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Putting Liberation in Perspective



THE LONGING FOR LIBERATION is not new in the hearts of human beings, but it is taking new turns and getting more attention these days. That in itself is a good thing, for since the days of Moses when the children of Israel protested their Egyptian bondage and eventually made their way toward the Promised Land, God himself has stood on the side of the oppressed and the downtrodden.

It was nearly 200 years ago, on June 7, 1776, that Richard Henry Lee made his motion for a "declaration of independence" for the colonies which were to become the United States of America. The motion was debated for three days, and a committee was appointed to draw the statement which was adopted and signed on July 4 of that memorable year in man's struggle for liberation.

Nations have won freedom, tyrants have been overthrown, minorities have made themselves heard, and deprived people have organized for the struggle toward liberation. Freedom is one of those beautiful words in the language, and liberation has a sound that appeals to everyone. But there must be moments for reflection upon the meaning of these words if they are to maintain their importance for people. Like great ideas, great words can become meaningless when their perspective becomes blurred and their usages confused.

Consider the number and nature of liberation movements now going on as an example of the need for perspective. It is reported that there are now groups of sexually perverted students demanding recognition for their organizations on college campuses, with a fair share of student fees allocated to them, and status among the other campus clubs. One wonders, What next?

Will there be those who will come forward with demands for equality in the grading of students, with slow learners given high marks? Will they adopt SLOWLIB as their label? What will keep the criminals from uniting in a movement for the elimination of all door locks, as

BURGLIB comes into its own? Maybe the short people of the world should unite, after centuries of listening to such slogans as "Dare to stand tall," "Tall in the saddle," and "A giant of a leader," and demand that everybody must stoop when he walks, so that the short people will not feel they have been the victims of discrimination. SHORTLIB, anybody?

A group of women are active in a movement that has become quite widely known by the label "Women's Lib," which has caused one wag to wonder whether or not the women really *need* liberating. He observes that when a man is born, people ask, "How is the mother?" When he gets married, everyone speaks of how beautiful his bride looks. When he dies, they say, "I wonder how much he left his widow."

Make no mistake about it, the editor is heartily in favor of liberation for all who are oppressed, and that includes the woman who does the same work as a man for less pay, or finds herself unfairly treated because of her sex. But does this mean we are chauvinistic if we refer to her as "Miss" or "Mrs."? Is the matter carried farther than really necessary if we find we must, in order to prove our lack of prejudice against the fair sex, purge our language of every trace of "man," so we address the group leader as the "chairperson" instead of the traditional "chairman"? There may be no end to this. The mailperson will deliver our mail; the repairperson will fix the appliances; the policepersons and firepersons will attend to the public safety; the children will play "cowpersons and Indians"; and, lo, the milkperson is even now at the door. And what, pray, will we do with our word "Amen"?

The truth is, liberation can be carried to unreasonable lengths when it gets out of perspective. When it does, it usually means loss of freedoms for some other groups or persons. Liberation for the minorities is good—until it deprives the majorities of something precious and good. Liberation for the individual is essential and right—until it brings oppression and the loss of rights to the society as a whole. The criminal by all means does have his rights and they must be protected—but so must the rights of the victims of his crimes. Liberation, therefore, in its real sense, means *freedom to give* respect and love to others, and to contribute something worthwhile for their well-being. For 2,000 years those who have followed Christ's way have known this secret, and they have been telling it wherever there are people who will listen.

Christ, the Liberator, declared to those who heard Him speak that day in the Temple, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). The pity of it all is that so many who long for liberation are trying today to find it by doing the very things that destroy it. It is not grasped; it is given. And it flows through the truly liberated toward all people, whatever their sex, whatever their color, whatever their national origin or ethnic identity, whatever their personal attractiveness or lack of it.

Liberation and love—Christ's *agape* love—belong together. Let us keep it that way.

If people do not long to have what we have, we don't have what we should have. Here are 10 keys that will bring continuous revival to every church.

Keys to Continuous Revival

By Lyle Pointer*

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH had 120 charter members. These disciples had united in prayer waiting for the promised coming of the Holy Spirit. On the day God's Spirit was enthroned, 3,000 persons met the qualifications for church membership. These converts had accepted God's Word and volunteered for baptism. The Early Church could very well have reclined, folded her hands behind her head, and yawned in contentment.

But the members of that first congregation believed in continuous revival.

The New Testament Church had a *sustained evangelism*. Luke, the New Testament historian, records that "the Lord added to the church daily" those who were being saved. Luke also notes outstanding characteristics of the Church which were the keys to this unending harvest of souls. God's people carried with them the reasons for daily tallying of saved persons.

I

It was a *telling* church. They testified to Jesus' death and its meaning to them. They explained that Jesus was God come to deliver them from sin and to remove the guilt of past evil behavior.

A young married couple were discussing witnessing with other believers. Jean testified, "When I was first saved

I talked about Christ all the time. I discovered that some people thought I was crazy. So I kept quiet. Then Chuck realized that living the Christian life but refusing to talk about God was deceitful. In fact, to believe we can live the Christian life and not speak about it is faulty thinking. This is Satan's way of adding us to his list of helpers."

"That's right! I heard a preacher say there would never be revival where people remained silent, because they would fall short of Christ's commission."

"Only an ungrateful Christian would refuse to tell what Jesus did for him."

Chuck and Jean had discovered that New Testament Christians shared the great news about salvation.

II

New Testament Christians *studied* diligently. They gleaned every bit of truth the apostles taught them. They had an open ear to all spiritual information. Doctrine stirred no fear within them. They relished knowledge about Jesus.

A grave danger within God's Church is ignorant adherents. Worse than being in ignorance is the repose of staying there. No attempt is made to tap the riches of Christ.

The wisdom of God is inexhaustible and endless. Christians should surge forward to gain new insights. They must be on the growing edge of new truth. Spiritual minds must be honed

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to a keen point. Precious time is wasted when 24 hours go flitting by without discovering something new about God. One reason souls were daily added to their number was because they could explain and apply from their learning the facts about God.

III

The Early Church was known for its close *fellowship*. There was a quality of togetherness about them best described as a friendly acceptance and a loving concern. The popular thing was to eat together. Everyone was included—saint and sinner.

Most Christians consider themselves friendly, and they are—among themselves. These warm arms of love reach no further than to those who are close and lovable.

Unfortunately, the stand-offish nature of the Church is based upon an improper emphasis of Jas. 4:4, "Friendship with the world is sin against God" (free translation). It has been stressed that Christians do not associate with sinners.

The "world" can also mean the principle of wrong. The Church cannot be in agreement with evil, but to disengage ourselves from needy hearts is sin indeed. Jesus prayed, "Holy Father . . . I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil" (John 17:15).

The fellowship of the Early Church circled everyone in need of God. They took fellowship so seriously that they went from "house to house." Contemporary methods of fellowship evangelism have given added evidence to support the effectiveness of this attitude in a love-starved world.

IV

New Testament Christians drew upon the resources of God by means of *prayer*. Prayer was not spasmodic, but habitually meaningful. The initial warriors of God made no claims to rugged individualism. They admitted their in-

adequacies in persuading men about the lordship of Christ.

William Barclay wrote: "They always spoke to God before they spoke to men."

I spotted the opportunity to witness to a young man about Christ and followed through by explaining the gospel. I drew the net, asking Larry if he would receive the Lord into his heart.

"I know I need to, and I want to—but I can't!" he said. There was a note of finality in his statement, but something (better Someone) would not allow me to conclude our conversation. I began to pray, "Lord, how can I get through to Larry?" Silence. Then the answer, and the words knifed through my consciousness.

"Larry, you have tried to go God's way before and you've failed. You don't want to go through the misery of failure again."

"No," he replied, "I really don't want to start something and not carry out what I've begun."

From that point I quoted him the promises of God, who was his Strength, a God who would never leave until He was forced out.

I prayed aloud for God to give Larry the courage to trust Him for the time of commitment and for the ensuing days. When I finished my prayer, Larry took up the conversation with the Lord. With genuine repentance he discovered God's loving approval.

God supplied the answer to an otherwise futile attempt at evangelism.

V

Miracles took place among the believers in Luke's day. Immediately our thoughts fly to physical healings. This is indeed the miraculous work of God. One lady said, "The greatest miracle I've ever seen is when God forgives and changes a sinner." Both are acts that anyone will agree are out of the ordinary. These strange events convince men of the genuineness of God's activity and power in the Church. One

conversion naturally results in another and another. The Bible shows us that God reveals himself through mighty deeds.

A church where miracles are happening is a spiritual church. God does not perform miracles through spiritually inept persons. Where there are no miracles, there are no converts.

VI

The first Church of Christ was a *generous* church. It has been said that the initial Christian community was communistic. The grammar of the Greek implies rather that the church members thought of their material assets being at the disposal of God. When a temporal need arose, God's people naturally and willingly sold their belongings to meet the situation. This is vastly superior to Communism.

There existed a deep feeling of concern for others. This sense of responsibility was prompted by a genuine love. It is no wonder that people were attracted to this group of God-proclaiming people. Doubtlessly "spongers" took advantage of these generous folk. But the sincere were rightly impressed, recognizing that God had triggered this humanitarian activity.

VII

The first Christians *praised* God. Every opportunity that presented itself found these people worshipping. Worship was dynamic for them. It was packed full of praises to God. The Christians continually lifted the eyes of the world to the God who had changed their lives. Their gratitude expressed relief from guilt, and the heartfelt love for the Saviour. Credit was correctly placed in the hands of the Crucified.

Neighbors and acquaintances were aware of the pre-conversion attitudes and activities of these Christ-followers. Praising God was a radical change. On-lookers were impressed. When a person suddenly shows a different life-style, the natural assumption is either that "he finally came to himself" or "he

slipped a cog." The New Testament believers swept away any such conclusions by their religious adoration. God caused the change in their lives.

VIII

Ask anyone around in A.D. 50 and he would tell you, "These Jesus-people are *joyful* all the time." It was a quality that drew people to them. Luke paid them a high compliment when he reported they "did eat their meat with gladness." (If there is anyplace where grumbling can be heard, it is at the supper table.)

Everyone enjoys happy people. They make delightful companions. The Christian's joy is not necessarily a boisterous thing; it comes from deep within the heart. Joy is an expression of the peace that God gives. As the Spirit resides within the Christian, more joy surfaces—it is a growing thing. It wasn't difficult to form fellowship groups when happiness existed. Besides, who is there who does not desire a deep, settled joy? Joy counted in evangelism.

IX

The Early Church was *united*. This means more than being together in proximity. Church members pulled in the same direction, achieving the identical purpose—evangelism.

Pull 16 friendly men off the street, feed them a meal, allow them to talk and get acquainted, but when these men part they are by no means united. The Christians had built into their souls a "singleness of heart." They were accomplishing the assignment Jesus had left for them—a mission possible.

