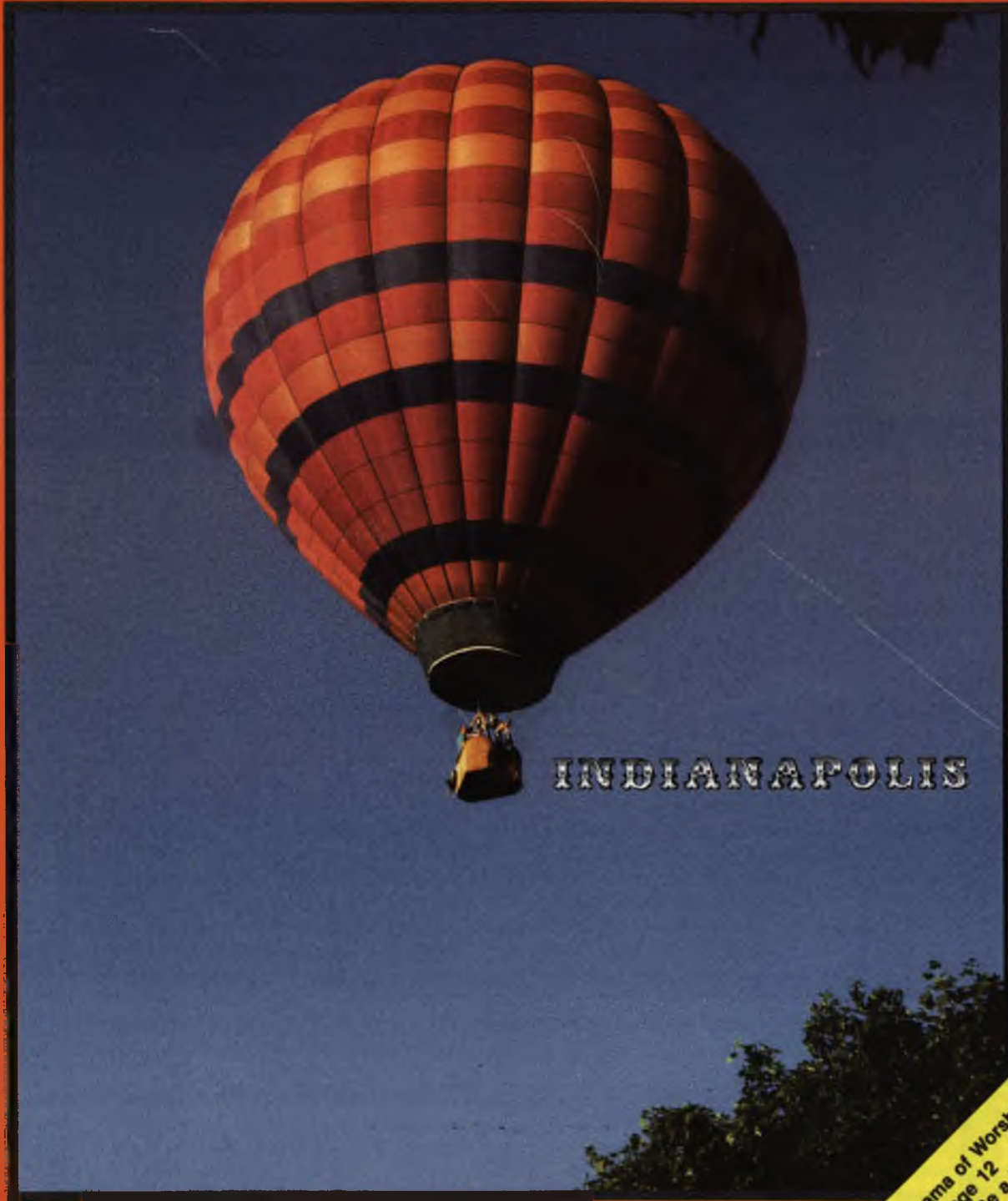


JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 1989

THE **TP** REACHER'S **MT** MAGAZINE

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WISE COUNSEL

"Advice is seldom welcome; and those who need it the most always like it the least."

