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THE

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

—proclaiming Christian Holiness . . .

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THE

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The Strategy of the Slingshot



WHEN THE RUDDY-FACED young shepherd David faced the arrogant Philistine giant in mortal combat, he needed the best weapons available. He tried on Saul's armor for size, but had the good judgment to reject it. It was just right for Saul, but not for him.

David "chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag . . . and his sling was in his hand" (1 Sam. 17:40). He resisted the temptation to employ weapons he had not proved, however heavy, however fancy, and however prestigious they may have been.

That which he admired in the hands of another was not to be selected for his own use; at least not for that reason. His strategy was to use what he knew best, stay with tested and proven skills, maintain his own identity, and "be himself" out there in the valley of Elah facing the crisis of his life.

His was the strategy of the slingshot, and therein lies a lesson for preachers everywhere. They, too, face giants as big and ugly as Goliath. They need all the courage they can muster, but they need also the wisdom to assess their own strengths and weaknesses. They need the sound judgment which enables them to see that they serve Christ best when they dedicate to Him what they do best, not what they wish they could do, or what someone else does so well. They reach their highest levels of effectiveness when they choose to "be themselves" in His name.

Take for example the case of Rev. J. Wellington Doe. His name is fictional, but his story is true. He moves to a new church which has more members, raises more money, and is composed of more professional and highly educated people than he has seen in any other church where he has been the pastor. Facing this "giant," he knows he needs something special if the battle is to be won. He fails to realize the reason he is there is because of who he is. He chooses a strange armor, an untried strategy, a different approach. He strains to use bigger words, more sophisticated language, deeper philosophical thoughts. The results

sound like a constant flow of meaningless jargon. Even his highly educated members can find little meaning in his multiplicity of words, and would have genuinely appreciated his skills with the slingshot which he could have used so well.

This courageous young pastor then becomes the victim of his choice of weapons. He had in his hand the weapon he knew how to use, and it could have made the difference. But he did not use it. On his shoulders, "Saul's armour" did not fit, and against "Goliath" he didn't have a chance. He was carried off the field of battle wounded, if not destroyed, and the giant remained more defiant than ever, taunting and ridiculing those who earnestly contend for the faith.

It need not be that way. St. Bernard, centuries ago, wrote, "I preached myself, and the scholars came up and praised me. Today I preached Christ, and the sinners came up and thanked me."

The preacher has in his hand the most effective weapon of all against the forces of wickedness, and to some it may seem crude and inadequate. But it is "the gospel of Christ," which "is the power of God unto salvation," that he wields. It is by "the foolishness of preaching" that men are saved, however weak such a weapon may seem to some. And it is through a God-called person that the gospel is preached. It is that person, not another, whom God chooses on a given occasion to use as His instrument. The preacher is wise when he chooses his own weapon, and when he is willing to be himself.

Certainly this does not suggest there is any license for a lack of preparation. David had practiced with his sling by the hour. He had tried every size and shape stone, every design for a sling, and had developed by hard work and diligent application the control of his muscles and the coordination of his mind and body. He had tested his skill under every condition, and found that it worked against the lion and the bear when his life and the lives of his sheep were at stake.

Of greatest importance, David had seen the hand of the Lord God of Israel in it all. His sling, his smooth stones, and his strong arm were the Lord's. It was God who guided, and God who gave whatever success he achieved. He could declare to the king and his court, "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (17:37).

The strategy of the slingshot becomes all the more to be desired when we are reminded that it places our faith where it belongs. We know what we can do, for this has been tested many times. But more important, we are aware that our sling and stones are ineffective unless God takes control. This is the condition in which He always comes through, when we know we must depend upon Him. When we risk all because we do depend upon Him, does He ever fail?

So it was that David met the taunts of his adversary with the reply, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day the Lord will deliver thee into mine hand" (17:45-46).

And God did exactly that—with the help of a shepherd, of all people; using a sling, of all things; with a simple trust in the God who never fails.

Biographical sermons are easier to preach than some other sermonic forms, but they require sweat and toil if they are to be effective.

Biographical Preaching: Easier, yet Effective

By Gordon Chilvers*

TELLING A STORY is the most successful way of teaching any subject, experts tell us. Preachers can use that information to simplify their sermon preparation without losing its value.

Biographical preaching, which is adopting the story to homiletic form, holds many advantages for us preachers. Men who have specialized in it have told us what it can do for our hearers.

F. B. Meyer, well known on both sides of the Atlantic, commends it: "To recruit a dwindling congregation; to sustain interest in a crowded one; to awaken new devotion to the Bible; and to touch the many chords of human life—there is nothing to be compared with a reverent retelling of the stories of the Bible heroes and saints."

Clarence E. Macartney of Pittsburgh wrote: "It is not possible to preach on the great men of the Bible without speaking practical and timely truths to the people, and in a way that everyone will understand. The great advantage of such preaching is that you summon these men themselves into the pulpit to preach for you."

Biographical preaching holds a

popular appeal because human experiences do not change over the years. Bible people have the same problems and joys that we have. Referring to a biblical incident in Ishmael's life, Joseph Parker says: "As through a door ajar, we may see a good deal of human life on what might be called its tragical side. The details are ancient and local, but the meaning is flowing around our life today, and should be understood by all who are seeking the great principles rather than the passing incidents of human history."

We begin our biographical preaching by choosing a character, at first avoiding those whose biographical details can be given in one line. If not, we should meet the unnecessary difficulties of going beyond what is said or despairing because we have so little information at our disposal.

Having chosen our biblical character, we learn all we can about him, especially on the particular incident that is to be the foundation of our sermon. Our Bible dictionary will give the essential facts of his life. We look carefully to see if more than one character bears the name—the Bible speaks of 13 Obadiahs.

Then we study our commentaries on the Bible passage, and the bio-

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graphical works on the biblical personality. When any Near Eastern manners or customs are involved that differ from our own, we consider their significance for the biographical study. When relevant, we consider the geographical facts and consult our Bible atlas.

We then prayerfully meditate on the facts we have collected. We seek spiritual insight into the workings of human nature. We try to understand the workings of God in providence and grace.

Then, but not before, we are ready to use our imaginations to help us see the situation more clearly. This will give life to our subject and help us make our presentation more vivid to our congregation. While lively imaginations are not the special gift of every preacher, we can develop them enormously by constantly and reverently using what we already have. We should be careful to see that our imagination is controlled by revealed facts.

We are now ready to organize our material. This organization is necessary, as every sermon worthy of the name must have an essential unity. A close examination of printed sermons by outstanding preachers will show amazing diversity in that organizing, but all will show it clearly.

Organization is in the long run a time-saver. It enables the preacher to select and arrange his materials more easily. The hearer also gains. Organization helps him grasp the significance of what is said, to remember the lessons of the sermon. Both are necessary as a preliminary in applying the Christian truth of the sermon to personal life.

In our organization, we draw out the one specific idea that will control the whole range of the sermon. We should try to express this in one crystal-clear sentence. If we cannot do this, then probably the idea is not

clear in our own minds. It is good to write this down at the top of our notes.

Knowing the teaching of the passage, and what result we hope to achieve from the sermon, we divide our material and set it under headings. These usually number three or four, though some preachers have done well with two, especially when they are used in contrast, or with seven or eight. The precise number will be controlled by the specific requirements of the sermon.

Next we label the divisions. Much variety is possible in making headings. They can be brief questions on the subject. We could take an incident in the life of Obadiah of Elijah's day (1 Kings 18) and ask: (1) Who is Obadiah? (2) What did Obadiah do? (3) What was its significance?

Alliteration has been profitably used by some preachers. It helps the hearer's memory. Yet alliteration must never be used where diverse letters would give clearer or more accurate headings. On Obadiah we could have: (1) Obadiah's career. (2) Obadiah's character. (3) Obadiah's cowardice.

Either of these types of headings will enable the hearer to learn easily, and to remember the outstanding facts of the incident or the biblical character's life.

If the speaker has the teaching of biographical facts only as his objective, this sort of heading will serve him well. Yet the preacher is aiming to do more than that. He wants the congregation to leave the sanctuary not only a little more familiar with the biblical facts, but with a determination to do the will of God, and to begin at once.

The preacher therefore seeks for his congregation to learn important human facts in the light of Christian truth, and see how they are illustrated in the life of the biblical character in

the chosen incident. To do this he will state his headings in propositions in the present tense.

A further advantage of this method is that he wants his hearers to believe the essential truths. The hearer remembering the list of questions or of words has little value unless he also remembers what was crucial in the paragraphs. If the propositions are stamped on his mind, they may remind him of God's will when he is tempted to ignore it.

Taking again the incident in Obadiah's life, we could have:

1. A man can do godly deeds in a wicked place.
2. A man in a wicked place can be tempted to compromise.
3. Compromise unfits a man for serving God.

We still find it a good practice to announce and repeat these headings. They are the skeleton of our sermon.

Subheadings will help keep our organization strong and clear. This will prevent our taking our hearers on a circular tour instead of leading them from point to point.

For every sort of heading used in the sermon, one danger arises. We must be sure that the subject of one heading could not be legitimately mentioned under another heading.

Two parts of the sermon demand special attention. The final paragraph is the sermon's goal. Being the last words of the sermon the congregation hears, it will be what will ring in their ears as they leave the sanctuary.

The final paragraph must be personal, so that the hearer is not lost in generalities. When it is individual, the hearer will see more effectively how it affects him. Though the basis of our sermon is an incident that happened many years ago, the final paragraph must be in the present tense. We are keen to move the will

of the hearer, so that he believes or does something and begins at once.

James Reid, in his sermon "The Victory of God in the Disasters of Life," appeals to his hearers to accept the view that "all things work together for good to them that love God." He concludes: "Those who accept the purpose of God in Christ and give themselves to it in loyal faith and service find there the secret of a continual victory—a victory in which life with all it holds of joy or woe becomes subdued to the mighty mastery of love."

As this paragraph is so crucial to the hearer, we must prepare it with the utmost care. If we write out little else, we ought to write out the last paragraph in full.

The next most important part of the sermon is the opening. These may be the only words of the sermon some of the congregation will hear. We need to catch the attention of the hearers from the first moments, because our sermon is all of one piece and any part that they miss will be a loss to them. Also, if we do not get their attention at once, it will be harder for us to get it at all.

We should make this paragraph as dramatic as possible. To do this, it should move rapidly. Our hearers are keen to know on which route we are taking them, and how we purpose arriving at our destination. Moving rapidly is especially important when the hearers are fairly familiar with the subject.

This is a special spot for using our sanctified imagination to good purpose. The best preachers score high marks here. In his sermon on Eutychus, C. E. Macartney began with the words, "Sound asleep! Fallen into a deep sleep, and under such a preacher as Paul!"

A personal incident, one that does not glorify the preacher, is often a good way to start. In his sermon

“David—the Man After and Against God’s Heart,” C. E. Macartney’s first paragraph is: “A man once wrote me after hearing a sermon on David and asked me, ‘Why do you think so much of David?’ and then went on to enumerate some of David’s gross transgressions. Perhaps the best answer would be, ‘Because God thought much of him.’”

