

THE *Preacher's* *Magazine*

APRIL
1961



The Preacher's Magazine

Volume 36

April, 1961

Number 4

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A Definition of the Preacher's Fire**

By J. B. Chapman*

IN DESCRIBING PREACHERS there is no more useful word than that word "fire." And by the addition of qualifying words, this term can be made to say a great deal. Preachers are said to have "no fire," and "much fire," but even at this, the exact quality is not made sure; for what, indeed, is fire in the preacher?

Some years ago we called upon a preacher to lead in prayer at the opening of an afternoon service; and he prayed that the Lord might give us fire in the meeting. He said, "We prefer real fire. But we must have fire of some sort. Please give us real fire. But if we cannot have real fire, then give us fox fire or wildfire, but anyway give us fire." Now we do not mean to approve the sentiment of that prayer, but we did get help out of the suggestion as to the various kinds of fire. And we have conceived the idea that every preacher has fire—fox fire, wildfire, or real fire; and as a means of self-improvement, we suggest that we attempt to define these various aspects or forms of fire and to classify ourselves with reference to them.

Briefly, the distinction is this: fox fire gives some light, but no heat; wildfire gives much heat, but no light; while real fire gives both light and heat.

Fox fire is usually found on dead and even on rotten wood, and it emits enough light to be appreciated, especially on a very dark night, but it is just as cold as its surroundings. To us this is a type of the "bookish" preacher. He has gone to head. His sermons are lectures and his only contribution is light. One can learn something by hearing him, but he does not stir the heart.

Wildfire is creature of the laboratory and is produced by combining the properties of real fire in unnatural and improper proportions. The "nonluminous flame" of the chemist is an example of wildfire. This flame is exceedingly hot, but it emits no light. To us, this represents the emotional preacher who does not study either men or books, and in whose sermons the teaching factor is almost entirely wanting. This preacher is long on ejaculations, but is short on facts. He cavorts and exhorts, but does not enlighten. His followers are "hot," but not intelligent. They do some things, but their actions are nonmoral, for they do not know why they do what they do.

Real fire is not wierd, but natural, and consists in the putting together of the qualities of light and heat in proper proportions. This illustrates the preacher who is balanced in character and in method, and whose preaching instructs and inspires. The

**Reprint from *Preacher's Magazine*, January, 1929.

*Deceased.

sermons of this man are wrought out by hard study and much prayer and they both enlighten and inspire. Under their effect one will grow both in knowledge and in grace.

And in this matter of fire, as in every other, the tendency is forever toward the extremes and the task is to maintain one's place on the golden mean. One preacher becomes a mere shallow player on human feelings. But the real task is to keep alive intellectually and emotionally—to keep the balance between fox fire and wildfire—to possess real fire.

Perhaps it is not amiss to say that the "putting together" of things is a factor in making them a curse or a blessing. The same essences go into the making of carbolic acid as into the making of sugar—only the proportions are different—and yet one is a poison and the other a food. Thus fox fire has the quality of light, and yet it can scarcely be said to be half-way good. Wildfire makes heat, and yet it is dangerous and destructive and hardly to be classed as a good. But real fire in the preacher's life is a positive prerequisite of success.

Many a preacher has lost his place in the ministry because he died, like a tree, at the top first. He failed to study and to grow intellectually and his fire gave forth no light, the people tired of his repetitions, he himself wearied of his sameness, and he was left stranded without a charge, or else he simply "draws his breath and draws his salary" in some indulgent parish where there is the stillness, the inactivity of death.

I have known a preacher who was, twenty years ago, a busy and much appreciated man. But he is today, at forty-five, no wiser and better prepared for his work than he was then; now he is constantly "open for calls." Either his fire has entirely gone out or else it is so totally wanting in the

light-giving quality that people do not demand his ministry any more.

When Moffatt, the translator, returned from this country to England, he wrote an article for a British weekly on his impressions of the ministry of America. Among other things, he said, "American preachers are exceedingly busy, most of them seem to have motorcars; but their libraries are thin." And perhaps we need not mention the fact that these conditions do not seem to be producing great preachers.

In fact, there is a question if the want of interest in church attendance of which preachers so commonly complain is not very largely accounted for by the fact that so few preachers really "tell them something" when they do come.

Dr. Wiley calls our attention to the fact that the ministry is of two general classes: the evangelistic and the teaching ministry. But while there are a few in which one or the other of these qualities is predominantly present, it is a better balanced preacher who combines the two in one personality. "Do the work of an evangelist," is a general, as well as a specific, admonition; and "Teach all nations" is a tenet of the Great Commission.

Describing his own and the labors of his companions, Paul said, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power." But it did come in word as well as in power. That is, it came in the form of sound doctrine and in the dress of good logic and excellent diction. It was unanswerable in its intellectual aspects, and yet it was delivered in the unction and power of the Spirit.

And what a remarkable thing is unction! It is that strange quality which distinguishes preaching from every other form of public discourse. It is not easy to define it. But it is

not difficult to discover its presence or to detect its absence. But unction is dependent upon what is said as well as upon the way it is said. And it is observed that unction is not readily detached from intellectual freshness and doctrinal depth. So the stale preacher is usually also a dry preacher. The effective preacher possesses both light and heat in proper proportions. He brings out of his storehouse "things new and old." The substance

of his preaching is old, but there is forever the joy of the enamored discoverer in his attitude. And with it all, he speaks as one having authority. He is not only a pedagogue; he is a prophet. He not only enlightens the mind, but he stirs the emotions and compels the judgment. He not only makes you think, but he makes you choose and act. His fire has both light and heat, and this is what makes him a good preacher.

A TESTIMONY AND AN EXHORTATION!

1. I tithe because God commands me to do so (Malachi 3:8-10).
2. I pay God's tithe because it is not mine; it is His (Leviticus 27:30).
3. I tithe because I believe God knows how to finance His work. If He says that is the right way I believe it, for "I believe God."
4. I tithe because I owe that much (and more) to God. He gives me everything I have; surely I should show some appreciation for His goodness.
5. I tithe because I want to have some part in giving the gospel to the world. If salvation is a blessing to me, it is to every person. I feel I am a hypocrite if I pray for the lost and will not give any share to get others saved.
6. I tithe because I do not have the heart to enjoy the comforts of the church: a comfortable building, the ministry of God's servants (the pastor, custodian, song leader, secretary), and then be too stingy to support God's work. I hope I never have such an attitude.
7. I tithe that I may do my bit, to know that if I do my share I will not then burden others (II Corinthians 8:12-15).
8. I tithe and give offerings because I love God, who gave the greatest Offering of all, His Son.
9. I tithe and give offerings because Christ gave His life for me.
10. I tithe and give offerings for I like to do so.
11. I tithe and give offerings because God has promised to bless me; and I want and need His blessings (II Corinthians 9:6).
12. I tithe and give offerings because I would be ashamed not to do so.

Now an exhortation: I exhort you to be fair with God.

XVI. Selecting Congregational Music

LAST MONTH we took a very quick look at the music program of the local church, especially as it related to the worship services. As we touched the various areas of church music, we had the feeling that one of the weakest spots in the program had to do with the congregational singing. Since the singing of the group is so important to our Protestant concept of worship, it would be well worth our while to single out this phase of the service and look at it separately.

It must be apparent to most of us also that so many times the handling of the congregational music is somewhat out of the hands of the minister. He finds it difficult to feel that he has the control of it that should be if the service is to be built as a unit of worship. Many times the person who takes charge of this music is one who is either inexperienced in congregational singing or inexperienced in building that singing into the total of the worship service.

Regardless of how the congregational singing is handled by a layman or a professional musician, it is all-important that the pastor stay close to it. It is a good rule for the pastor to choose the selections that are to be used in the Sunday morning service in harmony with what is his theme for the service or the particular emphasis which he desires to accomplish. Competent song leaders agree

that this should be done. The selections for other services may or may not be selected by the pastor, depending upon how capable the song leader is in selecting appropriate songs. In order to assist both the pastor who is selecting these songs and the one whom he may be directing, we have ventured to suggest a few rules which should be followed. These must be set the one against the other and again each taken individually. We can do a better job of choosing our congregational songs. Let us take into account the following:

1. The type of service which is being planned should be taken into consideration. While all of the services should be thought to be "worship services" of a sort, actually each service has a particular role to play in the total worship program of the church. Sunday morning is usually thought to be the "devotional" service of the week, and the people come with a particular mood which easily supports that purpose. There are distinct values to be gained here that cannot possibly be had in any other service. The hymns can be used in the Sunday morning service with great effect. That music which takes in the breadth of the worship experience should be employed. The evening service, on the other hand, is featured usually as the evangelistic service of the week. It is the service

of evangelism and testimony. Here the "gospel songs" and other more "subjective" songs can be used effectively. The midweek service carries the theme of prayer. Here many of the prayer songs can be used. These serve merely as examples. Each service should find the music appropriate to that particular service.

2. In a similar manner, the theme and purpose of the service should be kept in mind when the congregational numbers are selected. At times the pastor will want songs on faith to undergird his message on that theme. Other times he may want a bit of contrast in the songs used to the subject which he is going to present. At still other times he may want to use songs which will get across an idea related to his message which he will not have time to bring into the message. But in all of these we find one principle standing foremost—the music and the theme of the service blend together with a unity of purpose so that it is one service and not two (or three or four).

3. Music should be chosen as to its kind. We speak often of the difference between the hymn and the gospel song. There is a basic difference, and yet the line which separates them is a broad line, and often a given song cannot be identified in one way or the other. Generally speaking, the hymn is a song the words of which are directed to God. The gospel song, on the other hand, is a song which tells of human experience. "Come, Thou Almighty King" would be a typical example of the first. "Love Lifted Me" would be an example of the second. However, all of the congregational songs we regularly use do not fall easily into one or the other of these categories. There are songs about God but not directed toward God which have both the content and the mood of a hymn. This would be

true of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." Hence, each song must be viewed critically and placed in the service because of what it will contribute to a service.

4. Congregational numbers should be chosen also for their mood. We have used this word "mood" quite frequently in our study of worship. It is important. There is as much in the mood of a song as there is in its words. Most songs have a harmony of mood and word. Some do not. But in any event the mood of a song will do much to set the mood of the service. That is why it is important not to sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee" for the opening of Sunday school. By a similar token it is wise not to use "Such Love" for the opening congregational song of the Sunday morning service. We must study the moods of the songs we use and place them so that they will contribute to the mood which we feel should be projected on the service. A misplacement of mood is usually why a given song will "ruin" a service. We see this in bold relief in the invitation service. But the principle operates in every part of the service.

5. Songs not only have a given mood; they also have a certain depth. Some songs, while they might be solid in kind, in mood, and in content might be shallow and not carry through in projecting the full force of which the song would be capable. Sometimes the music is weak. Sometimes the song is incomplete. Some of these songs might be very impressive and conducive to worship in a simple devotional service in young people's or missionary meeting but would lack the strength to do for a fuller worship service all that is intended. Let us learn to watch not only the titles but to know the depth of the songs we use.

6. Songs must contribute to the direction of the service also. There is a progression of every service which must follow through with more or less direction or the service fails. As we have already indicated in an earlier article, the experience of Isaiah in the Temple traces this progression very accurately. The liturgical churches, of course, follow this progression with exactitude. This progression is a part of every true worship service, and those of us in the "free" tradition should not ignore it.

The first expression of worship is *praise and adoration*. It is the "upward look." People must turn their eyes toward God. There is not much base for true worship if they fail to do this. Hence the first songs of the service should do this. We do not have in our hymnal a great number of ideal opening hymns, especially for the Sunday morning service. "Love Divine," "Praise Him," "Holy, Holy, Holy" are some of the better ones which do this job of turning the minds of our people Godward.

The second movement is inward. As with Isaiah, when God is made manifest, immediately the human heart senses its finiteness. When there is sin, of course this is revealed. But even with the people of God there is a sense of limitation, failure, problems, cares, etc. And people want to admit these areas of need. Some would call it "*confession*," and if we understand what we mean by that, the idea is a good one. "When I Survey" lifts up some of these feelings. "I Need Thee Every Hour," of course, speaks frankly of this inner cry.

The third movement of worship brings these two together. I am weak, God is almighty, and He has made His strength (and salvation in the case where sin is revealed) available.

"Lean on His Arms," "Wonderful Peace," and many like songs speak of this *coming together of God and man* in worship.

There is the fourth movement of worship which is the outgrowth of the third; that is dedication and a pledge to service. "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go," "A Charge to Keep I Have," and like songs give us this thrust of worship.

It is very important that we see this progression and place songs in the order which will direct this progression. We might choose good songs but get them in the wrong order, if we do this we would tend to limit the progression of the service to its climax.

7. A word should be said also with respect to the amount of congregational singing in a given service. While we do not want to get into a "first, second, and last stanza" sort of rut, yet we have discovered that more songs of fewer stanzas do tend to give more ideas in a given service. Frequently we wear thin on a theme long before all of the stanzas are finished. Contrariwise, we can jump from one song to another so quickly that an idea has no chance to fix itself in the minds of the worshipers. Too many songs and too much time given to the congregational singing can wear an audience out. Too high a pitch left in the congregational singing can exhaust the crowd, leaving the people with little or no emotional response for the message. Congregational singing is not an end in itself; it is to give to the service what it can give and then contribute to all else that the service should accomplish.

