

NAZARENE PREACHER

DECEMBER 1971

STEADY IN THE STORM

General Superintendent Lewis

THE PASTOR'S CHRISTMAS GIFT

The Editor

AN M.D. EVALUATES THE VIRGIN BIRTH

A. D. Dennison, Jr.

HINTS AND HELPS

FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

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RETURN TO BETHLEHEM

Mrs. B. Edgar Johnson

Sermon of the Month—

LIFE'S MOST SIGNIFICANT ESTIMATE

George W. Privett, Jr.

-proclaiming Christian Holiness



NAZARENE PREACHER

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Steady in the Storm

By General Superintendent Lewis

THINGS DO NOT ALWAYS GO SMOOTHLY IN THE MINISTRY. Every preacher should be realist enough to accept this. Human relations and people being what and who they are means that sometime over some circumstance things will get rough.

No one ever enjoys such a situation. But it is no time to panic. Sometimes during periods of greater stress a pastor can win his greatest victories. Certainly in such hours he gains strength and confidence.

There are some reference points or anchoring places that every minister can and must have. Let me suggest two.

1. The Bible is always correct. No one ever strays from its precepts with impunity. This applies to the pastor as well as to the individual whose problem or decision may be the cause of the stress.

When or if someone in your church is requesting by action or statement a change in standards, polity, or procedure, this always applies. If the minister holds to this, he is safe.

Christ believed and gave as a basic principle the priority of the soul and spiritual values. He said it is better to enter into life maimed than the alternate consequence. He was saying, Never sacrifice the spiritual to the material.

For example, in the matter of marriage, He gave only one basis for the dissolution of that union; namely, adultery. The Bible speaks further to the matter of an unhappy union of man and wife. It does not deviate from the Christ-given principle but urges the Christian spouse to pray and continue to strive for the redemption of the unsaved and unsympathetic member of the union. Not only does this work for the salvation of a soul but it brings refinement to the soul and character of the patient Christian.

2. Another basic anchoring place: The Bible properly considers life as the pursuit of spiritual achievements. All other things are secondary. Redemption, serving God, and loving our fellowman are all essentials to this great purpose.

The pastor who guides his people toward these noble goals does them a service. Christian ethics are in conflict with a disintegrating society and as such there will be issues to face. Face them with strength he must if he is to be true to his calling. Preaching such truth clearly and scripturally will be to his advantage in dealing with specific issues and reluctance upon the part of the people.

Keeping these basic truths articulated and demonstrative in the lives of his church will favor him when some individual seeks to modify them for base desire.

(Continued on page 3)

The Pastor's Christmas Gift

SOME CHRISTMAS GIFTS a pastor might like to give his church, such as paying off the mortgage, are pathetically out of his range. But the most priceless gift, infinitely greater than lifting any debt, is within the capacity of all. It is the gift of a good man.

A good man is inwardly what he seems to be outwardly. A good man is just as trustworthy at midnight as at midday. He is just as clean where he is a stranger as where he is well-known. The man he appears to be in the pulpit is the man he really is in solitude. Such a man does not have to be policed. He is not a puppet of his own scheming, whose outward gyrations are controlled by the hidden strings of ulterior motives.

In the church we don't need men who are good ministers half so much as ministers who are good men. This means earnest men, who are good workers even when praise and promotion are slim. It means humble men, who are willing to serve anywhere God puts them. It means safe men—good risks in any home. It means prayerful men, who are in touch with God at all times. It means courageous men, who refuse to sell out, or whine in self-pity, or run away when the going gets rough.

This highest possible tribute was awarded Barnabas: "He was a good man . . ." Yet Barnabas was not among the apostles. Ecclesiastically he was second-rate, but spiritually he was first-rate. Too many suppose that ecclesiastical eminence is both conducive to and proof of spiritual eminence. It is neither. History points the finger of shame at men who scrambled to the top ecclesiastically but were sorry stuff spiritually. In contrast, many of God's noblemen, eminent in spiritual depth and power, have never come within hailing distance of the ecclesiastical pinnacles.

Let us never allow worry about ecclesiastical status to be the telltale proof of our smallness.

It would be a gross error to suppose that the good man, whose goodness is linked with fullness of the Holy Spirit and faith (as with Barnabas), could ever be an uninteresting dullard. Rather, he will be dynamic. Not that he will set out to be dynamic because

he likes the sound of the word and itches to hear himself called such. He marches to different drums. Being full of the Holy Spirit, he will be irrepressible; and being full of faith, he will be undiscourageable. He will be unable to sit still, for he will be impelled by the love of Christ. Such a man breathes a holy optimism, and radiates a contagious influence for God and goodness.

Happy is the church, this Christmas season, whose pastor is a good man.

Steady in the Storm *(Continued from page 1)*

So the minister who builds his ministry around such reference points and anchors it to the Bible truths will have strength to hold steady in the storm. He will also be able to guide others through the hard places.

The ministry of a man is not alone in the preaching. It consists of his ability to apply the truth to people's lives. The minister then becomes the shepherd. The church becomes a fortress and a shelter, and life the response to the strength herein obtained.

Storms there will be. But hold steady. With Christ on board, the boat will make a success of its journey. He is the storm Master. Push Him out of the boat and tragedy will result.

This is a stormy time in the world, also a tempest-tossed society. Such reflects itself in the lives of many people. The minister who flees the storm or seeks the illusive quick haven will miss some of life's greatest experiences. It is good to apply "old-time religion," Bible truths to people and their living and see them through.

God's laws are still in force.

God's commandments are still true.

God's ways are still best.

The good life is still available—but only on His terms.

The Christian life can be lived only in the structure of the Christian ethics.

The storm yields to the strength of the righteous soul and the pure heart.

The minister who masters the tempest does so through God's way and in God's strength.

This is the minister we need today . . .

Steady in the storm.

An M.D. Evaluates the Virgin Birth*

By A. D. Dennison, Jr., M.D.

AS A PHYSICIAN observing the human scene from the consultation room, the operating suite, the intensive-care unit, the hospital wards, I live with the marvelous. With each beat of my heart, with each breath of my lungs I ponder the profundity, the mystery, the wonder of life. Even in the macabre and somewhat ghoulish atmosphere of the morgue, as the pathologist carefully performs an autopsy, I am struck with the divine complexity of the human body. No computer can match it. No non-god could have created it.

Therefore, when I am confronted with the miracle of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, as recorded in God's Word, I am not nonplussed.

"If you believe what you like in the Gospel," said Augustine, "and reject what you like, it is not the Gospel you believe, but yourselves."

In a magnificent passage—Matt. 1: 18-20—we find unalterable evidence of

the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Those who reject the New Testament canonical and historical evidence of His unique birth have a Lilliputian God.

The Virgin Birth was a special miracle whereby the eternal Son of God took to himself a genuine and complete human nature, and was born of a woman, without surrendering in any way His regal divine nature. The Virgin Birth finds its rationale in the Incarnation, and the Incarnation finds its rationale in the drama of covenant love and personal redemption. To negate the Virgin Birth is to wipe out the Incarnation—God's sublimely conceived way by which the Christ (the Greek form of the Hebrew title "Messiah"), the Anointed One, stepped into history, as part of humanity, to unshackle man from sin.

The biblical doctrine of the Virgin Birth is unique in human culture. It is a biological miracle. Attempts have been made to argue that the Virgin Birth is just another mythological legend, like the pagan stories of heroes who were half god and half man. Without exception the pagan stories, with which com-

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parison has been attempted, involve cohabitation of a god with a human being. But to us He is supremely enthralling; He is Emmanuel—God with us (Matt. 1:23). In the Greek, the phrase “God with us” is taken from the Septuagint version of Isa. 8:8, where it is a translation of the Hebrew “Emmanuel.”

Those who wrestle with the supernatural mention various analogies in the biological world as possible naturalistic explanations of this supreme event. Parthenogenesis has been cited—reproduction in lower animals without fertilization by the male. It is unisexual reproduction. Artificial insemination has been proposed—hardly a technique of that era. It has been further pointed out that mechanical or chemical stimulation of an ovum can result in reproduction. The eggs of sea urchins can be chemically activated to produce. But such an observation bears no relationship to any human experience. Granted an omnipotent God, original Creator of the human body and the massive cosmos, the problems of miracles and the supernatural fade away. God could do it. God did do it. The Christian’s doctrine of God hardly permits a concept of a bound, limited, restricted, semi-potent demi-god.

The Virgin Birth is explicitly proclaimed in the first two chapters of Matthew and the first three chapters of Luke—a physician. Matthew’s account of divine ancestry is presented entirely from the viewpoint of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Luke’s account is given from Mary’s perspective. The genealogy in Matt. 1:1-16 may well be that of Joseph, for Jesus, born and reared in his household, was legally his son. When Josephus, the great Jewish historian, wrote his own autobiography, he began it with his personal pedigree, which, he informs us, he found in public records. The Jews placed great emphasis on purity of lineage. “Jesus Christ” (*Jesus*, the Greek form of the Hebrew *Joshua*—Jehovah is Saviour), “the son of David, the son of Abraham,”

is shown to possess an illustrious ancestry. Is there any cogent reason to be devious about this historical data? It is kingly, priestly, and prophetic. We worship Him as “King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

Twice in Matthew (1:18, 20), as well as Luke 1:35, the miracle of the unprecedented conception of our Lord is ascribed to the “Holy Ghost.” Dare we question the divine imprimatur of the Holy Spirit in attesting to the record that Jesus was conceived sinless and in the most sacred manner imaginable? The expression “Holy Ghost” is uniquely characteristic of the New Testament, where it occurs more than 80 times. Our minds flash back to when words came to us from far out in space: “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). We perceive that the Spirit is the Creator of the world and the Giver of Life. We note that both in the Hebrew, *ruach*, and in the Greek, *pneuma*, the word for *breath* and *spirit* is the same word. No wonder Job cried out, “The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job 33:4).

Let us move to the grandeur of this pivotal doctrine. Matthew begins and ends his glorious first chapter with the name that is above every name—Jesus. Twice the name is linked with another appellation; twice it stands alone in all its redemptive power. “And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21, NASB). This title, Jesus, is used mostly in the narratives of the Gospels, and only rarely does it appear in direct address. For the most part, the name Jesus is joined with other terms when used in the Epistles, but occasionally it stands alone. The various designations for our Lord, supernaturally conceived, are supported by both internal and external evidence. We find him as Jesus—the One who saves us. We note Him as the Christ—the Messiah

or the Anointed One. We are enjoined to call Him Emmanuel—God with us. What monumental, momentous, and moving eponyms! Our hearts are kindled at the very poignant concept of each majestic title. Our minds and our faith reject any naturalistic, biologic, or illegitimate origin of this great Saviour.

Matt. 1:18-25 drives us to heights of gratitude. The gospel message, the kerygma, the Good News begins in the heart of God and the womb of a virgin. We are stunned at our good fortune to have found this Jesus, born of a virgin, who came to save His people. We ponder the gospel in all its magnitude, its loveliness and majesty, its sublime compassion, its redemptive power, its life-changing ability. It is wrapped up in a Person—the incarnate, virgin-born Jesus, who is God with us—Emmanuel.