Peter and his colleagues had a unity of purpose because they had a unity of experience. Christ's accepted gift of eternal life and forgiveness had brought peace to the battlefield of the soul.

X

Finally, continuous revival happens because a church has "favour with all

the people.” William Barclay characterizes the New Testament Church as “people whom others could not help liking.” It was an *attractive* Church.

There is a mistaken feeling among today’s evangelicals that they are disliked. This feeling of being repulsed is due to the oft preached subject of separateness. It is true that the world hates God’s people. On the other hand, there is an attractiveness about Christianity. Christ had a winsome personality. He was warmhearted, open, receptive, and His disciples should be too. If people do not long to have what you have, you don’t have what you should have.

The hard and narrow way of Chris-

tianity is not attractive to the sinner, but the faith that puts God in control is beautiful. People are seeking this equilibrium that results from faith. The world longs for the peace evident in the believer—peace that is unruffled in the face of life’s overwhelming circumstances. “Oh, for the subtle assurance that ‘it is well with my soul’! That joy—Can I have it too?” Yes, be a joyful Christian with positive and firm personality—not the giggly brand, but one with gallant joy.

Continuous evangelism resulted because the Church demonstrated lovely life-characteristics. These were used of God to attract the soul of the world, drawing persons to the person of Christ.

Presented at the Iowa Wesleyan Conference
Minister’s Midyear Convention, Independence, Ia.

Why I Preach Holiness

PRAYERFULLY I have reviewed many things that help me in preaching holiness. I have concentrated a rather lengthy list into five major areas which have been, and continue to be, most influential and helpful in my preaching the glorious truth and life of holiness.

Holiness is taught in the WORD.

Preach it because it is in the Word.



by
**Franklin W.
Hauser**

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Minneapolis, Minn.

Such was the advice of Peter Boehler to young John Wesley. “Be ye holy; for I am holy,” is a command to be reckoned with. C. William Fisher, in his book *Second-Hand Religion*, says, “God’s holiness, being absolute and total, makes it *forever necessary* for God to stand at the threshold of every generation and say to every man and woman and young person, ‘Be ye holy; for I am holy.’” Holiness is in the Word!

Our God is holy in name (Ps. 11:9; 99:3; Isa. 57:15); He is holy in habitation (Joel 3:13); and He is holy in His relationships with His people (Lev. 20:7; I Pet. 1:16). You need not be a profound student of the Bible to know these truths—they run from Genesis to Revelation. Holiness is expected of God’s people. R. S. Foster writes, “It

breathes in the prophecy, thunders in the law, murmurs in the narrative, whispers in the promises, supplicates in the prayers, resounds in the songs, sparkles in the poetry, shines in the types, glows in the imagery, and burns in the spirit of the whole scheme, from its alpha to omega . . . its beginning to its end. Holiness! Holiness needed! Holiness required! Holiness offered! Holiness attainable! It is the truth glowing all over and voicing all through revelation; singing and shouting in all its history, and biography, and poetry, and prophecy, and precept, and promise, and prayer; the CENTRAL TRUTH of the system. The truth to elucidate for which the system exists. If God has spoken at all it is to aid men to be HOLY" (*Christian Purity*, p. 37).

Holiness is my JOYFUL experience!

I was introduced to this glorious truth before I was born! My first Sunday in this world I was carried in my mother's arms to a little white, frame, one-room holiness church. My godly mother and dad loved me, prayed for me, and loved one another with such a perfect love that the beauty of holiness was all about me.

I would have been a fool among fools and the most miserable of all wretches had I turned my back on the holiness people, the holiness message, the life of holiness. Many saintly elders prayed for me. Many men of God cared for my soul—men whose shouts of praise made the rafters ring, whose prayers rattled the very gates of hell, whose faces shone with the light of heaven, whose hearts burned with a holy fire. Unlearned, yet men of prayer, men of tears, men with broken hearts, men who had been with Jesus!

I could not turn away. There was only one path for me, and as a lad of 17, perfectly aware that I could go on no longer as I was, I opened up my carnal heart and the blessed Comforter did within me what our precious Lord

made provision for when He suffered without the gate. Blessed be His name!

Positionally sanctified? Yes! Experientially sanctified? Yes! And after 22 years, "I'm rejoicing night and day, as I walk the narrow way, for the Comforter ABIDES with me!" I preach holiness because I enjoy the experience of holiness.

Holiness is the ONLY ANSWER to man's basic problem.

Sin has separated us from God. Fellowship is broken. Ruth Paxton in her book, *Life on the Highest Plane*, writes, "A holy God must have a holy people. That which God has taken to be His own, which He has separated unto Himself must be holy even as He is holy. God cannot presence Himself with unholiness, neither can He use in His service that which is unclean. If He did so, He would deny His own nature and dishonor His own Name."

What an incentive to preach this truth! Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He came to sanctify His people. He came to cleanse them from all unrighteousness, to reinstate them in divine favor, to make them holy even as He is holy, thus restoring fellowship lost.

What a positive thrill to tell a man he can be clean and pure—that the dominion of sin can be broken, and the nature of sin eradicated! We are not called to prescribe partial remedies to the afflicted. We need not offer temporary relief in lieu of something better someday. We need not stand idly by, watching men live and die trying to act like Christians while never really knowing or enjoying the thrill of LIVING a holy life. Holiness is ATTAINABLE! It is the ANSWER.

Holiness is the surest way to a healthy church.

To be sure—we can get along without it. There are a thousand substitutes for holiness. Dr. Chester Tulga, a Conservative Baptist, writing in his book,

Holiness in Times like These, says, "The lack of interest in personal holiness is also appearing among the holiness denominations which profess a special responsibility for spreading scriptural holiness throughout the earth. The various holiness movements began with an intense emphasis upon personal holiness and their literature still bears the marks of the emphasis. . . . Some holiness groups have become so absorbed in building a denominational structure and boasting of their success that they tend to forget that the spread of holiness is their fundamental mission."

God save us from compromise—the deadliest of denominational enemies.

Beware of activity without spirituality. Question quantity which has no regard for quality. Let us lead our people out of the wilderness of carnality. "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection."

A. W. Tozer has said, "The church today is suffering from a rash of amateurism." We have been taken in by the world. We have taken the world in. We have come to the crisis where we must either repent of our backsliding or go baby-sitting Adam—entertaining in our midst the very enemy Jesus came to destroy. A holy church is a healthy church.

Holiness is THE message as we approach the end of the age.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace,

without spot, and blameless. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (II Pet. 3:11-14, 17).

Tozer, in his book *Born After Midnight*, writes concerning why many Christians seem lukewarm about Christ's return. "One reason," he says, "is simply that popular Christianity has emphasized the utility of the Cross rather than the beauty of the ONE who died on it. The 'work' of Christ has been stressed until it has eclipsed the person of Christ. What He did for me seems to be more important than what He is to me. Another reason is that Christians are so comfortable in this world they have little desire to leave it. Streets of gold do not have much appeal for those who find it easy to pile up gold and silver on earth. Why change a familiar good for something we know little of?"

"Again," he continues, "religion has become jolly good fun right here in this present world. Christianity is another and higher form of entertainment. We have but to enjoy the benefits of His heartbreak in the form of religious pleasures modeled after the world but carried on in the name of Jesus."

When we become more interested in what we are doing than whom we are doing for, we have missed the mark. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Are you "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God"?

Do you sense the end of the age approaching?

Then, Brother, preach HOLINESS, "without which no man shall see the Lord."



THE OVERTONES OF THE MINISTRY

By Raymond C. Kratzer

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VII. Propriety

A SENSE OF FITNESS in the work of the ministry is an invaluable asset to the work of the Lord. Col. 4:6 says: "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Palatable, gracious words coming from the lips of God's servant can add zest and flavor to many situations.

The high calling of the ministry involves a great respect for this office and an awareness of its impact on the people you serve. The intensive training required of an elder is designed to prepare the man of God so that he may "be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:17).

When potential kings or queens are being schooled for the office of ruler of the realm, no stone is left unturned in order to prepare them for their work. Their speech, manners, attitudes, judgments, and demeanor are brought into sharp focus, so that the office of ruler shall not be demeaned by their deportment. A great man of God said one time that, if he were called to be a minister, he wouldn't stoop to be a king. Consequently, we should consider the ministry in its unique place, and humbly strive to measure up to such a high calling.

The varied activities of a pastor offer a myriad of ways in which he can be a great blessing, if he is thoughtful and discreet. For instance, when he visits a very sick patient in the hospital, the words he says, the length of time he stays, and the prayer he prays can be a bane or a blessing. Here is where the overtone of "propriety" is so invaluable. Careful preparation for these times with well-thought-out prayers, encouraging promises from God's Word, and a cheery good-by in short order, can leave a patient with a song in his heart in spite of his illness.

Or here is a small child, very ill and with an anxious mother standing beside her bed. If the pastor comes in with gloom written all over his face and then prays as though the child might die, voicing the verities of eternity, it can be a traumatic experience that the child will never get over, even though he may recover from the illness. And a frightened mother may always feel reluctant to call the minister in times of need, lest his coming stir the troubled waters, rather than calm them.

How much better it would have been for the pastor to bring a little gift to the child! And then before he left to

say a prayer in a child's language something like this: "Dear Jesus, bless little Susie today. Touch her with Your wonderful hand and heal her real quick. We are so glad You love her and we know You are right by her side. Bless her mommie and daddy too. Amen." That sickroom will suddenly be filled with the beautiful overtone of "propriety" in the form of God's wonderful presence and blessing.

There are many other places where the overtone of propriety adds a note of beauty which leaves the situation more meaningful and helpful. Likewise, its absence can inject a discordant atmosphere that will be remembered again and again whenever the thoughtless individual is around. For example, I recall an incident when a group of preachers were eating in a restaurant. One of them was asked to offer grace for the meal. He proceeded to lift up his voice like a prophet and prayed a long prayer that would have been perfectly appropriate at family devotions or in a pre-prayer meeting prior to a revival. He seemed to be unaware of the uniqueness of the situation. His prayer should have been an expression of deep gratitude to God for food and fellowship that would have impressed non-Christian diners and would not have embarrassed his fellow brethren.

There are certain ethical standards by which the minister should govern his actions in every situation. For instance, when he becomes a member of a new group such as the Ministerial Association of his city, or of some district board, his first few meetings should find him a listener for the most part rather than the one who monopolizes the conversation. He may think he has the answer to all of the discussions, but he is ill-advised if he speaks too much as a newcomer. It is human to resent a newcomer who "takes over" the discussions in a group of which he has just become a member. He must earn his way and merit respect for his

ideas. His thoughts will sound discordant in spite of their relevance if they come from an unseasoned instrument.