This opening paragraph must be as interesting as we can make it. To be interesting, we must say something fresh, or say it in a fresh way if it is familiar. People will be bored if we repeat in the same way what they have heard earlier. What is unusual will grip, because it suggests to

our hearers that all we shall say will have a welcome freshness.

Biographical sermons are easier on the minister who seeks to preach well than some sermonic forms. Yet they require blood, sweat, and toil if we are to give our congregations our best.

What can we expect from our labors? Our hearers will see that the Bible is as relevant to the twentieth century as it was to the second century. They will know that God has already given an answer to the type of problem that baffles them today. They will mature rapidly as they learn from biblical incidents to walk closely with the Lord and rely fully on His resources.

*there's MUSIC
in your church*



Congregational Singing Can Be Exciting

By Keith Showalter*

HOW MANY TIMES have you suffered from the song service “blahs”? Unfortunately, Excedrin can’t relieve that headache. Yet all is not lost. If your worship service seems to be weak for the first 20 minutes on Sunday morning, perhaps

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some simple hints may help add meaning.

After selecting the songs which are to be used, and studying the message content of each, try using a few of these ideas.

1. Let’s assume the first song of the morning is a worship hymn. It lends itself to a moderately brisk

tempo, has verses that are meat in doctrine, and is faith-lifting. Try slowing the tempo for the last verse, turning all vibrato off on the organ, and instructing the choir to sing in unison on the melody, thus backing the congregation with the strong, majestic sound. It is really uplifting.

2. Another idea that works nicely on the same type of song is having the organist and pianist change keys and move the song a half or whole step higher. The tempo may also be slowed. If a church has no choir, this procedure will add much the same atmosphere as the first suggestion. This means that the instrumentalists must transpose the song—or “play by ear.” If they cannot do this spontaneously, they should be informed in advance which song will be used, so they can write out the transposition. Or, fortunately, many of the older hymns and gospel songs are written in different keys, depending upon the hymnal you use. For example, I have found “Amazing Grace,” “Blessed Assurance,” “What a Friend,” and others in different keys. Make a place in your library for collecting old hymnals.

3. A very effective idea I use often is to have various people or groups sing particular verses, such as a soloist on a given verse, the choir, the ladies of choir and congregation, or the men.

It seems best not to use more than two of these ideas in a song. You can overdo it. Be sure to give the victorious, positive, conclusive, or majestic verse to the men. This reminds the men that they should be the spiritual power of the family.

4. Try singing a verse or two without the instruments. Admonish everyone to sing a part whether it be “melody, alto, tenor, bass, or monotone.” It is worship we want, not perfectly blended voices. Some who enjoy singing the most are those who

can't sing very well. Songs that are excellent for this idea include such as “I Will Praise Him” and “The Old Rugged Cross.” For Sunday evening you might use “Wonderful Grace of Jesus” or “Master, the Tempest Is Raging.”

5. Try giving instruction to the congregation as well as the choir concerning volume for different verses. This can be done while the congregation is singing. For instance, after singing a verse of “Take the Name of Jesus with You,” lean forward and softly say into a close microphone, “Let's sing the chorus softly.” This causes people to look for the message or emotion you are trying to convey. It is rewarding.

6. Do not be afraid of leaving out a chorus between two verses if it adds to the meaning of the song. For example, the whole story of sanctification can be seen in the song “I Will Praise Him.” It can be even more dynamic if the chorus is omitted between the second and third verses. The second verse ties the act of complete submissiveness and consecration to God's sending the “blessing” in verse three, if it is not interrupted by the chorus.

7. Encourage your people to sing thoughts and not just phrases. Consider the song mentioned above. If we simply sing the phrases, “Then God's fire upon the altar”; “Of my heart was set aflame”; “I shall never cease to praise Him”; “Glory, glory to His name!” we miss the blessing of the message found in the lines, “Then God's fire upon the altar of my heart was set aflame. I shall never cease to praise Him. Glory, glory to His name!”

Since using several of these ideas I've picked up from others, I have seen the “blah” disappear for myself and my congregation. The congregation becomes a great big, beautiful choir, and they love it.



CALL TO SERVANTHOOD

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

2. THE PASTOR: MAN BETWEEN THE TIMES

"Whoever would be great among you must be your servant."
(Mark 10:43, RSV)

Another pastor-friend of mine has just resigned his church, and announced his acceptance of a position in secular employment—"tent making" he called it. Like too many others I have known, he has grown restive with the servant-task of pastoral ministry and has decided he can be a more effective Christian outside the creaky, crusty, barnacle-covered old institution.

I will grant that my friend has a point: servanthood is often tedious business. If we would achieve greatness in the company of believers, then we must be the servants of all. That means giving attention to all kinds of organizing, promoting, arranging, and maintaining trivia in regard to the program of the church which others are unable to perform. It is the servant's task to make ready the people of God for the coming of the King, and clean up after the worship-celebration is over. Granted, there is great inspiration in such service; mostly, however, it is perspiration. Callicles asks Socrates, "How can a man be happy who is servant of anything?" Many respond that they cannot be happy in such an innocuous and lowly role as that of the pastoral servant.

Somehow, my friend—and others

—missed the whole point of servanthood: namely, this is the only sure and dependable path there is to greatness—"Whoever would be great among you . . ." Jesus does not despise our desire to achieve, to live fruitful and useful lives, nor does He fault those native ambitions and supernaturally inspired visions which drive us toward seeking our special place in the sun.

What Jesus is saying, however, is that the servant of God is at the very crux of the entire divine-human drama. He is already right where it is—if he only had eyes to see it. There simply is no quicker way to bring the Kingdom to pass, nor is there a more effective role guaranteed to get more sweeping results. There is no promotion from servanthood. It is the highest position in the Kingdom, the very position which Jesus himself adopted. "For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45, RSV). Let us explore this further.

It is of significance to note that each of the Evangelists places the servant-sayings of Jesus (Matt. 20:26-28; 23:10-12; Mark 9:35; 10:43-45; Luke 22:26-27; John 13:1f.—here Jesus acts out the servant's role) between predictions of the Cross and

the promise of the Kingdom. Contemporary New Testament scholarship has shown us that each of the Gospel writers reflects a certain theological point of view and seeks to convey a specific message in the very arrangement of his "raw materials." If this position is accepted, then we must conclude that the placement of the servant-sayings between the Cross and the Kingdom is not accidental. In this manner each of the Evangelists is trying to tell us something about the dimensions of the servant's task. Let us examine the implications which follow from this special contextual arrangement.

1. *The servant stands at the midpoint between the Cross and the Kingdom.* He stands at the midpoint in time between the historic saving deed of God done in the Cross-Resurrection event and the eschatological consummation at the end of time. He is *the* servant of God between the time of Christ's first appearing and final revelation. He is the one called by God and commissioned by Jesus to carry out the will and carry on the work of the absentee Lord until He comes again (Matt. 24:45; 25:1, 14f.; Mark 12:2; 13:34; Luke 12:37-48; 14:15; 19:13; 20:9).

2. *The servant concretizes the ke-rygma, the proclamation of the gospel.* In the person and ministry of the servant, the Word continues to become flesh and tabernacle among men. The servant embodies God's solidarity with man and His care for the world. The servant delivers the Cross from impotence as a mere event of past history, and the Kingdom from irrelevance as mere wishful thinking about the future. In the person and proclamation of the servant, the incarnation is present and active. The servant is God's contact point with the world. Apart from the servant, God simply has no other means by which to address himself to man.

We are blessed in our scientific-technological age with mind-boggling means of communication. Many have rightly seen and aggressively pursued the possibilities of such instruments for propagating the gospel. It is now literally possible to blanket the globe with the Good News, and saturate any given area until we can be almost certain that everybody has really heard—or has everyone? If radio, television, cassettes, motion pictures, the printing press, bumper stickers, mass-distributed salvation-formulas were effective, then it would follow that the United States of America should have been converted three times over by now. Never in the history of the race have a people been so saturated with the Good News—and never has it been packaged and marketed with such technicolored and choreographed attractiveness. Yet, in my neighborhood at least, I believe that I have witnessed raw paganism and ungodliness such as would embarrass the Aguaruna Indians in Peruvian jungles. Apparently, evangelism by proxy is not working out very well.

There is no evangelism without relationship! Plastics, transistors, celluloid, and printer's ink cannot take the place of flesh and blood. People are not won to Jesus Christ at long distance. Nor are they converted by ingesting salvation-formulas. People are wrested from the kingdom of Satan, and translated into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, only when they get close enough to a servant of God to see a glistening tear in the eye and feel the warmth of an arm around the shoulder.

Consider Saul of Tarsus. None would question the authenticity of his heavenly vision or its power to transform. But after that crisis experience, Paul stumbled in the dark. Not until a human being by the name

of Ananias came, laid his hands on him, and prayed for him did the scales fall from his eyes and he received the blessed baptism with the Holy Spirit. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). That was God's method then, and it is His method now. He has no other way of drawing close to men, breathing into their souls the breath of life, apart from the personality of the servant.

P. T. Forsyth put it this way: "God's way of carrying home to the world was by a person. . . . God in Christ's cross not only manifests His love but gives effect to it in human history. He enters that stream, and rides on its rage, and rules its flood, and bends its course."

3. *In the servant the kingdom of God has come.* The servant is one who has been converted, has become like a child, and has entered into the realm of God's kingdom (Matt. 18:3). Or, more precisely, the Kingdom has entered into him (Luke 17:21). In the person and proclamation of the servant the Kingdom is at hand. It is dawning. It is drawing near. The servant no longer reflects this world's way of looking at things; he now manifests the values, standards, and holy ideals of the Kingdom. He is an ambassador of the King in a strange and foreign land. He bears the message and does the will of his Lord. As such, he comes into conflict with the world, for the Kingdom is God's judgment upon the world, and throws the world into crisis. That is why the servant is never very far from the Cross.

In the person of the servant are embodied the peace, joy, and hope of the Kingdom which make all things new. In him the Kingdom comes, and God's will is done "in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). His service is eschatological care, in that it always points forward to the final victory yet to be revealed. Yet it is concrete care,

here and now, in the midst of the shadows of this world's life. He who is coming has already come. Further, He continues to come, continues to bring the power and joy of the Kingdom to pass, in and through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Rudolf Bohren, in his book *Preaching and Community*, notes: "These are God's pastors, who practice pastoral care here and now; they are a sign that the sun is really rising, that the kingdom of heaven is actually coming. These are men who have found new possibilities for life in Christ. . . . Through the Holy Spirit, Christ dwells and works in the Christian community, enabling the community to carry on God's pastoral care on earth."

Lincoln was something of a mystery man to many of his closest associates. But there was one element of his personality which none could deny, and which was sardonically criticized by Fessenden in a personal letter to a friend: "You cannot change the President's character or conduct, unfortunately; he remained long enough at Springfield, surrounded by toadies and office-seekers, to persuade himself that he was specially chosen by the Almighty for this crisis, and well chosen. This conceit has never yet been beaten out of him."

