHWELL, MEL-THOMAS. (R) 2108 Alexander Ln., Bethany, Okla. 73008
RUSHING, KEN & EDNA. (R) 3621 N.W. 97th St., Miami, Fla. 33147 (full-time)
RUTHERFORD, BOB. (C) R. 1, Lynchburg, Tenn. 37352
RUTHERFORD, STEPHEN. (R) Box 204, La Vergne, Tenn. 37086 (full-time)
SANDERS, RUFUS J. (C) 311 N. Third Ave., Saginaw, Mich. 48607
●SAY FAMILY. (C) 1515 Pintelake Dr., Orlando, Fla. 32808
SCHLANG, NEIL. (C) 701 Neighborhood Rd., Chattanooga, Tenn. 37421
SCHMELZENBACH, ELMER. (C) 1416 Mary, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73127
SCHOONOVER, MODIE. (C) 1508 Glenview, Adrian, Mich. 49221
SCHRIBER, GEORGE. (C) 8642 Cherry Ln., Alta Loma, Calif. 91701
●SERROT, CLYDE. (C) Evangelist & Childrep's Worker, 558 W. Melrose Cir., Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. 33312
SETTON, ARNOLD (DOC) & GARNETT. (C) 1116 Highland Ave., Ashland, Ky. 41101
●SEYMORE, PAUL W. (C) Box 94, Pittsburg, Ill. 62974
●SHARP, CHARLES & FAMILY. (C) R. 2, Box 215-D, Vicksburg, Mich. 49097
SHARPLES, J. J. & MRS. (R) 41 James Ave., Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Canada (full-time)
SHEA, ALBERT J. (C) 288 Shaborn Ln., St. Marys, Ohio 45885
●SHOMO, PHIL & MIRIAM. (C) 517 Pershing Dr., Anderson, Ind. 46011
SHUMAKE, C. E. (C) P.O. Box 1083, Hendersonville, Tenn. 37075
SISK, IVAN. (C) 4327 Moraga Ave., San Diego, Calif. 92117
●SLACK, DOUGLAS. (C) 424 Lincoln St., Rising Sun, Ind. 47040
●SLATER, GLENN & VERA. (C) 320 S. 22nd St., Independence, Kans. 67301
SMITH, CHARLES HASTINGS. (C) Box 937, Bethany, Okla. 73008
●SMITH, DUANE. (C) c/o NPH*
SMITH, FLOYD G. (C) 256 Oakhurst Ln., Arcadia, Calif. 91006
SMITH, HAROLD L. (C) 3711 Germania Rd., Snover, Mich. 48472
●SMITH, OTTIS E., JR., & MARGUERITE. (C) 60 Grant St., Tidioute, Pa. 16351

SMITH, R. A. (C) Box 42, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281
 ◆SMITHS, SINGING. (C) 612 4th Ave. N., Myrtle Beach, S.C. 29577
 SNELL, DALE E. (R) 814 Paradise Ln., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80904 (full-time)
 SNOW, DONALD E. (C) 53 Baylis, S.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49507
 ◆SPARKS, ASA & MRS. (C) 91 Lester Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37210
 SPROWLS, EARL L. (C) c/o NPH*
 STAFFORD, DANIEL (C) Box 11, Bethany, Okla. 73608
 STARNES, SAM L. (C) 448 S. Prairie, Bradley, Ill. 60915
 STEELE, J. J. (Retired) 1020 W. Stanford, Springfield, Mo. 65807
 STEPHENS, KEN; (R) P.O. Box 24537, Dallas, Tex. 75224 (full-time)
 STEWART, PAUL J. (C) Box 90 Jasper, Ala. 35501
 ◆STOCKER, W. G. (C) 1421 14th Ave., N.W., Rochester, Minn. 55901
 ◆STONE GOSPEL SINGING FAMILY. (R) 5150 Airport Rd., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80916
 STREET, DAVID. (C) Rte. 1, Ramsey, Ind. 47166
 STRICKLAND, RICHARD L. (C) 4723 Cullen Ave., Springfield, Ohio 45503
 STUBBS, LLOYD A. (C) Rte. 3, Waverly, Ohio 45690
 SWANSON, ROBERT L. (C) 1102 Greenwood Dr., Yukon, Okla. 73099
 ◆SWEENEY, ROGER & EULETA. (C) Rte. 2, Box 106, Sharon Grove, Ky. 42280
 TALBERT, GEORGE H. (Retired) 409 N.E. 13th St., Abilene, Kans. 67410
 TAYLOR, CLIFF. (R) Family Evangelist, 2469 Sacramento Dr., Redding, Calif. 96001
 TAYLOR, JOHN D. (C) 205 N. Limit, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80905
 TAYLOR, ROBERT W. (C) 4501 Croftshire Dr., Dayton, Ohio 45440
 ◆TEASDALE, ELLIS & RUTH. (Retired) 58333 Ironwood Dr., Elkhart, Ind. 46514
 THOMAS, J. MELTON. (C) c/o NPH*
 THOMAS, W. FRED. (Retired) P.O. Box 416, Saline, Mich. 48176
 THOMPSON, GENEVIEVE. (C) Prophecy, Craig, Mo. 64437
 ◆THOMPSON, L. DEAN. (C) 314 S. Summit, Girard, Kans. 66743
 ◆THORNTON, RON L. (R) Rte. 3, Box 301, Colona, Ill. 61241 (full-time)
 TOEPPER, PAUL (C) Box 146, Petersburg, Tex. 79250
 TOSTI, TONY. (Retired) 8001 N.E. 89th Ave., Vancouver, Wash. 98662