A pastor meeting the board in his new pastorate for the first time will show wisdom if he does not initiate a lot of new things. He will show deference that will add pleasure to his associations if he is careful not to "throw off" on his predecessor, either by innuendo or by direct criticisms. Even if the pastor who preceded him had some enemies in the church, he also had some friends. And it would seem the part of prudence to take some months to evaluate the work that had been done in the church before pushing for a lot of changes.

Dr. A. E. Sanner, Sr., counseled the preachers never to inaugurate more than one new major program in his church the first year of his pastorate. If he was so brash as to begin two major changes, chances are that the waters of his leadership would be muddied a bit. If a third change of major proportions were to be in the offing, that change might turn out to be a change of pastors.

A minister must win his way into the hearts of his people. This takes time. That is why longer pastorates are to be desired and cherished. It takes a couple of years before people feel comfortable with the leadership of a man. They need time to feel his sincerity, to observe his tact and wisdom, to have been helped by his preaching or visitation. The children of the church must find in him a friend and a counselor. The aged must sense his heartbeat of love and compassion. And the active adults must be challenged by his leadership and spiritual dynamic.

The overtone of propriety extends into the way a minister dresses, the conformity to accepted standards of grooming, and an awareness of how his total personality graces the office

of "minister." Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God . . ." (II Cor. 6:4).

May each of us take some time out to check the instrument of his personality

over against the advisements of God's Word, the guidelines of the church, and the accepted customs of our day, and find the best way to sound forth in tones that will ring true and elicit harmony in his world of influence.

Pastoral Ponderings and Prayers . . . III

By G. Lewis VanDyne*



Thanks for the Difference You Make, Lord

IT'S 10 MINUTES until noon on Friday. Talk about it being late—this is late! This week I had to be away from my church until late Thursday afternoon. This means that I really have this one day in which to do all the things that a pastor should do in an entire week. It makes for frustration and panic, to say the least.

Finding myself in this predicament, however, has focused my attention on the multitude of promotional things that normally occupy my time—or at least clamor for my attention. I wonder at such times if they are all worth the effort and attention they get from me. Are they really necessary? Something I read last week in Francis Schaeffer's book, *True Spirituality*, makes me wonder if I am relying upon the Holy Spirit at all. Here's what he wrote:

If I woke up tomorrow morning and found that all that the Bible teaches

concerning prayer and the Holy Spirit were removed (not as a liberal would remove it, by misinterpretation, but *really* removed) what difference would it make *in practice* from the way we are functioning today? The simple tragic fact is that in much of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ—the evangelical Church—there would be *no difference whatsoever*. We function as though the supernatural were not here.

Forgive me for working as if nothing would be accomplished unless I am the prime mover. That is not really the case at all. Maybe I have done some moving of things in my lifetime, but what meaning did they have if they were not really the result of the Holy Spirit at work in me? What good are they if they are just human manipulation?

Well, maybe today I am being forced into relying upon the Holy Spirit. I don't want to be guilty of not doing what He wants me to be doing; but on

* Pastor, Santa Barbara, Calif.

the other hand, I don't want to do this work of pastoring any other way than the Holy Spirit would direct.

We will just have to get along without a bulletin, for one thing. We will just have to rely on the Holy Spirit to prompt people to invite and bring their friends—our slick promotion in the newsletter is out of order this week.

Maybe what You are saying, Lord—and I'm not hearing too well—is that I must ask the Holy Spirit first of all to direct my own life and then trust

Him to direct the lives of other Christians. If there is something of value spiritually in the services we are having, He will guide us into *His* ways of getting people out to the services.

Help me this day to sense the opportunities and the options of the Holy Spirit and not to allow the programs and the details to burden me down.

Lord, I believe You are at work and that You know where I fit best in the battle. In that confidence allow me to proceed.

Finding the best possible name for a church is important, and should be done thoughtfully and prayerfully

How to Name a Church

PACKSADDLE CHURCH," advertised on a highway sign south of Fort Smith, Ark., is not very well named.

The name does not tell me what goes on there, as do the names "Fellowship Baptist Church," at Waldron, Ark.; and "Harmony Freewill Baptist Church," south of Needmore, Ark.

The name does not tell me anything about the doctrines taught there, as obtains in the names of some churches.

Nor does the name refer to any New Testament place or person—nor to any important figure in later Church history, such as Luther or Wesley.

Almost as inadequately named is the "Jenny Lind Baptist Church," a little to the south in the same state.

The name "First," such as "First Presbyterian Church," has possible points in its favor, especially if the city where it is located is a rather large one. It often implies to newcomers that at that local church they might find certain services to the whole family not found in small churches (youth minister and special choirs). Hardly called for, however, is the name "First Pentecostal Church of God," to designate a church recently observed in a rural area where only two houses were in the vicinity.

It is probably a good thing that holi-



by
J. Kenneth Grider

Professor of Theology
Nazarene Theological Seminary
Kansas City, Mo.

ness churches have seldom gone on with that kind of naming to "Second" and "Third," as local churches in some denominations have done.

To be considered in naming a church is whether or not a given name is so appropriate that its use is warranted even though that name would not be appropriate if the church were to be relocated. Many churches are named according to the road or avenue on which they are situated and must be renamed when and if they are relocated. Such names as "Grace" or "Faith" are advantageous in such instances.

As our denominations begin working toward the goal of organizing more new churches, and as we find ourselves having to rename relocated local churches, the following are a few of the questions that need to be asked when naming a church.

1. Should the name suggest what is emphasized there is the way of doctrine?

2. Should the name suggest what the people of God feel or experience there?

3. Should the name suggest where the church can be found?

4. Should the name suggest the sequence in which the churches of a given denomination in a particular city were founded?

5. Should the name of the whole town be chosen, such as "Allentown Church of the Nazarene," when other Nazarene churches might be started in that town?

6. Should it memorialize a given individual, since that individual might not be known locally, or if he is, might not be known some years hence—and the name would have to be perennially explained to new people?

How do you name a local church? I hope we find names a little better than "Packsaddle," and I hope we have to find a lot of them in the next few years.

Practical Points

that make a difference

He Loved—and They Gave!

Dear Son:

He saw Mrs. Mickel in the hospital the second day he was in town. She was suffering from a chronic kidney infection which was suspect of cancer, and she was in and out of the hospital periodically. The story is long, but over a period of months our pastor prayed, called, showed concern, and loved the whole family—and then the story came out.

The family felt inferior to the congregation. The son, a maintenance man, said, "They look down on us because we're not educated." But our pastor, who is highly educated, kept loving them.

Saturday the father called and said, "We see the teens are saving stamps to buy a Ping-Pong table. Why don't you let me buy it?" And sure enough, he came with a \$70.00 investment and spent the whole evening putting it together. Well, you know what happened! The whole family is getting involved in church.

The son read scripture in Sunday school, although he was "scared to death." The daughter is involved in teen activities because she feels appreciated. A family won through concern! It is inevitable to salvation.

Love,
Dad

Evangelistically Speaking—

The View from the Evangelistic Pew

MANY WONDERFUL ARTICLES have been written in the last several years on the lot of the evangelist. I, for one, sincerely appreciate our evangelists and have used some of the finest that there are in the field. However, it seems that a word would be in order from the pastor's point of view that may help some of our evangelists.

1. Give the pastor credit for his spiritual insight.

The evangelist arrived at the parsonage at approximately 5 p.m. The pastor had been preaching revival to his people for four weeks. For 24 hours prior to the meeting, pastor and people had prayed around the clock. This information was shared with the evangelist, who evidently took it with a "grain of salt." His opening remarks were, "Everywhere I go they tell me they are ready for a revival . . ." In spite of the fact that much publicity had gone out, and visitors with spiritual needs were in every service, the

evangelist proceeded for eight out of 10 services to "straighten" the church out. This is an insult to the overseer of the flock, who is there to stay.

Most of our spiritually starved visitors went away worse than when they came, because they were told how the church had backslidden, its pastors had compromised, and its leaders and institutions had become rotten to the core. Finally, in the closing service he managed to get all of us to the altar, to give him the fuel for his next meeting. He could go away and tell how—at his last revival—pastor and people came to the altar.

I would warn any pastor that asked me about him. Of course, now that his meetings are coming hard, he asks why there is no demand for old-fashioned preaching anymore. The demand has never been greater for old-fashioned preaching, coupled with old-fashioned common sense.

2. Quit when you are through.

The story of the man slipping out the side door of the church at 12:15 p.m. points out a weakness of some evangelists. Someone asked the man, "Isn't the preacher through preaching yet?" He replied, "Yes, but he won't quit." Brethren, quit as soon as you are through, and you will have another chance tomorrow night. Remember, you can sleep until 10 a.m. while others will have to get up at 4:30 a.m.



by
Theo Carter

Pastor, Atlanta, Ga.

3. *Control your family.*

The house of God should be respected as a sacred place. I have taught my children and those of the laymen that carelessness in God's house is not to be tolerated. But when the evangelist arrived with his family, God's house became the playhouse, and the sacred altar a place to jump or hide behind. Let me add that this is not true of all family evangelists, but it is true of some that are on their way out, wondering why.

4. *Avoid stereotype.*

One of the finest revivals that this church has enjoyed to date came as a result of prayer and the wonderful, biblical preaching of our evangelist. As a result, our enthusiastic laymen desired to have him back one year later. Those who had marked his texts in their Bibles recognized his sermons as exactly the same—even in the same sequence—as the previous year. The revival was a complete flop, even though the preaching was the same—too much the same. I would hope that

our evangelists will periodically take time for new sermon preparation. If the evangelist has but 10 sermons, even to preach the Saturday night sermon on Tuesday would be some change.

5. *Recognize every church as individual.*

The evangelist was visibly shaken when his sermon that had produced a landslide in West Virginia, Florida, Indiana, or Tennessee didn't even scratch the surface in Georgia. If it was effective in Mississippi, it may also be effective in South Carolina—but it ought to be “born again.”

Dr. Bracken used to tell his students at Trevecca Nazarene College, “Preach your sermons over as often as you can get them born again—no more.”

These thoughts are shared with the prayer that they may be of help to a grand group of preachers engaged in the thankless task of full-time evangelistic work. May their tribe increase as they avoid the pitfalls along the way and give to God and the Church their very best for the salvation of the lost.

No two are exactly alike, but there are common elements in every call to preach

What Is a Call to Preach?

By Barth Smith*

DURING THE PAST YEAR I have read numerous applications submitted to a Nazarene college. Many things are taken into consideration when a ministerial candidate applies. The financial status of the candidate is important. His letters of recommendation are reviewed. But more important than any

of these factors in his purpose for enrollment. Here we discover if a person has indicated a definite and decisive call to preach.