If it is conceit, I trust that it is pardonable conceit. But I have the conviction that the humble and lowly servant of God who faithfully seeks to fulfill God's will is indeed "chosen by the Almighty for this crisis, and well chosen." Having this conviction, I do not defer to any other man or any other career or any other position in the world! I am at the exact center of where the real action is, and where the divine-human drama continues to unfold. Amen!

All scripture from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946 and 1952, is used by permission.

Many a man will never be at peace with God
and himself until some preacher has the
courage to preach the judgment of God,
tempered with pure love.

Preaching to Hurt

*His sermon had the usual heads,
And subdivisions fine;
The language was as delicate
And graceful as a vine.*

*It had its proper opening;
'Twas polished, as a whole.
It had but one supreme defect—
It failed to reach the soul.*

Many preachers fall into the classification in which the great temperance evangelist, Sam Morris, said his girl friend placed him before he was married. One Sunday afternoon when he was a boy preacher, he invited his girl to an old schoolhouse to hear him preach. As they walked to the schoolhouse, he asked the girl to marry him. She refused on the grounds that she would never marry a preacher. Undaunted, the gallant young preacher kept on insisting. Just as adamantly she refused. Young Morris preached his best that afternoon, and when the service was

over, they started home. Again he brought up the subject of marriage, and the girl accepted. Shocked and excited at his sudden good fortune, he asked the bride-to-be what changed her mind so suddenly. "Ah, Sam," she said, "you're not preacher enough to hurt."

Sometimes we preachers (maybe I am confessing) glory in the fact that we preach a message of love. Yet I cannot help wondering if a lot of our preaching of love is not pure flabbiness and unadulterated softness! There is a robustness about genuine love that runs parallel with judgment.

I went to the dentist and he was rough on one of my teeth! Yet I realize that he had to get rough before my tooth could be normal again.

Many a man will never be at peace with God and himself until some preacher has the courage to preach the judgment of God, tempered with pure love, to him.

Often—much too often—we preachers preach what appears to be the irrelevant, or we miss the mark a mile. Successful prophets, pastors, and preachers of yesteryears were men who could interpret the fine print of men's hearts. They knew the particular truth that would point up the occasion. They were fearless in declaring that truth.



by
Morris Chalfant

Pastor
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With moral, spiritual, and political ethics plumbing new depths of perversion and degeneracy, it is time the conscience of America and the Protestant church were stabbed awake. It would be tragic to rank first in brains and last in morals. Yet, despite the fact that we are reaching for the moon educationally and scientifically, we are headed for the moral cesspool with the speed of a sputnik. The great need is for preaching on conscience—preaching that will probe the depths; preaching that will arouse the slumbering convictions of our nation, our churches, and our homes; preaching that will slash through our rationalization, materialism, and smug religious complacency.

A layman spoke out at the camp meeting board as they were making their selection for their evangelists, "We must have at least one conscience preacher."

There is wisdom in this statement. God has endowed mankind with a conscience. Some would call it natural conscience in contrast with the higher state of conscience truly Christian in its ideals. Beasts have no conscience since they have no capacity for moral responsibility. But a man or woman—however low his or her condition in life—does have a capacity for moral responsibility. The minister who would win souls is

always on safe ground in his appeal to this sense of right or wrong.

D. L. Moody said that you have to get a man lost before you can get him saved. He was simply saying that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." But man must hear the message of his lost condition, and he must hear it in no uncertain terms and tones if he is to believe it.

Man must feel in his conscience a deep sense of lostness if he is to enjoy a deep experience of repentance. No skin-deep experience will suffice!

Sin must be pictured as black and hopeless. Then the better way described by Paul as the highest way of all must come to the fore to captivate the individual.

God paid an awful price that His message of judgment and love might be proclaimed to the whole world. His innocent Son went to the Cross to die for the ungodly. This all hurt Him deeply! He will not brook sin, will not act softly toward it. His righteousness stands forever against sin in any form.

The lost must know, however, that closely behind the rumble and roar of God's judgment may be heard the whisper of Christ's forgiving love. The blood flecks of the Son of God compound the true ingredients of total redemption. That is what I will preach!

There is one right and many wrong ways of preaching holiness. One can preach "Christ of contention" (Phil. 1:16) and stir up more opposition than existed when he began, or he can present his message so that it will commend itself to the reason and conscience of every right-thinking man. If you can preach so that all good, sincere people will go away and say, "He is preaching our doctrine," you are doing better than when you are emphasizing all the differences and earning an opposition that might have been avoided, without compromising the truth.

—J. B. Chapman

Those who are involved in building and remodeling are reminded that the acoustical aspects of the sanctuary are among the most important components of the design.

Hearing and Sanctuary Design

By Joe F. Guess*

THE ACOUSTICS of church sanctuaries has been of concern to me for several years. The importance of the acoustical environment is obvious. We *hear* the Word of God preached; we *hear* prayers; we *hear* soloists sing; we *hear* the choir; and we *hear* others join with us as we lift praises to God in congregational singing. Since hearing is our primary physical activity in church, our first concern in building design should be to provide a good acoustical environment. Too often, however, a sanctuary is designed on the basis of eye appeal alone, with no regard for hearing until problems show up after construction, when corrective measures are most expensive.

Since the minister is most influential in setting goals of building architecture and in deciding on specific plans, I am anxious that he be aware of the rudiments of acoustic design. But even more important is the knowledge of the vast improvement in the liveliness of the singing, the increased participation, and the feeling of togetherness which can come with a good acoustic environment.

The goals of the acoustical design of church sanctuaries are simple: (1) speech that is easily understood, and (2) singing that is easy and has a feeling of unity. If the building is correctly planned, the minister's sermon can be heard clearly by persons

in all parts of the auditorium. There are no noticeable echoes, and the minister's voice sounds natural—not boomy.

But the greatest joy of a well-designed church is the singing. The choir blends and projects a full sound to the audience. The congregational singing is easy because each person hears the voices of many others reflected to him. He does not feel that he is "sticking out" and soften his singing until the only voice heard is that of the song leader straining to generate enthusiasm.

How does one achieve a good acoustical design? Listed below are some major elements of good hearing conditions. The list is by no means complete, but it may help someone avoid some of the most common pitfalls, and provide a list of checkpoints to consider when evaluating a building plan.

The ceiling is the key

The speech sound that the listener hears reaches him by two paths: direct and reflected. The direct sound travels a straight-line path from the speaker's mouth to the listener's ear, while the reflected sound bounces off ceilings and walls before reaching the ear. Since people are among the best sound absorbers in an auditorium, the direct sound that passes over their heads is quickly absorbed. Beyond a few rows in the audience the direct sound becomes weak. The only way to increase the intensity of

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the direct sound is to place each successive row higher than the preceding one, so that the heads of the listeners are well above those on the preceding row. This is the idea of the classic Grecian, open-air theatres. However, since this arrangement gives a person a psychological feeling of being an observer rather than a participant, we avoid this extremely stair-stepped configuration and use the level or slightly sloping floors. Thus we must reinforce the direct sound with reflected sound.

The sound that is reflected from the ceiling is not "soaked up" by passing over the audience, since it comes down at a rather steep angle from the ceiling. Because of the absorption of the direct sound, this reflected sound must provide most of the sound energy to listeners in the rest of the auditorium. To get this sound to the audience, the ceiling should be (1) hard, sound-reflecting, (2) not too high nor too low, and (3) flat.

Never put an acoustical absorber on the ceiling of a church sanctuary! The ceiling must be made of hard, sound-reflecting material if it is to return most of the sound energy to the audience. A church is not an office building where we want speech privacy, so we don't want to soak up the sound before it reaches the audience.

If the reflected sound is to reinforce the direct sound and not be heard as an echo, it should travel no more than 30 feet farther than the direct sound. To satisfy this requirement, the ceiling should be no more than 15 to 25 feet above the speaker's head. The exact height will depend upon the arrangement and size of the auditorium.

Another reason to keep the ceilings lower is that the sound spreads out and becomes weaker as it travels. The lower ceiling makes the rein-

forcement of the sound more effective. It would be detrimental to hearing conditions to have the ceiling so low that the reflected sound comes down at a shallow angle and is absorbed like the direct sound. The low ceiling reduces the air volume of the sanctuary and with it the reverberation, a moderate amount of which is very important in providing a warmth in the music. While the usual tendency in church architecture is not toward ceilings that are too low, one should be aware that either extremely high or low ceilings cause acoustical problems.

The ceiling should be flat to reflect the sound uniformly to all parts of the audience. Concave or vaulted ceilings focus sound to one part of the audience and leave the others untouched. The popular A-frame construction with exposed beams does not give the best coverage to the audience. In addition it is more expensive to heat and air-condition than the standard ceiling-insulation-roof construction.

Let the choir ring

The members of a choir need to hear each other in order to blend and sound like a choir. This is especially important for the inexperienced, untrained singers usually found in a typical church choir. The choir loft should contain no absorbing materials, no acoustical tile, no carpets, and no draperies. The basses need to hear the sopranos, and all they can hear is sound reflected from the ceiling, walls, or floor, since the sopranos are facing the audience rather than toward the basses. The walls and ceiling should be hard-surfaced, non-porous materials. Plaster, because of its rigidity and weight, is among the best.

The sound in the choir loft has to get to the audience, so there should be no decorative framework to re-

flect the sound back into the choir loft. Nor should there be any draperies hanging in front of or behind the choir. The audience should hear that sound, and they cannot hear what is absorbed in draperies.

One church I attended had acoustical tile in the choir loft, and the choir members were not able to hear each other, nor could they be heard by the congregation. The church was remodeled and the ceiling of the choir loft was replaced by gypsum board (not as good as plaster, but better than acoustical tile). For three weeks the choir sounded great. Singing was more fun; it was easier to stay on pitch; and a crisp, big sound got out to the audience. Then the carpeting and draperies arrived. The floor of the loft was carpeted and draperies covered the wall behind the choir. Once again each choir member could hear only himself, and perhaps his nearest neighbors. The sound that reached the audience was weak and had all the snap of an overripe banana.

Soak up sound below and behind

I have been adamant in saying how sound should not be absorbed. But most of us have been in places that were so full of echoes and reverberations that we could ill understand what was said, and we left with headaches from the confusion. Usually in that type of environment some well-intentioned, but ill-informed person tried to help the situation by installing a PA system. The PA system, of course, did not eliminate the echoes, but simply raised the sound level nearer the threshold of pain, and added its own distortions to the sound. It is obvious that we should be prepared to absorb some sound to keep down the reverberations, particularly the irritating, high-frequency ones.

An audience will absorb sound in

proportion to its size. Because of this fluctuation, acousticians recommend using upholstered seats, which absorb more than hard seats. Therefore, if economics permit, upholstering the seats is a good way to begin your sound control.

If still more sound absorbency is required, the floor can be carpeted. Little sound reaches the carpet, so it can be restricted to the aisles without compromising its effectiveness.

One place that is often a source of problem reflections is the back wall of the sanctuary, which reflects sound back toward the pulpit and can cause annoying echoes, particularly in circular buildings. Acoustical tile or panels can be added to the upper part of the wall, using a scattered pattern for slight absorbency, or covering the entire surface for a bad echo.