TRIPP, HOWARD. (C) c/o NPH*
 ◆TUCKER, BILL & JEANETTE. (C) P.O. Box 3204, La Vale, Md. 21502
 TUCKER, RALPH. (C) c/o NPH*
 ◆TURNOCK, JIM & D. J. (R) c/o NPH* (full-time)
 VANDERPOOL, WILFORD. (C) 11424 N. 37th Pl., Phoenix, Ariz. 85028
 VARIAN, W. E. (C) 5423 Hicks Corner, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49002
 WADE, E. BRUCE. (C) 3029 Sharpview Ln., Dallas, Tex. 75228
 ◆WALKER, LAWRENCE C. AND LAVONA. (C) c/o NPH*
 ◆WARD, LLOYD & GERTRUDE. (C) Preacher & Chalk Artist, 1001 Averly St., Fort Myers, Fla. 33901
 ◆WELCH, JONATHAN & ILONA. (C) 601 Commercial, Danville, Ill. 61832
 ◆WELCH, RICHARD & CLAUDIA. (C) Rio Vista Apts. No. 5, Madison, Tenn. 37115
 WELCH, W. B. (C) 5928 Edith St., Charleston Heights, S.C. 29405
 WELLS, KENNETH & LILY. (Retired) Box 1043, Whitelish, Mont. 59937
 WEST, EDNA. (C) Carlisle St., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80907
 WEST, C. EDWIN. (C) c/o NPH*
 WHITED, CURTIS. (C) 307 N. Blake, Olathe, Kans. 66061
 WILKINS, CHESTER. (C) 5118 Ranch Rd., Bartlesville, Okla. 74003
 ◆WILKINSON TRIO. (R) 2840 18th St., Columbus, Ind. 47201 (full-time)
 WILLIAMS, G. W. (C) 2200 Elva Dr., Kokomo, Ind. 46901
 ◆WILLIAMS, LAWRENCE. (C) 6715 N.W. 30th Terr., Bethany, Okla. 73008
 WILSON, ROBERT J. (C) Rte. 2, Box 139, Lexington, Ala. 35648
 WISE, DAVE. (R) c/o NPH (full-time)
 ◆WISEHART, LENNY & JOY. (C) c/o NPH*
 WOLPE, JOSEPH P. (C) 3976 4th St., Riverside, Calif. 92501
 WOOLMAN, J. L. (Retired) 1205 S.W. 62nd, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73139
 WRIGHT, E. G. (C) Rte. 2, Box 363, Old Lincoln Way, Orrville, Ohio. 44667
 WYLIE, CHARLES. (C) Box 162, Winfield, Kans. 67156
 WYRICK, DENNIS. (C) 603 Reed Dr., Frankfort, Ky. 40601
 ◆YATES, BEN J. (R) 5709 Willow Terr. Dr., Bethel Park, Pa. 15102 (full-time)

THE PREACHER'S WIFE

The Month Before Christmas

CHRISTMAS WILL soon be everywhere. Lights glowing, children gazing, old folks sighing, teens smiling . . . The smell of pine, candles, and fresh-baked cookies filling the air . . . Every home, church, school, and store will echo with the sights, sounds, and smells of this treasured day.

As ministers' wives, we are chief participants in this celebration. At home and church we can create an atmosphere of happy preparedness. Let me reiterate some simple suggestions.

Start your Christmas preparation early.

Christmas in our first pastorate was a joyous time, but do you know what I remember? Tears and frustrations over trying to make shirts, stuffed animals, aprons, and embroidered pillowcases which I should

have started six months earlier.

The other thing I remember is holding back tears during Christmas play practice, as we—the crew—cut, painted, and made props from cardboard boxes. Even we pastors' wives sometimes attempt greater projects than our emotional maturity underwrites. More seasoned advice would be to start early, and, in some instances, keep projects simple. Relaxed simplicity is more beautiful than disordered extravaganzas.

Make Christmas a family affair.

Since you are a minister's wife, the church will probably get its proper share of your time and energy during the month of December. Make sure your family does the same. The first rule will help here. Have the bulk of your baking finished and in the freezer ahead of time. Then you can reserve an afternoon for helping the children decorate their favorite cookies. Have most of the gifts bought and wrapped early. This permits an evening of family shopping and gift wrapping.

As you mark your calendar, remember Susie's Christmas concert at school and Jim's request to have his class over for a party. In our adult celebration, we sometimes neglect to give the children that which they want most—time and attention.



by
Frances Simpson

Pastor's Wife
 Linwood Church of the
 Nazarene
 Wichita, Kans.