Bernard Ramm tersely, succinctly, and logically sums up the evidence for this core doctrine, this mighty miracle of the Virgin Birth: “The evidence is theistic: we believe in an omnipotent God who could do it; and theological: we see its place in the incarnation and we see the place of the incarnation in redemption; and historical: we have the records of trustworthy men before us in the writings of the Gospels and in the earliest documents of Church History. Let no man feel that he is compromising intelligence or critical spirit if he believes in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.”

Miracles generate no doubts in my heart. I have viewed too many as a physician. I, too, am a miracle, for this virgin-born Redeemer took the cantankerous sin of my life and nailed it to a tree, high on a hill, located in a suburban Middle East city.

“... and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save”—physicians, dentists, lawyers, businessmen, laborers, wives, mothers, the “now generation,” drug addicts, murderers, all sorts of people—“from their sins.”

Practical Points

*that make
a difference*

“I Think”—but Who Cares?

Dear Son:

Our pastor always has something good to say on Sunday. His messages are logical and relevant. He tells a good story and illustrates his sermons with classic simplicity. He usually preaches topically, but I do not object, because he is a sincere man who is interested in people.

But you know, he always starts each point with “I think.” Now I respect his judgment, but I weary of a personal observation which has become habitual.

Really, I do not care too much what he “thinks.” I want to hear what God thinks, and the wonder of it is that most of what he says can be found in God’s Word.

Granted, it takes some “digging,” but I expect that of my pastor. He is an artist in interpreting the Word—or should be!

Son, tell Mary to watch those personal rhetorical habits that will take the people away from the Word and center their attention on the preacher. When the authority is placed where it should be placed, then the preacher stands as God’s oracle; when it is all what “I think,” he stands alone.

Love,
Dad

Hints and Helps for the Christmas Season

By Ross R. Cribbis*

Music—new or old?

Many choirs prepare an entirely new cantata for the Christmas season each year. While the rehearsals give the choir members opportunity to become acquainted with the new music, the congregation generally hears the cantata only once.

In my experience, individuals in the choir often express distaste for the new music, only to develop a real appreciation for it after repeated practices. This seems to indicate that members of my congregation may also not like the new music the first, and only, time they hear it.

If such concern on the part of the choir director and pastor is reasonable, then at least three alternatives present themselves.

First, use the same cantata more than once during a season. We all know how people anticipate their favorite numbers when they know what is coming because they have heard the production before.

Second, as an alternative use portions of the new cantata throughout the Advent season. Let the choir sing some of the numbers, and let the instrumentalists use some for the offertory numbers and for the preludes and postludes.

Third, this could be the year to repeat one of those favorite cantatas used in previous years. You will be delighted at the response of the choir when you suggest it.

Or the choir might present a “home-made” cantata using familiar music which has already found a place in the hearts of the people. One of our denominational music leaders, while confessing that his department is helped financially by the use of a new cantata each year, expressed his feeling that familiar Christmas music, tastefully arranged and presented in a cantata, can often have more meaning for the worshipping congregation.

Perhaps, then, this could be a good year to use the old and tested Christmas numbers. Here is an arrangement used effectively by a mixed choir of 25 members.

“His Beautiful Name”

A Song in the Silent Night

By the Junior Choir

That Beautiful Name

Perry—Camp

Narrator—Matt. 1:18-21

Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus

Pritchard—Whitman

Narrator—Luke 2:4-7

No Room

Peterson

Narrator—John 1:24

*Pastor, Peabody, Mass.

Down from His Glory

Booth-Clibborn—di Capua

Narrator—Phil. 2:5-7

Ring the Bells

Bollback

Narrator—Luke 2:8-14

Gloria in Excelsis Deo

French Carol Melody

Narrator—Luke 2:15-18

Joy to the World

Handel—Whitman

Narrator—Luke 2:20

No Name Has Meant So Much to Me

Smith—Carmichael

Benediction

Real life crèche

One pastor prepared a “living” Christmas scene on the front lawn of his church. Each evening for 10 days preceding Christmas, a nearby farmer-member transported sheep, cattle, and goats by truck onto the churchyard at dusk. A stable setting had been prepared. In would come volunteers from the congregation to play the roles of Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. (To be biblical, we had best leave the wise men out of the stable scene.)

From dusk until late evening, the participants would portray the manger story. Only the baby was unauthentic. A doll was used. The human players were different each night. The pastor warns: “Be certain to have adequate personnel for the number of nights you want the scene to be presented.” The church received considerable local publicity from this unique effort—and doubtless the drama was to many a silent but eloquent reminder of Christ.

Darkness and the star

On Christmas Eve, or at another appropriate time, have all sanctuary lights turned off. Leave the congregation in darkness until the density of the blackness has made its impression. Then, suddenly, let a large, bright star flash on in the darkness as the organ-

ist plays “There’s a Star in the Sky” or other fitting carol.

Christmas family service

Have you planned a Christmas morning “Come as you are” service this year? Hold it about 10:30 a.m. and hold it to about 30 minutes. Stress that it is a family service. It could include:

Quiet organ music

Prayer of thanksgiving for Christ

Congregational song: “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

Lukan birth account, read by a young mother

“Gloria in Excelsis Deo”

(Or “Gloria Patri,” No. 49 in *Praise and Worship* hymnal)

Brief meditation

Congregation: “Joy to the World”

Benediction

Organ postlude

Light and “added light”

Some pastors are using the Advent wreath idea each Christmas. A wreath with four candles is laid on the Communion table. Four Sundays before Christmas Sunday, someone comes forward during the service to light the first of the candles. When the people arrive for worship the next Sunday, the one candle is burning and someone, during the service, lights the second candle. The next Sunday the third candle is lit, and finally on Christmas Sunday the fourth candle is lit and the four burn through the service.

(In some parts of the world evangelicals object to the use of candles in the sanctuary.—*Editor*.)

The symbolism of light and added light is there in the burning candles. The congregation’s attention to the approaching celebration of the birth of Christ is highlighted. The fact that a neighboring pastor has used this year after year suggests the meaningfulness of this simple practice.

"They are not looking
for easy solutions"

Reaching Teens for Christ

By William Varian*

THIS IS A DAY for sheer, clear honesty at all levels. The trick or device used to gain acceptance will not be successful. An honest appraisal of the youth of our day is that they don't want false concepts and are not looking for easy solutions. They daily must face facts that we were unaware of even 20 years ago. The local pusher in high school, the sex advertising and looseness in behavior, the movie and pornography industries with their cheap obscene filth, and the depravity of many teachers and leaders in the community, are facts they see and know about.

The Church is responsible to "tell it like it is." The youth of our church on all levels are not asking us to bring the gospel down to them, but to show them the way up to the gospel. Their needs are identical to our needs at their age. They need Christ presented as: (1) conscious of them as individuals; (2) adequate for their every need; (3) having a plan for their personal lives—"just for them," including marriage, college, vocation, etc.; (4) demanding of their all, and (5) accepting nothing less than their *best*.

My challenge is and always will be to "tell it like it is."

Communicate through sincerity

Communication is both the great opportunity and the great problem of our day. The method of the soul winner must be personal sincerity. The marvelous ability of men like Dr. Billy Graham is not found in homiletical perfection or superior sermon preparation, but personal radiance, an open Bible, and empathy with the listener.

Much has been said about communicating through sideburns, moustaches, cute words, and popular slang. The clear-cut concept of "being yourself" and communicating through your personality and not another's is vital.

I still envision men of God, Spirit-filled, pouring out their hearts as though it really mattered to them. Something false shines through when we are dressing, speaking, or communicating for ourselves rather than for Christ. Youth will respect us if we are sincerely seeking to communicate our message from a full heart. They know the difference!

Talk God's language

Teens are interested in what God has to say. The Word of God is still powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword, and our most effective instrument. Books, articles, and comments are

*Pastor, First Church, Kankakee, Ill.

great and necessary but the teens need to hear "Thus saith the Lord."

I was interviewed by 60 members of a Catholic high school the other day. One boy said, "Your church sets the standards—doesn't that make it difficult for each one to do what he wants?" My answer to him was, "The church has a responsibility not to follow the standards of men, but set the standards of the Word." If we are to reach teens today, we must be Bible men. We must also not be ashamed of our standards as Nazarenes. I agree with our church in this area and think we are responsible to explain those standards without embarrassment. "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" are both part of God's language.

Be positive—be positively *against* sin and positively *for* Christ. The fear in some teen-winners seems to arise from a concern that teens want it soft. We are "tiptoeing through the tulips" when we ought to be prophets of God again! Prophets have never been popular, but have always been *necessary*. Prophets will win more than pleasant, sweet poets.

Value supremely thorough decision

The man who does not prepare a message for the sole purpose of getting a decision is wasting the time of both God and the people. Reaching teens for Christ means getting them to "choose Christ above all." The thousands of teens with whom I have dealt have the same needs teens have always had: devotion—lacking; friendships—wrong; practices—sinful; association—unfriendly; minds—confused; future—unclear; objectives—hazy; ambition—lacking; vocation—undecided.

I believe the Holy Spirit can, in a matter of seconds, change all the vital desires and purposes of a teen-ager's life. This change can be so dramatic that the teen falls in love with Christ and decides to serve Him and thoroughly accepts Him as his Saviour. This is

why we cannot be frivolous or too soft in our approach. The maze of problems which life brings to all is still there, but now Christ is the Friend of the teen; and not only Friend, but Saviour.

We must make our teens aware of the cost if we are to make the sale! *Thorough* decision can stop the erratic behavior in their lives. I mean simply that teens can pay the price of full redemption and keep an experience in spite of the problems of life. "Tell it like it is"—with personal sincerity—through the Word of God—and preach for *decision*. We can reach teens if it is important to us! We will never be soul winners until to be such is primary in all our planning.



CHRISTMAS

By J. Christy

Christmas is a gentle time

When all the world's aglow
With lights and stars and candles
And faces of those we know.

Why all this brightness on a
Little spot called earth?

Jesus, God's own Son, is here
And saying we have worth.

What could be better

In a weary, crowded land
Than to know that I am worth more
Than a tiny grain of sand,

... or a hunk of ugly junk,
A priceless pearl, a bar of gold,
A world, a galaxy, a universe,
The wisdom of all mankind retold?

Worth more than all these things?

Worth more! I know! I know!
Christmas celebrates that moment
When God declared it so.



Are we a credit
to our calling?

Preacher Owes Preacher

By Harold E. Platter*

PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT wrote the following words, which hold special significance for Nazarene ministers: "Every man owes some of his time to the upbuilding of the profession to which he belongs." And a preacher must do this, along with seeking to fulfill his call to the ministry.

The preacher is more than just the man in the pulpit or the man in the study. He is more than the many duties he is called on to perform. He is a holy representative, and in his own given area of responsibility, he is God's man. A "man of the cloth" has become a trite expression in our time, but even so the expression still carries the connotation of a man of God. It is the devious and thoughtless acts of a few ministers that have made the expression trite.