Use electronic reinforcement sparingly

The great fad of our age is electronics. If the sound isn't right, the tendency is to go out and buy a microphone, an amplifier, and some loudspeakers. If that doesn't help, we get a mike for the song leader and some for the choir, an equalizer, booms, and a man to run the sound system.

I should admit here a personal preference for simplicity and directness in the worship or evangelistic service. I find a mike held in front of the face a barrier to the direct, face-to-face communication of the gospel; and I detest gimmickry with the most powerful message man can know. But personal preference aside, the use of electronics does not cure most acoustical problems. All that a sound reinforcement system does is make the sound louder. It cannot get rid of echoes and resonances. Rather, it usually makes them worse through feedback. It does not help choir mem-

bers hear each other and blend, and there is a continual problem of getting uniform "miking" on the choir. If the acoustical environment of the sanctuary is too "dead," a mike will make the song leader louder, but does not help the congregation to hear one another.

In a sanctuary well designed acoustically, microphones may not be needed at all in buildings with seating capacities up to 200. For larger sanctuaries a pulpit mike will suffice, with perhaps another for soloists. Choirs should never have to be "miked" except for the largest churches. Reinforcement of the choir is unnecessary because the number of voices in the choir increases with the size of the congregation, and the larger choir compensates for the larger buildings.

There is a place for electronic reinforcement. But when a building is being designed, the sound reinforcement should be considered last—after all the other aspects of a good acoustical design are optimized.

Ask someone who knows

The surest way to achieve a good acoustical design is to have the services of a good acoustical consultant from the initial planning stages. The Acoustical Society of America provides a list of consultants who have listed with the society. A consultant from this list should be willing to provide references of satisfied customers. The consultant should always advise on major construction, as it is cheaper to do it right the first time than to correct the problems later.

When involved in building and remodeling, remember that the acoustical aspects of the sanctuary are among the most important components of the design. While a bad acoustical design is irritating, a barrier to communication, and emotionally and physically tiring, a good

acoustical design contributes positively in ease of communication, spirit of the music, and a sense of togetherness in the services.



He Caught a Vision of What The Church Is All About

Dear Son:

John is a prominent businessman in our community and a pillar in the church, but lately he has been tempted to leave. You see, our pastor has served his term, and his usefulness is waning. John knows this and wonders why we can't have a change of leadership.

Last week he flew to Canada with a lay evangelistic team for a workshop. His leader took him to his church in Toronto on Sunday with this explanation:

"John, my pastor is not very effective, and I have been tempted to leave. However, I have decided that my place is there to help him and support the fellowship."

When John returned to the States, I saw a new man. He sat on the front seat, brought his friends, supported the program, and shared his contagious enthusiasm.

And something happened to our pastor. With John boosting, our pastor started producing—and there was the difference.

Have a wonderful day Sunday.

Love,
Dad

● **General Superintendent Lawlor**



An Occupational Peril

THE PHARISEES were among the bitterest enemies of our Lord. They received from Him the most pronounced denunciation as indicated in Luke 12:1, where He said to His disciples, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Here Jesus accused the Pharisees of being "religious play actors," insisting upon professional performance without personal possession and practice. The Pharisees were preoccupied and absorbed with things—nonessentials—forgetting that which really mattered.

When we read Christ's many warnings to His disciples about these Pharisees, we must each ask: Is there a danger that I, a minister of God in 1975, will fall victim to the occupational hazard of becoming a "religious play actor," professing much without the definite, personal experience of the blessing of practical, everyday holiness? We must constantly guard against infiltration by this professional age which makes its impact upon us, diminishing, and in some cases effectively destroying, our ministry. Is there not some danger that this psychological-pressurized age may make our work become mere routine, custom, and performance?

It is easy to be deceived in the quality of our ministry, forgetting that doing one's work with greater facility and human ability may not mean doing it better ministerially. We may easily become professional, more concerned about what people think of us than whether we have moved them to seek and to know the true and living God.

Many ministers, I fear, have left the ministry because they became "religious play actors" and like some of old "walked no more with him" (John 6:66). The first ideals were not maintained. Attainment to higher heights and deeper depths spiritually was not made. Mercenary considerations asserted themselves. Making money, secularism, worldly patronage, and position became more important than the sacredness of their calling. As ministers, therefore, we should ask ourselves daily whether these dangers do beset us. We must constantly live in the Spirit in order that we might be saved from this evil



world and from attachment to everything transitory and earthly. Rather, let us set our affections on things spiritual, heavenly, and eternal.

The minister of God must be completely delivered from human infatuation with the spirit of the world, the pleasures of the present, and the spirit of the times, which ignore the eternal. We must take care that the fatal breath of worldliness does not drift into the sacred precincts of our ministry. Every minister is responsible to take care that he does not become infected with this poisonous leaven of hypocrisy. The higher our position, the greater our responsibility to God and man.

But regardless of relationship or ecclesiastical position, each one of us must be uncompromisingly faithful to God, to our call, to our people, and to our church. We must value talent, ability, academic success, hard work, professional promotion—but these must be secondary. Spiritual character and conformity to the doctrine, principles, and standards of our ministry must have first consideration. Each of us, as we value our own souls and the eternal destiny of others, must constantly remember the warning of Jesus to "beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." God demands, and our profession as Nazarene ministers deserves, faithfulness rather than professionalism.



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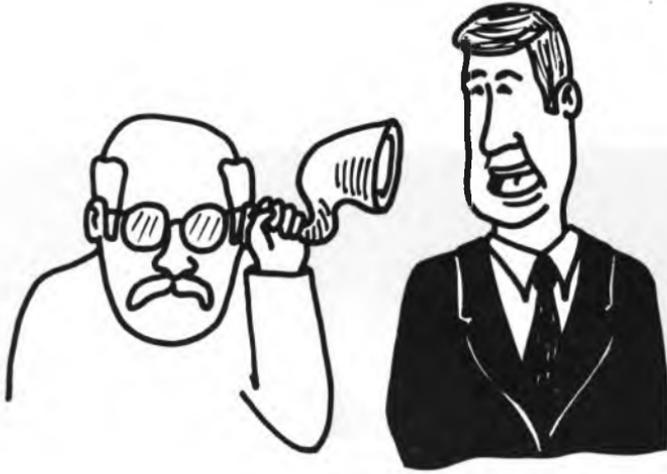
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John B. Nielson
General Director

Calendar Suggestions

Family Week—May 4-11

Baby Day—May 4

Mother's Day—May 11

Senior Adult

Ministries—May 18

VBS Sunday—May 25

Children's Day—June 1

Family Outreach

Sunday—June 8

Father's Day—June 15

(For Family Celebrations)

Pastor:

- Enlist the help of your local CFL director and committee.
- Your district CFL director should be prepared to provide helps and resources for significant family experiences on any or all of these occasions.
- Choose the event(s) best suited to your local needs.



CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE



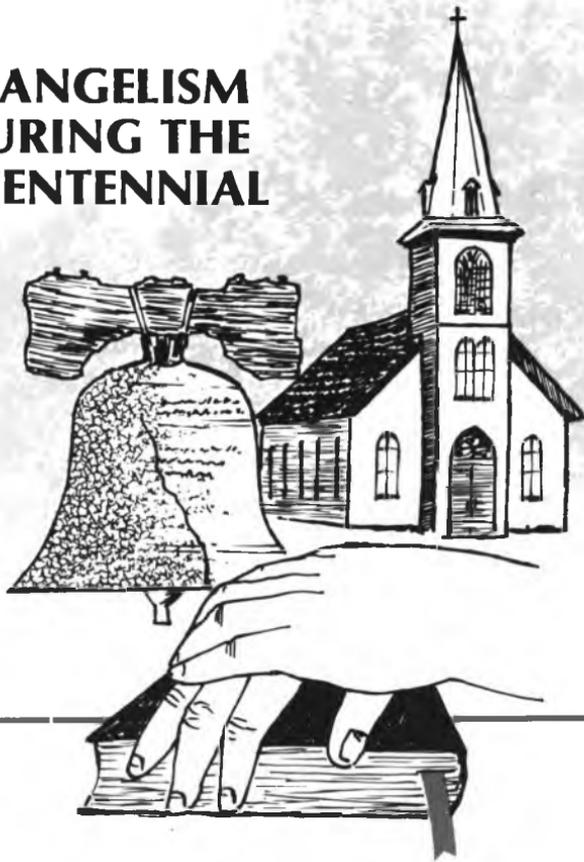
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In order that they may let others matter to them.

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1. Actively seek involvement in community projects.
2. Contact American Bible Society about the special bicentennial scripture portions for distribution.
3. Send to the Department of Evangelism any information about special ways you are using the bicentennial for evangelism, and we will try to share it with others.

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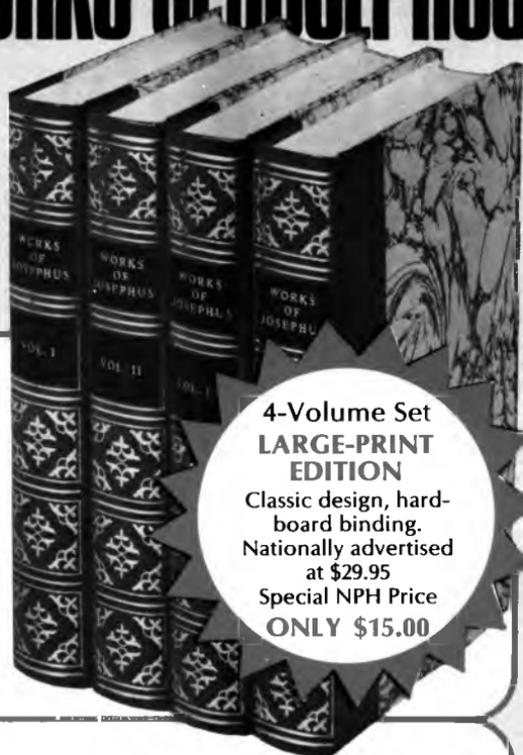
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Other _____