—Lord Chesterfield,
Letters, Jan. 29, 1748



THE ARK ROCKER

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THE EXPLANATION

When I was a kid, we had a dog named Daniel around our place. And until last Wednesday, I had always believed that we should have lived in constant fear of Danny's being dog-napped—either by breeders, philosophers, theologians, or the editorial staff of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. You see, in common terms, Danny was **THE EXPLANATION**. In fancy language, he was the ultimate *Deus ex machina*.

Was there paper or other stuff scattered about the floor? Danny did it! Had a piece of pie or cake turned up missing in the middle of the morning? Danny ate it! Morning mail mislaid? Danny took it! Radio or TV left going full blast? Danny! Flower vase knocked off the piano and broken? Danny!

I tell you, that dog was sheer genius! Or so I thought until last Wednesday. Then I learned that Danny was mere con-dog. He had duped us. He was a genius only at getting us to believe that he had been responsible for stuff that really should have been chalked up to the account of "**NOTHING**" or "**NOONEINPARTICULAR**."

It astounds me that I had not learned about this "NOTHING" or "NOONEINPARTICULAR" business before, and I apologize for bothering you with it, for you probably figured it out long ago. In fact, you may even have written a college term paper on it, so far ahead of me are you. But at least let me tell you how it dawned on me that there is an active, aggressive, maybe even intelligent force in the universe called NOTHING or NOONEINPARTICULAR and that it seems to be the real source of a lot of problems, even in the Church!

Well, last Wednesday, unbeknown to each other, Curggie Smith and I read the same notice in *Sixth Scents*, the Sixth Church newsletter: "Recent efforts of the Sixth family to keep our building and grounds clean have so far succeeded that we have had to terminate the employment of Lycurgus 'Curggie' Smith, effective with the end of Pastor's birthday pageant rehearsals in August." This was the first that Curggie had known of his disemployment.

Curggie called me about it because he needed someone to talk to and because his roots were in my congregation. (In fact, his aged parents still attend when they need an extra 40 winks.) My notes on the conversation quoted him: "Bng jntr not grtst job in wrld, but a way to srv chch for pst 10 yrs. Wnt jb bck if pssbl. Cn I hlp hm?" Well, I know Smerdley, his pastor,

as you know. So, as a fellow pastor, I went to talk to Smerdley about the matter. And that is where I began to learn about this force, or whatever, called NOTHING or NOONEINPARTICULAR. (I capitalize simply because I do not care to antagonize anyone or anything with this sort of power.) "Ah," said Smerdley, avuncular and "deeply concerned," which put me on full alert. "Really, the issue was partly economic and partly personal, but we dare not say that publicly lest it panic the folks and embarrass Lycurgus. 'Better lie than die,' I say—but not to the folks, of course. They would probably misunderstand. 'Keep it positive,' I always say. Curggie's a problem personality, you know. Too intense. Always finding and eliminating dirt somewhere. Needs to lighten up. But be that as it may, you should know that I really am not personally responsible for Curggie's release, though of course, I had to do the dirty work. I got considerable pressure from the Mops and Slops Committee of the official board. Hey! Your wife's uncle is the chairman of Mops and Slops; why don't you talk to him? In fact, all I heard were generalities. So find out what you can and get back to me, if you will."

A bit more conversation ensued, then I had to go. So as I headed for the door, I said, "I guess we should say that no one thing nor any one person in particular is really responsible for Curggie's 'retirement.'"

"Right!" said Smerdley, happy with my quick intellect. "Nothing nor anyone in particular."

Well, I was now in too deep to get out. So off I went to Uncle Mops and Slops. Cautiously, I ventured, "I see that Sixth Church is releasing Curggie."

"Ah," said Uncle-in-law, "really the issue is partly economic and partly institutional, but we dare not say that publicly lest it panic the folks and embarrass both the past and present pastors. 'Better a little lie in loving service of the truth than truth that only hurts,' I say—but not to the folks, of course. They would only misunderstand. 'Keep it positive,' I always say. We all love Curggie but not at the expense of losing Pastor Smerdley. Lots of janitors, not many pastors. Smerdley inherited some problems here and needed to be able to resolve them in his own way, so we gave him the authority to do so. We're a bit embarrassed that Curggie got caught in it, but

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THE **PREACHER'S** **IM** **MAGAZINE** Proclaiming Christian Holiness

Volume 64, Number 4

JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 1989

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Authors should address all articles and correspondence to Editor, *Preacher's Magazine*, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes should accompany all manuscripts.

