

The Preacher's Magazine



- Jesus Came Preaching and His Called Servants Still Do
- Whatever Happened to Doctrinal Preaching?
- The Work of the Holy Spirit in Pastoral Counseling
- Preaching and Church Growth

September, October, November, 1978

EDITORIAL

MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

by Neil B. Wiseman

Little boys on their way to becoming grown men experience crushes. I was captured by my first crush on Miss Watson, my third grade teacher. Then there was my first awareness of little girls and then the teen years. I even remember the 19c valentine sent back inscribed: "sender unknown—let's keep it that way."

But when I was 15, I was smitten by a new crush. I developed a strong attraction to the *Preacher's Magazine*. My pastor, Robert A. North, introduced me to it. He bore with an awkward adolescent through the first glimmerings of a call to preach, affirming my aspirations in significant ways. He made time to talk with me. He gave me books to read and a class to teach there in our little church in Detroit. When he introduced me to the *Preacher's Magazine*, it was love at first sight. My pastor and the *Preacher's Magazine* taught me those primer lessons on what the Christian ministry is all about.

As soon as I could get my own subscription, I began to save every issue. As time permitted, I indexed the articles and sermons on 3 x 5 cards. As the years rolled on my *Preacher's Magazine* index became a bountiful resource to which a busy young pastor turned again and again to meet the rigorous demands of preparing spiritual meals for growing parishioners. I preached better then and I preach better now because of the *Preacher's Magazine*.

My love affair with the *Preacher's Magazine* put me in touch with some of the giants of the holiness movement. How could I keep from being strengthened by editors like J. B. Chapman, L. A. Reed, and D. Shelby Corlett; and writers like C. B. Jernigan, Floyd W. Nease, C. E. Cornell, H. Orton Wiley, and Charles W. Carter?

The last four helmsmen of the *Preacher's Magazine*—Lauriston J. DuBois, Norman Oke, Richard S. Taylor, and James McGraw—have enriched my life not only by insightful editing, but by personal acquaintance, love, and respect.

"Laurie" DuBois was a courageous pioneer youth executive. He was also my trusted advisor, reader of my M.Div. thesis, and, for a time, my landlord. We worked together on many projects and committees when we pastored neighboring churches in Denver. I never knew him to be on the wrong side of an issue.

The Bible says, "iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another" (RSV). In this manner, my friend, Norman Oke, sharpened my ministerial development. The "iron" of his helpful editing sharpened my love for the *Preacher's Magazine*. His resignation as editor to accept a pastorate in Washington, D.C., came too early for me. Later we worked together on the pioneer faculty at Nazarene Bible College at Colorado Springs. I pastored a nearby church and taught part-time; he was the academic dean. His unique writing style and his love for preachers are qualities I still admire.

Richard S. Taylor is my special friend, and when he became the pilot of the *Preacher's Magazine*, I knew the object of my long affection was in good hands. The holiness movement could hardly have gotten along without his writing, preaching, and teaching. There are some fine points on which we have agreed to disagree. But last week I had a letter from him consisting of a delicate blend of admonition and affection which closed with those warm words, "I love you a lot."

Then I owe so much to the gentle strength of James McGraw. True, I loved him because he was my wife's uncle. But I loved him too because he was my friend. Though we did not see each other often, our conversations always picked up just where we left them the last time. He was a teacher/preacher and peacemaker. By training, experience, and intuition he saw things from a pastor's perspective. Though he loved his major assignment of training preachers in his seminary classroom, he was always eager to be involved in the frontline local ministry of the church.

A Pastor's Prayer

Our Heavenly Father: We seek Thy face at this early hour on our Lord's great day. Above all else, we need Thy melting grace and a sense of Thy divine presence among us. Even now, give us the humility of faith and the inner assurance of Thy enabling power. Our own reserves seem very low this morning. But we trust Thee now for all we need.

Even as our Lord himself admonished Peter so long ago, help us to "feed the sheep" entrusted to our care. Rather readily we detect many cares and conflicts that surround those we serve. But often we do not read their deepest needs except on their downcast countenances and by their wistful glances.

In Thy house, be pleased to speak through us today. We offer Thy people Thy Word to feed their hungry souls. They are thirsting after "the water of life"; may we not proffer them our own "soft drinks" of current opinion, even when sweetened with a dash of humor. We cannot truly analyze their real needs except by Thy Spirit's penetration. We dare not reach for the crannies or dark places of their souls by ourselves. Let the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, do its work in our midst today. We dare not dull those sharp edges by our careless paraphrasing, no matter how popular the trend.

Some see Thy way as good, but like a faraway mountain pass—so high and too difficult to climb. Let Thy Word afford us the needed clarity and reassurance. Help us this morning to fling a whole bundle of Thy promises at their feet in the nick of time. Let our knees bend at truth proclaimed, and may our hearts melt in genuine contrition. Grant that our unashamed cries for succor shall be heard in Thy house today. Enable many to learn that Thy Word is both Light and Life.

We promise Thee in the quiet of our own heart this morning our sincere praise for all Thy mercies. We will be careful to give Thee—and Thee alone—all the glory. Hear our prayer, for we ask it sincerely in the name of Him "who sacrificed himself for us, to set us free from all wickedness and to make us a pure people marked out for his own, eager to do good" (Titus 2:14, NEB).*

Amen

Samuel Young

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My love affair with the *Preacher's Magazine* continues through my present associations in this effort. I welcome Wesley Tracy as managing editor. He is my trusted friend, an experienced pastor, and a gifted teacher. His incisive pen has a way of cutting to the heart of an issue. Then, too, denominational leaders in the Churches of Christ in Christian Union, Evangelical Friends Church, Wesleyan Church, and the Church of the Nazarene are my advisors. The *Preacher's Magazine* is fortunate to have Stephen Miller as office associate. Steve is a second year seminarian, a journalism graduate from Kent State University, and a Christian education major who brings creative skills to the *Preacher's Magazine*. And I am grateful to our publisher, Mr. Bud Lunn, who keeps pushing the *Preacher's Magazine* to greatness with new ideas and massive economic subsidies.

My affection for the *Preacher's Magazine* grows when I think of our 15,000 readers plus their spouses—all committed to scriptural holiness. In a time like this, perfect love and Christian holiness fits the needs of contemporary man. To you our readers, I pray that the *Preacher's Magazine*, under my editorship, will significantly influence your min-

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE— THE OLD AND THE NEW

What a year! The winds of change have brought my 45th birthday, the editorship of the *Preacher's Magazine*, my father's retirement, the "teening" of my children, the death of my last grandparent, and the son of my best high school friend is a college freshman. To add to my dilemma, two former young "free spirits"—my lifelong friends—are now district superintendents. All of this reminds me that I stand between what was and what is to be. The *Preacher's Magazine* stands there too. And so do you.

The commitment to proclaiming Christian holiness is as old as the 1926 beginning of the *Preacher's Magazine* and as new as tomorrow's headlines. That emphasis will continue. Word studies from both the Old and New Testament will continue. Book reviews with a wider group of reviewers will be included, and preaching helps will appear in each issue.

Reader feedback will continue to be received with appreciation. Carefully written free-lance material of 750, 1,600 or 2,400 words dealing with Christian holiness, preaching, pastoral care, evangelism, personal ministerial growth, leading effective public services, staff relationships, and other subjects of interest to pastors and evangelists will be

istry. The idea that devotion plus excellence produces effective ministry will be heard often through these pages.

All my professional instincts are pastoral. More than 15 years of my ministry have been in the pastorate, and I have been training pastors in the classroom for the last six years. I see myself as an ignorant parish priest. Being ignorant (that's not the same as stupid), I can learn. And I have a deep conviction that every holiness preacher can grow and learn along with me. Being a priest, I see things from the perspective of a pastor who is trying to bring God and man to intersection. Being a parish priest causes me to look at Kingdom efforts from the view of a local church—the center of spiritual life.

Your new editor is no match for the stalwart greats who edited the *Preacher's Magazine* from its inception in 1926, but the development of both your ministry and mine is important to me and I will give you my best. My special thanks for allowing me room to grow with this new assignment. Your comments, criticism, and prayers are always welcome—especially the latter.

1. From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952, © 1971, 1973. Used by permission.

carefully considered for publication. While 2c per word paid for articles will not encourage anyone to become a full-time writer, the joy of helping shape another's ministry provides reason enough for submitting your writings.

About half of each issue will be built around a theme; a six-person editorial board which changes personnel with each issue will advise the editorial team. To provide balance, the other half of each issue will publish regular departments and recurring features. Format changes move from 48 pages of 6 x 8 3/4 to 64 pages of 8 1/2 x 11; from six issues per year to a quarterly.

Veteran pastor and evangelist Archie I. Woodward, my lifelong friend, put it well, "New methods help people climb and even conquer mountains more efficiently. But we still have the rock, altitude, wind, rain, snow, and the blistering sun to consider." He is right. The needs of our congregations are still the same, but our methods can and should improve. Through these pages we seek to proclaim the changeless message of holiness and at the same time change our methods as our times demand.

May God help us all to know the difference between the changeless and the changeable.

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Proclaiming Christian Holiness

Volume 54, Number 1

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THE ARK ROCKER

The Prophet on Madison Avenue

Madison Avenue threatens to replace Mount Carmel. The famous New York center, symbol of selling by publicity and advertising, gains followers while the altars of prophetic fire and prayer lose appeal. The mantle of Elijah gives way to the method of the promoter. The pastor-promoter challenges the pastor-prophet.

The prophet creates little enthusiasm on Madison Avenue. Publicity experts have difficulty in glamorizing teary-eyed Jeremiah, weeping for his people. Madison Avenue prefers the religious promoter with a congenial personality who fits in everywhere from a pizza party to a sensitivity session. Rustic and blunt Amos doesn't get past the receptionist in the glittering publicity office. He is advised to improve his appearance and to take at least three public relations seminars. Isaiah's lofty vision of a high and holy God puzzles the promoter. What sells on today's market is a benign, handyman God, or a God with a magic wand to perform miracles on demand.

Even David, the country/folk

singer of Israel, finds it almost impossible to locate a disc company to produce a record for him. He is told that songs that express praise and devotion, that exalt God's law and personal righteousness, that appeal to a quiet devotional response, simply do not sell. There is some encouragement; however. If David will jazz up his harp to produce 115 decibel sound effects, insert some wiggles and waggles about how *we* feel, what *we* think, and how *we* react, then he may find a sponsor.

The prophet on Madison Avenue learns that the traditional pastoral prayer in the Sunday morning worship service must be revamped. No longer need the pastor serve as a priest to lift his people into God's presence for edification and blessing. The promoter-pastor regards the prayer as an occasion for mass counseling. We are reminded that we all have problems. If we don't have a problem, we must invent one instantly so that we can be included in the prayer. The prayer resembles a conference call with the

pastor referring all problems to God as a master psychiatrist and then assuring the congregation that God is fully alert to their situation.

The prophetic sermon must also be recycled. To declare "thus saith the Lord" sounds too dogmatic. Persuasion must be used instead of proclamation. Sermons on self-discipline, self-sacrifice and "bearing the cross" must be avoided like the Russian flu. Essay-type sermons on human potential fit the promotional pattern. The inspirational sermon becomes more remote while the program-centered appeal moves to the front. The devotional sermon becomes a special day address as the practical problem-solving formula grows in popularity.

"I wonder," mused the prophet, "Isn't it true that we subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions . . . waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens? Can Madison Avenue match that?"

The Ark Rocker

PREACHING

PREACHING IN YOUR CORNER OF THE GLOBE

by Neil B. Wiseman

Preaching. What does the word trigger in your mind?

Is it fun or frustration? Is it sweaty, hard work or merely a time slot to be filled?

Are you anxious—even eager—to preach next Sunday? Or do you dread your next preaching assignment?

The renewal of preaching is being widely discussed and even prayed for by ministers and laymen. But the renewal of preaching can never come by a theoretical discussion of the matter. Nor will it come by the mere reading of more books in hermeneutics and homiletics. Renewal of preaching can come only by better proclamation in every preaching event where you and I preach.

● *Preaching is mandated by the Scriptures.* God means for preaching to be at the center of the Church's life. Without effective preaching, the Church is stunted in her growth and hindered in her witness. True, most organizations can survive without authoritative communications by their leaders. The service club needs only a cause and a group of people to work in united efforts toward that objective. A school needs only pupils and teachers committed to student learning. A business needs only a proprietor, a customer, and a product. But while the Church has all of these, it is also the communicator of the "eternal gospel."

The Word of God is the content of our preaching. To use Billy Graham's well-worn phrase, we preach what "the Bible says." From Bible times to the present, the church has been shaped by her preachers. And those preachers must live with the mandate of Paul's probing question ringing in their ears, "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

● *Preaching is muted by religious gobbledygook.* Sound doctrine, if it is to have any effect, must be communicated in words people understand. The talk of Canaan may bless the experienced saints, but it is a foreign language to the sinner and the new convert. Theological concepts which never get beyond the level of a kind of spiritualized smog may satisfy the speaker but never set the sin-slave free. Religious goofy dust sends people away hungry and confused.

Fog, goofy dust, gobbledygook, and biblical smog are not humorous. When we preachers do not

adequately communicate the message, everyone loses. Without clear speech, eternal truth cannot be applied to life. Doctrine becomes obscure. Believers are puzzled. Sinners remain unsaved. Congregations think their preacher knows little about God or life. And the church meant by God to prosper, withers to bland mediocrity. Solid biblical preaching, meaningfully applied to life, is not all a church is called to do, but it is foundational to everything else.

● *Preaching is measured by change.* It appears that the church's reward systems—if she has any—do not seem to give many points for good preaching. To preach well demands weekly time investments and serious devotional commitments. Then, too, parishioners often give us preachers their sleepy nod or passive approval as if to say, "It will all be over in a few minutes." All of these factors and a thousand others tend to make the preacher question whether preaching is as important as he once believed.

But let's think again. In our most serious moments, we know that the life-giving Word of God changes people. Where else can contemporary man check both his life-style and his thoughts against God's will? Where else can the shifting moral values of modern times be checked against changeless truth? Where else can people of this age, with their loneliness and hopelessness, hear a fresh word from God? Either they hear it from the preacher or they likely do not hear it at all.

Could it be that modern man is not tired of preaching but wearied by the irrelevant harangue sometimes called preaching? Like all of the work of God through the Church, we must have faithfulness in preaching. But faithfulness is not enough. Our preaching must do something. Our preaching must call into question the attitudes, actions, and activities of our hearers. It must be both positive and negative. It must be pastoral and evangelistic. It must be prophetic and affirming. But the final measure of our preaching is whether or not people become more Christlike.

Preaching. What a work! What a mystery! Who is worthy of such an assignment? Who can achieve it? You can. With His empowerment on your best efforts, you can restore preaching to its influential place in your corner of the globe.

JESUS CAME PREACHING— AND HIS CALLED SERVANTS STILL DO

by Oscar F. Reed

Good and bad news hover above the preacher in today's world. The good news is that there is a renewal in proclamation¹ accompanied by fresh unction attending preaching as "event." The bad news is that there are forces minimizing the function of preaching in the Body of Christ—the Church. The seeming contradiction is not novel. It has been so in nearly every generation of Christian preaching in one form or another.

"All that I can say and feel is, that by the change of times the pulpit has lost its place." The complaint sounds contemporary, doesn't it? The quotation was taken from the writings of the premier preacher Frederick W. Robertson in 1851.

In every generation the preacher struggles with "the fall"—the sense that preaching isn't what it once was or that it does not hold the primary place in ministry that it once did. The observation led Gene E. Bartlett in the Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale to designate the ministry as the "perplexed profession."

That idea moves among us with "the greatest of ease." The only difference between 1851 and 1978 is that there are more beckoning fingers to lure us away from the importance of proclamation and the skills that attend it.

Donald Miller cites one ministerial student: "I consider preaching as a necessary evil. I shall do as much of it as my position demands in order to qualify for the other important tasks on which my heart is set. But I could well wish to avoid preaching almost entirely" (*Fire in Thy Mouth*, p. 14).

The discrediting of preaching is one of the moods of our times. It comes from all kinds of church specialists, and uninformed laymen who seem to tie into every secular movement and use it as a means to church growth. It also comes from preachers who are unwilling to pay the price to know what

the gospel is and to discipline themselves in preparation.

Perhaps the most serious consideration is the confusion of roles which plagued the pastor-preacher—and the problem of self-identification formed in the question—who am I?

Samuel W. Blizzard, in a study of 700 ministers, observed,

During an average work day of ten and a half hours these men spent an average of only thirty-eight minutes preparing to preach. The time spent on administration was seven times more than spent on preaching. These men declared that preaching ought to be their primary function, but they had reduced it to a very weak fifth-rate role in actual performance.²

Now the study could well prove the minister's lack of understanding of the role of ministry within the Body of Christ. It may well be that he is trying to play seven roles instead of engendering cooperation, with everyone in the congregation discovering their own task through spiritual gifts. But it could also mean that he has neither understood the role or nature of preaching within that body and is wasting his time on peripheral tasks.

The Ephesian Complex

I am not ironical when I suggest that rediscovery of Ephesians 4:11-13 has revolutionized the evangelical community. As a result, the work of the contemporary church has expressed itself in many differing modes within the Body concept. I am willing to accept the biblical understanding of ministry with prophecy (forthtelling) as one of its roles. In this respect, the "call" is a call to all men of the community, accepting their gifts as the Spirit "apportions to each one individually as he wills" (1 Cor. 12:11, RSV).³ Preaching is the first of the several gifts listed which are given to make up the

Neither body life, personal evangelism, nor even church growth science can replace the primacy of preaching.

proper functioning of the Body of Christ. (See Rom. 12:6-8 or Ephesians 4:11 where Paul has no "ax to grind.") In 1 Corinthians where Paul is contrasting prophecy with *glossolalia*, he begins his exhortation by urging the Corinthian church to "pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially [*mallon de hina*—but rather that] that you may prophesy [preach]" (14:1, NASB).⁴

It is amazing that the differing emphases moving across the church tend to minimize preaching either overtly or by omission. For example, with all of the exciting work that is done by "church growth" experts, very few of them emphasize preaching as one of the essentials to church development. And while McGavran, Arn, Wagner,⁵ and others will orally affirm the place of preaching in the growth pattern, their work has little or nothing to say about preaching as proclamation. In fact, however, the very churches these authors cite as examples of church growth are churches with strong, superlative pulpits. I am not arguing on pragmatic grounds—God forbid! I am only suggesting, that any expression of community must include all that the Bible includes in its understanding of what the Body of Christ entails. And while I do not object to the sociological categories that are used in proposing growth strategy, I have the "sneaking notion" that God's grace intervenes in spite of "homogenous units." The church growth movement will strengthen its hand when it confidently proclaims the place of skilled biblical preaching as an integral part of church growth.

I have no doubt that fellowships can grow when they meet human need through care, inspiration, discipling and "incessant" celebration. But can the church of Jesus Christ grow apart from proclamation? Graham Pulkingham, in the January issue of *Sojourners*, has put the whole issue in perspective when he concludes:

A vision of parish renewal must include credible forms of evangelism, apologetics, and the proclamation and teaching of God's Word. It must include strong and relevant pastoral care in matters of human integrity and interpersonal relationships, and in expressions of worship and service. It must include a prophetic ministry for ease in creative change, correction, group recall, and public witness. And it must encourage leadership and stimulate challenges of individual commitment in order to administer and effectuate all of these things.

I have purposely overstated my case and risked misunderstanding. But a proper vision of Ephesians 4 always includes the prophetic. A church is less than a church if it does not include all the functions of the Body of Christ—and I thank God for them all. As victims of the Fall, however, it is difficult for

us to keep our priorities in line. I am convinced after a lifetime of "church-watching" that if we are to develop an informed people, intelligent in their faith and instructed in truth, that we must give attention once more to the proclamation of the gospel through skillful and dynamic biblical preaching.

The Renaissance of Preaching

In spite of all that has been said, there are strong indications that ministry is awakening to the importance of preaching.

One sign is the increasing emphasis on preaching in American seminaries. For example, at Nazarene Theological Seminary the entire faculty and staff have banded together in every discipline to enforce the task and nature of proclamation. Theology, philosophy, Bible, history, religious education, pastoral care, missiology, music, evangelism, and administration are all united in creating a disciplined environment for superlative proclamation.

At the last meeting of the American Academy of Homiletics in Princeton, N.J., I saw nearly 80 representatives from nearly as many seminaries work together in class and program to improve the spiritual vision and task in preaching among students.

Another sign of the renaissance is that outstanding pastors "dare to lock their office doors in order to pray, to study, and to prepare sermons."⁶

They are encouraged to believe that when they find messages from the Lord, people will rejoice to hear those messages. They dare to believe that people will excuse them from many aimless activities which plague the modern preacher if they are busy finding God's message.

Another sign is the "heart hunger" of laymen for pastors who are preaching the Word. Again and again, I hear laymen say, with conviction, "Please feed us!" After every strategy has been used to get people within the church doors, and after they have involved themselves in "body life," they still await the proclamation of the Word.

Preaching Is Primary

What does the "primacy of preaching" mean? A minister has a hundred and one tasks and functions during the week. Putting preaching first means that the most important of his tasks is to be an oracle of God. It is fascinating to see how mastering the preaching task prepares a man to meet his other obligations.

Every preacher may not become renowned or famous, but he can take the "stance of the prophet" to proclaim the gospel. Primacy in preaching means

Preaching is the central, decisive function of the church.

that he does not speak for himself, but for another—even Jesus Christ—as ambassador for the King.

To my mind, the first and greatest work of the man in the pulpit is to preach the Word. If God has called him at all, He has called him to do just that. Nothing else should come before it. Nothing else can take its place. Almost every other work in the church can be accomplished by laymen or laywomen, but preaching is still the preacher's job (H. C. Brown).⁷

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Christian martyr of World War II, speaks eloquently to the primacy of preaching. Bethge, Bonhoeffer's student and biographer, insists that for Bonhoeffer, discipleship, suffering, silence, did not take the place of the sermon, but served for its enthronement. He never doubted (in the helplessness of his time) "the coming of the new enthronement of the Word under which the world would be renewed and transformed." His concern for the sermon was not a matter of fearfulness but of confidence in the ultimate value of the sermon. He stood upon the "irreplaceability of the preaching of Christ."⁸

His practice bore equal witness to his confidence in the sermon: Bonhoeffer loved to preach. When a relative discovered that he might have only months to live, he wrote: "What would I do if I learned that in four to six months my life would reach the end? I believe I would still try to teach theology as I once did and to *preach often* . . ." In the day before his death Bonhoeffer preached one more time, without ornamentation, liturgy, or religious trappings for a few Protestants, Catholics, agnostics, and atheists.⁹

Word, church, and world became the German Lutheran's dominant concepts, with proclamation the unifying concern of each. This may be what this article is all about! Whatever else we do, proclamation must be the "unifying concern"—thus its primacy!

Example and Command

Questioned by Pilate, Jesus summarized the reasons he had come to earth: "For this I was born and for this I have come to bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37, RSV). Christ bore this witness, fulfilling the work of the prophet through the itinerant preaching of the Word of God. Speaking to the disciples "he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth" (Mark 1:38).

Isalah has said, "So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I propose and prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Isa. 55:11,

RSV). This Christ knew and proclaimed. Whenever the Word is preached, understood and believed, it cleanses sinful men from all their impurities (John 15:3), revives those who are spiritually dead (John 5:25), and sanctifies the believers (John 17:17).¹⁰

Mark authenticates the urgency of proclamation by quoting the Savior, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation," and closes with these words: "And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it" (Mark 16:20, RSV).

The apostles were supremely conscious of their responsibility in preaching: Paul could never forget his charge given at Damascus "to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life . . . manifested in his word through the preaching with which he has been entrusted by the command of God our Savior" (Titus 1:1-3, RSV).

The apostles demanded absolute authority for the word of truth, submitted to it, and expected others to submit themselves to it unconditionally.

"For I would have you know, brethren," said Paul, "that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11-12, RSV).

The word preached in the Holy Spirit is the very power of God (1 Cor. 1:18). It produces the fruit of God (Col. 1:6); it regenerates through the "good news which was preached to you" (1 Pet. 1:25, RSV); it is the instrumental cause of faith (Rom. 10:12-17); it teaches us to be renewed in the Spirit . . . true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:20-24). It confers the hope of heaven (Col. 1:5) and works effectively in all those who believe (1 Thess. 2:13). It enriches in the gifts of God's grace—no gift being withheld (1 Cor. 1:4-7). Whenever the Word is preached, the gospel bears wholesome fruit (Col. 1:6).¹¹

Even when men resist the Word it proves to be an instrument of power (2 Cor. 2:14-15).

"Can such a word and work ever be praised too highly? Will it ever be sufficiently exalted and glorified?" *No! It must be proclaimed!*

The Word is upright (Ps. 33:4), proves true (Ps. 18:30), is well tried (Ps. 119:140), is sweeter than honey (Ps. 119:103), sharper than a two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12), is spirit and life (John 6:63), and abides forever (Isa. 40:8; 1 Pet. 1:25). That is why "secular eloquence can only veil beneath the impurity of its intentions the splendor of the gospel

The Word of God, preached and taught, is the most powerful means of promoting the salvation and sanctification of men.

and weaken its power. The gospel should be preached with fear, weakness, and trembling."¹² It does not call upon the wisdom of men, personal feelings, or adaptations of our day. It calls upon our fidelity to scripture for "the word [preaching] of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to those who are being saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18, RSV). What more can be said?

Preaching the word of God is not an invention of the Church, but a communion which she receives. She cannot, therefore, validate this communion. Having received it, she can only repeat it, obey it and demonstrate her obedience. Preaching is the central, primary, decisive function of the church.¹³

The Witness of History

The teaching of Scripture is confirmed by the history of the church. Where the Word of God is absent the testimony to the saving power of Christ through His Spirit is also absent. History has proved time and time again that Christian faith "develops in proportion to the extent to which revealed truth is given and diffused among the people."

When truth was corrupted by the speculations of philosophy, when a certain "reserve" was injected into preaching, according to the famous doctrine of *economy*, and when liturgical practices took the place of proclamation, then the shadows of darkness engulfed the church until truth and light were almost totally obscured.

The Reformation brought a "resplendent sunrise" to preaching. When the Bible was handed to the translators and printers, and the preaching of the Word authorized, the gospel was received with true faith, light, freedom, and the Christian faith prevailed proportionately.

There have been wide fluctuations in the Protestant faith proportionate to the faithful preaching of the Word. When it was neglected, decadence set in and Christian life died. When it was preached with fidelity, the eternal flame of spiritual life flamed into vivid expressions of salvation, sanctification, and discipling.

The Word of God, preached and taught, is the most powerful means for promoting the sanctification and salvation of men and for answering their temporal and eternal well-being. Such is the unanimous testimony of scripture and history.¹⁴

The Pragmatic Trap

Seven years ago, as a visiting professor at the Graduate Theological Union, I stood outside the student union of the University of California at Berkeley listening to a bearded young man preach-

ing his heart out to a dozen "street people" who were under the influence of drugs. A young man touched me on the shoulder and said, "I used to be one of the 'street people,' but this man and his friends touched me with the gospel, took me home with them and got me a job."

"But," I replied, "isn't he preaching to people who will never respond?"

The young man replied, "But our call is to preach the gospel and allow the Holy Spirit to take care of the results!"

There are many beckoning fingers speaking to the preacher today. The pragmatic injunction is always before him—what will work? What will build? And I suppose that in our world, every opportunity for building the "body" is in order if we follow the scriptural guidelines for the growth of the "body."

But I can't help but listen to the echoes of 20 centuries as Paul in another day declared:

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek . . . For, "every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved."

But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent? . . . So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ (Rom. 10:12-17, RSV).

1. I am using the term "proclamation" in its historical sense as "preaching."

2. This discussion, for the most, is taken from Brown, Clinard, and Northcutt, *Steps to the Sermon*, pp. 8-12, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963.

3. From the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946, 1952, © 1971, 1973. Used by permission.

4. From the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.

5. It is unfortunate that Orjala, in *Get Ready to Grow*, says nothing about preaching as an integral part of the church growth other than listing "prophecy" as one of the spiritual gifts. Orally, he affirms its place.

6. Brown, p. 11.

7. H. C. Brown, Jr., "A Modern Prophet" in *Messages for Men*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1960, p. 80.

8. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Eberhard Bethge, 5 vols. (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1961), III, 11-12 as quoted from Clyde E. Fant, *Bonhoeffer, Worldly Preaching*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1975, p. 3. (with Bonhoeffer's Finkenwalde Lectures on Homiletics).

9. Clyde Fant, p. 4.

10. Cf. Luke 5:1; 11:28; Matt. 7:24; John 8:31; 14:23; 5:24; 5:38; Matt. 15:6; John 15:22; 12:47; Matt. 24:14; Luke 24:47; Matt. 10:7.

11. Quotations are from the RSV. An excellent source for this discussion is Pierre Ch. Marcel, *The Relevance of Preaching*, tr. by R. R. McGregor, Grand Rapids, Baker, "Commission and Witness," pp. 1-24.

Cf. 2 Cor. 2:17; 1 Thess. 4:8; 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Col. 1:5; Acts 20:25; 1 John 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Cor. 3:1-3.

12. Pierre Ch. Marcel, p. 16. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:17-18; 2:1-5; 12-13; 4:20; 2 Cor. 4:5; 11:4; 2 Tim. 3:14.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Everything that proceeds from a pulpit is not necessarily Christian preaching.

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN PREACHING?

by William M. Greathouse

Modern homiletics owes more to Aristotle and Cicero than to Peter and Paul. "The sermon as we know it was not what happened in the New Testament."¹ Current persuasion theory has heightened the contrast between today's sermon and New Testament preaching. Many homileticians make the preacher's goal twin to that of the secular persuader—to elicit the desired response from the listener using whatever rhetorical devices it takes.

Modern persuasion technique has become quite sophisticated. Psychologist James McConnell is quoted as claiming, "The time has come when if you give me any normal human being and a couple of weeks . . . I can change his behavior from what it now is to whatever you want it to be, if it's physically possible. I can't make him fly by flapping his wings, but I can turn him from a Christian to a Communist and vice versa."² This may overstate the truth, but Duane Loftin cites an actual case where a vocal atheist was "converted" by secular hypnotists to a serious church attendee. The research was stopped when the investigators decided the situation was unethical.³

This raises serious questions for the preacher. Would it be possible to create a Christian "believer" by hypnotic suggestion? If by persuasive technique I "convert" a person to Christ, is he truly a Christian?

Paul has a radical word for us. Referring to his preaching in rhetorically-oriented Corinth where persuasive speech was extremely popular, he wrote, "My message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith should not rest in the wisdom of men but the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:4-5, NASB).⁴

The apostle is disclaiming any use of human rhetoric and persuasive technique, or reliance upon human wisdom in any form, for bringing others to Christ. Rather, he was controlled by the admittedly "scandalous" notion that *God himself* saves men

through the "folly" of proclaiming "Jesus Christ and him crucified," not casually, to be sure, "but in demonstration of the Spirit and power." Such was Paul's *theocentric* view of preaching.

This is graphically illustrated in Galatians (3:1-3). Before their very eyes Paul's converts had seen "Jesus Christ publicly portrayed as crucified" (RSV).⁵ Literally, the Crucifixion had been "placarded" before their vision. So vividly had Jesus' death been painted that each had believed "the Son of God loved *me* and gave himself *for me*" (cf. Gal. 2:20)! Thus hearing the gospel "with faith," they had "received the Spirit" and been saved (3:6-14). But now these New Testament Christians were being "bewitched" by false teachers who were trying to "perfect" the work of God "by the flesh" or "by human efforts" (NIV).⁶

The Foundation of Christian Preaching

The basic axiom of Christian preaching is that salvation from the moment of its incipency to its final consummation is by the Spirit who comes through the preaching of Christ. Such preaching, we shall see, includes not simply the Cross, but the total Christ-event in all its implications for life. But this is to anticipate. Let us now return to the word of the Cross.

Paul was absolutely sure of the reality and power of the gospel message. It was not the product of human reason but the gift of divine revelation: "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1:21-25, RSV).

Preaching is making known to others an historic fact. It is heralding the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth—which occurred in the city of Jerusalem in the year 29—as the very deed of God for the salvation of all mankind. This so-called "scandal of particularity" is part and parcel of the gospel. To be saved one must *believe* this. Yet one cannot believe until he has first *heard* of Jesus' death. But when this "word of the cross" is preached, "in demonstration of the Spirit and power," a climate of faith is created in which it is possible to repent and believe the gospel. "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom. 10:17, RSV; read vv. 5-17).

Luther once remarked, "If a thousand Christs had been crucified and no one said anything about it, what use would that have been? We must draw this deed into history and divulge it to the whole world." The gospel itself therefore becomes an integral part of God's saving action (the meaning of Rom. 1:16). When Christ is *preached*, He is present in His saving power. This led Dietrich Bonhoeffer to say, "The proclaimed Christ is the real Christ."

All this is true because the Crucified lives. Between the death and resurrection of Jesus from the dead a unique relation prevails which forbids that one event be viewed in isolation from the other. The crucified Jesus has been raised to living fellowship with the Father and makes it known that He lives. Put to death by men, He now lives by the power of God. This is the reason His death is our justification (Rom. 4:24). This, too, is why He is present in the message of His death. The power of God's love which triumphed in the powerlessness of the Cross is released through the preaching of Christ. This love becomes God's power to salvation for everyone who believes. The death of Jesus is proclaimed because the Crucified lives; the death of Jesus is proclaimed because the *Crucified lives*.