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| | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| 'Hawaii | 102.06 |
| 'Minnesota | 100.37 |
| 'Idaho-Oregon | 100.07 |
| 'Canada Pacific | 100.02 |
| Canada Central | 98.91 |
| Rocky Mountain | 98.75 |
| Southwest Oklahoma | 98.67 |
| Dallas | 97.83 |
| Northwest Oklahoma | 97.65 |
| Kansas | 97.13 |
| Washington | 97.01 |
| Iowa | 96.56 |
| Pittsburgh | 96.37 |
| Philadelphia | 96.30 |
| Alaska | 95.90 |
| Sacramento | 95.85 |
| Joplin | 95.80 |
| West Texas | 95.62 |
| New Mexico | 95.59 |
| Illinois | 94.89 |
| Georgia | 94.81 |
| Northwest | 94.56 |
| Colorado | 94.33 |
| Arizona | 94.17 |
| Canada West | 94.04 |
| Northeast Oklahoma | 93.90 |
| Nebraska | 93.51 |
| North Carolina | 93.09 |
| Dakota | 93.08 |
| Michigan | 92.92 |
| Louisiana | 92.78 |
| Northeastern Indiana | 92.57 |
| North Arkansas | 92.43 |
| Northwest Indiana | 92.33 |
| Northern California | 92.11 |
| Northwestern Ohio | 91.88 |
| Kansas City | 91.87 |
| Eastern Michigan | 91.82 |
| Southern Florida | 91.80 |
| Canada Atlantic | 91.46 |
| Indianapolis | 91.30 |
| Virginia | 91.22 |
| Chicago Central | 91.17 |
| Northwestern Illinois | 91.16 |
| Alabama | 91.15 |
| Southern California | 91.09 |
| North Florida | 91.00 |
| Akron | 90.96 |
| Wisconsin | 90.90 |
| Washington Pacific | 90.69 |
| South Carolina | 90.67 |
| Central California | 90.64 |
| Central Ohio | 90.59 |
| Oregon Pacific | 90.38 |
| Southeast Oklahoma | 90.33 |
| East Tennessee | 90.24 |
| Upstate New York | 90.23 |
| San Antonio | 90.02 |
| Eastern Kentucky | 90.00 |
| (Central) Florida | 90.00 |
| Houston | 90.00 |
| Kentucky | 90.00 |
| Los Angeles | 90.00 |
| Maine | 90.00 |
| Mississippi | 90.00 |
| Missouri | 90.00 |
| Nevada-Utah | 90.00 |
| New England | 90.00 |
| New York | 90.00 |
| South Arkansas | 90.00 |
| Southwest Indiana | 90.00 |
| Southwestern Ohio | 90.00 |
| Tennessee | 90.00 |
| West Virginia | 90.00 |

1974 Summary of
Pensions and B



DISTRICT

“DOUBLE
Life I

Annual premiums are paid by the Department of Pensions and Benevolence. "Double Coverage" is automatic to all ministers insured under Plan 1 on districts paying 90 percent of their official 4 percent Pensions and Benevolence budget apportionment.

Denominational

Percent Districts

Benevolence Budget



DENOMINATIONAL AND DISTRICT PENSIONS AND BENEVOLENCE BUDGET PAYMENT RECORD

The shaded spaces indicate each year the district paid at least 90 percent of its Pensions and Benevolence Budget.

RECORD

ERAGE"

nce

The 4 percent is based on the total spent for local purposes, except monies spent for buildings and improvements and church indebtedness in the past assembly year (4 percent of the sum of Column 9 less Columns 1 and 2, in the pastor's annual church financial report).

erage 92.66%

| DISTRICT | 1965 thru 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| Akron | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.96 |
| Alabama | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.15 |
| Alaska | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 95.90 |
| Arizona | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 94.17 |
| Canada Atlantic | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.46 |
| Canada Central | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 98.91 |
| Canada Pacific | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 100.02 * |
| Canada West | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 94.04 |
| Central California | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.64 |
| (Central) Florida | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Central Ohio | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.59 |
| Chicago Central | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.17 |
| Colorado | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 94.33 |
| Dakota | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 93.08 |
| Dallas | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 87.83 |
| East Tennessee | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.24 |
| Eastern Kentucky | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Eastern Michigan | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.82 |
| Georgia | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 94.81 |
| Hawaii | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 102.06 * |
| Houston | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Idaho-Oregon | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 100.07 * |
| Illinois | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 94.89 |
| Indianapolis | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.30 |
| Iowa | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 96.56 |
| Joplin | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 95.80 |
| Kansas | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 97.13 |
| Kansas City | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.87 |
| Kentucky | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Los Angeles | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Louisiana | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 92.78 |
| Maine | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Michigan | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 92.92 |
| Minnesota | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 100.37 * |
| Mississippi | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Missouri | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Nebraska | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 93.51 |
| Nevada-Utah | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| New England | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| New Mexico | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 95.59 |
| New York | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| North Arkansas | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 92.43 |
| North Carolina | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 93.09 |
| North Florida | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.00 |
| Northeast Oklahoma | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 93.90 |
| Northeastern Indiana | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 92.57 |
| Northern California | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 92.11 |
| Northwest | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 94.56 |
| Northwest Indiana | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 92.33 |
| Northwest Oklahoma | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 97.65 |
| Northwestern Illinois | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.16 |
| Northwestern Ohio | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.88 |
| Oregon Pacific | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.38 |
| Philadelphia | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 96.30 |
| Pittsburgh | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 96.37 |
| Rocky Mountain | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 98.75 |
| Sacramento | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 95.85 |
| San Antonio | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.02 |
| South Arkansas | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| South Carolina | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.67 |
| Southeast Oklahoma | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.33 |
| Southern California | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.09 |
| Southern Florida | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.80 |
| Southwest Indiana | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Southwest Oklahoma | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 98.87 |
| Southwestern Ohio | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Tennessee | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
| Upstate New York | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.23 |
| Virginia | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 91.22 |
| Washington | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 97.01 |
| Washington Pacific | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.69 |
| West Texas | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 95.62 |
| West Virginia | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | Shaded | 90.00 |
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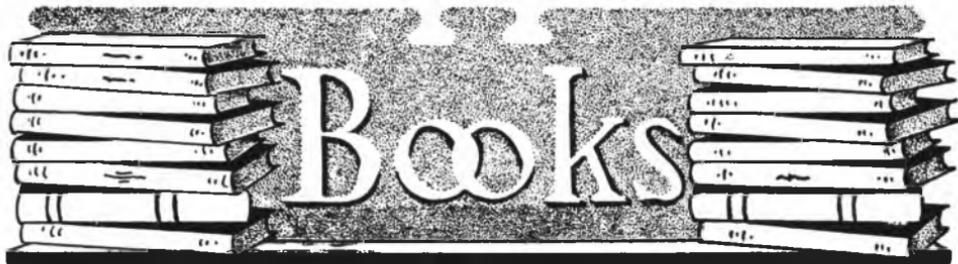
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WHY SHOULD good stewardship practices be evidenced in all our lives? Is it to glorify the church? No. Read what Peter wrote:

*Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us (1 Peter 2:11-12, NIV).**

Christian stewardship is a broad concept. It is a challenge to us in all that we do. Naturally, giving of our monetary resources is part of stewardship. But Christian stewardship is more than money. Much, much more.

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New Text

Unit 221a, Teaching Nursery Children

Text: Living and Learning with Nursery Children



WORLD YOUTH CONFERENCE 1974

3 Things to Tell the Story

1. The Youth Department has put together a 72-page paperback photo book entitled *Nazarene World Youth Conference—Something Special*. It is available through the Nazarene Publishing House for **\$1.95**. The photo book contains over 100 photos that capture the feeling of W.Y.C. 1974.
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Is your world, your home, your church any different because of your faith in Christ?

Different Enough to Make a Difference

WALKING THROUGH the historic marbled halls of Westminster Abbey, past the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, standing for a moment at the grave of David Livingstone, gazing at the burial places of the great and not-so-great of English history, I found myself in an out-of-the-way place in the Abbey. There between two massive statues was an old man—ragged clothing, unkempt appearance, paper in his shoes—seeking refuge from a bitter cold day. He was alone, hungry, needy, yet no one seemed to care. The church was serving a very limited purpose—just a place to get in out of the cold. It didn't really make a significant difference.

My thoughts went back to the Early Church, of which Christ and His influence were so much a part, and to the difference it made whenever and wherever these committed followers labored. Theirs was an effort different enough to make a difference. Things were never the same after being touched by their influence, by the scope of their love.

Broken men made strong, fearful men made bold, burdened men set free, sinful men forgiven!

I must wonder at the difference our church makes. Are we still different enough to cause the unusual to happen wherever our influence is felt?

Disciples make a difference! Is your world, your home, your church any different because of your faith in Jesus Christ? Do things happen when you pray? Are lives changed when you witness? Does the glory of God surround you, the Holy Spirit guide you into the way that seemeth right unto the Lord? If not, it should.

Paul said to the church in Rome, "Don't just pretend that you love others; really love them. Hate what is wrong. Stand on the side of good. Love each other with brotherly affection and take delight in loving each other. Never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord enthusiastically." That was the formula that caused those Early Christians to change their world.

"Bryan," I said to my youngest son, "I told you if you ever did that again you would be punished; now why didn't you do as I said?"

"Because," he answered a bit timidly, "you told me so many times, I didn't really think you meant it."

I sometimes wonder if the world thinks we mean business, if they take us seriously, or if we are just playing let's pretend. I hope not!

One thing for sure, the world did



by
H. B. London, Jr.

Pastor
First Church of
the Nazarene
Salem, Ore.

not take that Early Church for granted. They beat them, hated their values, despised their zeal, and envied their fellowship. You see, they

were different. Those early followers of Christ were so different that their one burning desire was to make Christ known and real to every man.

When the church shows that it cares for the children in the community, people will respond.

Summertime Ministries for Children

By Betty Benson Robertson*

HOW MANY BOYS AND GIRLS are enrolled in the children's division of your Sunday school? Are you looking for effective ways of reaching new children? Many churches spend the summer months reaching as many new children as possible. Here are some ideas which have been used successfully.

Backyard Bible School. This is a ministry of outreach in neighborhoods where church families live. A host family is selected. Individuals are trained to hold Bible-oriented sessions for one hour, using such aids as illustrated songs, visualized stories, puppets, and other meaningful activities. Time is allowed for recreation and refreshments. Fliers are distributed in the neighborhood the Saturday prior to the first session. A large sign on the front lawn marks the house that is being used. A registration card should be made for each

child. Following the week of backyard Bible school, contact all the children from the unchurched homes with a personal visit.

Day Camp. Day camping is a planned program of experiences for children in an out-of-doors setting during the day. It can be conducted at the church, at a local park, at a nearby state park, or anywhere that camplike activities can be conducted. Activities usually include roll call, Bible Adventure Time—at which time the vacation Bible school curriculum materials are studied—worship, singing, games and recreation, crafts, outdoor fun, field trips, special feature time, and lunch.

Vacation Bible School. The traditional VBS is also a strong vehicle in the church's ministry to children. It provides Bible study and a program which appeals to boys and girls. A vacation Bible school usually leads to an increase in Sunday school enrollment. It gives the church an entrance

*Pastor's wife, Church of the Nazarene, Arvada, Colo.

into new homes, and often results in parents finding Christ. When the church shows that it cares for children in the community, people will respond.

Sum-Time Funner for Kids. This is a two-hour program on a selected day of the week—for instance, from 10 to 12 on Friday. It is run throughout the summer as a ministry to your church children. As boys and girls become interested through other programs such as backyard Bible school, they can participate in the Sum-Time Funner, which is usually held at the church. Each week there should be a meaningful Bible story and songs for the children to learn. If your church is not conducting a VBS, material could be used from the curriculum lessons. Special features are appropriate, such as field trips, crafts, films, puppet shows, and things of this nature. There should also be opportunity for well-organized recreational activities.