What does it mean to be called of God to preach?

A call to preach is a call from God. John Oliver Nelson defines the call of God in terms of being confronted with a life situation where God is needed

*Dean, Nazarene Bible College, Colorado Springs, Colo.

and to realize that you must help meet the need. In this definition we discover: (1) The call is from God. (2) The call is to meet a definite need. (3) The call is the result of an inner compulsion to help people. God must select men for the ministry. This is the first premise of a call from God to preach. Without this foundation, the other considerations for preaching are faulty. The fact that God chose me for the ministry, and I acknowledge this call, is the heart of it.

A call to preach is a communication from God. When God calls, He communicates His will through a variety of channels. It may come through His Word. It may come as an inner persuasion whereby a person feels he is directly invited to take up the work of the ministry. Sometimes God has used another person to communicate his call. John Knox was singled out in the congregation by a preacher named John Rough and exhorted to refuse not the holy vocation Jesus had given him to perform. His call may occur in an ecclesiastical setting.

George Truitt, for many years pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, Tex., was pulled aside by many Christians after his conversion and asked this question: "Shouldn't you be preaching?" He related how one night at the close of a church conference an old deacon stood up and began to talk. Before he sat down he moved that the church ordain George Truitt to the full-time ministry. The motion was seconded, at which time Truitt stood to his feet and said, "Brethren, you have me appalled . . . Wait six months before doing such a thing." Members of the congregation responded by saying, "We dare not wait. We must follow our convictions." Truitt throughout his

life emphasized the individual's personal call from God, but the role of other Christians in it was of great significance in his own experience.

A call to preach has only one purpose. That purpose is to proclaim the gospel. The gospel is the good news of God's reconciling love given to us in Christ Jesus, who came to the world and made atonement for our sins. A man who preaches the gospel declares that Jesus is our risen Lord. To the world this may seem foolish. But God uses the "foolishness of preaching" to save those who believe. A man called to preach proclaims only one message.

A call to preach is a call to servanthship. This concept of servanthship is the Christian distinctive of the ministry. It means a minister willingly gets down under the load of human need. The measure of Christian greatness is not prominence and power, but humility and faithfulness. The primary purpose of ministry becomes that of serving rather than being served. The call to servanthship is endangered today by the materialistic rush of modern life. God-called men must be servants.

What is a call to preach? It is really hard to explain, but nevertheless is very real and meaningful to those who are called. It is an act of God whereby He communicates His will for men to preach the gospel. God uses many channels to communicate His will. Among them are His Word and other Christians. The primary foundation for a call must be this: Is it from God? Unless God calls us, we labor in vain. Sometimes in the valley of discouragement and depression this clear call of God is the only signal we have to keep us going. I am glad to know that the church believes in a God-called ministry.

To merely identify oneself with the cause and defense of the Christian faith without an accompanying commitment to and demonstration of that faith results in soul-dissatisfaction and exposure to eternal loss.

—Don Owens

NAZARENE FOCUS

FOR PASTORS AND LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

COMPILED BY THE GENERAL STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION
EARL C. WOLF, Executive Director HAROLD O. PARRY, Office Editor

Six More Months

By General Superintendent Stowe



Time does march on. July is the halfway point in another year. But 1973 isn't just *another* year! It's a key year—yes, Key '73! In six months the record will be written—in indelible ink. Will it read, "100,000 new Nazarenes received"? How is your church progressing toward its goal? This last half of 1973 must be maximized!

I. HARVEST THE FRUIT OF SUMMER EVANGELISM

If you wait until fall you'll wait too long. Vacation Bible school evangelism should result in several prime membership prospects. One of our churches had a number of children converted in its VBS. No follow-up was made. A few weeks later, several of these child-converts attended the vacation Bible school of another denomination. At the close of that school the pastor baptized and took into membership 11 boys and girls who had been saved in the Nazarene vacation Bible school.

Another important step is to conserve the result of summer-camp evangelism. If you can't personally attend all the camps, find out which of your young people and children sought the Lord at camp altars. Channel these new Christians into membership immediately.

II. CONTINUOUS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

Have weekly sessions—during the Sunday school hour, following the midweek service, or on Saturday morning. Four meetings should be sufficient to cover doctrine, rules, and government. Don't make new converts wait a month. Start them in the first session after they are saved, and let them complete the four-week cycle.

III. SET A MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP SUNDAY

Make definite plans to receive at least one person into the church each month. Mobilize your membership committee and Sunday school teachers as "recruiters" to seek out candidates. Train your personal evangelists to get those whom they lead to Christ into immediate contact with the pastor so they can be directed into membership. On Membership Sunday have the person primarily responsible for each new member stand at the church altar with him and present him to the pastor for reception.

Church membership is a sacred privilege. No one should be taken in who is unwilling to accept its standards of admission. But no one should be denied this privilege who is willing to accept its responsibilities. ". . . that . . . [we] might by all means save some."

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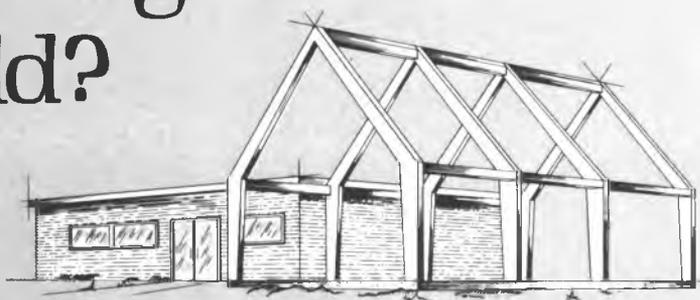
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Planning to Build?



The Department of Home Missions in Kansas City maintains a lending library of books about the beginning phases of church building programs. Write for them. They will be helpful to you.

The filmstrip "Let's Build" (FS-351) may be rented from the Nazarene Publishing House (\$3.50). Seeing it is a "must" for any building committee before they settle down to planning their building.

If financing is your problem, perhaps the General Church Loan Fund is your answer. Loans are made only to home mission churches, however, so check your eligibility. A home mission church is one five years or younger with fewer than 50 members raising less than \$20,000 per year.

Always work in close cooperation with your district superintendent and district boards of home missions and church extension. They have been through many building programs and know the pitfalls to avoid. Also they must approve your plans before you build.

**Always build for God's glory
and man's salvation.**

Real

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. . . IN WORSHIP

God comes first! Every service should be the most important event of the week.

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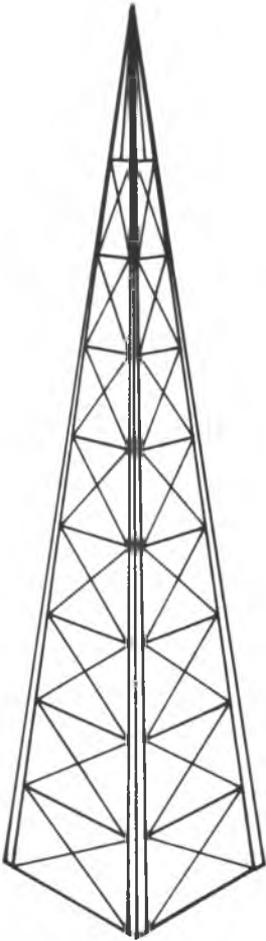
We do not know all that we should about witnessing, but we can tell what Christ has done for us.

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AMBASSADORS NOW (FR-115). 28 minutes, color. Join the 1969 Ambassador Team in the thrilling travels that took these 12 college students to nine countries in Europe and Central America. Original music score; filmed on location. (1970) *Freewill Offering.*

ASSIGNMENT AMBASSADORS (FR-107). Take a thrill-packed trip to South America along with 16 young Nazarene Ambassadors as they present the gospel to the hungry South American people. (1966) *Freewill Offering.*

FOUND (FR-112). 30 min., color. Born in Germany, where he was converted at an early age, William Sedat came to America as a young man. Here he became interested in missionary work among Central American Indian tribes, scores of which had no written language. It has been to the Kekchi and Pocomchi Indians that Dr. Sedat has given his life. Follow him along the narrow jungle trails and catch a glimpse of the people Bill and Betty Sedat have been called to serve. (1968) *Freewill Offering.*

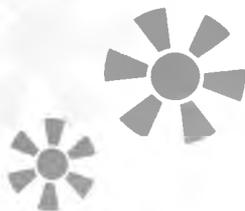
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THE GENERAL (FR-106). Color film that shows in a clever presentation with animated techniques how our General Budget came into being and how it is being used (1961) Available on a *Freewill Offering basis.*

THE SPREADING FLAME (FR-111). 30 min., color. Contrasting with the religious rites of both ancient and modern Latin America, small groups here and there through Mexico and Central America have caught the dynamic of the gospel and the purpose of the Church of the Nazarene. The accounts of vision and sacrifice which have grown out of these Latin fields are deep with feeling and reassurance. (1968) *Freewill Offering.*

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THE PREACHER'S WIFE

Mrs. B. Edgar Johnson

Let It Ring!

By Marjorie Wallace*

HOW OFTEN HAVE WE, as pastors' wives, listened to that noisy phone and been tempted to just let it ring? The phone can be a disturbing and annoying interruption. It often bores us, takes our valuable time, and keeps us from needed rest. Before you yank that bothersome invention from the wall, give some thought to this important contact with the outside.

It's two o'clock in the morning when the phone seems to jump as it rings to be answered. Mr. Maxwell is almost beside himself as he calls for help. His wife of 54 years has had a heart attack. She has been taken to the hospital, but Mr. Maxwell needs comfort and love from a faithful minister. His source of comfort was as close as his phone. Soon the pastor has been able to calm Mr. Maxwell, and daylight breaks as they pray together.

In the heat of the afternoon, the phone again summons us. Eight-year-old Janie has been attending Sunday school for three weeks. Her mother is calling to ask for help in a home situation. Here is a good way to reach the entire family for God and the church. Once again, thanks to that phone, we are off to help.

A lonesome, homesick newlywed, married to a serviceman, calls later that day. She has been to church only twice, but God's conviction is upon her.

*Pastor's wife. Port Angeles, Wash.

She needs to talk; she needs prayer. As we go to her aid, I'm again grateful for the phone.

Little Vicki, the organist's child, is critically ill. Only the prayer chain, through the use of the phone, can have 50 people on their knees praying for Vicki within one-half hour. God is answering prayer. Vicki is improving.

Dinner is interrupted by a long awaited call. Hurt feelings have resulted from a disagreement at the church board meeting. A man is calling to ask forgiveness. How glad we are that God is dealing and Christians are minding!

Each of these dear folk had an urgent call. What would have been the outcome if we had let that phone ring? Vicki needed help *now*. Mr. Maxwell needed help *now*. It is difficult to ask forgiveness, and that friend might not have called again. Janie's family was in church last Sunday. Our homesick newlywed has found Christ. Now she has other young women from the church with which to associate.