The crucified Jesus who lives is He "whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30, RSV). Through Christ, who is our salvation, God has completely redeemed our human situation. Jesus Christ has become our *wisdom* from God; the true and saving disclosure of God to the human heart and the one true source of our own self-understanding. He has been made our *righteousness* before God: our perfect GUILT Offering through whose Blood we have pardon and cleansing of conscience. He has been made our sanctification: our Purifier from sin and Restorer to the lost likeness to God. As the suffering Savior, His blood heals our diseased souls; and as the risen Lord, He lives and reigns within us through the sanctifying Spirit (Rom. 8:2-4). And Christ has become our *redemption*: our indwelling "hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

By His incarnation, Jesus sanctified every stage and dimension of our human existence, becoming what we are that we might become what He is. By His obedience He fulfilled God's righteousness and made possible our acceptance before Him. By His exaltation He has been glorified as Lord and Christ; He has now received from the Father the sanctifying

and consoling Spirit whom He gives to the Church. From the Father's right hand He shall return in the triumph of God's kingly reign, judge the world, and consummate the salvation of those who are His own.

Christian preaching moves out from this biblical understanding of the centrality and supremacy of Christ, to touch every area of human sin and need. With Christ as the Center and Norm of our message, preaching becomes as broad and deep as the human situation. But we never range so far as to forget that in Christ, and in Christ alone, "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3, RSV). No one "makes a prey" of us through philosophy, or psychology, or sociology "according to human tradition, . . . and not according to Christ" (Col. 2:8, RSV). As Christian preachers we "take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5, RSV). We exhaust every available source of human knowledge and bring this to bear upon the needs of people, but we never forget that *Jesus Christ* is the Way without whom there is no going, the Truth without whom there is no knowing, and the Life without whom there is no growing.

The Message is Urgent

And, yes, there is urgency in this business of Christian preaching! Preaching is not dry, unemotional, detached speech. The messenger himself becomes a part of the message. Remembering Peter Bohler's advice to John Wesley, we may at first preach faith until we have it; but then, because we have faith, we will preach it! We speak as the oracles of God. The truth which has transformed us possesses us betimes with a holy ecstasy. We have not truly preached until we have proclaimed Christ "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (1 Pet. 1:12). And no one has really heard the gospel, as Dr. James B. Chapman used to say, until he has heard it "in demonstration of the Spirit and power."

Some of Paul's hearers accused him of being "beside himself." "If we are beside ourselves," he could only reply, "it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ controls us" (2 Cor. 5:13-14, RSV). Gospel urgency grows out of this possession by Christ's love, along with the conviction that "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18). In performing this ministry of reconciliation we "beseech" (v. 20) our hearers. Yet we depend, not on our persuasive techniques or human wisdom, but on the converting and transforming power of the Spirit. "We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways; we refuse to . . . tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. 4:2, RSV).

1. Duane Loftin, *Christianity Today*, Feb. 4, 1977.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. From the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.

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WHATEVER HAPPENED TO DOCTRINAL PREACHING?

by T. E. Martin

The apostle Paul advises his young disciple Timothy to watch his life and doctrine closely. "Persevere in them," he says, "... by doing so you will further the salvation of yourself and your hearers" (1 Tim. 4:16, NEB).¹ It was his conviction that preaching doctrine was redemptive both for the preacher and the hearer. This is good advice for any time, and especially ours. To do it may not be easy with all the popularity of 15- to 20-minute sermons. But the need and the promise of such preaching tower above the problems involved. This is a day for renewed emphasis, or "attendance," on doctrine.

One of the most articulate observers of the religion scene in America today, Dr. Martin Marty, describes our times as moving toward a "settledownness." He believes

settledownness implies a generation of dug-in ministers who, under the low ceilings and within the context of narrowed expectations, still dream the dreams and see the visions. They and the people by whom they are served and whom they serve will be working out more implications of Paul's dizzying claim that Jesus Christ is "be-

fore all things, and in him all things hold together," for "all things were created through him and for him" (Col. 1:17, 16b).²

Here is an eloquent appeal for preaching doctrine from one who last year was voted one of the 10 most influential churchmen in America. He makes it because he is convinced that the times require it. His appeal renews the inspired claim of the apostle made to Timothy. It gives weight to the talk of a return to biblical preaching. For as Paul reminds Timothy, this is one of the purposes of inspired Scripture—it is "profitable for doctrine" (2 Tim. 3:16).

Such calls for doctrinal preaching will challenge some and disturb others. It has often been claimed that doctrinal preaching is dull and pedantic. "People will not listen to doctrine," it is asserted, "it bores them." Perhaps much that purports to be doctrinal is just that, boring. But doctrinal preaching soars above the dull and pedantic when the preacher himself has been grasped by the truth he attempts to proclaim, when he preaches from an inner demand. Too many preachers have settled for reciting creed or

rehearsing dogma without any sense of urgency.

I would like to suggest that doctrinal preaching involves much more than repeating theological premises or conclusions. It is more than explaining what has been held as authentic. Rather it is ministering to the contradictions of what is seen with what is not seen, in the conviction that "the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18b). Doctrinal preaching means the honest but joyous declaration of truth even when it appears unlikely, as Habakkuk did:

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places (Hab. 3:17-19).

This is not "triumphalism" which equates prosperity with blessing. It is rather demanding against the contradiction of the

apparent, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." (Rom. 3:4).

Isaiah is describing the heart of doctrinal preaching when he writes,

The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever (Isa. 40:6-8).

Doctrinal preaching does not offer easy solutions. It does not prate about simple formulas. It does not even profess to fully understand its own message. Instead it rings with certainty of faith in the face of despair. It declares the truth of God which sounds forth from His Word even though facts of current experience appear to deny it.

But the preacher does not do this glibly. He faces up to the context in which the Word of God is to be heard. His preaching struggles with the hard exigencies of existence. It probes the depths of reality with fear and trembling. It strives for answers without ever losing sight of the revealed truth. It has been summoned to utter. Like Paul, with chains rattling on his wrists and ankles, he must testify, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19). Or like Martin Luther, trembling before the political powers of the entrenched church, the doctrinal preacher must confess that his conscience is captive to the Word of God. Declaring that to go against Scripture is neither safe nor right, Luther cried, "Here I stand, I can do no other."³ He later testified, "If I had heard that as many devils would set on me in Worms as there are tiles on the roofs, I should none the less have ridden there."⁴

Our generation awaits that kind of certain word. A young person in Manhattan's Yorkville recently explained to a survey-taker his falling away from his church (Catholic) with these words,

The fact of God's existence, and whether Christ is God's son, is real-

ly not relevant to my daily life, and how I live it, nor would I live it differently if I felt differently about these beliefs. Perhaps my ideas would change again if there was someone I could talk to in depth, rather than in passing.⁵

After citing these remarks, Martin Marty comments, "Ministers tomorrow will have to get into deep discussions about faith."⁶ If they do not, more young minds will fall away and ministers themselves will lose their chance to speak for God. Of course to talk "in depth" requires that one live in depth.

Doctrinal preaching soars above the dull and pedantic when the preacher has been grasped by the truth he proclaims, when he preaches from an inner demand.

There is a lot of shallow and spectacular preaching today which scratches itching ears while it claims to be doctrinal about "end time." The books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation are frequently quoted as prophecies of current events. Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man..." (Matt. 24:36). But there are some who think they do. Such speculation at best creates interest in what the Scriptures really say and at worst it feeds the anxieties of our day. I do not see this as doctrinal preaching at all. It is spectacular, to be sure, but is, I fear, only giving scorpions to people who ask for eggs. In fact Jesus told his disciples, "These things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them..." (John 16:4). Doctrinal preaching about end time is not to predict but rather to remind men that God controls history and

makes known His purposes when He wills. We do not have the commission to forecast, but rather to explain afterwards that He is at work.

Preaching in general, and doctrinal preaching in particular, is defined in the Bible as a man speaking for God—an ambassador. It is not saying what the preacher thinks God ought to say nor what he would say if he were God. It is speaking in words and symbols what God has said through the written Word, the Bible, and through the Living Word, Jesus Christ.

Doctrinal preaching is speaking the truth in love. It is declaring reality against fantasy. Malcolm Muggeridge, who says of himself that he has come "belatedly and reluctantly to see in Christ the only reality in a world increasingly given over to fantasy," says that Good and Evil are the only essential themes of mortal existence. He compares them with the positive and negative points which generate an electric current: "Transpose the points, and the current fails. . . . It seems to be clear beyond any shadow of doubt that the darkness which is falling on our civilization is due precisely to the transposition of Good and Evil."⁷ He hails Alexander Solzhenitsyn as one who came to see this in a rather strange way. This exiled Russian writer diagnoses the sickness of the West to come from our having lost our awareness of Good and Evil. Because of this loss we are powerful and prosperous with no avail. He blesses his imprisonment because:

It was only when I lay there on the rotting straw that I sensed within myself the first stirring of Good. Gradually it was disclosed to me that the line separating Good and Evil passes: not through States, not between classes, nor between political parties either, but right through every human heart and through all human hearts.⁸

Our generation of ministers must preach to people who have lost sight of this line. They must be brought to see again how twisted the current value systems are. But

they will do it in the full knowledge that such corrective action implies conflict.

Doctrinal preaching thrusts the hearer into controversies of the mind and soul which force confrontation and struggle. It will not end until the hearer sees the fantasy of the sensual and the reality of Christ. For the modern messenger, like his earlier counterpart, declares, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good" (Mic. 6:8a).

How can this be done? In both Ezekiel and Revelation there is a very insightful symbol given. The angel gives the messenger a book with an admonition from God to eat it. The promise accompanies the admonition that it will be sweet to the taste but bitter when digested. This is the way with preaching doctrine. To hear the Word of God as it relates to man's problems and hopes is sweet to hear but what a fire it kindles! Doctrinal preaching arises from saturating one's mind and heart with the Word of God. It is musing on it until, like the Psalmist, the fire burns. It is more than knowing what it says. It is allowing what it says to become so much a part of oneself that it must be spoken.

Let me hasten to suggest that by musing I include the corrective and supportive discipline of the thinking of the body of believers through the years. The truth of God's Word, amplified by the struggle of the prophets in every time, is true doctrine. Paul counsels that "prophets" should be subject to the judgment of prophets. The first leaders of the Church said, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts 15:28). Paul promised that if this was done,

the visitor, when he enters [the assembly], hears from everyone something that searches his conscience and brings conviction, and

the secrets of his heart are laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, crying, "God is certainly among you!" (1 Cor. 14:24-25, NEB).

Doctrinal preaching need not be complicated or argumentative. Its strength lies in its authority. Listen to this kind of preaching in the New Testament.

And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me,

Doctrinal preaching thrusts the hearer into controversies of the mind and soul which force confrontation and struggle.

and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me (Acts 27:20-25).

The preacher in this kind of ministry is telling what God has shown him in his hours of waiting upon Him. The news is good, only the vehicle will be lost. The inexorable purpose of God moves on. He is doing what the Psalmist advises:

Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death (Ps. 48:12-14).

To speak to men the words of God is to give them more than just answers. It is to have shown them the One who will be with them, and who will bring them at last to the harbor safely and on time.

Finally the preacher who speaks of doctrine disassociates himself by his very message from what Peter calls "this crooked generation." To them he confesses that he is a pilgrim on a journey. And the writer of Hebrews pens,

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city (Heb. 11:14-16).

The preacher feels the loneliness of his eternal commitment, it is true, but he also has the joy of having spoken a redemptive word in a troubled time. He can be confident that the One who has called him is not ashamed of the appointment.

1. From the New English Bible, © The Delegates of the Oxford University Press and The Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, 1961, 1970. Reprinted by permission.
2. Martin E. Marty, "Getting Up for Ministry in a Settled-Down Time," *the Christian Ministry*, Nov., 1977, p. 10.
3. Martin Luther, speech at the Diet of Worms, April 18, 1521; inscribed on his monument at Worms.
4. Luther's *Sammtliche Schriften* (1745), XVI, 14.
5. Marty, "Getting Up," p. 8.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
7. Malcolm Muggeridge, speech delivered to the 35th Annual National Religious Broadcasters Convention, January 24, 1978, Washington, D.C.
8. *Ibid.*

LET THE MAN PREACH

by Sherwood E. Wirt

Not long ago it was our pleasure to go to a conference and hear some great preaching. The preaching was done by men we had never heard of: men who have never written books, or built a "public image, or achieved national status. It was a magnificent experience. The conference was set on fire by their eloquence. Every Christian went away with a new sense of the presence of God. Right before our eyes the church was renewed.

Whatever is wrong with the Church today, it is nothing that cannot be cured by good preaching. The layman who is unhappy about his church is the layman who has not been stirred lately by a powerful gospel message. Many executives are sitting in denominational board rooms wondering why the graphs that were going up for so long are now beginning to tilt downward. Their church membership statistics are dipping and threatening to cascade. They wonder, is there too much emphasis on this, and not enough on that?

To such leaders we would say: Look to your preaching! Get your ministers, excited about the gospel. Burn into them the conviction that God's power is waiting to be released. See to it that each congregation is on tiptoe from Sunday till Sunday, wondering what kind of spiritual feast is going to be set when the Bible is opened and God's Word is proclaimed.

There is no excuse whatever for consistently poor execution in the pulpit. There is every

reason to expect a thrilling, life-changing proclamation. Let us look at some of those reasons: (1) the authority of the Word of God, (2) the power and relevance of the gospel of salvation, (3) the convicting work of the Spirit of God, (4) the desperate condition of contemporary man. There is a full quiver for any preacher's bow!

Instead of being made into a check-out counter where facile observations about the hang-ups of supermarket existence are spooned out, the pulpit should be a flying buttress of the kingdom of God, from whose sacred ramparts life belts are pitched to drowning men and women. The power of God to penetrate every facet of a man's being, to strip him and drench him and dry him and clothe him—this is preaching fare! Our congregations need to be shaken until the pews groan with the knowledge of the wickedness of sin, and until the floors creak with the traffic of people heading for the front to get right with God.

If a minister is not preaching with power, it may be that he has allowed himself to doubt that God "cut him out" for such work. If so, he has skimmed on spiritual preparation and shortchanged the pew. He has deluded himself into thinking that program is more important than proclamation.

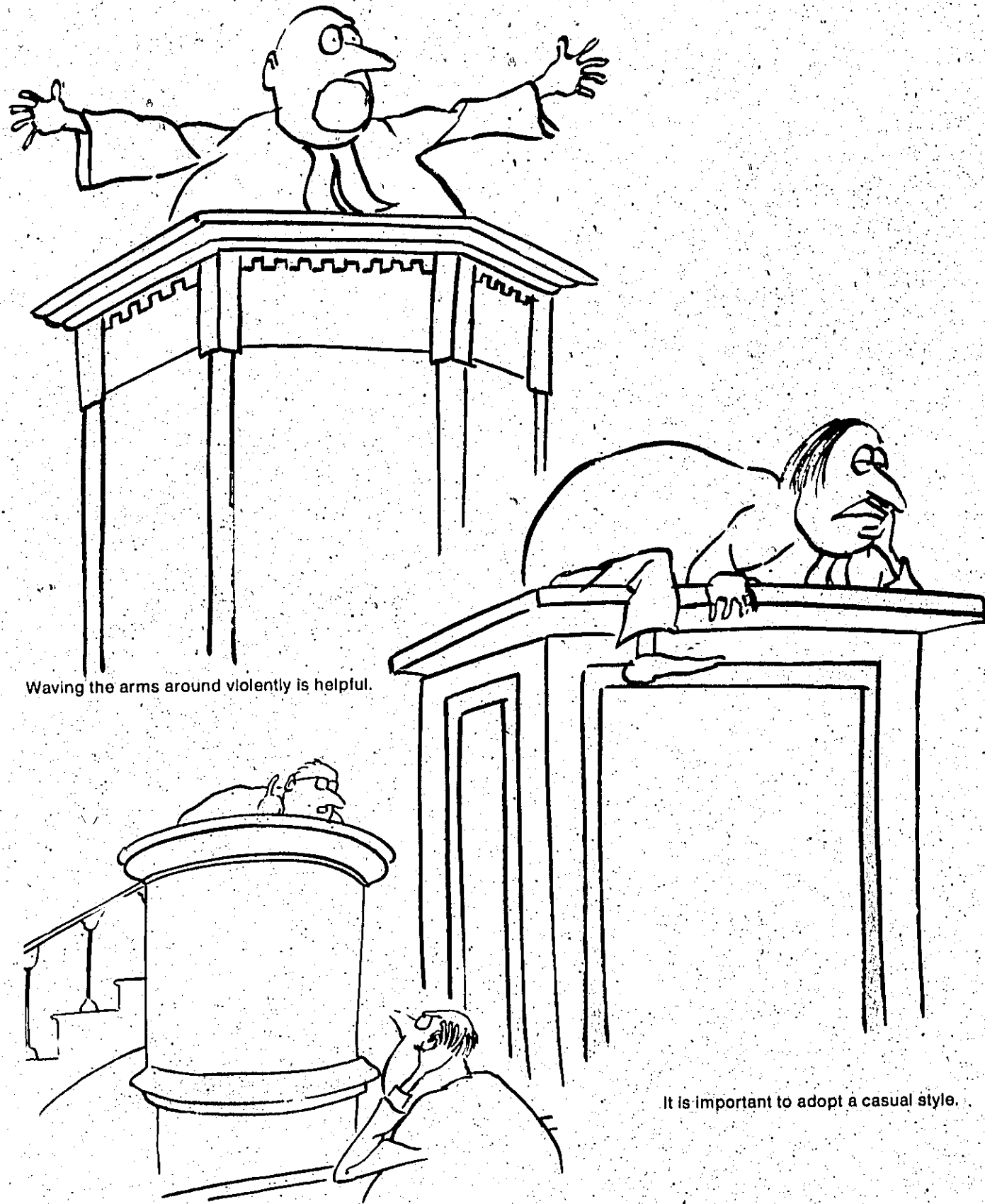
Christ said His preached words would live forever. Let's put the Church back on a biblical foundation. Let's have some great preaching!

From *Decision*, © 1970 by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

"If we read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility."

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

An Abbreviated Lecture on How

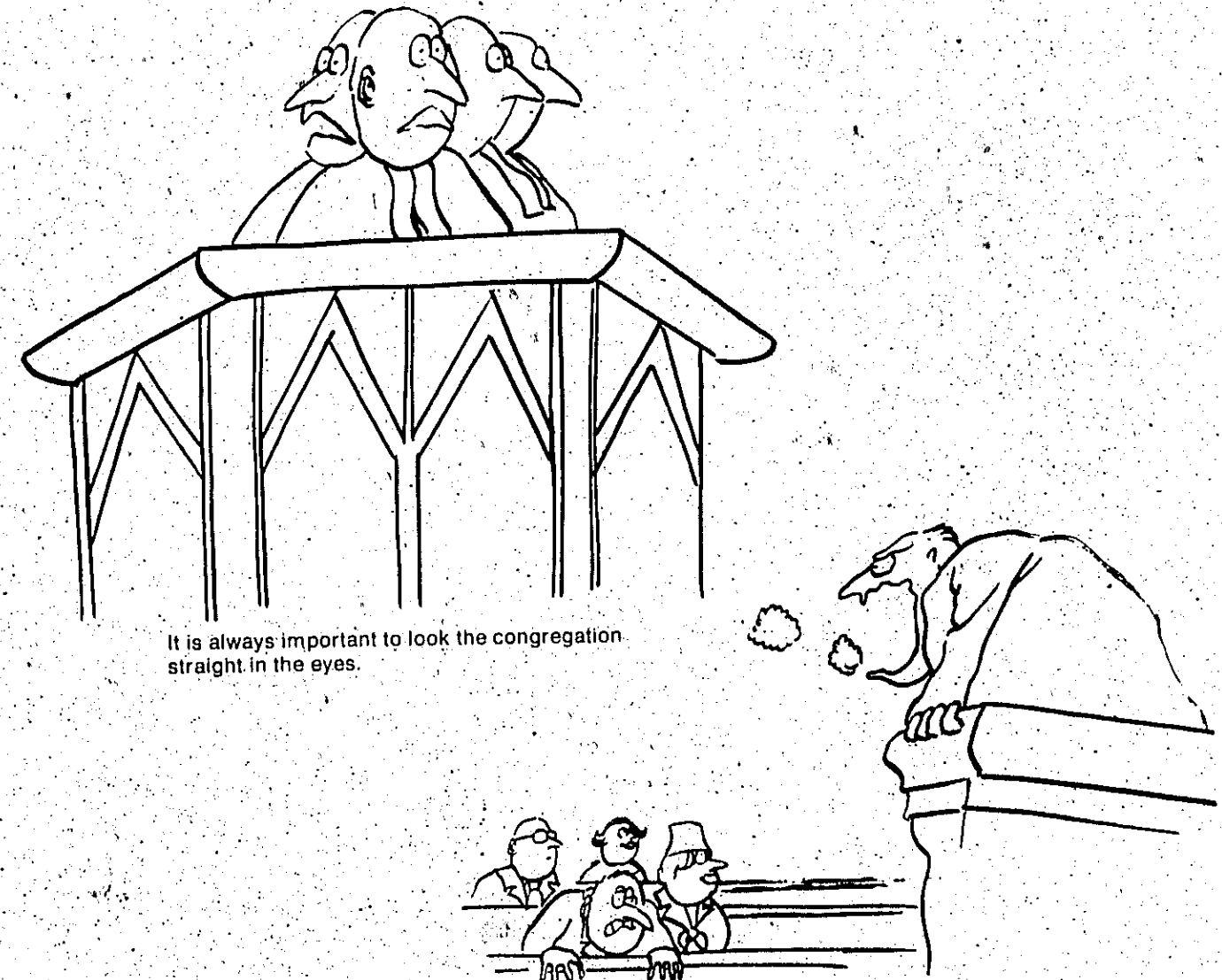


Waving the arms around violently is helpful.

It is important to adopt a casual style.

If you have spent Saturday night watching TV instead of preparing your sermon, whispering is very important.

to Preach Effective Sermons



It is always important to look the congregation straight in the eyes.

Alternate yelling and whispering makes for an alert congregation.



It is important to keep the stance casual and relaxed. Be chummy with the people in the pews.

Gordon Watt

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An analytical look at the television preaching of Rex Humbard and Robert Schuller may help us sharpen our own preaching—at least we can profit from their strengths and weaknesses. It is not our purpose to praise or blame, support or condemn either man, but rather to analyze their preaching.

THE PREACHING OF TWO TELEVISION GIANTS

by Wesley Tracy

Not "Charlie's Angels" . . .
Not "As the World Turns" . . .
Not even "Kojak" . . .
tops the tally of the program aired on the most television stations around the world. Rex Humbard's telecast from his super-church in Akron, Ohio, out-video's them all.

Not too far behind is Robert Schuller and his sun-drenched "Hour of Power" from Garden Grove, Calif. Every week, each of these men preaches to more people than Jesus and His apostles did in all the years of their collective lives. Thus an inquiry into the quality of their preaching is timely.

Before taking a close look at a television sermon preached by each of these men, let us look at the men behind the sermons.

Bits of Biography

Alpha Rex Emmanuel Humbard was born August 13, 1919, in Hot Springs, Ark. to Evangelist A. E. Humbard and his wife Martha Bell Childers Humbard. Rex was the oldest of six children. As a teenager, Rex was leader of a gospel singing group which performed four radio broadcasts per day out of Dallas, Tex. He also traveled with the Humbard family evangelistic team, finally becoming its business manager. At 19, Rex finished high school. His formal training ended there. Up to this time Rex had been a singer. Now he added "preaching" to his repertoire. He observed "I hadn't time to get any formal training at a seminary, but I did gain experience under the greatest of all teachers, the Heavenly Father."¹

Describing his ordination he says simply, "It was decided that I should be ordained."² Thus one night after a revival service at the Gospel Tabernacle in Greenville, N.C., Rex was ordained.

His days as itinerant evangelist ended in 1952 when he founded his church in Akron. In 1958 the congregation moved into the Cathedral of Tomorrow, built by a \$2.1 million loan from James Hoffa and the Teamsters Union. The church along with several Humbard commercial investments have grown into a vast empire.

Robert Schuller was born on a farm in Iowa in 1927. He graduated from Hope College, Holland, Mich., and from Western Theological Seminary in the same city. In 1955 he started the Garden Grove Community Church in a drive-in theater with 158 persons. By 1967 it was the largest congregation in the Reformed Church in America. Now they have outgrown their \$3 million sanctuary and are soon to construct the Crystal Cathedral which has a price tag of about \$15 million.

A staff of nearly 100 full-time persons and more than 1,000 volunteer workers direct the church's ministries.

The Setting of the Sermons

The sermons under consideration here were parts of one-hour color television programs. For both Humbard and Schuller, the televised sermon was one of three or four delivered the same day.

A sermon can be enhanced or murdered by the events which precede it. Both sermons were preceded by elaborate musical production. The Humbard telecast featured six musical offerings anchored by Maud Aimee's (Mrs. Humbard) rendition of *Amazing Grace* just before the sermon. The pre-sermon events also included an elaborate ceremony of prayer for "unsaved loved ones." A healing service and commercials for olive-wood Communion cups and trips to the Holy Land and Hawaii were also part of the pre-sermon setting.

Schuller's sermon was preceded by no fewer than nine musical items. Tom Netherton and Norma Zimmer were featured soloists. Prayer, scripture reading, announcements, and the offering were interwoven with the music. Also viewers were offered a "gift" if they would "write." The gift was your choice of two versions of the Bible—one for "blacks" and one for "whites." The pictures in the books indicated which race they were for.

The Structure of the Sermons

The following outlines were constructed from the transcriptions of the sermons.

Title: "The Day of Prosperity and the Day of Adversity," by Rex Humbard

Text: Eccles. 7:14

INTRODUCTION

A. Adverse Conditions in the World Today

1. Financial crisis
2. The population explosion
3. Natural disasters
4. Starvation
5. Scarcity of the knowledge of Christ

B. Proposition or Thesis of Sermon: True religion is good in adversity and prosperity.

I. WHAT IS PROSPERITY?

- A. Prosperity Includes Material Things
- B. Prosperity Includes Physical Health
- C. Prosperity Includes Friends
- D. True Prosperity Counts the Favor of God as Primary

1. A personal illustration
2. Bible testimony: Matt. 16:26
3. The rich young ruler

II. THE DANGERS OF PROSPERITY

- A. The Danger of Self-sufficiency
- B. The Danger of Pride (Nebuchadnezzar)
- C. The Danger of Leaving God Out
 1. Texas chain-store owner
 2. Florida real estate man
- D. The Danger of Falling in One's Responsibility to Give to Support the Gospel of Christ
 1. Various scripture passages invoked.
 2. Application: Support the worldwide ministries of the Cathedral of Tomorrow.

III. WHAT IS ADVERSITY?

- A. Lazarus a Case Study in Adversity
- B. Jesus Suffered Adversity
- C. Death in One's Family Brings Adversity
- D. Adversity Comes Because of Sin, or to Test Us.
- E. Eventual Victory over All Adversity Is Sure

CONCLUSION

"Trust and serve God both in prosperity and in adversity."

Title: "Now You Can Succeed in Your Search for Personal Happiness," by Robert Schuller

INTRODUCTION

- A. It Is Possible to Be Happy

- B. The Key to Personal Happiness Is to Discover God's Plan for Your Life (This is the thesis or proposition of the sermon.)

I. GOD HAS A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

- A. The Bible Reveals that God Loves You and Has a Plan to Guide Your Life
 1. Prov. 3:6
 2. Ps. 32:8
 3. Prov. 2:9-10
 4. Ps. 139:16
 5. Isa. 46:34
- B. Problems Regarding God's Will
 1. Some never discover God's will.
 2. Some do not want to find God's will.
 3. Happiness will not come outside of God's will.
- C. A Woman Who Discovered God's Plan: Francesca Cabrini
 1. Her limitations
 2. Her triumphs
 3. She is an example for us; nothing can stop you when, like her, you live in God's will.

II. GUIDELINES FOR THE HAPPY, FULFILLED LIFE

- A. Pray
- B. Weigh
- C. Obey
- D. Pay
- E. Stay

III. THE FIRST STEP TOWARD THE GOOD LIFE IN GOD'S WILL

- A. Free Yourself from Locked-in Thinking
- B. The *Titanic* Tragedy: An Example of Locked-in Thinking

CONCLUSION

- A. Are You a Locked-in Thinker About God's Will?
- B. Accept Christ as Your Personal Savior and Begin a New Life

Both men follow the traditional design of three main points. Humbard religiously sticks to this plan even though his dual subject lends itself naturally to a two-point development.

Humbard, in accordance with tradition, began with a Bible text. Also, traditionally, he departed from it—expository remarks were brief. Schuller started with a relevant introduction and gave the sermon a Bible base by referring to five scriptures in the first main point.

Both men clearly state the proposition of the sermon in the introduction. Schuller appears to stay with his stated thesis better than Humbard.

Regarding proportion or time structure, Schuller used his time in this manner:

Total Speaking Time 18 minutes, 34 seconds
Introduction 1 minute, 17 seconds
Body 16 minutes, 32 seconds
Conclusion 45 seconds

Humbard's time chart looks like this:

Total Speaking Time 19 minutes, 15 seconds

Reading and explaining the text	1 minute, 30 seconds
Defense and promotion of travel tours	3 minutes, 20 seconds
Pre-sermon prayer	25 seconds
Introduction	2 minutes, 10 seconds
Body	12 minutes, 4 seconds
Conclusion	46 seconds

Logical Argument

Saint Augustine long ago reminded preachers that logic was not invented by men, rather it has its origin in God and men have merely discovered it. The preacher must carefully gather his evidence, and weave it into a cogent, consistent whole. In pursuing this goal he has two logical "hounds" to unleash and put on the trail of the valid conclusion: *induction and deduction*.

Using the inductive model, the preacher collects sufficient facts, instances, and examples to establish a general truth.

When the preacher uses the deductive model he begins with a general truth and step by logical step he applies it to particular cases.

Humbard's hounds of induction and deduction get lost in the forest. The sermon is a logical muddle. Early in the sermon he lays down an overarching *deductive* principle, but soon takes a strange path in the "yellow wood" and spends the main part of the sermon spinning a series of six *inductive* examples which seem to deny the original deduction rather than support it. Careful listeners must have been confused by the clashing flow of evidence. He asserts that people are to enjoy prosperity. Further, he strongly states, "Some people think that God wants people to live in poverty. That is not true! God wants to bless you." He then cites the text, "In the day of prosperity be joyful." He then proceeds to develop a strong argument by inductive examples which contradicts his previous assertion. The idea that *prosperity is dangerous* and *damning* is given more extensive treatment than anything else in the body of the sermon.

First, using the biblical example of Jesus and a storm at sea, he threatens that God may fling adversity at the comfortably prosperous. Then he cites the example of proud Nebuchadnezzar who prospered and was rewarded with insanity. Following these Bible examples he tells about the Texas chain-store operator who got rich and died in sorrow, describing himself as a failure. Next comes the example of the prosperous real estate man for whom prayer was offered by his pastor to reduce his income because he wasn't giving enough to the church.

Two other examples of the same tone are also included: the rich young ruler who lost his soul because of his wealth, and Naaman, the prosperous Syrian who was plagued with leprosy.

The conclusion *induced* is that all sorts of dire calamities are sure to fall upon the prosperous,

including insanity, failure, disease, trouble, reverses, sorrow, and eternal damnation. How different from the injunction of Humbard's own Bible text, "In the day of prosperity be joyful" (Eccles. 7:14). How opposite from his own assertion that God wants to prosper persons!

The major argument in the sermon is deduced following the inductive establishment of the principle that prosperity brings all kinds of calamities. The deductive argument may be expressed in this disjunctive:

Prosperity will be used either for selfish purposes or godly purposes.

It must not be used selfishly.

Therefore, you must give the fruits of your prosperity to God's work.

Or it could be expressed this way:

Prosperity is perilous to all men

Your personal wealth puts you in peril.

Give your money to the Rex Humbard world-wide ministries.

The logical argument in Schuller's sermon is much more clearly developed. The inductive process is seen in three examples from the life of Mother Cabrini. After example one he said, "But *physical handicap* cannot stop a woman who is dedicated to God's calling for her life."

The second example is underscored with "But *disappointment* cannot stop a woman who is dedicated to God's calling for her life." Example three had the tag line: "But *rejection* cannot stop a woman who is dedicated to God's calling for her life."

Over all obstacles she climbs to characteristic joyfulness and deserved sainthood. Culminating the series of specific instances Schuller proclaims the generalization:

Show me a person who has discovered God's calling, God's will, and they move in it. Believe me, nothing—nothing can stop them. For they have the very powers of heaven behind them and legions of unseen angels support them. And their bodies may be weak, and they may be spitting blood, and they may be dying in their organs, but get out of their way. The secret of personal happiness? Discover God's calling for your life and then move on with it!

If Schuller's sermon were reduced to a deductive syllogism it could be expressed:

All men seek happiness.

Those who dedicate themselves to God's will find it.

Give yourself to God now.

The Use of the Bible

Humbard made 26 references to the Bible. His short explanation of his text (Eccles. 7:14) was his most effective use of scripture. Several other times he referred to what "the Bible says" without citing particular references. At other points he lumped together a series of "near quotes." In one series Matt. 25:30; 16:26; and Mark 8:36 are given in rapid-fire succession—all slightly misquoted.

One could also question his use of scripture at the point of isometrical inaccuracy. The Pauline phrase "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6) is wrested to mean one should give to the Humbard religious enterprises. Humbard makes 3 John 2: "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth," mean that people should "catch the vision" and "share their benefits."