December, 1976

17

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Keep Christmas Christ-centered.

Much of what the commercial world attaches to Christmas is appealing; but it is up to the church to keep the season holy. Put up your crèche before you put up your Christmas tree. Send religious cards or insert a promise for the coming year. Play the carols more often than "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town." Be sure to have a family Christmas Eve service. Make all the Christmas activities at church a happy time for your family.

Build some Christmas traditions.

A simple act can become very meaningful as it is done every year in the atmosphere of Christmas beauty.

I remember how much our family wanted a crèche. I went to the dime store and bought three figures—Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus for 39c each. My husband made a crude stable out of plywood left from a building project. The children gathered straw and we had our crèche. Every Christmas thereafter, we selected one figure for the crèche until we had shepherds, wise men, camels, sheep, and donkeys. Today the crèche is priceless.

Rev. Sam Roberts, an Indiana pastor, introduced us to the tradition of having a special candle which we light only on Christmas Eve as we read the Christmas story together. This pastor told how his children, grown and married, would feel the

tug of the Christmas Eve scene around the aging candle, and would make last-minute trips home to hear Father read the familiar words.

I like Kathryn Johnson's tradition of having the younger children act out the Christmas story, using the crèche figures.

Adopt some time-honored custom or create your own new and novel idea. As you do it year after year, it will become a cherished tradition.

Help create peace on earth, goodwill toward men.

As a minister's wife, you will do some entertaining during the Christmas season. This need not be elaborate or expensive, but plan well. If you have the church board in, make it a memorable evening by having carolers stop by. Share Christmases past by candlelight.

If you have a young adult class over after church, plan for the children who will be present. Turn out the lights, sit around the fire (this keeps the children still); recite "'Twas the Night Before Christmas," and let the children share their excitement.

Experience Christmas in your own heart.

Take time to bow anew at the manger, knowing it has been transformed into a throne via a cross. Let His living presence radiate through you to a busy, mixed-up world.

A family where a husband and wife love each other more deeply and faithfully as years go by . . . where a husband can affirm his wife's gifts without thinking he is giving up his manhood . . . where a wife can joyfully adapt to her husband's leadership and still be liberated . . . where children are a gift and not a burden . . . where simplicity is the keynote and not slavery to consumerism . . . where security in Christ is so real that children don't have to be rushed off to private school to flee integration—that family is a powerful evangelistic statement before a word is said. —Leighton Ford

Evangelistically Speaking—

How Not to Conduct a Revival

By Lawrence H. Bone*

THIS ARTICLE is written with a fervent hope that it may help some of my brethren to be aware of some basics of revival work that may be overlooked.

Seldom, if ever, has the writer experienced such chaos as was his misfortune to experience in a recent revival. The evangelist was entertained in an adequate parsonage, and the pastor and his wife unselfishly gave their own room to him while they slept on a less comfortable bed in another room. Such unselfishness is deeply appreciated.

However, two children, both under six years of age, were allowed to so dominate the household that at times chaos reigned. These small children were allowed to yell and pound the table or high chair with silverware, even while grace was being said. They were allowed to interrupt conversations, run screaming through the house, at times to throw temper tantrums while the parents did little or nothing to control them. Sometimes this crying and screaming went on very late at night.

To compound the problem, these children, together with others, were

allowed to create confusion, during church services, even though the church had an adequate nursery and play area.

There were no ushers—during the week or on Sunday—stationed at the rear of the sanctuary to meet, greet, and seat people coming in. Nor was there a greeter at the church entrance.

The church board frowned on taking offerings during the week, for fear (they said) of offending visitors. It is the writer's opinion, having served both as pastor and evangelist, that many of the people who visit our services want to help us financially. It is a wise pastor who realizes that friends of the church can help him raise his revival budget.

The closing Sunday morning was unbelievable. Five minutes were taken out of the morning service to take birthday offerings that should have been taken in Sunday school. Too much time was taken for announcements, and almost nothing was said about the congregation giving liberally to the revival offering, although the church had called both an evangelist and singers, and no offerings had been taken for six nights.

*Nazarene evangelist, Covina, Calif.

The evangelist preached following two special musical numbers (isn't one enough on revival Sunday mornings?). He did his best to present God's Word and show people their needs. When he concluded his message and had the congregation stand for the invitation, he was shocked by what followed.

Adults in charge of boys and girls who had come on a bus (the children were sitting in the center front seats of the sanctuary) began herding the children to the aisles and out of the sanctuary. Had they waited 10 minutes, some of those boys and girls might have given their hearts to Christ. But those adults seemed more intent on keeping a bus schedule than in leading children to the altar.

The damage of the interruption was irreparable. The audience was distracted. The singers sang the invitation songs, and the evangelist urged people to seek the Lord. One child and one adult did come to the altar. But one wonders if many more might have come had they not been so distracted. Whatever spirit of conviction had existed was destroyed by sincere but unwise people.