Park Parties. Children naturally navigate to park areas during the summer months. This provides an opportunity for the church to minister to the children where they are. Take attractive fliers to the park and pass out to the boys and girls, indicating when you'll be back for the party. Also contact homes near the park area. Keep your party to one hour, and have lots of fun, games, and surprises. Also have a Bible story using visuals or puppets. Take along plenty of cups, Kool-Aid, and cookies. Also have cards which the children may fill out as to name, address, phone, and whether they attend Sunday school and church regularly. There should be careful follow-up on all prospects.

Apartment Outreach. A church should relate to families in apart-

ment complexes. One of the easiest ways is to reach their children. A "Kum Ba Yah" Club or afternoon activity can be effectively used. The manager must be contacted first, explaining carefully your church's purpose and aims in wanting to minister to the boys and girls in the apartments. Oftentimes the apartment clubhouse can be used as the meeting place. Depending on circumstances, this could be a one-week concentrated effort, or something that was continued throughout the summer months. The program could be similar to that of a backyard Bible school.

Jug Clubs (Just Us Guys or Just Us Gals). These clubs can serve both as a ministry to your own church children and as a means of reaching new boys and girls. Clubs such as bicycling, cooking, gardening, crafts, auto mechanics are organized. A qualified leader is selected to head up the activities. Time should be allowed at each meeting for Bible study or a devotional.

Resources:

- Games for Children*, Ronald Keeler, \$1.50
- Games for All Occasions*, Anderson and Carlson, \$1.25
- 301 Creative Crafts for All Occasions*, \$3.95
- Help . . . I'm a Camp Counselor*, Wright, 95c
- Puppet Shows That Reach and Teach Children*, Reynolds, \$2.95
- Hand Puppet*, American Girl (VA-7969) or Boy (VA-7974), \$3.75
- Visual Aid Encyclopedia*, \$1.95
- More Adventures of Jack Sack* (VA-5406), 75c
- Illustrated Gospel Story Booklets*: \$1.15
 - Barney's Barrel (VA-71)
 - Wise Little Bird (VA-72)
 - Miss Bump (VA-74)
 - Little Red Hen (VA-75)
 - Crippled Tom (VA-76)
 - Franny's Nest (VA-77)
- Storytelling—It's Easy*, Barrett, \$2.25

The Facts About Pastors' Wives

Section Six: A Summary Statement (Age Differences)

FOR SEVERAL MONTHS we have been reviewing the facts about preachers' wives as reported by themselves in a recent study. Although the study served as a master's degree thesis, the long-range purpose was to help us as preachers' wives understand ourselves better. Though much more study needs to be done at greater depth, there are some summary statements to be made at this time.

1. After considerable time for developing a dependable tool in the form of a questionnaire, the instrument was administered to Nazarene pastors' wives in a succession of pastors' and wives' retreats. Age, educational level, and size of church served were used to test for likenesses and differences among women in parsonages. "Younger women" are under 35 years of age. "Older women" are above 50. "Less educated" is high school or under, and "better educated" is college graduate. "Smaller church" is under 50 members, "medium church" is 51-150 members, and "larger church" is above 150 members. Between these categories there are differences among pastors' wives.

2. More than half of the pastors' wives are under 35 years of age. Only 25 percent of them are over 50.

3. Younger women receive more telephone calls than older women. But both younger and older women receive three out of four calls on church-related business, mostly from other married women.

4. Younger women tend to get more calls from teens and young adults, while older women receive a greater proportion of calls from children, adults, and senior citizens.

5. Older women receive more calls of a "very serious" nature than either the younger ladies or those in the 35-50-year age bracket.

6. The number one problem dealt with on the telephone by the younger and older women are "church-related" messages. The number two problem brought by phone to younger women are "emotional and spiritual," while older women have more calls concerning "physical health." The number three problem brought to younger women concerns "home and family," while older women do not receive as many of these kinds of calls.

7. Younger women do not respond to their telephone obligations with as much positive feeling as older women. A few younger women said it was not part of their obligation. Older women also saw their telephone ministry as "helpful" more than younger ones. Many more older women initiated calls as a ministry than did younger ones.

8. Both younger and older pastors' wives reported an average of four people who came to see them face-to-face with personal problems in a typical week. Most who came were women, and 30 percent were single.

9. Both younger and older women served the same proportion of adults, but younger wives helped more teens while older women helped more senior citizens. In fact, younger women reported almost no senior citizens coming to them.

10. Older women had almost four times as many "very serious" problems brought to them as younger women reported.

11. Age made no difference in the three kinds of problems dealt with face-to-face: emotional-spiritual, church-related, and home and family. The number one technique of each age-group was to be a good listener, and then to try to get the counselee to talk with her husband. They were reluctant to either "straighten them out" or "refer them to a professional counselor."

12. As in the telephone ministry, younger women did not enjoy the face-to-face ministry as much as the older ones. A small number even felt

it was not their obligation. Older women were much quicker to initiate "helpful" discussions than the younger ones.

13. The number one personal problem category for all pastors' wives was "church-related." The number two category for younger women was "interpersonal relationships," while older women were concerned with "physical health."

14. Three out of four of all pastors' wives said they liked their role as pastor's wife "very much." Almost none were negative.

15. Half of all pastors' wives have visited a doctor in the last three months. And 18 percent of the younger wives visited a professional counselor against zero percent among older women. As might be expected, older women had more surgeries.

16. Both younger and older pastors' wives get along equally well with their husbands with a low incidence of misunderstandings. Only a small number of younger women "thought some about divorce," and an even smaller proportion (6 percent) had "given it serious thought."

17. About 70 percent of pastors' wives—young and old—enjoy the parsonage life "very much." Only a small proportion (4 percent) of younger women "do not like it."

Although the age of the pastor's wife does make a difference, there are also variables in education and the size of the churches served. These will be considered next month.

Next month:

Summary statement continued

Prejudice need not be overt to be damaging or vicious. In fact, the more subtle it is, the more it can hurt, because it means that it proceeds from intelligent people—people who should know better.

—Sergio Franco



By Ross W. Hayslip*

LIFE IS FILLED with unexplainable mysteries. There are many events that I have observed that I do not understand. Human beings in their relationships often say and do things that hurt each other, and because of misunderstandings many breaches in lives of individuals are produced.

One of life's greatest conundrums is "Why do people act as they do?" You can spend time and energy in seeking the solution to this puzzle, and end up in frustration.

Long ago God helped me to see the value of taking all of these events and happenings that I cannot understand and placing them in a figurative package. It is a package that has grown larger as the years pass.

Once I put one of these items in the package, God has helped me to dismiss it from my apprehension. I have resolved not to open the package or to reexamine its contents. As

the road of life stretches out, I see many people assume attitudes and indulge in actions that I do not understand. It doesn't make sense to me as I seek to reconcile these things in my mind. I find that the process of rationalization is a dangerous and disappointing activity that can end only in frustration.

How much more satisfying to add it to the package and let God take care of it! You can rest assured that if you place these things that are beyond your comprehension into the hands of God you need not worry about misjudgments on your part. God has a vantage point that is far different from the one that we occupy. While men judge motives from actions, God evaluates actions from motives. Only God can see the motive.

I am limited by my humanity. My knowledge is only that which comes to me through my physical senses and emotional reactions. Knowing this, I must be willing to admit it freely to myself. Then I can realize that it is beyond me.

I have full confidence in the God that I love and serve. My commitment to Him takes in the things that I see and understand and these unexplainable mysteries as well. I'll let Him hold the package. Its contents are no longer my concern. It is all in His hands!



by
Ross W. Hayslip

Pastor
First Church of
the Nazarene
Tucson, Ariz.



By C. NEIL STRAIT

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

When Jesus Passes By

THE STORY OF ZACCHAEUS in Luke 19:1-10 commends itself to us in a number of ways. Consider these:

1. There is the *desperate man*, Zacchaeus. One of the most hated of the region, because he was a tax collector. Hence he was a lonely man. Wealthy maybe, but apparently unhappy. This is a picture of sin and the desperation it breeds.

2. There is the *discerning Master*, Jesus. He knew where Zacchaeus was. Jesus knows where we are in our pilgrimage. He discerned that Zacchaeus was "lost." But William Barclay reminds us that "lost" doesn't mean damned or doomed. Instead, it means "out of place." Jesus knew that Zacchaeus was "out of place" due to sin; he needed the Master's touch to put things right.

3. There is the *divine moment* in the life of Zacchaeus. A moment when darkness turned to life, when futility was replaced with forgiveness, when sin gave way to salvation. One divine moment when life makes up its mind—and is forever changed.

4. A concluding thought—Zacchaeus was *forever changed* because he meant business. He was determined to do more than the law commanded (v. 8), and it brought a new and deeper dimension to his growth.

Joshua: God's Man for God's Plan

Here's some thoughts from Joshua 1:2, NASB.* It begins with (1) a

great predicament: "Moses My servant is dead." (2) *A great plea*: "Now therefore arise . . ." (3) *A great plan*: "Cross this Jordan." And (4) *A great promise*: "Cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them."

Only two comments need to be made. First, the Jordan flows south and means "descending." Could God's advice to Joshua, "Cross this Jordan," represent that moment of yielding in a man's life—when he surrenders, when he dies out to sin, when he descends from the tower of self and crosses over into the Canaan experience of the sanctified life, and leaves the lowlands forever? Not until a man has a "crossing of the Jordan" in his experience does he begin the ascent of spiritual growth.

E. Stanley Jones so aptly titled his autobiography *A Song of Ascents*. Dynamic Christian living is ascending.

A second thought—the promise to Joshua was "Cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them . . ." Land represents stability, wealth, nourishment, strength, health.

The promise of the Holy Spirit is that our lives will be filled with all the fullness of God, where we are obedient to His bidding.

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

Something to Think About

Walter D. Wagoner, in his stimulating book *Say a Good Word for Jesus*, has some good advice for churches seeking a pastor. It was a challenge to me, so I pass it on.

“Seek a person who can carry on an intelligent conversation with the world.

“Being in intelligent conversation with the world works both ways: that we know what is going on in the world around us, and that those around us understand what we are saying and doing.

“Seek a person who has the handsome faculty of being fully human.

“Seek a man who is ‘. . . fresh and alive and in love with life.’”**

An Old Testament Text

There is a delightful verse in 1 Sam. 9:27. From it I pass on this bit of outline:

1. *Preparation*—“. . . stand thou still a while.”
2. *Promise*—“. . . that I may shew thee the word of God.”
3. *Provision*—“. . . the word of God.” Whatever a man has been called to, there is something here he needs to heed.

**Walter D. Wagoner, *Say a Good Word for Jesus*, Pilgrim Press, 1973, pp. 115-16.

IN THE STUDY

Looking at Our Lord in Luke

April 6

TWO KINDS OF JOY (10:17, 21)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 10:17-24

INTRODUCTION: All three Synoptic Gospels describe the mission of the 12 apostles, whom Jesus sent to the towns of Galilee (Matt. 10:1-15; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6). But only Luke records the later sending of the Seventy (or 72, as some of the oldest Greek manuscripts have) into Perea. The story of this is given in Luke 10:1-12.