The uncertainties of our present time press the need for preachers who are giving of themselves to the "upbuilding" of the ministry to which they belong. It is still true that deeds outweigh words. Hence our actions need to add dignity and standing to the ministry. This is no invitation to become the solemn, super-pious personage so often depicted as a minister. Instead it is an invitation to concern for the correct ministerial image. This means that on purpose we endeavor to raise the public impression of the ministry, as a whole. Not by crying, "Foul," when the ridiculous or the false is presented to the public, but by the honest involvement of our own energy and time, within our own home, church, and community.

A preacher's time is one of his most valuable possessions. He must use it wisely. Time for prayer is a must. Time for sermon preparation occupies much of his working week. Time for calling and counselling. Time for church business and related activities. Time for family and friends. Time—time—time! And now I dare suggest he occupy some more of his time shoring up the image of the ministerial profession. I think I hear someone say: "Let the ones who are tearing down the image of the ministry exercise that time for rebuilding."

But we can't wait for these careless brethren to see the error of their ways. Too much is at stake. All of us are involved. Every preacher casts a shadow toward every other preacher. The carelessness of one preacher can make every one of us suspect. In this holy fellowship "no man is an island." We so closely touch one another!

I would plead for concern about our public image. The success of the gospel may go with this. Respect for the preacher helps to enlarge or diminish his congregation, and in effect this enlarges or diminishes the outreach of the gospel. So, brother preacher, help build your profession—your ministerial standing—by giving some time and thought to actions that will strengthen your position as a preacher. Caring about the ministry, as a whole, will be of benefit to all. Caring about yourself and how you appear to the public is also of benefit to all. I dare not forget that I owe that much to you, preacher friend! And *you* owe it to me too!

* Pastor, Indianapolis, Ind.



There is more than
one kind of leadership

The Role of Unnoticed Leadership

By Richard K. Morton*

LEADERSHIP—is that one of those ships with big sails?” inquires a small boy.

I think that he has something there, but there is a sense in which the most valuable and powerful leadership is not so identified while being exercised and may long remain unnoticed in the day-by-day flow of a group’s program.

The ordinary stereotype of a leader is of one who stands boldly and strongly and purposefully out in front of a group, pulls them forward, and guides them. In actual experience, however, leadership of that sort is relatively ineffective, for many in the group disperse in various directions, do not know where the leader is going, or why, and do not need a rallying cry or booster so much as one who is right with them and giving them a hand with each step of the process they are in.

There is the type of leader who, having previously held office and power, now wants simply to work within the ranks, urging and training others for leadership or in skills required by the group. These are especially valuable, for they are less likely to be contending for power and office, and others are rather likely to accept advice from them.

Then there is the type of younger leadership who does not want to take

the prime responsibility, especially where big decisions are to be made or where much contention is likely to be met. Once an overseer has taken charge and the main objective has been set, he will be a kind of executive officer and work out the necessary details. This inner leadership is often absolutely necessary.

Another type of unnoticed leader is the one who is utterly committed to an organization or its cause. He or she does not especially want position or office, but enjoys giving encouragement and practical suggestions to officers and members alike. Such persons, working all through the group, give it life and dynamic and help to get things done. We make a great mistake in thinking we must always have some imposing figure standing way out in front of the group and acting something like a military commander at the head of his troops. The unelected leaders, with timely and practical aids, may be as needed as the overall head of a project. All the push and pull should not come from one prominent spot.

Still another type of leadership found *within* a dynamic group is the type which may or may not hold a subordinate office, but efficiently performs an inconspicuous task which makes it possible for others to perform

*Faculty, Jacksonville University, Jacksonville, Fla.

greater ones, and aids in coordinating the work of all. It is this kind of leadership which makes the other and more prominent kinds effective.

It is clear therefore that leadership often comes from various places within the membership rather than being exercised out in front of it. If some

members can exercise qualities of leadership by strengthening structures and functions somewhere within and even at the bottom of an organization, they can greatly help its top leadership. If they also can help unify and stimulate members who are hard to challenge or

(Continued on page 45)

Will H. Huff—as I Knew Him

By C. T. Corbett*

BACK IN THE 1890's there was a long labor strike in the pottery industries of East Liverpool, Ohio. For weeks men walked the streets with no work. A live-wire holiness preacher saw the situation and opened the doors of his church for revival campaigns both night and day. Hundreds of these men were called into this Methodist church, and through the noble efforts of this wide-awake pastor many of the strike-idle men were converted. Among them was a very fine lad by the name of Will Huff. (Years later our Nazarene pastor, Rev. O. L. Benedum, secured the old altar of the church where Huff was converted and installed it in his NYPS room. I saw it some years later when I had an evangelistic meeting there.)

Someone opened Huff's eyes to the need of good schooling in preparation for life's labors, the calling to the ministry. Accordingly he went to A—— College, and for a while he was happy there. But when he failed in Greek, he transferred to Peniel College. There in that Texas town he studied for several years under A. M. Hills. But something else happened to Huff in Peniel. He met Bud Robinson, then a resident of Peniel and a fledgling evangelist. Together they formed an evangelistic team and soon were making their rounds across the nation in soul-winning campaigns. Always their theme was "Holiness unto the Lord." They were so different in their presentation of the gospel that they complemented each other, and God used them in churches, tents, and camp

meetings. They preached to the multitudes and their seekers ran into the thousands.

Thus these men came to the fore as messengers of the Cross. People of all walks of life heard of this team and the calls came from everywhere. In March, 1903, they conducted an unusual campaign for P. F. Breesee, First Church of the Nazarene in Los Angeles. Later they amicably separated and each worked out his own slate, which was always full. They remained very good friends throughout their lives.

In the mid 1920's I heard Will Huff at the old Red Rock campgrounds, a famous camp seven miles south of St. Paul, Minn., my childhood home. Huff would stand very close to the pulpit, speaking so low that one had to lean forward to hear every word—and they were well-chosen words, indeed. Then he would "rise higher, wax warm, strike fire, and end in a storm." I inquired of the old-timers and they told me this was the method he used for years. It was a thrill both to watch and to hear him. He held his audiences spellbound with his unique type of oratory. In it he so drilled the holy truth home that he usually had remarkable results with many seekers at the altar. His method seemed to be his very own. God blessed him as he used every ounce of his talents for the Lord and the souls of men.

Thus the labor-striking "dish-maker" learned to bring the "Bread of Life" to the endless thousands that came to hear him preach. And the man that could not master Greek learned to master the Scriptures and the English language. For some 30 years he

*Nazarene Evangelist, Kankakee, Ill.

was a leading camp meeting holiness preacher. He died at the age of 55 in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1928.

In his earlier days he met and married a lovely young lady from Morningside College, Sioux City, Ia., and for years Sioux City was their home. In fact you will find his gravestone in a cemetery near the college

campus with the simple markings: "Will H. Huff—1873-1928." As I stood there I recalled seeing that unusual, short, stocky man with a good shock of wavy hair as he began to speak very low, then "rise higher, wax warm, strike fire, and end in a storm" with an altar full of seekers weeping their way to Calvary.

Earning a welcome in
the sick room

Ten Commandments of Hospital Visitation

By Earle L. Harvey*

TO VISIT THE SICK AND SUFFERING of this world is a high calling. To minister to and provide strength for the sick is even more noble. This is true whether such visiting is done on a regular basis by the pastor or on a sporadic basis by the layman, who generally visits only when he has a personal friend or relative in the hospital. Effective hospital visitation is a skill well worth polishing. As in the polishing of any skill, there are rules which provide a framework. It has been found by experience that if those engaged in hospital visitation will attempt to familiarize themselves with the following rules, and use them, their visits will be a greater blessing to everyone concerned.

1. *Check with a ward nurse* before visiting a patient. (If the patient is in a room with a closed door, knock, but do not enter immediately! Identify yourself and the nature of your call.)

2. *Observe carefully the setting* and the situation with regard to the patient, noting whether there are indications (e.g., cards or flowers) that others are aware of his hospitalization.

*Chaplain administrator of United States Army Support Command, Thailand; home membership, First Church, St. Bernice, Ind.

3. *Speak in a normal tone of voice*, neither too softly nor too loudly. Be sure that the patient can hear without strain. Say *only* what you want the patient to hear. Often the patient is sensitive to even a faintly whispered word about his condition. Don't take that chance.

4. *Don't touch, lean against, or sit upon* the patient's bed.

5. *Be brief*. Unless a counseling situation has developed, five minutes is sufficient time. When you are ready to leave, *leave*. Leave door open or closed, as it was when you entered. Do not tell the patient that you will see him later unless you plan to do so.

6. *Call often*. A continuing contact is often more helpful than one or two prolonged calls.

7. *Don't play doctor*. Visit patients regularly, know the meaning of as much medical terminology as possible, but do not use it to talk to the patient or doctor. Do not pass on to the patient any information you may have received from the doctor or nurse regarding his condition. In addition do not discuss the patient's problems with any other patient.

8. *Concentrate on the patient's feelings*, not his physical condition. Accept the patient's feelings as he states them. Remember that he is almost always able to sense your rejection or acceptance of his feelings. Do not be too cheerful. Try to convey a spirit of calm. Either levity or morbidity should be avoided.

9. *Pray only if it is indicated*. There are certain signs to look for: (a) Has the patient been using the language of religion? (b) Has he accepted you as a clergyman? (c) Is the patient facing surgery or some other traumatic event?

10. The only constant rule is: *Always do that which is in the best interest and welfare of the patient*.

SERMON OF THE MONTH—

Life's Most Significant Estimate

By George W. Privett, Jr. *

Luke 9:20—"... whom say ye that I am?"

What do you think of Jesus Christ? That is life's most significant estimate. As you describe Him, you reveal yourself. Your judgment of Him will determine where you will spend eternity. You will form a lot of opinions in your lifetime. But this is your most important. It is an estimate of far-reaching consequence.

Unlike many religions, Christianity calls for a verdict. It is not merely a creed for memory and recitation. It is dynamic truth centered in a Person, who calls for our response of faith and obedience.

The Circumstance

The scene of this dialogue between Christ and His disciples was one which was steeped in religious history. At Caesarea Philippi, (1) there were temples of the ancient Syrian Baal worship; (2) nearby was a cavern reputed to be the birthplace of the great god Pan, god of nature; (3) that cave was said to be the place where the sources of the Jordan River sprang to life; and (4) there was a great temple of white marble built to the godhead of Caesar. The area was calculated to impress the onlooker with the might and divinity of Rome. Against this backdrop, Jesus' divinity shines

forth with a more brilliant light.

The question also stems from a devotional atmosphere. Luke indicates that Jesus had been alone praying before He made inquiry of His disciples. The Master and His disciples were in fellowship. You don't probe this way unless you know whom you are talking for and to.

The question was born of urgency. Time was short. Were there any who understood Him accurately enough to carry on His work after He was gone? The question involved the very survival of the Christian faith. Our Lord decided to put them to the test. Exactly whom did they believe Him to be?