8. While not always inherent in the particular song itself, there is the all-important matter of tempo in congregational singing. Here we have the two extremes. The one would make

all music in the church slow and sedate and funereal and never vary from this pattern; the other would insist that all songs have "life" and "zip" and would even speed the songs which were written to be sung slowly. Of course, both of the two extremes are wrong. There should be variety in tempo. The song should be chosen with its tempo in mind. It does no good to "drag" a song of testimony and praise. It is equally as bad to seek to sing out of tempo a song that can convey its best meaning only when it is sung thoughtfully and worshipfully. A song should never be

sung so rapidly that the congregation doesn't get all of the words in. Congregational music is for the purpose of allowing the people to express themselves. Music at too high a tempo defeats this.

These are but a few suggestions which may serve to point up the very important aspects to this matter of selecting the songs which our people are to sing. Let us do a better job than in the past that our worship services will be more relevant and more meaningful.

(To be continued)

Empty Prattle

By Stephen C. Johnson*

THE LATE Dr. H. F. Reynolds at our assembly used to hold his watch in hand to show the importance of punctuality and saving time. If there is one place we should give attention to time saving, it is in the pulpit. Our pastors, song evangelists, and platform managers could take a lesson from our radio commercials. Every word is typewritten. So many of our song evangelists feel they must make an extended comment on each song they use. In most instances it is just empty prattle.

Following the songs some pastors will engage in a short lecture on the importance of prayer, and then ask for special requests, speaking of the nature of each illness, with compliments for the individual for his usefulness and remarks on how we miss

him in the services. Consuming more time for requests than in the prayer!

Then there is the period for announcements. Dr. J. B. Chapman advised pastors, "Use but two minutes for your regular announcements. Everyone knows you have prayer meeting Wednesday evening, and Sunday school at 9:30 a.m."

A church of our acquaintance provided church bulletins to save time in the worship service, but the pastor used the time to be saved thereby giving explicit explanation of each item in the bulletin.

A guest speaker gave his text fifty-five minutes after the stated hour of service. Another was given the service one hour and twenty minutes following the close of the Sunday school period. In each instance much time was consumed by empty prattle. Young pastors, take heed! We older men cannot be helped much!

*Pastor, Greenfield, Indiana.

The Preaching of Joseph N. Speakes

By James McGraw*

I'VE HAD ONLY two main ambitions in life—to be good and to do good.”

So declared a man who had spent his life serving Christ and his church, preaching holiness of heart and life, and making an impact upon those who knew him so that they were inspired and lifted by his enthusiastic spirit. These were words that described the career of the man who spoke them, the “witty Irishman from Arkansas,” Joseph N. Speakes.

When he spoke these words, he was seventy-five years of age and living in retirement. But retirement for Joseph Speakes did not mean any cessation of service, lessening of labor, or abatement of activity. Retirement for him, in his own words, meant simply “to put on new tires all around, and to get going again!” This he did, preaching on an average of sixty to seventy times each year during the ten years of his retirement just preceding his victorious death in Christ. “Being good and doing good,” he preached scriptural holiness as long as there was strength in his body to carry on the work God had called him to do.

Joseph Nicholas Speakes was born near Lake City, Arkansas, January 12, 1879. He was the sixth of fifteen children, the son of Fergus B. and Louvenia Speakes. The Speakes family came to America before the Revolutionary War, and members of the family fought in that war of independence and in every succeeding war in the nation's history. But Joe Speakes was a soldier of a different sort. He fought

in the war against sin and evil. He pioneered, he scouted, he patrolled, he spied out the land, he captained his companies and led his regiments, and he brought discomfort to the forces of the enemy in that war as long as there was strength in him to carry on the struggle.

He began early in life. It was at the age of twelve that he was converted, and he was preaching at fifteen. By the time he was eighteen years old he was conducting revivals. He taught school part of this time, but the divine urge to preach was upon him; and soon after he was sanctified under the ministry of Will Huff in the Main Springs Camp Meeting near Prescott, Arkansas, he gave his full time to preaching.

His education was more thorough than many other men of his era. He attended school at Jonesboro Training School, Jonesboro, Arkansas; Marvin Collegiate Institute, Fredericktown, Missouri; and Bethany-Peniel College (now Bethany Nazarene College), Bethany, Oklahoma, from which he was graduated. His studies included law, which proved beneficial to him later in his ministry. He met Miss Jessie Tate at Fredericktown, and in 1902 they were married.

He was ordained by Bishop John Granberry of the Southern Methodist church on September 23, 1900, and spent eleven years of his early ministry as a circuit rider in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas.

“Being good and doing good” in his early ministry, he fought a vigorous

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war against opposition to scriptural holiness. It was after he realized that he could fight more effectively in a distinctly holiness church that he united with the Holiness Church of Christ. He served as president of that body's Eastern Council for several years, and was one of the seven delegates from this group who helped bring about the union at Pilot Point in 1908 with the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, which was later to be known as the Church of the Nazarene. Later that year, when the Arkansas district assembly convened, General Superintendent E. P. Ellyson granted Speakes his elder's orders in the Church of the Nazarene.

Among the eighteen churches he served as pastor in the Church of the Nazarene were Newton, Kansas; Maplewood, Missouri; Little Rock, Arkansas; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Topeka, Kansas; Grandview, Wenatchee, and Monroe, Washington. He served also as district superintendent on four districts, namely: Kansas, 1910; Missouri, 1912; Arkansas, 1914-16; and Northwest, 1924-29. He was instrumental in organizing a total of twenty-four churches in the above-named areas. One of the strongest of these today is First Church of the Nazarene in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

Joseph N. Speakes will be remembered as a loyal churchman. He was one of the secretaries at the Pilot Point assembly in 1908, and he was placed on the *Manual* Revision Committee and the General Board of Missions at that time. In 1911 he became secretary of the newly organized Board of Church Extension, and traveled in its interests throughout the United States, Canada, and British Isles. Later he served one quadrennium on the General Board, and for eight years he was a member of the General Court of Appeals.

Still busy at seventy-seven, he was one of more than a hundred "pioneers" who met at the 1956 General Assembly, and he was the only one of this group who had not missed a single General Assembly since 1907. Of course he was chosen president of this venerable body of "Nazarene Pioneers," as would be expected.

Perhaps one word can describe this man who was so "busy being good and doing good" in the church he loved. That word is "radiant." His ministry has been characterized by many who knew him as a radiant ministry. He preached with joy, with enthusiasm, with unction, with radiance. These qualities are often found together, and in reality they are all just one central, essential factor, and that is "radiance," or *unction*.

W. E. Sangster says of unction that it is the most important factor in any man's preaching. He writes: "Men with unction impress others as having the breath of God about them. The spiritually sensitive know it at once: even the spiritually insensitive are often aware of a strange difference which they cannot explain. People of discernment are conscious that there is a divine element operating in the preaching; the preacher seems to fade out and leave the hearers face to face with God." (*Approach to Preaching*, p. 26). When one thinks of such preaching, men like Brother Speakes immediately come to the mind, for these men faded out and let their hearers come face to face with God!

The "glory" that Bresee wanted upon the church came upon Speakes when he preached, and it came upon his hearers as they listened. His sermons usually ended in a blaze of glory, often with the singing of such songs as "Palms of Victory" or "By and By We're Going to See the King." There was a victorious note in his preaching.

He walked about as he preached, rather than remaining in one spot behind the pulpit, and he gestured frequently but moderately. His voice was strong and resonant but pleasant to hear. He used it with a great deal of variety, inflecting his tones and varying his pitch and intensity to suit the mood of the moment. He seemed to enjoy preaching.

His favorite source for illustrations was the Bible. He spoke of Samson, of Elijah, of Daniel or Abraham or some other Old Testament character, and he knew how to make them "live." He could relate the oft-repeated incident of Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail the night deliverance came with an earthquake, and make it sound as new and fresh as though it had been selected from the front page of today's newspaper. There was zest and verve in his whole life, and it made his preaching the more interesting and the more effective.

In addition to the Bible as a source, he found many illustrations from personal experiences and from life situations. An incident in his travels, an answered prayer on the mission field, a remarkable conversion in the life of an agnostic, or a hard-fought battle won in the organization of a new Church of the Nazarene—any or all of such experiences made vivid illustrative material in the preaching of Joseph Speakes.

A product of the "Bible belt," where in his early experience a member of an audience might at any moment speak out to interrupt a preacher by asking a question which required a good working knowledge of the Scriptures to answer, Speakes preached Biblical sermons. They were not always what would be technically defined as expository, but they were usually saturated with the Scriptures. There were many quotations from the

Bible in his sermons, giving a distinctly scriptural tone even to his topical sermons.

The life and ministry of Joseph Speakes had a glow and a warmth that stemmed from the heart of a man who loved Christ, loved his church, loved his family, loved the people to whom he ministered, and loved the Word of God. There was always a twinkle in his eye. There was genuine friendliness in his relationships with others. The mature Christians felt comforted and encouraged by his presence, and the youth felt he was their friend.

In the sixtieth year of his ministry, just a few years before his death, he was still effective as a minister. There were more people finding victory at the altar than he had seen in many years, and he was making such an impact upon the church he pastored in Monroe, Washington, and upon the community it served, that Mayor Robert H. Follis proclaimed him an honorary life citizen. It was on this occasion that he spoke the memorable words which so well characterized his spirit: "I've had only two main ambitions in life—to be good and to do good."

He died peacefully in Nampa, Idaho, on April 18, 1959, just a little more than three months past his eightieth birthday. The man who had never missed a General Assembly of his church since its organization was thus called to be a delegate to the General Assembly of the First-born, to which he had been chosen before the foundation of the world. It is a safe guess that he will continue being good and doing good in his new relationship there, in his "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," to which thousands of younger men who have been heartened by his heroic example will by faith also steadfastly aspire.

God's Matchless Love (John 3:16)

By Joseph T. Larson*

THE LOVE OF GOD is the source of all God's grace for all mankind. John 3:16 is said to be the gospel in a miniature. It contains theology, "the doctrine of God and things pertaining to God." It contains anthropology, "the doctrine of man." It contains Christology, "the doctrine of Christ." It contains soteriology, "the doctrine of salvation." It embraces the essentials of salvation in Christ. It contains eschatology, "the doctrine of final things." For Jesus says: ". . . shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

The late Dr. J. C. Masse of Boston gave six wonderful truths on this text: "It was a wonderful love that brought salvation. It was a wonderful sacrifice that bought salvation. It was a wonderful Spirit and grace which taught salvation. It was a great invitation to accept the love. It was a great scope of invitation—'whosoever will'—'whosoever believeth.'" He admitted another was responsible for these expressions.

If I may use the expression "so great," the following summary of this text may be given: The so great God had a so great love for a so great world of so great sinners, that He sent a so great gift, the so great Son, who had (and has) a so great love for lost souls that He gave himself as a so great Sacrifice for so great sinners. As a result of the so great sacrifice of Blood, there was given a so great grace, for so great an invitation, that whosoever would accept the so great

gift of God should not perish but have everlasting life. Here is seen a so great deliverance from sin, and a so great home awaiting us in heaven, for the souls redeemed by God's great Son!

God so loved the world that He gave His Son for its sin. Christ loved the world, and died for humanity on the Cross. He has labored for humanity to redeem them to God. Everlasting life for our salvation!

THE MEASURE OF GOD'S LOVE

One cannot measure God's love by being limited to one passage, even though it is great. God loved the first pair, Adam and Eve, even after they had sinned. God loved Noah and his family. God loved Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with all of their descendants. Though they sinned grievously, yet God loved them still. He liberated them from the land of bondage, led them through the Red Sea and the wilderness into the Promised Land. Later, God chastised them by using their enemies in the seventy years' captivity. God loved them enough to send them prophets, priests, and judges. God did not take pleasure in their wickedness, nor in the death of the wicked, but in their repentance. Although the Old Testament contains the law and the prophets, yet observe the marvelous love and goodness of God in the Psalms and other parts of the Old Testament!

After the restoration of Judah to their land, there ensued a period of four hundred years, when it seems

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that God sent them no prophet, following Malachi. But at the close of this period God sent His own Son to redeem those who were under the law. He came as God's Heir to the throne of David, and to show in reality the expression of God's love. But Israel rejected Him, saying: "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours." That was their rejection of the love of God in Christ!

A Christian man rescued a drowning man, and was later cursed to his face by this man. As the Christian man wept, he said: "Oh, my God! Now I understand what it meant for Thy Son to be rejected and cursed for our sake!"

Christ's death implicated Jews and gentiles alike, and meant a fullest manifestation of the love of God as seen in the Cross. This cannot be fully measured until we measure the death of His agony, sorrows, and the sin of all mankind which was upon Him!

"Him being delivered by the determinate counsel . . . of God"—there lies a depth of foreknowledge and foresight in this truth. God allowed Him to be unjustly sentenced, betrayed, condemned, crucified, and then raised Him in power to live forever.

It was the love of God which sent Him. It was the love of God that alleviated the sufferings of men. It was the love of God which demonstrated His Son's power among men in miracles and good works. It was love which allowed Him to be shamefully crucified. It was the love of God which caused Him to arise from the dead and ascend into heaven once more. It was love which restored Him to the Father's presence and glory. It was love which sent the Holy Spirit of God to become for us "another Comforter," "teacher," and "advocate" within our hearts. Through the

Holy Spirit is shown the love of God, "which is shed abroad in our hearts."