Yes, the phone continues to ring. The happy calls, the long-drawn-out conversations of lonely people, the silly calls from teen-agers—all must be answered. Let us be grateful for the avenue of service that our phone affords.

Yes, Lord, thanks for my phone. May I use it as a tool for Thee. Amen.

In these days of tensions and anxieties, we need to show the people how God can solve their problems; and doctrinal preaching can be exciting as well as nurturing

Preaching That Builds Mature Christians

By Gordon Chilvers*

I HEAR YOU are preaching doctrinal sermons to your congregation at Carr's Lane," a fellow minister said to Dr. Robert W. Dale one day. "They will never stand it."

The famous Birmingham preacher replied: "They will have to stand it."

He was right. They not only stood it; they really thrived under it. What they "stood" is seen by reading Dr. Dale's great book on the atonement, every chapter of which went through the pulpit. Then we can turn to his book *Christian Doctrine*. Every word of that, too, was given to his people from the pulpit.

Doctrinal preaching is the urgent necessity of every congregation. Like the minister who spoke to Dr. Dale, a pastor may feel his congregation would not appreciate doctrinal sermons. True, people do not want to hear doctrinal discourses that have no relation to daily life. Nor do they appreciate lots of theological terms they do not understand.

Yet they are hungry for doctrinal sermons that will inspire them to do the will of God and to start at once. Men are often puzzled by events and hurt by life. They are eager to hear what the Bible has to say on such matters.

Robert J. Robinson, minister of the First Baptist Church of Augusta, Ga., asked his people to name the two ser-

mons which they wished him to use on "Preach-it-again Sunday." They were to choose from the morning and evening subjects of the past year. From mimeographed sheets containing texts, topics, and brief notes, they chose these subjects: "Does Prayer Work?" and "When the Bible Fails to Speak." From a list not specially doctrinal, they had chosen two doctrinal subjects.

The urgency for a minister to preach doctrinal sermons is well expressed by Dr. Andrew W. Blackwood: "In a doctrinal sermon the call is for a popular interpretation of a high Christian truth, in order to answer the unspoken question of the hearer. The difficulty is that the man in the pulpit must know the heart hunger of his people. He must be able to understand what some part of the Bible teaches with reference to such a human need. Then he must be able to let the revealed truth shine out through his sermon so as to meet the human need. Is it any wonder that doctrinal preaching is difficult? Nevertheless it is the need of the hour."

Doctrinal preaching is so crucial to every preacher as it is not a type which stands aloof from other types, but is closely bound up with them.

Though the evangelistic preacher will aim to keep everything simple, doctrinal preaching is at the heart of evangelism. Evangelistic preaching is

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designed to bring the unsaved hearer face-to-face with Jesus Christ. The preacher seeks to show him his sin and that he ought to repent.

While we must say, "Come to Jesus," we need to do more than merely repeat the phrase. The unsaved hearer must know what is meant to come to Jesus, why he should come, and what results will follow when he comes.

When the apostles evangelized the multitudes, they did not studiously avoid doctrine in their sermons, as the early chapters of Acts make plain. Evangelistic movements of more recent days have had a good measure of doctrinal preaching.

The doctrines to be preached will include: the love of God, the holiness of God, the meaning of sin, man's accountability to God, the forgiveness of sin, true repentance, God's reconciling work in Christ, and eternal life.

One type of evangelistic doctrinal preaching is done by taking a text and expounding it. Almost every verse from Isaiah 53, for example, could be treated doctrinally in an evangelistic sermon. Some time ago a series of sermons on Isaiah 53 was published in my name. I understood that later they were effectively used by an evangelist thousands of miles away. Certainly Philip the Evangelist had no difficulty in evangelizing the eunuch by a doctrinal sermon from Isaiah 53.

Another approach to doctrinal preaching in evangelism can be taken by using one of the New Testament case studies. In the Gospels we see Christ working with such people as the Samaritan woman (John 4), Zacchaeus (Luke 19), and the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43). In Acts we have such cases as the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (c. 9), of Cornelius (c. 10), of Lydia (c. 16), and of the Philippian jailer (c. 16).

Doctrinal preaching will show our hearers they can get complete relief for their soul sickness. In these days of un-

ceasing tension, we receive a loud call to show believers what God can do to solve their problems. The most effective help we can give comes from doctrinal preaching.

Every human difficulty can be overcome by God. Primarily, then, we seek to show men what answer God has for them. Robert E. Luccock has a volume of doctrinal sermons called *If God Be for Us*. In these words he shows how the doctrine meets the need of each class of hearers: "If God be for us, it means release from anxiety, healing for loneliness, assurance that life is not lost in any kind of frustration. Because God is our Friend, it means release from life's poisons, redemption of suffering, the fellowship of the Church in our conflict with evil."

Our purpose as preachers is not to concentrate our hearers' attention on the sickness, but on the God who can heal it.

Here are some of God's remedies: for the fearful—Ps. 32:4-8; for the depressed—Psalms 34; for the discouraged—Ps. 118:5-13; for those having doubts—John 20:24-29; for those who want forgiveness of sin—I John 1:9; for those needing guidance—Ps. 37:3-11; for the lonely—Psalms 23; for those needing peace—Phil. 4:6-7; for those in sorrow—John 14:1-3; for those who are tempted—I Cor. 10:12-13.

Doctrinal preaching is the regulator of human conduct. Often ethical sermons give us preachers the most concern. If we attack the issue head on, some hearers will put up their defenses and refuse to listen, while others will become so absorbed in the topic that it will shut out other matters of importance. If we only hint at what is correct conduct in a specific situation, then for some hearers it will have no more permanence than water on a duck's back. Our knowledge of our hearers will guide us as to how to treat each specific ethical issue. Yet at the basis of them all must be a solid foun-

dation of doctrine.

The Bible treats the matter that way. The Ten Commandments begin with a doctrinal statement, God's love in redemption: "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of . . . the house of bondage" (Exod. 20:2). The Apostle Paul always made his ethics depend on the doctrine he had already given. We see this clearly brought out in the Epistles of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, where approximately the first half is doctrinal. This is made the basis for the moral exhortation given in the second part of the Epistle.

How Paul relates doctrine to life is seen in I Corinthians 15. Having spoken of the certainty of our resurrection from the dead, he exhorts us to steadfastness, as no honest service for God is in vain.

This doctrinal approach in ethical sermons is essential. Our hearers must learn how important doctrine is as a basis of their conduct. The British writer Dorothy L. Layers once said: "It is worse than useless for Christians to talk about the importance of Christian morality unless they are prepared to take their stand upon the fundamentals of Christian theology."

When our sermon is doctrinal, we seek to explain one section of Christian truth in a way that will meet a human need. Preaching which does not urge the hearers to believe or do something is nearer an essay than a sermon. Phillips Brooks said: "The truth is given to us, not to be lectured on, but to be lived by." Adapting his later words we ask ourselves: "How fully are our hearers living? Not how many doctrines do they hold, but how much of the life of God have they taken into their lives?"

One useful way of beginning a doctrinal sermon is by means of a life-situation. This will alert our hearers to the practical nature of the sermon. They might think a sermon that begins with doctrine would be remote from

their lives with its continual barrage of problems. The life-situation can be an incident from the Bible. This can be told dramatically and with just sufficient detail to ensure the hearers of getting the point of the story. It could be an incident from life today. The amount of detail we give depends on how well the congregation is likely to know it.

A doctrinal sermon must always keep moving or it will be dull, heavy, and unreal. Ideally, says Andrew W. Blackwood, it "should be so full of life, motion, and color that only the most thoughtful laymen will discover that they are hearing doctrine."

To do this, we preachers must use imagination, especially in our presentation of the subject. Yet imagination is not that fancy which invents, nor does it resemble wild horses let loose. We should first get all the information to enable our hearers to see clearly their situation in the light of the doctrine we are teaching.

Further, life will come into the sermon as we confine our words to contemporary language. This means the avoiding of all theological terms unless we explain them carefully. Also we must overcome the temptation to speak in the words and thought forms of the King James Version. Using current language will show our hearers that what we have to say is relevant to life even though the basis of our message is from an incident of 4,000 years ago. This is especially important for young people. They are always being told the Bible is out-of-date and meaningless for today.

Every sermon is finally a personal matter between the hearer and God. To facilitate the process of the hearer's relating the message to his life we must sound the personal note distinctly. It is what the person does with our message that makes it valuable, not how he thinks it applies to some other person or whether he compliments us on a

good sermon.

During World War I, Arthur J. Gossip preached on the text: "God is our refuge and strength" (Ps. 46:1). He called it "How to Face Life with Steady Eyes." After a few sentences of introduction he asked his war-weary hearers, "Aren't you forgetting God? And when did He ever fail us?"

Our hearers are more likely to be attracted by our doctrinal sermons when we preach them joyously and

persuasively rather than apologetically. We are sure of the truth we are preaching and just as sure that our hearers can receive tremendous benefits from receiving it and rightly reacting to it.

Our people need to see constantly how God and their lives are related. When we preach good doctrinal sermons, we can expect our people to show how well and how fully they are responding to this rich fare from God's table.

Innovator or Imitator?

SOCIOLOGIST C. Wright Mills writes, "As a social and personal force, religion has become dependable. It does not originate—it reacts. It does not denounce—it adapts. It does not set forth new models of conduct—it imitates." The concerned Christian must ask himself, What significant impact do I and my church make on those with whom I come in contact?

We are in an age of rebellion against the modern social order. The leaders of the revolution are found in our younger generation. It is seen in the hippies and kindred groups. Will Herberg, noted theologian, points out the methods of the hippies in seeking to replace hate and war with love, and conformity with nonconformity. He likens them to a religious movement of some decades ago known as the "Adamites." Too often it

is easy for us, as we conform to our age and allow it to squeeze us into its mold, to ignore the foment of revolution that goes on around us.

The Early Church certainly were innovators! They were a loosely organized collection of lower-class people who met in one another's homes for prayer and learning and worship together. They had no buildings and no relish for ecclesiastical titles, but they shared two characteristics: *Christ was real* to them, and they burned with an intense *desire to share* this reality with a sinful world.

The imitator is usually characterized by an apologetic air. Nathan M. Pusey of Harvard, a place not commonly thought of as a provincial, church-related college, speaks boldly and says, "It would seem to me that the finest fruit of serious learning should be the ability to speak the word "God" without reserve or embarrassment, certainly without adolescent resentment; rather with some sense of communion, with reverence, and with joy." The minister of our day could well adopt this attitude toward his calling and his message.