One thing more needs to be added. A visiting pastor whose evening service was early enough to allow him to drive 20 miles and visit the Sunday

night service was not even recognized by the host pastor, even though he came in before prayer time. The writer was embarrassed both for the visiting pastor and for the host pastor.

Truth is stranger than fiction. These things actually happened. In hope of their not recurring, we offer the following suggestions:

1. Give careful attention to 1 Timothy 3:5, "(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"

2. Use good ushers during every service.

3. Always have a greeter at the door to welcome visitors—and regulars too.

4. Give the friends of the church opportunity to help in the revival finances.

5. Try to train parents with small children to use the nursery.

6. Delete all unnecessary items from the Sunday morning revival service.

7. Plan for children to stay for the altar call, and encourage them to seek the Lord when the invitation is given.

8. Be cordial and courteous to visiting pastors. Recognize them in the service. Make them feel welcome. They will do the same by you when you visit their church.

My Morning Prayer

Lord, Your fields of ripened grain are so vast; Your orchards of full, ripe fruit stretch as far as eye can see; Your vineyards are loaded with ripened grapes; and Your gardens are filled with foods for every need.

Please give me a basket and send me to the garden, field, orchard, or vineyard of Your choosing, and I will faithfully gather there, and in no other, and at the end of the day I will bring my gleanings to You.

Your loving servant,
T. W. Willingham

THE STARTING POINT

A Word About Forgiveness

In Colossians 2:13-15, *The Living Bible** gives us a beautiful resume of forgiveness in these thoughts:

1. Forgiveness is the answer to the deadness sin brings. "You were dead in sins, and your sinful desires were not yet cut away. Then he gave you a share in the very life of Christ, for he forgave all your sins" (v. 13).

2. There is a clearing up of the charges against life. "... for he forgave all your sins, and blotted out the charges proved against you. ... He took this list of sins and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross" (vv. 13-14).

3. There is a new way open to Him. Two phrases suggest this: "... he gave you a share in the very life of Christ" (v. 13), and "God openly displayed to the whole world Christ's triumph at the cross" (v. 15).

Help from a Great Preacher

Helmut Thieliicke, the great German preacher, once confided to a friend: "Every conversation I engage in becomes at bottom a meditation, a preparation, a gathering of material for my preaching."

You and I must gather daily from our experiences, our study, our reading, our conversations, and our observations those

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By C. Neil Strait

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

choice items that will add a dimension to our preaching. And that man who is not gathering has nothing to share.

The Motto of Life

Ann Kiemel, in her recent book *I Love the Word Impossible*, gives us the perfect illustration and sermon idea for a holiness message. This is what she writes: "The motto of my life is YES, LORD. Anytime, anywhere. Yes to whatever He wants, wherever He leads" (p. 93).

The Goal of Every Preacher

Someone writing of Abigail Adams' letters and speeches of two centuries past, concluded that they had "an inability to be dull."

Of few—so very few—will this ever be said. But that it could be our goal would be a great boost to our ministry and our preaching.

A Good Illustration

Lawrence Housman, in his autobiography, *The Unexpected Years*, tells of a rehearsal incident during a stage play on the Nativity. The scene had moved to the time when wise men were paying their visit to the Christ child. The script called for all the lights to be switched off as they left, except the light over the manger. A stagehand accidentally hit all the switches, and the entire stage was in darkness. A voice rang out, "Here, you've switched off Jesus!"

A Word for the Preacher

I close this month's column with the words of Dean Tilroe, Syracuse University. He gave this advice, just before his death, to Dr. Norman Vincent Peale: "Never make a speech that you don't tell people that they can have a great life."

That's good advice. May this be true of your preaching and mine.

Junkyards and Parks

Harold E. Kohn, in his book *Best Wishes*, passes along this interesting observation. "A junkyard and a park symbolize two contrasting kinds of living—jumbled and purposeful. The junkyard's ugliness is found chiefly in its disorder.

The stuff that is there may be old and broken, but its ugliness is not in its age or disrepair, for the goods in an antique shop are old and yet often beautiful, and material stacked neatly in a repair shop may be broken without being unsightly.

More than any other feature, it is the disorderliness of a junkyard that makes it ugly" (p. 69).

You could draw the contrast between the chaos of sin and the creation of the new birth from Kohn's observation.

IN THE STUDY

Seeds for Sermons

December 5

JESUS NEVER MEETS A STRANGER

TEXT: "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house" (Luke 19:5).

One of the nicest compliments a person can receive is that he is so well adjusted socially that he never meets a stranger. Even if it is a first meeting, the extrafriendly person makes the new acquaintance feel so much at ease that the closing remark of their first contact will be "Seems like I have known you for a long time." Also, the extrafriendly person never waits for a formal introduction but engages the other person in conversation from the moment their paths cross. Such friendliness is a wonderful social quality

to possess. All of the admirable social qualities mentioned above exemplify the way Jesus approaches people. He never meets a stranger. This is clearly demonstrated in His relationship with Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus, thinking he was a total stranger and completely out of Jesus' range of vision, discovered three things about Jesus' attitude toward him.