God proved at Pentecost that He loved the world, for He sent the gospel in power to them in order to bring them to repentance. Eight thousand were saved in two successive occasions, and hundreds of millions of souls since that time. The love of God embraces all nationalities, colors, and classes, and excludes none.

The object of God's love was His Son. Then He loved a sinful world. He loved Israel, including also the gentiles. Then he had a peculiar love for His own people in the true Church. Christ loved souls until He wept. He preached, He performed miracles, He raised the dead, He cast out devils, He championed the cause of the helpless masses, and lamented that "ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40).

God's love has a drawing power, a saving power, a blessing power which nothing else except the Blood has. God's love has been "focused" on this sinful world for six thousand years and has burned through the carnal natures of millions, entering to abide there by faith in Christ. God has scattered His words of life and love; He has shifted His efforts among various nations, tribes, kindreds, and tongues, until the world has in some measure heard of His gospel of love, life, light, and salvation.

God's design in creation, in man's nature, in a mother's love, in a father's care, in the saints' fellowship, and in the entire Church has shown forth the love of God. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10). We may see God's love in His gifts, in His care and providential dealings, in His healing of sicknesses. We may see God's love in taking home the loved ones, either through death or at His second

coming. All these are evidences of His matchless love.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD'S LOVE

God's love is limitless, everlasting, and divine. It is not narrow, but "suffereth long, and is kind," "envieth not," never vaunts itself, "is not puffed up," "is not easily provoked," "thinketh no evil," "rejoiceth in the truth" and "rejoiceth not in iniquity"; "love never faileth." God's love is compassionate, sympathetic, merciful, forbearing, patient, kind, all-embracing, all-inclusive, and universal for all men. If a sinner can really see God's love in Christ, it will lead him to repentance, melting his heart, making it like unto the saints of God. God's love works; it wins, it saves, it sanctifies, it satisfies, it converts, it enriches saints, and moves toward a heavenly joy and destiny!

DANGERS IN REJECTING GOD'S LOVE

God's love rejected brings a night of woe and darkness. Israel as a nation rejected Christ, who was the manifestation of God's love. One million Jews perished in A.D. 70 and the remainder were dispersed for 1,850 years! God allowed General Titus to punish them for all this, even as Christ predicted 37 years before. The death of Christ was a necessity, but the manner in which He was opposed, rejected, hated, and finally crucified became their great sin. No animal of the Old Testament had ever endured such abuse prior to its death as a sacrifice!

Yet there have been millions of gentiles since who have rejected God's love in Christ to their eternal detriment. Grace and mercy and love rejected can only bring judgment upon the Christ-rejecters. God is just as well as merciful. He is equal to every occasion. When a soul rejects the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit there cannot be any other way of salvation. Let us not refuse the love of God in Christ, for it is God's gift to all.

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:4-6).

A king once condemned a minister for refusing to recognize his son on equality with himself. The minister showed the king that he committed a greater offense by refusing to recognize the Son of God as equal with the Father and worthy of worship and obedience.

How much do we love God in return for His great love? Do we obey the two great commandments which Christ said were the greatest? That is, to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves?

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7-8).

PREJUDICE

Prejudice is a great time saver. It enables you to form opinions without having to get the facts.

—Sunshine

Of First Importance

By Charles W. Hodge*

PLANNING WHAT TO PREACH can be a problem when a pastor wants to build sermons on important themes. The preacher is repeatedly puzzled as he ponders over pages of pulpiteering points. What, he wonders, do my parishioners need to produce in them pulsating spiritual power? What truth is "of first importance"?

Preachers of our space age can be consoled by the fact that preachers of the apostolic age were confronted with a similar problem in evaluating truth. Paul, the itinerant preaching theologian of the New Testament Church, evaluated the body of Christian truth and settled the issue in his mind before he preached in the materialistically minded metropolis of Corinth. When he wrote his first letter to the Corinthian converts, Paul reminded them that he had preached to them the message that was "of first importance" (I Corinthians 15:3, R.S.V.). Every preacher of the gospel knows immediately that if Paul considered a truth "of first importance" he should give it serious thought.

In reviewing the essential points of his message to the Corinthians, Paul revealed at least four underlying concepts that gave background and power to his preaching. These apostolic facts of faith might strengthen contemporary preaching.

Paul summarized his previous preaching in Corinth with these words: "I delivered to you as of first importance . . . that Christ died . . . that he was buried, that he was raised

. . . and that he appeared . . ." (I Corinthians 15:3-5, R.S.V.). These things "of first importance" were events—events in history. For Paul, God worked in history. This was essential to his message. The content of his sermons was the declaration of what God had done as He worked in history.

These happenings in real life did not occur by chance. Far from it! Paul strongly asserted that the death and resurrection of Christ were "in accordance with the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:3-4). What God had done in the Christ-deed of history was fulfillment of prophecy. What God had promised he had begun to fulfill in Christ.

Underlying his statements about the historical events which fulfilled God's predictions, Paul had complete confidence in the power of God. The God who foretold and fulfilled by acting in history was, for Paul, a God of power.

Characteristic of Paul is his use of the name "Christ." When he preached, he spoke not of the superior teachings of the "Master," nor of the unique compassion of "Jesus." Though these were held in pious reverence, when Paul preached he spoke of the deity of "Christ." It was "of first importance" to Paul that the Man to whom he bore witness was the God-Man. He was careful to use names for the Incarnate God that would show His deity. Paul did not argue the deity of Christ—he asserted it.

Vital as these concepts were, they formed but the attitude of mind with

*Pastor, Albertville, Alabama.

which Paul approached his message. They provided important background and added to the meaning of his preaching content. The first main point of his message was: "Christ died for our sins" (v. 3). In preaching, Paul headed the list of things "of first importance" with the statement of what the Incarnate God did in history for man. He started, not with world views, nor a discussion of man's problem of sin, nor even statements about the nature of God. He must have known that most men are well enough acquainted with their sin problem to know that they need help in handling it. Then, too, as a man yet in his sins reaches out for God, he is more interested in the help he needs than in meditating about the nature of God. Assuming this, Paul spoke first of history's salvation-providing event. It was with keen insight, or possibly divinely inspired spiritual insight, that in the first point of his message on things "of first importance" Paul spoke to the crux of man's soul problem. This first point might be rephrased to read: "The help you need can be found in Christ."

In his first point, Paul sounded a vital note. But it was by no means the ultimate note. From his popular-style presentation of the atonement, Paul moved on to the trial of Christ as a matter of course and to the Resurrection as another matter "of first importance." Again he stated his point with remarkable simplicity: "He was raised" (v. 4).

The final events in the life of Christ and the experience and preaching of the apostles reveal that Christ's resurrection became the clue to interpreting the Crucifixion and all God's workings in history. It is when the Cross is seen through the tomb's open door that it speaks salvation to men's hearts. Christ's resurrection—history's

salvation assuring event—was also the "first fruits" (I Corinthians 15:20, R.S.V.) and sure hope of the resurrection of Christians. Paul, in his second sermon statement, was saying to the man in need, "The assurance and hope you crave can be found in the resurrected Christ."

It was of ultimate importance in the preaching of Paul that the crucified and resurrected Christ "appeared" to men. In Paul's own summary of his preaching to the Corinthians, "that Christ died" and "that he was raised" only lead to the climactic punch thought, "He appeared." The death and resurrection of Christ—events in history—have no meaning to the individual person unless they are made contemporary by a personal meeting. The provision of salvation by the signature of Christ's blood, the seal of the tomb, and the witness of the Resurrection could not be effective without the delivery through personal confrontation with Christ. A personal meeting of the resurrected Christ with the needy men of earth—history's salvation-appropriating event—is the point of persuasion in Paul's preaching. In his preaching to needy persons Paul vigorously affirmed: "You can find this Christ who helps and gives hope!"

Paul's preaching was convincing. He persuaded many people to become Christians. It should not be too surprising that the theologian of the New Testament Church was its strongest evangelist. His conversion to Christ demanded that he be evangelistic. It took his personal meeting with Christ to interpret the Crucifixion for him. It took the post-Resurrection appearance of Christ on the Damascus road before Paul would no longer regard the Resurrection as rumor but as reality. For him, the scene on the road to Damascus meant salvation,

revelation, and doctrine. But "of first importance," it meant salvation.

When Paul was personally confronted with the truth which he later preached, it brought conviction. This conviction led to his conversion. He was convinced that these truths were "of first importance," not only to him, but to every man who was still in his sins. So Paul preached knowing that these important truths would convince, convict, and convert. He told the Corinthians about the appear-

ances of the resurrected Christ to the 12, to the 500, and to himself. He told them this not only to acquaint them with Christ. To the Corinthian sinners as well as the "chief of sinners," the message "of first importance" was the convincing news that man had been and still can be confronted with the living Lord.

"Of first importance" to any preacher's audience is the message that men not only may but must meet the living Lord, Jesus Christ.

IV. Problem of Theological Words

By Mildred Bangs Wynkoop*

ALL THAT HAS been said in the previous article regarding both the Scripture's message of holiness and the involvement and identification of the minister with the truth of the Scripture has relevance for this study. We are seeking the *meaning* of all that is implied by holiness. Theology has utilized Biblical words and has also adapted other words to its technical use. Some of the questions raised by holiness theology become questions because the terms are not fully understood. If holiness theology is "scriptural," the meanings should be found clearly in Scripture.

But language is both formal and vital. That is, language comes out of living situations and gradually gathers local connotations which are rich and high in communicative value among those who understand the overtones. As anyone knows who has traveled from section to section in one country or in the world, the inflections of meaning are not automatically

carried in the word itself, so that a thought barrier is raised across the sections though the words are the same.

This is particularly true in religious circles. Each strong leader tends to express himself in a certain way and to mean certain things. His followers pick up the pattern of expression and it provides a medium of communication. When very vital theological truths are under discussion, the language expressing these truths becomes set in a mold in the interest of preserving the particular truth involved.

When the influence of two leaders with strong language patterns begin to touch and intersect, though the truths may be identical, the words and phrases are not the same and it may look as if the theology clashed. Often the judgment regarding truth has been superficially made and the different language patterns have actually served to create divisions among brethren that a more discriminating analysis could never have justified.

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Denominational semantics follows the same trend. If care be not exercised, orthodoxy can become a matter of linguistics rather than basic ideas, and those who may express themselves differently are considered heretical.

The serious result may be that the evangelistic outreach of the denomination may be hindered by the "ingrown" but very sacred language of the group which carries no meaning whatever to those who listen. To the writer's knowledge a recent publication of a book of sermons written in a strongly denominational language pattern, and understood with deep appreciation by those familiar with it, is totally incomprehensible to others who should be receiving the message of the book. While the intimate "family" words are precious to those inside the circle, a more universal and mature expression needs to be cultivated when matters as vital as religious truths are involved.

Theological words are actually family words. They arise in the warm atmosphere of a close association with life. But they tend to regidify, and as the family separates, the words and original connotations drift apart.

INTERPRETING THEOLOGICAL WORDS

Theological terms have a way of dropping out of the faithful avenues of communication. Their necessarily technical nature required for precise meaning tends to separate them from the dynamic flow of a living language. This is true of all intellectual disciplines. The tendency is to either force a gulf between theological language and the everyday world, so that people say, "I see no vital relation between Sunday and church and my workaday world," or all the rich heritage of theological language is discarded and the new terminology substituted which has neither charac-

ter nor stability, and Christian communication of truth is impaired. The irony of this paradox is that theological language was once the idiom of the workaday world.

Most religious conversation is an attempt at interpretation of theological terms. There are two forms of it. One is personal. "This is what theology means to me," we say, and preach with warmhearted zeal. Preaching can never dispense with the personal experience of the preacher, but the danger here is that the preacher's experience begins to be confused with the message itself until methodology becomes as sacred as the Bible, and if one challenges the method he is thought to challenge the doctrine too.

Interpretation of doctrine, moreover, can be at the level of the scholar's desk. If care be not taken here, the danger exists that not simply the archaic words will be translated into contemporary idiom but that the message itself will not be properly distinguished from the temporal, and that more than the temporal will be discarded, to the detriment of the message.

It is everlastingly the preacher's task to interpret theology to people. This means that Biblical preaching is orderly, sensible, aware of central Biblical issues, rational, consistent. It is also relevant, meaningful, vital. But interpretation dare not proceed on merely personal and subjective principles, lest the Word of God become in the preacher's mouth the word of man.

Holiness theology suffers the same foibles to which any scientific body of knowledge is heir. The need for interpretation is just as pressing, perhaps more so, because of the existential dimension of holiness. The only safe and wise thing to do is to clarify

the terms by reference to the Scriptures, out of which they came. This takes the erratic and divisive subjectivism out.

IS THE BIBLE THEOLOGY?

There is the belief in some quarters that there is no difference between doctrine and Scripture, that Scripture is itself doctrine. It seems scarcely worthwhile to devote time to this idea, but lest this concept should by any chance produce misunderstanding, a word or two is well spent. It is well known that some segments of the Christian Church do consider the Bible to be finished theology. Those who hold to a more rigid type of verbal inspiration are inclined to so do. In this view there cannot be recognized any significant element of subjectivity in interpretation either in the persons of the original writers or in the reader. Truth is totally objective and hence theology cannot be deduced but discovered. Underlying meanings are presumed not to exist in that all the same words have the same meanings, fixed and unalterable, and a collation of texts in which these words occur would constitute systematic theology. One does not read the Bible for principles to be applied in the varied and changing situations possible in life, but in a purely grammatical and historical sense in which no spiritual relevance is recognized. Application, then, of truth is external, forced, legalistic, or when completely impossible it is assumed to be eschatological. In this view, human interpretation is actually engaged in, but without recognition of the function. Because of this, human interpretation is confused and equated with Biblical teaching and a subtle but dangerous intellectual pride substitutes for humble dependence on the Word.