The Confusion

You might say Jesus took a poll to find out the popular feeling. His disciples mingled freely with the people. Whom did they take Him to be?

Some said He was John the Baptist. Certainly Herod Antipas considered John so great a man that, when Jesus appeared, he feared it was the Baptist come back to life.

Others said He was Elijah. The people regarded Elijah a prince among the prophets. Malachi assigned him the role of forerunner: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal. 4:5).

* Pastor, First Church, Concord, N.C.

Orthodox Jews still expect him before the Messiah and leave a chair vacant for Elijah while they celebrate the Passover.

Another opinion was that Jesus was Jeremiah, "the weeping prophet." A curious legend persisted that, before the Exile, Jeremiah had taken the ark and the altar of incense out of the Temple and hidden them. It was believed that he would produce these before the Messiah came.

Here we see the inadequacy of human categories. Although their estimates are complimentary, they have an uncertain ring. The people had their problems in believing. After all, the leaders had rejected Jesus and the crowds had deserted Him (John 6:66). Of course, the god of this world had blinded the minds of many. Also, living prophets, who still hurl thunderbolts, are not as popular as dead ones.

The Confession

The crowning, momentous question came when Jesus looked with steadfast gaze into the eyes of His disciples and asked: "Whom say ye that I am?" After a period of silence, there is the great discovery of Peter, who confesses: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." *Messiah* (Hebrew) and *Christ* (Greek) are the same word meaning "Anointed One." The highest category the people could find was inadequate to describe Christ. Napoleon stated: "I know men, and Jesus Christ is more than a man."

"Peter," we may hear Jesus saying, "even with your experience of My character and works, it is apparent that you have been illumined by a light that flashes from the very face of God. Upon this truth I will build My Church, and all after you who confess My deity will be added to it. I am the only true Foundation (1 Cor. 3:11) and the Church's chief Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20), and upon this spiritual conviction I will build My kingdom."

The confession we make must be a personal discovery. Jesus asks: "You—what do you think of Me?" Of Pilate, He asked, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?" (John 18:34) No true knowledge of Him can ever be secondhand. We must know Christ, not simply know about Him.

The Challenge

What do you think of Christ? The world says He is a myth, a great teacher, or the

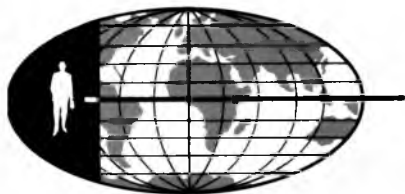
highest prophet. Some even go so far as to say that Christ doesn't matter. There is a mystery about Him. He stirs our reverence. He stands ready to forgive sins by virtue of His cross, which still looms on the horizons of time. I must decide one way or the other about Him.

D. L. Moody contends that the evidence speaks unmistakably of His divinity. Among His enemies, we find the Pharisees saying, "This man receiveth sinners," and, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Pilate said, "I . . . have found no fault in this man"; and Judas cried, "I have betrayed the innocent blood." "This man hath done nothing amiss," confesses the thief on the cross; and the devils, according to one of Mark's accounts, address Him as "Jesus, thou Son of the most high God."

Adding generously to this is the testimony of Christ's friends. The Baptist said, "I bare record that he is the Son of God." Peter preached, saying, "God hath made that same Jesus . . . both Lord and Christ." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," writes John the Beloved. "My Lord and my God," was the utterance of a convinced Thomas. Paul counted all things loss compared with "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. 3:8). Other translations amplify this truth and speak of the "exceeding value," the "priceless privilege," the "surpassing worth" and the "overwhelming gain" of knowing Christ.

The redeemed saints of all ages join in this tribute, exclaiming: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12). The Father's estimate is, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17).

What do you think of Christ? "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Confess your sins to Him and commit your life to Him. The Bible plainly says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). By the Holy Spirit, Jesus is on our hands and the challenge is flung out, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" (Matt. 27:22)



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True or False

- _____ I Timothy and Titus were probably written by Paul.
- _____ By “canon” we mean a generally accepted list of books.
- _____ The Bible was written over a period of some 1,500 years.
- _____ We have the original copy of at least two single books of the Bible.
- _____ Most of the papyrus manuscripts of the Greek New Testament have come to light since 1940.
- _____ Joshua wrote the book of Joshua.
- _____ Version means a translation.
- _____ The King James Version of the complete Bible was first published in the United States in 1875.
- _____ The Bible is now translated into over 1,000 tongues.
- _____ It took 80 years for the King James Version to win complete acceptance in the English-speaking world.

(See below for answers)

If you missed more than two, better plan to offer this interesting denomination-wide study in your church next spring.

February and March are the months.

The Unit is 120a, Introduction to the Bible

The text is NEW: **How We Got Our Bible**, by Ralph Earle

Answers: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-F, 5-F, 6-F, 7-T, 8-F, 9-T, 10-T.

Bible Society Offering—

DECEMBER 12

"The United Bible Societies report that along with continuing massive needs for Scripture in all world areas, there is for the first time in recent history, unprecedented opportunity for Bible work in Eastern Europe . . .

"I'm concerned that even though the needs are mounting, our denomination's annual offering has leveled off . . .

"There is no better means of saying, 'Jesus is the Way,' than by putting God's Book into men's hands. That's what the Bible societies of the world are trying to do. They must have our help, and we, theirs."

—PAUL SKILES, report to the General NYPs Council, January, 1971

U.S.A. pastors, mail your church's offering to Dr. Norman Miller, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131. In other countries, mail directly to the headquarters of your national Bible society.

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Thanks . . .

"WORDS are inadequate to express my thanks to the church for providing me with expert medical care during my recent illness. While I was in the hospital the fact that the bills were paid gave me a tremendous sense of peace and security. My wonderful church has provided very adequately for my needs during these FOUR hospital experiences during the past year, and I feel a deep sense of gratitude . . ."

*FRANCES LIVELY
Manzini, Swaziland*

Just one of the many notes of thanks for medical aid . . . thank you, pastors, for making these "notes" possible, for without your cooperation, participation, encouragement, and direction, Memorial Roll giving would not be what it is today. I feel sure you, too, are proud to have a part in giving our missionaries

"expert medical care"

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Keep up the good work. . .

Thankfully yours,
Mrs. Reeford L. Chaney
General Council Member

THANK YOU, PASTOR

for paying your NMBF Budget, which has made possible NMBF assistance and "Basic" Pension benefits for over 1,000 ministers and widows of ministers in 1971.

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

In behalf of my wife, my family, and myself, I want to say, "Thank you," and praise God for the friendship and fellowship in the Church of the Nazarene. The assistance was unmerited on our part but nonetheless appreciated. Again we say, "Thank you, thank you."

*An active pastor and family,
Indiana*

FOR "BASIC" PENSION

I received my first pension check this morning. I can not only join one minister that wrote saying he was so grateful. I can still say, the church, the people, and the Lord have been and are so good to me.

I'm so thankful for the check, as I told our district superintendent, it will be the means of helping us to enjoy a few little things that we would not have been able to do otherwise.

*Thanks so much,
A retired elder,
New Mexico*

FOR NMBF MONTHLY ASSISTANCE

We are praising God for his goodness to the children of men and are feeling much better and much more secure with this extra help which has come to us because of the faithfulness of God's people and our church.

We used our first check to clear a hospital debt and help on our medical bills. We are slowly getting on our feet and God is helping us wonderfully so to renew our strength in Him. May the Lord richly bless you.

*A retired minister and wife,
Oregon*

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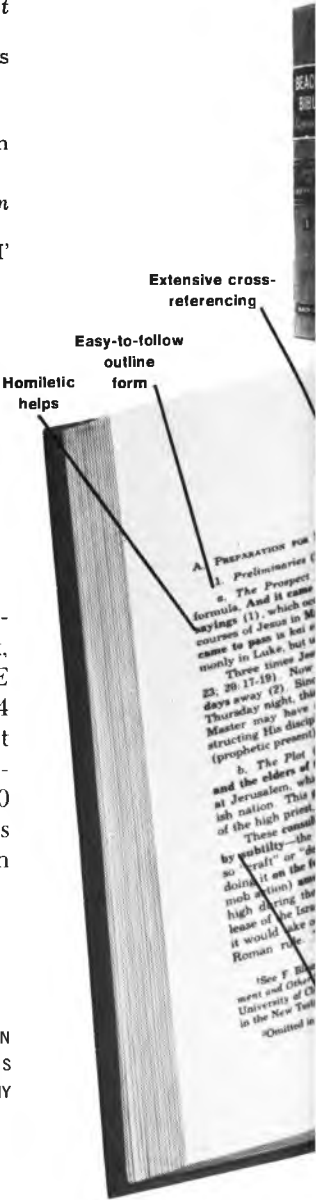
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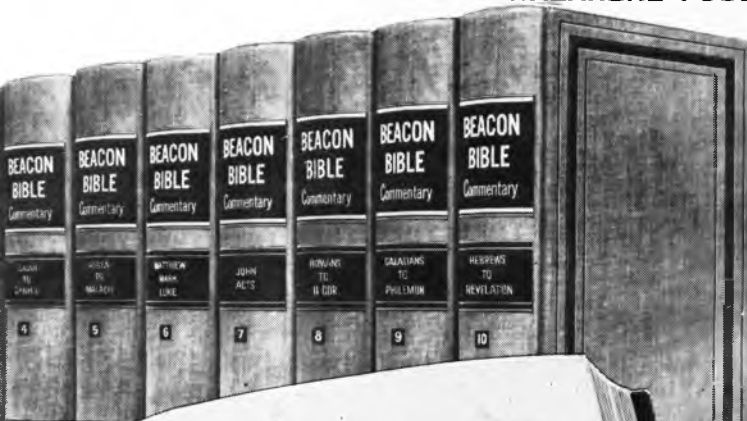
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Dear Brother Mitchell:

I received your letter concerning Miss _____, who had requested material from "Showers of Blessing." I have made contact with her. She is now in the hospital after having tried to take her own life. She is deeply disturbed and very much in need of spiritual help. PLEASE join me in prayer that I might be used to win her to Christ before it is too late.

Thank you so very much for contacting me. There are thousands of others out there in this troubled world who are just as much in need as this lady.

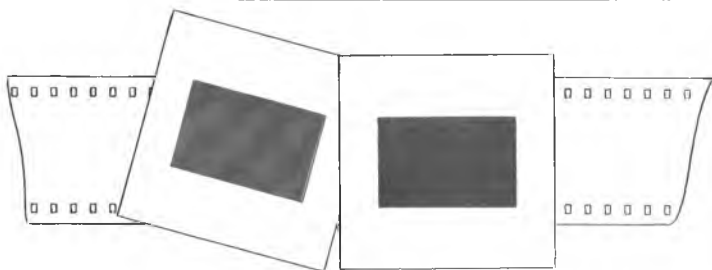
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We would like to recommend another source where you can get slides on the Bible and filmstrips on many religious subjects including religious holidays. Write to the Nazarene Audiovisual Committee, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131, for a full SVE Catalog. All the materials listed in this catalog can be purchased through your Nazarene Publishing House.