I. HE SEES ME—"He looked up, and saw him." Zacchaeus thought Jesus was so absorbed in the swirling commotion of the crowd surrounding Him that He would never glance upward. But Jesus located him in his obscure place of hiding. This lets us know that Jesus does not overlook anyone. Some people think they are so worthless and insignificant that no one ever looks their way. They think of themselves as the forgotten person, or the handicapped person, or the displaced person. This negative approach is completely turned around when Jesus enters the picture. He has a way of letting each person know that He overlooks no one, sees everyone, and has an interest in each.

II. HE KNOWS ME—"and said unto him, Zacchaeus . . ." Jesus had never been introduced to Zacchaeus, nor had their paths crossed before, yet Jesus knew him by his first name. This was the surprise

of a lifetime—to be called by name by a person he had never seen before. This was an unforgettable moment. All of us take pride in the important people with whom we are on a first-name basis. Each of us is on a first-name relationship with the most important Person who has ever lived on the planet Earth. What a thrill it is to be on such a personal and intimate relationship with Jesus that He knows us by our first names.

III. HE LOVES ME—"for to day I must abide at thy house." This was the greatest discovery that Zacchaeus made—namely, He wants to have fellowship with me; He wants to be with me and my family. Jesus is no respecter of persons, so He desires to have you know that He loves you and wants to live in your heart. At the same time, He desires to live in your home and make that home circle one in Christian fellowship. When He is a part of the home, everything will go better in the push and pull of the daily exchange.

CONCLUSION: You are really somebody on the social register of the Lord. You are important enough that He never overlooks you. He knows you by first name. You are the type of person He wants to keep company with.

December 12

WHEN GOD'S SON WAS DEMOTED

TEXT: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:6-7).

We show our love for our sons by wanting them to have better educational advantages than we have had; by having a higher standard of living than we have had; by having a better home and furnishings than we have had. But at the divine level, God reversed this order and allowed His Son to be demoted so He could show to what lengths His love would go to reveal himself to mankind. At the Christmas season, we are re-

minded that when God's Son stepped down to identify himself with sinful man, the departing word from the Father was "Give them all My love." There are three reasons He was willing to lay aside His equality with the Father and make himself of no reputation:

I. HE STEPPED DOWN TO BECOME SIN, SO WE COULD PARTAKE OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

As God's greatest Christmas present to mankind, Jesus was gift-wrapped in the clay of humanity. He became like us in every point, even to the degree that He became sin (without committing sin) so that we could step up to the level of sharing the righteousness of God. Sin is always considered as separation from God, or estrangement from God, or alienation from God. This is exactly what Jesus became as He was on the Cross and had to cry out in the deepest agony: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Also, on the way to the Cross He fell in the dust of the road, and this symbolized to us that He went as far down in the dirt and filth of sin as a man can go so He could lift the worst of sinners to the level of receiving the righteousness of God.

II. HE STEPPED DOWN TO THE LOWEST LEVEL OF POVERTY, SO WE COULD PARTAKE OF THE RICHES OF GOD.

He became so poverty-stricken that He had no place to lay His head. He did not have a coin to pay the small amount of tax. He had to beg for a cup of water to slake His thirst. He was so poor that He had to earn His living by the sweat of His brow, with corns in His hands as He worked with a carpenter's hammer. Through His poverty He identified himself completely with us so we could partake of the riches of the Lord's grace and love and power. Jesus tells us in John 16:15 that what the Father has is His, and what is His will be shown to us by the Holy Spirit, so that everything He has is made available to us. This enables us to be all-sufficient and to abound in all things, unto all good works.

III. HE STEPPED DOWN TO BECOME THE SON OF MAN, SO WE COULD BECOME SONS OF GOD.

He became what we are so we in turn



by
Mendell Taylor

Professor of History of Christianity, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City

could become what He is. He became one with us so we could be one with Him. He partook of our humanity so we could become partakers of His divine nature. He became finite so we could share in the infinite. He became involved in the temporal so we could participate in the eternal.

CONCLUSION: His demotion makes it possible for us to be promoted. His coming down to our level makes it possible for us to be lifted to a divine level. His taking on the form of a servant makes it possible for us to reign as priests and kings.

December 19

FOUR WAYS OF TREATING JESUS

TEXT: "... they [the wise men] saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11).

Jesus is the most unique personality in the history of the world. Every person is confronted by Him in one way or another, at one time or another. At the time He arrived on this enemy-infested globe, there were four attitudes taken toward Him, and everyone in our world today will be in one class or the other. The four possible ways of treating Him are as follows:

I. IGNORE HIM—This is the way the innkeeper treated Him. He let the parents of Jesus know that there was no room available for them to occupy even though the mother was in labor. (This may be the first and most famous of all "No Vacancy" signs.) The innkeeper could have made some shifts and rearranged his guests to make room for one more family if he had thought the guests were important enough to warrant this change. But he was ready to ignore the One who was destined to become the most distinguished name possible to have on a guest list. In today's world, many people live such overcrowded lives that they have no room for Jesus. Thus they ignore Him.