A more generally accepted view understands theology to be a deduc-

tive science. Whether systematic or not, theology is the human interpretation of the teachings of the Scriptures. The Bible is, then, the Source Book which is carefully examined. Meaning is presumed to lie in the words because meaning has structured the whole complex of life behind the words. Grammar is a tool of clear thinking, not its prison. History is a context of events which contributes meaning to all intelligences in history. Theology is what we say about Biblical teaching understood in this way.

An example or two may help. Everything that goes into a doctrinal statement regarding the Trinity or the divine-human nature of Christ is found somewhere in Scripture. But no doctrine of the Trinity or Christology is articulated anywhere. It took the Church many years to properly formulate these doctrines. In fact few, if any, of the Articles of Faith are found as such in Scripture. The deity of the Holy Spirit, so explicitly delineated in our creeds, is in the Bible a fact of experience, not a philosophy. As H. Orton Wiley so wisely says, these most sacred Christian beliefs were experiences of practical religion before they became theology.

Therefore, when Biblical status is claimed for any doctrine, it is proper to seek again the sources of that doctrine—not simply to challenge the claim, but to enrich our understanding of it. It is a proper and necessary task to return often to the Bible for the light its own context casts on the theological words we have borrowed from it.

It is our intention, then, to undertake a fresh examination of the Biblical material out of which holiness doctrine is built. It must be an exegetical rather than a wholly theological enterprise.

Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle*

Romans 12:1-2

BESEECH OR EXHORT?

THE VERB IS "PARAKALEO." It comes *para*, "beside," and *kaleo*, "call." So it literally means "call along side." It was first used in the sense of "call to one's side, summon." It probably has this meaning in Acts 28:20 ("called for"). It may simply mean "invite" (e.g., Matthew 20:28). Sometimes it carries the stronger connotation, "summon to one's aid, call upon for help." But its main three meanings in the New Testament, as reflected in the King James Version, are as follows: "beseech" (43), "comfort" (23), "exhort" (21). It occurs altogether 108 times.

A check of several translations shows a variety of rendering: "appeal to" (Moffatt, Goodspeed, Knox, R.S.V., Amplified), "beg" (Ballantine, Berkeley, Phillips, Williams, Wuest), "entreat" (20th Century, Montgomery, Spencer), "pray" (Wand), "plead with" (Weymouth). All of these seem to be synonymous with "beseech." However, Godet prefers "exhort." But he stands nearly alone in this.

OFFER OR PRESENT?

"That ye present" is the aorist infinitive, *parastesai*, "to present." Arndt and Gingrich cite the verb as here "a technical term in the language of sacrifice: *offer, bring, present*."¹ They suggest the meaning "offer" in this passage.

The force of the aorist tense is brought out vividly in Williams' translation: "to make a decisive dedication." A footnote explains: "Aor. infin., *once for all*." Similarly Wuest has: "by a once-for-all presentation to place your bodies at the disposal of God." The language here clearly refers to the crisis of complete consecration.

BODY OR WHOLE BEING?

The call to present our "bodies" may seem strange at first thought. Many commentators (e.g., Godet, Sanday and Headlam) take this literally as referring to the physical body. Denney makes that only the starting point. He writes: "The body is in view here as the instrument by which *all* human service is rendered to God."² Weymouth translates it: "all your faculties." It would seem that this may be a correct interpretation of what Paul meant.

REASONABLE SERVICE

The Greek is *logiken latreian*. The first word is an adjective meaning "rational" (cf. "logical") or "spiritual." It occurs only one other place in the New Testament (I Peter 2:2). There it is translated "of the word" (cf. *logos*).

The second term is a noun. It is a technical religious word meaning "service" or "worship." In the Septuagint it means "the service or wor-

¹*Lexicon*, p. 633. So also Godet.
²EGT, II, 687.

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ship of God according to the requirements of the levitical law.”³ Occurring five times in the New Testament, it is translated “service” four times and “divine service” once. The point is that this word as used in the Bible refers to religious service, not secular.

Sanday and Headlam define the two words together thus: “A service to God such as befits the reason (logos), i.e. a spiritual sacrifice and not the offering of an irrational animal.”⁴ Godet explains it as follows: “the service which rationally corresponds to the moral premises contained in the faith which you profess.”⁵ Denney translates the phrase “spiritual worship.”⁶ Phillips has: “intelligent worship.” Spencer prefers “rational worship.” Wuest’s *Expanded Translation* reads: “rational, sacred service, (rational, in that this service is performed by the exercise of the mind).” Weymouth has: “a spiritual mode of worship.” The Berkeley Version reads: “your worship with understanding.”

CONFORMED

“Conformed” (v. 2) is *syschematizesthe*, which occurs only here and in I Peter 1:14. It comes from *syn*, “with” or “together,” and *schema*, which means “form.” So the English word “conform” (*con*—“with”) exactly expresses the idea. The present imperative means “stop being conformed.”

AGE OR WORLD?

The term *aion* is translated “world” thirty-eight times in the King James Version and “age” only twice. But the latter is the more usual meaning of the term. Basically it means a segment of time, “age.” It is used of the present age, the age to come, and also

of eternity. But a distinction should be made between *cosmos* (world) and *aion* (age).

TRANSFORMED

The verb is *metamorphos*. It occurs only four times in the New Testament. Two occurrences are actually one—parallel accounts of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2). Here it is rendered “transfigured.” In the fourth place it is translated “changed” (II Corinthians 3:18).

The word comes from *meta*, “across,” and *morphe*, “form.” So it means to change across from one form to another. The biological expression “metamorphosis” comes from it.

The translation of this term in the Gospels suggests the topic “The Transfigured Life.” Its three uses in the New Testament give some insight as to how we may live the transfigured life. The divine nature in Jesus came to incandescent glow on the Mount of Transfiguration, so that it burst through the veil of flesh and the disciples caught a glimpse of His eternal glory. Just so we must be filled with the Holy Spirit. Then something of the divine glory within will shine out through our lives.

The present passage indicates that transfiguration comes through the renewing of one’s mind. The verb is in the present imperative. It therefore means: “go on being continually transfigured (more and more, day by day).” This comes by the constant renewing of our minds. Philippians 4:8 gives some idea of this process.

The third passage (II Corinthians 3:18) suggests that transfiguration takes place as we reflect the glory of God, just as the moon reflects the light of the sun. The context mentions the shining face of Moses when he came down from talking with God on the mount. We are transfigured by exposing ourselves to the glory of Christ and reflecting it to a darkened world.

³Thayer, *Lexicon*, 372.

⁴Romans, p. 353.

⁵Romans, p. 426.

⁶EGT, II, 687.

The fellowship of prayer will restore the phosphorescent glow.

Sanday and Headlam bring out the difference between the Greek words for "conform" and "transform" with this paraphrase: "Do not adopt the external and fleeting fashion of this world, but be ye transformed in your inmost nature."⁷

PROVE OR DISCERN?

The verb is *dokimazo* (see on 2:18). It means "test," "prove" by testing, or "approve" as the result of testing. But it may also mean "discover" or "discern." Moffatt translates it "make

out." Goodspeed has "find out." Weymouth says "learn by experience." *The 20th Century New Testament* reads "discern." That seems to be the clearest translation. Williams has "find and follow," with the footnote: "Vb. means *test and approve*, so *find and follow*." The Berkeley Version reads: "sense for yourselves." These would all seem to indicate, in agreement with some of the best commentators, that "discern" may be preferable to "prove."

⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 353.

How I Use "The Works of John Wesley"

By Ross W. Hayslip*

SINCE MY PURCHASE of the final volume of *The Works of John Wesley*, I have felt that my investment was too much and my potential source of materials too great to allow the volumes to become mere ornaments of decoration on my library shelves.

I am slowly and laboriously compiling my own "topical concordance" of these fourteen volumes. The incidents of the "Journal" are full of dynamic points of evangelistic fervor. His letters abound in doctrinal illustrations, and the poetry is always useful in devotional thought.

In a loose-leaf notebook I am in alphabetical indexing, recording in full the material and listing also page and volume numbers where the materials are found. This way when I desire an illustration from Wesley's life and thought I turn to my alphabetical listing and I have it. For example, under *S* I have listed *Stewardship*. Under *Stewardship*, I have listed a quotation from Volume III, page 267—"Sunday 26—I preached at West Street in the morning to a crowded audience, and in the evening at the Foundry. How pleasing would it be to ply between Bristol and London, and preach always to such congregations there! But what account then should I give of my stewardship when I can be no longer steward!"

One of my problems in sermon building is to find appropriate illustrations. These volumes are opening new resources that I hope to use in the future. I am also annotating the volumes freely so that the material will be readily accessible when I need it. The wisdom of Wesley is timeless and I find that the audiences today are still thrilled with the recounting of incidents from his adventurous life.

*Pastor, Whittier, California.

How to Convert Nobody

TOO MUCH modern preaching is designed to please everybody, offend nobody, and send people home feeling that day by day in every way they are getting better and better. Such preaching never converted a single soul nor changed and transformed a single life.

The great Evangelist Charles G. Finney must have known many demagogic pulpiteers in his day. One day when his soul was burdened with the ineffectiveness of current preaching, he sat down and wrote this ironic classic which applies to our day with remarkable aptness:

TEN RULES FOR CONVERTING NOBODY

1. Let your supreme motive be popularity rather than salvation.

2. Study to please your congregation and to make a reputation rather than to please God.

3. Take up popular, passing, and sensational themes to draw the crowd, and avoid essential doctrines of salvation.

4. Denounce sin in the abstract, but pass lightly over sins that prevail in your congregation.

5. If asked, "Is it wrong to dance, play cards, or attend the theatre?" answer very pleasantly, "Oh, that is a matter for private judgment. It is not for me to say you shall or shall not."

6. Preach on the loveliness of virtue and the glory of heaven, but not on the sinfulness of sin and the terrors of hell.

7. Reprove the sins of the absent, but make those who are present pleased with themselves, so that they will enjoy the sermon and not go away with their feelings hurt.

8. Make the impression on worldly church members that God is too good to send anyone to hell, even if there is a hell!

9. Preach the universal fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man so as to show that no second birth is really needed.

10. Do not rebuke the worldliness of the church, but fall in with the amusement policy. Instead of kneeling for prayer, let the people sit down to eat and drink and rise up to play.

The Apostle Paul, speaking under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, once said: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

Submitted by the Department of Evangelism,
Church of the Nazarene.

A Shining Light on Sunday Night

By Mary Boatright*

*Let's go to church on Sunday night
With a warm and ready smile,
If it's just around the corner
Or maybe many a mile.
Come in the spirit of prayer and praise;
Be ready your voice in song to raise.
Greet everyone you see in sight.
Be a shining light on Sunday night.*

*Seven o'clock is the time of arrival;
Be on time and bring your Bible.
Invite your neighbor, your cousin, and friend,
All you meet—there is no end.
Rich or poor, whatever their plight,
Bring them all on Sunday night.*

*When they learn of our Saviour's love,
And how He left His home above
To give His life on Calvary
That they might live eternally,
They too will have a new insight,
And become a light on Sunday night.*

*Member of the Montavilla Church of the Nazarene in Portland, Oregon.

PASTORS

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DR. G. B. WILLIAMSON
General Superintendent

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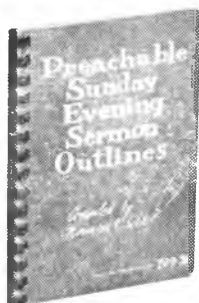
The Secret Is Out

By **CHARLES D. MOSHE**

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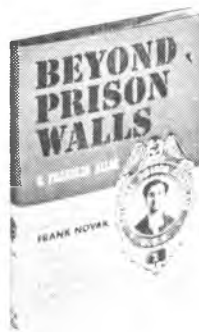
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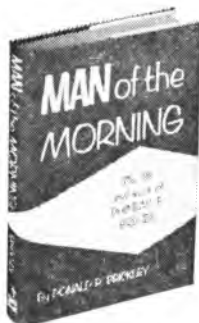
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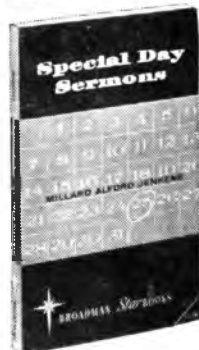
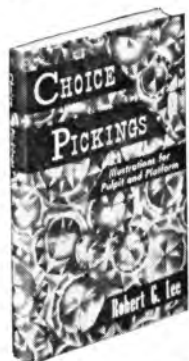
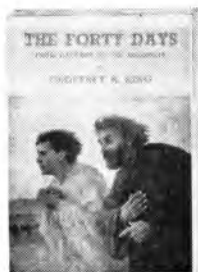
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"QUEEN of the PARSONAGE"

*May she who in the parsonage dwells be radiant, poised, serene;
And every moment of each day be every inch a queen!*

Supplied by Ruth Vaughn*

PORTRAIT OF A QUEEN

IN THE NAZARENE parsonage in Creston, Iowa, lives Mrs. Eugene Moore. She first entered a Nazarene parsonage almost forty years ago and since that time she has filled each parsonage with the warmth, joy, and vitality of her love.