Our scripture lesson today describes the return of these messengers together with their reactions and *Jesus'* reactions. Both rejoiced. But it was a different kind of joy in each case. That of the disciples was proud joy in a great accomplishment. That of Jesus was a humble joy in the realization of the Father's will

being done. Our greatest joy should come, not from personal accomplishment, but from the progress of the Kingdom.

I. THE JOY OF THE DISCIPLES (v. 17)

Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem for the last time. In Luke 9:51 we read that “when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face



By Ralph Earle

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to go to Jerusalem." He knew that it meant suffering and death at the end of the road, but He marched resolutely toward the goal. His primary purpose in coming to earth was to die on the Cross as an atoning Sacrifice for men's sins. Now that purpose must be carried out, regardless of the personal cost.

The Samaritans were unfriendly to Galilean pilgrims who were headed for Jerusalem to attend the sacred festivals there (vv. 52-53). Because of this, it would appear that Jesus and the disciples crossed over the Jordan River and went down the east side.

As they neared Perea (literally, "across"), on the east of the Jordan opposite Judea, Jesus sent messengers ahead of Him "into every city and place, whither he himself would come" (10:1). He wanted them to prepare the way for His brief ministry in Perea, since His remaining time was very limited.

Now the 70 short-term missionaries were returning. They had had a successful mission, and they were rejoicing over it. Enthusiastically they said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name" (v. 17, NIV).*

To this joyful report Jesus gave first a positive reply: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (v. 18). The kingdom of God was toppling Satan's kingdom. The prince of the power of the air was not only a fallen creature from the past; he was now a doomed enemy of God. Divine power was stronger than demon power.

In these chaotic days of Satan worship and demon possession in the United States and Europe, we need to remind ourselves of this fact. The devil is powerful, far stronger than man. But Christ is all-powerful, and He will sometime destroy Satan (Rev. 20:10). Meanwhile the archenemy of mankind is already a defeated foe, toppled from his throne by the coming of Christ to earth. (The Greek word for *fall* is literally "having fallen." He has already been cast down from heaven.)

Jesus went on to say to His disciples that He had given them "power . . . over

all the power of the enemy" (v. 19). What more can we ask than that?

But then the Master sounded another note, which seems almost like a reproof (v. 20). The greatest cause for rejoicing is not the working of miracles, but the fact that our names are written in heaven. This is the greatest miracle of all.

II. THE JOY OF THE MASTER (v. 21)

At that time Jesus "rejoiced in spirit." But the oldest Greek manuscripts have "rejoiced in the Holy Spirit." Since the Greek verb for "rejoice" is a strong term, *The New International Version* has: "Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit."* Then He expressed His joy to the Father, not because of spectacular miracles, but because His Heavenly Father had revealed these things to "babes"—humble people like His disciples. This is one of the great glories of the gospel. While many intellectuals and politicians spurn the message of salvation, the Good News comes to the poor and the needy. It is for anyone who will accept it.

Instead of proudly rejoicing in our accomplishments, whatever they may be, we should joyously express our thanks for the privilege of being God's redeemed children.

April 13

THREE PHILOSOPHIES OF LIFE

(10:37)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 10:25-37

INTRODUCTION: Bad designs on the part of opponents often bring about real blessings. It was so in this case. A "lawyer"—that is, a man who was expert in interpreting the Mosaic law—stood up to test Jesus. He asked, "Master"—the Greek word means "teacher"—"what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Wisely Jesus answered: "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" (NIV)* The question might well be asked of us, "How do you read the Bible? What does it say to you?"

The teacher of the Law answered by quoting what Jesus elsewhere described as the "first" and "second" commandments of the Law (Mark 12:28-31). We

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

are to love God with all our being and love our neighbor as ourselves. Christ told the questioner that if he did this he would have life.

Unfortunately, this religious leader wanted to justify himself. So he asked, "And who is my neighbour?" We may be thankful for this question, for in answer to it Jesus gave the matchless parable of the Good Samaritan, one of the best-known and most meaningful of all His parables. (Recount the parable.)

This parable reveals three basic philosophies of life:

I. GRABBING (v. 30)

The philosophy of the robber was: "What's yours is mine, and I'll take it."

II. KEEPING (vv. 31-32)

The philosophy of the priest and the Levite was: "What's mine is mine, and I'll keep it."

III. SHARING (vv. 33-35)

The philosophy of the Samaritan was: "What's mine is yours, and I'll share it."

These three philosophies can be summed up even more briefly. That of the robber's was: "Beat him up." That of the priest and the Levite was: "Pass him up." That of the Samaritan was: "Pick him up."

Too many godless people have the first philosophy. Too often, church members have the second. But actually, they sometimes display the first, beating people down with their harsh, critical judgments.

But let's zero in on the second: "Pass him up." When the priest saw the poor victim lying beside the road, he may well have said: "Why, I offered a sacrifice for that man the other day at the Temple. I've done my duty by him." So he went on down to Jericho, where thousands of priests lived in its warm, pleasant climate.

In much the same way, we too often take the attitude that if people will come to our church we will be glad to minister to them. But as long as all the church activity is carried on inside four walls, the masses will be left lying outside, lost in their sins.

The Levite may have glanced at the bleeding body beside the road and said

to himself: Well, he's too far gone for help. And he, too, walked on to his home.

Do we give up too easily on seemingly hopeless cases? Do we say, "It's no use trying to get him saved"? Is this really due to selfish unconcern?

In contrast to these two men, the Samaritan did three things. First, he "went to him." That is what Jesus, the Good Samaritan, did for us. He came to earth, where we were, and actually into our humanity.

If we are going to help people, we must first go where they are—not in church, but at school, at the office or shop, and most importantly, in their homes. There we must minister to them.

Second, the Samaritan poured into the man's wounds the antiseptic wine and the healing olive oil, and then bandaged the wounds. He took care of the victim's immediate needs.

Third, he set the man on his own beast, took him to an inn, and took care of him. Follow-up work is essential for successful evangelism. Too many new converts finally succumb to temptation and are lost simply because no one cares for them after they are saved. The Good Samaritan even made provision for the continued care of the man he had rescued. This is one of the finest improvements that Billy Graham has made to his evangelistic crusades.

The teacher of the Law had asked, "Who is my neighbour?" (v. 29). Now Jesus turned this around and asked him which one of the three—priest, Levite, or Samaritan—was neighbor to the robbed man. The self-righteous Pharisee would not say, "The Samaritan," for the Jews had nothing to do with Samaritans (John 4:9). So he answered, "He that shewed mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go, and do thou likewise." And that is what He is saying to us today: "Be a neighbor to everyone who needs your help."

April 20

PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER (11:9)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 11:1-13

INTRODUCTION: One of the outstanding characteristics of Luke's Gospel is its

emphasis on prayer. This is reflected in the greater attention given to both Jesus' prayer life and His teachings on prayer. Six times Luke mentions His praying, where the other Gospels do not. Luke also gives the only parables on prayer—three of them that are found in the Gospels.

The scripture lesson today illustrates both of these factors. Matthew gives the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples. But Luke prefaces it by giving the occasion for it: Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He finished His disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray." As a result we have the so-called Lord's Prayer, plus one of the three parables on prayer. The other two are in the eighteenth chapter of Luke.

The one found here is called the parable of the importunate friend. It has three main parts.

I. THE REQUEST (vv. 5-6)

Jesus told about a man who found himself in an unexpected predicament. Late one night he was roused from sleep to find a friend from a distance standing at his door. This friend was "in his journey" (KJV). But the Greek suggests "out of his way" (*ex hodou*). Perhaps the reason he appeared so late was that he had lost his way somewhere.

In many homes today the latecomer would have been shown to his room and wished a good night's rest. But the culture of that time and place demanded that anyone who came to the door must be offered something to eat. To neglect this hospitality would be a disgrace.

However, in those days there were no refrigerators in the homes, and so food was not usually kept overnight. The situation was very embarrassing. What could be done? In desperation the homeowner hurried over to rouse his neighbor and get some food. Perhaps the neighbor had a larger family and would be more apt to have something left over.

But why did the man ask for *three* biscuit "loaves"? The answer is simple. To be polite, he must sit down with his friend and eat with him. But courtesy also required that he offer his guest a second biscuit when he finished the first. So three loaves were needed.

II. THE REFUSAL (v. 7)

Unhappy at being wakened at midnight, the neighbor called out, "Stop bothering me!" The door was locked for the night, and his children were in bed with him. This was literally true. In the ordinary Palestinian home, the only "bed" was a blanket or quilt spread out on the floor. All the family would lie down together and pull a big blanket over them. If the man got up, he would disturb the whole group. So he called back to the man outside, "I can't get up and give you anything."

III. THE REWARD (v. 8)

The distracted host was not to be put off. This was a real emergency! So he just kept on calling for help.

Finally the neighbor decided that if he was going to get any more sleep that night he had better get up and grant the man's request. Once he got up, he was ready to give the man whatever he wanted.

Jesus said that the final compliance with the request was not due to friendship between the two neighbors, but rather to the man's "importunity." The Greek word *anaidia* is found only here in the New Testament. It literally means "shamelessness." The host was so desperate that he persevered in asking shamelessly at midnight until he received.

Then Jesus made the application: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (v. 9). The three imperatives—ask, seek, knock—suggested three degrees in intensity of praying. Sometimes we merely "ask," and the answer comes quickly. At other times we have to "seek" in continued, prolonged prayer. This draws us nearer the Lord and so has great spiritual value. But there are also occasions on which we have to "knock" desperately for divine help. This suggests fasting and praying, for instance. It is an interesting coincidence that in English, though not in Greek, the initial letters of these three verbs form an acrostic: A-S-K.

The concluding words in v. 13 are beautiful. If earthly ("evil") parents give good gifts to their children, "how

much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

April 27

THE FOLLY OF REFORMATION

(11:24-26)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 11:14-26

INTRODUCTION: Jesus drove a demon out of a man who could not speak. When the demon left, the man began to talk. This made the people marvel.

But "some of them"—Pharisees, as we learn from Matthew—had an explanation for it: Jesus was driving out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons.

Christ countered their criticism by pointing out the absurdity of their accusation. If Satan was opposing himself, his kingdom would fall. Then He said, "But if I with the finger [power] of God cast out devils [demons], no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you" (v. 20).

Then He went on to show the folly of reformation without regeneration. He did so by painting a picture in homely terms.

I. EXPULSION (v. 24)

Jesus talked about a demon leaving a man, and finally deciding to return. Was this a warning to the one out of whom He had just cast a demon (v. 14)? It was not enough for the man to be delivered from demon possession; he must now fill his life with good conduct.

II. EMPTINESS (v. 25)

When the unclean spirit came back to the man's heart (or life), he found it swept and "garnished." The last word in the Greek means "arranged in orderly fashion." But Matthew adds a very significant note; he says it was "empty." And an empty house is a target for unwanted intruders.

III. EVIL (v. 26)

Finding the spacious house empty, the demon went and gathered seven demons worse than himself. Together they took possession of the premises. The result was that the last state of the man was worse than the first.