Schuller made fewer references to the Bible. Nevertheless, he skillfully builds a biblical foundation for the sermon. He begins, "Let me share with you a few words from the Bible. Listen. Now the words you will hear . . . are not the opinions of Robert Schuller . . . [they] are the words of God. Listen." Then he emphatically reads Proverbs 3:6. Next he says, "Listen (*loud whisper*) Psalm 32, verse 8; God is speaking. Listen." That verse is read and before going on he says, "Listen to Proverbs 2, verses 9 and 10." This selection is read twice. Psalm 139:16 and Isaiah 46:34 are given similar emphatic treatment.

After building this biblical foundation, Schuller builds a topical sermon on the theme. Though much of Schuller's preaching looks strangely like Peale's self-help positive thinking out for a stroll in a leisure suit, this sermon is effectively Bible based.

The Use of Emotion

Persuasion seldom occurs without involvement of the feelings. Humbard piles negative example upon negative example and produces emotions of fear, dread, guilt, shame, self-effacement, submission, loneliness, and condemnation. Then in the conclusion he tries to change the direction with one flick of a conclusion (46 seconds in length). From the accusatory tone which dominates the sermon, Humbard adopts a tender compassionate tone for the conclusion.

The universal hunger for personal happiness is the emotional focal point of Schuller's sermon. He promises, "You will be captured by a peace of mind and a confidence and a courage that nothing else can bestow." Feelings of faith and confidence are encouraged. In his two major illustrations (Mother Cabrini, and the Titanic) these feelings are stirred: sympathy, pity, shared adversity, admiration, love, suspense, tragedy, alarm, fear, and outrage.

The Delivery of the Sermons

Though many things relate to the delivery of sermons we shall take time only for *gestures* and *voice*.

Schuller's delivery is a study in constant movement. He uses the hands, the arms, the face, the head, the eyes (in spite of glasses) and the whole body. He uses some 20 distinct gestures during the sermon, including open hand, open hands, palms down, hand raised, both hands raised, whole arm raised, both arms raised, clutched hands, folded arms, clenched fist, pointing hand, pointing finger, turning the whole body, ecstatic movement of the

whole body (a sort of ecstatic quiver), turning of the head, raising eyebrows, smiling, and acting out certain aspects of his examples.

Two gestures, however, seem to dominate Schuller's delivery. The smile and the stance of raised open arms. Both are positive gestures, the smile showing friendliness, and the open arms suggesting openness, honesty and affection. It sometimes seems that he is reaching out to embrace the vast audience.

Humbard used fewer gestures. He employed: pointing with one finger, pointing with the hand, palms down, patting of the chest or heart when referring to himself or emotions of the heart, enumerating on his fingers, one hand raised, clenching of the fist or fists, movement of the whole body, and a spanking gesture acting out a description of God punishing a person, and the use of eyes (looking down on pitiable Lazarus).

The most dominant gesture by Humbard was pointing the finger. He used this gesture no fewer than 116 times. This is a rate of six times per minute. Add to this 24 gestures of pointing the hand or using the clenched fist and quite a negative picture emerges. Humbard gave dictatorial, accusative, and aggressive gestures at the rate of more than seven per minute. Even when speaking positively, the gestures are negative. When he reaches the conclusion of the sermon where he shines a beam of hope upon the audience, his voice changes to a benedictorial tone but his gestures do not. Speaking of "heaven with day [as opposed to hell's night] and health, and joy and life eternal" he accents "day," "health," "joy," and "life eternal" with the gesture of a brandished fist as each word is stated.

The inflection, tone, or accent of the *voice* can change or even reverse the meanings of words. Variety and imaginative use of the voice can rescue a speech from boredom. The rate at which words are spoken, and the distinctness of pronunciation affect the outcome of the speech event. How did Humbard and Schuller spend the voice riches at their disposal?

Schuller's total speaking time was 18 minutes, 34 seconds. During that time he delivered 2,410 words. His rate of words spoken per minute was 130.

Humbard spoke for 19 minutes, 15 seconds. He used 3,471 words. His rate of words spoken was 180 per minute, 50 words per minute more than Schuller.

Part of the difference here may lie in the fact that when Humbard reaches a point of impact he tends to rush his words and overwhelm the audience. Schuller tends to slow down and let every word soak in at the points of impact in his sermon.

Humbard speaks in a loud camp meeting preacher's monotone. When he steps behind the pulpit he seems to shift into "the preaching voice." Pitch and modulation are generally the same throughout

(Continued on page 58)

ONE MAN'S WEEKLY VOYAGE

by Randal E. Denny

For the pastor, each week is a voyage from start to finish—ready or not!

There was a time when I fearfully faced the question, "What will I preach next Sunday?" Today, however, that weekly voyage is enjoyable. In fact, the curiosity of the trip starts on Sunday night at the close of a long day. It's like peeking ahead to see what happens in the next chapter.

"To preach" means "to make publicly known!" Therefore the preacher is like a translator of ideas—taking God's Word and translating it into the hearts and lives of the people. It is no casual assignment.

For me, consecutively preaching through Bible books has proved invaluable. For pastor and people, there is a sense of progression and accomplishment as they study, share, and walk through a book of the Bible. Progressively working through the Bible provides variety to biblical preaching, touches all the biblical bases, and handles the material in proportion to biblical emphasis. It is a well-balanced diet for spiritual nourishment. Such a plan avoids the pitfalls of one man's pet themes and whims.

Each year, I take a standard-sized manila folder and draw enough horizontal lines to make 13 spaces on each of the four faces of the folder. That makes a four-page calendar for the year, each page representing one quarter of the year. Each page is made into 3 columns: "Sunday Morning," "Sunday Evening," "Midweek." The one folder serves as a sermon planning guide, making it easy to see the progression of my preaching subjects and scripture lessons.

The folder is a simple tool to encourage me to plan ahead. In a study through the Book of Acts, the paragraphing and subheadings in the *New International Version* of the Bible served as guides in organizing preaching segments. By anticipating the usual Christian calendar events, scheduled revivals, and guest speakers, I mapped out more than six months of preaching in the Book of Acts.

Planning ahead saves the preacher from those desperate, evening-before searches to escape playing the role of Plato's fool who is pegged in this perceptive quote: "Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something!"

After setting up the calendar of sermons and scriptures, I assign a similar manila folder to each

sermon. The title and scripture is printed on the label of the folder. New labels are put over old labels when a sermon has been completed and preached. It is amazing how much material one can find for several sermons while reading and preparing for one. Notes and clippings for an upcoming sermon can be filed long before the sermon is used. The files should be kept in a convenient place for ready access.

In the early part of the week, the biblical passage should be read many times, comparing different translations, and working through the Greek text if possible. (Hooray for the Interlinear!) One should prayerfully search for the "big idea" of that selection of scripture. One should ask: "Why is this passage in the Bible?" "What practical good for my people comes out of this scripture?"

The quest for the "big idea" continues until the outline emerges from the scripture. The enlightenment of the Holy Spirit enables one to see the direction of the sermon. It is exciting to live with a passage until it speaks to one's spirit in a practical way.

I have developed certain expository steps. Considering each of the three or four major points of a sermon, I develop each point in the following manner:

(A) *The statement of the idea.* This is a major point: "God is love!" It should be worded as simply as possible. Avoid complex sentences.

(B) *Clarity!* What do you mean, "God is love"? Explain the statement.

Benjamin Franklin had quite a flair for fancy words. One time he told his mother, "I have imbibed an acephalous molluscus!"

Frightened out of her wits, she forced a huge dose of castor oil down his throat. When he admitted he had only eaten an ordinary oyster, she whipped him for deceiving her.

Franklin resolved never again to use big words where little ones would do. That's good advice for the preacher.

(C) *Expand.* The general development of the statement takes place in many forms such as word studies, and the tracing of theological concepts and biblical background.

(D) *Illustrate.* A study of the great preachers—including Jesus—will reveal the tremendous importance of proper illustration. Illustrations serve to

"bring home" and dramatize the truth one has already developed.

(E) *Application.* Here is the searching question: "So what?" Practical application of a point, as well as the entire sermon, makes the difference between a lecture and a sermon. "God is love—so, what?" What difference does it make? The preacher must face this with rugged honesty. There is no point in giving answers to questions that don't matter. If one cannot make application of the truth he has worked so hard to develop, he will make no impact on his people.

Once I have developed my own general outline, the next step is to study the commentaries on the scriptural text. In anticipation of the study on Acts, I wrote to college and seminary professors and respected preachers asking for suggestions about the best commentaries on the Book of Acts.

Thursday is set aside for research through the commentaries and other books in my library. I have

"Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools because they have to say something." Plato

a simple 3 x 5 card file that is indexed by scripture. If I am preaching from John 3:16, the card for John 3:16 is pulled. On it is listed every book in my library that deals with John 3:16. The author, name of the book, and page numbers are listed. In a matter of a few minutes every available book can be placed on the desk with a page-marker at the appropriate place. This enables my whole library to assist in sermon preparation.

I also maintain a file of the outline notes gleaned from other speakers, along with outline ideas from my own inspirational moments. The file is kept on 4 x 6 cards, and is indexed by topic and scripture.

On Friday, with title, outline, and research notes on hand, I turn to the illustration file. Illustrations taken from books, newspapers, magazines, and other sources are placed in a file that is indexed by subject. The problem is no longer in finding illustrations, but in being selective. I never use an illustration for more than one sermon—unless by accident. After an illustration idea has been used, I throw it away so I do not duplicate it elsewhere.

By Friday night I have typed a complete outline. The sermon could be preached at that point. I set Saturday aside for writing the sermon in full. The manuscript is typed on 8½ x 11 paper, double-spaced. The sermons are collected at the end of each pulpit year and bound into a permanent book form with appropriate indexes by titles and scripture references. These become an invaluable source of material as the years go by.

Writing in full helps to avoid pet words or phrases, and clarify thoughts. It also makes it possible to say

more in a shorter time. Leo Bickmore saw nine drafts of one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's speeches. The first was rough. The second showed improvement. The third evidenced greater improvement. The ninth differed from the eighth draft by only one word. The diligent writing by Roosevelt was one of his keys to success as a public speaker.

One significant advantage of the written sermon is that one has the full scope and meaning of the sermon for later use. Many times skimpy outlines cannot be recalled enough to be used again.

Saturday night is reserved for a complete rewriting of the sermon. This second copy is done on regular typing paper folded like a bulletin, single-spaced. The rewriting is a learning process. The second copy is placed in an envelope afterward, having been used as a delivery copy. The envelope also serves as a container for any new ideas, illustrations, and quotes that might fit well with the sermon for later use. The envelope is filed under sections such as: Pastoral, Evangelistic, Holiness, Promotional, Seasonal, Special, Doctrinal, and Youth. By keeping original manuscripts at home and the second copies for delivery at the church, fires and floods would not destroy one's past sermonic materials.

Sunday morning is the pastor-preacher's greatest day of opportunity. What a privilege! What a responsibility! Yet, what a joy! Strong churches are not gathered around weak pulpits.

I read a book entitled *Great Adventure in Small Boats*. It was filled with stories of men who have ventured on pilgrimages at sea in small boats. An exciting but exhausting chapter about thunderstorms at sea closed with a penetrating conclusion. These words are especially applicable to the pastor-preacher as he begins a voyage every Monday morning, with the hopes of arriving safely at port by Sunday night. Let these words speak for all preachers:

It is at this point that the somewhat waterlogged reader may well begin to wonder why . . . anyone would want to put to sea in a small craft, and how those who went through these storms had the heart to go on with the voyage. Perhaps the only answer is to be found in the words of the voyagers themselves.

Robinson, at the very height of the Mediterranean storm which he describes . . . gives us the result of his introspection.

I was in one of my rare moods of doubt. Why should I choose such a life, I asked, and called myself every kind of a fool, while all the time I knew that I would yearn for it all again when I had been a little while on shore. Something makes me want to fight the elements, to endure hardships, to feel the luxury of sailing into a strange and beautiful port when it is all over. . . . And so the ship strained on, the seas crashed overhead, and I lay there and knew that I loved it!

1. David Klein and Mary Louise King, *Great Adventures in Small Boats* (New York: Collier Books, 1963), p. 194.

SERMONS CAN COMMUNICATE

The efficient use of attention-getting techniques, idea sequences, and verbal support material will help the audience identify with and remember the minister's sermon.

by Harry Russell

Many ministers build sermons by a rigid set of prescriptive rules. It is true that following a single method for sermon construction simplifies our job. A single, simple method of sermon building and delivery, however, conspires against meeting the changing needs of the persons in the congregation.

Although the discovery of what can and should be said to an audience is in itself an interesting topic, space does not permit its being discussed here. Instead, the following comments will be directed toward the choices we have in organizing our ideas so that they will be clear, strong, and appropriate. The efficient use of attention-related devices; the appropriate sequencing of ideas; and the wise use of verbal support material should help build sermons that are interesting and effective.

Getting Attention

It is pointless to address an audience of people without first having their attention. Since people are known to attend in response to a variety of phenomena, it seems that professional speakers might be interested in knowing what some of those phenomena are.

By its nature, activity, or the verbal suggestion of activity will attract attention. Conflict can be

made evident by comparing opposing ideas. A sense of uncertainty or incompleteness often is followed by a sense of suspense. Because people seem to attend ideas with which they are familiar, one may associate ideas and feelings with those the audience is believed to hold.

The topic can be shown to be near the listener either in time or space as in the statement, "The person I'm speaking of might be your next door neighbor." People also give attention to ideas shown to be vital to their lives. It is best to be specific rather than general. That is, don't call it a tree if it is known to be a weeping willow. If the listener is relied on to supply his own detail, each listener will likely fill in different detail, thus changing for each person the speaker's intended meaning.

Humor is perhaps the most misunderstood means for holding attention. Use it sparingly. The point of the humor should be evident because, unless directed toward the topic, humor will draw attention to itself. Used judiciously, however, this method will not lose its appeal.

While these features are an aid to professional speakers, they alone do little more than help the listener attend what is being said. Structure is needed for the content. If placed in a logically related sequence and given sup-

port, the sermon's content can be made meaningful to the listener.

Sequencing Ideas

To determine the appropriate sequence for ideas in a sermon, answers should be sought to one or more of these questions: How do I want my audience to respond to my message? How much does my audience already know about my topic? Do I expect the audience, generally speaking, to like, dislike, or be apathetic toward me or my message? How can I best achieve my purpose in delivering the message?

Chronological Sequence: Using this sequence, one will deal with ideas in the order in which they occur. For example, in a sermon about the life of Christ, one might talk about His Birth, Ministry, and Passion because they occurred in that order. The order helps the listener remember the ideas. One weakness of this sequence is that in emphasizing chronology, one may fail to properly emphasize any cause or effect inherent in the topic.

Space Sequence: This sequence can be used to describe something as it appears. For example, a three-point sermon might include three places where Christ ministered. Remember that the direction of the sequence is not as important as its consist-

ency. It is the systematic arrangement of ideas that helps the audience remember them. The arrangement might be from top to bottom, right to left, front to back, or inside to outside. The sequence is most valuable when the purpose is to explain or give information.

Cause-Effect Sequence: Some phenomena are best understood when viewed from the perspective of one condition being a cause or effect of another. Even the often quoted scripture: "The wages of sin is death" exemplifies a cause-effect sequence. Although most often used to advocate the restriction of certain conditions, this sequence can be used to advocate that certain conditions are desirable causes. For example, daily devotions can be seen as a desirable cause of a deeply devout life.

Problem-Solution Sequence: Like causes and effects, other phenomena are best presented from the perspective of one condition constituting a problem and another condition constituting a solution. While it is important to present solutions as being both practical and desirable, the solution should not introduce any new problems of its own.

The value derived from sequencing ideas seems to be largely that of helping the listener process and retain information. The sermon's content, of course, is information carefully chosen and strategically placed in support of the major ideas to be expressed. Devices, called verbal support material, are intended to support, expand, or enlarge ideas in the minds of the listeners.

Supporting Major Ideas

The following devices do not all serve equally well to support all ideas. A liberal supply of common sense always helps in selecting appropriate techniques.

Examples: Examples can be either the "let's imagine this has happened" type or the real-life variety. Too frequent use of figurative examples leads the listener to assume the speaker has

no real-life examples from which to draw. Examples are useful mainly in making ideas clear and vivid.

Illustrations: Different from examples, illustrations are useful in pointing out specific characteristics, functions, or integral parts of ideas. It is seldom the case that all listeners will, with equal sensitivity, understand an idea. Therefore, while it will not prove, the well chosen illustration will illuminate those portions of an idea that may be unclear.

Statistics: Statistics, often the most conclusive kind of evidence, are numbers of any sort used to amplify or prove an idea. The function of statistics is to show how many instances support the point. Aside from the importance of documenting the source, there are other questions that should be answered prerequisite to using a statistic:

—Are there enough instances included in the statistics to warrant the conclusion to be drawn?

—Do the statistics truly represent the whole problem, or only a minor portion of it?

—Were the statistics gathered by people who were biased?

—Finally, do the statistics measure what they claim to measure? Could another type of measure serve as a better index of the phenomenon?

Analogy: This supporting device is different in that it compares two objects or events. One point of comparison is something the audience probably knows little about. The other point of comparison is something the audience probably knows much about. By likening selected features of one to selected features of the other, an analogy is built.

Jesus used a kind of analogy when, talking to a group of farm-oriented Hebrews, he likened the Kingdom of heaven to a man who went forth to sow seed. Some seed fell on stony ground, some fell among thorns, etc. His listeners understood his message about the Kingdom of heaven because they understood a great deal about farming.

Restatement: This is the simplest way to expand an idea. To use restatement one need only paraphrase something already said. Assuming that the original statement should warrant its being paraphrased, the paraphrase should be at least as clear and vividly stated as was the original.

Testimony (quotations): This means the verbatim (or at times paraphrase) of another person's statements. Like many of the other idea-expanding devices, there are certain rules that govern the proper use of testimony.

1. The quotation is best if it comes from a relatively unbiased source. Audiences are quite good at detecting a biased source.
2. One should document the source of the quote. Some variation of "According to a recent article in the *New York Times*, this statement was made . . ." will serve nicely.
3. Some significant point in the message should be evident in the quote. Be sure to establish the point either before or following the quote.
4. Choose a quote that is fairly easy to understand.

Because Christians enjoy reading the Bible and hearing it read, scripture serves as a readily available source of quotes. In addition to scripture quotes, however, it adds to the speaker's credibility to be heard quoting from currently published literature.

It can be said that we are speaking to a "public" or delivering a message anytime groups large or small "give us the floor." Whenever our message is to be heard, the time allowed us to speak is likely to be brief at best and should be used advisedly. The end we seek is too important to approach the task of sermon-building with a casual attitude. The concepts presented here, when used efficiently, should help clarify ideas and help listeners identify with and remember the truth proclaimed.

BUT WHEN LIFE TUMBLES IN, WHAT THEN?

by Arthur John Gossip

Because of the upheaval of the times, Arthur John Gossip (1873-1954) devoted many of his sermons to the task of encouraging people.

Shortly after the dramatically sudden death of his wife in 1927, Gossip preached the famous sermon "But When Life Tumbles In, What Then?" The sermon's intimate, conversational tone has helped establish it as one of those rare messages that will be remembered for many years to come.

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" (Jeremiah 12:5).

Here is a man who, musing upon the bewilderingments of life, has burst into God's presence, hot, angry, stunned by His ordering of things, with a loud babble of clamorous protest. It is unfair, he cries, unfair! And frowningly he looks into the face of the Almighty. It is unfair! And then suddenly he checks himself, and putting this blunt question to it, feels his heart grow very still and very cold. For after all, he asks himself, what is it you have to complain about so far? Nothing that everybody does not share. Only the usual little rubs and frets and ills of life that fall to everyone, no more. And if these have broken through your guard, pushed aside your religion, made you so sour and peevish and cross towards God—God help you, what will happen when, sudden as a shell screaming out of the night, some one of the great crashing dispensations bursts in your life, and leaves an emptiness where there had been a home, a tumbled ruin of your ordered ways, a heart so sore you wonder how it holds together? If you have caught your breath, poor fool, when splashing through the shallow waters of some summer brook, how will you fare when Jordan bursts its banks and rushes, far as the eye can see, one huge, wild swirl of angry waters, and, your feet caught away, half choked, you are tossed nearer and nearer to the roaring of

the falls, and over it? Suppose that, to you as to Job, suddenly, out of the blue, there leap dreadful tidings of disaster, would you have the grit to pull yourself together and to face it as he did? "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Suppose that to you as to Ezekiel, that valiant soul, there comes a day when, with no second's warning, you are given the bleak message: "Son of man, behold I take away the desire of thine eyes at a stroke; yet neither shalt thou weep, nor let the tears run down. So I preached unto the people in the morning: and in the evening, my wife died." Suppose that to you, as to Christ, it became evident that life was not to give what you expected from it, that your dreams were not to be granted, that yours was to be a steep and lonely road, that some tremendous sacrifice was to be asked of you, could you make shift to face it with a shadow of the Master's courage and the Master's calm? For there is no supposing in the matter. To a certainty to you too, in your turn, someday, these things must come.

Suffering Is Universal

Yes, unbelievably they come. For years and years you and I go our sunny way and live our happy lives, and the rumours of these terrors are blown to us very faintly as from a world so distant that it seems to have nothing to do with us; and then, to us too, it happens. And when it does, nobody has the right to snivel or whimper as if something unique and inexplicable had befallen him. "Never morning wore to evening but some heart did break"—and

hearts just as sensitive as yours and mine. But when yours breaks, what then? It is a bit late in the day to be talking about insurance when one's house is ablaze from end to end: and somewhat tardy to be searching for something to bring one through when the test is upon one. And how are you and I, so querulous and easily fretted by the minor worries, to make shift at all in the swelling of Jordan, with the cold of it catching away our breath, and the rush of it plucking at our footing?

Goethe, of course, tells us that all the religions were designed to meet us and to give us help, just there; to enable us to bear the unbearable, to face the impossible, to see through with some kind of decency and honour what obviously can't be done at all.

But then so many people's religion is a fair-weather-affair: A little rain, and it runs and crumbles; a touch of strain, and it snaps. How often out at the front one lay and watched an aeroplane high up in the blue and sunlight, a shimmering, glistening, beautiful thing: and then there came one shot out of a cloud, and it crashed down to earth, a broken mass of twisted metal. And many a one's religion is like that. So long as God's will runs parallel to ours, we follow blithely. But the moment that they cross, or clash, that life grows difficult, that we don't understand, how apt faith is to fail us just when we have most need of it!

You remember our Lord's story of the two men who lived in the same village, and went to the same synagogue, and sat in the same pew, listening to the same services: and how one day some kind of gale blew into their lives, a fearsome storm. And in the one case, everything collapsed, and for a moment there were some poor spars tossing upon wild waters, and then, nothing at all. For that unhappy soul had built on sand, and in his day of need, everything was undermined, and vanished. But the other, though he too had to face the emptiness, the loneliness, the pain, came through it all braver and stronger and mellowed and nearer God. For he had built upon the rock.

Well, what of you and me? We have found it a business to march with the infantry, how will we keep up with the horsemen: if the small ills of life have frayed our faith and temper, what will we do in the roar and the black swirl of Jordan?

That has always been my chief difficulty about preaching. Carlyle, you recall, used to say that the chirpy optimism of Emerson maddened him, Emerson across whose sheltered life no cloud or shadow was allowed to blow. He seemed to me, painted the other, like a man, standing himself well back out of the least touch of the spray, who throws chatty observations on the beauty of the weather to a poor soul battling for his life in huge billows that are buffeting the breath and the life out of him, wrestling with mighty currents that keep sweeping him away. It did not help.

And I, too, have had a happy life: and always when

I have spoken of the Gospel, and the love of God, and Christ's brave reading of this puzzling life of ours, it has seemed to me that a very easy answer lay ready to anybody's hand who found these hard to credit. Yes, yes, they might well say irritably, if I stood in the sunshine where you are, no doubt I, too, could talk like that! But if your path ran over the cold moors, where the winds cut and whistle and pierce to the very bone, if you were set down where I am, I wonder if you would be so absolutely sure? As Shakespeare says, it is not difficult to bear other people's toothache; but when one's own jaw is throbbing, that is another matter. We will listen to Jesus Christ: for He spoke from the darkness round the Cross. We mayn't understand Him, or agree with Him, or obey Him: but nobody can challenge His right to speak. But you! Wait till you stand in the rushing of Jordan, till to you there has come some fulfilment of that eerie promise, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," and what will you say then?

I'll tell you now: I know that we are warned in Job that the most drastic test of faith is not even these tremendous sorrows, but a long purgatory of physical and mental agony. Still, I don't think that anyone will challenge my right to speak today. And what I have to say is this: when Claverhouse suddenly shot Brown of Priesthill, he turned to the wife and asked, the callous brute, "What think you now of your braw guidman?" And she, gathering together the scattered brain, made answer, "I aye thought muckle of him, but I think more of him now." I aye thought muckle of the Christian faith; but I think more of it now, far more.

We Do Not Always Understand

I have never claimed to understand many things in this perplexing life of ours, have always held that my dear master Browning went by much too far when he said confidently that for a Christian man there are no problems in the world or out of it. Surely the acknowledgment of God's love raises new problems. If love, then why and why and why and why? To me the essence of the faith has always seemed a certain intrepidity of loyalty that can believe undauntedly in the dark, and that still trusts God unshaken even when the evidence looks fairly damning.

Do you think Christ always understood or found it easy? There was a day when He took God's will for Him into His hand, and turned it round, and looked at it. And, "Is this what You ask of Me?" He said; and for a moment His eyes looked almost incredulous. Aye, and another day when, puzzled and uncertain, He cried out, "But is this really what You mean that I should give You, this here, this now?" Yes, and another still, when the cold, rushing waters roared in a raging torrent through His soul: yet He would not turn back, fought His way to the farther bank, died still believing in the God who seemed to have deserted Him. And that is why He

is given a name that is above every name.

I do not understand this life of ours. But still less can I comprehend how people in trouble and loss and bereavement can fling away peevishly from the Christian faith. In God's name, fling to what? Have we not lost enough without losing that too? If Christ is right—if, as He says, there are somehow, hidden away from our eyes as yet, still there, wisdom and planning and kindness and love in these dark dispensations—then we can see them through. But if Christ was wrong, and all that is not so; if God set His foot on my home crudely, heedlessly, blunderingly, blindly, as I unawares might tread upon some insect in my path, have I not the right to be angry and sore? If Christ was right, and immortality and the dear hopes of which He speaks do really lie a little way ahead, we can manage to make our way to them. But if it is not so, if it is all over, if there is nothing more, how dark the darkness grows! You people in the sunshine may believe the faith, but we in the shadow must believe it. We have nothing else.

Further, there is a grave saying in Scripture, "Receive not the grace of God in vain." That Christ should die on our behalf, that God should lavish His kindness on us, and that nothing should come of it, how terrible! And were it not pitiful if we receive the discipline of life in vain: have all the suffering of it, pay down the price in full, yet miss what it was sent to teach!

I know that at first great sorrow is just stunned, that the sore heart is too numbed to feel anything, even God's hand. When his wife died, Rossetti tells us, he passed through all that tremendous time with a mind absolutely blank, learned nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing; so that, looking back, all he could say was that, sitting in a wood with his head in his hands, somehow it was photographed permanently on his passive mind that a certain wild flower has three petals. That was all.

But by and by the gale dies down, and the moon rises, and throws a lane of gold to us across the blackness and the heaving of the tumbling waters. After all it is not in the day, but in the night, that star rises after star, and constellation follows constellation, and the immensity of this bewildering universe looms up before our staggered minds. And it is in the dark that the faith becomes biggest and bravest, that its wonder grows yet more and more. "Grace," said Samuel Rutherford, "grows best in the winter." And already some things have become very clear to me.

This to begin, that the faith works, fulfils itself, is real; and that its most audacious promises are true. Always we must try to remember that the glorious assertions of the Scriptures are not mere suppositions and guesses. There is no perhaps about them. These splendid truths are flowers that human hands like ours plucked in the gardens of their actual experience. Why is the prophet so sure that as one whom his mother comforts so will God

comfort all hurt things? How did the Psalmist know that those who are broken in their hearts and grieved in their minds God heals? Because, of course, it had happened to them, because they had themselves in their dark days felt His unfailing helpfulness and tenderness and the touch of wonderfully gentle hands.

And it is true. When we are cast into some burning, fiery furnace seven times heated, we are not alone, never alone; but there is *One beside us*, like unto the Son of God. When our feet slip upon the slimy stones in the swelling of Jordan, a hand leaps out and catches us and steadies us. "I will not leave you comfortless," said Christ. Nor does He. There is a Presence with us, a Comforter, a Fortifier who does strengthen, does uphold, does bring us through somehow from hour to hour and day to day. Pusey once wrote that when his wife died, he felt "as if the rushing waters were up to my chin; but underneath the chin there was a hand, supporting it."

And that hand is there. And as the days go by, what grows upon one more and more is the amazing tenderness of God. Like as a father pitieth his children, mused a psalmist long ago. I have been wondering these days whether he too, poor soul, had suddenly, without one second's warning, to tell his children that their mother was dead, and that remembrance of that agony made him sure all his days it is not willingly that God afflicts and grieves us children of men. Anyhow that is true.

There is a marvellous picture in the National Gallery. Christ hangs upon the Cross in a dense darkness; and at first that is all one sees. But, as one peers into the background, gradually there stands out another form, God's form; and other hands supporting Christ, God's hands; and another face, God's face, more full of agony even than our Saviour's own. The presence, the sufficiency, the sympathy of God, these things grow very real and very sure and very wonderful.

The Certainty of Immortality

Further, one becomes certain about immortality. You think that you believe in that. But wait till you have lowered your dearest into an open grave, and you will know what believing it means. I have always gazed up at Paul in staggered admiration when he burst out at the grave's mouth into his scornful challenge, his exultant ridicule of it, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" But now it does not seem to me such a tremendous feat: for I have felt that very same. True, I can tell him where death's sting lies. Ah! it is the constant missing of what used to be always here; the bitter grudging every second of the dear body to the senseless earth, the terrible insecurity, for one is never safe—anything, nothing, and the old overwhelming pain comes rushing back. Yet when the other day I took up a magazine, it was with amazement I discovered they are still chattering about

whether we people are immortal or not. I am past that. I know. "I believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."

But there is one thing I should like to say which I have never dared to say before, not feeling that I had the right. We Christian people in the mass are entirely unchristian in our thoughts of death. We have our eyes wrongly focused. We are selfish, and self-centered, and self-absorbed. We keep thinking aggrievedly of what it means to us. And that is wrong, all wrong. In the New Testament you hear very little of the families with that aching gap, huddled together in their desolate little home in some back street; but a great deal about the saints in glory, and the sunshine, and the singing, and the splendour yonder. And, surely, that is where our thoughts should dwell. I for one want no melancholious tunes, no grey and sobbing words, but brave hymns telling of their victory.

Dante had a sour mind. Yet, as he went up the hill that cleanses him that climbs, suddenly it shook and reeled beneath him. What's that? he cried out in alarm. And his guide smiled. Some happy soul, he said, has burst through into victory, and every other on the mount is so praising God for that, that the whole hill rocks and staggers. And is not that the mood that best becomes us?

Think out your brooding. What exactly does it mean? Would you pluck the diadem from their brows again? Would you snatch the palms of victory out of their hands? Dare you compare the clumsy nothings our poor blundering love can give them here with what they must have yonder where Christ Himself has met them, and has heaped on them who can think out what happiness and glory? I love to picture it. How, shyly, amazed, half protesting, she who never thought of self was led into the splendour of her glory. As the old poet put it centuries ago,

Our sweet is mixed with bitter gall,
Our pleasure is but pain,
Our joys scarce last the looking on,
Our sorrows still remain.

But there they have such rare delights,
Such pleasure and such play,
That unto them a thousand years
Doth seem but yesterday.

To us it will be long and lonesome: but they won't even have looked round them before we burst in.

In any case, are we to let our dearest be wrenched out of our hands by force? Or, seeing that it has to be, will we not give them willingly and proudly, looking God in the eyes, and telling Him that we prefer our loneliness rather than that they should miss one tittle of their rights. When the blow fell, that was the one and only thought that kept beating like a hammer in my brain. I felt I had lost her for ever, must have lost her, that to all eternity she must shine far ahead of me; and my heart kept crying out, "I

choose it, I choose it. Do not for my sake deny her anything." I know now that I have not lost her. For love is not a passing thing one leaves behind. And is it not love's way to stoop?

And, after all, thank God, our gift is not an absolute one. When we are young, heaven is a vague and nebulous and shadowy place. But as our friends gather there, more and more it gains body and vividness and homeliness. And when our dearest have passed yonder, how real and evident it grows, how near it is, how often we steal yonder. For, as the Master put it: Where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. Never again will I give out that stupid lie, "There is a happy land, far, far away." It is not far. They are quite near. And the communion of the saints is a tremendous and most blessed fact.

Nowadays, for example, to pray is to turn home. For then they run to meet us, draw us with their dear familiar hands into the Presence, stand quite close to us the whole time we are there—quite close, while we are there.

And for the rest, many poets have told us of Lethe, the river of forgetfulness. But Dante, in his journeyings, came on another, the Eunoe, to taste the sunny waters of which is to have recalled all the gladsome and glorious and perfect things one has ever experienced. Eunoe runs beside the track all through the valley of the shadow; and a wise soul will often kneel, and lift a handful of its waters to his thirsty lips, and, ere he rises, wonderingly thank God for the splendour he has known, that never would and could have been at all but for His marvellous grace.