II. DEPLORE HIM—This is the way Herod treated Him. Herod did everything within his power to destroy Jesus. He wanted to run everything his own way, and he thought there was a possibility that Jesus might someday rival him in rulership. He was so threatened by his fears of Jesus that he ordered all babies destroyed so there would be no chance for His survival. This is the same spirit that caused Jesus to be crucified 33 years later. The mob said: "We deplore Him because He is setting aside our traditions and customs, and we want to run our religion our way." That is the spirit that crucifies the Lord afresh today: "We want to be our own bosses and operate our lives the way we want."

III. EXPLORE HIM—This is the way the shepherds reacted. They made haste to the place where He was born so they could "See this thing which is come to pass" (Luke 2:15). They wanted to be classified as observers. They were curious enough to want to see the unfolding drama of Jesus' birth, but they were not attracted enough to make a commitment to Him. They were glad to be classified only as spectators. Many in our contemporary scene are in this class. They read about Jesus just to find out about Him as a historical figure, but they never go beyond this in their relationship to Him.

IV. ADORE HIM—This was the attitude of the three wise men who came into His presence and "fell down, and worshipped him; and . . . opened their treasures" to Him. They went all out in their overwhelming desire to worship Him as Lord of all. They gave Him the best they possessed because they wanted to demonstrate that they loved Him without reservation. They went overboard to reveal how much they adored Him. This is the wisest choice any person can make. Just as the wise men went home a different way, so when we adore Him as Lord, we go home a different person with a different attitude.

CONCLUSION: The best way to celebrate Christmas Sunday, 1976, is to move into the presence of Jesus and let Him know that we love Him, we worship Him, we adore Him with all of our being.

December 26

WHERE DO YOU STOP LISTENING?

TEXT: "... and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers" (Acts 7:52).

The background for this text is the occasion when Stephen is being tried before the religious leaders of his day. They gave him a chance to speak in his own behalf before they rendered a verdict regarding his future. Stephen spoke for about 10 minutes as he recounted the way God had dealt with His chosen people. Stephen called attention to the fact that the God of the Jewish nation was a revealing God, a communicating God, a covenant-keeping God, and the God of miracles. His listeners were captivated by his review of the way God had manifested himself in the stream of Jewish history. However, they turned him off the moment he referred to Jesus as the Just One and to the fact that they were guilty of destroying this divine Messiah. They stopped listening and built insurmountable walls of resistance when the speaker touched the area of their prejudices and pet peeves. This same audience response occurs today when the minister declares a truth that cuts across the personal interests and prejudiced opinions of the listeners.

However, we are the losers if we stop listening to the truth because it is cross-grained with our unexamined conclusions. Truth is to be followed, even if it hurts, if we are going to be at our best for the Lord and have His best in our lives. If we stop listening when any of the following subjects are brought up, we pay a heavy penalty for our hostility because we may walk back of light or disobey the command of God.

1. Repentance, restitution, or confession to clear up the past record
2. Consecration, commitment, or surrender to the full will of God
3. Separation from the world to show the lordship of Christ
4. Faithful attendance to the means of grace
5. Sabbath observance
6. Faithful in stewardship in the areas of our time, talent, and treasure

7. Visitation evangelism, witnessing, and person-to-person contacts
8. Christlikeness in word and deed, in the home, in the school, in business
9. Honesty, integrity, and fidelity in family relationships
10. Bible reading, family devotions, and "taking time to be holy"

Other items too numerous to mention can be brought into focus as the local needs are considered.

CONCLUSION: This checklist reveals how open we are to light from the word of the Lord and to guidance by the Holy Spirit. We must keep our lives squared with these basic principles if we keep pace with the Lord's plan for our lives. Only as we walk in the light, saying a positive YES to the Lord as He leads the way, will we discover the pathway that is brighter and brighter until the perfect day.

By
Ralph Earle

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



Cleanings
from the Greek

1 Corinthians 16

"Collection" (16:1-2)

The first thing we would note is that "collection" (v. 1) and "gathering" (v. 2) in the KJV is the same word in the Greek and obviously should be translated the same way in both places.

The Greek word is *logeia* (only here in NT). Deissmann says: "It comes from *logevo*, 'I collect,' a verb which, like the derivate, was found for the first time comparatively recently in papyri, ostraca, and inscriptions from Egypt and

elsewhere. We find it used chiefly of religious collections for a god, a temple, etc., just as St. Paul uses it of his collection of money for the 'saints' at Jerusalem" (LAE, p. 105).

In verse 2 we have a hint of Christian tithing. On the first day of the week each one was to "set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income" (NIV).*

"Liberality" or "Gift"? (16:3)

In only one other place in the KJV is the word "liberality" found (2 Cor. 8:2). There the Greek is *haplotēs*, which literally means "simplicity" or "sincerity."

But here it is a very different Greek word, *charis*. Occurring 156 times in the NT, it is translated "grace" 130 times. Here most recent versions have "gift," which is obviously the meaning in this context. But since there are other Greek words that simply mean "gift" in the sense of something given, the most adequate translation here would be "gracious gift."