NAZARENE INFORMATION SERVICE

One-Half Million Strong

NAZARENE pastors may send at once for copies of the 1971 denominational year-end review story which summarizes gains during the calendar year including passing of the one-half million mark in world membership.

A separate story will cover highlights of Nazarene world missions in 1971.

Pastors may have as many copies as necessary for distribution to their local newspapers and broadcasters.

Mail requests to: NIS, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo. 64131.

No automatic mailing of these stories will be made to pastors. Those who can use them may have them by return mail, but write at once.

These releases are for use during the last week in December or during the first 10 days of January, 1972.

Copies will be mailed directly to all news editors in cities where the Church of the Nazarene is known, including cities where Nazarene colleges are located.

Nazarene pastors may make certain that their local newspapers get copies by sending a card or note to NIS, with the name of their newspaper(s) and the name of the church editor or individual who should receive the articles.

This will be the fourteenth annual Nazarene year-end review for newspapers and broadcasting.

Pastors are reminded to mail tear-sheets containing Nazarene stories from their local newspapers to NIS.

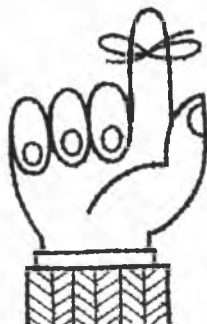
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Wills Emphasis Guide For Pastors

The office of Wills, Annuities, and Special Gifts exists to serve each pastor and his congregation in the matter of stewardship of accumulated possessions. These suggestions are offered to help each pastor to have a more effective bequest program in the local church.

1. *Have your own will made.* Give evidence of your concern for your loved ones and of your example of stewardship over your possessions in relation to God's work.

2. *Inform yourself about the work of wills.* There is much misinformation about wills. Consider: Who needs a will? When should a will be drawn? What happens if there is no will?

3. *Adopt a proper philosophy and attitude about wills.* Consider its relevance to *every* family, young or old, rich or poor.

4. *Discuss the wills emphasis with your church board.*

A. A "Wills Emphasis Committee" of three or more could be named to plan and promote the whole wills effort in the local church.

B. A "Wills advisory group" consisting of some persons with special knowledge could be named to make available the technical and religious counsel necessary for the proper making of wills in which the church is remembered.

5. *Present the wills emphasis publicly.* Through sermon, pulpit announcement, bulletin items, or newsletters.

6. *Distribute printed matter about wills.* Secure free literature and distribute to your congregation.

7. *Show films about making a will.* Available on a reservation basis through NAVCO.

8. *Slate a service with wills representative.* As schedule permits, the Consultant or Associate Consultant is available for services in local churches.

9. *Submit names of interested persons.* Our office is available to counsel or correspond with those needing or seeking guidance in these matters.

Office of Wills, Annuities, and Special Gifts

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THE PREACHER'S WIFE

Mrs. B. Edgar Johnson

Return to Bethlehem

LAST CHRISTMAS SEASON I read an article that greatly impressed me. It was written by Leonard Spigelgass, a Jew, and bore the heading, "Christmas was never my holiday, and it isn't now. But I believe in what it means, and I don't like what you've done to it."

The author's point was that Christmas is for Christians—a blessed time, a holy time—but they had forced it on him, for whom it was neither blessed nor holy. Yet he felt he had more respect for it than most Christians seem to, as he observed how they celebrated it. In short, he said Christians had polluted their sacred day—the birth-day of Christianity.

As he told of his childhood frustrations during the Christmas season, when he wished that Christmas were at the bottom of the sea, I remembered Bessie, the little Jewish girl who lived across the street from us in my early grade school years. She must have experienced these same frustrations and feelings of being "left out." At school we cut out stars and poinsettias, and made wreaths to decorate our classroom. We sang carols. We talked about our anticipated gifts. Our city of Denver had extraordinarily beautiful lighting during the season. To this day, I've never seen such animated

window displays as the large stores had—to delight young and old alike. One year a portion of the sixth floor of the largest department store corralled Santa's *live* reindeer from the "North Pole." The mail was loaded with greeting cards. Christmas was in every window, every magazine, every newspaper, and on the radio.

Bessie was allowed to come over and see our Christmas tree, but her visits were restrained during this time. The Nativity figures were always prominent in our home, for Christmas had real spiritual meaning and definitely centered around the birth of our Saviour. Little Bessie was rather silent on these Christmas visits—a combination of wonder with a touch of sadness in her childish eyes, and undoubtedly a question in her heart as to why her home had no wreath in the window, no tree in the corner, no gifts in her stocking.

Mr. Spigelgass contended that *today* no one is left out. Everyone celebrates! Why not? What's religious about it? It's become a national holiday. It has no meaning, really, no significance, except those nice words about peace and goodwill. And who's against that! Even Jews need not be "left out" today, since they can celebrate Hanukkah, Feast of Lights, "as a fine way around Christmas for the kids."

Missionaries will tell you that Tokyo almost outdoes our large cities in decorations and commercialism at Christmas. For what? The Christmas season has become "The Holidays" (a euphemism coined by non-Christians to disguise the theological aspects). "Season's greetings" and "Merry X-mas" can be pretty untheological too. The original term and celebration have become polluted.

Since "ecology" became a household word two years ago, we have heard much about the pollution of earth, our waters, our air. The emphasis for saving our world is on personal responsibility. Each individual is urged to help preserve what is left of our environment. We are admonished to discontinue using certain types of detergents and sprays that contribute to pollution, to buy returnable bottles rather than the no-deposit type; we are not allowed to burn trash in the cities; we should subdue noise. One suggestion list included even the ban of colored facial and bathroom tissues to prevent dye from entering our water.

But what about the pollution of Christmas? Shall we accept our personal responsibility to curb the degradation of this holy season? It isn't holly or candles or lights or Christmas trees or candy canes that have polluted it. These symbols can even enhance it when we keep the spiritual meaning of the day primary. But we might do well to take a second look at the Christmas cards we send. Does the message have any relation to the birth of Christ or the meaning of Christmas?

When our children were young, a benevolent neighbor who was very fond of them put up a six-foot Santa in our yard. I felt a tinge of embarrassment and always tried to explain why he dominated the scene that year. I'm not against Santa—in his place. My sister and I used to visit him (even though we didn't "believe") in order to get the free coloring book or trinket he always gave. Our primary emphasis,

our attitudes, our priorities *will* "come through" and be sensed by our children, our friends, our congregations.

Let me quote these significant words from the article to which I referred at the beginning:

"To those to whom he is deity, his birthday is a very special time . . . I wish he had prevailed, for what he said and what he believed and what he taught in no way do I find offensive . . . Nothing I can say or do can stop the degradation of Christmas; but something you do can . . . It's up to you. Turn it back into a searching of your soul and your purpose. Keep it as precious as it is. Throw us out.

"In his name, if you believe, you can stop wars, and race hatred and pollution . . . You have a remarkable instrument—and you use it for martinis and to increase the gross national product. The power of the church is waning—your church, mine—but the power of Christ is still viable. I can say it because I'm objective. You act like Christians; you prove it to me . . ."

Shall we be extra careful this year to be personally responsible to "keep Christ in Christmas"? Certainly we will not degrade it with martinis, but we can abuse it with too frenzied shopping, too much social pressure. We must give Christ a place in our Christmas parties and banquets—and in our homes.

We can see the star and hear the angels sing only if we return to Bethlehem.

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What to Do with Your Bible

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- Stow it in the heart.
- Show it in the life.
- Sow it in the world.

—Selected

IN THE STUDY

The Greatest Grace of All

(Meditations on I Corinthians 13)

By H. K. Bedwell*

No. 7 Love—The Hardy Grace

"Love suffereth long, and is kind." Under prolonged test love does not crack or crumble. It is a durable grace. This is the opening statement about love in action. How does Christian love perform in the cruel arena of a hostile world? It emerges covered in glory—"suffereth long, and is kind." To "suffer long" arouses sympathy for the sufferer, but to be kind through it and at the end of it must stir our admiration, for this is love triumphant. In the music of life's experience, love strikes three ascending notes: first, Sensitivity—"love *suffereth*"; second, Durability—"love *suffereth long*"; third, Resiliency—"and is *kind*."

1. THE SENSITIVITY OF LOVE—"Love *suffereth* . . ."

Love lies wide-open to suffering. Because it is the very highest grace, it can suffer the very deepest pain. In an evil world this is inevitable. Because love is outgoing, concerned not with its own welfare but the well-being of others, in a selfish society it will meet with basest ingratitude. In its jealousy for the honor and glory of God it will arouse the diabolical venom of the enemy of God—Satan. In its concern for the salvation of men it will meet with indifference, rejection, and even open hostility. Love will collide head on with hate. Because love is what it is, it is bound to bleed. But though it will be bruised and battered and even broken, it will still remain what it is—love.

There is a vital distinction between being sensitive and being touchy. A person who

is touchy is concerned about himself. In any situation he asks himself, How does this affect me? He resents just criticism. He takes offense at the smallest injustice. He complains when people talk about him and grumbles when they do not. I once heard an African preacher describe the touchy person as one who walks through life with a thorn growing out of each shoulder. Touchiness is the blood poisoning of sensitivity. It is sensitivity gone bad.

In the human body the sense of touch is a safeguard and a means of communication, but if any part of the body becomes infected and swollen, it becomes "touchy" instead of being sensitive. It is the poison of self-love that makes a person touchy. True love feels but it does not resent. Since sensitivity varies with the personality and often with the state of health, it is sometimes hard to know where the line lies between true sensitivity and carnal touchiness. Safety lies in insuring the present sanctifying power of the Spirit by walking in the light, and thus keeping self in its proper place.

When Paul preached in Athens he encountered the derision of the Stoics (Acts 17:18). They called him a "babbler." The teaching of Christ runs contrary to that of the Stoics. Their philosophy was, "Grin and bear it." Pain and suffering were to be met by suppressing any sign of it, with a show of indifference. The word "stoical" has thus entered the English language and found a place in our dictionaries and is defined as "showing great power in resisting pain and hardship." It is an early form of

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Christian Science, an effort to avoid the reality of pain and suffering. Love recognizes the reality of suffering of both body and mind, but supplies an inward grace to suffer long and be kind. It uses suffering rather than ignoring it. Between the extremes of indifference and touchiness there lies the normal experience of sensitivity. Entire sanctification will not rid you of this, for it is an essential part of our human nature.

II. THE DURABILITY OF LOVE—"Love suffereth long."

Love is not only sensitive; it is enduring. It is hardy. It outlasts the storms. The two words "suffereth long" are only one word in the Greek NT. In modern translations it is often written as "patience." Really it is the verbal form of the noun used in Galatians 5 where the fruits of the Spirit are listed; the one called "longsuffering" is called "patience" in the RSV. William Barclay describes long-suffering as "the steadfast spirit that will not give in." Chrysostom says, "Longsuffering is the spirit which could take revenge if it liked but utterly refuses to do so." Lightfoot says long-suffering is the spirit that will not retaliate. The basic thought is that love under prolonged pressure and adverse circumstances will not break down. It will endure. In one of the Bantu languages I discovered *patience* is translated by a word picture which means "having a long heart." This is very expressive, for we speak of the impatient as being "short-tempered." A long-suffering person is one who is "long-tempered." One early English Bible tried to introduce a literal rendering of long-suffering from Latin and used the word "longanimity." Unfortunately it did not catch on. But that is what it is.