Mrs. Moore has spent her life mothering neighbors, cats, and six children; patching jeans, curtains, and broken hearts; cooking corn bread, oatmeal, and church suppers; teaching Sunday school classes, training courses, and the multiplication table.

Each moment has been filled with creating new things from old things, balanced meals from a bare cupboard, and peace in the parsonage; directing the Christmas play, the Easter pageant, and Junior's A-B-C's, counting sheets, children, and calories; rolling cupcakes in coconut, dough into pie-crust, and stringy hair into lovely curls.

She has always been capable of smiling despite illness, inadequate salaries, and worn dresses; whispering prayers, encouragement, and love; smoothing difficult situations, ruffled feelings, and fevered brows; answering the telephone, the doorbell, and arithmetic problems; hiding her disappointments, her longings, and Christmas presents; weeping in sorrow, in joy, and over a sick kitten.

Mrs. Eugene Moore has filled her life with communion with the Almighty. To the three girls and three boys who were born into her home, she presented Jesus Christ both in theory and in practice. Throughout the years of their growing up, they lived constantly in an atmosphere of prayer. Many times they came running into the parsonage from school to find Mother on her knees in intercessory prayer. Because of this godly example and the strong bulwark of prayer with which she surrounded their lives, all six of her children are Christians serving God and the church. Her three boys are dedicated ministers of the gospel telling to others the wonder of serving the God of their mother.

To each church member, each townsman, her husband, her six children, Mrs. Moore has always symbolized beauty, love, and joy; she has consistently represented peace, grace, and faith; she has lived a life filled with happiness, selflessness, and God. Truly this is a Portrait of a Queen!

ROYAL COOKBOOK

Mrs. Ruth Wagner, district parsonage queen of the new Maine District, sent this luscious recipe for "cabbage rolls." This makes a terrific main dish. Try it soon.

Boil leaves of 1 medium cabbage until wilted. Remove the hard core. Mix 1 lb. of hamburger, 1 cup bread

*Lubbock, Texas.

crumbs, 1 cup cooked rice ($\frac{1}{4}$ raw rice), 3 tbsp. minced onion, 2 eggs, $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. salt, sage, parsley flakes, and pepper. Then place $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of this mixture at the core end of each cabbage leaf. Then roll up, gently tucking leaf over the meat. Place rolled side down in shallow baking dish or casserole. Then add 1 cup vegetable juice, pouring over the rolls. Cover and bake in an oven at 350° for about an hour. Heat may be lowered when rolls have been in oven for thirty minutes. Delicious served with mashed potatoes (or baked), buttered carrots, and a crisp salad with cake for dessert.

OVER TEACUPS

Dell Aycock continues this month with her pertinent, informative, much-needed paper on "The Preacher's Wife as a Counselor."

"Most people who have willfully plunged themselves into trouble are seeking an easy way out. We must not be hard on people, but when we sense that they plan to do wrong things knowing in their hearts what are the consequences, we must be firm. God has the answer for them but it's not an easy one.

"Never be afraid to pray with them no matter who they are. The non-Christian counselors may say, 'Do not bring religion into counseling. It upsets people.' But if you can get people to honestly confess their sins and ask forgiveness of God and if you will stay with them until they know all is well with their souls, you will help most people and they will bless you the longest day they live. Many of the sicknesses and nervous troubles hounding people today are due to a troubled conscience. They only relief they will ever find is when they confess and get right with God.

"When one comes to you with trouble not of her own making, it is an entirely different affair, and she needs

comfort, encouragement, and prayer. Pray with her, encourage her, and give her the Word to carry away. There is nothing better. Urge that she should allow no bitterness to be in her heart or thinking, and show her the promise that God can help her to forgive.

"Never laugh or make light of any trouble or imagined trouble. This business of counseling, telling people what to do with their lives, or trying to help them keep out of tragedy, is a serious matter. After she leaves, never—no, never—tell or repeat or make a joke of the matter to any other. If your inquirer may be neurotic or have outer emotional or mental disturbances, be cautious how you deal with such a person. Some people need a doctor, some a lawyer; some need only common sense, and some a good spanking. You will be limited in the help you can give to these. Do not prescribe if they need a doctor; you are not a doctor. Do not try to give legal advice, for you are not a lawyer. Do not try giving anyone a spanking, for you are not a parent or a judge."

BOOKSHELF WITH LACE

For a devotional book which deals with the subject of prayer and personal devotions there is the small book *Preacher and Prayer*, written by E. M. Bounds. This is a good book to read and study and then reread. It is the type of thing you like to keep on your nightstand with your Bible, for it bears much repetition. This is a "must" for your husband's library as well as your own. It may be purchased at your publishing house for \$1.25.

THE KING'S HOUSE

A parsonage queen, Mrs. Ivy Bohannon, recently showed to our conclave some attractive book ends she had made. She had taken a couple

of old bricks, sprayed them gold. On top of the brick, she cemented pretty shells, trinkets, and figurines. So easily done, so easy on the pocket-book, so pretty to look at! Good for Bible school too! If you need book ends at home or church, these will please you, I'm sure.

(If you have any ideas which you would like to share with other parsonage queens for this feature, "Royal Cookbook," or any other department, please feel free to do so. We learn one from the other. In this manner we all become better "queens of the parsonage.")

HEART TALK

The greatest minister's wife whom I have ever known is the one whom I know intimately, my mother. In the years that I lived at home, where I observed her life so keenly, I never remember her allowing herself the luxury of carrying a grudge. I came across a yellowed piece of paper the other day on which my mother had written, many years ago, her desire for her life in the parsonage. I believe it is one which we all need to adopt as our very own.

"I was thinking this morning that I'd like to be a 'shock absorber.' You know, they save the folk in the car the jolts of the rough highway. So along the highway of life when troubles of various nature—and cutting remarks—come my way, I want to treat them as mere passing incidents and act as a shock absorber and prevent all those things from reaching any other to hurt them. I read the other day about the oyster. When an oyster gets a grain of sand or something hard that hurts inside its shell, instead of trying to get it out, it starts covering it with fluid which, in the end, becomes a beautiful pearl. If there had been no pain, there would have been no pearl. Most of us, at times, may be misunderstood and receive criticism or be treated unkindly, but surely we will not be less wise than the oyster and go around nursing a sore spot and showing every one the sore thumb, but right away—if we will start in to cover it up with a spirit of charity, then it will result in something beautiful and desirable."

Such has been the life of Mrs. S. L. Wood, my mother. Such are my greatest prayer and desire.

POROUS EARNESTNESS

Joseph Parker said, "Some have porous earnestness." He tells of a Mr. B . . . "No plow man ever gasped as he gasped; no iron founder ever sweltered at his furnace as Mr. B . . . sweltered in the pulpit. His eloquence was a continual attempt at suicide and his climaxes constantly suggested the possibility of a coroner's inquest. But we must be earnest as Christians before we can be earnest as ministers. Truly our weaknesses are strength and when we feel our own nothingness the grace of Christ is most magnified in our hearts and when the shallow channel of our invented eloquence is quite dry, God gives us His word as a well of water whose springs never fail. Out of this earnestness will come a simplicity which cannot be misunderstood, a candor which is above suspicion and an independence as superior to flattery as it is scornful of intimidation. To fail there is to fail altogether."—Contributed by B. V. Seals.

The Preacher and His Grammar

By Robert D. Rogers*

ONE OF THE MOST shocking experiences of my short ministry came to me one night as I sat and listened to a fellow minister lustily proclaim, "I murder the King's English, I know, but no one can preach the gospel any better than me."

This is a rare admission to hear a man make. Yet many ministers could well make the same admission in regard to their grammar. Unfortunately, far too many of God's anointed men feel that the grammatical phase of their ministries is unimportant.

It would seem that pure logic would advise one that, if he is to preach successfully to people who speak a certain language, great care should be taken to learn that language well. This principle is insisted on by mission boards. Yet in our own nation thousands are ordained to preach the good gospel of salvation to Americans who understand very little of the principles of English grammar.

Ministers should immediately face up to the fact that the world is very rapidly becoming literate, and that the United States is leading the world apace in a mad rush for education. In order to communicate with that world, especially in our own United States, the ministers of the gospel are going to have to be able to speak in decent modes of grammar.

There are a great number of grammatical textbooks which are prepared so that they are self-teaching. The fact that a person has never had the advantages of a college education is

no excuse for atrocious grammar. Men who can study theology and the Bible by the hour can allot some time to the learning of the language in which they are expressing themselves. Furthermore, college-bred preachers should never put away the English composition text, but should keep it close at hand for constant refreshing.

One evening a few months ago the college where I have been teaching took a group of students to minister at a Los Angeles skid-row mission. A lad was chosen to bring the message, and preached forcibly, with reasonably good results. At the close of the service a ragged-looking alcoholic rushed to the side of the boy who had preached and began to scold him. He most soundly berated the fellow for his grammar, saying that if he wanted to make an effect on the world he should learn to speak his language properly. The derelict to inebriation then announced himself as a doctor of philosophy and a former professor of English at a large western university. He pointed out to the preacher his gross lack of knowledge of English grammar in no uncertain terms, and left the lad bewildered and defeated.

An isolated circumstance, you say? Perhaps it is not nearly so alone as some might think. Who knows how many times such a one as the inebriate mentioned above, with an excellent education but a tragic fall into sin, has rejected a message while stumbling over the messenger? Neither does it do any good to say that the sinner has no room for complaint about the one who tries to help him out of sin; for

*El Monte, California.

whether we like it or not and whether it ought to or not, it does make a difference. The proof of the difference it does make is too painfully evident. There is no excuse for allowing causes for the rejection of our gospel which can be remedied to be left unattended. Surely it is more important to win a soul than to gain a point.

Along with a study of principles should go a study of words. Particular attention should be given to words which are used in preaching but are not now common grammar. The Authorized (or King James) Version has many such obsolete or uncommon words. These are often mispronounced. Especially misused are the verbs which end in *eth*, or simply *th*, such as *saith*, *doeth*, *seeth*, etc. In most cases the *th* ending is suffixing

the single-syllable verb, and should be pronounced as a single syllable. For example, *saith* would not be correctly pronounced *say-eth*, but *seth*. If there is great difficulty in distinguishing between monosyllables and polysyllables, a self-pronouncing Bible would be of great help.

By all means, it must be admitted that the most eloquent preachers do "get in the brush," and sometimes use poor grammar. But that is no excuse for all preachers to ignore good grammatical policies. Thank God, most of God's ministers strive for satisfactory grammar in their preaching. It should be a case of 100 per cent of the ministers earnestly endeavoring to use the best principles of college English. Their ministries would be much better for it.

Watch Those Figures

By F. F. Wise*

WATCH THOSE FIGURES," is a common phrase in our modern weight-conscious society. A paradox of contemporary history is that, while most of the world suffers from malnutrition, Americans have to diet to keep their most healthful figures. Americans are figure-conscious.

Any connection between this problem and the problem of statistical figures is accidental. At least any casual relationship would be hard to establish. Yet Americans are just as enchanted with the authority of statistical figures as they are with their own physical figures. Speakers in education, economics, and politics comb the records in order to have some

supporting figures to quote to uphold their particular position. Ministers are not immune to the charms of statistics. With avid fervor they woo figures to lend authority and dignity to their sermons. With dedicated decisiveness they quote the statistics to prove their points. Figures become the levers to pry people loose from their complacency and their lethargy. After they have delivered the figures, they are tempted to smile with smug satisfaction that they have proved their point beyond any possibility of refutation.

Ministers, beware! Do not be too easily seduced by the sirens of Statistical Island! They sing sweet music. They grace most any point you wish to get across. They support almost

*Nashville, Tennessee.

any position you wish to establish. Flee their youthful charms! Behind their beauty lies deception! The sweet flattery of their songs is filled with deceitful vengefulness. When they have agreed to testify on your behalf in the court of truth, they will betray you lest you unmask their fickle ways. Figures sound so solid and substantial! Use them wisely, lest they turn your wisdom to folly and your truth into deceit!

Some wag has said that figures do not lie but that liars do figure. The truthfulness of this statement can be accepted for lack of evidence to the contrary. The real truth of the matter is that, unless figures and statistics are interpreted with accuracy, they can be used to prove most anything. If one chooses his statistics carefully he can make a case for most any position. When a minister of the gospel uses figures unwisely, he is in danger of losing the confidence of the thinking, well-informed persons in his congregation. In the long run he may lose his influence with them. They have a right to question all of his pronouncements when they see him mistakenly draw unwarranted conclusions from the statistics which he quotes.

No mother in her right mind would throw the baby out with the dirty bath water. No intelligent minister would shun the company of statistics. Truth must not be left to die upon the cold plains of intellectual reasoning when it could be made alive and warm by being swaddled in the cradle of statistics. The minister should use them just as he does any other illustrative material. He will follow good, recommended procedures for their use, so that his members will have confidence in his message. He will not encourage the rejection of his pleas because he has not used figures wisely in the past.