These three verses suggest three principles governing our giving. First, it is to be *systematic*—"upon the first day of the week" (v. 2). Second, it is to be *proportionate*—as one is prospered (v. 2). Third, it is to be *voluntary*—a gracious gift, given freely (v. 3). God does not want what is given grudgingly but what is given gladly. Paul did not want to put on the pressure when he arrived.

"Conduct" or "Send"? (16:11)

"Conduct him forth" (KJV) suggests something formal and public. The verb *propempeō* does have this meaning in Acts 20:38; 21:5. But for this passage Arndt and Gingrich give: "*help on one's journey* with food, money, be arranging for companions, means of travel, etc., *send on one's way*" (p. 716). "Send him on his way" (NASB,** NIV) is the simplest translation.

"Quit You like Men" (16:13)

This is all one word in Greek, *andri-zesthe* (only here in NT). Arndt and

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Gingrich define this verb as "conduct oneself in a manly or courageous way" (p. 63). Abbott-Smith has simply "play the man" (p. 35). This verb occurs frequently in the Septuagint, three times (2 Sam. 10:12; Ps. 27:14; 31:25) in combination with "be strong" (*krataiousthe*), as here. Robertson and Plummer (ICC) render the two "Be not only manly but mighty" (p. 394).

"Charity" or "Love"? (16:14)

The correct translation is: "Do everything in love" (NIV). That is a most significant command for all of us!

A Good Addiction (16:15)

In these days of addiction to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, it is refreshing to read of a family that "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." These first converts of Paul in Achaia (specifically Corinth) were now ministering to others.

The verb is *etaxan*, "arranged, ordered, appointed." Robertson and Plummer (ICC) comment: "They had spontaneously taken this service upon themselves. Just as the brethren appointed (*etaxan*) that Paul and Barnabas and others should go to Jerusalem about the question of circumcision (Acts 15:2), so Stephanas and his household appointed themselves (*etaxan heautous*) to the service of their fellow-Christians. It was a self-imposed duty" (p. 395).

Such spontaneous consecration to a ministry to others is an expression of true love. Probably the best translation today is "devoted themselves" (NASB, NIV). This kind of Christian devotion seems to be increasing in the church, and for this we are devoutly thankful.

"Anathema" (16:22)

In most other places in the NT this word is translated "accursed" (see our comments on Rom. 9:3 and Gal. 1:8). But here it is transliterated from the Greek. The one who does not love the Lord-Jesus Christ is under a divine curse. (Paul is addressing professing Christians.) Behm says that the word means "something delivered up to divine wrath, dedicated to destruction and brought under a curse" (TDNT, 1:354).

"Maran-atha" (16:22)

In the KJV there is not punctuation between Anathema and Maran-atha, though there should obviously be a period. A. T. Robertson says, "It was a curious blunder in the King James Version that connected *Maran-atha*, with *Anathema*" (WP, 4:204).

The Bible Society Greek text has *Maranā tha*. According to Edgar J. Goodspeed, the first edition of the KJV (1611) read, "Let him bee Anathema Maranatha," with no separation in the last word (*Problems of NT Translation*, p. 166).

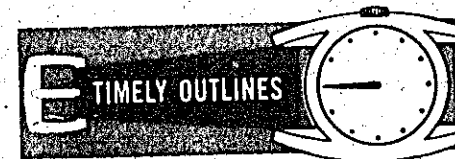
Arndt and Gingrich say that *Maran-atha* means "[our] Lord has come." But they immediately add "better separated *maranā tha* . . . [our] Lord, come! an Aramaic formula which, according to *Didache* 10:6, was used in the early Christian liturgy of the Lord's Supper" (p. 492).

The *Didache* (pronounced dee-da-kay) comes from the second century. The passage cited is a part of the Thanksgiving that was to be repeated aloud at the close of the Communion service. The people were to say: "Hosannah to the God of David. If any man be holy, let him come! if man be not, let him repent: Maranatha, Amen" (*The Apostolic Fathers* ["Loeb Classical Library"], 1:325). A footnote in this Loeb edition reads: "A transliteration of Aramaic words meaning 'Our Lord! Come!'"

This *Didache* passage reminds us of the closing promise and prayer of the NT (Rev. 22:20): "'Yes, I am coming quickly,' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" (NASB).

Robertson and Plummer (ICC) call attention to a slight problem. They write: "Why St. Paul gives this warning in Aramaic rather than Greek [writing to Corinth] is unknown. The most probable conjecture is that in this language it had become a sort of motto or password among Christians, and familiar in that shape, like 'Alleluia' with ourselves" (p. 401). The *Didache* seems to give some support to this view.

It is our privilege and responsibility to live in constant expectation of our Lord's return. This attitude is one of the strongest safeguards against carelessness in conduct, and it also is a powerful incentive to devoted service for our Master.



The Child of Bethlehem

INTRODUCTION: There are 333 detailed prophecies about Christ's first advent.

TEXT: "Thy holy child Jesus, whom thou has anointed" (Acts 4:27).