Long-suffering is the power to see things through. When this grace is lost in our work for God, irritability, resentment, and pessimism will destroy our best efforts. These things are bound to creep in when long-suffering goes out.

III. THE RESILIENCY OF LOVE—"Love suffereth long, and is kind."

It is sadly possible to suffer long and be bitter and resentful. Love can emerge from a long siege of adversity and opposition and still be kind. On a main highway in America was a sign: "Danger, drive

carefully for the next 40 miles, road under construction." Forty exhausting miles later there was another sign: "Construction ended; thanks for your patience." It seems we are all still "under construction" and require daily the grace of patience mixed with kindness.

The difference between ordinary steel and spring steel is that ordinary steel when bent under pressure retains its bent shape, but spring steel jumps back when released to its original shape. Love is the spring and shock absorber of life. It smooths out the ruts, the potholes, the corrugations, and the bumps. The ruts are still there, the rough places are still there, but the joint action of the springs and shock absorbers takes out the jolts. I shudder to think what the ride would have been like on some of the roads in Africa on which I have driven if the car had been without springs or shock absorber! Love is resilient; it has spring in it; it will be beaten, but not bent.

Kindness is listed in the nine fruits of the Spirit, but in the Authorized Version it is translated as "gentleness." Elsewhere it is always "kindness" and is so translated in the RSV. Moffatt uses the word "kindliness." Notice how closely it follows "long-suffering" or "patience." These two graces are twins and cannot be separated. It is interesting that Jesus used the same word when He spoke about "old wine" in Luke 5:37. The thought is that of being "mellow." New wine is harsh; old wine is mellow. Kindness is mellowness.

Again kindness makes a person easy to work with. The same Greek word is used in the promise of Jesus to those who come to Him. "My yoke is *easy*." That is, "My yoke is kind." It is well-adapted and comfortable to wear. We all know the "porcupine" type of person who is difficult to approach and to team up with, whereas the person who is long-suffering and kind is a pleasure to meet, and easy to work with.

Many years ago I read the biography of a young missionary to South America named Fenton Hall. He tragically lost his life after only a short time on the field. He was, when in the army, champion heavyweight boxer. He stood well over six feet tall and correspondingly broad. He helped in a city mission hall in the east end of London, one of the toughest quarters of the city. One night some young hooligans were upsetting the service. Fenton Hall picked

two of them up and carried them out.

Unwisely someone closed and bolted the door after him. Immediately the gang outside set upon him, kicking and punching him from every angle. Fenton Hall, who could have knocked those puny, underfed youth out one by one, simply folded his arms and stood against the door and took it all in silence. Afterwards someone said, "With your boxing experience didn't you feel tempted to lay about them?" Without hesitation Hall replied, "It never even entered my head to hit back." Is it any wonder that some of these very youths were soon won to Christ?

GLEANINGS

from the Greek



By Ralph Earle*

I Cor. 1:14-21

"Sanctified . . . Saints"

In the light of 3:1, where Paul says the Corinthian "brethren" are not spiritual but carnal, it is obvious that "sanctified" here (v. 2) is used in a restricted sense. It expresses a relationship of having been set apart to God. Findlay (EGT, II, 758) puts it well: "This initial sanctification is synchronous with justification."

These born-again believers were "called to be saints" (cf. Rom. 1:7). The term "saints" is the plural of *hagios*, "holy," which is the root of the verb "sanctified" (*hagiazō*). So saints are literally "holy ones." Again, the term is used in its limited, sacramental sense of "belonging to God." This is the main meaning of "holy" in the Old Testament, though the personal and ethical meaning comes to the front in Isaiah and some other prophets and becomes dominant in the New Testament. However, it is clear that Paul uses the term "saints" for all Christians, as those who are called to belong to God.

"Coming" or "Revelation"?

The Greek word is *apocalypsis* (v. 7), which literally means an "uncovering," and so "revelation." That is the way it is usually translated in the King James Version (12 out of 18 times). Only in this

passage is it rendered "coming."

The Second Coming will be a revealing of Christ, who for over 1,900 years has been veiled from sight. We are told that, when He comes again, "every eye shall see him," even "they also which pierced him" (Rev. 1:7; cf. John 19:37).

"Divisions"

This is a strong word in the Greek, *schisma* (v. 10), from which we get our word "schism." The noun comes from the verb *schizo*, which means "split, divide, separate, tear apart, tear off" (Arndt and Gingrich). It is used literally for a "rent" in a garment (Matt. 9:16; Mark 2:21). Elsewhere in the New Testament it is used figuratively and is translated "division" five times and "schism" once (I Cor. 12:25).

This was the main problem in the church at Corinth. There were four parties or cliques in the congregation (v. 12), and Paul devotes the first four chapters of this Epistle to dealing with this crucial situation.

"Perfectly Joined Together"

Instead of being divided into quarreling cliques, Christians should be "perfectly joined together"—all one word in the Greek, *katertismenoi*, the perfect passive participle of *katartizo*. This verb literally means "put in order, restore . . . restore to its former condition" (A. & G.). It is used of fishermen "mending" their nets (Matt. 4:21; Mark 1:19). Here in Corinthians it means "make one what he ought to be" (Thayer). Lias (CGT) says that the idea is that of being "*fitted together*, as the fragments in a piece of mosaic, in which each minute portion exactly fills its proper place."

Perhaps Alford is a little closer to the true picture when he comments: "*Katartizo* is the exact word for the healing or repairing of the breaches made by the *schismata*" (*Greek Testament*, II, 476).

In the ICC volume on I Corinthians, Robertson and Plummer write: "The word is suggestive of fitting together what is broken or rent (Matt. iv.21). It is used in surgery for setting a joint (Galen), and in Greek politics for *composing factions* (Hdt. v. 28)." All three of these uses apply well to this passage.

"Judgment" or "Purpose"?

Of the Greek word used here, Lias says: "*gnome* is usually employed in the sense of *opinion*. But it has also the sense or *purpose* or *consent*." After citing a passage in Polybius, he affirms: "There, as here, the decision of the mind is meant, rather than the

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opinion on which it was formed." For this passage Arndt and Gingrich suggest "purpose" or "intention."

"Contentions" or "Quarrels"?

The word *eris* (v. 11) means "strife, wrangling, contention" (Abbott-Smith). Arndt and Gingrich suggest that in the plural, as here, it means "quarrels." As Robertson and Plummer say, "The divisions became noisy." Findlay writes: "*Erides* signifies the personal *contentions*, due to whatever cause, which lead to *schismata*." And so it is today that church quarrels lead to church splits.

"Preach the Gospel"

This is one word in the Greek, *euangelizo* (v. 17). Paul declares: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to evangelize." That is the main mission of the Church.

"Preaching" or "Word"?

Paul says that "the preaching of the cross" is foolishness to those that perish. But the Greek word for "preaching" (v. 18) is simply *logos*, which is translated "word" 218 out of the 330 times it occurs in the New Testament. It is "the word of the Cross" (that is the word about the Cross) that perishing sinners despise. What the world still ridicules is the message of the Cross, the good news of salvation through Christ's death for us at Calvary. Too many people would rather try to save themselves than let Christ save them.

"Preaching" or "What Is Preached"?

This word in verse 21 is still another one that is translated "preaching" in the King James Version. It is *kerygma*, which has become established in theological circles as an English term in good standing.

It comes from the verb *kerysso*, which means "herald" or "proclaim." In classical Greek the noun meant "that which is cried by a herald, a proclamation" (Abbott-Smith). In the New Testament it is used in the sense of "proclamation" or "message," "that is, the substance as distinct from the act" (Abbott-Smith). Lightfoot declares: "It refers . . . to the subject, not to the manner of preaching" (Notes, p. 161). Lias comments: "The word translated *preaching* should rather be rendered *what is preached*" (cf. RSV). In agreement with all this, Findlay writes that *kerygma* "signifies not the act of proclamation, but the *message proclaimed* by God's herald."

On the basis of the King James rendering many have thought that it is the *method*

of preaching that is considered foolish. Rather, it is the *message*.

In Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Friedrich spells out what this message is. He writes (III, 710):

At the heart of the New Testament *kerygma* stands the lordship of God.

Preaching is not a lecture on the nature of God's kingdom. It is proclamation, the declaration of an event.

Friedrich goes on to point out that the central emphasis of apostolic preaching was not the words of Jesus, but the historical fact of his life, death, and resurrection. He says (III, 711):

The reality of the resurrection constitutes the fulness of the early Christian *kerygma*. This is a fact which cannot be apprehended like other historical events. It has to be continually proclaimed afresh.

Commenting on 1 Cor. 1:21, he affirms: "The foolish message of Jesus crucified saves those who believe" (III, 716). That is what the gospel is. And that is the good news which every preacher is commissioned to proclaim.



Christmas—

The Response of the Shepherds

TEXT: Luke 2:15—"Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."

INTRODUCTION: Sketch story. The gospel was preached to the shepherds that night as they watched on the hillside. The great question was, What would they do about it?

I

It is certain they could have reacted very differently than they did. They could have relapsed into indifference—"So what?" They could have allowed themselves to be too busy with their own affairs. They could have discussed and debated until the opportunity was gone. They could have lost the opportunity by procrastination—"We'll go some other time, when more convenient."

II

Or they could have gone in the wrong spirit. Not reverent, eager wonder, but idle curiosity could have prompted them. People love a show. Detached objectivity. Such people, being blind, see nothing unusual—only a babe. As a result they go away skeptical and critical. Those who hang around the church as onlookers usually end up as cynics and critics. But the fault is in them, not in the facts.

III

But the shepherds did not so react. They said, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass." They went immediately, eagerly, expectantly. Faith is exhibited here. Not, "Let us see if this true." They believed that it was true, and they wanted to be in on this marvelous event. And they found the Babe exactly as the angels had said. Those who seek Jesus in simple faith and obedience will find Him.

IV

What was the result? They went away changed men (vv. 17, 20). They were now witnesses. This is always true. Contact with Jesus always transforms. We can never be the same.

V

The gospel still demands reaction, response. It is not now preached by angels but men—but we are just as responsible for what we do with it. The good news does not impose Christ on us; it simply tells us that Christ has come, and where and how we may find Him. But we must go. Not now to Bethlehem, but to Calvary, in penitential prayer, in humility, in faith. We must come close enough to get under the protecting shadow of the Cross. We must leave our sins forever; and we must leave even our "sheep"—our duties—long enough to seek Him until we find Him. Then we can go back to our duties with a new song and a new gladness.