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE (ISSN 0162-3982) is published quarterly by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2923 Troost Ave., Kansas City, MO 64109. Editorial offices at 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. Address all correspondence concerning subscriptions to your denominational publishing house. Copyright 1989 by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City. POSTMASTER: Please send change of address to the Preacher's Magazine, P.O. Box 419527, Kansas City, MO 64141. Subscription price: \$3.50 per year. Second-class postage paid in Kansas City, Mo. Litho in U.S.A.

The Devotional Life

MONDAY MORNING DEVOTIONS

by Reuben Welch
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Reuben Welch

For Monday, June 5

YOUR CONCERN FOR ME

I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me; you were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content (Phil. 4:10-11, RSV).

A long time ago my brother-in-law, Milton Poole, said to me, "If you want to stay in a church and be happy for any length of time, always impute the best motives to the actions of your people." I think Paul did that with the Philippians. Whatever had delayed or interrupted their care for him, he was careful to put the very best light on it.

Paul and the Philippians had a loving, affirming partnership in the gospel that was deeper and more binding than normal pastor-people relationships. And though there were times when he had to rebuke or correct them, he was careful to see the best in them. Was it because he knew that even tight and loving relationships are fragile and need tender treatment?

I think so, and that is our meditation for this Monday. It is commencement season, and (for Nazarenes) it is General Assembly time. That means intensified activities, transitions, hopes, and expectations, to say nothing of heightened stress! Our actions don't always measure up to our declarations of love and concern. And even when our love is real, things sometimes come up to delay or interrupt its anticipated expression.

We understand that for ourselves. Today is a good day to understand it for others as well and deliberately impute the best motives to those around us.

For Monday June 12

NOT THANKS, BUT REJOICING

I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me; you were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content (Phil. 4:10-11, RSV).

Paul had received a care package from the Philippians. Why didn't he say, "Thank you very much, I really appreciate it"? Nowhere in this letter of gratitude does he say, "Thank you." Instead, he rejoices in the Lord that their care for him has flourished. I wonder if it was because he was sensitive to the complexities of giving and receiving gifts. (Paul Tournier writes about this in his book *The Meaning of Gifts*.) Don't you wish there were some dependable rules to guide us through our inevitable experiences of giving and receiving gifts?

We give a lot to the people we serve, and they give a lot to us. Sometimes they give gifts with strings attached. Accepting these gifts places us in their debt. Our freedom is diminished as our obligation to them is increased. What are we to do?

It seems that Paul received their gifts as from the Lord and not just from the Philippians. Their giving was interpreted as an expression of their love for Christ. For that, Paul gave thanks and welcomed their gifts as from Christ. And so he was free.

"O Christ, we want that freedom. Make us know that You are the Giver of every gift. Save us from bondage to the givers who surround us. May no earthly gift we receive ever compromise our total reliance on You or our total obedience to You."

For Monday, June 19

LEARNING CONTENTMENT

Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content (Phil. 4:11, RSV).

This verse is a wonder! Paul, in prison, didn't have anything. Yet his response to their gift of things he really needed came not out of a sense of want but out of contentment.

"I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content." Well, my state's California. What's yours? The real question is, what is *our* state in the state we live in? We certainly are not as bad off as Paul was, but a lot of us are right now experiencing enough troubles and sorrows and stressful situations to make us wonder if we aren't in some sort of prison. And, like Paul, we need to learn to be content. What easy words to write!

We know that contentment is not just a matter of deciding to be happy, but it comes from total dependence upon Christ, the Source of our strength. But it *is* something we can learn. I wonder if we have ever tried.

Actually, I am wondering if anyone will even read this meditation. Everyone, it seems, is getting off to General Conventions and Assembly. There's no time to learn contentment! But that is precisely what the Spirit would have us learn at this precise time in our journey. Wouldn't it be awful to go to Assembly discontent, wanting something, needing to be in the right places and seen by the right people, hoping to get that something we want, so that we will be content? Wouldn't it be wonderful to find our contentment in Christ and in the simple, good things that He gives us for our lives? Then we go simply to praise God and seek His guidance as we do the business of the church, free of our compulsions and content in Him.