The primary application that Jesus probably had in mind was to the Jews of His day. In the Babylonian captivity they had expelled their ancient besetting sin—idolatry. They had gone all out for legal righteousness. But because they did not have their hearts filled with God's presence, they succumbed to the demons of formalism, racial prejudice, greed, hypocrisy, jealousy, pride, and hate. The result was the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and the scattering of the Jews to the ends of the earth.

But what do Jesus' words here say to us? Elsewhere (*Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, IV: 61) we have suggested a relevant application. "The warning for individuals is that reformation is not enough. One must not only cast off bad habits, but allow his heart to be filled with Jesus Christ and his life with worthwhile activity. Otherwise he will find himself a victim of worse habits than before. No heart can long stay empty. One's only safety lies in keeping both heart and life filled with the good, that there may be no room for the bad."



Christian Is the Name!

INTRODUCTION:

1. The followers of Christ were called *disciples*.

Disciples means "learners" or "scholars."

This is still a mark of His true followers. They are the learners; He is the Teacher.

2. They were called *Christians* at Antioch.

This was probably 20 years after the resurrection of Christ.

3. They were called *Brethren*.

While Jesus was with the disciples, the expression "brethren" related to their immediate relation to Him.

When He departed from them, they began to use the name to express their relation one to the other, thus revealing their common tie to the Father as brothers united together in Him.

4. They were called *Believers*.

This is the name the Apostle Paul gave the faithful followers of Christ.

5. They were called *Saints*.

For they sought to be separated, purified, and consecrated—all these elements are united in sainthood. A single saint will fill a whole congregation with belief in Christ, as a single rose will fill a room with its fragrance.

Of all these names which prevailed in the New Testament times, the one that has penetrated the gospel of Christ with force is the name *Christian*. This name has come to be the standing name for a follower of Christ.

I. THE NAME "CHRISTIAN" WAS PROPHETIC.

A. This name was not given by Jews, for they had already named the followers of Christ "Nazarenes," a word derived from *Nazareth*—out of which, according to their proverb, no good thing could come.

B. There was, however, an element of Jewish truth in the name *Christian*, for it was in Israel that the great hope of Christ arose.

C. There was also a Greek element in it, for the Jewish term *Messiah* had to be translated into Greek—the Greek *Christos* being the equivalent of the Hebrew word which we call *Messiah*.

D. There is also a Roman element in the word *Christian*, for the word, having a Greek root, has a Roman ending. It is possible that the word was spoken by a Greek-speaking Roman who characterized the strange new Jewish sect that was making such a stir in the city.

II. THE NAME "CHRISTIAN" EMPHASIZES THE FACT THAT CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF ALL RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

A. Are they *brethren*? Then they are connected with one another by being connected to Him.

B. Are they *believers*? He then must be the prime Object of their faith.

C. Are they *saints*? Then they should obtain likeness to Him as the standard of holiness. This name includes all the others—besides, it contains the name that is above every name.

III. WHO THEN WILL DESERVE THE NAME "CHRISTIAN"?

A. He who is called *disciple* and willingly learns of Him.

B. He who is called *brother*, who loves Christ and his fellowman.

C. He who is called *believer*, who has accepted the testimony told of Christ and receives Him as Lord and Master.

D. He who is called *saint*, who is different from the world, and develops like the Master in holiness of heart and character.

1. As disciples, we thirst for all truth.

2. As brethren, we purge ourselves of selfness (selfishness) and spend our love for God and man.

3. As believers, we make the fullness that is in Christ Jesus our own.

4. As saints, we shed abroad the gentleness and purity of Jesus, that others will take knowledge that we have been with Him.

5. As Christians, we bring the message of reconciliation to all mankind.

RALPH J. FERRIOLI

What Now, Christian?

SCRIPTURE: Col. 3:1-17

INTRODUCTION: Directed to Christians

I. THEY ARE TO SET AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE.

A. We do have control over affections.

B. Jesus warned that where treasure is, there also is the heart.

C. Heavenly treasure and affection assure the heart.

In order for them to set affections above:

II. THEY MUST MORTIFY THE FLESH.

- A. This means to kill or "die out."
1. They must do it *themselves*.
2. Must die out to carnal nature.
- B. Some things done away with:
1. Lust of flesh—preoccupation with sex
2. Love of world (covetousness)—God calls it idolatry.
3. Inordinate passion—hate, malice
- C. These done away with because:
1. God's wrath is upon these things.
2. We want a new walk.
- D. Command directed to Christians—indicates second work.
1. God could do it all at once, if we sought.
2. Limitation seems to be on man; Paul writes frequently to carnal Christians. We accept salvation as free gift, unaware of cost of discipleship. Suicide to self is painful.
3. Examples seem to bear out second experience:
Bible: Jacob, Paul, Corinthians
History: Moody, Graham

This is one side of the same experience, and then by faith:

III. THEY ARE TO PUT ON THE NEW MAN.

- A. This new man in the image of God; therefore it is holy (pure) vs. mature.
- B. It is characterized by love (vv. 12-13).
- C. It is common ground for all Christians (v. 11). Both a duty (commanded) and a privilege (provided by fullness of Holy Spirit).

CONCLUSION:

1. Three types illustrated here: unsaved (implied); saved and carnal (following self); saved and sanctified (controlled by Holy Spirit).

2. God desires all to be in the last category.

3. Only you and God know.

4. Would you like to move up?

PAUL N. VAIL

BULLETIN



BARREL

GOD IS THERE

*In the happiness of living,
When the moments seem so fair,
And the heart sings out in rapture,
GOD IS THERE!*

*In the troubles that confound us,
In our worry and despair,
When we long for help and comfort,
GOD IS THERE!*

*So whatever lot befalls us,
We can trust His loving care;
And be sure in joys and trials,
GOD IS THERE!*

Selected

* * *

**I still just cannot understand
Why some—so easily—
Can stay at home on Sunday nights
To watch that old TV.**

**We need not love the preacher;
He's human—that's okay.
But LOVERS OF THE GOSPEL
Just could not stay away.**

**We hope all careless members
Will take a prayerful look
At that ATTENDANCE RECORD
They're writing in God's book.**

**It will be so embarrassing,
If they should make it through,
To have the angel have to ask:
"Hey, stranger, who are you?"**

J. E. Ferguson

* * *

Make no mistake about it—the Christian life is a warfare. Either we're in it to conquer for Christ or we're yielding ground to the enemy. To win this ideological battle we need Christians who spe-

cialize in obedience, live by faith, and take their Bible seriously. They must be like the first-century Christians who knew

the Spirit of God personally, followed His leading, and obeyed instantly.

—ROBERT A. COOK



Conducted by the Editor

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your Publishing House

**Behold the Man
(People, Politics, and Events
Surrounding the Life of Jesus)**

By George Cornell (Word Books, Waco, Tex., 1974. 206 pp., cloth, \$5.95.)

George Cornell is an Associated Press religion writer and an Episcopalian layman. His book reflects research in Jewish and Roman culture, and together with biblical scholarship, helps him to weave a tapestry of reality around the life of Jesus and the time in which He lived. The book is written in journalistic style, and is easy to read. The interesting feature is the unique manner of combining the scriptural record with the extrabiblical material to provide realistic insights into the life of Jesus and those whose lives touched His. Seldom heard facts, for example, about Joseph are drawn from the research into Jewish customs as well as the biblical account. The author believes the story of Jesus—the greatest ever told—has sometimes suffered through its isolation from its historical context. This is worth reading.

J. M.

**The Englishman's Hebrew-English
Old Testament, Genesis—2 Samuel**

By Joseph Magil (Zondervan Publishing House, 1974. 912 pp., cloth, \$19.95.)

This text is not an interlinear; rather it is a two-column arrangement, the Hebrew on the right and the English translation on the same line on the left. It is recommended for the individual who has had the basic grammar of biblical Hebrew, who has not been able to take additional courses in the language, and who wishes to continue using the original text for study and sermon preparation purposes. It is also recommended to the student who is in the beginning stage of his study and use of the Hebrew Bible; it can serve as a valuable aid in getting "over the hump" and in developing one's facility with biblical Hebrew, if one does not permit it to become a crutch. This text should also serve well in enabling those who have laid their Hebrew aside to pick it up again rather easily. The translation in one column and the Hebrew in another is a better tool for the individual with a limited working knowledge of Hebrew than an interlinear.

HARVEY E. FINLEY

**The New International Dictionary
of the Christian Church**

J. D. Douglas, gen. editor (Zondervan Publishing House, 1974. 1,074 pp., cloth, \$24.95.)

A one-volume reference work which

sets out to give information not easily available elsewhere in such convenient form. There are 4,800 articles by 180 scholars from the U.S.A., Canada, and the United Kingdom. As might be expected in such a vast undertaking, the book lacks detail in some instances where one might wish to find it. For example, there is nothing about the merger of the Wesleyan Methodist church with the Pilgrim Holiness church, and only a line or two about the Wesleyan church. The Free Methodists are not mentioned. The Brethren in Christ get a paragraph, and the Church of the Nazarene is given a fair description based on Timothy Smith's history. The Holy Spirit is treated in a section under that heading, but nothing much is included of the events described in Acts 2. Glasgow University's Dr. William Barclay gives the book a nod of approval, suggesting that it should be "very useful indeed. . . . To turn over the pages is to discover the enormous number of things about which one knows nothing. . . . It is clear, concise, comprehensive."

J. M.

Preachers' Exchange



WANTED—Copy of the book, *Happy Day*, by C. A. McConnell.—Rev. W. E. Rothman, 2821 Sunnydale Dr., St. Joseph, Mich. 49085.

WANTED—*Biblical Illustrator*, Hebrews, Vol. 2; and Romans, Vol. 2.—Rev. Iræ L. True, Jr., 411 E. Acacia Ave., Glendale, Calif. 91205.

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Hiding the preacher behind the Cross will allow hungry souls to see Jesus more clearly.

● **God's Pattern for Church Board Members**

An installation sermon which should challenge church officials to give themselves unselfishly to the Lord's work

● **Starting Point**

Seed thoughts on the basic aspects of the Pentecostal experience

AMONG OURSELVES

Last month a new series of articles was introduced without fanfare, but it is already attracting attention and making its impact on our readers. Dr. C. S. Cowles presents this month his second in a series on the "Call to Servanthood," declaring that the only way to true happiness is through genuine servanthood. Some of our brothers have missed this point. Their focus of attention has been upon the excitement of being "at the top," and they have found emptiness and disillusionment because something precious is missing. They have sacrificed servanthood on the altars of "success" (p. 8). The more of these articles on servanthood we read, the more impressed we are with their importance to us. We hope you feel the same way. Even the planning of our sanctuary can be done with this approach in our minds. Why bring people into a place of worship where they cannot see or hear very well, and expect God to bless them? Hire an architect who is familiar with our evangelistic methods—not one who thinks we want a church that resembles a poor man's Basilica of St. Peter's! Thanks for reminding us, Professor Guess (p. 13). A blending of the very practical with the instructional and the inspirational. It all comes your way with a prayer that it may be of help right there in your part of His vineyard.

Yours for souls,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be the initials "J.M." with a flourish at the end.

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