R. S. T.

The Way of Peace

TEXT: Luke 1:79—"... to guide our feet into the way of peace."

INTRODUCTION:

1. The universal desire for peace.
2. Men do not have peace because they

do not know—or are not willing to take—the "way of peace."

1. *If we are to find the way of peace we must have a guide.*

A. Because there are many false ways. Prov. 14:12.

B. The true way is not the way the natural man would expect. It is not discoverable to human wisdom. Acts 8:31.

II. *If we are to find the way of peace we must see that Jesus is the Guide.*

A. Human guides are helpful only if they guide us to Jesus.

B. He is the God-man, who came into the world for this very thing. John 14:27.

C. Therefore if we would find peace we must come to Jesus.

III. *Jesus will guide us into the way of peace at the gate of repentance and faith.*

A. He begins by taking away our false peace and making us unhappy. Then He says, Confess, forsake, allow Me to put you right with God and man. Matt. 4:17.

B. The gate of repentance looks ugly, narrow, and difficult; it is hard for men to believe that it will open to them the way of peace. But there is no other way.

CONCLUSION: We must be willing. A guide does not carry. We must walk. Then we will know the inexpressible sweetness of peace. Let us enter into the path of peace this very day.

R. S. T.

For the New Year—

God and the Midianites in 1972

TEXT: Judg. 7:21—"And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran, and cried, and fled."

INTRODUCTION:

1. Sketch story.
2. There are "Midianites" in our lives. Personal lives. Church life.
3. God wants to deliver us. In fact He delights to deliver when the odds seem stacked against us. How can we let God deliver us?

I. *We must be men of courage and faith.*

A. Verse 3—those fearful and afraid were sent home.

B. God does not need many men, but He needs mighty men. Mighty in faith. Our human resources may be woefully inadequate, but when God is our Resource we are invincible. Phil. 4:13; I Sam. 14:6.

II. *We must be men of unselfish discipline.*

A. Vv. 4-7, the "drinking" test.

B. Some thought only of quenching their thirst: they represent the self-indulgent, self-protecting, morally flabby "soldier." The others kept themselves alert to the enemy; kept their appetites secondary and controlled.

III. *We must be men of obedience.*

It is important to observe the way Gideon armed them and organized them.

A. Victorious conquest is not a matter of devising our own campaign and asking God to bless it; it is a matter of getting the plan of God in the beginning. God must get all the glory. True divine deliverance is supernatural.

B. An indispensable element of their obedience was their unity. Though Gideon's men were few in number, they were united. Their cooperation was perfect; that made them strong.

C. Furthermore, obedience to God in this crisis meant obedience to God's appointed leader. "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

CONCLUSION: If we will but accept God's armor, obey God's order, stay where God puts us, and in it all allow the pitcher of self to be broken that the inner light may shine—*God will do the rest*. To fight the Midianites in our lives in our own way is presumption and brings disaster. But if we have faced them with courage and discipline, if we have taken the sword and the pitcher, and have shouted our testimony, then all we need to do is stand still—God will fight for us.

R. S. T.

spiritual heroes who so valiantly advanced the race this far.

It is an obstacle race, but the runners are encouraged by the victories of others, notably that of Christ. "A great cloud of witnesses . . . looking unto Jesus . . ."

Success in this race is conditioned upon the single-mindedness with which we run, especially in relation to sin.

I. *We must cast off the besetting sin.*

"Besetting" translates the Greek word *euperistaton*, a military word meaning to encompass, to encircle.

Morgan translates it, "the sin in good standing around," i.e., some sin so popular that it is not branded as sin.

The challenge is to a separated life, the vigorous rejection of anything that damages body, mind, or spirit, however popular it may be even with nominal Christians. To us it must be sin, and therefore it must be flung aside, cast away, no longer indulged.

II. *We must lay aside the hindering weights.*

A weight is anything that hinders our running, however innocent or legitimate it may be. Some weights are—

- (1) The claims upon our time that leave us too busy to serve Christ.
- (2) The claims upon our energy that leave us too weary to attend church.
- (3) The claims upon our purses that leave them too empty to support the gospel.
- (4) The claims upon our affection that leave us too earthy to enjoy spiritual blessings!

So stripped for the race we must run with steadfast endurance, all the while considering Jesus, our great Exemplar, in single-minded devotion to the will of the Father and the welfare of the children! So running, we shall be crowned!

W. E. McCUMBER

Taking Off Weight

Scripture Lesson: Heb. 12:1-5

Text: Verse 1

The Christian life is a race towards the goal of the city of God. We are called upon to share the faith and patience of those

The Gifts of Jesus

Scripture Lesson: Mark 5:24-34

Text: Verse 34

In Edinburgh a Christian worker asked a drunken man, "If Jesus were talking to you, what would He want you to give Him?" Replied the sinner, "Nothing. He would want to give me something!"

Here is a picture of *helplessness*—"an issue of blood twelve years." And it is *transformed into happiness*—"The fountain of her blood was dried up." And the difference was made by the amazing love-gifts of Jesus.

I. Jesus gives *cleansing*. "Be whole of thy plague."

- A. Her condition was one of *defilement*. She had "an issue of blood" and this rendered her unclean by law (cf. Lev. 15:19).
- B. The defilement was in contact with His *dynamic*. We read that "virtue had gone out of him." The Greek word is *dynamis*, *power* (cf. Rom. 1:17).
- C. Out of that contact came her *deliverance*. "She was healed of that plague." His power triumphs over pollution (cf. I John 1:7).

II. Jesus gives *calmness*. "Go in peace."

- A. Her dispeace was *evidenced in trembling*. She came "fearing and trembling."
- B. That dispeace was *shattered by telling*. "She told him all the truth." Confession was vital both to her good and to others' blessing (cf. Rom. 10:9-10).
- C. Dispeace was then *resolved in triumph*. "Go in peace." Jesus masters our fears and inspires our faith, for He deals adequately and triumphantly with all the forces of evil that occasion fear (cf. v. 36; John 20:19-21).

III. Jesus gives *comfort*. "Daughter."

- A. This was a word of *adoption*. It is the only place where Jesus calls a woman "daughter," but it reflects His relationship to all believers. He is "the everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6).
- B. Thus it is a word of *assurance*. How comforting to know that we belong to Him! He promised the disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless" (John 14:18). The Greek is *orphanos*. He who adopts us will always be with us!

These gifts of Christ are bestowed in response to faith. There is sharp contrast between the *unrewarded thronging*—"Much people . . . thronged him"—and the *rewarded touching*—"She . . . touched his garment. . . . And straightway the fountain

of her blood was dried up."

You may touch Him by your faith for all these wondrous gifts today!

W. E. McCUMBER

Jesus, the Son of God

1. Gabriel announced it (Luke 1:35).
2. John the Baptist attested it (John 1:34).
3. Satan challenged it (Matthew 4:3, 6).
4. Demons acknowledged it (Luke 4:36, 40-41).
5. Peter confessed it (Matthew 16:13-16).
6. High priest denied it (Matthew 26:65).
7. Jesus claimed it (Matthew 26:64; John 10:36).
8. Centurion convinced of it (Matthew 27:54).
9. The Resurrection proved it (Romans 1:3-4).

Conclusion: Believe it to be saved (Acts 8:37).

—W. L. WILLIAMS
in *Advance*



By Asa H. Sparks*

Visitation

1. *For community outreach, try the chain of love.* Using construction paper links for each person contacted, a Sunday school averaging in the fifties made over 1,000 contacts within a six-week period. A contest was conducted between the teens and children and adults to see which division could be the most effective.

2. *Have you tried Cross Evangelism?* Mimeograph a sheet with a cross drawn on it in the style of ticktacktoe. This will give you nine squares. The center square is for the member to write his name and address and distance from the church. The square above is for the person across the street. The square below is for the person across the alley. The squares to the right and left

*Pastor, Gastonia, N.C.

are for the neighbors to the sides. The four corner squares are for the diagonal neighbors. When completed and returned to the pastor it will give a prospect list for every member to work on, a list of conveniently reachable prospects.

3. *Many churches have used the Light of Evangelism* to keep crowds coming. This is a hollow cross with lights in it. These lights reflect off the wall behind. The cross stays on as long as there are visitors each Sunday or at each service.

4. *We want our people to visit* but seldom give recognition when they do. You can change this with the Boosters Club. List in the bulletin those who have invited five or more to Sunday school the previous week.

5. *George L. Smith* reports fantastic results with a visitation revival. Instead of having a special speaker the church people came to the church each night and visited for an hour.

6. *Offer a prize to the first person* to contact the mystery absentee of the week. The absentee could be selected from your Sunday school rolls or your church telephone directory.

7. *Have you tried the Pastor-Lay Assistant?* Use a double postal card requesting that a member visit one specific person and give the reason why. The returned card pre-addressed to the pastor would give the caller's report. For best results use a pre-print or mimeographed message on each (E. K. Bryant).

BULLETIN



BARREL

My Christmas Greeting

By John Stockton

When December's cold, bleak weather
Holds sway o'er hill and dale,
And the postman with high-top boots
Wades snow to bring our mail,

It's time to find a Christmas tree
To help spread Christmas cheer,
And bring in the decorations.
For the day is almost here

When we with grateful hearts
Commemorate the birth

**Of the One who came on Christmas
And brought great joy on earth.**

**We have also had our sorrow
Back through the passing year,
But His grace has been sufficient
To cast out doubt and fear.**

**We appreciate so much your friendship,
And we are writing for a reason:
To assure you of our love and prayers
Throughout the Christmas season.**

Editor: This and the poems published in previous years were originally written for the privacy of the friendship and family circle. We count it a special privilege to be permitted to share the warm and homey Christmas sentiments of this great layman—and friend of us all.

CHRISTMAS IS COSTLY!

It cost Mary and Joseph the comforts of home during the long period of exile in Egypt.

It cost Bethlehem mothers the massacre of their babies.

It cost the shepherds the complacency of their pastoral life.

It cost the wise men a long journey and expensive gifts and changed lives.

It cost the apostles and the Early Church persecution and sometimes death.

It cost missionaries of the Christ untold suffering and privation.

More than all, it cost God the Father His own Son; it cost Jesus a life of sacrifice and service, a cruel death, unmatched in history.

IS CHRISTMAS TOO COSTLY?

It is, if all it means is gift exchanges.

It is, if all it means is tinsel.

It is, if all it means is buying and selling.

It is, if all it means is a holiday.

IT ISN'T TOO COSTLY—

If it means joyous singing!

If it means the forgiveness of sin!

If it means peace among men!

If it means the hope of the world!

DOES CHRISTMAS COST US ENOUGH?

Are we giving enough for Christ and world needs?

CARL SUMMER, *Pastor*
Calvary Church
Bethany, Okla.

BEHOLD, THE STAR OF CHRISTMAS

We look at toys and tinsel trees
And trimmings and trinkets . . .
We feast on meats and sweets
And fleeting joys—
And call it Christmas.

We sing songs of joy and hope
And peace, goodwill to men . . .
We send cards and occasionally a note
And phone friends and family—
And call it Christmas.