"O Lord, don't let this be the summer of our discontent. We let our lives down on You. Teach us the 'great gain in godliness with contentment'" (1 Tim. 6:6, RSV).

For Monday, June 26

LEARNING THE SECRET

I know how to be abased, and I

know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me (Phil. 4:12-13, RSV).

Twice in verses 11 and 12, Paul says, "I have learned." He has learned a secret. Literally, he says, "I have been initiated." He has gone through it and knows the ropes of both "plenty and hunger, abundance and want."

Morris Weigelt closes his letters with a beautiful phrase, "Resting in the rhythms of His grace." We want to believe that grace rhythms are upward spirals of blessing. Paul knew they were rhythms of "plenty and hunger, abundance and want." And all the while, rhythms of grace.

It is hard for us to see our times of abasement, of hunger, and of want as integral to the basic contentment of our lives in Christ. In spite of all our sermons to the contrary, we instinctively feel that humiliation, loss, and emptiness are symptoms of distance from God and tokens of the absence of grace in our lives.

This very week some will abound; others will feel rejected and abased, humiliated and defeated. Some will get what they want; others will get and feel they must respond to what they really do not want. We are not exhorted to imitate the contentment of the Stoics, exercising passive inner disengagement. I believe we are urged to understand that all the rhythms of our lives—the whole range of them—are rhythms of His grace.

For Monday, July 3

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me (Phil. 4:12-13, RSV).

Strange that a man in prison with neither clout nor resources should say, "I can do all things." Actually, he couldn't do anything at all; he was totally dependent. How can he make this astonishing declaration of independence?

We are drawn to these verses because we, too, experience prisonlike limitations. We have homes and families and churches and bodies and bills. These and a hundred other "givens" restrict our freedom and tether our mobility. How can it be said, "I can do all things"?

Well, we instinctively know that "all things" doesn't really mean "all things." Let's reflect on the "all things" Paul meant. He tells us what they are: "I have learned . . . to be content." "I know how to be abased." "I know how to abound." "I have learned the secret of facing plenty." "I have learned the secret of facing . . . hunger." "[I have been initiated into] abundance and want."

Brothers and sisters, we have been seeking our sufficiency in the wrong directions and expressing our strengths in the wrong places. We think doing all things means *doing* all things—mostly in our own strength. For Paul it meant facing the good and the bad, the hard and the easy, the sorrows and the joys—and learning contentment in Him who was his Strength.

For Monday, July 10

THE SECRET OF STRENGTH

I can do all things in him who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13, RSV).

In Paul's dependency he was independent; in his inadequacy he was adequate. It was because he was totally dependent upon Someone who is totally adequate! When Paul said he could do all things, he was not talking about his own abilities nor about his own personality or psychic energy. He was not talking about himself at all, he was talking about "him who strengthens."

Our strength, then, is not a matter of personality type. We know Paul was a strong personality. In spite of physical problems, he was a strong, dominant person. But that's not the point. Strong Christians are not the same as strong persons! I wonder, given our culture, if we can ever really learn that Christians with strong personalities are not necessarily strong Christians.

The dark side of our identification of strong Christians with Christians with strong personalities is that in our mental exhaustion, when our

psychic energy is drained and we are feeling depressed, we think we must be weak Christians—and add false guilt to our depression!

I think the Spirit would have us listen to Paul and learn that our strength is in dependency on Jesus and not in our mental state nor emotional well-being nor our hyped-up positive attitude. If Jesus is our Strength, He is our Strength when we are strong. If He is our Source of adequacy, He is our Source when we are wrung out and depressed. Living in the prisons of our own humanity, then, we can yet say with hope and with joy, “I can do all things *in him* who strengthens me.”

For Monday, July 17

OUR UNFAILING SOURCE

I can do all things in him who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13, RSV).

I saw this title on a shelf of a Christian bookstore: *Developing Your Spiritual Muscles*. Wait a minute. I didn't know we had such things. Jesus is our Strength, and because He is always our Strength, we ourselves do not ever become strong. Spiritual strength is *not* analogous to physical strength.

We know how to get strong physically. We start easy, gradually increasing the weights and the sweat. No pain, no gain—but keep it up, and we've got muscles.