There is a great danger that we will



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decide merely to follow the trends of our day rather than to attempt to reverse some of these trends. James H. Laird points an accusing finger at his own denomination by saying, "We have been an ingredient of the earth rather than its salt. We have been enamoured by numbers, overimpressed by size, worshipping at the shrine of worldly success, overawed by the glitter and glamour of our split level churches. Still a modern Zechariah might say to us if we would listen, 'Not by number and not by beauty, but by my Spirit says the Lord of Hosts.'"

There is no question that imitation will not successfully meet the problems of this age. We must not be afraid to change our methods in order to proclaim the changeless message. Our methods must help us to reach that great army of the unchurched who reside in high-rise apartments, trailer courts, hospitals, and prisons. We could

well explore once again the possibilities of outdoor services and small-group meetings. A small group of committed Christians can do a great deal in the penetration of the various sectors of our world. We must have folk who are willing to revive the New Testament concept of going out where the people are. We must not be afraid to be unconventional.

Elton Trueblood in *The Company of the Committed* has pointed out the fact that two of the most significant movements in religious history have been military in form and organization—the Jesuits under Loyola, and the Salvation Army under William Booth. They were both successful in influencing the world because they refused to be imitators. They sought and found ways to make their impact felt.

There is a place for the ministry of the holiness church today. God help us to find ways to multiply that ministry!

IN THE STUDY

Marching with the Master Through Mark

July 1

PUBLIC ENEMY NO. 1 (5:3-5)

SCRIPTURE: Mark 5:1-17

INTRODUCTION: Some years ago John Dillinger was labeled by the FBI as "Public Enemy No. 1." He was a trigger-happy man who could very coolly shoot down bank employees. Everyone feared this heartless murderer.

But the real Public Enemy No. 1 is sin. It destroys not only men's bodies, but their souls as well. The Bible declares, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). We

should be more afraid of sin than we are of the most vicious, violent criminal. For sin can cause us to be lost eternally.

Jesus and His disciples had gone to the east side of the Lake of Galilee in order to find a place of quiet seclusion for a much needed vacation. But their plans were interrupted by a demon-possessed man, who came shouting to meet them (v. 7). He had many "devils" (vv. 9, 12). This should be translated "demons." The Greek always distinguishes carefully between *diabolos*, "devil," and *daimonia*, "demons." The former is never in the plural. There are

many demons, but only one devil. (On this point, *The New English Bible* is inaccurate.)

In the description of the Gadarene demoniac we see a vivid picture of sin. We shall notice three aspects of that portrait.

I. SIN IS SUICIDE (v. 3a).

We read that this man "had his dwelling among the tombs." That is, he was dwelling in the place of death. And that is what every sinner is doing. John 3:36 says: "He who is believing on the Son has everlasting life: and he who is not obeying the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (literal Greek). The one who keeps on sinning is slowly but surely committing suicide. Every time a man deliberately disobeys God he drives another nail into the coffin of his eternal doom.

II. SIN IS INSANITY (vv. 3b-4).

In some of the demoniac's quieter moments the men of the village would grab him. They would fasten his hands behind his back with chains. Then they would tie ropes around his ankles. But as demon power surged through him, he would tear apart his chains and kick off the fetters. Then he would rush at the people as they fled in fear. "No man could bind him," not even with chains.

Sin is *unbinding*. You can tie it down in one place, and it will break out in another. People conquer one bad habit, only to find themselves slaves of another. We have had a man say to us: "I gave up drinking, but I just can't quit smoking." Only the power of Christ can break the power of sin.

Sin is also *untamable*. We read: "Neither could any man tame him." Sin is like a wild animal that has never been tamed. Hunters and trappers in the northern woods of Canada and Alaska have told us that the bear is the most treacherous animal of the forest. It may outwardly appear to be sub-

missive. But they say that the basic nature of a bear remains unchanged. In an off-guard moment it will turn murderously on any human being within range.

And that is the way sin is. Some people think they can tame it. But they are only deceiving themselves. Only God can control it and cleanse us from it. We are helpless to handle it.

III. SIN IS SELF-DESTRUCTION (v. 5).

All the time, "night and day," the demoniac was in the mountains and among the tombs, "crying"—that is, "screaming"—"and cutting himself with stones." He was destroying himself, which shows that he was in a real sense insane. For people in their right mind do not deliberately destroy themselves. Sin is spiritual insanity because it is self-destruction.

The self-destructiveness of sin is easily seen in the case of alcoholics and drunkards. But the Surgeon-General's report showed conclusively that cigarettes often produce lung cancer, and therefore are destructive of one's physical health. Why, then, do people keep on smoking and drinking? The answer is found in a phrase that occurs in Heb. 3:13—"the deceitfulness of sin." People who show good sense in other matters will act insane at this point.

We can observe the physical effects of the heavy use of alcohol and tobacco. But the so-called "sins of the spirit" are no less damaging. Anger, hate, and jealousy destroy the finer fibers of the soul just as surely as the sins of the flesh destroy the body. All sin is self-destruction. The only successful remedy is salvation through Christ. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift" (Greek, "free gift") "of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

A good closing illustration for this message can be found in the article entitled "The Man Who Wrote His Own Obituary," in the July, 1966, issue of the *Reader's Digest*.



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July 8

FAITH REWARDED (5:34)

SCRIPTURE: Mark 5:25-34

INTRODUCTION: In the second half of chapter 5 we have an incident that is unique in the Gospels: two miracles dovetailed to-

gether in one story. In response to an eager plea, Jesus started out for the home of a synagogue ruler named Jairus. While He was on the way, a woman touched His robe and was healed. After she had witnessed to this, the Master continued on to Jairus' house and raised his daughter from death.

There is a suggestion here of two types of sinners. Some seek out Christ, as did the woman, and are saved. Others seem as helpless to make a move toward Him as was the 12-year-old girl who was dead in her home. To such, the Saviour must be brought in personal soul winning. They will not come to church, but must be found where they are. Both types need the Master, and both can be saved.

I. THE WOMAN'S AFFLICTION (v. 25)

We are told that the woman had an "issue" or "flowing" of blood for 12 years. Such prolonged hemorrhaging would leave her weak and pale—a constant source of embarrassment. Typically, Mark, reflecting the blunt preaching of Peter, says that she "had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse" (v. 26). One has only to read the absurd prescriptions for medical treatment given in the Talmud to realize that this statement is not at all exaggerated (see Vincent, *Word Studies*, I, 189; Adam Clarke, V, 304). The rabbis had a saying for it: "The best physician is worthy of Gehenna."

The woman's case seemed hopeless. Luke, the physician, agrees that she "had spent all her living upon physicians," but quickly adds: "neither could be healed by any" (8:43). She had an incurable condition.

II. THE WOMAN'S FAITH (v. 28)

The natural hopelessness of the woman's condition was matched by her faith that expressed itself in hope. She said, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." The Greek says, "I will be saved." The verb *sozo* is used largely for physical healing in the Synoptic Gospels, but for spiritual salvation in the Epistles. In Acts, which is a transitional book, both usages occur.

The woman's faith was not passive but active. When she heard about the miracles Jesus was performing, she believed He could heal her too. So she put feet to her

faith and came to Him. Timid and self-conscious, she slipped up behind Him in the "press"—the Greek simply says "crowd"—and touched His "garment"—*himation*, His outer cloak.

III. THE WOMAN'S FORTUNE (v. 29)

The results of her faith were instantaneous. "Straightway," or "immediately"—a key word in Mark, occurring 40 times—"the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt" (Greek, "knew") "in her body that she was healed of that plague." Her faith was rewarded at once—no waiting or teasing.

It cost Jesus something to heal people. We are told that He perceived that "virtue" (*dynamis*, "power") "had gone out of him." The great Healer of mankind gave of himself wherever He healed anyone.

So He turned and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" The disciples replied, in substance, "There are many people pressing against You, and how can You ask who touched You?" Ignoring their lack of understanding, Jesus continued looking around to see who had touched Him. Finally the woman saw that she could not hide. She came, knelt humbly before Him, and "told him all the truth." Because of this she got a double blessing: "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole" ("saved you"); "go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." Not only had she been healed, but the healing was permanent.

Why did Jesus make the woman confess before the whole crowd? Because He knew it would help to strengthen her faith. It was not a cruel demand, but an act of love for the woman's good.

July 15

FAITH, NOT FAILURE

SCRIPTURE: Mark 5:22-24, 35-43

INTRODUCTION: Jairus was one of the "synagogue rulers" (one word in Greek). As such he was a highly respected member of his community. He was also a Pharisee—the Pharisees had charge of the synagogues—and we know how the Pharisees felt toward Jesus. So it took humility and courage for Jairus to ask Jesus for help.

But he was desperate. His daughter was dying. And so his love led him to break through all barriers and seek help from the

despised Prophet of Nazareth. He fell at Jesus' feet in earnest supplication. Love knows no limitations.

I. FAITH TRYING (v. 23)

Jairus "besought him greatly." The adjective *polla* literally means "many." Here it is used as an adverb in the sense of "much." But it may also suggest that in his desperation he said repeatedly, "Please help us!"

Moved by intense love for his little girl, the father cried out, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death," or "is at her last gasp." When Jairus left the house, his daughter's condition was so desperate that it seemed every breath she drew might be her last. Matthew, in his account, puts it even more strongly: "My daughter is even now dead"; that is, she is already as good as dead.

But Jairus exhibited amazing faith for a Pharisee. He said: "Come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed" ("saved"); "and she shall live." He believed that Jesus could bring the girl back from the very jaws of death.

II. FAITH TRIED (vv. 35-36)

Jesus was very happy to answer the father's earnest plea for his daughter, and so He started out for Jairus' house. But "much people"—"a large crowd"—"followed him, and thronged him"—literally, "pressed Him together." This impeded His progress and must have made Jairus feel impatient.

Then came the woman who touched the Master and was healed. Jesus turned around and asked who touched Him. When the woman testified to her healing, He gave her a special blessing. But all this took precious time, and we can easily imagine how the tension mounted inside the agonized father's heart.

To cap it all, some messengers came from Jairus' house with the sad news, "Your daughter is dead." Then they added, "Why do you bother the Teacher any longer?" We can easily catch the implication: "He doesn't care about your daughter, or He wouldn't be talking to this woman!" It was a testing time for Jairus. But Jesus said: "Stop being afraid; just keep on believing" (v. 36).

III. FAITH TRIUMPHANT (v. 42)

When Jesus arrived at Jairus' house, He found the professional mourners making a

tumult of loud weeping and wailing. He put them all out, entered the room, and said to the dead daughter in Aramaic, "Talitha cumi"—"Little girl, get up." It was probably the way the mother called her each morning. What a beautiful, tender touch!

Then Jesus commanded something to be given the little girl to eat. He had raised her from the dead, but it was now the parents' responsibility to keep her alive. So today. Only God can bring the sinner back to life, but we are to see that the new convert is spiritually fed.