And so back to life again, like a healthy-minded laddie at some boarding school, who, after the first hour of homesickness, resolves, if he is wise, he will not mope, but throw himself into the life about him, and do his part and play the game, and enjoy every minute of it,—aye, and does it too—though always, always his eyes look ahead for the term's end, and always, always his heart thrills and quickens at the thought of that wonderful day when he will have not memories and letters only, but the whole of his dear ones really there, when he will be with them again and they with him. Well, that will come in time. Meanwhile, "Daton, no weakness," as that brave soul kept muttering to himself on his way to the guillotine, and he showed none.

I don't think you need be afraid of life. Our hearts are very frail; and there are places where the road is very steep and very lonely. But we have a wonderful God. And as Paul puts it, what can separate us from His love? Not death, he says immediately, pushing that aside at once as the most obvious of all impossibilities.

No, not death. For, standing in the roaring of the Jordan, cold to the heart with its dreadful chill, and very conscious of the terror of its rushing, I too, like Hopeful, can call back to you who one day in your turn will have to cross it, "Be of good cheer, my brother, for I feel the bottom, and it is sound."

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PREPARING TO PREACH FROM ACTS 15:6-11

The First in a New Series of Holiness Exegetical Studies

by Frank G. Carver

Introduction

In this new series we are paying particular attention to the task of preaching Wesleyan holiness biblically, although the texts used in the previous series were of the substance of the holiness message.

We are continuing the same exegetical approach in terms of tools and methods as outlined in the introduction to the earlier series. The reader is advised to refamiliarize himself with the presuppositions set forth there.¹

When we presume to speak of "holiness exegesis" several qualifications are in order lest we drift into a sectarian exegetical ghetto with its own "Berlin wall." First, the biblical presentation of holiness, although certainly inclusive of, is much more than a second crisis in religious experience. Biblical holiness is primarily a quality of life or relation to God flowing from the grace of God in Jesus Christ. In biblical interpretation one works from the life to the crisis, not vice versa.

Second, holiness can be a synonym for integrity. Integrity demands that the holiness preacher let the text speak for itself, that the text be handled with absolute honesty. For us as convinced Wesleyans, biblical preaching by definition is holiness preaching. If we are not convinced that to preach the Bible with integrity is to preach holiness, we have no authority for our message apart from the subjectivity of religious experience.

Third, ideally there can be no such thing as a distinctive "holiness exegesis," although a degree of subjectivity is unavoidable in practice. No unique-to-us principles of exegesis exist by which we can determine what the text meant (the descriptive question) in its biblical setting as over against the work of exegetes outside the Wesleyan tradition. Rather it is when we ask what the text means (the

interpretive question) in our contemporary human situation that we build the hermeneutical bridge of a distinctive faith-witness to the application of divine grace from the perspective of the Wesleyan experience.

The four exegetical studies of this present series, as well as the three previous, are offered as suggestive illustrations in the direction of a holiness hermeneutic that seeks to do justice both to the biblical sources and to the witness of the Wesleyans.

And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are" (NASB).²

The Historical Question: Where Do We Find Our Text?

1. What Was the Life Setting of Acts?

In what historical form? Acts introduces itself (1:1) as the continuation of the Third Gospel (Luke 1:1-4). It contains the consequences in the life of the Church of the career of Jesus—His words and deeds, His death, and His resurrection. Just as the Gospel of Luke was something more than biography in telling the story of Jesus, so Acts is more than

history in telling the story of the age or "Acts of the Apostles." Acts is proclamation, the proclamation of the continuation of the Good News in Jesus through the activity of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the first Christians.

From what historical setting? The evidence of Early Church tradition and the internal testimony of the Third Gospel as well as Acts makes it quite probable that Luke was the writer of both documents. Luke, a gifted writer and possibly Gentile Christian prophet, was a physician and a companion of Paul in Philippi, possibly also in Ephesus, and on the journeys to Jerusalem and Rome (16:10 ff.; 21:17; 28:16).

Although several dates are suggested for the writing of Acts, Bruce argues that a date a little earlier than the persecution of the Christians in Rome in A.D. 64 gives a reasonable life setting for the work.³ Paul had been in Rome for two years. His witness there coupled with the legal procedure occasioned by his appeal to Caesar had probably made the Roman middle classes, represented by Theophilus, aware of Christianity. With such people as his intended readers, Luke's purpose in Acts was to continue his witness to Jesus (1:1; Luke 1:1-4) as he narrated the progress of the Christian movement which was then present in Rome.

Luke's theme in Acts centers in the activity of the Holy Spirit. It is this Spirit of the resurrected-exalted Jesus (2:32-33), poured out on the disciples vindicating Jesus as God's salvation-presence in the world, who leads the primitive Christian Church out of their Jewish parochialism to a worldwide mission.

2. How does Acts 15:6-11 function in the document?

Luke has structured Acts into six panels sketching the progress of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, each concluding with a short summary report (5:42; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30-31). Imbedded in the fourth of these panels, "Paul's First Missionary Tour and the Apostolic Decree" (12:25—16:15),⁴ is the narrative of "The Council at Jerusalem" (15:1-35) which functions as the turning point or "watershed" of the book, that "episode which rounds off and justifies the past developments, and makes those to come intrinsically possible."⁵

The account of the initial missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas (12:25—14:28) and the coming of Judaizing Christians to Antioch (15:1) has presented the issue of Gentile salvation as a crisis in the church (15:2) which must be resolved before Luke can continue with his story of the Gentile mission (15:36—16:5). This Luke accomplishes with his narrative of the gathering of the apostles and elders (15:1-35) to decide the matter. At a crucial point in the passionate debate which opened the Council proceedings, Luke reports the speech of Peter (6-11) which declares God's decision to save the Gentile believer in Jesus "in the same way" as the Jewish believer—"through the grace of the Lord Jesus" (v. 11).

The Recreative Question: What Did Our Text Mean to Its First Readers?

1. How Does the Writer Seek to Communicate His Message?

What is the form and structure of the text? As a unit, 15:1-35 is a narrative of the Jerusalem Council, reflecting the style of ancient history writing. Woven into the descriptive and summarizing statements are "verbatim" reports of two speeches and a letter:

- 15:1-5: Introduction: Scenes which set the stage
- 15:6-11: Report of Peter's speech
- 15:12: Summary of statement of corroborating witness of Barnabas and Saul
- 15:13-21: Report of the speech of James
- 15:22-35: The apostolic letter and its reception.

Luke's report of Peter's speech (vv. 6-11) combines the two forms of a miracle story (Mark 1:30-31) and a call narrative (Mark 1:16-20) in a way similar to Luke 5:1-11. The elements common to both are the situation to be overcome, the solution by divine action, and the call.⁶ It is easy to picture the setting and function of this "miracle-call" form in the Early Church's utilization of the activities of Jesus' ministry in their preaching and teaching.

The report of Peter's speech which evidences the basic structure of this form can be analyzed as follows:

- (1) 15:6-7a Introduction: focus description of the situation
- (2) 15:7b-9 Argument by appeal to divine initiative
 - (2.1) 15:7b Thesis: assertion from personal ministry
 - (2.2) 15:8 Interpretative appeal to the miracle of Gentile Christian experience
 - (2.3) 15:9 Interpretative application of the miracle
- (3) 15:10-11 Conclusion: call to the consistent application of the gospel
 - (3.1) 15:10 Question: an argument from common Jewish experience
 - (3.2) 15:11 Concluding reformulation of thesis

The report of Peter's speech functions as a miracle-authenticated call to discipleship in terms of the understanding of the gospel emerging from the Gentile mission. In its narrative context, the speech illumines in a climactic way the significance of the issue at stake in the Jerusalem Council, bringing the inherent nature of the gospel mission to clear focus.

(1) *Introduction: focus description of the situation (6-7a).* Gathered "together" were not only "the apostles and elders" but also many other members of the Jerusalem church (cf. vv. 12, 22). The situation set up by the progressive succession of scenes in verses one to five now comes to focus in "much

debate." It is at the peak of excitement and conflict that "Peter intervenes and with one stroke clarifies the situation."

(2) *Argument by appeal to divine initiative (7b-9)*. The argument consists of a basic point which is then expanded and interpreted.

(2.1) Thesis: assertion from personal ministry (7b). Peter moves into control of the debate as he reminds his hearers of the conversion of the Gentile Cornelius (10:24-48) which took place nearly 10 years earlier through his own ministry. Caught up contrary to his own will in that event, he now asserts that the Gentile mission originated in God's own sovereign decision. With Cornelius the divine will that Gentiles as Gentiles, and not as proselytes to Judaism, "should hear the word of the gospel and believe" is clearly revealed. This is Peter's central thesis, the point pertinent for the issue at hand.

(2.2) Interpretative appeal to the miracle of Gentile Christian experience (8). God's action in the conversion of Cornelius is now characterized. His action is based on His character and ability as One "who knows the heart." God's witness to Cornelius of his proper attitude toward Him (cf. 10:1-4) was the gift of the Holy Spirit in the likeness and continuity of the Pentecost miracle—"just as He also did to us." See Acts 11:15-17.

Peter's appeal is to an indisputable reception of the Holy Spirit completely apart from any belonging to a circumcized people (vv. 1, 5), a reception corresponding rather to the stance of the inner person.

(2.3) Interpretative application of the miracle (9). The conclusion then is inevitably that God "made no distinction between us and them." Jew as Jew and Gentile as Gentile find favor with God on an essentially identical ground, defined by the terms "heart" and "faith."

Peter's key definition is the explanatory clause, "cleansing their hearts by faith." It is paralleled in Peter's earlier defence of his action by the response of his hearers: "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life" (11:18).

"Cleansing" in this total context has a twofold dimension.

First, the very opening of Cornelius' heart to the gospel is the work of the Holy Spirit. God has erased the distinction that made him as a Gentile unclean in contrast to the "clean" Jew (11:9). Faith itself is here a gift of the Spirit. In Cornelius' case the cleansing work of the Spirit began long before Peter invaded his horizons. His prayers, alms, and fear of God as a devout man (10:1-3) were not "works" which were rendering him acceptable to God, but evidence of the faith-stance that the Spirit was bringing to birth in his heart.

Second, the cleansing action of the Holy Spirit in the heart has primary reference here to the issues of law and grace in salvation (cf. vv. 1, 5, 11). The "cleansing" of the heart is from all reliance on human legalism to an utter dependence upon divine

grace in salvation, from any confidence in the power of the flesh to a single trust in the presence of the Spirit for spiritual adequacy. To be "filled with the Holy Spirit" (2:4) can thus be understood as having been brought by the cleansing presence of the Spirit all the way to grace in one's relation to God and fellow-persons as a Christian.

As thus understood, the repetition of the miracle of Pentecost in the case of the Gentile Cornelius furnishes Peter's argument with irrefutable evidence.

(3) *Conclusion: call to the consistent application of the gospel (10-11)*. The conclusion functioning as a call to a decision about the nature of discipleship opens with a question which introduces a new argument into the debate and leads into a restatement of the original assertion in new terms.

(3.1) Question: an argument from common Jewish experience (10). The argument shifts from the citing of evidence to a question concerning the experience of Jews and Jewish Christians with the ceremonial law. The question is somewhat rhetorical as Peter calls the Gentile Christians "disciples" which in effect prejudices the Jewish observances as essentially useless in the context of the gospel mission.

"Yoke" was used in a positive sense for taking up the duties of the law in Judaism. But as was obvious in New Testament times, to many ordinary Jews like Peter the traditional law was a heavy burden which only a few like Paul could claim to have fulfilled (Philippians 3:6). In contrast to these "heavy loads" (Matthew 23:4) as Jesus called them, Peter and the apostles had discovered in the Spirit the full meaning of Jesus' word, "My yoke is easy, and My load is light" (Matthew 11:30).

Many of the Jewish Christians themselves were probably not overly punctilious in their observance of the law, or at least they in no way allowed their observances of a religious heritage to compromise their faith in Christ as the only sufficient means of salvation.

(3.2) Concluding reformulation of thesis (11). The central thrust of Peter's concern (7b) is now formulated as the answer to the preceding rhetorical question about the observance of the ceremonial law. The form of the issue has become, Are the Jewish apostles who believe that they "are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus" now going to "acknowledge another principle of salvation for Gentile believers?"

The question of Gentile salvation was developed in the main argument in terms of the faith principle (vv. 7, 9) and is now brought to its conclusion as a call to free grace in discipleship.

2. What Is the Writer Attempting to Accomplish in the Passage?

At a crucial point in his story of the Early Church from Jerusalem to Rome, the saga of the gospel's emergence from within Judaism to a universal Gentile application. Luke in his report of Peter's speech

(Continued on page 53)

Nazarene

UPDATE

Compiled by Stephen M. Miller,
Department of Education and the Ministry

It's Your Pulpit



You carry responsibility for your pulpit. Certainly you are responsible for what is done and said there when you preach. But you are also responsible for what is said there when you select and let others preach.

The people who come to your church are trained to believe what comes from the pulpit. They are "asked" to accept with authority what is said from the stand behind which you proclaim the gospel. So you become responsible in the practical sense for all that goes on and is said on the platform of your church.

The General Church holds you responsible. The district believes you are the one in charge there. And I believe the Scriptures place the care of the flock under the shepherd. He is the shepherd all the time.

The responsibility for the pulpit also goes beyond condoning who stands there. It is an awesome divine assignment. You stand there as the representative of God. You become the voice saying what God wants said on the occasion to the people. This intense, vitally important period must be preceded by much preparation. Surely to represent God is an honor and a solemn task.

The people come to worship. It is the program of the hour, selected and directed by you, one that will bring them to worship. The synonyms of the word

"worship" convey clearly its meaning. They are: adore, deify, exalt, honor, revere, praise, etc. You, as shepherd, voice of God, leader of the service, should bring the people into the reality and meaning of worship. And when you have done this you will have assisted them to live for Christ in the days ahead.

But in addition to that time period of "pulpit filling" you have all the time, the people expect you to be able to offer them spiritual guidance and strength any hour of the day or week, and why not!

The man with a pulpit is a man chosen of God to accomplish the greatest assignments in the world—the opening and advancing of the kingdom of God. Don't ever forget and lose the divine dimension from your pulpit.

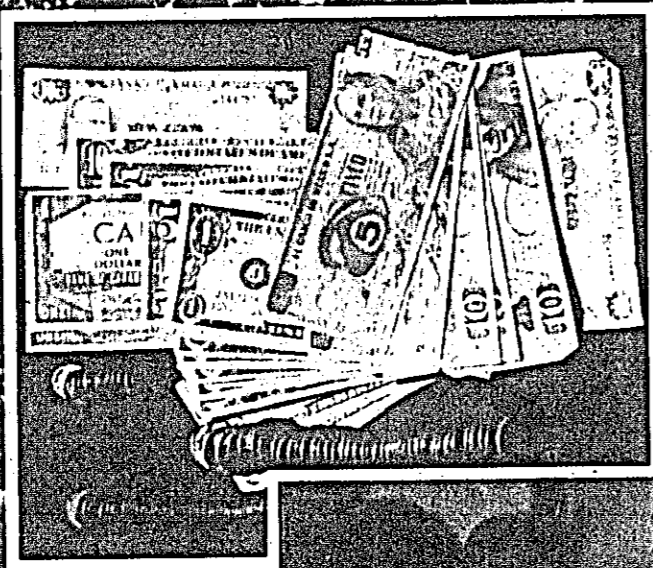
It is the divine dimension that matters most. Certainly in the light of that the pulpit responsibility is life's great assignment. It cannot be accepted lightly. It requires and demands your very best.

That pulpit can and should be the "open door" into the verities of the Truth that makes men truly free. It should be the entrance into life eternal and the road to the best God has for those who seek and serve Him.

What an awesome privilege to be a pastor, preacher, evangelist, speaker of divine truth. What an awesome responsibility!

—General Superintendent V. H. Lewis

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NOVEMBER 19



See Your Stewardship Kit for Resources to Promote These Emphases.

The Ugly Duckling

By E. S. Mann

Remember the story of the ugly duckling?
The mother duck was upset.
One large egg had taken an unusually long time to hatch.
At length, however, she led her new brood to the barnyard.
The large duckling created a sensation.
He was different.
He was chased and bitten and shunned.
He was the butt of the whole duck-yard.
Other ducklings thought him ugly.
The senior duck judged him a poor specimen.
"It's a pity you can't make him over again," she said.
Some tried to make him over.
When unsuccessful, they wanted to get rid of him.
They felt he didn't belong.

Time passed.

You recall the outcome.
Eventually the ugly one developed beautifully.
He became the most handsome swan in the neighborhood.

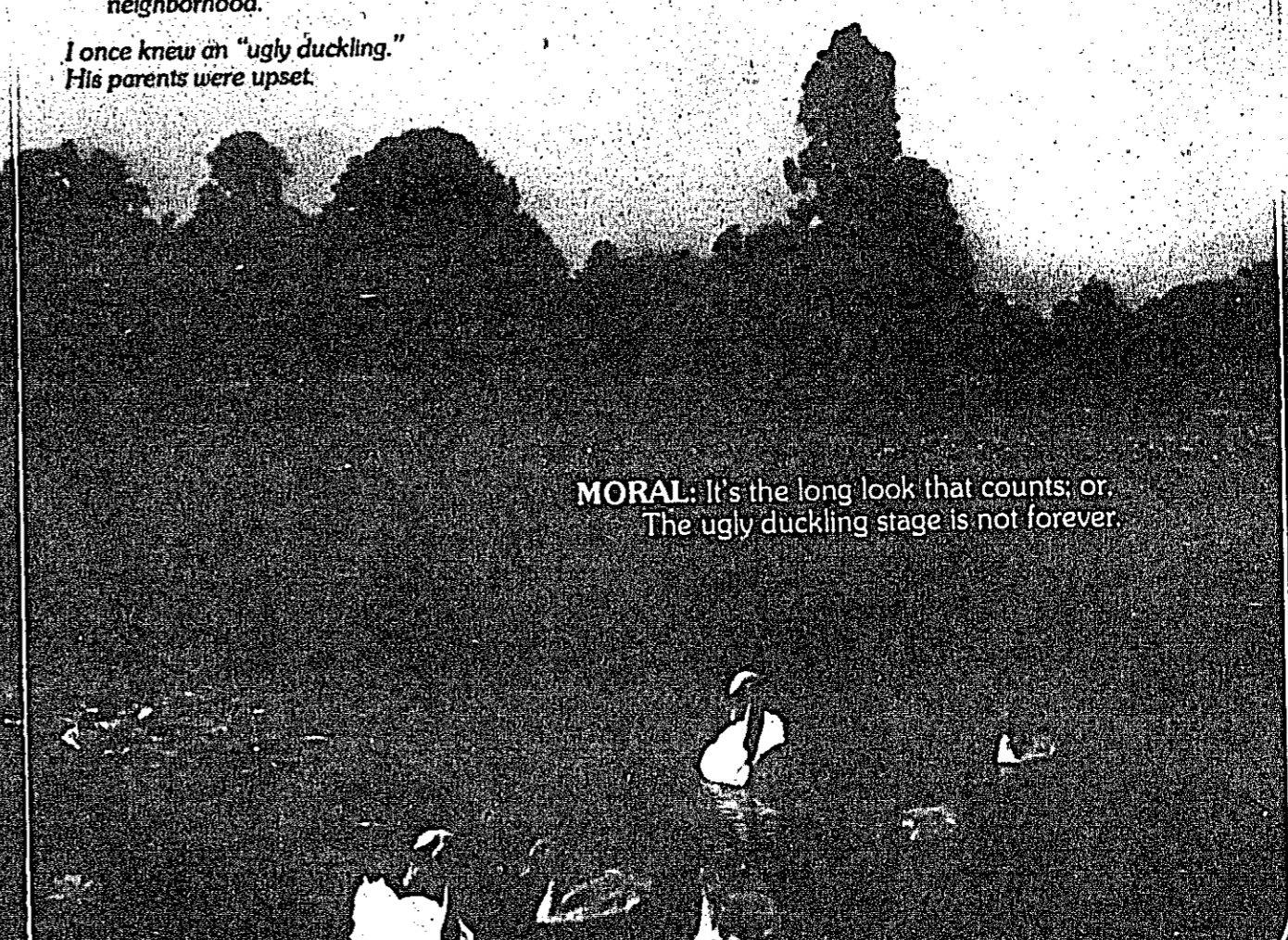
I once knew an "ugly duckling."
His parents were upset.

They actually despaired of him.
So—they sent him to a Nazarene college.
He didn't seem to belong there either.
He was different.
His ways were not the ways of his fellows.
His activities were notoriously awkward.
His antics were noised abroad.
Some said he should be excluded from the barnyard.
Others said, "I can't support such ugliness!"

Time passed.

He, too, eventually developed beautifully.
He did not, of course, become a handsome swan.
He did, however, become a vibrant Christian.
He is married with three lovely children.
The Nazarene church he pastors is growing rapidly.
Those most intimately involved are profoundly grateful . . .
Grateful for the stability of the environment
In which he spent his most awkward
And most vital years.

MORAL: It's the long look that counts; or,
The ugly duckling stage is not forever.



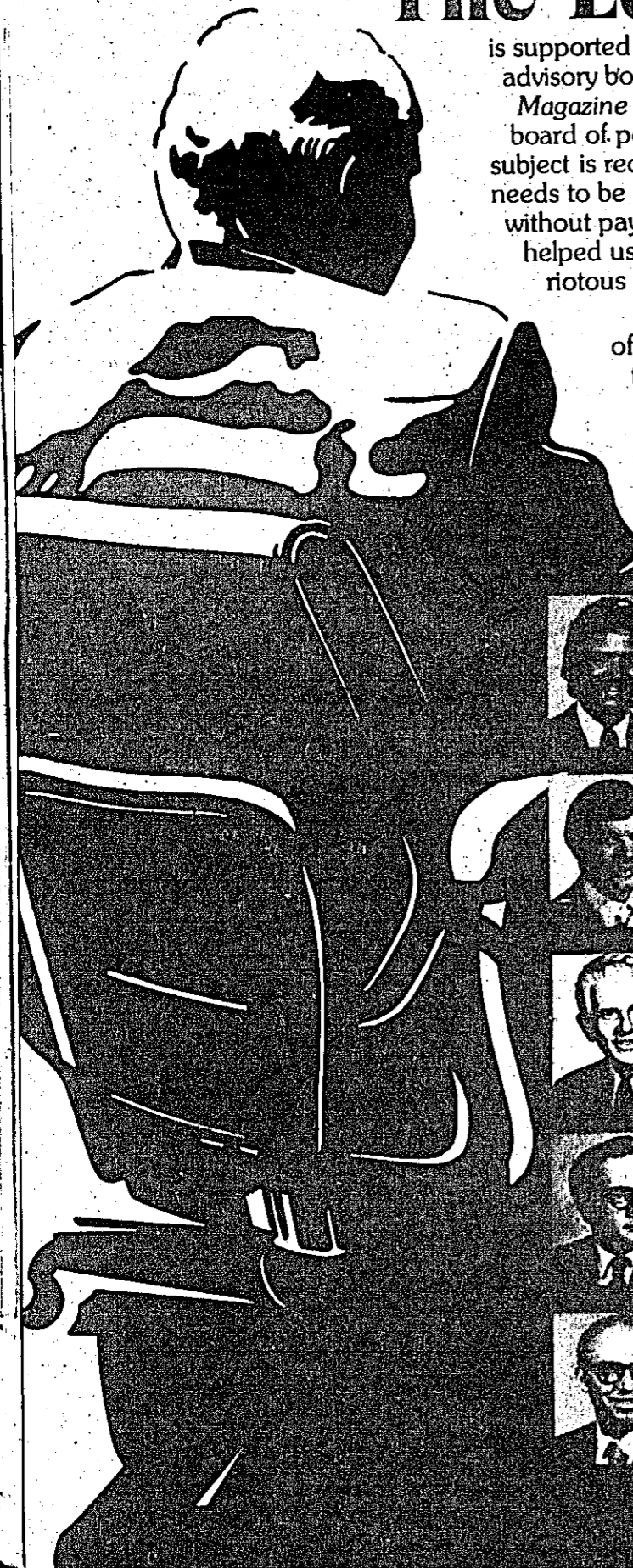
At the *Preacher's Magazine*

The Editorial Chair

is supported by the wise counsel of a rotating editorial advisory board. Each issue of the new *Preacher's Magazine* will accent a quarterly theme. An advisory board of persons with experience and expertise on the subject is recruited to tell the editor and his staff what needs to be said about the accented theme. Serving without pay, the editorial board pictured on this page helped us put together this issue on "Preaching." A riotous burst of applause is due these gentlemen.

Future boards will be helping us frame issues of the *Preacher's Magazine* on these pertinent themes:

- Well, What About the Sunday School?
- Pastoral Care
- The Epistle to the Ephesians
- Christian Holiness
- ... and many more



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Assistant Professor of Preaching
Travecia Nazarene College



Dennis Johnson
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former pastor and "Showers of Blessing" preacher



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YOUTH

The Department of Youth Ministries has been saying to students on Nazarene college campuses in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Asia, that there are so many places where God's love must meet human need. We want to help them come together. In fact, we want to make it possible for students to *be there* when it happens. This is "Youth in Mission." It is one way to deliver committed student energy to areas of significant world need. The "coming together" process will allow students to experience the mission... the ministry... the church.

This fall the department is conducting its annual "Festival of Youth in Mission" on all U.S. Nazarene college campuses, Nazarene Bible College, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Canadian Nazarene College, and others. The Festivals will feature the basic programs which make up Youth in Mission for the Summer of '79.

This Fall on Nazarene Campuses

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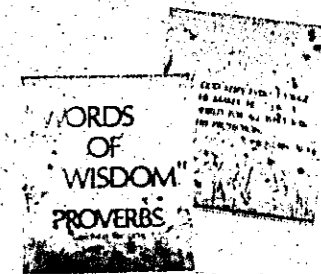
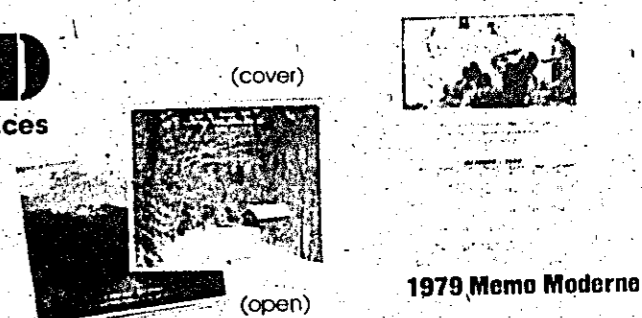
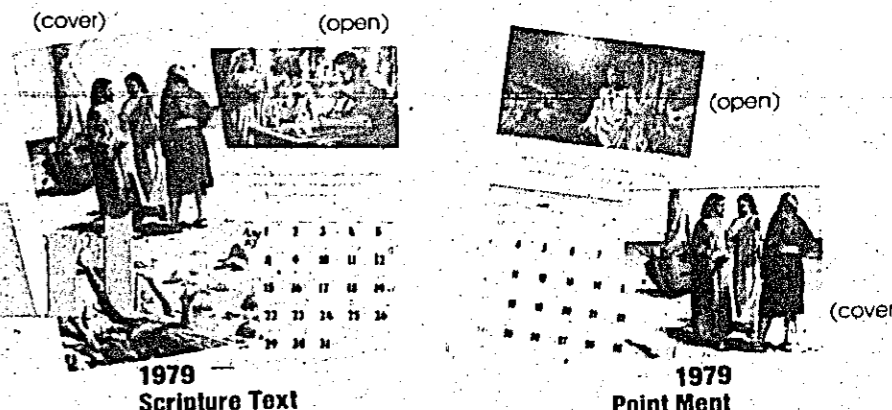
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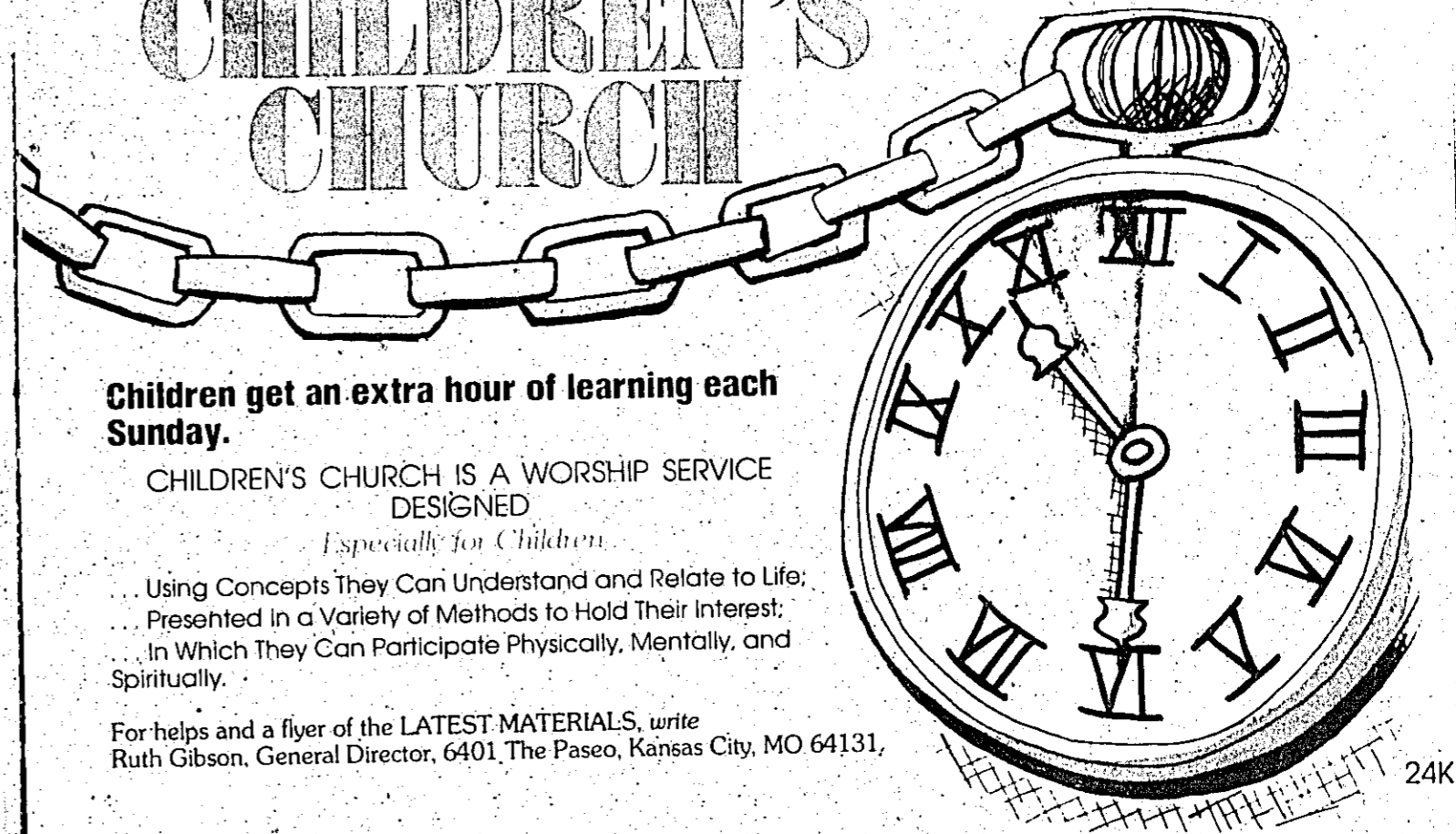


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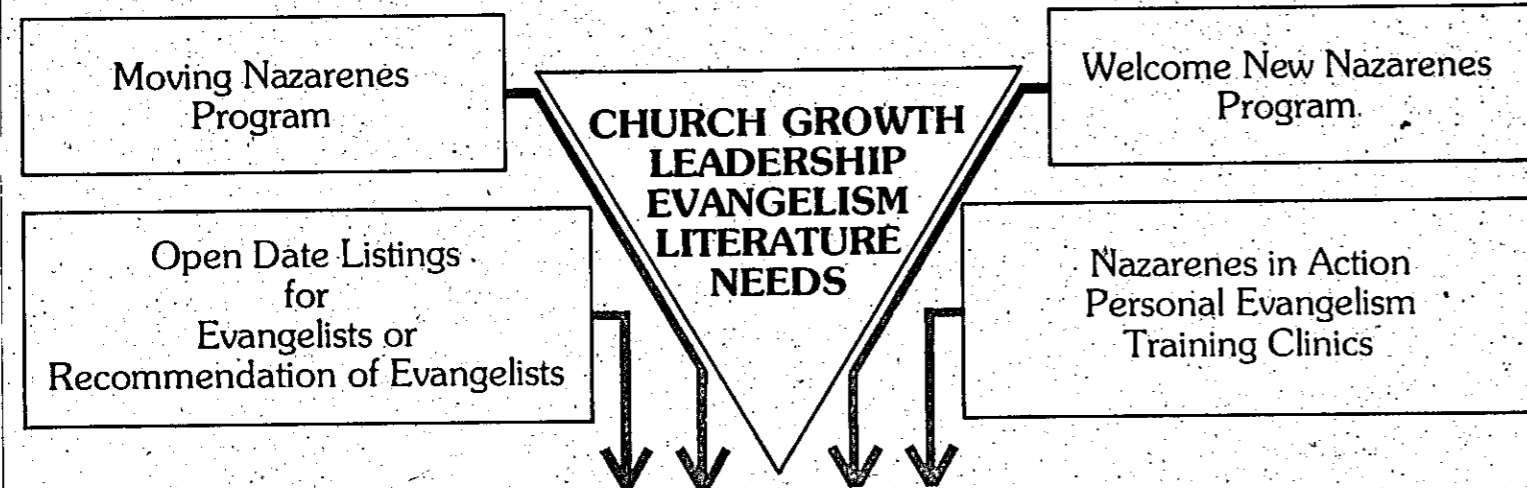
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The Chaplain's moral and spiritual ministry is significant. 24M

Brethren, PRAY for Us . . .

that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you" (2 Thess. 3:1, NASB).*

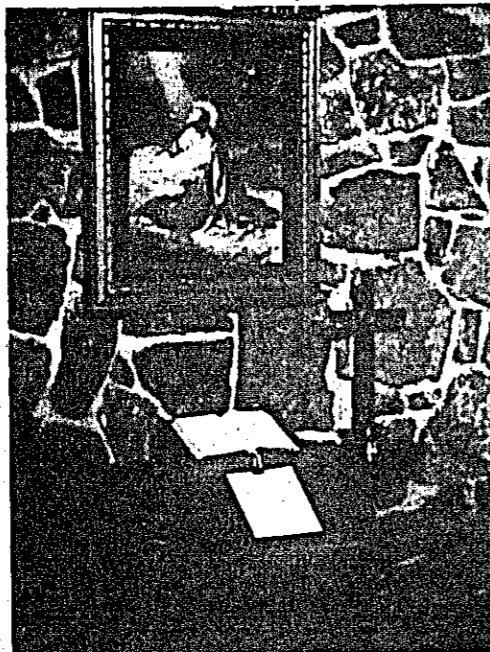
Fundamental to the attaining of our objectives are your prayers. "Without God, we cannot; without us, He will not." Without your prayers, we cannot achieve our mission described in our name:

Nazarene—NBC is an institution of the Church of the Nazarene.