- I. The child of prophetic promise (Gen. 3:15; Mic. 5:2; Luke 1:30-33; Gal. 4:5)
- II. The man of fervent prayer (Luke 18:1; John 17)
- III. The child of divine purpose (Isa. 9:6-7)
- IV. The man of spiritual power: "All power is given unto me . . ." (Matt. 28:18-20)
- V. The child of enduring preeminence (Col. 1:18)
- VI. This child made the gospel possible (Matt. 1:23; Luke 2:7-10)
- VII. Christ brings the evangel at Christmas (Luke 2:7-25)

Christ is beyond Bethlehem now, beyond all sufferings and a fulfilled earthly ministry (John 19:30). But He works through His own servants divine miracles to the glory of God.

JOSEPH T. LARSON

Try This Idea—

Christmas Project

Looking for a way your church can give a little extra to missions during the Christmas season?

Why not enlist your young people to set up a post office in the church foyer? Announce to the church members that they are to address their Christmas cards and bring them to the church Christmas post office. The money which would have been used for postage is given to a special missionary offering. The young people

are responsible to sort through the cards, stack them according to names, and tie them in bundles. At a designated time the church families stop by the post office and pick up their cards.

A way to save even more for missions would be to have the young people make and set up a giant Christmas card in the foyer. The church people may sign their names to this card and give the money for both cards and postage to a special missionary project. The young people should be on hand during all services to collect the money.

BETTY B. ROBERTSON

BULLETIN BARREL

CHRISTMAS

We are in danger of losing the awe, the wonder, the praise of true worship by failing to keep before us constantly the mystery and glory of the Incarnation.

—WILLIAM GREATHOUSE

Let's approach Christmas with an expectant hush, rather than a last-minute rush.

In Denmark, people say to one another at Christmastime, "May God bless your Christmas, and may it last until Easter." That's much better than our jolly "Merry Christmas," isn't it?

GIFT OF ALL GIFTS

The great Gift, the unique and living One, is not a thing but a person. It is Jesus Christ himself. In Him God has given himself, no longer just things which He creates or has created, but His own person, His own suffering, His own solitude, given unto death itself. He declared it himself, just before turning to face His cross, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This Gift of all gifts is the self-commitment of God himself, who carried

it through to the bitter end so that we may entrust ourselves to it.

The almost unbelievable news of the revelation is that it really is a gift. It is free, without reservation and without recall. Whatever our virtues may be, whatever may be our times of repentance, they all would be unequal to the payment of such a treasure. Thus it is that God offers it freely. He is the One who has paid its price, in the death of His Son. The erasure of all our failings and all our remorse; of all our regrets and our rebellion—what a gift it is! The redemption of all our joys about to be swallowed up in death, and their fulfillment in eternal joy itself—what a gift indeed!

—PAUL TOURNIER

A CHRISTMAS CANDLE

A Christmas candle is a lovely thing;
It makes no noise at all,
But softly gives itself away—
While quite unselfish, it grows
small.

—Eva Nickolson

Said the Spider to the Fly

Once a spider built a beautiful web. He kept it clean and shiny so that flies would patronize it and not get suspicious.

Then one day this fairly intelligent fly came buzzing by the clean spider web. Old man spider called out, "Come and sit." But the fairly intelligent fly said, "No, sir. I don't see other flies, and I am not going in alone!"

But presently he saw on the floor below a large crowd of flies dancing on a piece of brown paper. He was delighted! So he came in for a landing.

Just before he landed, a bee zoomed by, saying, "Don't land there, stupid! That's flypaper!" But the fairly intelligent fly shouted back, "Don't be silly. Those flies are dancing. There's a big crowd there. Everybody's doing it. That many flies can't be wrong!" Well, you know what happened.

Some of us want to be with the crowd so badly that we end up in a mess. What does it profit a fly (or a person) if he escapes the web only to end up in the glue?

THE LOG

The Preacher's Magazine

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● **Is Sin an Entilty?**
Definition can never be permitted to take the place of explanation. And that requires explanation.

● **The Spiritual Education of Children at Home**
John Wesley, one of 19, had no children of his own. But he did leave some valuable advice.

● **The Speechless Messenger**
An expectant people, a troubled preacher, and a day that went without a divine message.

This has been a historic year for our magazine. It marks our fiftieth anniversary since its beginnings in 1926, and it has been a glorious year in our history. Our readers are thoughtful and gracious in their comments and criticisms, and our contributors are writing better articles as time goes by. A special word of thanks is due to Dr. Mendell Taylor for his year-long series, "Seeds for Sermons." Many have expressed appreciation for the fresh ideas in these sermon starters. And we like your title so well, we just may borrow it for the continuation of this series, if you don't mind, Doctor. Our friend and brother, Rev. Mark E. Moore, of Sylvania, Ohio, will present "Seeds," beginning in January. And the names of many others to whom we owe a debt of thanks would take more space than our magazine could provide, so we say to all of them, and to all of you, may this Christmas season be a joy and the New Year a time of rich blessing.

Yours for souls,