July 22

DISCIPLES ARE MISSIONARIES (6:7)

SCRIPTURE: Mark 6:7-13

INTRODUCTION: The term "disciple" today usually signifies a follower. Literally the Greek word *mathetes* means "a learner." The disciples of the various rabbis were those who sat at their feet and learned from them. So it was with the disciples of Jesus.

But in this passage we see that the disciples were sent out by their Master. These two aspects of discipleship are well summarized in Mark 3:14: "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach." We must first sit at Jesus' feet and learn from Him. But then we must go out in His name to minister to needy humanity.

I. WENT IN PAIRS (v. 7)

Jesus understood human nature. He appreciated the importance of companionship. So He sent out His disciples "by two and two."

This is a necessity for missionary work today. Failure to recognize this has brought much tragedy. Increasingly, missionary societies are asking for married couples. There are enough special trials and hardships on the mission field without people trying to face them alone. If single girls or men are sent, they should be sent in pairs, as Jesus sent His disciples. Then if one becomes discouraged, the other can furnish encouragement. If one becomes ill, the other can care for the patient.

II. WENT TO PREACH (v. 12)

Repentance was the main theme of John the Baptist's ministry. His text was: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at

hand" (Matt. 3:2). Jesus started His public ministry with exactly the same proclamation (Matt. 4:17). Now the disciples went out and "preached that men should repent."

What does the word "repentance" mean? The popular idea is that it means being sorry for sin. But the Bible plainly declares that "godly sorrow" works "repentance" (II Cor. 7:10). So sorrow for sin is the prelude to repentance, not the repentance itself.

When asked the above question, a little girl is said to have replied, "It means being sorry enough to quit." That comes a lot nearer the truth. Actually the Greek word *metanoia* means "a change of mind." To repent is to change one's mind with regard to God, sin, oneself, and one's whole future. But this is more than something mental. It is basically a moral decision to be done forever with sin.

III. WENT WITH POWER (v. 13)

We are told that the disciples cast out many demons (not "devils") and "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." Demon possession, common in Palestine in Jesus' day, and met by modern missionaries in Asia and Africa, is now becoming increasingly prevalent in America and Europe. This may well be one of the signs of the Second Coming, Satan putting forth extra energy as he sees that his time is short. Only divine power can cope with demon power.

The disciples "went out" (v. 12). We are familiar with the fact that the Greek word for "church" (*ecclesia*) means an assembly of "called out" ones. But the "called out" must become the "sent out" if sinners around us are going to be saved. All disciples must be missionaries, at home or abroad.

July 29

OBEDIENCE REWARDED (6:37)

SCRIPTURE: Mark 6:30-44

INTRODUCTION: Sometimes God asks us to do what seems impossible. But our only responsibility is to carry out His orders. It is His responsibility to furnish the necessary power. "Where God guides, God provides."

Jesus told His disciples to do what was utterly impossible: feed a crowd of thousands of people with one boy's small lunch. But the thrilling fact is that the disciples actually did this—with Christ's enablement!

I. THE MASTER'S COMPASSION (v. 34)

Again and again in the Synoptic Gospels we read that when Jesus saw human need He was "moved with compassion." But the Greek has the aorist tense, *esplanchnisthe*. It is better translated, "He was gripped with compassion." This was His instant reaction to human need, and it should be ours.

Jesus saw people as sheep without a shepherd. And so He became the Good Shepherd. As those who follow Him, we too must become shepherds to the lost sheep of the human race.

II. THE MEN'S CONFUSION (v. 36)

Jesus and His disciples had gone to the east side of the Lake of Galilee to have a quiet vacation (v. 31). But when they arrived there by boat they found a large crowd waiting for them. As we have already seen, Jesus did not react with resentment but with loving compassion. He taught them (v. 34), feeding their souls.

But as evening came on, their bodies were hungry. It was the Oriental custom that guests, even unexpected ones, must be fed at mealtime. So the disciples' reaction was: "Send them away." Let them go and get their own supper wherever they can.

To add to the disciples' confusion, Jesus said to them: "You give them something to eat" (v. 37). They almost exploded with incredulity. If they had two-thirds of a year's wages (200 denarii), it would not be enough to buy food for a crowd of 5,000 hungry men.

The Master asked His disciples to check up on how much food they actually had. Andrew vouchsafed the information that a boy had a small lunch with him (John 6:9). The "five loaves" were the size of small pancakes or thin breakfast biscuits.

III. THE MULTITUDE'S COMFORT (v. 42)

When the few small "loaves" and fish were presented to Jesus, He blessed and broke them, then gave them to His disciples, who in turn served the crowd. There was enough for all! We read: "They did all eat, and were filled." The last word literally

means "filled with grass." It is the picture of hungry sheep or cattle grazing until they have eaten all they want, and then lying down contentedly. The verse may well be translated: "They all ate and were satisfied." When the disciples gave their little bit to Jesus, He transformed it into food for a multitude. We can do the same today.



Mountaintop Living

SCRIPTURE: Mark 9:2-9

INTRODUCTION: All too well we know the valleys in our Christian lives. But here is a picture of the mountaintop. Peter, James, and John experienced one of the greatest moments of their lives as they witnessed Jesus transfigured before their eyes. We have all experienced those times when our faith has been lifted to a new dimension. Our enthusiasm has been rekindled. We feel like we could kill all the giants. The glow of God's presence is upon us.

And if we are really honest, most of us are just like Peter, who suggested that the mountaintop experience be preserved. We like mountaintop living; there is nothing better. But, in the way Peter suggested, it would have been impossible to preserve the experience. Why? Physically they had to come down from the mountain. Emotionally they had to come down. But spiritually, no one ever need come down from mountaintop living.

I. THE MOUNTAIN TOP—PHYSICALLY

A. They could not stay on the mountain forever.

1. There was the business of Kingdom building that had to go on.
2. There was work to be done: Man with dumb spirit healed on way down.

B. We cannot stay in revival services or special place of prayer forever.

1. There is work for Jesus to be done.

2. There is new vision for the tasks at hand.
3. There is refreshment and renewal that must be channeled into meaningful action for God.

II. THE MOUNTAIN TOP—EMOTIONALLY

A. The disciples had to come down emotionally.

1. Problems of maintaining a continuous spiritual high
 - a. Emotions ebb and flow.
 - b. Body gets tired and weak—depression and moods.
2. Problems of basing Christian life on feelings
 - a. Emotions play tricks.
 - b. Build your faith on the unchanging Word of God.
 - c. Martin Luther: "Feelings come and feelings go and feelings are deceiving. My warrant is the Word of God; naught else is worth believing."

B. The Christian will come down emotionally.

1. Feelings fail; faith never.
2. God's Word will stand—dependable.

III. THE MOUNTAIN TOP—SPIRITUALLY

A. The motives of mountaintop living

1. Peter's motive was right; his method, questionable.
 - a. Motive: Preserve the mountaintop experience.
 - b. Method: Build three booths.
2. God's method was sure.
 - a. "Focus on My Son" (vv. 7-8)—listen to Him; concentrate on Him.
 - b. The secret is Jesus—don't worry about others, stay close to Him.

B. The methods of mountaintop living

1. Always be totally honest with God.
 - a. Mistakes and failures: Take them to God immediately.
 - b. Unconfessed sin: Don't let the sun go down on sin.
2. Always be willing to obey.
 - a. Obey God implicitly, no matter what others do.
 - b. Follow Jesus' perfect exam-

ple: (1) purpose of going to the mountaintop; (2) confirmation of God's will.

3. Keep prayer life vital and up-to-date.
 - a. "Pray without ceasing" (Eph. 6:18).
 - b. Don't use God like a bottle of aspirins—for headache only.
4. Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.
 - a. The uplift of worship
 - b. The fellowship of worship
 - c. The lesson of the charcoal: Together make a glowing fire hot enough to cook steak. Set a hot, glowing ember out by itself and it will soon burn out.

CONCLUSION: Physically and emotionally it is impossible to stay on the mountaintop indefinitely. But it is possible spiritually if we will:

1. Be totally honest with God always.
2. Be willing to obey always.
3. Keep our prayer life vital and up-to-date.
4. Not neglect the ministry of the church.

There is no need to slide back to the valley spiritually. You can maintain the new ground you have gained and enjoy mountaintop living.

DAVID NIXON

The Nature of Jesus Christ

SCRIPTURE: John 1:1-18

I. CHRIST, PREEXISTENT WORD OF GOD—"In the beginning . . ." He did not come into being; He was.

A. He is called "the Word of God" because through Him are revealed to us the thoughts, feelings, purposes, and will of God.

B. They are now our words expressing to others our thoughts, feelings, purposes, and the will of God.

C. Christ is the Word of the Old Testament.

D. Christ's own person is the Word of God. He reveals to us God's nature, character, love, goodness, and attitude toward men. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

E. Christ's teachings reveal to us the mind and heart of God. He has prepared the heaven of eternal life and shows us the way there.

F. Christ's atonement on the Cross is the revelation and exemplification of God's love and plans for us. No other act can equal this expression of the heart of God.

G. Christ is still the Word of God by the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, whom He sends to reveal the truth.

II. CHRIST, DIVINE—"And the Word was with God . . ."

A. "The Word was God." None other greater than He. Not only equal to God (for that might imply two Gods). No, He is not one of two Gods; He is God himself—the one eternal God.

B. The Trinity is the absolute unity of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C. The distinction of the Godhead. Christ the Son is distinct from the Father. The revelation (relation) was not new with the coming of Christ. God was never without His Son.

III. CHRIST, THE CREATOR—"All things were made by him."

A. He exists, but all other things were made.

B. The Word was that part of the Godhead through which the creative power was exerted.

C. No things were made without Him.

IV. CHRIST, THE SOURCE OF LIFE—"In him was life."

A. He was the Source of all life—natural and spiritual (Col. 1:16-17).

B. The word "life" occurs 60 times in the brief books of John.

C. It is a far greater work to renew a soul (give it life) than to create the world. Only life can produce life.

D. In the first chapter of Genesis the word "create" is used three times—of matter, of life, and of the soul of man.

E. Christ is the spiritual Life; the new birth brings us into the life of God (1 John 5:12; Gal. 2:20).

V. CHRIST, THE SOURCE OF LIGHT—"And the light shineth in darkness."

A. Without the light the world would be a mass of coldness and death.

B. Light is the source of life. It gives beauty, warmth, comfort, joy, health, and power.

C. What light does for the natural world, Jesus does for the world of men. He reveals God, heaven, and truth. He shows the way. He renews, cheers, comforts, and causes growth.