Bible—The Bible is at the heart of our curriculum. The school was founded to train persons for Christian ministries, both lay and ministerial.

College—We are a college-level institution committed to Bible college studies fully accredited by the American Association of Bible Collegés.

Pray for Students—They were dedicated laymen in your churches. Sensing God's call, they have come here to study, many at great sacrifice, in order to secure training for their task. Most students are married (average age is 31) and must work full-time as well as attend their studies.



Pray for Faculty—The combined faculty of NBC has a massive teaching and pastoral experience in the Church of the Nazarene. Led by Dr. L. S. Oliver, president, they have a vision of excellence in training men and women for ministry. Your prayerful support will make a difference in what happens in them and in the classroom.

Pray for Trustees—These 17 men elected by the General Assembly meet annually each October to govern the affairs of the college. Outstanding churchmen, they solicit your intercession.

Pray for Worldwide Revival—NBC is committed to the revitalization of our church and the evangelization of the world. A strong emphasis on scriptural holiness is maintained. Since our students in 1977 came from 42 states and 5 international areas, a revival here would have far-reaching influence.

Pray for Finances—With an enrollment of 800, the operation of NBC requires a huge sum of money. A recent campus improvement was the construction of the new Music and Speech Building. If adequate contributions are received from the churches, it can be made debt-free.

Your church's prayerful support is requested in the Nazarene Bible College Offering, Sunday, October 8, 1978. Our goal is \$125,000. Send your offering to:

Dr. L. S. Oliver
Nazarene Bible College
P.O. Box 4746, Knob Hill Station
Colorado Springs, CO 80930

P.S.—In this matter of prayer, we covenant to reciprocate. Send us your request with description and it will be placed on the roll in Aycock Chapel, attracting the devoted concern of students and faculty.

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"Each man has his gift from God."

1 Corinthians 7:7 (NIV)

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Three Vital Roles of the HOLY SPIRIT

1 FOR OUR SALVATION

He convicts us of our sin and draws us to Christ.

2 FOR OUR SANCTIFICATION

He cleanses us through the infilling of His Spirit.

3 FOR OUR SERVICE

He endues us with power and gifts for the building up of the Body of Christ.

"Nothing is more important in practical Christian service than the recognition and use of the gifts of the Spirit."

These words from Dr. W. T. Purkiser's book *The Gifts of the Spirit* have taken on a vital new significance in today's atmosphere of positive church growth.

Dr. Kenneth Cain Kinghorn of Asbury Seminary says, "The rediscovery of this New Testament theme constitutes a breakthrough for the church that may prove to be one of the most significant religious developments of our century."

Dr. C. Peter Wagner has defined a spiritual gift as "a special attribute given by the Spirit to every member of the Body according to God's grace for use within the context of the Body."

This renewed interest among Christians in the gifts of the Spirit places a unique

responsibility upon the Church of the Nazarene, for this denomination was founded principally for the proclamation and demonstration of the sanctifying grace and power of the Holy Spirit in effectual service in men's lives.

It is logical, then, that the Church of the Nazarene would come forward with an innovative, Wesleyan, Bible-based study of the work of the Holy Spirit specifically as it relates to the charismata, or gifts.

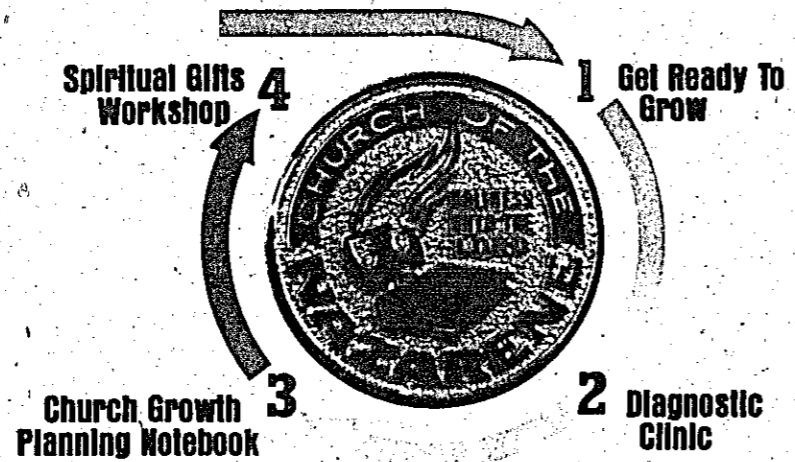
The Spiritual Gifts Workshop has been developed by the Kansas City Center for Church Growth under the direction of Dr. Raymond W. Hurn. It is designed for eight hours of intensive Bible study, and includes a Spiritual Gifts Profile which will be of great benefit to each participant in the examination of his or her own life.

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Department of Home Missions
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GROWTH Training Cycle



- 1 Get Ready To Grow**
 This is the indispensable first step to growth, and each church that desires to participate in the growth cycle should begin with this CST study. It sells for \$1.95. The accompanying *Strategy Manual* for the leader sells for \$2.00, and includes eight teaching transparencies for overhead projection.
- 2 Diagnostic Clinic**
 This material enables any church to pinpoint its areas of strength and weakness and make intelligent plans to get on the growth wagon according to the basic principles laid down in *Get Ready to Grow*. The Diagnostic Clinic packet sells for \$39.95, including the leader's guide and 10 participant's manuals. Additional participant's manuals are available for \$1.50 if needed.
- 3 Church Growth Planning Notebook**
 The Church Growth Planning Notebook is the third step in the growth training cycle. It includes planning instruments for the pastor and church board. The planning experience culminates in a church board retreat for the purpose of long-range planning. The packet sells for \$14.95 at the Nazarene Publishing House.
- 4 Spiritual Gifts Workshop**
 This workshop developed by the Kansas City Center for Church Growth under the leadership of Dr. Raymond W. Hum will assist churches in maximum mobilization of their people for the work of God. Developing spiritual gifts also provides for personal Christian growth. The workshop packet sells for \$34.95 and is available from the Nazarene Publishing House (S-3997).

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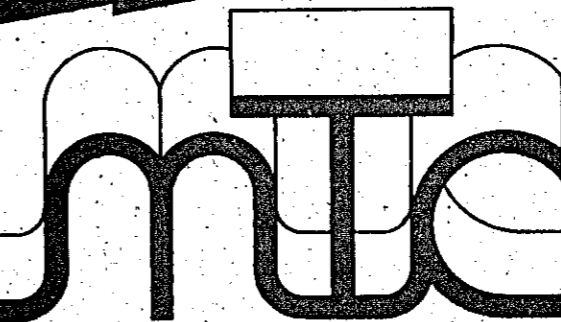
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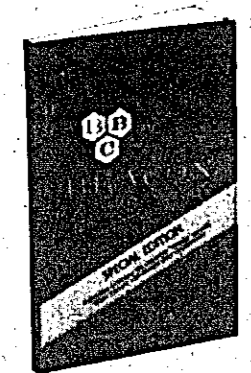
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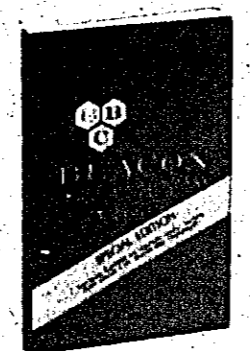


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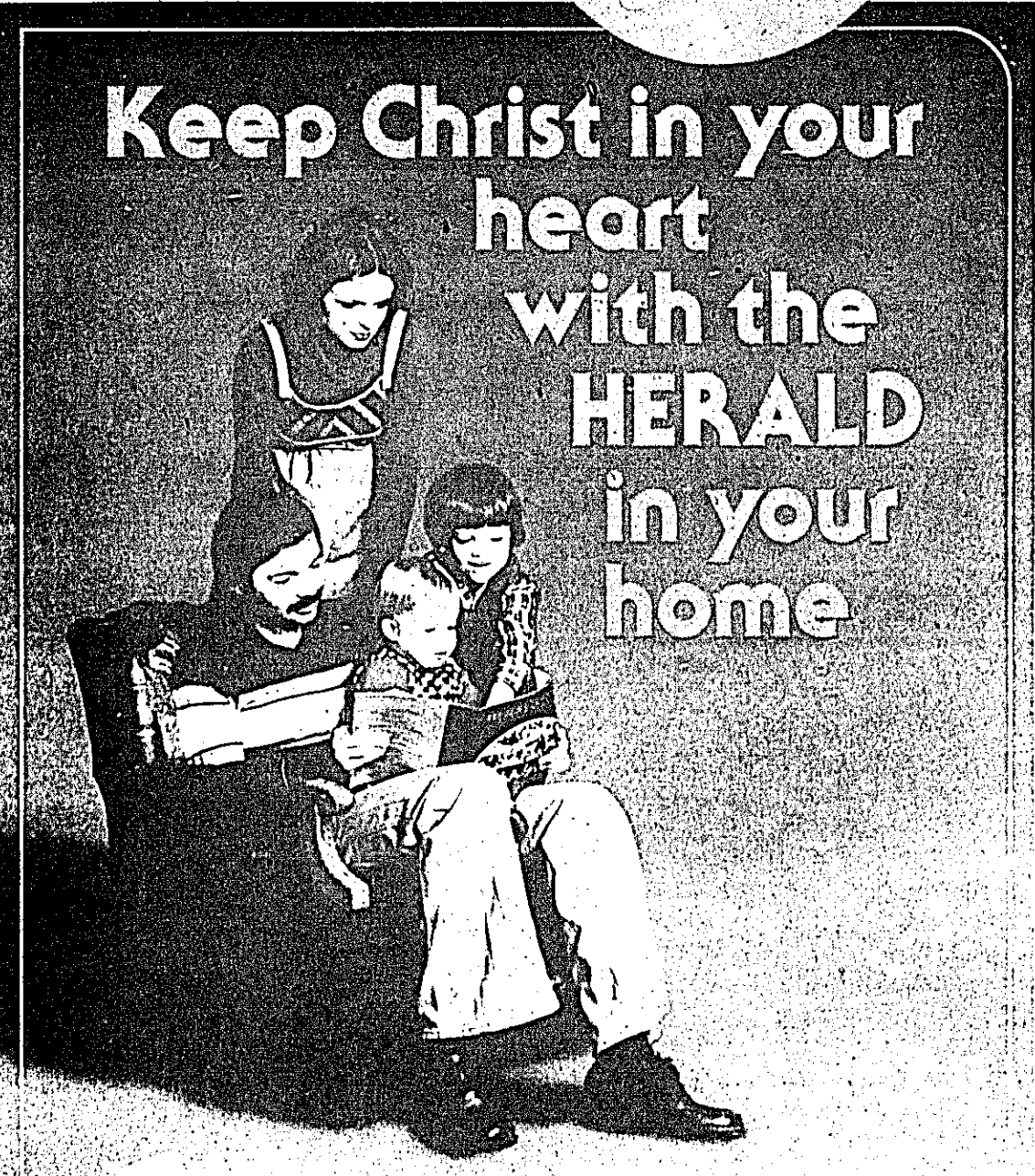
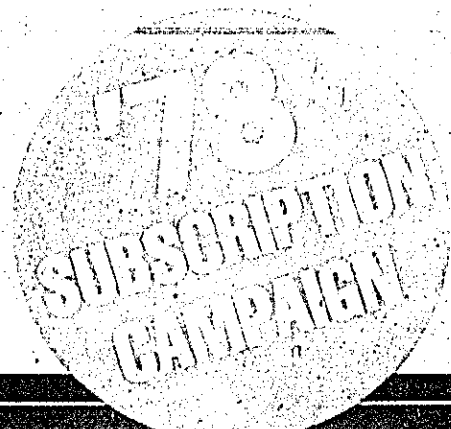
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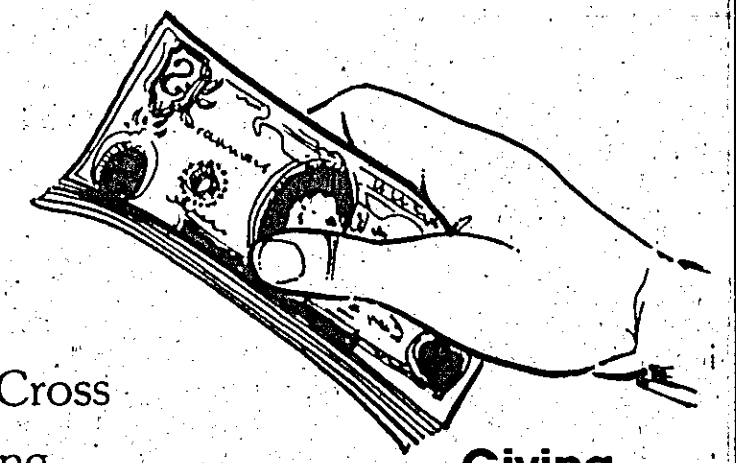
ail Self-interest to the Cross
 now the Joy of Giving

Send Missionary Workers
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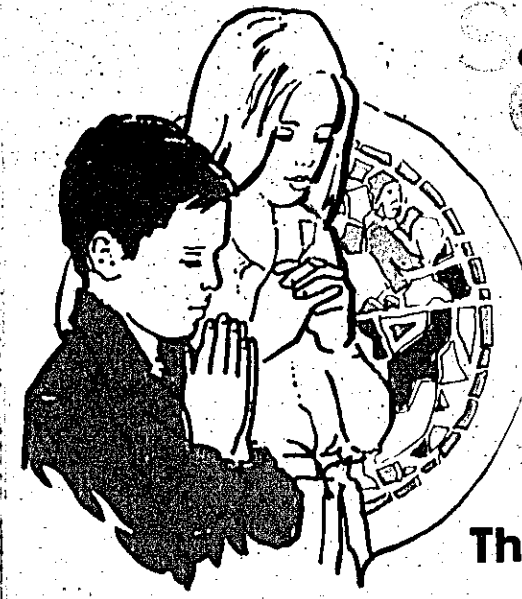
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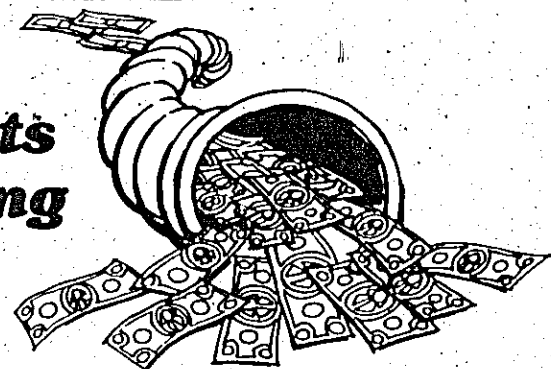
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Local Planning Day OF Retreat

Set Objectives & Priorities

1. Honor Schools Criteria

- 5% INCREASE Enrollment
- 5% INCREASE Attendance
- 5% INCREASE Profession of Faith

2. Fall Promotion (District Responsibility & Local Church Implementation)

- Attendance Emphasis
- Outreach Ministries—Find a need, AND MEET IT.

CALENDAR

September

- Addition Emphasis**
- Enlist everyone to enroll a new member
 - Prospects include: previous visitors to Sunday school or church, bus families, new residents

October

- Attendance Emphasis**
- Encourage all enrollees to attend
 - Make classes exciting and enriching
 - Show people you care for them

November

- Application Emphasis**
- Plan effective training
 - Encourage dynamic teaching
 - Provide a caring fellowship

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(Monthly plates published in the last issue of the "Herald of Holiness" each month)

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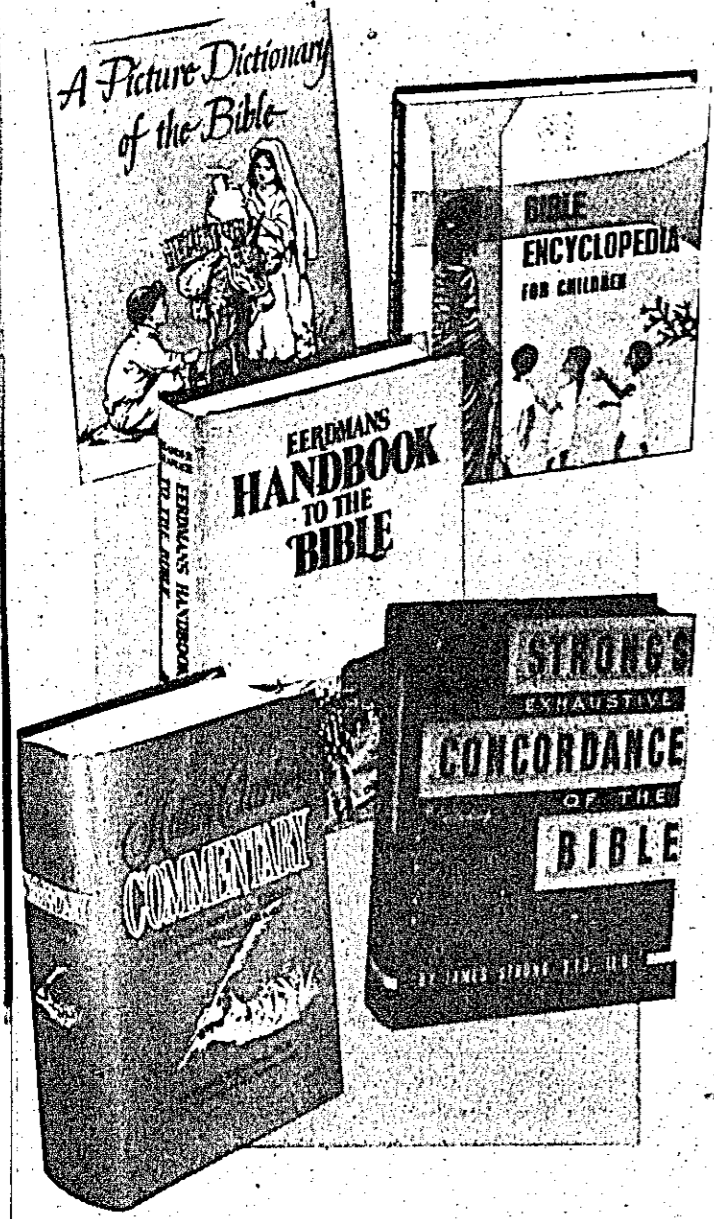
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- Who cares about them?
- Who is there to listen when they want to talk—
- To counsel when they want advice—
- To do special things on their birthdays—and in between—
- To send packages of homemade goodies—
- To write them letters, send cards, telephone—
- To invite them home for Thanksgiving and Christmas—
- To give them a place to go for summer holidays—help them find a summer job—
- To visit them for special programs at college—
- To send a corsage or a bouquet on their Big Days?

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Want to be an adopted aunt and uncle?
 Here's how you get in on this program—
 Write to Dr. William Vaughters, Department of World Mission, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

Tell him how many missionary boys or girls you want to adopt. One is fine, but you can have more if you want them. Dr. Vaughters will send you the name (or names) of missionary kids in the college nearest to your home.

You take it from there. Write, telephone, visit, send parcels, invite them home. Give them a special place in your lives.

You may save a distressed young person from despair and possible disaster, and help him or her adjust to a happy life in the U.S.

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The NIV is a transdenominational effort by more than a hundred top Bible scholars, working from the original languages to translate God's Word afresh.

Its history goes back into the fifties, although the major work was begun in 1967 when the New York Bible Society agreed to sponsor the project. The New Testament portion was successfully introduced in 1973; the Old Testament will be released in 1978.

The translation process.

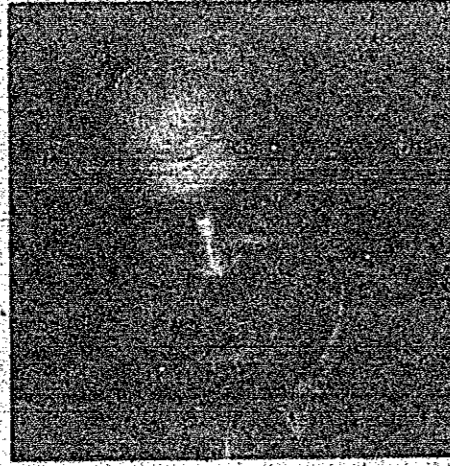
As work on the NIV began in earnest in the 1960s, a 15-member Committee on Bible Translation was appointed to oversee the work, with Dr. Edwin Palmer named executive secretary to coordinate the project. More than 100 noted scholars from leading seminaries and colleges in English-speaking countries were formed into five-man translation teams under the financial sponsorship of the New York International Bible Society.

The goal of these translators was to produce a translation that is accurate, clear, and dignified... suitable for public reading as well as private devotion, for study and memorization as well as evangelism. The belief of the translators that "the Bible alone, in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs" ensures their respect for and faithfulness to the text.

English stylists worked at all levels of the translation to make certain that it communicates well to all kinds of people. Through the use of idiomatic, contemporary English, they aimed for a combination of simplicity, clarity, and readability. At the same time they preserved the dignity of the Word of God by carefully using language that does not call attention to itself by unusual wording or faddish idioms.

The translation process followed safeguards the accuracy and clarity of the NIV. Each book of the Bible was assigned to a translation team of four or five persons, two of whom usually are specialists in that particular book.

The product of this first team went to an Intermediate Editorial Committee, which checked the translation for faithfulness to the original text and quality of English style. Next, the translation was sent to a General Editorial Committee, which again painstakingly pored over the work. Finally, the permanent Committee on Bible Translation carefully examined the work for final approval.



Ralph Earle, Nazarene Theological Seminary — member of Committee on Bible Translation, 15-man governing body for the entire NIV project.

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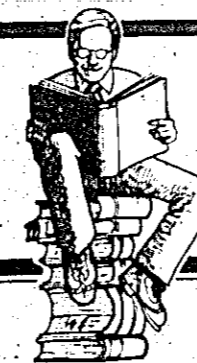
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Every book reviewed in this column may not agree at all points with evangelical holiness positions. Yet each book contains sufficient useful material to warrant bringing it to our readers' attention.

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By John Claypool (Word Books, 1977. 90 pp., cloth, \$4.95).

Stages will make you a better person and a better pastor. It will help you and your people confront the inevitable changes which you must encounter in life.

John Claypool holds the Bachelor of Arts degree from Baylor University, the Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Theology from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and is pastor of Northminister Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss. He says the university system helps prepare man for only the first one-third of life, but not the last two-thirds. This leaves a great vacuum in training. The church, on the other hand, influences man's life "from the womb to the tomb." It therefore holds the key to filling this vacuum.

Stages is a guide that draws on the life of David and the best in behavior science to help the reader anticipate the events and feelings he will have to deal with throughout life. The author examines life in its four basic stages:

CHILDHOOD: "A condition of helplessness and dependency." The time of life which holds the two basic challenges of finding one's own personal worth and the gifts he has within himself.

ADOLESCENCE: "That time of life that offers something painful for everybody." The most intense stage of life that carries the challenge for the parent "to let up without letting go, to step back without walking out on a relationship" and for the ado-

lescent "to pick up responsibility and walk forward into the world without walking away from one's sources."

ADULTHOOD: "The most strenuous segment of our existence" which carries the challenge to continue "to grow concurrently on the three basic frontiers of adulthood: work or vocation, relationships with one's 'significant others', and one's own unique selfhood."

SENIOR ADULTHOOD: "The final and climactic act." The time of life when the emphasis changes from doing and having to being.

It has been a long time since I have received so much help from such a small book.

—Jerry W. White

Searchlights from the Word

By G. Campbell Morgan (Fleming H. Revell Company, 1977. 384 pp., \$6.95).

G. Campbell Morgan's book is a profitable sermon starter that presents the Scriptures clearly and freshly, and prods the mind toward new biblical insights.

Morgan develops his sermon "searchlights" by using random verses taken from each of the 1,189 chapters in the Bible.

The preacher who is short on biblical study resources will find this a gold mine of detailed material.

Reprinted after being out of circulation for years, it is a welcome addition to the G. Campbell Morgan reader's library. It beautifully expresses his love of the Scriptures in clear, concise sentences.

Morgan makes no serious attempt to discover Christ in the Old Testament passages. The notable exceptions are Isaiah 49 and 66, along with scattered verses in the Prophets and Psalms.

—James T. Christy

A Pastor's Handbook of Church Management

By Barth Smith (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978. Approx. 200 pp., \$5.95).

Dr. Smith's handbook is a comprehensive collection of valuable ideas for today's minister. I wish I would have had it during my early ministry. It would have made me more effective in personal and church administration.

The guidelines regarding job descriptions for pastors, associates, and lay leaders are excellent. The discussion about organization is also good. Further ideas for conducting annual meetings, electing or appointing nominating committees, etc., are helpful.

Smith's discussion of constructing yearly budgets, preparing objectives, and rating public relations are all tremendously helpful to both pastor and layman.

Guidance given by Smith in conducting weddings, funerals, Communion, and baptism is valuable to both new and seasoned ministers.

Smith is to be complimented on his fine compilation of materials and personal ideas.

—Paul D. Mangum

PREACHING AND CHURCH GROWTH

by Dennis Johnson

"I've spent over 60 hours in church growth seminars, and preaching has never been mentioned," so said one preacher to the group gathered around the lunch table. What is the relationship between the church growth movement and preaching?

It is not an "either-or" situation. Church growth and preaching are neither competitive nor contradictory, but are complementary in at least three areas:

1. They work toward the same goal
2. They focus on common objectives
3. They share the challenge of the equipping and mobilization of the laity.

Preaching and church growth work toward the same biblical goal for the church. Stated simply, it is to make disciples. Note the statement of Dr. Paul Orjala:

Church growth, pure and simple, is the growth of the church by making disciples. Making disciples involves:

1. Helping people to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior;
2. Bringing them into the fellowship of the church;
3. Nurturing, training, and supporting them until they become ministering members of the Body of Christ.¹

Compare the challenge of Dr. James B. Chapman in his book on preaching:

There are really three discernable distinctions in the task to be done by New Testament preachers. These are: (1) to lead the lost to Christ for salvation, (2) to inform and indoctrinate those who have become children of God, and (3) to inspire and direct the church in faith, unity, and good works.²

Although he proclaims an unchanging message, the preacher's method must be ever changing. Church growth techniques offer tools for discovering the most effective methods for growth. The Word provides the dynamic power and motivation for the church to see her goal realized.

Not every church or pastor wants to grow. The first axiom of church growth stated by Peter Wagner is that the pastor and church must want the church to grow and be willing to pay the price. Given the desire to grow, preaching and church growth meth-

ods cooperate to make this come about. Neither is sufficient alone. Methods of church growth without effective preaching of the Word may become lifeless mechanics. Similarly, preaching that does not harness congregational energies toward the growth objective may be sterile and even frustrating.

Concerning growth, Ralph Winter of the School of World Mission, Pasadena, Calif., states there are four areas in which church growth operates in the activities of the church: internal, expansion, extension, and bridging. Notice Paul Orjala's definition of internal growth:

*Internal growth is the development of qualitative growth within the church, sometimes referred to as nurture. This involves doctrinal teaching and formation of ethical and spiritual patterns of life, and is the starting point for all other forms of church growth. Without internal growth, the church cannot be the church.*³

Internal growth is foundational to all other types of growth, and preaching is an essential ingredient. The centrality of preaching is underscored by Dr. Chapman:

God's method of preserving the purity and power of His Church is distinctly connected with the preaching of the gospel; and every other way, when it becomes a substitute for substantial preaching, results in spiritual deterioration and essential defeat. If the Church is to continue to be the Church, the chief place must be given to preaching the gospel in the hearing of the people who constitute the church.⁴

It has been so from the beginning of the Church. The apostles refused to be turned aside from their primary task of prayer and preaching (Acts 6:3-4). Paul's instructions to Timothy and Titus carried a reminder for them to emphasize their preaching and teaching ministry. He wrote Timothy, "Attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching" (1 Tim. 4:13, NASB).⁵

The words of Dr. Donald A. McGavran, the "father" of the church growth movement are especially fitting:

(Continued on page 49)

The Power of Pastoral Counseling as the Work of the Holy Spirit

by DeForrest Wiksten

The pastor who seeks to improve his counseling ministry is constantly seeking to acquire effective theories and techniques of counseling. He skims through the current issues of pastoral and psychological journals, scans the bookstore and library shelves and enrolls in three-day institutes on pastoral care, all in a rather frantic and feverish search for more power in his ministerial armament.

In the process he gathers bits and pieces of academic "fallout" from the assortment of schools of thought in clinical and social psychology, practical theology, and the many theories and methods of psychiatry.

With the ever-deepening and widening expression of the Christian ministry in the life of individual and community, there is no limit to the kind of problems that people will bring to the minister. It can reach such proportions of request and referral that the minister can easily begin to feel he is a sort of personal problem traffic manager, waving people on and pointing in this or that direction.

The holy mission of shepherding God's people in the way of God's grace becomes obscured by the superficiality of being an ordained social worker or the "poor man's psychiatrist." If he is to maintain his balance and professional integrity, the parish minister needs to be in touch with the unassailable power of his calling and the immutable confidence of his pastoral practice.

My psychiatric social work experience and parish ministry have contributed toward my concern to better know the solid ground upon which pastoral care and counseling may proceed. It is the contention of this paper that contemporary pastoral counseling, in theory and practice, will be strengthened for the parish minister as he is better able to perceive, appropriate, and articulate the source of crisis, change, and growth, all of which express the saving and healing presence of God.

The church doctrine for this reality is the doctrine

of the Holy Spirit. However, "mainline" Protestantism has, perhaps more than any other doctrine of the church, neglected this elusive but critical aspect of the faith. This is no doubt due to the abstract and mysterious nature of the matter in a day of concrete scientism and perversions of "Holy Spirit experiences."

The authentic doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the expression by the church of the active presence of God revealing himself into personal relationship with man and the self-understanding man derives from this encounter. The church has generally accepted the Scripture, tradition, and reason as the threefold means of authority, but the Wesleyan force has reaffirmed the insistence upon the inner validation of the Christian life as the work and reality of God's Holy Spirit.

The Wesleyan revival began to lose much of its force with the advent of the 20th century. The emphasis upon a subjective Christian experience through the indwelling of the Spirit received at "revival meetings" gave way to the sophisticate age of industrial achievement and the nihilism of two world wars.

Significantly, however, it is during these last five or six decades that we have witnessed the amazing rise of the personality sciences and the highly subjective enterprise of individual psychotherapy and personal analysis.

The second half of this century then finds the serious Christian grappling for ways to embrace at one and the same time the scriptural, traditional, and reasonable realities of Christianity and the sometimes contradictory insights of depth psychology. How can modern man, who is teased and seduced by the "peace which passeth understanding," repent and surrender without sacrificing his intellectual respectability?

The parish minister finds himself likewise caught in the middle. On Sunday morning he preaches his

monologue about God's grace and spirit of love which convicts of sin and quickens to salvation. But Monday morning comes and he faces a parade of anguished souls searching for meaning and purpose in their lives and he is perplexed about whether to use a "non-directive" technique, reflect feelings, interpret behavior, clarify sexuality, lead in prayer, or quote scripture.

If the peace which transcends man's understanding is available by justification through faith in God's reality, then the doctrine of God's present Holy Spirit must be the central power of the pastor's care and counseling.

To be sure, the debt which the parish ministry of pastoral care owes to the behavioral sciences is vast and incalculable. The grace and healing

It is God who awakens man to his own need. Man's capacity to respond to the presence of that to which he ultimately belongs is the legitimate object of scientific study. But the saving relationship of man with God is the work of God, for man cannot bring himself to completion any more than man can create himself.

Much of the average pastor's care and counseling are obscure and frustrating because he affirms a doctrine of man as a creature of God's creation, but the tools and methods of his counseling are appropriated from scientific humanism, and have no contact with God's initiative in the God-man relationship. For this reason the pastor often panics in the face of the weird assortment of psychopathologies which confront him in people whose

The pastor's counseling will be obscure and frustrating if he relies upon the tools and methods of mere scientific humanism.

power of God's Spirit is everywhere present and in untold ways is revealed in the so-called secular healing arts. But at the risk of overstatement, it is the burden of this paper to challenge the practising parish minister to become aware of and articulate the healing presence of God in the counseling process. He is too often only vaguely able to relate his faith commitment to the theological system and technical descriptions of what he is doing while he tries to help his people.