We give gifts, lots of things, lots of things!
And say we're in the spirit of Christmas.
Can it be that we look, and do not see?
We feast, and are yet hungry?
We sing, and are yet sad?
We give, and yet know not God's Gift?

Behold, the STAR of Christmas!
He looked on us and loved us still;
He loved us and lived among us;
He lived among us and listened to us;
He listened to us and gave—
He gave himself for us.

Behold, the STAR of Christmas,
For only as we behold Him
Can we look and feast and sing,
And give and live—
And call it Christmas.

—FRED HOLLIMAN
Pastor, Prospect, Ore.

CHRISTMAS LIST

*Give a gift of laughter;
Give a gift of song;
Give a gift of sympathy
To last the whole year long.*

*Give a cheerful message;
Give a helping hand;
Tell your sorrowful neighbor
That you understand.*

*Wash the supper dishes;
Help to dust the room;
Give a smile to heaven
Someone's heart of gloom.*

*Give a gift of sharing;
Sweeten dreary days;
For the lost and lonely,
Give yourself always.*

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

THE BIBLE—

Make it the first morning business of your life to understand some part of the Bible clearly, and make it your daily business to obey it in all that you do understand.—JOHN RUSKIN.

I cannot too greatly emphasize the importance and value of Bible study—more important than ever before in these days of uncertainties, when men and women are apt to decide questions from the standpoint of expediency rather than on the eternal principles laid down by God himself.—JOHN WANAMAKER.

It is impossible to mentally or socially enslave a Bible reading people. The principles of the Bible are the groundwork of human freedom.—HORACE GREELEY.

If I am asked what is the remedy for the deeper sorrows of the human heart, I must point to something which in the well-known hymn is called "The old, old story," told of an old, old Book and taught with the old, old teaching which is the greatest and best guide ever given to mankind.—WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

It worked for us—

Sermon Requests

Pastor Charles Ogden of Whittier First (Calif.) distributed a letter to his people with the heading: "What sermon subject do you think would be most helpful to you?" Here is the letter:

Dear Friend:

Did you ever wish you could suggest to the minister what subject you would like to hear discussed in a sermon? Well—here's your chance. As pastor, I am coming to you for help and asking: "If you were thinking of three or more sermon subjects, what would they be?"

On the other side of this letter is room to list as many as 10 sermon subjects. We hope you will list at least three. It will be very interesting to see which requests rate highest. Across the next months your pastor may be preaching from the most requested subjects.

Do not list what others think, or what you think the pastor would like. Let your own heart speak out its feelings, desires, hopes.

To start you thinking here are some listings: but please make your own, and list in order of your desires, 1, 2, 3.

1. *Personal needs:* How can I live a successful life? How can I overcome failure? How can I defeat worry? What can I do with my fears? etc.

2. *Faith*: What is faith? What can I do about doubts? What is really important to believe? etc.

3. *Salvation*: How can I become a Christian? What does it mean to be a Christian? Can we really know if we are saved? What should I do if I sin? etc.

4. *Prayer*: Why do I pray so little? How can I learn to pray with meaning? Why doesn't God answer my prayers? etc.

5. *Prophecy*: Is the end of the world near? Is Jesus really coming again? What does the Bible say about the crisis in the Near East? etc.

6. *Death*: What is death? Should Christians worry about death? Why am I afraid? etc.

7. *Heaven*: Is there life after death? Is heaven real? Who will be in heaven? Will we know each other in heaven? What will heaven be like? etc.

8. *God's will*: How can I find God's will? Does God care about the details of my life? Does God care about my work? etc.

9. *Spirit-filled life*: Can every Christian be filled with the Spirit? What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? How may I be filled? How may I keep filled with the Spirit? etc.

10. *Happiness*: What is happiness? How can I be happy? etc.

On the back of the letter there was not only space for a listing of desired subjects, but a request to return the sheet to the pastor by a definite date; also a space for additional comments; and a request to indicate age-group, as follows:

___ Above 60; ___ 40-60; ___ 30-40;
___ 20-30, Married; ___ Single Adult;
___ College; ___ Senior High.

Christmas Candlelight Service for the Family

(Let the family gather around the Christmas tree, or near a manger scene, as a worship center. A large lighted candle nearby will symbolize Christ, the Light of the World. Each member of the family should also have a small unlighted candle for use later in the service.)

FATHER: "O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord."

A CHILD: Tell us again the story of Christmas, that we may rightly keep Christ at the center of our celebration.

FATHER: Christmas began long ago, when God promised His people Israel that He would send them the Messiah. One of the prophecies about the coming of Jesus is

recorded in Isaiah 9: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

MOTHER: (*Reads from Luke 2*) "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed . . . And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem . . . And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

FAMILY SINGS:

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His
sweet head;
The stars in the sky looked down where
He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

FATHER: (*Continues reading from Luke 2*)

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

CHILDREN: (*Read together from Luke 2*)

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

FAMILY SINGS:

*It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.*

A CHILD: (*Read from Matthew 2*)

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. . . . And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

MOTHER:

*Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.*

FATHER: So we have read how God in His love has sent the gift of His Son, Christ, to us. We have heard how the shepherds and the wise men received Him into their hearts. May we also receive Him in love and follow Him always. Let us now take Christmas to all our house, with the prayer that the Spirit of Christ may abide with us always.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

(Each member of the family now lights his own candle from the large candle, and, led by the father, they move through the rooms of the house singing Christmas carols, beginning with "Joy to the World." As they return to the Christmas tree or manger scene, they sing "Silent Night." The family then prays together the closing prayer.)

FAMILY: O God, who hast made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true light, we praise Thy holy name. Above all things do we give thanks and praise to Thee, that Thou hast suffered Thine only begotten Son to become man for our salvation. We pray Thee, Father, that we may ever be comforted by His incarnation and serve Thee as Thy children, till finally with all angels and saints we may honor and praise Thee forevermore. Through Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(OPTIONAL) CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

(Each member of the family now lights his own candle from the large candle, and, remaining in the family circle, sings to-

gether "Joy to the World" followed by "Silent Night." The family then prays together the closing prayer as printed above in the candlelight service.)

SOURCE UNKNOWN

The Role of Unnoticed Leadership

(Continued from page 13)

activate, they will make leadership all the more likely to succeed.

It is often true that members with some leadership qualities know better where the group's weak spots and areas of greatest needs are. If they can help the weakest and most inactive members to respond more to leadership, they will also have performed a valuable function.

Often these unofficial, behind-the-scenes leaders are among the first to get action going on the plans recommended by the pastor or SS superintendent. Sometimes the plans of the leader need explanation or even defense. In other cases they need individuals to step forward quickly, so that work can get started.

In almost any group a large amount of real leadership comes from those loyal, active, and discerning members who are not presuming to be known as leaders, but who want to help the formal leadership with its program.

There is also what might be called the leadership of the routine. This means that there are those who help to see, month after month, that the routine work is done, so that the leadership can deal with the creative and initiating side of the group's program. When a group has to be constantly correcting the omissions and faults in its regular plans and operations, it is not going to get ahead very fast.

Unnoticed leadership always has a part also through the fact that, as each member and officer contributes something and coordinates with his fellow members, the group greatly benefits.

Certainly every group needs strong leadership—but there is more than one kind!

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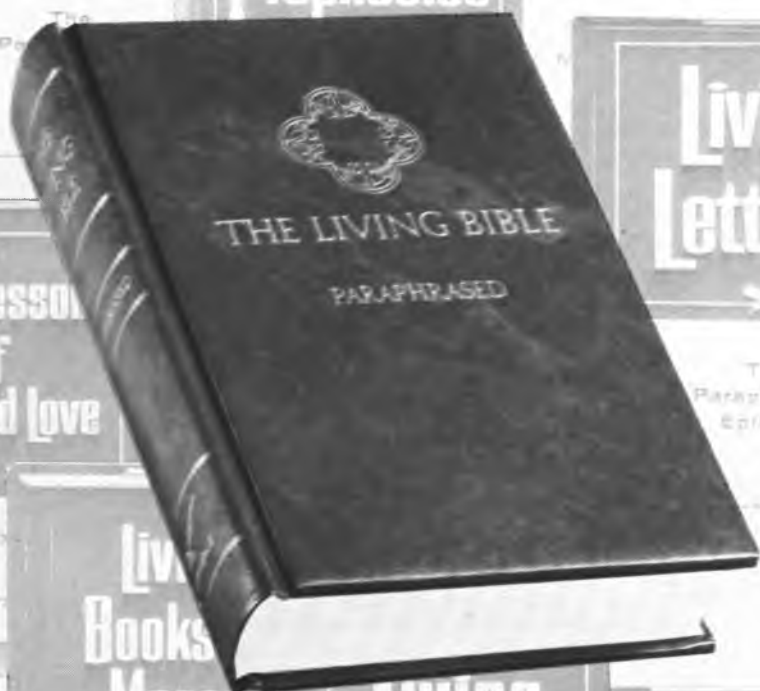


AMONG OURSELVES

In a recent letter J. Ray Shadowens quotes Bresee: "Multiplication by any process but by the power of the Holy Ghost may mean numbers but not strength, the register of a graveyard and not of a living army" . . . Sometimes contest capers serve some purpose, perhaps to spark the imagination and excite some who won't be drawn in any other way. But unless beneath the stunts is a solid level of prayer and holy passion, the big blast will be only an explosion of the flesh, with very little spiritual residue to show for it after the fireworks . . . But where contests are launched by a night of prayer at the district camp meeting, and heavy accent is placed on souls as the real goal (as Akron District did with "Touchdown '71"), the story is bound to be different . . . If Bresee saw some of our shenanigans he would "turn over in his grave." But if he also noted the nights of prayer and real spiritual breakthroughs here and there he would turn back again (at least partway) . . . Pastors, Amy Vanderbilt has her eye on you, and some things she doesn't like. Like calling unannounced in parishioners' (or prospects') homes at mealtime. Apparently her readers don't appreciate it either. Neither does she approve of young ministers calling people of all ages by their given names. She calls this an "error." Well, we are relieved to know it is not a sin. But stupid things can foul up a man's ministry too. I suppose Amy (Pardon!—Mrs. Vanderbilt) would also frown on everybody calling the pastor by his first name. Sounds sort of cozy and friendly—for a while. But often this proves to be just another of the practices (whose name is Legion) which bring short-term gains but long-term losses . . . The real lib movement should be ML, not WL. At least in the NWMS. A brave preacher is spearheading the movement in Northwestern Ohio—Alva B. Kelly, pastor at Van Wert, who is the first man in the States or Canada to be elected district NWMS president. Of course your local missionary presidents knew about this months ago. It was in the summer issue of *General Council Tidings* . . . President Kelly says: "I do not believe the work of the missionary society should be left to the women, nor do I believe it should be taken over by the men. The missionary society needs and deserves the total energy and resources of us all." No quarrel with that . . . and there is really no better way to upgrade the parsonage table talk, than to take it (page 19).

Until next month,

B7



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