An example of unwarranted conclusions based upon figures might serve well here. A minister could point out that Americans spent several million dollars more for home permanents last year than they gave to missions. On the basis of these figures he might conclude that Americans thought more of their hair than they did of lost souls. The facts are undeniable, but the assumptions would be unwarranted. The fallacy would be in the unlikeness of the groups being compared. Unsaved and unchurched Americans probably bought home permanents but they did not contribute to world missions. Only a part of the total population probably give the bulk of the money for the missionary program of the church. It would be nice if all chipped in and gave for missions, but they do not. The real basis of comparison should be in quoting how much the people in the church give to world missions in comparison with what they spend for permanents. If the latter figure exceeds or even approaches an amount equal to that given for missions, the statistics would validly warrant a reprimand from the pastor for their disinterest in the missionary program.

Figures can work to support a position only when certain principles are applied to their use. A few of these might be cited simply for guidance in helping you make figures work for you.

First, *the groups from which the statistics are gathered and compared must be as nearly equal as possible.* If an educator gave a test designed to measure the reading ability of seniors in high school to sixth graders, he could get a pretty good case that our schools are not teaching our children to read. Such a study would be ridiculous. If the seniors from two school systems were found to vary significantly on the same test, the ed-

ucator would then be able to say that one group was inferior to the other. This would not warrant him to say that one system was doing a better job of teaching English than the other school system. It would spur him to look for the causes that made the differences.

This leads us to the second principle. *Statistics reveal pertinent facts about the present status of things; they do not necessarily tell us causes.* To state facts and to make value judgments are two distinct and separate steps in dealing with problems. Upon further investigation our educator might find that the real reason for the one school system showing up deficient in English skills was not poor teaching but a generally inferior group intellectually. He might find that in the school system the teachers were doing an exceptional piece of work in the light of the inferior material they had to work with.

This principle highlights the danger of looking at the assembly statistical reports only in judging the effectiveness of a pastor. It is conceivable that a pastor working in an economically and industrially declining community might seem to show static statistics (while the pastor in the boom town makes rapid progress), yet be doing just as good a job in the light of his local situation. Assembly statistical reports are one measure of progress, but not the only measure.

The third guiding principle is that *one must not make the facts say more than they really do.* Quite often someone will point out that juvenile delinquency is on the increase. He will then draw the conclusion that the American home is disintegrating. He implies that if the home could be re-

stored the problem of delinquency would be solved. The inadequacy here is that, although the home may be one of the major causes of delinquency, it is not the only one. There are many other factors involved, such as intelligence, social conditions, economic level of the neighborhood, recreational facilities available, and group influences which play upon the total picture.

Fourth, *the differences between groups must be significant.* Two groups of persons may differ as much as ten in the scores they make on a test, but this may or may not be a significant difference. The size of the groups involved and the amount of variability in the individual scores of the groups determine whether this is a significant difference. The elements of chance and inadequate sampling could make the differences rather than there being a true difference.

Watch those figures! Before citing some statistics, ask yourself some questions. Are the groups which are being compared quite equivalent in purposes, interests, intelligence, and such characteristics? What other factors besides those cited in the statistics may be operating to produce these results? Are the differences real and significant or are they due to chance? With these reservations in mind, what do the facts actually say? Do they warrant the sweeping generalizations which one is tempted to make for them?

Ministers who read will find statistics. Ministers who wish to influence people to actions will use figures. Ministers who wish to be thought of by their parishioners as men of integrity and truthfulness will use figures wisely.

LOVE

There is no better way to take the irk out of work than to put love into it.—*Sunshine.*

The Pastor Finds Time During the Building Program**

Milton L. Bunker*

ONE OF THE MOST strenuous and abnormal periods of a pastor's ministry is that time when he is responsible for the building program.

He faces varied and numerous problems now that previously he has not had to cope with. This will necessitate many additional hours of work and added responsibilities until his entire schedule will need adjustment.

In the beginning stages he will have to preside over additional board meetings, then special meetings of the building committee. There will probably be meetings of the financial committee—formulating plans for the financing of the project. During this time he will be spending considerable time at the bank or banks making arrangements to secure the necessary amount of money, or possibly walking the streets and praying, endeavoring to find a bank that will loan the money.

Next, the pastor will be meeting with the architect. These meetings will become more frequent and will take on greater importance as the plans near completion. Important decisions will have to be made, and many suggestions given the architect in order to have the style and size church that the majority of the congregation desire.

Of course there will always be those who will want to build somewhere else, or build different-style architec-

ture, or build a little later, or build for a little less, and some undoubtedly won't want to build at all. Naturally with these extra problems and pressures the pastor will have to give added attention to certain individuals in order to keep a measure of peace in the church family. Too, he will probably be dealing with a strong church leader or two who have very positive ideas and who will present many an interesting experience.

A few will be fortunate to pastor where the building project itself can be awarded to the lowest bidder or most desirable contractor. In this situation the problems will not be as many during the actual construction but there will be problems nevertheless. The contractor will be held up for the materials or will face a time of bad weather or be confronted with strikes and labor difficulty.

However, this is only dreaming, for most of us come face to face with the reality of building programs without sufficient finance to turn the project over to a contractor.

This means long hours, arriving early on the job and staying late. The pastor's duties will include the hiring of workmen, subletting contracts, purchasing materials, checking time, making out the payroll, and acting as paymaster. Of course he will be following the blueprints carefully, supervising construction, correcting mistakes here and there, answering questions, and making many decisions. This will continue for many long months during all

*Pastor, Akron, Ohio.

**Presented at Akron District Preachers' Meeting.

kinds of weather, five or six days a week and two shifts a day. Two shifts, you say? Yes, one with the hired workers from 8:00 to 4:30 and one with the men of the church from 5:00 to 11:00. The pastor will never learn exactly when his men are coming or how many to expect; for some will come early and others late, depending on their regular shift. Naturally, he will be expected to be there waiting for them when they arrive, line up the work for them, and remain to lock up when the last one leaves.

He will face some tests and discouragements during the year preceding the building and the year he actually builds. I wish I could say that it would end there, but it won't. It will continue for a year or two or perhaps longer after the building has been completed.

The people will experience disappointments and discouragements likewise. This presents a problem of building confidence and hope and encouragement even during the time when the pastor may need a little additional help himself. He certainly can't afford to let the people become discouraged. To keep up their morale will be one of the pastor's tasks.

True, during this time there will be just as many hospitalized, babies born, young wed, old die, sermons to prepare, messages to deliver, meetings to conduct, and calls to be made.

The question is, How can I find time for my regular ministerial tasks plus these additional assignments during a building program?

Pastors, it takes a lot of planning and organizing of one's work; it takes sincere prayer, both to watch and pray and to work and pray; and it takes some personal discipline as well.

One important factor is to decide between the important and the most important things to be done. This is always necessary on the part of a suc-

cessful pastor, but especially so during this special project. He will have to leave many things undone. He should be sure that these are matters of lesser importance.

It would be my suggestion to arrange a tentative preaching program for several months ahead. You could have your thoughts and some "outlines in the rough" even before construction actually begins. This advanced work will prove of untold value when your time is limited and your body is worn and tired and the mind is weary.

A challenge for co-operation needs to be given your people for understanding and wholehearted co-operation and faithful prayer for the pastor and church during these months of stress and strain.

Your people can co-operate in many ways. First, by understanding that you will not be able to call on them as frequently during this time. Secondly, on Sunday, whenever possible, they can give you names of those in the hospital. There will be exceptions and emergencies arise, it is true; but if all will try, you can arrange your hospital and home calls for the week ahead when you return from service on Sunday evening. Thirdly, they can all be encouraged to pray, help call on the absentees, and get new people in during this period when your time is limited in these areas of responsibility.

This leads me to say that a phone is necessary on the project. Your own people can be encouraged to phone in between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. You too can use this time to make other necessary calls to reach the absent ones from the Sunday services and to take care of important business matters.

You can plan your personal calls on the sick, aged, and new people from two to four in the afternoon. This

schedule will permit you to get the work under way both morning and afternoon and be on the job in the afternoon until a member of the building committee arrives to supervise activities in your absence.

It will be imperative for you to organize your work and your time very carefully and conscientiously. Planning your calls in sections of the city or community to make more in less time will be a distinct advantage. There won't be a dull moment during the day with workers needing assistance, phone ringing, salesmen calling, men seeking employment, etc.

During this ordeal, where and when can I find time for study and sermon preparation?

Most of it will have to be done between 11:00 at night and 7:00 in the morning, and on Saturday evening. One will have to live close to God during this hectic time, asking for added strength and for His special anointing and guidance. I believe that regularly and consistently a pastor needs to be well prepared to give him greater ease, assurance, and confidence as he steps behind the sacred desk. This certainly must be the rule and not the exception. But during the building program many exceptions will arise. Frequently during this time I have prayed, "Now, Lord, I have been faithful this week to do Your work, I have put in long hours, and

I have conscientiously tried to do my best. Lord, You know my responsibilities for tomorrow and I don't want to fail You or my people. If I have ever needed You, Lord, it is now." After a few minutes of prayer and communion with the Lord I have been able to meditate and prepare my mind and soul for the message of the morrow. Often then as I have stepped up to proclaim His Word I have felt a strange something—a peculiar presence of the Almighty One enabling me to deliver His message under His divine anointing. My soul has been thrilled time and time again and the people have been blessed and encouraged because of God's presence.

Though one is weary, worn, and tired, the day of dedication will be a glorious one and certainly one never to be forgotten. If you live through the building program and to the day of dedication and haven't a good case of ulcers or are not soon thereafter voted out of your beautiful new church, consider yourself most fortunate indeed, and never cease to give God praise.

If you should be privileged to stay on and pastor this wonderful people and enjoy the fruits and benefits of your labors, be ever grateful for a good people who have co-operated—stood by and helped you while you were finding time to carry on the work of God and the church during the building program.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Fire ruined the First Presbyterian Church building at Dayton, Kentucky. The pastor, Robert O. Garden, decided to conduct services temporarily in the Sunday school building, which holds 200 people.

A reporter said: "As I understand it you have 365 members. What will you do if they all turn up some Sunday?"

"I'll praise the Lord!" said the pastor.

Praise

By Pauline E. Spray

BETTY McDONALD once told about an undisciplined child who came visiting in her home. The little girl was, in plain language, "impossible." Vainly Mrs. McDonald looked for some virtue in the youngster for which to praise her. This was most difficult to find. One day, however, she discovered the child had an unusually high forehead.

"Susie, you have a lovely brow," she began telling the youngster.

From that moment on, Susie became a better child. She quit kicking the cat and smiled instead. Mrs. McDonald concluded that the girl found it difficult to be bad with such a lovely brow.

This principle works on children. It also works on adults.

Frederick B. Harris said, "There is no verbal vitamin more potent than praise."

Not long ago Bob and Ruth visited with another minister and his wife, a lovely and talented couple with great potential. Dick and Lucy having a struggle financially; their church had refused to increase their meager salary or give them any extra allowances for conventions, etc., although it was larger and more able to help them than the one Bob pastored. When Bob and Ruth talked about the wonderful way they were provided for, Dick and Lucy were amazed to hear of the "good treatment" their friends received.

Later, Bob and Ruth discussed the problem Dick and Lucy faced. Why

did their church people take the attitude they did? What was the trouble? Dick and Lucy need to learn a little secret which had helped them in their ministry—the value of praise.

Flattery is detestable, but timely recognition is of untold value. "It is no flattery to give a friend a due character; for commendation is as much the duty of a friend as reprehension."

We praise not to receive praise in return. Fuller said, "Praise not people to their faces, to the end that they may pay thee in the same coin. This is so thin a cobweb, that it may with little difficulty be seen through; 'tis rarely strong enough to catch flies of any considerable magnitude."

Give sincere praise that it may inspire others to greater accomplishments. It is better to recognize the virtue's of one's friends now than to wait and bestow flowers on the dead. According to Ruskin, "The greatest efforts of the race have always been traceable to the love of praise . . ."

Humanity reaches its highest degree of excellence when it is recipient of human or divine appreciation. William Somerset Maugham put it this way: "People ask you for criticism, but they only want praise."

Oftentimes a word of praise or encouragement produces a greater healing effect than the most potent medicine. "The sweetest of all sounds is praise."

Solomon, the wisest man, said, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." In other

words, be not stingy with sincere praise.

What can you do when there is nothing to praise in an individual? "I'm not going to lie just to make some old fuddy-duddy feel good," you say. But wait! If one looks long enough and hard enough, he can find at least one thing for which to express commendation.

And it works!

In the home, praise works with the children. Bovee said: "Words of praise, indeed, are almost as necessary to warm a child into congenial life as acts of kindness and affection. Judicious praise is to children what the sun is to flowers."

It works in the schoolroom. It has been my personal experience to witness the transformation of pupils through a bit of sincere praise.

And it works in the church. A bit of praise will help people clean up both their persons and their homes.

One district superintendent told a pastor he scarcely recognized a particular congregation. The people were transformed because each particle of improvement they made was noticed and commended. A miracle was wrought when their efforts were recognized and approved.

Voiced approval will develop talents. One never dreamed he could sing publicly, but after a little encouragement and sincere praise he became a pleasing soloist. Another,

with an impediment of speech, could scarcely testify. Months later he was praying in public and became a confident person.

Even the most antagonizing member has at least one quality to praise. Perhaps she makes the best bread in town, or he grows the finest carrots in the neighborhood.

Praise will help accomplish wonders with the most difficult situations. If we would win people, we must make them like us. If people like us, they will do almost anything in the world for us. If we want people to love us, we must love them—or stay on our knees until we do.