The lucidity and clarity of the psychological sciences have helped the minister utilize clinical training and experience. This has given the greatest boost to pastoral effectiveness in the last half century. But we must continue the progress by translating theological jargon for the benefit of both the parish and clinical worlds.

It is not his rational capacity, his emotional life, nor his moral consciousness that makes man in God's image, but it is man's awareness that he longs to know his Creator who is demanding the life He had created. This is the presence of God's Spirit in man which produces his capacity to recognize the One to whom he ultimately belongs. This Spirit continues to draw man into fuller communion and relatedness with the source-object of his longing.

The Christian doctrine of God as Creator expresses the prevenience of God and that man in simply having his life as existence had already been the object of God's gracious creative activity. Man's salvation, or the realization of his longing, is never the product of his own initiative, but is a response to the omnipresent reality of the Creator.

longing becomes expressed in personal crisis and breakdown.

In his panic he decided that the pastoral counselee is "sick" and must be referred. In so doing he amputates or aborts, at least for the time being, a possible-birth of the counselee's longing and contributes to the submerging of the only force that might enable the counselee to get in touch with that which will satisfy his longing.

The pastoral counselor can avoid such fragmentation in his work and of the people who come to see him, if he will realize that most of the inner conflict and outer confusion of the so-called neurotic, troubled, and even psychotic person is a manifestation of the person's longing for health and wholeness. It is a longing to be in relationship with God. It is the agitation of life by God's Spirit, and he cannot create it or stop it. He can only ally himself with it and relate himself to it.

The counselor is no more responsible for the healing and wholeness of his counselee than the preacher is responsible for the hearing of the Word in the worship service. The presence of the Spirit is as much a reality in the counseling situation as in the confrontation of the Word in preaching and sacramental experience.

In this way the counselor is like a midwife standing by, watching and enabling the birth process which is inevitable if nothing is done to inhibit it. Counseling is the process of *potently* waiting upon the Spirit of God.

Counseling proceeds on the same basis as the total mission of the pastor, namely, pointing through himself to the healing power of God's consuming

presence. He must affirm the Christian doctrine of man which says that man is constantly longing to know the order and meaning there is in life because God the Creator has brought order and meaning out of chaos.

Man's own life and existence are the creation story in miniature. That is, without God, his life is void and chaotic, separated and without purpose and direction and form. When man endeavors to experience his being alone, his being remains chaotic. His longing for order drives him to be united with that which will give form and substance to an otherwise fragmented existence.

At the "wellspring of his existence" is the longing and drive to effect that union. Everything man does is in some way an expression of that force. The

does not affect the real issues of health and wholeness. The pastoral counselor who has practiced as if he were a junior psychotherapist has experienced the incompleteness of methodology dedicated only to insight into the past-present relationship.

The forward thrust of the counselee's longing remains the ineluctable power driving him to that which calls him forward to life rather than back to the past. Just as so many have risen from the analyst's couch, after having probed and picked apart their oedipal configuration for years, saying, "Where do I go and what do I do from here?"—so the counselee wants help in the pastoral situation to encounter that reality which is calling him to become more than an explanation of all that is past.

The Holy Spirit is in truth the Counselor in every interpersonal relationship and not we ourselves.

counselor-pastor can add nothing to it or subtract from it. His counselee already comes fully equipped for achieving this union. His longing is often heavily disguised, but that does not mean it does not exist. He and the counselor are simply blind to it for the moment.

The source of the counselor's confidence is that this longing is inherent in every man and is always stronger than the "neurotic" and "psychotic" and "immature" masks which conceal it. This is in man the reflection and image of the eternal.

The Limitation of Insight

For several decades the humanistic psychotherapies have generally defined their goal as hearing through the achievement of insight. As Freud expressed it, "... to replace id with ego" or "... the replacement of neurotic misery with ordinary human unhappiness." The thrust of treatment has gone in the direction of enabling the patient or helped person to understand why he has felt and acted in the ways that were causing him to suffer.

The clues and answers were sought and supposedly found through the experience of insight into the causal determinism of past experiences impinging on the present state of suffering. Purportedly, if a person could uncover a sufficient number of his "traumatic" experiences he would soon relieve himself of the misunderstood or misinterpreted responses which constitute his ill body or ill style of living.

We have seen that months and years of agonizing memory probing and interpretations of the transference of feeling to the therapist just somehow

The past couple of decades have seen a rapid rise among the personality and therapeutic sciences of a concern for the dimension of man that is beyond the clinical manifestations of the neurosis-psychosis complex.

A. H. Maslow, Gordon Allport, Karl Menninger, Rolló May, Viktor Frankl, the Jungians, and the existential analysts are but a few who have reached out in theory and practice and touched upon the rapprochement which is inevitable between the psychological-clinical world and the theological-parish world.

Rather than talking so much about instincts, inhibitions, psychosomatics, and sexual dynamics, we hear more now from the sciences about impulses toward self-actualization, growth, and the maturity of appropriate striving. These are overtures to get in touch with man at the point of his innate and basic thrust of life which is his longing to be united with life that is greater and other than himself.

It is the conviction of Christian counselors that God is present in the counseling situation; "The Holy Spirit is in truth the Counselor in every interpersonal relationship, and not we ourselves. This is the most basic affirmation concerning the Holy Spirit as Counselor" (Wayne E. Oates, *Protestant Pastoral Counseling*, Westminster Press, 1962, p. 58).

The pastor engaged in counseling knows that the counselee is not in his hands totally, but that both are in the hands of God, and "underneath are the everlasting arms." The Holy Spirit is the counselor and it is not the pastor's task to prove God's love or

to defend God's character or prove His existence. The pastoral counselor relates himself to the Holy Spirit as counselor in much the same way that the doctor relates to life. Life is the healing agent, and the doctor cannot create life, he can only cooperate with it to the best of his ability. Likewise in counseling.

The counselor cannot, as said before, add anything to the counselee's capacity for the wholeness of knowing union with God. This does not mean he is not important—just the reverse. It is his capacity for detached optimism and enjoyment of human interaction that enables him to set the scene for growth and identification of appropriate striving.

The intention and work of the Holy Spirit is to

is to bring men to faith.

We are inclined to make insight, comfort, peace or happiness—rather than the often painful tensions of faith—our goals. The painful tensions of faith are those realities of life that encompass joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, despair and hope. The event of Jesus Christ is witness to the truth that this is what authentic existence is about. It is the faith of Jesus that makes this a possibility for all men. Unless this faith is the self-conscious goal of all pastoral work, that work will be dissipated in the quest of spurious and superficial goals.

The whole of the Christian faith is summed up in the doctrine of the Incarnation. This is the affirmation that the transcendent God has entered into

The only legitimate goal of counseling is to bring men to faith.

bring about the centering of man's energies, strivings, and loyalties upon the reality of God's presence in the life of man. The Holy Spirit focuses man in his own history, his vocation, and in his own destiny by constantly renewing the encounter that man has with God's demand that man respond to His holy presence.

I have said in regard to a doctrine of man that he is a creature created for striving and one who longs to be in union with that from which he came. The implication is that he is separated from the Creator, and this is affirmed over and over again in Christian theological affirmations about man's sinful state.

However, man's dilemma is that he has the capacity to choose the object of his striving, and his sin and sickness is that he chooses time and again to give himself partially to other than the God who demands man's all.

Faith as the Object of Counseling

If the work of the Holy Spirit is rightly understood by the counselor, and his own life has been exposed to the anxiety-reducing power of God's holy spiritual presence, then the process of counseling will be mostly free of judgment and condemnation of the counselee.

All too often the pastoral counselor is so bound by his own systems of fighting anxiety and idolatries that he can't wait and discern the nature of the work of the Holy Spirit which is already at work in the self of the counselee, convicting and quickening him to his sin and misery.

The counselor is tempted to step in with unnecessary moralisms or advice rather than giving himself to the trust of being under the same judgment by God's Spirit. This is mostly due to losing touch with the only legitimate goal of counseling, which

finite man's history and become man: become man in the taking of human finitude but perfecting that finitude by triumphing over suffering through faith.

The gospel is that man's sin, although inevitable, is no longer necessary because sin was shown to be overcome when the Christ surrendered to His own death and finitude. Man then is saved when he surrenders to his own death but rejoices in the giving up of himself in the name of Christ who was resurrected to eternal life with God. But the central force of the whole story is the relationship of suffering to love. Regin Prenter says: "Inner conflict may be said to be the battleground where the decisive final struggle between the law and the gospel, death and life, Satan and the Holy Spirit is fought. Therefore, the place where we may learn to know the Holy Spirit is in the school of inner conflict" (in *Christ and Selfhood*, by Wayne E. Oates).

A most potent aspect of the process of counseling is the relationship of listening. This is not passive but energetic and purposeful. The counselor listens but is not always able to understand what the counselee is trying to communicate. He is always guided by the longing that is deposited at the core of his being, through the Holy Spirit, but his communications are limited by his finitude. Through the activity and power of the Spirit he will sooner or later communicate what he needs to communicate. The task of the counselor is to listen and respond.

To be genuinely listened to is an enormously stimulating experience. It creates a vacuum in the one who is communicating that must be continually filled with his emerging self that is straining to achieve union with the Eternal Self.

This is at the same time a frightening experience. It is no wonder that many people who may have spent a lifetime demanding to be heard in an assort-

ment of ways fall mute in the face of someone who will potently wait and listen for them to reveal themselves. "A person often interprets being quietly listened to as mounting condemnation of himself. At such times he seeks expressions of trust and affection."

But these the pastor cannot always give him. "Love does not express itself on command; it cannot be called out like a dog to its master. Love is autonomous; it obeys only itself." For the pastor to say, "That is all right, I don't disapprove," without being bidden to it by his own self, would be a betrayal to his deepest trust (in the presence and power of the Spirit). "This is to say that health and wholeness exist in the depths of the unconscious, and the work of the counseling process is to learn to abandon oneself to it." It is to give oneself over to the Spirit of God in faith. (Quotations in italics from Robert C. Murphy, Jr., "Psychology Based on Human Longing.")

The Completion of Partial Experience

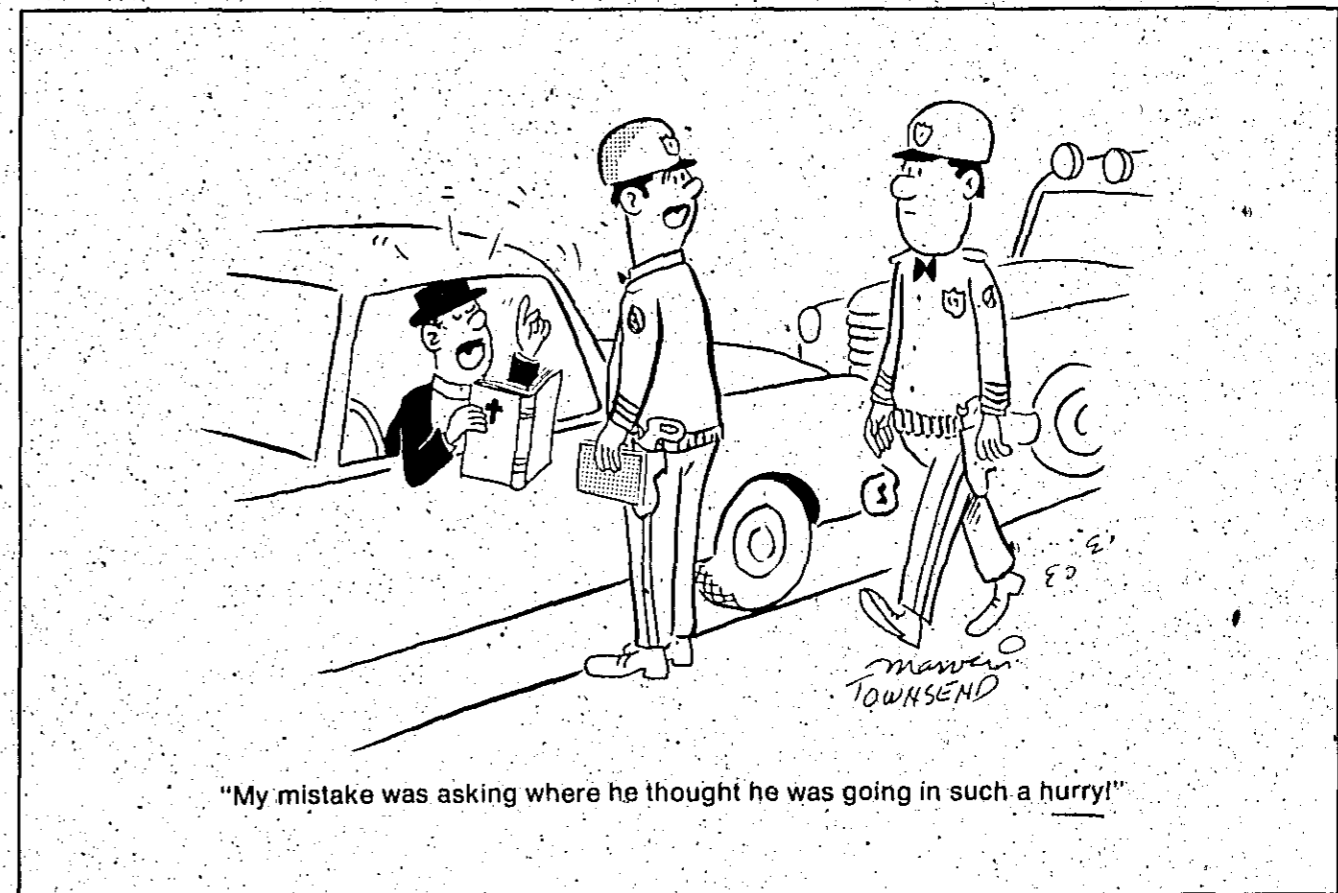
If the object of counseling is the experience of faith, the living of faith is always beyond the counseling relationship. Counseling that proceeds in the awareness of God as the author and object of the counseling will issue in the counselee expressing his faith in the only way possible. This is the way of worship.

If pastoral counseling is effective, in that it enables the counselee to experience that his struggling and striving are his longing for God, then the counseling event will produce the practice of worship. For man is a self whose longing drives him to complete himself by union with that from which he feels separated, and the paradox of existence and the Christian doctrine of grace is that the more of God that man knows, the more he longs to know. Or, alternatively stated, God is always demanding from man that which only God can give to man.

Man's longing for God is then partial. The awareness of his longing is partial and it is never complete except in the way that God makes it complete. This completion is the event of revelation of God in Christ, and man receives this revelation and responds only in the act of adoration, confession, and commitment of himself in the act of worship.

If counseling ends and the counselee is not enlivened to his need for worship, then the identification of the object of his longing has been less than the God who created his longing. It may well be that all too often he has prematurely terminated his quest by kneeling at the idol of painless and peaceful second-class selfhood, rather than immersing himself in the vigorous, vital, and purposeful tensions of the I-Thou relationship with God.

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WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO PREACH EVANGELISTICALLY —AND EFFECTIVELY?

by Lawrence H. Bone

Mere human manipulation, though inordinately popular, is not evangelism. Therefore it is necessary to define evangelism and then bring our ideas, motives, and methods within the scope of the definition.

The Anglican definition of evangelism is as follows: "So to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit that men shall come to put their trust in Him as their Saviour and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His church." To reach that goal requires consideration of several points.

1. The Person Doing the Preaching

Every preacher preaches against the backdrop of what he is as a person. He preaches wherever he goes and not only from the pulpit. If he is a godly man, he will exert a godly influence in his home, his community, and his church. In a genuine sense he must be able to say to people, "Follow me as I have followed Christ." This requires discipline, sincerity, honesty, and love. The preacher who can express this kind of spirit can influence people for God. Such example comes as a result of living in the Word, living a life of prayer, and showing compassion for people.

2. The Person Preached

It was said of Charles Spurgeon that no matter what was the subject of his sermon, that before he finished preaching he lifted up Christ. The Greeks came to Philip the disciple and said, "Sir, we would see Jesus." (John 12:21). Philip, the deacon, upon being invited into the chariot of the Ethiopian, "preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35).

Probably some of our silly notions that have been preached as "gospel" have alienated people from Christ whereas if Christ had been lifted up in His beauty, love, and power to conquer sin and the sinner, more people would have desired Him.

Our mission is to preach Christ. Our message is Christ. We are into the heart of the Christian message if we can say with St. Paul, "I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (2 Cor. 2:2). In doing this we will tell people of Christ's love for the sinner, of Christ's hatred of sin, of Christ's requirements for purity, of Christ's supply of power for living, of heaven where Christ takes His people, and of hell where Christ-rejecters send themselves.

Some will agree with such a message; others will disagree.

Christ will become the Living Stone and the Sure Foundation to those who agree and He will become a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense to those who finally refuse Him.

3. The Preparation of the Evangelistic Message

A pastor preached almost verbatim a sermon from a book of sermons written by one of America's great preachers. The author of the book of sermons was visiting in the same city and attended the church and heard his sermon preached. Needless to say, he must have heard a good message. When the visiting minister met the host pastor and speaker of the morning at the door of the church after service, he asked, "How long did it take you to prepare that good message?" The pastor replied by saying that he had prepared it in about three hours, to which the visitor responded, "It took me 10 years to prepare that message."

The way of least resistance may lead us to copy another's material, but too much easy dependence on the work of others can sometimes be embarrassing.

There are great Bible truths to be preached and great texts to be developed. In doing this one wisely turns to the works of great scholars and great preachers for

guidance and insight. But the material studied must be reworked. We must put our own stamp upon it and if we use something verbatim, let us give the source.

Genuine preparation involves heart preparation as well as that of the head. Hours spent in prayer until the Father reveals the Son through the Holy Spirit will prepare the preacher as well as the sermon. Genuine preparation is done only as God breaks our hearts over the lost.

It was said of a famous New England preacher that his power in public declaration was matched by his power in private devotion and intercession.

4. The Preaching of the Evangelistic Message

William Baxter said: "And so I preach as never sure to preach again—the message true. As dying man to dying men." A man must pray fervently, study thoroughly, read widely, condense and digest material carefully. Then when he goes to the pulpit with a profound sense of his own unworthiness and inability, and a knowledge that only by God's help can the message be delivered effectively, he will preach with power.

If he preaches with a desire that people will not see him but will see Christ, his hearers will know there is a prophet in their midst.

A young man preached a sermon in his home church and after the service asked his father how he did. The father replied, "Son, in preaching, some men stand in front of the Cross and some men stand behind it." Let us stand behind the Cross! In no other way can there be true preaching.

The purpose of the evangelistic message, as implied in the definition of evangelism, is to lead people to Christ. The goal of the

message is persons repenting and savingly believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior.

5. Preserving the Results of the Message

The new convert needs to be taught how to read and study the Bible; he needs to be taught how to discipline his time so that he maintains a daily schedule for his personal devotions. The new convert needs to have a mature Christian assigned to him for counsel, encouragement, and supportive fellowship. The new convert also must be led into the deeper life, the experience and life available to him in and after entire sanctification. John Wesley said, "Never encourage the devil by snatching souls from him that you cannot nurture. . . . Converts without nurture are like stillborn babies."

CONCLUSION

Let a word be said for passion in preaching, for without soul passion, few hearts will be warmed. One Christian leader lamented, "Fifty percent of our preachers are preaching without any heart." If there is any degree of viability in the statement, it should drive us all to our knees until we are touched anew with Christ's love and the fiery baptism of the blessed Holy Spirit. Eloquence is a great soul on fire for a great cause. Our message is the greatest; our cause is the greatest. Let us take heart.

Robert Frost said that an author writes what he wishes but a poet writes what he must. Preaching is the same—one preaches what he must. If the fire of God burns within, it comes out in power; if spiritual anemia prevails within, it too comes forth—in puny sermons. Frost also observed that the trouble with much modern poetry is that there is "no blood

in it." If our preaching is to move people toward God there will be blood in it—Christ's and ours.

Let a word also be said for receiving praise for preaching. While it is true that one mark of maturity is to be able to receive compliments gracefully, yet even in receiving the praise of men, we must be sure that Christ is exalted.

William Carey did a monumental work for Christ and souls in India. At one point in his ministry William Carey returned to England for a time and busied himself in trying to create greater interest for his missionary endeavors. In one meeting where he was to speak, the chairman, before introducing Dr. Carey, spent considerable time telling the audience what Carey had done. He told how many churches and preaching points Dr. Carey had established. He told of his work in translating the Scriptures. He told of the publishing work that had been established. Finally William Carey could stand it no longer. He arose, apologized for interrupting the chairman, and said, "I have sat here today listening to what William Carey has done. It has been Dr. Carey has done this and Dr. Carey has done that. Everything that has been said has been said about William Carey and not one word about William Carey's Christ. From now on, Mr. Chairman, I shall have to ask you to say everything about William Carey's Christ and not one word about William Carey."

Our labor of love for our dear Lord will cause people to think of Jesus as we preach. It will also cause us to glorify God and give the credit to Him alone as people express words of appreciation.

1. *Renewing the Spirit of Revival*, by Leslie Parrott, p. 109.

"Oh! that God would give me the thing which I long for; that before I go hence and am no more seen, I may see a people wholly devoted to God, crucified to the world, and the world crucified to them, a people, truly given up to God in body, soul, and substance. How cheerfully should I then say: "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

John Wesley

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF THE MINISTERING TEAM

by John Clark

Because of the rapid development of multiple-staff ministries in both large and small churches many problems have come to the forefront. Some problems exist because of the misunderstanding of the team approach to ministry. Others occur when inadequately trained personnel are hired to fill staff positions. One often recurring problem claims our attention for this article; however—the problem of interpersonal relationships among staff personnel.

A Biblical Philosophy of Ministry

Successful interpersonal relationships among staff personnel must be based upon a biblical philosophy of ministry. Paul's letter to the Ephesians speaks to us at this point. The team approach is clearly identified: Ephesians 4:11-16 states that God gives special abilities and gifts to His people to do certain things best. The purpose of these abilities and gifts is for the equipping of the saints in order that they (the saints) might do the work of ministry. A biblical philosophy of staff ministry then is not the doing of tasks but rather the growth and development of the people who are to do the tasks. If there is disagreement at the point of philosophy of ministry, serious problems among staff personnel will arise.

Team Spirit

If a basketball team is to have a winning season, teamwork is essential. The multiple staff also must work as a team if they are to enjoy success. The pastor must take the lead in helping his team

to know how to function effectively. Building the team spirit includes:

1. discovering, developing, and using spiritual gifts
2. defining responsibilities
3. affirming one another
4. resolving conflicts.

The pastor as the key to the development of the team spirit must keep in mind that it *seldom develops quickly*; time and patience are required.

When we are able to exercise our God-given spiritual gifts, individual growth occurs and the encouragement of individual growth is an important way to build team spirit. This eliminates the "errand boy" philosophy that often causes conflicts and frustrations when staff members are not using their gifts to achieve church objectives.

Clear Job Descriptions

Clarification of staff responsibilities is also necessary for a winning team spirit. An adequate job description which includes an organized summary of the duties and responsibilities is the first step in identifying and clarifying the position that each staff member will fill. Unwritten job descriptions lead staff personnel to uncertainties and misunderstandings which produce potential interpersonal problems. After defining and clarifying the job description, careful attention should be given to insure that the methods of achieving his assigned objectives are in accordance with the staff members' God-given gifts.

Affirmation Helps

Another element so important in developing successful team ministry is that of affirming one another. Affirmation helps the staff member to know that what he or she is doing is valid. Several ways in which staff personnel can affirm each other are:

1. Listening attentively—the awesome power of the listening ear communicates care and worthwhileness;
2. Sharing one's feelings, and hopes in an honest and open way;
3. Helping each other to identify and capitalize on their strong points and work on their weak points.

Resolving Conflicts

Resolving conflicts that are going to naturally occur among staff members is a real test of team maturity. Conflicts can be positive elements of growth if they are dealt with properly. Identifying and removing causes of conflict is necessary for the continued growth of the team. Because we are human there will be times of misunderstandings, mistakes, and failures. These must be dealt with openly, expressing concern and love through informal conversations, conferences, and staff meetings.

His "gifts unto men" were varied. Some he made his messengers, some prophets, some preachers of the gospel; to some he gave the power to guide and teach his people. His gifts were made that Christians might be properly equipped for their service . . .

1. From the *New Testament in Modern English*, Revised Edition © J. B. Phillips 1958, 1960, 1972. By permission of the Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. Used by permission.

GLEAMS of IMMORTALITY

Conclusion of the Series on Immortality

by W. B. Walker

Job was deeply concerned about the immortality of the soul. He finally emerged from his doubt and declared, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (19:25).

The scripture is the final answer to Job's question. We are baffled if we depend on other evidences alone. The Bible is our book of hope. Immortality is clearly taught in the Scriptures. Let us turn to its sacred pages in time of sorrow and anguish. Through this revelation of God, we can stand beside the casket of our loved one and rejoice in the hope of a better day.

The Old Testament Teachings

Even the language of the Old Testament presupposes a future life. Prophet after prophet rejoiced in this blessed hope. The translation of Enoch and Elijah and the going hence of the saints of that faroff day reveal the universal belief in a life beyond the grave. Abraham sought "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). And Moses endured "as seeing him who is invisible . . . for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb. 11:27, 26).

David peered into the future and declared, "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness" (Ps. 17:15). "Abraham gave up the ghost . . . and was gathered unto his people" (Gen. 25:8). And Isaac was also gathered unto his people. "And Jacob yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people" (Gen. 49:33).

At the death of his son, David said, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23). David expected to go to his child in the realm of departed spirits.

The belief in familiar spirits and the tendency to consult them was a demonstration of belief in the future life. Saul went to the witch of Endor in the time of distress and trouble. He was deeply concerned

about the future—he wanted to look on the other side of life. There are many about us today who desire to peer into the future. But many seek for information from the wrong source. Such passages as 1 Sam. 28:7, and many others, prove without a doubt that the belief in the hereafter was common in the ancient world. The inscriptions on the tombs, and the writings found in the mummy cases show that the Egyptians believed in a future existence.

The Pharisees in the New Testament believed in immortality. The dying thief on the cross was assured that he would be with Christ in paradise: "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). This passage assures us that where Christ is, there we shall be also. It speaks strongly of a life beyond the grave and our association with the Lord.

The apostle Paul says, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). He was between life and death, and had a strong desire to be with Christ, but it was better for the Church that he remain.

"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), declares Paul the apostle. This passage teaches us three things: (1) There is a place being prepared for the saints beyond this life. (2) The condition of the holy is even better in the future life. (3) The change for the better takes place immediately after death.

Stephen was stoned to death. His face shone as the face of an angel. He looked beyond this earthly state and saw Jesus on the right hand of God. He offered prayer for the forgiveness of his murderers. And then he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59).

On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus and the disciples, "And behold there appeared Moses and Elias, talking with him" (Matt. 17:3). These saints had been dead for centuries. They were in the spirit world. Truly they were conscious. The certainty of the believer is

a heaven where rainbows never fade, suns never set, babies never cry, and mothers never die.

Because He Lives

As a final answer to Job's ancient question, "Shall a man live again?" I consider the answer of Christ.

Jesus was the Savior of men. He was the fulfillment of all the dreams of the prophets. Patriarchs and kings acknowledge Him as the Savior of the world. He is conceded to be the greatest of the prophets. He had eyes of fire that penetrated into the deep things of God. The Master clearly taught the survival of the soul after death.

To Christ, that such men as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were mere heaps of dust was incredible and absurd. He declared to one school of thinkers who denied life after death that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32). The Master entertained no doubts about His resurrection. Jesus did not argue—He affirmed.

There is not a trace of speculation or conjecture in His words about the future life. "In my Father's house are many mansions: . . . I go to prepare a place for you; . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). There are four things in these two verses that should thrill our souls when we think about the future. (1) That He was going away. (2) That He was going to prepare a place in the future for His believing children. (3) That He was coming back to this world again. (4) That where He is, we shall forever be. Truly the Master states this truth with all the calmness and certainty of one who gives expression to an indisputable and demonstrated fact. There is no doubt that Jesus went to the Cross with the firm conviction that after death He would live again.

After the death of Christ and His resurrection, the disciples of Christ went abroad preaching that death had lost its sting and that the grave could win no victory. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory" (1 Cor. 15:57). Jesus convinced His followers that He was still alive after death, and He was in communion with them.

In the preaching and teaching of the disciples, the two words that had in them the sweetest music were "Jesus" and "Resurrection." So these early disciples went everywhere proclaiming this blessed certainty.

Our Master illustrated the certainty of immortality by His own example. He was crucified by His enemies. He suffered the pain of physical death.

Demons laughed in hellish glee when He was crucified. Perdition was all astir because the plan of the ages was seemingly coming to naught: "It is finished" (John 19:30). He cried. His head fell limp on His breast.

Our Lord was taken from the Cross on Friday evening. It was so near the Sabbath that they borrowed a tomb for Him. He was placed in the tomb, and the tomb was sealed tightly. The Roman soldiers guarded the tomb. The third morning dawned and the gray of the east spread itself over the hills and valleys. The light fell upon the soldiers' spears and shields. There was a rush of pinions and a shining one approached the tomb and broke the governor's seal as if he cared nothing for his authority.

The angel of God rolled away the stone and sat down upon it. The Son of God stirred up in His bed, opened His eyes and came forth from the tomb like one who comes from a pleasant sleep. He stood upon the brink of the grave and looked into the depths of it. "O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55). He cried out. Then as Death fled in terror, "O death, where is thy sting?" (1 Cor. 15:55).

Lifting up His voice so that it comes ringing across the centuries, even reaching us in our need, He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). Thus our immortality is sure. Our Lord left a light burning in the tomb that all the storms of doubt and time cannot extinguish. He broke the bars of death asunder and left us His guaranty of immortality.

In that land beyond this earthly state Jesus will be heaven's Morning Star (Rev. 22:16). He will be the center around which all the splendors of heaven shall revolve.

*All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.*

Thank God, He will be there to give life, beauty, and glory to all the attractions of the clime! My eyes shall behold Him! I shall hear His tender voice! I shall look into His smiling face!

*When my life work is ended, and I cross the
swelling tide,
When the bright and glorious morning I shall
see,
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the
other side,
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.*

"Do not forgive us unless we forgive. Hold back Your pardon if we are to hold back our pardon. If we are carrying bitterness and resentment against other people, O God, do not forgive us."

—Martin Luther

THE MINISTER'S MATE

NEW FULFILLMENT FOR THE PASTOR'S WIFE

by C. S. Calian

Many a pastor's wife has remained cheerful while, willingly or grudgingly being victimized as an unpaid servant of the church. She has been cautious and cooperative while lonely and frustrated. The rights of women and the rising number of women pastors have brought the pastor's wife to a new threshold of self-awareness; she no longer harbors guilt for her needs of personal identity.

To be the wife of a professional is both satisfying and frustrating. There is both status and loneliness in such a situation. It would be instructive and therapeutic for the wives of professionals in several fields to meet and discuss together their woes and pleasures. Many will be sharing the same conflicts and problems. So often the wives of clergy feel particularly exploited. Seen from a broader perspective, however, her joys and problems are shared by a wider circle of wives married to professionals. For example, Dr. James L. Evans of the Institute of Living in Hartford, Conn., has indicated that wives of medical doctors are often deeply troubled.

The same phenomena can be observed among the wives of business executives. The *Wall Street Journal*, in several lead stories, underlines the fact that wives of executives pay a heavy price for their husbands' success. Take, for instance, the case of the executive living in a comfortable home with three children, two cars, but a bitterly unhappy marriage. As their income grew, his hours away from home increased. The wife is suffering from deep-rooted emotional dissatisfaction, and her husband is the victim of sheer exhaustion from long hours and worry about his job. According to Allied Van Lines, who move many executives around, the num-

ber of families in similar situations is considerable. Corporate executives have been known to move as many times as a pastor's family; both are conditioned to a nomadic existence.

The women's movement has encouraged more of these frustrated wives of professionals to pursue careers and seek satisfying jobs as part of the answer in the midst of dissatisfaction and loneliness. Yet working partners with two careers can also be a new source of frustration if the fundamental understandings and goals of each party are not based upon a common consensus. Liberation involves more than material security or pursuing a career. Both are certainly factors in one's well-being, but a wife's liberation (as well as her husband's) can come only when each discovers the quality of relationship they wish to have with each other.

The primary relationship of a wife to her husband and a husband to his wife needs to be under constant review. Nothing should be taken for granted. The tendency of most partners married to professionals is to blame the profession for the dissatisfactions that might later result in the breakup of the marriage relationship. This is true for the wives of many clergymen who often feel victimized by their husbands' profession. In London, the wife of an Anglican clergyman is reported to have said that "clergymen should be celibates because being married to one is a lousy job." According to her, she had married seven years earlier with the high-minded vision of working with her husband in a great venture. "But here I am, surrounded by four children, tied to the house, expected to turn up at every cat hanging, and feeling like a widow as my

The tendency of most partners married to professionals is to blame the profession for the frustrations and marriage-wrecking tensions they experience.

husband is always on duty." She goes on to say that "I resent also the double standards maintained in the parish. A clergy wife is expected to run the conventional things, turn up at church and every other connected social affair, whatever her domestic circumstances may be. One receives no encouragement for managing it, but plenty of blame when one does not. I also resent the fact that I have to be myself, self-consciously. I resent the basic idea that somehow we are different. Clergymen ought to be celibate because no decent, right-minded man ought to have the effrontery to ask any woman to take on a lousy job. It is thoroughly unchristian." I wonder how many wives of clergymen would to some degree echo her sentiments.