D. How is life light? Dead things do not enjoy. Dead eyes do not see. Dead minds do not know the truth. Dead hearts do not feel or rejoice. The very first thing that makes light a reality is life. All the light of heaven concentrated upon an eye will not give it light unless it is a living eye.

E. How does Christ, the Life, give light?

By giving spiritual life, by renewing the soul. Then it sees, by experiencing the blessing and glory of spiritual and eternal things.

He gives light by teachings.

He gives light by example.

He gives light by manifestations in works and word of the nature and heart of God.

He gives light by revelation and experiences through the Spirit, whom He sends.

RALPH J. FERRIOLI

BULLETIN



BARREL

Quarrelsome

When you hark to the voice of the knocker,
As you list to his hammer fall—
Remember the fact that the knocking act
Requires no brains at all.

When you list to the growl of the growler,
As you hark to his ceaseless growl—
You will please recall that a dog is all
That is takes for an endless howl.

As you watch for the kick of the kicker,
As you notice his strenuous kick—
You'll observe the rule that a stubborn mule
Is great at the same old trick.

The knocker, the growler, the kicker;
Faultfinder, large and small—
What do they need for each day's need?
No brains, no sense—just gall!

—Selected

WOULDN'T IT BE WONDERFUL IF

All the sleeping would wake up,
All the lukewarm would warm up,
All the disgruntled would sweeten up,
All the discouraged would cheer up,
All the depressed would look up,
All the gossipers would shut up,
All the witnesses would speak up,
All the believers would stand up!

From the "Prow"
West Palm Beach, Fla.

A Good Sermon

*An old Scotch woman said to her pastor,
"That was a grand sermon you preached
last Lord's Day."*

*Seeking to test her sincerity he asked,
"And what was the text?"*

*"Ah, Minister!" she replied, "I don't
know the text or the words. But I came
home and took the false bottom out of my
peck measure."*

How Old?

"Dear Mother," said the little maid,
"Please whisper it to me—
Before I am a Christian
How old ought I to be?"

"How old ought you to be, dear child,
Before you can love me?"

"I've always loved you, Mummy dear,
Since I was tiny, wee.

"I love you now and always will,"
The little daughter said,
And on her mother's shoulder hid
Her golden, curly head.

"How old, my girlie, must you be
Before you trust my care?"

"O Mother dear, I do, I do;
I trust you everywhere."

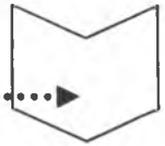
"Then you can be a Christian too;
Don't wait 'til you are grown.
Tell Jesus now you come to Him
To be His very own."

And so the little maid knelt down,
And said, "Lord, if I may,
I'd like to be a Christian now."
He answered, "Yes, today!"

Author unknown



HERE AND THERE



AMONG BOOKS

Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
Your Publishing House

Gifts and Graces

By *Arnold Bittlinger* (Eerdmans, 1972. 123 pp., paperback, \$1.95.)

Understanding Speaking in Tongues

By *Watson Mills* (Eerdmans, 1972. 88 pp., paperback, \$1.95.)

These two books may well be treated together. Both deal with a phenomenon that is attracting much attention today.

The subtitle of the first volume is "A Commentary on I Corinthians 12-14." It is divided into three parts, one part dealing with each of these three chapters. The material was first given as a series of Bible studies at a conference in West Germany and has been translated from the German.

On the whole, the exposition is excellent and contains a good amount of preaching material. A paragraph of scripture is printed at the beginning of each chapter, and then a careful explanation is given, verse by verse. The author exhibits thorough scholarship and yet is clear and understandable in his presentation.

Concerning each of the spiritual gifts in 12:8-11, Bittlinger explores four areas: (1) the nature of the gift; (2) its Old Testament background; (3) Jesus' use of it; (4) the practice of His disciples and the New

Testament Church. His discussion is very enlightening and helpful.

However, when he comes to "various kinds of tongues" he does an odd thing; he discusses it under the heading: "Praying in the Spirit." He states that when the Gospels speak of Jesus "sighing" or "groaning" they mean that He was praying in the Spirit. To support this assertion he claims the authority of Carl Schneider for the idea that the Greek verb *stenazo* "was a technical term in the Hellenistic world of that day for prayer that did not involve the mind, but was called forth by the Spirit" (p. 49). A check of Kittel's massive *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* reveals that J. Schneider, in his article on *stenazo*, says of the groaning of the Spirit in Rom. 8:26: "This means that he [Paul] cannot have in view speaking in tongues or the inarticulate stammering of ecstasies in worship" (VII, 602).

Bittlinger has given one of the best expositions of I Corinthians 12-14 that this reviewer has seen. But he appears to be influenced at some points by a belief in speaking in tongues that affects his comments. For instance, he writes: "I Cor. 14:16 makes it clear that 'singing with the spirit' occurs normally in a language unknown to listeners" (p. 112). Many of us would question that deduction.

The second book is based on Watson Mills's doctoral dissertation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The author seems to classify himself as a "non-glossolalic" (p. 7). But he shows a great deal of sympathy for those who speak in tongues. His primary purpose in writing seems to be a concern that non-Pentecostals should accept Pentecostals as brothers in the Lord and treat them as such. This, of course, is admirable. But it seems to this reviewer that he concedes too much to the point of view of the latter group.

One of the main values of the book lies in the two opening chapters. In the first he defines glossolalia and gives a brief history of the Pentecostal movement. In the second he shows how speaking in tongues was a "rather commonplace" phenomenon among the pagans in the Graeco-Roman world of the first century. It was "frenzied speech in a religious context" (p. 24). In Chapter 4 he develops this matter still further in his discussion of "The Hellenistic Background of Glossolalia" (pp. 44-47) and "The Palestinian Background of Glossolalia" (pp. 51-56). What many people need to realize is that speaking in tongues was no new occurrence on the Day of Pentecost and so cannot be taken as a proof that one has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

RALPH EARLE

Jesus and His Contemporaries

By *Everett Harrison* (Baker Book House, copyright 1949. 251 pp., paperback, \$2.95.)

This recent addition to the "Minister's Paperback Library" is a reprint of *The Son of God Among the Sons of Men: Meditations on the Gospel of John*. It now carries the subtitle, "Biographical Preaching from the Gospel of John." The author is professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary.

Especially for variety, a series of biographical sermons can be both fascinating and profitable. People like to think in terms of life situations.

Dr. Harrison has done an excellent job in portraying Jesus' contacts with 17 individuals portrayed in this Gospel. Included are not only six of the apostles, but most of those with whom Jesus had personal interviews—a striking feature of the Fourth Gospel.

Making the Bible come alive is an important responsibility of every preacher. This volume will help him to portray Mary and Martha, Nicodemus, the woman at the well, and many others as living characters.

RALPH EARLE

Ephesians: The Glory of the Church

By *Homer A. Kent* (Moody Press, 1971. 128 pp., paperback, 95c.)

This is one of a series entitled "Everyman's Bible Commentary." As this indicates, the work is intended for laymen as well as preachers. Technical details are avoided and clear, simple language is used. But the expositions are based on solid scholarship and are adequate. This volume covers fully every paragraph in this profound Epistle.

The author is dean and professor of New Testament at Grace Theological Seminary. His comments are based on a thorough understanding of the Greek text. There is a wealth of homiletical material here. Anyone wishing to do a study of Ephesians would find this volume helpful.

RALPH EARLE

Preacher Aflame

By *Donald E. Demaray* (Baker Book House, 1972. 87 pp., paper, \$1.25.)

A brief but intensely enthusiastic book by the dean of students at Asbury Theological Seminary, this publication no doubt reflects the 1970 Asbury revival, which still burns in the heart of the author. The chapters are from four lectures which have been delivered in preachers' retreats, entitled: (1) The Incendiary—the preacher afire for his task; (2) The Communicator—the fired-up preacher fulfills his role; (3) The Listener—good listening makes for good preaching and communicating; and (4) The Expositor—a look at how God's Word gets through to modern man.

A reading of this little book will inspire a preacher with a clearer concept of what happens when real preaching is taking place. It is the miracle of God speaking to men through a human instrument, an instrument set afire with the *enthusiasm*, which means literally "in God." Preaching like this is indeed "an event taking place," as Donald G. Miller puts it, and as P. T. Forsyth insists.

Preachers' Exchange



FOR SALE—Twenty-five old holiness gems—books by Chapman, Ruth, Corlett, Price, Rees, Nease, etc., excellent condition.—Kenneth L. Dodge, 319 Wilson Ave., Richmond, Calif. 94805.

WANTED—Book, *Pastoral Work*, by A. M. Blackwood.—Rev. W. I. Dakaik, Box 1021, Vernon, B.C., Canada.

FOR SALE—32-vol. set of *Preacher's Homiletic Commentary*, in new condition. 6-vol. set of *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, excellent condition.—Rev. Lloyd J. Laubaugh, Rte. 2, Box 74, LeRoy, Mich. 49655.

WANTED—to buy: *Praying Hyde: A Man of Prayer*, by Basil Miller.—Will Hughes, 1200 Elm St., Crossett, Ark. 71635.

WANTED—*Overcome Evil with Good*, by Audrey J. Williamson; *The Approaching Advent of Christ*, by Alexander Reese.—Rev. Jack Seberry, 3550 Gateshead, N.E., Rockford, Mich. 49341.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Attention: FREE METHODISTS—

NEEDED—For library at Western Evangelical Seminary in Jennings Lodge, Ore., *Conference Minutes*, 1861-71, 1873-75, 1877; Copies of *The Earnest Christian*; *Missionary Tidings*—any before 1906, 1917-22, 1928-31, 1933-40; any *Sunday School Journals* and YPMS publications. Send to: Library, John Wesley Foundation Research Center, 2204 S.E. 55th Ave., Portland, Ore. 97215. Attn. Byron Jacobson.

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COMING next month

- **A Midsummer Night's Dream**
There is no limit to the mighty power of God, even in the summertime.
- **Prayer Meetings for the People**
Most pastors are eager to find ways to make the midweek service as good as it ought to be.
- **Were You Honking at Me?**
When the horn blows, it means something, but not always what you think.



AMONG OURSELVES

There is no word in our language more authentically beautiful nor more frequently abused than our word "freedom." It is used carelessly and casually by those who have not comprehended its true meaning. It must be brought into clear focus from time to time if it is to remain in its premier place among the words we use as the tools of our trade (p. 1). It is fitting that during a season which draws our thoughts to this precious gift, we are reminded of the "keys" to continuous revival which releases churches from the bondage of apathy and indifference (p. 3); and the doctrine of full salvation, which is what freedom is all about (p. 6). Be sure to read Theo Carter's article and then thank God for the freedom to be honest with yourself (p. 14). In its highest and purest form, freedom is the ability to choose Christ's way and live His life in the power of the Holy Spirit. Let that freedom ring!

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