Appreciation and praise cost so little, but in the ministry they may mean the difference between success and failure, love and liberality, or enviousness and a begrudging attitude.

Don't be afraid to praise another. The ability to do so is not a sign of weakness, but of strength. And don't put it off. Don't wait until it's too late.

"You've been a good mother to us," her children said to a dying woman as they gathered about her bedside.

"You never told me that before," she whispered with her final breath.

Don't let people die from lack of recognition, commendation, and a bit of sincere praise!

Appreciation and praise are timely twins. Have you made their acquaintance?

A WITNESSING CHURCH

"The Gospel is not something to come to church to hear, but something to go from the church to tell. . . . The church languishes when her members wear medals in the grandstand; she prospers when they wear scars in the arena. . . . After all, we are running a lifeboat and not a showboat."

—VANCE HAVNER, *Hearts Afire*
(Westwood: Fleming H. Revell,
1947)

Submitted by Nelson G. Mink

JOHN WESLEY ON PERFECTION ATTAINABLE IN THIS LIFE:

1. Has God anywhere in Scripture commanded us more than He has promised us?

2. Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next?

3. Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to write in our hearts? Jeremiah 31:31 and Hebrews 8:10.

4. Is it impossible for anyone in this life to "love God with all his heart and mind and soul and strength"? And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?

5. Does the soul's going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin?

6. If so, is it not something else, not "the blood of Christ, which cleanseth" it "from all sin"?

7. If His blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the soul and body are united, is it not in this life?

8. If when that union ceaseth, is it not in the next? And is not this too late?

9. If in the article of death, what situation is the soul in when it is neither in the body nor out of it?

10. Has Christ anywhere taught us to pray for what He never designs to give?

11. Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?

12. If you do, did not God give you that desire?

13. If so, did He not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should be fulfilled?

14. Do you ever pray God to "cleanse the thoughts of your heart that" you "may perfectly love Him"?

15. If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?

Mr. Wesley wastes no time. He gets to the point quickly; and he, like Fletcher, ties one up so tightly he can't get loose.

"If all the crutches were laid end to end, there would still not be enough for all the lame excuses people offer for not attending church.

—FROM CORPUS CHRISTI
Nazarene Newscaster

"People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after."

—GOLDSMITH

"Every man is a volume if you know how to read him."

—W. E. CHANNING

"Every year it takes less time to fly across the Atlantic and more time to drive to the office."

—*American Mercury*

"Make yourself indispensable and you will move up. Act as though you are indispensable and you will move out."

—*Office Economist*

"The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can well, and doing well whatever you do, without a thought for fame."

—*Megiddo Message*

Danger of Disobedience

Adam was driven from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:23-24).

Aaron was stripped of priestly robes before he died (Numbers 20:22-29).

Moses was refused entrance to Caanan (Numbers 20:12).

Saul's kingdom was taken from him (I Samuel 28:17).

All of these because they didn't obey the Lord when they clearly understood His commandments!

—PAUL F. WANKEL
Dupo, Illinois

Revive Thy Work

TEXT: Habakkuk 3:1-2

1. "Revive thy work" in our nation by keeping our leaders in touch with God, our laws in line with the Bible, and our homes honoring God.
2. "Revive thy work" in our church by sending revival spirit without fail, the presence and glory of God in each service, and by keeping Pentecost evident in our church.
3. "Revive thy work" in our lives by giving the purity of the disciples, the power of the apostles, and grace in tests and temptations.

—PAUL F. WANKEL

It Is Finished

TEXT: John 19:30

1. Earthly Life of Christ with its disappointments, pains, hungers, and sorrows is finished.
2. Earthly ministry of praying, teaching, preaching, healing, and feeding is finished.
3. Plan of salvation is finished. All of us may enter holy of holies and find rest to our souls and a full salvation that saves from all sin.

—PAUL F. WANKEL

Things which God has prepared for them that love Him.

1. Strength: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31).
2. Companionship and protection: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee" (Isaiah 43:2).
3. Satisfaction: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Isaiah 55:1).
4. Joyous salvation: "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3).
5. Comfort: "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4).

—PAUL F. WANKEL

A Biblical Image of God

1. He is a holy God (Leviticus 11:44-45).
2. He is an everlasting God (Habakkuk 1:12).
3. He is a pure God (Habakkuk 1:13a).
4. He is a God of love (I John 4:8).
5. He is a God of light (I John 1:5).

—PAUL F. WANKEL

Forerunners of Full Salvation

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:57-80

THEME: The purpose of the ministry of both John the Baptist and Jesus To raise up "an horn of salvation" (v. 69).

To save us from our enemies (v. 71).

To perform mercy (v. 72).

That we might serve Him in holiness and without fear (vv. 74-75).

John's task was to go before Christ (v. 76).

To give knowledge of salvation (v. 77).

To give light to those "in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (v. 79).

CONCLUSION: It has been the testimony of the saints that these things were accomplished.

—PAUL F. WANKEL

SCRIPTURE: John 12:1-9

INTRODUCTION:

He Is Risen

SCRIPTURE: Mark, chapter 16

INTRODUCTION: Observe the time of Easter, spring; everything has new life. It is fitting that Easter should come at this time.

I. JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED.

- A. This is half the gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-3).
- B. The death of Christ was:
 1. Voluntary (Philippians 2:6-8; John 3:16-18; Romans 5:8).
 2. Sacrificial—It cost Him a great deal.
 3. Vicarious—He suffered in our stead.
 4. More than martyrdom.
 - a. Martyrs die with heaven in view.
 - b. Christ died with God's face away—as sinners die.
 5. Absolutely necessary.

II. JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD.

- A. Other half of the gospel (I Corinthians 15:4).
- B. Charged with blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God.

III. THE EMPTY TOMB.

- A. One of the proofs of the Resurrection is "Behold the place where he lay." There was something about the graveclothes that convinced them.
- B. His epitaph was not "here lies" but "He is risen."
- C. Later they had another proof; they saw Him.
- D. The greatest question is: "Do you know the power of His resurrection?"

—R. J. NIKKEL
Exeter, California

A. Extravagance defined.

1. Spending beyond usual limits. Sometimes illustrated by our Christmas spending.
3. Many think that government spending is extravagant.

B. Further defined.

1. Spending lavishly, beyond the bounds of reason, excessive.
2. God's love was extravagant.
 - a. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
 - b. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

C. We wouldn't celebrate Christmas or Easter without such extravagance of love.**D. Love should swell up in our hearts for Him who died for us.****I. MARY'S LOVE WAS EXTRAVAGANT BECAUSE SHE SPENT ALL SHE HAD ON ONE PERSON.****A. Background.**

1. On first Easter Sunday morning: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome brought spices and perfumes to anoint Jesus' body.
2. But Mary of Bethany anticipated His death and anointed Him beforehand.

B. In gratitude to this Person who meant more to her than any other.

1. Disturbs me a little when people do not say or do much about their Christ.
2. Mary had done all she could with words, but now this expression with costly ointment was more adequate.

C. David would not offer a sacrifice that cost him nothing (II Samuel 24).**II. JUDAS WAS EXTRAVAGANT BECAUSE HE SPENT WHAT BELONGED TO OTHERS.**

- A. So close to a beautiful story like this is Judas.

1. Tight with others but generous with himself.
2. We wouldn't mind the government's extravagance quite so much if it weren't our money they were spending.
3. Paul could teach Judas a lesson, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor . . . and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing."

B. The fires of love for Christ had died out in Judas' heart and another fire was raging.

III. LOVE IS EXTRAVAGANT BECAUSE IT SPENDS ALL FOR GOD'S GLORY.

A. Love "seeketh not her own," "is not puffed up."

B. Jesus then told Mary that wherever the gospel was preached this story would be told in memory of her. But nothing was further from her thoughts than the fame which followed her action.

CONCLUSION: There are those like Judas who ask, "What am I going to get out of it?" Christians ask, "How much can I give?"

—BOB E. HARMON
Helena, Montana

The Cross

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1:12-23

INTRODUCTION: In our day the Cross is not the Cross! We live in a day when the Church is producing a brand of religion that humanizes God, deifies man, and compromises sin. We live in a day when most pulpits come equipped with soft pedals from which casual clergymen toss their taffy into the laps of congregations desperately ill from spiritual diabetes—too much sugar.

This has produced a generation of spiritual dwarfs who stand for nothing and fall for everything. This anemic program has produced a wave of professing Christians, 95 per cent of whom never win a soul to Christ.

The answer is not in rummage sales or raffles, bazaars or bingo, but in a return to the right conception of what the Cross really stands for. Let the Cross be the Cross!

I. THE PERSON ON THE CROSS

The Person on the Cross is significant to us because of His:

A. Position

1. "He is the head of . . . the church" (v. 18).
2. "Who is the image of the invisible God . . ." (v. 15).
3. He is God incarnate. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (2:9).

B. Possessions

1. The universe is His. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth . . ." (v. 16).
2. We are His possessions. We are His by every law of ownership, by right of creation; He has received us as a gift and by right of purchase.
3. The keys of hell and of death are His possessions.

C. Permanency

1. Christ's power, unlike earthly kingdoms, is not passing. Every generation must deal with the fact of the eternal Christ and His demands upon their lives. "And he is before all things . . ." (v. 17).
2. We cannot ignore Him, we cannot destroy Him, and we cannot change His terms of discipleship.

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS

The purpose of the Cross was:

- A. To be the propitiation for our sins.
- B. To be the purchase of our salvation.
- C. To perpetuate God's plan. The atonement was not an afterthought.

III. THE POWER OF THE CROSS

We see that the Cross has:

A. Power for pardon

1. "You, that were sometime alienated and enemies . . . now hath he reconciled" (v. 21).
2. The great military, political, and financial powers of our day are too weak to forgive sin. Indeed the Church herself has no magic wand to wave over sinners and thereby pardon their sins. It takes the power of the Cross.

B. Power for purity

1. We read that the Cross has power to "... present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight" (v. 22).
2. This means a holy heart and life and presents heart purity as a present possibility. If we cannot obtain this blessing now, then the atonement was a failure and the Bible is a farce.

C. Power for perseverance

1. "... continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel . . ." (v. 23).
2. This "rooted and grounded" experience, available through the power of the Cross, produces an invincible Christian optimism that comes out victorious in every circumstance.

CONCLUSION: Friends, today many things are bidding for your allegiance. Possessions call deafeningly loud; position bids high; popularity beckons to many; and to whom has not pleasure whispered promising secret delights? Amidst these temporal clamorings I wish to point you toward the only eternal value—the cross of Christ! It is firm in its foundation, secure in its structure, and eternal in its existence.

—WESLEY TRACY
Kansas City, Kansas

God's Words with the World

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 1:1-4 and 4:12-13

INTRODUCTION:

A. God speaking with Adam and Eve.

1. Wonderful experience.
2. Like ideal father-son relationship.

B. Sin cut off fellowship.

1. Adam separated himself from God (sinner seeks to hide himself in world).
2. God immediately went to work on ways to restore speaking terms.

I. GOD SPOKE IN VARIOUS WAYS (1).

A. Through nature.

1. "The heavens declared the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work" (Psalms 19:1).
2. But the language of nature falls upon sin-darkened minds and dulled sensibilities.
 - a. Some have thought if God would continually work miracles people would believe on Him.
 - b. Others have said if God would reveal himself like He used to in the Old Testament—in clouds, in fire—then doubt would be no longer possible.

(1) Supposed the vision of the wheels to Ezekiel should rise to our view every morning from the north, would that reveal God any more than the sun which rises every morning in the east?

(2) We understand only what our spiritual senses are able to discern.

B. Through events.

1. Moses said, "Consider the discipline of the Lord . . . for your eyes have seen all the great work of the Lord which He did" (Deuteronomy 11:2-8, R.S.V.).

2. Do we see God at work in wars, catastrophes?

C. Through messengers.

1. Angels.
2. Prophets.
 - a. God gave Isaiah a message for Hezekiah.
 - b. God sent the prophet Nathan to David.

II. GOD SPOKE BY HIS SON (1:2).

- A. Other ways secondary, inferior, and incomplete.
- B. Parable of Jesus: Matthew 21: 33-39.
- C. Paul says of Him: He "is the image of the invisible God," and in Him there dwelt the fullness of God (Colossians 1:15, 19).

III. GOD SPOKE THROUGH HIS WORD (4: 12).

- A. Quick and powerful (living and active).
 1. Living: "Life has a way with it, that sends us searching for some sentence strong enough to match against the hour. Listen, then! For you won't find it anywhere but here—this Bible!"
 2. Powerful: The disciples and men have used it to transform the world.
- B. Sharper than two-edged sword; lays us open before God.
- C. Discerns and analyzes (4:13).

IV. GOD SPOKE DIRECTLY TO MAN.

- A. He came to Paul when he was persecuting the Christians, and said, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."
- B. He came to the man who had a big wheat crop, and said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."
- C. A "still small voice" came to Elijah (I Kings 19:11-13).

CONCLUSION: Words of that "still small voice": "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Discerning, piercing, analyzing. God might well ask us the same question.

—BOB E. HARMON
Helena, Montana

A Burning Strength to Overcome

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 33:14-16; 40:29-31; John 16:33; Revelation 7:13-17

INTRODUCTION: Our Lord in heaven is a God of victory and His victory can be ours! Isaiah has prophesied it. Christ fulfilled it, and left the Holy Spirit to bear witness to it!