Another case is found in a letter sent to Ann Landers from an unhappy pastor's wife.

Dear Ann Landers:

I have written you dozens of letters and torn them all up, but I promised myself that this letter is going into the mailbox. I am a pastor's wife who is sick of the de-

Insofar as she conceives of her role as a minister's wife as being something 'extra' or more than her primary relationship of fulfilling or complementing her life's partner, she is likely to face disappointment and unhappiness.

mands made on me and my family. There are approximately 500 members in my husband's congregation and approximately 500 ideas on how a pastor's family should live.

My husband puts in at least 70 hours a week, yet there is never a free evening just for us. We must visit the sick, visit the bereaved, visit the couple who had a new baby, visit the old woman who fell down and broke her hip.

The phone rings in the middle of the night. Mrs. So-and-So's husband is an alcoholic and he hasn't been seen since 3:30 p.m. A widow is worried about her teenage son. He took the car without permission and she is sure he is dead in a ditch. A hysterical neighbor phones to say her daughter has locked herself in the bathroom and is threatening suicide.

Yesterday my husband received a letter criticizing the dress I wore Sunday. It was too short. I am expected to serve on all sorts of committees. It is assumed that I will pour tea and stand in the receiving line of every civic and social affair. Some nights I think my feet will fall off.

When I married my husband, I wanted to help him serve God, but in the 18 years he has been in the ministry I haven't seen even one life changed because of our efforts.

I hope you won't think I'm mercenary, Ann, but I bitterly resent the fact that we will never own our own home and we will always have to scrimp to make ends meet. The cost of living has skyrocketed in the past 10 years, but my husband's salary is the same as it was in

1958. He is a brilliant man, and I know we could have lived much better if he had chosen any other profession.

Please give a word of encouragement.

—Losing Heart!

Ann Landers was not able to help "Losing Heart." The famed columnist hoped some other pastor's wife who had worked through a similar situation would respond. A few months later, Ann Landers printed a response to "Losing Heart" from another pastor's wife of 20 years' experience.

Dear Losing Heart:

When I married I was determined to be the most universally loved minister's wife in the world. I soon learned it was impossible.

I tried playing the role of Fashion Queen. The criticism was scathing. I then tried dressing more conservatively, and was carped at for looking "down at the heels." When I ran myself ragged with committee work I was accused of trying to be "the center of everything," so I cut back on community work and did very little. I

was then hauled up short for my indifference—even called "snooty."

My first three years as a pastor's wife were nightmarish. I felt as if I had failed miserably and was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. It took a lot of nerve but I decided to talk over my problems with another pastor's wife, one who was handling her life beautifully. She set me straight. Her advice was: "Stop trying to play a role. Be yourself. The person who tries to please everyone pleases no one."

Now I dress to please myself and my husband.

I never pour at teas or serve on committees unless I truly want to. If a cause doesn't appeal to me I don't become involved. I'm so busy with activities that do inspire me that I no longer feel guilty if I don't give a piece of myself to everything.

My husband is still overworked, but I've learned how to make our time together count. You can be sure I'm not the most popular pastor's wife in the world, but I now have a genuine sense of joy and fulfillment. I would not change places with any woman I know.

—Columbus, O.

What had the experienced pastor's wife, Columbus, O., learned? What enabled Columbus, O., to be herself? An underlying assumption in a working marriage partnership should be the mutual desire on the part of each partner to help the other to be herself or himself. This goal should prevail in the relationship (and for that matter within the family) in order to create an atmosphere in which each seeks to fulfill and complement the spouse.

Freedom and Leashes

Sexual distinctions between male and female symbolize the interdependence that exists between the sexes. A similar interdependence exists theologically between mankind and God. An individual's awareness of independence is in direct ratio to his or her awareness of dependence. This is another way of saying that none of us is perfectly free. Freedom must be seen within the context of relationships. The old warning to a groom during the wedding rehearsal that he is about to lose his freedom simply isn't the case. In a healthy marriage, partners don't lose their freedom but actually extend freedom.

Most human beings at birth symbolically are given a "dog tag" by the hospital attendants. This dog tag identifies the infant and links the baby to the parents. For some years the parents hold the leash. In marriage the individual makes the choice with another person, causing the parents to release their leashes, thus enabling the couple to tie their separate leashes together. This gives the couple a wider span, a larger radius of coverage than the single leash either of them possessed prior to marriage.

In a mutually growing relationship, one actually extends and widens movements and freedom rather than curtailing them. However, none of us is free of "dog tags" or "leashes." Our freedom always has strings (or some kind of relationship) attached to it. We have some choice as to the relationship (the strings), but no viable choice to think of ourselves as nonrelational entities. We all live with relational limitations, though admittedly our capacity and potential within any relationship are never fully realized.

Our freedom (our radius), then, is the measure of movement from our base. Is our base (our relational ties) providing us maximum movement, or are we getting tied up into knots and shortening our potential distance of movement? In a healthy marriage, tying oneself with another person, becoming an extended radius, hopefully enables each partner of that relationship to know greater freedom and thereby to be enriched.

Marriage represents, perhaps better than any other expression of communal living, the fact that no individual is an island. To be a person is to understand oneself as a communal being, with an essential will to community. There is this constant need for fulfillment and completeness which every couple should seek to work out together. The goal of the couple is the mutual fulfillment of each other. In practice, this will result in trade-offs and compromises within a context of love. Witnessing maximum completeness of one's mate will bring fulfillment and satisfaction to each partner.

Successful marriages are experiments seeking a creative balance at precisely this point. Where the balance is not always maintained, as in the case of many busy professionals, disturbances and doubts set in. The problem basically lies with the couple in

renewing their efforts at communication, either directly together, or, when necessary, with the help of a counselor. Only in a secondary way does the problem lie with one's profession or career. In the long run, the couple must find their balance, the fulfilling or complementing of each other in a satisfying way, if their marriage is to be a rewarding experience.

But What About Preachers' Wives?

From this perspective, how should we look at the role of a minister's wife? Is there something "extra" asked of her? It is my contention that insofar as she conceives of her role as a minister's wife as being something "extra" or more than her primary relationship of fulfilling or complementing her life's partner, she is likely to face disappointment and unhappiness. She will be under constant anxiety and tension, giving her attention to secondary tasks, which divert her from being herself in those relationships where she chooses to spend her time and energies. It is at this point that the couple must have honest communication with each other, if maximum freedom and fulfillment is to be realized by each of them. This whole process becomes even more complicated when the entire family is taken into consideration. Reassessment of every situation and each relationship must go on regularly.

When the couple and their children understand each other, then the forces of society and the congregation will not persuade them to jump to half a dozen tunes of public opinion, never satisfying any of them. To reach this understanding, the pastor's wife may find herself to be the necessary catalyst who takes the initiative and expresses her freedom in order to get the process of open conversation started at home. As she creatively works out her own lines of interdependence, she will experience a measure of freedom without guilt, no longer seeing herself as the proverbial victimized wife of a pastor and his congregation. Her initiative will also enable her husband to work out his lines of interdependence, enabling him to be set free as well, no longer tempted to sacrifice his wife to the church's program.

Within this context, it becomes clear that most of our conversation regarding a pastor's wife is carried on at a superficial level. Most discussions and materials written on the minister's wife attempt to ascertain in some quantitative way her relationship to the congregation. Such an approach often sees the minister's wife as a de facto "assistant pastor" to the congregation or as the "professional lay worker" in the life of the church and community. However, the question is not really a matter of degree at all, but rather a qualitative matter of relationship; how much or how little she should be involved in the church's life is not significant. She has a choice in her primary relationships. Any additional involvement outside the circle of her primary

(Continued on page 57)

THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE OF A MINISTER

by
Mendell Taylor

God created man with the capacity to live in holy love and holy fellowship with his Creator. However, God's masterpiece soon became His disasterpiece. The shattering of this divine image did not destroy man's desire to return to his original estate of holy love and fellowship with the Divine. In other words, man was made by God and for God—and man is too big to be satisfied with anything less than being devoted to God.

Devotion is related to the act of dedication. What we are dedicated to, we will be devoted to; and what we are devoted to, will be the object of our devotion. The object of our devotion is related to what we worship; and we express our worship by being devout. All of these words form a chain which is linked to the religious aspect of man's being.

One of the literal meanings of the Greek word for man (*anthropos*) is "upward reaching being." As long as man reaches up to and is devoted to that which is divine, he will find happiness; but if he allows himself to reach downward to that which is devilish, he will find debasement and despair. If he strives for that which is angelic, he will discover satisfaction; but if he allows himself to drift to the animalistic, he will soon become satiated. If man rises to his capacity of having his body become the temple of the Holy Spirit, he will know the thrill of fulfillment; but if he caters to his base desires, his body will become a tavern and he will be a victim of frustration.

When man expresses his devotion in the direction of these positive features, he discovers that

he can behold the Infinite even though he is finite; he can participate in the eternal even though he is surrounded by the temporal; he can be associated with the transcendent even though he is existing in the mundane. This means that when we look above we are not confronted with a terrifying void, or an infinite blank; but we can behold the face of a Heavenly Father who cares, who knows, who understands.

This Heavenly Father is so anxious for us to keep in touch with Him that He sets up the spiritual communication so we can get in contact with Him in split-second timing. I like to think of this instant communication system as transistor-like. That is, the moment we flick the switch of prayer we have full-volume reception from the throne of grace.

At the same time, He is so anxious for us to keep in touch with Him, that we do not have to go through a battery of secretaries to get an appointment with Him. Instead, He has rolled out the red carpet of welcome (dyed red by

the blood of Jesus) to let us know that we can come to Him at any time, from anywhere, about anything.

When we come into His presence, He drops everything, as if He did not have anything more important to do than listen to us. He hangs on to every word, as if what we are saying is the most significant information He has had a chance to listen to in a century of time. He then designs an answer with our initials monogrammed on it, to let us know that this answer would not fit anyone else. It is customized to our need and situation.

He assures us that we cannot wear out our welcome with Him. He is not like some of our "so-called" friends. When they hear a car door slam in front of their house, they peek between the venetian blinds to see who is coming up the walk. When they recognize who it is, they sigh "Oh, there they are again. Another evening shot." It is not that way with the Lord. The more often we come, the better He likes it, and the longer we stay, the more pleased He is.

Again, He is so anxious to keep in touch with us, that He gives each of us a different voice box and voice quality. Because of this arrangement, he knows each of us by voice. Thus, when we come into His presence, we do not have to start by saying: "Do you remember me Lord?" The only identification we need is the sound of our voice—He knows us that intimately.

Finally, He is so anxious to keep in touch with us, that He gives each of us an assigned frequency on the divine wave-length, so we

can have a "hot line" from our heart to His listening ear. In the regular communication world we have short wave-lengths, A.M. wave-lengths, F.M. wave-lengths, and T.V. wave-lengths. All of these can be operating at the same time, but none of them spoil the others because they are in different levels of reception. Inside the structure of these

wave-lengths, there are various assigned frequencies. The Lord has worked it out so that in the spiritual world, His divine wave-length has the possibility of an infinite number of assigned frequencies. This makes it possible for each of us to have a private, person-to-person "hot line" to the throne of grace.

All of these prayer benefits

have been put into operation so we can have a wonderful devotional life—we can keep in constant contact with Him, and He can get in touch with us by instant communication. The major question is: Will we make the most of our devotional opportunities, or will we take them for granted and leave them unused and undeveloped?

PREACHING AND CHURCH GROWTH (Continued from page 34)

Because biblically the salvation of souls is the highest priority, the primary concern of the church is the communication of the Gospel. Effective communication results in church growth. This primary concern is often forgotten in the pursuit of sound but secondary objectives and interest.⁶

Preacher, take heed! Church growth methods offer no escape from the arduous task of sermon preparation. On the contrary, the demand for effective preaching is heightened as the church becomes more deeply aware of her calling and opportunity.

In this age of scientific specialization we have almost come to the point where a different doctor is required to examine each eye. The question comes, who can put man back together again? Who can see him as a whole person who lives, loves, sins, and dies? Colin Morris answers these questions, "I would contend that it is the preacher and only the preacher who addresses Man in his wholeness, the totality of his being."⁷ Through the Living Word the preacher proclaims truths that are timeless, yet apply personally to any man, anywhere, at any time. The redemptive work of Christ becomes present reality. His cross and His resurrection loom out of the past, confronting the hearer, demanding decision.

Church growth science offers a tool for analyzing the accomplishments, organization, and environment of the church. The church needs to know herself and her community. But it is the Holy Spirit, moving through the Word, that brings plans to life, empowers for growth and service, and makes the church, *The Church!*

Church growth principles offer challenge and mobilization of the laity, freeing the preacher for his primary task. Many question the validity of preaching in our day. As Neil Wiseman puts it, "Preaching is in trouble. Even her best friends wonder if she is critically ill or perhaps even dead."⁸ If this is true, then Colin Morris's observation is in order:

Yet if preaching is finished then so is the Church, for preaching founded it, carried it to the far corners of the earth and has sustained it in existence, battered, diminished and humbled as it may be, to this day.⁹

If preaching has declined, it is due in large measure to the abnegation by the minister of his primary task. Paul Benjamin laments:

While the kingdom languishes for want of dynamic leadership a prophetic race has been reduced to "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the congregation.¹⁰

The biblical role of the preaching ministry must be restored. At the same time, the people in the pews must be freed to become the ministers of Jesus Christ which God has always intended. A congregation alert to the principles for church growth and aware of their spiritual gifts will begin to share more and more of the tasks of ministry essential to the life and growth of the body, freeing the preacher for the task that is uniquely his—preaching the Word. Through their involvement, they are confronted with the needs of others and challenged to respond with the hope of the gospel. Such laymen will come to hear the Word with keen appetites, listening ears, and expectant faith. Woe be unto the preacher who offers them froth or straw!

Implementing the principles of analysis through church growth methods is not a miracle drug, some kind of cure-all for the problems of the church. One must take care not to confuse the symptoms with the disease, the diagnosis with the cure. Analysis is not intended as a substitute for biblical preaching, but does provide a clear view for the direction of the church. New methods are not a refuge for the lazy or careless preacher, but they do offer tools for increased effectiveness. Biblical preaching has been, is, and will be central to the dynamic life of the church.

1. Paul Orjala, *Get Ready to Grow* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978), p. 15.
2. James B. Chapman, *The Preaching Ministry* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1947), p. 74.
3. Orjala, p. 23.
4. Chapman, p. 19.
5. From the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.
6. *Church Growth Bulletin*, January, 1971, Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 117.
7. Colin Morris, *The Word and the Words* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 25.
8. Neil B. Wiseman, *Biblical Preaching for Contemporary Man* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1976), p. 136.
9. Morris, p. 26.
10. Paul Benjamin, *The Equipping Ministry* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1978), p. 5.

John Wesley and Romance

by Donald Metz

John Wesley mastered several languages. His knowledge of Hebrew and Greek enabled him to write concise commentaries on the Old and New Testaments. When the situation demanded it, he preached in German, Italian, or French. On occasion he prayed publicly in Spanish. He wrote to his brother Charles in Latin—when he wanted the letter's contents to be secret. But Wesley never learned the language of romantic love.

At 33 Wesley fell in love with a beautiful 18-year-old girl in Georgia. Albert Outler described the romance as a preposterous and pitiful affair. John's idea of a thrilling afternoon was to study French with Sophia Hopkey and read to her from William Law's *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*.

In October of 1736, General Oglethorpe arranged for Sophia and Wesley to travel together by boat from Frederica to Savannah. If ever the setting was encouraging for romance, it came during an overnight stop when the party made camp. The dark woods, the brilliant moonlight, the silent stars, the gentle whisper of the flowing river, and the flickering firelight formed a backdrop perfect for a proposal of marriage. Wesley almost made it when he said to Sophia: "I should think myself very happy if I was to spend my life with you." But her coy reply checked further amorous dialogue and Wesley hastily closed the conversation by reading a psalm!

Back in Savannah, Wesley agonized between his growing affection for Sophia and his inability to come to a decision. Wesley decided to transfer the responsibility to God by drawing lots. He met with two friends, Benjamin Ingham and Charles Delamotte to prepare three lots. On the first was written "marry," on the second "think not of it this year," and on the third "think of it no more." After earnest prayer Delamotte selected a piece of paper with a shaking hand and read "think of it no more."

Sophia helped to resolve the matter by eloping with William Williamson, a newcomer to Georgia. A short time later Wesley refused to serve Sophia Communion in a public service on the basis of an ecclesiastical technicality. On August 8, 1737, a warrant was issued demanding that Wesley stand trial for defamation of character. Savannah was in an uproar. The trial dragged on for months without a verdict. Finally, on December 2, 1737, Wesley fled under cover of darkness and began his painful journey to England.

Wesley's second romantic venture was, in many ways, a repetition of his first humiliating experience.

On August of 1748, Wesley became ill at Newcastle. Grace Murray, a widow 13 years younger than Wesley, nursed him through his illness. By the time he had recovered his health he had lost his heart to the charming Methodist widow. He proposed marriage and was accepted.

But the romance was interrupted dramatically when Grace impulsively promised to marry John Bennett, a popular and handsome Methodist preacher. Wesley persuaded her to reconsider, which she did. Many Methodists openly opposed the marriage, especially Charles Wesley. Under intense pressure from Charles, Mrs. Murray finally agreed to marry John Bennett—and did so. Wesley was again denied the comfort and solace of a loving wife.

Wesley's third experience was more than tragic—it was a disaster. Early in 1751, Wesley married Mrs. Vazeille, the widow of a wealthy London merchant. Mrs. Vazeille's name does not appear in Wesley's *Journal* until he records the fact of his marriage. She had nursed Wesley through an illness. Apparently Wesley found it difficult to avoid proposing to ladies who nursed him with sympathy and care.

The marriage was a mismatch. Wesley's reason for getting married would hardly kindle romantic fires, for he wrote on February 2, 1751: "I now fully believed that in my present circumstances I might be more useful in a married state; into which, upon this clear conviction, and by the advice of my friends, I entered a few days later."

Wesley was 48 years of age when he married. He had no intention of allowing marriage to interfere with the routine of his itinerant ministry. A few weeks after his marriage he wrote that he could not understand "how a Methodist preacher can answer to God to preach one sermon or travel one day less in a married state than in a single state." Mrs. Wesley's temperament could not tolerate such rigorous dedication. She hated to travel. Her choice was between loneliness and constant moving about. She resented Wesley's attention to the spiritual needs of women. In January of 1771 Mrs. Wesley departed from Wesley's home. They were never reconciled.

At the age of five, Wesley learned the letters of the alphabet in one day. But in an entire lifetime he never learned the alphabet of romantic love. But even a spiritual genius should be permitted one flaw in the grammar of life.

This article appeared in the "Preacher's Magazine" as an editorial 22 years ago—its message is real now as it was in 1956.

UNTHANKFUL THANKSGIVING

by Lauriston J. Du Bois,
past editor of the *Preacher's Magazine*

It is scramble time! Time to try to whip together the annual Thanksgiving message! Perhaps it is for the Union Thanksgiving service in the community; perhaps it is for the local congregation. But November is the time (early October for Canadians), and it is such a well-established holiday that the preacher can hardly ignore it, even though he would like to. There is the escape of preaching on missions and the Thanksgiving Offering that Sunday, or there is the strategy of trying to completely spiritualize the concept, so as to avoid the deadening implications of preaching about Thanksgiving as such.

Let's face it. Or rather, let's confess it: Thanksgiving sermons are a dime a dozen, but Thanksgiving messages are priceless. They are about as difficult as any special-day message to find and harder than any to preach. Give me Christmas or Easter or Mother's Day or Labor Day or Straw Hat Day any year, and I'll let you have Thanksgiving. Perhaps this is a phobia of mine which I should not press upon my readers. Maybe I've just missed it. Maybe you like to preach at Thanksgiving time. If so, forgive me and turn to the sermon outline section and pass this up.

But for those who feel somewhat as I do, here's the plight I'm in. I need some help in getting my Thanksgiving message this year.

It really began to crystallize a year ago. I was asked to speak at Thanksgiving services in a high school and in a union church service. I began to list the things for which I was thankful, so I could tell the folks about it: I listed a free nation, absence of a hot war, the largest national income in history, a measure of personal health, a fair job, a wonderful family, etc., etc., etc. But the list went dead on me, for my mind would not concentrate on the beautiful gadgets and gimmicks which surround me. All it would do was remind me of those who *did not have* the personal blessings I was listing

and who were not sharing in the national bounties about which I was boasting.

My problem is this: If I say I can thank God for enough money for my needs, I imply that the person who does not have enough money for food for his family has a perfect right to curse God. If it is proper for us to thank God profusely for the bountiful harvest and overflowing grain bins, then it is right and proper for the two-thirds of the earth's population who go to bed hungry every night to blame God for their plight. If I can get blessed thanking God for my two hands, then it is proper for the lad who has no hands to despair that God has forsaken him. If I say that God has given me health this year, then what can the crippled man dragging himself along the street on his crutches say? Actually, the wrong fellow in a Thanksgiving service can ruin the service and choke the preacher nearly to death! We saw it during the war. Thanksgiving services were poor affairs then, for we were stripped of the pleasant circumstances around which we so habitually build these festive services.

Don't misunderstand me. I'm really not a pessimist—I think. But it seems to me, if we grasp the real significance of Thanksgiving we are going to dig a lot deeper than we have in the past. It's like the little motto which struck me so forcibly years ago and which has pestered me ever since: "I cried because I had no shoes, and then I met a man who had no feet." Or put it this way: "I cried because I did not have a simple 'necessity' of life and would have blamed God if I could have done so and not been seen by my neighbors. And then I saw a man who had so much less than I and he seemed to have a smile on his face."

A year ago I visited a man in the hospital. He had been on his bed for 31 years. At that he was comparatively young. As he visited with us he gasped

(Continued on page 57)

WESLEY ON MIRACLES

by Donald D. Wood

"I acknowledge that I have seen with my eyes, and heard with my ears, several things which, to the best of my judgment, cannot be accounted for by the ordinary course of natural causes; and which I therefore believe ought to be ascribed to the extraordinary interposition of God."¹

A wall with several people sitting upon it fell as Wesley was preaching; yet no one was injured. He and his Methodists were delivered from mobs when violence to their persons was expected. Wesley's horse was instantly healed the moment Wesley prayed for it. Wesley cried out to God for strength while preaching, and God restored his strength and voice that he might continue. A Mr. Lunnell recovered from fever at once upon seeing Wesley. Ann Calcut, speechless for some time, had her speech restored as prayer was made.

John Wesley believed God worked miracles in his own day. The God of Peter and John yet healed, cast out tormenting demons, and, miracle of miracles, delivered gross sinners from their bondage. God exercised His sovereign will not because of Wesley, but because He so desired and people believed. "I do not pretend to any extraordinary measure of the Spirit. I pretend to no other measure of It than may be claimed by every Christian Minister."² In these words, Wesley discounts any personal power to work miracles; he takes the station of humility. However, he was not so fearful of his critics as to deny that God could and, in fact, did work signs and wonders in Wesley's presence.

In his sermon "The More Excellent Way," Wesley answered those who asked why the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit seemed to vanish, or at the least, severely diminish after two or three centuries. His reply:

The cause of this was not, (as has been vulgarly supposed,) "because there was no more occasion

for them," because all the world was become Christians. This is a miserable mistake; not a twentieth part of it was then nominally Christian. The real cause was "the love of many," almost of all Christians, so called, was "waxed cold." The Christian had no more of the Spirit of Christ than the other Heathens.³

Again he writes regarding the Montanists' "excesses."

I was fully convinced of what I had long suspected, 1. That the Montanists, in the second and third centuries, were real, scriptural Christians; and 2. That the grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn, was not only that faith and holiness were well-nigh lost; but that dry, formal, orthodox men began even then to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves, and to decry them as either madness or imposture.⁴

Mr. Wesley had no doubt that a paucity of miracles indicated a deficiency of faith and practice more than a different method of God's ways among men. Miracles are not man's to command, yet God honors faith and consecration to the divine will.

How shall miracles be judged as such? Wesley writes, "Observe, that the truth of these facts is supported by the same kind of proof, as that of all other facts is wont to be, namely, the testimony of competent witnesses."⁵ In noting his own healing while preaching, Wesley mentions that about two hundred saw him receive his voice again, change his posture and show no more signs of sickness. Precisely how God did it, Wesley knew not; but that God did it, he doubted not.

Do miracles prove to unbelievers that God is at work or that they must needs be converted? No. Even if there be "real and undoubted" miracles, "all this would not force them to believe; but many would still stand just where they did before; seeing men may 'harden their hearts' against miracles, as

well as against arguments."⁶ Pharaoh to Pharisees saw the deed but refused the creed.

Do miracles confirm one's call? Only the miracle of preaching indicates forcefully that one is called of God. For Wesley, preaching is the great miracle that God employs to convert the unbeliever. The success of the gospel is that which "will bear the infallible test,—the trial of the written word."⁷ "Fol-

low after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy" (1 Cor. 14:1).

1. *Wesley's Works* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing Co., 14 vols.) VIII, p. 460.
2. *Wesley's Works*, Vol. X, p. 125.
3. *Wesley's Works*, Vol. VII, p. 27.
4. *Wesley's Works*, Vol. II, p. 204.
5. *Wesley's Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 460.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 462.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 468.

... Acts 15:6-11

(Continued from page 32)

declares the full freedom of the gospel. Interpreted is the significance of the Pentecost-like miracle of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Roman centurion (10:1), the Gentile Cornelius, for the saving nature of the gospel.

The gift of the Holy Spirit, "cleansing their hearts by faith" (9), is a cleansing from all subtle legalisms. This assures, first of all, that the gospel is for all men alike on the same one basis, that of faith alone. It assures, second, that this salvation is supremely one of grace alone, and that therefore the Spirit comes to the human heart to cleanse it all the way to grace. The Christian disciple can live utterly out of the grace of God because of the activity and presence of the Holy Spirit. This is the radically liberating gospel that Luke is proclaiming.

III

The Life-Response Question:

How Does Our Text Apply to Contemporary Life?

1. What Do I Hear?⁸

The God of the gospel of Jesus Christ meets me as sheer grace, granting me the privilege of relating to Him in simple faith, and providing me with the possibility of living daily in the cleansing flow of the risen life of His Son in the Spirit.

2. What Do I Proclaim?—A Sermon: The Cleansing of the Heart

Introduction

- (1) The crucial issue in salvation is that of law and grace (1-7a).

- (2) God's answer is found in His gift of the Holy Spirit (7b-8).
- (3) The "cleansing of the heart" is the only adequate solution (9).

This means that . . .

God gives us the Holy Spirit to cleanse us to faith—

- (1) A cleansing from all reliance on human worth in salvation;
- (2) A cleansing to a dependence on Christ alone for divine acceptance.

God gives us the Holy Spirit to cleanse us to grace—

- (1) A cleansing from all reliance on human strength in discipleship;
- (2) A cleansing to a sole dependence on the Spirit for holy living.

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit is present to continually cleanse us from all legalistic bondage to ourselves, freeing us by faith to serve God in the full liberty of the gospel of grace.

1. *The Preacher's Magazine*, 53, 1 (January-February 1978), pp. 30ff.
2. Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture is from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.
3. F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts, The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1955), pp. 21-23.
4. Bruce, p. 13.
5. Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles; a Commentary*, trans. Bernard Noble and Gerald Shinn (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), p. 461.
6. Compare Luke 5:4-5 (1-5), 6-7, and 8-11 with Acts 15:6-7a (1-7a), 6-9, and 10-11.
7. Haenchen, p. 445.
8. Bruce, p. 307.
9. See the suggested subquestions in the *Preacher's Magazine*, 53, 1 (January-February, 1978), p. 33.

Because half-a-dozen grasshoppers [crickets] under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field; that of course they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome insects of the hour.

—Edmund Burke

SERMON CRAFT

by C. Neil Strait

A Thought from the Prodigal Son

The story of the prodigal son has had its share of sermon mileage, but I pass this thought along to add to the material.

In Luke 15:12 we have the *revelation of the problem* in the words "give me." In 15:17, the phrase "When he came to his senses" gives us the *realization of the problem*. And in 15:19 two words, "make me" show the *resolution of the problem*.

The Lost Brother

The other brother in the story of the prodigal son can also be thought of as "the lost son." Here are reasons why I feel it so. (1) He had no place in his life for his brother. His words betrayed him, for as he talked to his father about his son, he refused to acknowledge him as his brother, but instead said: "this son of yours" (Luke 15:30). (2) He did not have sufficient place in his life for his father. His phrase, "I've been slaving for you" (v. 29) shows how he viewed his relationship with the father. (3) If you don't have place for others, and for God (the father in this story), then self never fits either. Hence, lostness.

An Example

In Paul's letter to Titus there are three admonitions that speak to us about example.

In 2:3, Paul admonishes, "Teach what is good."

In 2:6, he instructs Titus to "encourage the young men to be self-controlled."

In 2:7, he states "In everything set them an example by doing what is good."

These three phrases point up the important responsibilities surrounding the call of God and service for Him.

The Way We Were

In Titus 3:1-8, Paul takes his reader back into the past for a look at their living before Christ, and then challenges them with the "newness" of life in Christ. Here is a possible outline of the context:

1. A *study of contrasts* (3:1-3), expressed especially in these words: "At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all

kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us" (3:3-5).

2. A *summary of conversion* (vv. 4-7): "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life" (3:5-7).

3. A *stress on our commitment* is expressed in the sentence: "I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good" (v. 8).

A Thought from Maclaren

Somewhere I picked up this thought from Andrew Maclaren concerning "The Testing Fire" in 1 Cor. 3: 10-15. Here is the suggested outline:

1. The patchwork structure suggested by the words "wood, hay or straw" (v. 12).

2. The testing fire, "His work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work" (v. 13).

3. The fate of the two builders, "If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss" (vv. 14-15).

It is all a reminder to us that "no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (3:11).

Give Them God

E. Stanley Jones made an impressive point when he said: "Anything less than God will let you down." And he went on to reason that the cause of the letdown was that "anything less than God" is not rooted in eternal reality. It has a built-in failure (*Abundant Living*, p. 39).

The point all of this raises is that in our preaching, we can afford to give our people nothing less than God. For anything less than this will let them down.

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

SERMON OUTLINES

Featuring the sermon-crafting of Paul S. Rees

THE MAJESTY AND MERCY OF GOD

Text: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Isa. 57:15).

Introduction: How do you think of God? Most people today believe in God's existence. The Hebrews of the Old Testament had very little concern about the *existence* of God. They took that for granted. Their concern was, as ours should be, with the *character* and the *activities* of God.

I. THE MAJESTY OF GOD

- A. His loftiness
 - 1. God is beside us, within us, and above us
 - 2. He stands above nature and humanity
- B. His unchangeableness
 - 1. Transcender of time
 - 2. Transcender of space
- C. His holiness
 - 1. "Thing-mad" culture
 - 2. Isaiah was shaken (6:5)

II. THE MERCY OF GOD

- A. Two thrones—highest heaven, lowliest heart
- B. Mercy on conditions
- C. Mercy has consequences
- D. Mercy is solemn

III. THE MYSTERY OF GOD

- A. High and lofty Infinite One, and lowly Intimate One
- B. Not infinite Conflict, but infinite Harmony

Conclusion: The crown of God's mercy is the pardoning of our guilt and the cleansing of our hearts. But men are in danger of the wrath of God at the very moment they are offered His mercy. And if they permanently refuse that mercy, they are permanently cut off in God's judgment of love. God has acted in Christ to bring us back from alienation and loneliness to fellowship in His kingdom. The question is: have we acted, responsively and decisively, to let Him be God in us? If we haven't, this is our moment!

CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS

Text: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (John 13:13). "On his head were many crowns" (Rev. 19:12).

Introduction: It is said that a group of English authors once discussed what they would do if certain heroes of history were suddenly to enter the

room. Charles Lamb, a member of the group, said this: "If Shakespeare were to enter this room, I should rise up to do him honor; but if Jesus Christ were to enter, I should fall down and give Him worship."

The greatness of Jesus is throbbingly human and thrillingly divine. It is the crown of all greatness, and therefore we call Him Lord.

Christ wears a crown of Lordship in:

I. HIS REVELATION OF TRUTH

- A. Jesus was authority (Matt. 7:28, 29)
- B. He gave directions
- C. He offered insights
- D. He pronounced enduring principles

II. HIS REDEMPTION BY ATONEMENT

- A. Man's sin created a barrier
- B. "The Lord's death" broke the barrier

III. HIS RITUAL OF REMEMBRANCE

- A. The Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20)
- B. The Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10)

IV. HIS RULE OVER LIFE

- A. We are His servants
- B. Have you yielded complete lordship?

V. HIS RETURN IN GLORY

- A. The Lord himself shall descend
- B. The Church and citizenship responsibilities

Conclusion: The "Stranger" will speak once more. He spoke at Calvary—in love and judgment. He won at Calvary—the victory over the entire empire of evil. But He is coming again to finalize that victory, to put into effect that judgment, to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace.

THE FIFTH FREEDOM

Text: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Introduction: Freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from wants, and freedom from fear—these, said Mr. Roosevelt to Congress, are rights that must be guaranteed to the people of the world.

Jesus, too, was a champion of freedom—but the champion of a fifth freedom. He wanted everyone to enjoy this freedom, yet everywhere He turned He found men who were enslaved. Sometimes they realized it; sometimes they did not. The men to whom Jesus was speaking in the text were not well

prepared to receive His teaching on freedom. But are we ready to listen to Him—and respond?

I. CHARACTER OF CHRIST'S FREEDOM

- A. Not freedom from suffering
- B. Not freedom from temptation
- C. Not physical freedom

II. CONTENT OF CHRIST'S FREEDOM

- A. Freedom from bondage of the mind
- B. Freedom from bondage of the will
- C. Freedom from bondage of the spirit

III. CONDITION OF CHRIST'S FREEDOM

- A. Christ gives freedom
- B. We accept this gift

Conclusion: The slave of sin does not need to remain forever in the house of sin. Why? Because the mighty Son of God will take a sin-bound man and lead him into glorious liberty.

ARE YOU MANY OR ONE?

Text: "Unite my heart to fear thy name" (Ps. 86:11).

Introduction: This text is the cry of the man who knows how unhappy and unfruitful is the life of a divided heart. He is the man who is partly for Christ—partly for self . . . partly surrendered—partly reserved. Such a man pleases neither himself nor his Lord.

I. CONDITION OF A DIVIDED HEART

- A. Impotent
- B. Unhappy
- C. Ambitious
- D. Jealous
- E. Angry

II. CONSEQUENCE OF A DIVIDED HEART

- A. Lacks perception
- B. Lacks power
- C. Lacks praise

III. CURE FOR A DIVIDED HEART

- A. Confess your condition
- B. Call on the Lord
- C. Commit yourself

Conclusion: The blood of Christ cleanses the sin of your heart, the mind of self, and the root of bitterness! You can be made dead to sin in a definite, decisive, victorious stepping out of an old bondage into a new freedom. This becomes a declaration of faith which claims a whole Christ for a whole man.

These outlines have been extracted from two books of sermons by Paul S. Rees with the permission of Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. The books are *Things Unshakable and Other Sermons* and *Stand Up in Praise to God*.

THE WINNING WITNESS

Text: "And he brought him to Jesus" (John 1:42).

Introduction: Christians were never meant to be terminals; they were meant to be junctions.

I. ANDREW—A CONVINCED MAN

- A. Convinced he found Messiah.
- B. Convinced of seriousness of sin.
- C. Of reality of repentance.
- D. Of call to convince others.
- E. Unconvinced souls are not convincing.

II. A COMMUNICATING MAN

- A. Go to the people.
- B. One on one.
- C. Warm truth is better than clichés.

III. A CONTENTED MAN

- A. Content to be unspectacular.
- B. A commoner for Christ.

Conclusion: Andrew, the commoner, is a pattern we can all follow.

From *Christian: Commit Yourself* by Paul Rees, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1957.

THE DIET OF DEVOTION

Text: ". . . desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2:2).

Introduction: Care and feeding of the Christian by the regular diet of God's Word.

I. THE WORD IS DURABLE

- A. It endureth forever (1:25)
- B. It has timeless energy, deathless truth, priceless love.

II. THE WORD IS DEMANDING

- A. Contaminated food must go.
- B. Maintenance of healthy diet.

III. THE WORD IS DESIRABLE

- A. Great men have fed on it.
- B. More than a boring duty.
- C. How to read it.
 1. Systematically
 2. Reverently
 3. Prayerfully
 4. Intelligently
 5. Obediently

Conclusion: The milk of the Bible takes us from growth to growth, from grace to grace, and from glory to glory.

From *Christian: Commit Yourself* by Paul Rees, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1957.

NEW FULFILLMENT . . .

(Continued from page 47)

relationships is hers to determine in partnership with her spouse.

Of course, the primary circle of relationships can become an ingrown affair. To avoid this, the couple must continually see themselves (as should all the couples of the congregation) not only in interdependence upon each other, but constantly acknowledging the source of their mutual dependence upon

the God who upholds us all. The committed couple will submit their activities and decisions to the wisdom of God. This transcended perspective will further free them to listen to others in love, not out of duty but from a liberated spirit of personal identity and self-fulfillment.

1. *Des Moines Sunday Register*, September 24, 1967. Copyright Ann Landers, Field Newspaper Syndicate. Used by permission.

2. *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 19, 1967. Copyright Ann Landers, Field Newspaper Syndicate. Used by permission.

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UNTHANKFUL THANKSGIVING

(Continued from page 51)

for breath between every few words. Across his chest lay a copy of the *Herald of Holiness*; at his bedside was his Bible. He wheezed out his love for God for His blessings upon him. When leaving, the pastor asked him, "What can we get you? Do you need anything?" His reply staggered me back on my heels. "No, I need nothing, nothing at all!"

Should we, then, throw out our Thanksgiving observance? No, not at all. In fact, I think we should improve it. Our big problem now is that people are so busy getting primed for a feast of turkey or roast duck that they can't take time once to be genuinely thankful. But could we as preachers help our people see that thankfulness is a testimony, basically not of material but of spiritual bounties?

The true root of thankfulness is in God and not in us. The greatest experiences of gratitude have come out of the deepest sorrow and the greatest poverty. Love, loyalty, friendship, opportunity to serve, faith, the presence and comfort of God—these are the basic principles of thanksgiving. And many times these qualities are the most evident in the midst of the greatest physical need. In essence, we must be grateful for God himself and all He is to us. Then there can be thanksgiving everywhere—in want or in plenty—in distress or in blessing. Then a crippled child who was carried by loving parents will not be able to wreck the Thanksgiving service and cause the preacher's pleasant platitudes to stick to the roof of his mouth.

Forgive me for passing on to you my problem. But I could do no other.

PREACHER'S EXCHANGE

FOR SALE: One set of *Preaching Through the Bible* (28 Vols.), never used, \$85.00 and shipping costs. Donald L. Peck, 948 Old 52, New Richmond, OH 45157.

FOR SALE: *New Testament*, by James Moffatt, \$1.50; *Jesus the Messiah*, by Edersheim, \$1.50; *Pulpit Commentary—Numbers and 1 Samuel* (one vol.), \$2.00; *Story of the Bible*, by Hurlbut, \$2.00; *His Word Through Preaching*, by Bishop Kennedy \$1.25; *Triumphs of Faith*, by G. Campbell Morgan, \$1.00; *Christ for Every Crisis*, by Walter Maier, \$1.00; *Oxford Annotated Bible*, \$1.50; *Higher Significance of the Gospel*, by Kallenbach, \$1.00; *Personalities of the Old Testa-*

ment, \$1.25; *The Way—The Living Bible Illustrated*, new, \$1.50. L. D. Sharp, 614 S. Erie, Wichita, KS 67211.

FOR SALE: Back Issues of *Christianity Today*, and one set of *Adult Bible Teacher* for the 1966-77 12-year cycle. Larry Stover, 7402 E. 110th St., Kansas City, MO 64134.

WANTED: One set of *Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible*, by Charles Simeon. James O. Brannon, 2117 Eaton Rd., Hamilton, OH 45013

WANTED: Books and other materials on the history of the Church of the Nazarene: *Manual* 1908, 1923, 1932; *P. F. Bresee, D.D.*, by Hills; *Out Under the Stars*, by

McConnell; *Holiness—Pioneering in the Southland*, by Rogers; *Rev. Bud Robinson*, by Wise; *Our Pioneer Nazarenes*, by Corbett; *Tempest Tossed on Methodist Seas*, by Haynes; *A Man Sent of God*, by Heath; *Soldier of the Cross*, by Corbett; and *A New Look at J. O. McClurkan*, by Strickland. Larry Stover, 7402 E. 110th St., Kansas City, MO 64134.

WANTED: One set of *Barnes' Notes* (27 vols.); R. E. Rogers, Rte. 2, Box 478, Georgetown, OH 45121.

WANTED: *Scriptural Freedom from Sin*, by Henry E. Brockett. R. M. Rudisill, 228 W. St. Francis, Dexter, MO 63841.

HUMBARD and SCHULLER

(Continued from page 21)

the sermon, although pitch and rate rise when he cuts loose on a tried and true "Amen-getter" like:

I'd rather . . . live in a log cabin with cracks you can (sic) throw a cat through the wall and drink water out of some spring . . . and know God than have all the things . . . the world can offer.

The most positive element in Humbard's voice usage is that his voice comes across with the ring of conviction.

While Schuller's profuse gestures may sometimes be out of place in the living room of the television viewer, his conversational tone of voice is appropriate. He speaks informally, pleasantly, and generally in a conversational manner.

One of Schuller's strong points is variety in voice usage. His pronunciation is sharp and clear. Hardly a syllable is neglected. He nearly always knows exactly which word he wants to accent in his well-tried-on sentences. He gives many words special treatment that is somewhat different from ordinary usage. The words "beautiful" and "Savior" are ones that he frequently uses and emphasizes by giving even the unstressed syllables equal stress.

When reaching a point of impact, he will draw out the key word in a low, grating voice. When Francesca Cabrini stood before the Pope, his reply to her request to be sent as a missionary to China was, "The answer is no-o-o!"

Another voice device used by Schuller is made possible by electronic amplification. He emphasizes certain key words by whispering. It is a stage whisper, dependent upon good electronic pickup. He reserves its usage for strategic impact. When Schuller reaches the end of the Cabrini story, he closes it with this statement: "Discover God's calling for your life and then move on with it! Wow!" The last word, "Wow," is given the holy whisper treatment.

The Style of the Sermons

In the category of style we shall briefly note the elements of clarity, correctness, and tropes and figures.

Clarity is a treasure for, as Augustine observes, "The object of all preaching is to unlock meanings" (*De Doctrina Christiana*, 4.5.7.).

The preacher should strive for preaching which is so clear that no listener could misunderstand it.

Linguistic analysis helps probe the depths of clarity. Using the Dale, Chall, Klare readability formula, I tested five 100-word samples from each of the sermons. This test revealed that Schuller speaks on the fifth to sixth grade language level while Humbard preaches on the ninth to tenth grade language level. This means that a person with fifth to sixth grade reading skills could read Schuller's sermon with 80 percent comprehension. Humbard's sermon could be read with 80 percent comprehension by persons with ninth to tenth grade

reading skills. Studies show that the average American adult reads at the ninth grade level. Thus much of Humbard's sermon goes right over the heads of many listeners.

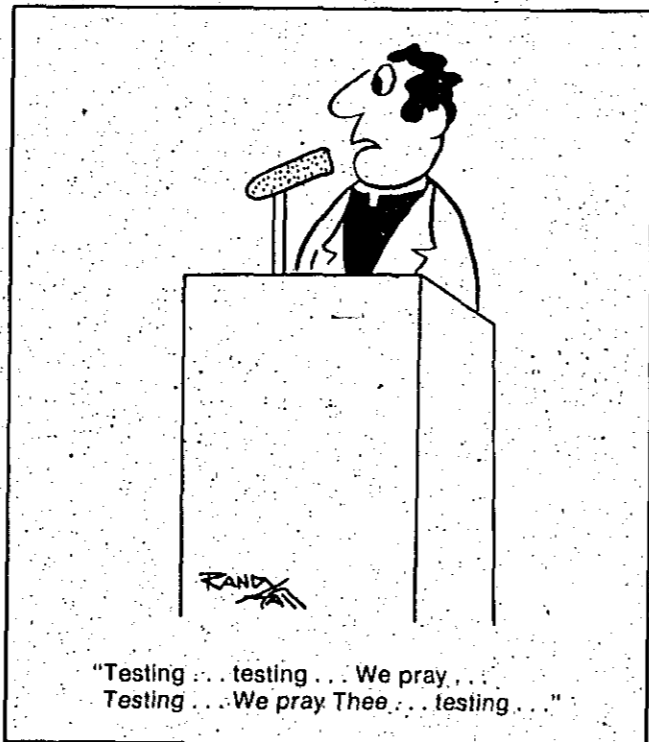
The use of "inside" Christian language, sometimes called *Christianese*, conspires against clarity. Both sermons sport examples of this with Humbard's displaying the most including "Abraham's bosom," "catch the vision," and "if Jesus tarries." Schuller uses "open door" and "bestow upon you" (*Christianese* for "give").

Correctness is important in communication. The rules of grammar and the principles of syntax are not necessary evils; they are tools of communication too useful to be neglected. The speaker must know the rules of grammar. In addition, he should have a sense of propriety in arranging the qualifying elements of the sentence.

The extemporary nature of Humbard's speaking contributes to his proclivity to repeatedly find himself in grammatical and syntactical quagmires from which there is no graceful escape. This excerpt from the sermon introduction illustrates the point.

Today the conditions of the world are conditions that I can say are approaching what we might say not the day of prosperity, but the day of adversity. As we look upon the financial crisis that now is in the world, we see nations shaking and banking circles shaking and banks are lost as the market has fallen all over the world and we see nations that one time had great industrial power, and nations that one time, not only our own, but nations around the world, suddenly it looks like it's their day of adversity.

Schuller, on the other hand used good grammar in the sermon examined in this study and only rarely experienced syntactical difficulty.



Sameness in sentence structure can contribute to weariness and boredom in the hearers. Variation should occur in the length of sentences; variation should occur in the type of sentences used. A speaker should give special attention to the inclusion of periodic sentences. They build suspense and help keep attention. The periodic sentence is one in which neither the idea nor the grammatical structure is completed until the final words are given.

While Schuller is not a master of the periodic sentence he does use periodic construction in every section of the sermon. Here is an example: "And their bodies may be weak, and they may be spitting blood, and they may be dying in their organs, but get out of their way."

Humbard rarely employs periodic sentences. Loose sentences and run-on sentences seem to be his typical style. It is hard to punctuate his swiftly spoken sentences in preparing a transcript from the recordings of the sermon.

He has developed a peculiar anaphoric style of parallelism that typifies his sentence structure. It is not true literary parallelism in which the key words are all the same part of speech and in the same form. Nor is it the poetic parallelism of the Hebrew scriptures. It is more like the impromptu restatement of a speaker who needs time to formulate his next remark. Selected examples include the following sentences:

"What God gives you is good for everybody of every class, of every nationality, and every nation."

"It's good for the servant, it's good for the master, it's good for the boss, it's good for the laborer."

The use of tropes and figures are of major stylistic interest. The stylistic devices recruited by Humbard and Schuller will be summarized.

Humbard used the following:

1. *Anaphora* is the repetition of a word or words at the beginning of successive clauses in a sentence. Humbard uses this device almost to excess. One example is here cited:

"Now if you ever saw a man that was prosperous he had military power, he had social power, he had financial power, he had every power that a man could wish for."

2. *Simile*. Only one simile is used by Humbard. It is from the Bible. Nebuchadnezzar's "fingernails became as claws of an eagle."

3. *Metaphor*. Two biblical metaphors are used: "Cup of salvation" and "Abraham's bosom."

4. *Alliteration*, the preacher's pitfall, is used sparingly by Humbard. Here is one example: "He [Jesus] was born in a stable, borrowed a cradle, and was buried in a borrowed tomb."

5. *Anthropomorphism*. In a sort of extended metaphor that reveals God as Father and man as a disobedient child, Humbard gives to God hands to spank with and a knee over which to bend the errant child. "If the Lord has you over his knee spanking you—repent."

Robert Schuller used the following tropes and figures.

1. *Personification*. Schuller proclaims that the disciple will be "captured" by peace, confidence, and courage.

2. *Metaphor*. Schuller, like Humbard, used metaphor in a limited manner. I found only three incidental ones.

3. *Epistrophe* is the ending of successive sentences or clauses with the same word or words. Schuller uses this device effectively in building up the sense of tragedy in the Titanic story by ending five sentences with nearly identical phrases of "after all, they were unsinkable."

4. *Prolepsis*. Schuller twice anticipates objections or questions about what he is proposing and proceeds to attempt to remove them.

5. *Anaphora*. Schuller also makes use of the favorite device of Humbard. "God's will is always positive, it is always constructive, it is always beautiful, it is always good."

6. *Asyndeton*. Schuller uses the conjunctionless series for impact. "She arrived at Ellis Island in New York sick, thin, tiny, weak."

7. *Assonance* is the rhyming repetition of internal vowel sounds. Schuller uses this in his five key words: *pray, weigh, obey, pay, and stay*.

8. *Erotesis*, the stating of powerful questions to add force to discourse is used by Schuller when, at the climax of the Titanic story, he asks, "Have you been locked-in in your thinking about God and Jesus Christ? About God's will?"

It would be fair to say that Schuller demonstrates a more sophisticated knowledge and usage of the stylistic devices of clarity, correctness, and figures of speech.

And in Conclusion, Let Me Say . . .

We have surveyed the sermon craft of Humbard and Schuller. How would you evaluate their work? The *Tau Kappa Alpha* speech society makes an annual award to the public speaker of the year. Billy Graham was a recent recipient of this award. The members of the society evaluate each nominee by applying these three questions to his or her speaking:

- Was the speaker intelligent?
- Was the speaker responsible?
- Was the speaker effective?

Using this scale, how would you rate Humbard and Schuller? On second thought, perhaps they should be ruled by Augustine's benchmark:

True eloquence consists, not in making people like what they dislike, nor in making them do what they shrank from, but in making clear what was obscure. . . .

What advantage is there in purity of speech which does not lead to understanding in the hearer, seeing that there is no use at all in speaking, if they do not understand us for whose sake we speak.

1. Rex Humbard, *Miracles in My Life* (Old Tappan, New Jersey, Fleming H. Revel, Co., 1971), p. 11.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

3. Augustine, *Christian Doctrine*, 4.10.24, 4.11.26.

OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES



by Charles Isbell

Introduction

A "word study" must be understood as just that, the study of individual words and their meanings. In this column I shall attempt to distinguish among the numerous kinds of meaning which attach to various words, for the same word may at different times have functional, derived, symbolic, technical, theological, or ironic value. I will try to in each case assess the *contextual function* of a word rather than seeking the meaning, when really no single meaning exists.

PSALM 23

"The Lord" (Psalm 23:1)

The English word "Lord" is a title, whereas the Hebrew word here is *yahweh*, the proper name of Israel's God. It is Yahweh rather than any other god who is addressed as the Shepherd.

"Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1)

A common Hebrew word is used here, *rō'eh*. Only the fact that Yahweh is so designated makes the phrase remarkable. Hammurabi, an 18th-century (B. C.) king of Babylon had written that his god, Enlil, had appointed him to be a shepherd of his people. David the king was remembered as a simple shepherd. But here God himself is acclaimed in faith as the Shepherd.

"Maketh me to lie down" (Psalm 23:2)

This phrase is simply "he enables me to stretch out comfortably." "Green pastures," is simply "green grass."

"Still waters" (Psalm 23:2)

"Still waters" (RSV) or "quiet waters" (NASB) both miss the picture. The phrase is *mē m'nu-hōt*, which JB* renders correctly, "waters of repose." The idea is of

a pastoral scene with a source of water beside which sheep might stretch out in comfort for rest after a tiring day of walking in search of pasture. With Yahweh as Shepherd, the "sheep" can simply relax in an atmosphere which includes sufficient nourishment.

"He restoreth my soul" (Psalm 23:3)

How can one's "soul" be restored (KJV, NASB, RSV) or "revived" (JB)? The word *nephes* (soul) means "life" in such contexts and the phrase should be rendered with NEB,** "he renews life within me."

"Paths of righteousness" (Psalm 23:3)

"Paths of righteousness" conveys little actual meaning. A path cannot be *unrighteous* or *righteous* in and of itself. The word *ma'gāl* means a path that has become customary through continued usage. In the context of this shepherd imagery, it means the way to and from pasture which has been tramped down by the flock over many days. Throughout life, the sheep would be led on many such paths by a shepherd and here the trust expressed in Yahweh is that his choice of paths would be wise.

"For his name's sake" (Psalm 23:3)

This phrase really means for the sake of His "reputation." Yahweh, as Shepherd, will lead His "sheep" in a manner which is consistent with His essential character (name) or reputation among men.

"Valley of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4)

This is a difficult phrase to interpret. It is composed of two Hebrew words which mean "middle"

and "death." "Gloomy valley" (JB) is too weak for Hebrew *šalmawot*. "A valley as dark as death" (NEB) is much closer to the meaning. Death would be understood to be the darkest of all valleys. If Yahweh could lead through darkness of this intensity, all other darkneses would be much less frightening by comparison.

"Comfort" (Psalm 23:4)

The "rod" and "staff" of the Shepherd would probably not be perceived as a *comfort*. It is possible to read the verb "comfort" in Hebrew as derived from the root *naḥah* (lead) rather than from *naḥam* (comfort), which would mean the phrase should be translated, "Your staff and shepherd's crook lead me." This accords well with the picture given in verse three.

"Mercy" (Psalm 23:6)

"Mercy" (KJV, RSV), "loving-kindness" (NASB), and "kindness" (JB) are too specific and do not do justice to the Hebrew word *ḥesed*, which includes the preceding meanings but means above all "covenant faithfulness." A life characterized by the giving and receiving of covenant concerns within the community is anticipated here.

"Forever" (Psalm 23:6)

"Forever" is literally, "for length of days," and means something like English "unending." It would be pressing beyond the evidence to assert that this equals the New Testament's "eternal life." The idea is simply that as far as one can imagine and beyond, one may count upon the good leadership of Yahweh.

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NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

Matthew 6

"Take heed" (Matt. 6:1)

The verb is *prosecho*, which literally means "hold to." It was used in the sense of "hold your mind to this"—that is, "give attention to it." Jesus is laying now some important principles in the Sermon on the Mount and He wants us to fix our minds on them.

"Alms" or "Righteousness" (Matt. 6:1)

The observant reader has probably noticed that in most modern versions "alms" in this verse has become "righteousness," or something akin to that. Why so?

The simple answer is that the earliest manuscripts all have *dikaosynen* instead of *eleemosynen* (from which we get "eleemosynary," giving to charity). *Dikaosyne* means "righteousness." But here it is obvious that it is used in the sense of "acts of righteousness" (NIV). The NASB has here, "Beware of practicing your righteousness . . ."

Concerning these two alternatives, Rev. A. Carr says: "The two words were nearly synonymous with the Jews, partly because the poor had a right to share in the produce of the land; partly because almsgiving is the most natural and obvious external work of righteousness" (*The Gospel According to Matthew*, p. 126).

In a similar vein, A. B. Bruce writes that *dikaosynen* "is the reading demanded in a general introductory statement." He then goes on to say: "Alms formed a very prominent part of the Pharisaic righteousness, but it was not the whole, and it is a name for the whole category that is wanted in v. 1" (*Expositor's Greek Testament*, 1:116).

In other words, what we have in

v. 1 is a general introductory statement, and so it is properly put in a separate paragraph in the NIV. Then we have a discussion of three kinds of righteous acts: (1) Giving, vv. 2-4; (2) Praying, vv. 5-15; (3) Fasting, vv. 16-18. This is the clear arrangement in the Greek text.

"To be seen by them" (Matt. 6:1)

Did Jesus say that we are not to let anybody see us doing righteous deeds? Emphatically, no! We already have His command: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (5:16). He wants people to see our good deeds.

What does 6:1 mean then? The Greek very clearly says, "for the purpose of being seen by them." It is the motive that Jesus is dealing with—as throughout the Sermon on the Mount.

Furthermore, the verb *seen* here is not one of the two common Greek words for "see" in the New Testament. It is *theaomai*, which means to "contemplate," look at carefully and deliberately. From it comes the noun *theatron*, meaning "theater," where people sit and view things for a long time. What Jesus is saying is: "Don't make a theatrical show of your giving, praying, and fasting."

"Hypocrites" (Matt. 6:2)

This English word (plural) is simply a transliteration of the Greek word *hypocritēs* (singular)—plural here, *hypocritai*. The term is used commonly in Greek writers for an actor. In those days they did not have any electric amplification. The visitor to the Middle East today marvels as he sees those great stone Roman amphitheatres, seating 5 to 50 thousand people in the time of

Christ. How could actors on the stage saying their parts possibly be heard by people sitting far away in the top tier of seats?

The answer is that the actors wore on their faces large masks that contained hidden megaphones, so that they could be heard by the large crowds. So a *hypocrite* was a person who wore a false face, who pretended to be what he was not.

That is exactly what a hypocrite is today. He is a playactor, playing a false role, and appearing to be something different from what he is.

"Have" or "Have Received" (Matt. 6:5, 16)

The KJV says: "They have their reward." The ASV (1901) has, "They have received their reward." The NIV reads, "They have received their reward in full." Why these changes?

The Greek verb for "have" is *echo*. But here we have a compound, *apecho*. Adolf Deissmann pioneered in the application of the papyrus discoveries to an understanding of the New Testament. Most of the papyri we have comes from fairly near the time of Christ.

On the basis of its usage in the papyri, Deissmann says that the verb *apecho* is "a technical expression regularly employed in drawing up a receipt. . . . this meaning of *apecho* applies well to the stern text about the hypocrites: 'they have received their reward in full,' i.e., it is as though they had already been given a receipt, and they have absolutely no further claim to reward" (*Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 110-11).

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CLERGY QUIZ

- Which Old Testament book is most often quoted or alluded to in the New Testament?
A. Jeremiah C. Isaiah
B. Job D. Genesis
- McGavran, Arnt and Wagner are names associated with:
A. European speculative philosophy
B. The church growth movement
C. The theology of hope
D. The civil rights movement
- Which of the following best describes the Wesleyan-Arminian doctrine of depravity?
A. extensive C. deterministic
B. intensive D. all of the above
- Which of the following works were written by Clement of Alexandria?
A. *Christ the Instructor*
B. *A Message to the Heathen*
C. *On Christian Doctrine*
D. all of the above
E. A and B but not C
F. B and C but not A
- "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" is a sermon written by
A. Billy Graham C. Alfred E. Neuman
B. Jonathan Edwards D. Phillips Brooks
- Which of the following does not belong in this list?
A. Luther D. Melancthon
B. Zwingli E. Bernard of Clairveaux
C. Calvin
- If a parishioner of yours believed he had committed the unpardonable sin, which of the following Minor Prophets should he read?
A. Nahum C. Amos
B. Joel D. Hosea
- If you were going to preach on prayer, which of the following passages would likely be the most helpful?
A. Matthew 12:1-9
B. 2 Corinthians 11:1-5
C. 1 Chronicles 4:9-10
D. Ecclesiastes 7:1-3
- "For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion" is from
A. Psalm 27 C. Job 6
B. Psalm 23 D. Isaiah 7

- The Ten Commandments are found in
A. Genesis 37 D. Numbers 17
B. Exodus 22 E. none of the above
C. Deuteronomy 33
- The last of the Crusades took place in
A. 687 C. 1089
B. 1212 D. 1066
- Which of the following names does not belong in this list?
A. Paul E. Johnson D. C. S. Forrester
B. Wayne Oates E. George C. Bonnell
C. Seward Hiltner
- The man commonly regarded as the founder of the Sunday school is:
A. Timothy Bettleham C. Charles Fox
B. Robert Raikes D. William Penn
- The author of *Mere Christianity* is:
A. Andrew Blackwood C. C. S. Lewis
B. Hugo St. Victor D. John Woolman
- Which of the following persons is associated with "the theology of hope?"
A. C. H. Dodd D. Paul Tillich
B. Karen Horney E. Karl Barth
C. Wolfhart Pannenberg
- The subtitle of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's doctoral thesis is:
A. Dogmatical Inquiry into the Sociology of the Church
B. A Dogmatical Inquiry into True Discipleship
C. A Non-dogmatical Inquiry into Christian Ethics
D. Missing

Answers (we think):

4—E	8—C	12—D	16—A
3—A	7—D	11—B	15—C
2—B	6—E	10—C	14—C
1—C	5—B	9—A	13—B

Rating Scale

- 16 Correct: *Super*—You are neglecting your golf.
- 12-15 Correct: *So-So*—but better not enter that extra tournament.
- 8-11 Correct: *Not so hot*—nine holes per week is enough.
- 0-7 Correct: Sell your golf clubs to your secretary.

SEEN & NOTED

"In the beauty of your ministerial morning, set up ideals so lofty that you will never need to change them, except as they keep soaring higher."
Andrew W. Blackwood

"The caliber of its leaders is the measure of a movement; for the caliber of men is indicated by the size of the things which challenge them, by the type and size of things which discourage and defeat them, by the caliber of the helpers they choose, by the size and type of things which either irritate or please them, and by the reach of their shadow—the unconscious influence."
J. B. Chapman

"We have to acquire a peace and balance of mind such that we can give every word of criticism its due weight, and humble ourselves before every word of praise."
Dag Hammarskjold

"We wield a two-edged sword with sharp edges. We are not little boys playing with wooden ones."
Gerald Kennedy

"To do right is wonderful. To teach others to do right is even more wonderful—and much easier."
Mark Twain

"It is so difficult for us to transfer our affections (to things above), for we have fallen in love with toyland and our playthings are so dear."
Peter Marshall

"The love of our neighbor is the only door out of the dungeon of self."
George MacDonald

"Not he who has little, but he who wishes more, is poor."
Latin Proverb

"Our comforts tempt us to refuse to help the neediest people in the world, if it means sacrificing our comforts. Or if we do give up these comforts, we pity ourselves."
Frank C. Laubach

"Corruption never has been compulsory."
Robinson Jeffers

"The captain of a Coast Guard rescue crew ordered his craft out to rescue a ship floundering on the reefs. The first mate protested, 'The gale is terrific and the reefs are terribly treacherous. We probably could get out there, but we could never get back.' The captain said, 'Launch the boat. We don't have to get back. But we have to go out.'"
Alvin Rogness

"Shun, as you would the plague, a cleric who from being poor has become wealthy, or who, from being nobody has become a celebrity."
Jerome

"All the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action."
James Russell Lowell

"Human history is a catalogue of blunders, wry hindsight, and vexed longing for another chance to rectify that which is past changing."
Meredith & Fitzgerald

"Lose the day loitering. 'Twill be the same tomorrow."
Goethe

"More dreams, poems, high inspirations, and rare insights have been born in prisons and on beds of suffering than in all the vacation spots."
Anonymous

"A good listener is not only popular, but after a while he knows something."
Anonymous

"All arrogance will reap a harvest rich in tears."
Aeschylus

"Our symbol is not a cushion but a cross."
R. G. Turnbull

"Souls are made sweet not by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in—a great love, a new Spirit, the Spirit of Christ."
Henry Drummond

"He who has a why to live for can bear with almost any how."
Nietzsche

PLEASE TALK TO US—

The editorial team of the *Preacher's Magazine* regards this publication as uniquely the property of our readers. We exist to serve you. Fill out this page and help us serve you better.

I. Rate This Issue

- Which of the following words best represents your overall opinion of this issue?
 A. Superb D. Ho-hum
 B. Superior E. Even worse
 C. Average
- The blend of scholarly and practical articles is:
 A. About right
 B. Slanted too much toward scholarly concerns
 C. Slanted too much toward practical concerns
- The article I liked best was _____
- The article I liked least was _____
- I like the new format and size: Yes _____ No _____

II. In Future Issues

A. In light of my interests and needs, I would like to read articles on the following subjects. (Number your first choices one through five in order of preference).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ___ 1. Abortion | ___ 2. Archaeology |
| ___ 3. Baptism | ___ 4. Bible word studies |
| ___ 5. Bus ministry | ___ 6. Business meetings |
| ___ 7. Building programs | ___ 8. Camps |
| ___ 9. Campus ministries | ___ 10. Christian education |
| ___ 11. Christian Ethics | ___ 12. Church administration |
| ___ 13. Church & community | ___ 14. Church history |
| ___ 15. Church music | ___ 16. Communion |
| ___ 17. Contemporary theology | ___ 18. Discipleship training |
| ___ 19. Divorce and Remarriage | ___ 20. Doctrine of the Bible |
| ___ 21. Doctrine of the Church | ___ 22. Doctrine of God |
| ___ 23. Doctrine of man | ___ 24. Doctrine of salvation |
| ___ 25. Eschatology | ___ 26. Evangelism |
| ___ 27. Evangelists | ___ 28. Exegetical studies |

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ___ 29. Glossolalia | ___ 30. Holiness heritage |
| ___ 31. Holiness doctrine | ___ 32. Holy living |
| ___ 33. Home Bible studies | ___ 34. Homiletics |
| ___ 35. Liturgy | ___ 36. Marriage |
| ___ 37. Midweek services | ___ 38. Ministerial salaries |
| ___ 39. Parliamentary procedures | ___ 40. Pastor and family |
| ___ 41. Pastoral care | ___ 42. Pastoral counseling |
| ___ 43. Personal growth | ___ 44. Philosophy |
| ___ 45. Politics and the Church | ___ 46. Prayer |
| ___ 47. Preaching | ___ 48. Promotion |
| ___ 49. Publicity | ___ 50. Revivals |
| ___ 51. Sermons (full length) | ___ 52. Sermon Ideas |
| ___ 53. Sermon outlines | ___ 54. Sexuality |
| ___ 55. Small groups | ___ 56. Social issues |
| ___ 57. Special days | ___ 58. Staff ministries |
| ___ 59. Stewardship | ___ 60. Sunday School |
| ___ 61. Theology | ___ 62. Witnessing |
| ___ 63. Worship | ___ 64. Wife of minister |
| ___ 65. Women in the church | ___ 66. Youth ministries |
| ___ 67. _____ | ___ 68. _____ |

B. Authors whose work I would like to see in the *Preacher's Magazine* include: _____

C. I know a person who could write an effective article on _____
 He or she is: _____

III. About You

A. I am a ___ pastor, ___ evangelist, ___ staff minister, ___ educator, ___ district superintendent, ___ Headquarters employee, ___ student, ___ retired minister, ___ other.

B. Check your age-group ___ 20-35 ___ 36-50 ___ over 50

C. Name (only if you wish) _____

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