I. THE NEED FOR SPIRITUAL POWER

- A. In the Old Testament situation.
 1. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David.
 2. Spiritual injection of power.
- B. In the New Testament situation.
 1. Paul and Silas, Peter, etc.
 2. This met the need of their time.
- C. In the Early Church situation.
 1. Martin Luther, John Huss.
 2. John Wesley
- D. In contemporary life.
 1. No religion—no conscience.
 2. No spiritual power—no victory here.
 3. All real spiritual achievement comes from the mind of God, and we are His tools.
 - a. Often we are tools of everyone except the Carpenter of Nazareth.
 - b. We allow Satan to wield us.
- E. In achieving eternal life.
 1. We need spiritual power brought out by Christ.
 2. Anointed of the Holy Spirit.

II. THE ABUNDANCE OF GOD'S POWER

- A. Overshadow personality and situations.
 1. A standard is lifted.
 2. Life takes new meaning.
- B. More than enough for every situation.
 1. His riches unexhausted.
 2. His promise incomprehensible.
- C. A certainty and reality.
 1. No speculation but realization.
 2. Problems seem small when measured on Calvary's brow.

III. THE IMPACT OF SPIRITUAL POWER

A. We shall be light of the world and reflect the beauty, truth, and power of Him who is the Hope of the world.

B. We can have God in our midst.

1. This can be realized only by putting Christ in the center of our lives.

2. By having Him be the deeper meaning of our souls.

C. Burns a holy path to glory.

1. Lifts up the area through which it is routed.

a. Holiness makes a change over the person, home, and all areas it contacts.

b. God's holiness burns away the dross of sin.

2. He pervades and envelops all human life.

D. Your own life is transformed and it in turn transforms the situation through Christ.

1. Heart of Christianity is Christ, the Creator of all.

2. Yet Christianity is always a minority group.

3. Its life has been held together at the center by men and women with fire in their souls.

IV. THE METHOD OF GAINING THIS POWER

A. Going to right Source.

1. Jesus Christ.

2. Holy Spirit.

a. Theory alone is not reality.

b. Real religion is not cold creed, but love.

B. Something must happen between you and Jesus Christ.

1. We can never be channels of power until His power has swept through us like fire through a coal.

2. Drop the "old" picture of yourself.

3. Let Christ's impression of you take hold instead of your depression.

4. His photo of the real you is the one to look at.

CONCLUSION: If you wonder why God won't change your situation, check and see if you yourself are changed or will be changed. Spiritual power can do it! Let its essence surge through your total being.

—ESTELLA M. JACOBS

Cumberland, Maryland

The Service of the Saviour

TEXT: . . . *I go to prepare a place for you* (John 14:2).

INTRODUCTION: The birth and life of Christ reveal many of the sacrificial services that Jesus has performed for us. However, Christ's departure made possible His greatest gifts and blessings and gave occasion for one of His greatest promises, "I go to prepare a place for you." We see that these words are:

I. THE PROCLAMATION OF A GREAT FACT

A. The fact of His deity.

B. The fact of His crucifixion.

C. The fact of His resurrection.

D. All these are included, but this promise primarily reveals the great fact of heaven.

II. THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF A GRACIOUS FAVOR

A. Man cannot merit heaven.

B. He had to prepare our right to the place.

C. He had to prepare our fitness for heaven.

D. He had to prepare the accessibility of heaven.

III. THE PROSPECT OF A GLORIOUS FUTURE

A. ". . . I will come again, and receive you . . ." (Matthew 14:3)

B. What is heaven like? Jesus called heaven "my Father's house."

C. Heaven is "going home" with Jesus.

CONCLUSION: Let us view with reverence, humility, and joy these services of the Saviour. Do not let every trifle, every promise of pleasure or profit, divert our attention from our heavenly home and our waiting Christ.

—WESLEY TRACY

Just a Minute

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 2:13 and 6:16

TEXT: Jeremiah 6:16

INTRODUCTION: *Thus saith the Lord . . . (Jeremiah 6:16).*

- A. In this world we have many voices calling for our attention.
 - 1. Employers, teachers, organizations, advertisements.
 - 2. They are saying, "Just a minute."
- B. When God speaks, He should get our attention immediately.
 - 1. Drop your work; stop thinking about tomorrow's activities or what you are going to have for dinner.
 - 2. Give your serious attention for "just a minute."
- I. STAND BY THE ROADS.
 - A. Many are at the crossroads of decision.
 - 1. There are many roads.
 - 2. Billy Graham sees many decisions for Christ in this decade.
 - B. Don't take a road because "everyone else is doing it."
 - C. Only one way to heaven.
 - 1. Plainly marked; Jesus himself pointing the way.
 - 2. Jesus is the Way.
- II. LOOK.
 - A. Take just a minute; pause awhile.
 - B. Ponder over the paths before you.
 - C. Consider the entire route.
 - D. Consider the condition of the road.
 - 1. "The way of transgressors is hard."
 - 2. The end of the transgressor's way is eternal death.
- III. ASK FOR THE OLD WAY.
 - A. This century, new ways advocated.
 - 1. Cults.
 - 2. Communism.
 - B. Old ways have been tested by experience.
 - 1. Israel was referred back to the old ways marked out by Moses.
 - 2. Christians are referred back

to primitive Christianity; to the life and example of Christ and the teaching of the apostles.

- C. Do some investigating; inquire of other travelers.

IV. WALK IN THE GOOD WAY.

- A. Old ways are to be followed only so far as they are good.
- B. Many proposed ways, but only one has God's blessing.

V. FIND REST FOR YOUR SOUL.

- A. This is what we are seeking.
- B. Best sellers in 1950's about peace and happiness of mind and heart.
- C. Bible.
 - 1. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls."
 - 2. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

CONCLUSION: "But they said, We will not walk therein."

- A. Perhaps they didn't say this in so many words, but by their lives they had rejected God and insisted on being the captain of their own vessels. They had "forsaken . . . the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns" of their own which held no water.
- B. That's our problem today. As Isaiah said, "We have turned every man to his own way." We have marked out our own trails and forgotten the old paths, where martyrs and prophets and holy men of every age have left their footprints.
- C. Many could say, "It was a long time ago and a long way back since I left the old paths and started charting my own way." Those paths have taken you a long way from God, but fortunately it's not a long way back. Accept Christ; He is the Way.

—BOB E. HARMON

The Source of Sin and Salvation

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:1-15

INTRODUCTION: In this message we are speaking of something that pertains to everybody in a special way. It is something that all who have reached the age of accountability have nurtured and kept and petted and pampered and clasped to their bosoms as a treasure.

Yet they have found that it binds with the chains of evil habits, that it blinds by erasing spiritual vision, and it grinds the very heart out of a person. Men have found it to be sordid while it appears to be sweet, savage while it appears to be soothing, and slavery when it appears as freedom. We are talking about sin! But our greatest concern is to see God's remedy for sin.

I. THE ROAD TO SIN

From our Biblical example we notice that this slippery highway reveals the following:

- A. Doubt. Eve doubted God's goodness at the serpent's suggestion. ". . . hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Thus he insinuated that God was withholding something good from them.
- B. Denial. They denied God's holiness. When the serpent said, "For God doth know . . . ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (v. 5), they believed the serpent and thus accused God of selfishness.
- C. Disbelief. They did not believe that God would keep His word. The serpent told them, "Ye shall not surely die" (v. 4). They obviously believed him.

II. THE RESULTS OF SIN

We, along with Adam and Eve, have found sin to be:

- A. Degrading. Sin destroys self-respect, drags down character, and drowns spiritual life in the sea of rebellion. It caused Adam and Eve, as well as you and me, to attempt to hide from God.

- B. Deceiving. Sin looked so sweet, and so deceived them that they sinned in spite of the fact that the path of law and duty was plain and clear, and when there was not the slightest hint of even a possibility of redemption.

- C. Damning. Sin makes us the object of divine wrath. The penalty for sin was and is death.

III. THE REDEMPTION FROM SIN

In verse 15 we see the first mention of the atonement. We see that this verse is:

- A. The declaration of God's faithfulness.
- B. The divulgence of God's forgiveness.
- C. The divine promise of man's freedom.

CONCLUSION: Following the road to sin results in spiritual suicide. But Jesus has the answer. The disadvantages brought upon us in the Fall are restored in the Cross.

—WESLEY TRACY
Kansas City, Kansas

The Suffering Saviour

SCRIPTURE: *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach* (Hebrews 13:13).

I. HE SUFFERED SEPARATION.

- A. Separation from society.
- B. Separation from intimate friends.
- C. Separation from His will.

II. HE SUFFERED PHYSICALLY.

- A. Agonized in prayer.
- B. Sweat blood.
- C. Prostration.

III. HE SUFFERED MENTALLY.

- A. Betrayed (Judas).
- B. Condemned (Pilate).
- C. Forsaken (Father).

CONCLUSION: Yet in all this, Jesus said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

—R. R. LEWIS
Albany, Indiana

THE FORTY DAYS

Geoffrey R. King (Henry E. Walter Ltd., 1959, 105 pages, paper, \$.75)

It is not very often that your Book Editor becomes all "hepped" up over a little paper book as inexpensive as this one. But to be frank about it, I have not in years found as much genuine value per page as there is in this little paperback. This was put out well over a decade ago over in England, but I don't think it has circulated in our American market until this new edition has come off the press.

As one reviewer has said, "This is a book which has made the Easter episode live." We have many books of pre-Easter reading of devotional content and books that deal with the seven words of the Cross and the various characters that surround the Calvary story. But here is a different book. This book takes the forty days from Calvary to the Ascension and gives you material to preach "like a house on fire," for those tremendously important six weeks following Easter.

When you have read the book once, you will want to read it again. In fact you will have a hard time, if you happen to read the book early in the week, waiting until Sunday for an opportunity to preach some of the materials. Not frequently does the preacher have the opportunity of buying a book with at least a half a dozen delightful sermons in it for the price of three postwar milk shakes.

HAPPINESS IS A HABIT

Gordon Powell (Hawthorn, 1960, 157 pages, cloth, \$2.95)

Here is a very rare book combining sound psychological principles and eternal religious truths. The author applies sound, positive thinking to all of the areas of human experience. It will greatly help people to total personality development, soul culture, and spiritual maturity. I wish every pastor would read it once and give it wide circulation among his church members, young and old. It is truly worth its weight in gold.
—E. E. WORDSWORTH.

MAN OF CYRENE

Arvin H. Johnston (Concordia, 1961, 179 pages, cloth, \$3.00)

One of the most intriguing characters in the entire Calvary scene is Simon of Cyrene. So brief is mention of him in the New Testament that one might be inclined to think that he is a minor character. However, the better acquainted we become with him, the more we discover that he played an important role, not only at Calvary, but in the Early Church.

This is Biblical fiction. The facts are based on a vast amount of Biblical research. The characters are fictional. But anyone reading this previous to Easter will develop a fresh appreciation for the sufferings of Christ on "The Way of Sorrows." This will be good reading for laymen and will give strength, warmth, and interest to any pre-Easter preaching.

WHY REVIVAL TARRIES

Ravenhill (Bethany Fellowship, 1959, 175 pages, cloth, \$2.00)

This is a worthy and faithful appeal for a return to the old paths of revival. The author makes clear that there is much more to revival than an evangelist and a meeting. He is scathing in his denunciation of the modern easy method of so-called revival. His conviction of truth and pertinent enthusiasm for real revival in our day are worth the price of the book.

The author was, for a long time, a minister in the Calvary Holiness church in Britain, but left that group before the Calvary Holiness church united with the Church of the Nazarene. He is a sanctified minister and has a burning pen.—EDWARD LAWLOR.

FREEDOM FROM THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Billy Graham (Zondervan, 1960, 113 pages, cloth, \$2.00)

These are seven sermons preached over the radio program "Hour of Decision." In each one is a clear-cut, blunt, and scriptural explanation of one of the seven deadly sins.

But at the point of deliverance from them, there is a sad and tragic doctrinal confusion. The author, world famous as an evangelist, fails to differentiate between "sins" and "indwelling sin." He admits that such sinful tendencies as envy are part of "original sin" and yet fails to note that "original sin" or "indwelling sin" still remains in the regenerate and must have a solution other than the solution of the regenerating experience of the new birth. Throughout Billy Graham suggests that the victory of God for such sinful tendencies as pride, anger, envy, impurity, slothfulness, and avarice were all cared for when one was converted. This book will offer no help to a holiness preacher who knows that the victory for indwelling sin is found in the cleansing, purging Holy Spirit in a second crisis.

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

Stephen Neill (Harper, 1960, 124 pages, cloth, \$3.00)

The author is an outstanding leader in the Anglican communion, has had twenty years of missionary service in South India, is now associate general secretary of the World Council of Churches.

This book is worthwhile reading, for those who can stand having their faces slapped and still smile. The author, in a scholarly way, discusses the historical thinking that has been done in the area of holiness. His writing style is brilliant. The presentation is scholarly. These were lectures given in a seminary in South America.

But I stated you would have to be prepared to stand the buffeting of adverse currents, for the author argues strongly against the hope of victorious living, and certainly sees no place for the eradication of carnality. The value of such a book lies in the sheer fact that one can always wage better warfare if he knows what his enemy is doing.

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