Is that the way it is with faith? Do we believe for little things and then gradually increase the size until we can have faith to heal cancer? I think not. Nor do we carry faith around with us like we carry muscle, waiting for something to exercise it on. We don't grow prayer like we grow muscles. We don't get strong by obeying little and finally obeying big.

The trouble with thinking that we can get spiritually strong is that the center of gravity stays with ourselves and not with Jesus. And who of us could not testify, “The trouble began when I took my eyes off Jesus and got them on myself.” Jesus is our Strength, He is always our Strength.

It isn't that it is not good to be strong, in personality or in body. Our problem is not strength—or weak-

ness; it is self-dependency. I believe God's word to us is this: Bring your strengths to Jesus, give them up to Him. He can do wonderful things with strong people who are totally dependent upon Him. Bring your weakness to Jesus, give it up to Him. He can do wonderful things with weak people who are totally dependent upon Him!

For Monday, July 24

ALL THE WAY ALONG

I can do all things in him who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13, RSV).

These July days, when we are wishing we were stronger and had more time to do our summertime chores, let's think again about our strength in Christ.

We all know that our strength is in Him; it is awfully hard to accept the corollary that we ourselves do not ever become strong. “All the way along, it is Jesus.” I think we are most vulnerable when we assume that having been Christians for a long time, we are strong. We think we have our lives in hand, and then tragedy comes in the shape of divorce, or death, or loss of place. We think we are in control, then temptations we never dreamed of almost overwhelm us.

These things cause us to have feelings of anger or despair or fear or guilt that we could never have anticipated. We wonder what is the matter with us—we were stronger than that, we were more trusting than that, we were more mature than that! No, as a matter of fact, we were not. Assuming our maturity and our strength, we were covertly depending upon ourselves and not trusting wholly in Christ.

I keep thinking of that line, “All the way along it is Jesus.” We say to new believers, “Trust in Jesus; depend on Him. You can't do it alone; don't trust yourself; rely on Jesus.” What do we say to ourselves who for long years have known Him? Do we need to trust not quite so much, now that we are mature? Because we are strong Christians, do we need to flee to Jesus not quite so quickly and desperately for refuge in temptation?

I am concluding that a strong Christian, whether young or old, strong or weak, is one who has learned to lean harder, quicker! We can indeed “do all things in him who strengthens” us. Well, we can't—but He can!

For Monday, July 31

THE FRUIT OF GIVING

Not that I seek the gift; but I seek the fruit which increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more; I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God (Phil 4:17-18, RSV).

It is amazing how the center of gravity keeps moving away from Paul to God and to these Philippians. He was in prison, but he was all right, able to say, “In him who strengthens me I am able for anything” (Moffatt). Craddock writes that Paul was not pacing the floor of his cell, asking the guard every five minutes whether the mail had come. The Philippians had sent gifts, and he was profoundly grateful. They had paid in full, and then some.

But Paul's real gratitude was not for the gifts themselves. As we would say, it wasn't the money but the gift—the giving that mattered. In fact, Paul interprets their gifts as a fragrant offering laid upon the altar, “a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God” (v. 18). We talked in an earlier devotion about the ambivalent character of gifts. Paul received his in such a way that their gifts were not just gracious tokens to him, but were sweet-smelling offerings to God.

I wish we weren't so secular and casual about our service and giving to each other. We can do it with hardly a thought of God or any sacrificial offering to Him. My prayer for us this Monday is that we will be able to see the deep and real inner connection between our loving acts of giving to each other and our loving worship of God. I pray we will really believe what Jesus said: “As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Matt. 25:40, RSV).

For Monday, August 7

ALL YOUR NEEDS

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19, RSV).

Well, this is the classic “blank check” verse. Just fill in your needs; it is already signed by Jesus and waiting to be cashed at the bank of heaven. I have actually seen the printed checks. Have you?

Most of us have had enough experience to know that the verse is not a universal proverb nor an unconditional promise for all comers. I think our problem is how to take the verse seriously without taking it so mechanically and literally that we misuse it.

Out of their poverty, the Philippians had given gifts to Paul, and through them God had supplied all his needs. I believe the sense of Paul's response is that the God who had used them to meet his needs would not fail to use others to meet theirs.

That's the heart of my own meditation for this August Monday. God did not supply Paul's needs directly; the Philippians thought up the idea and did the legwork. We miss a significant point if we interpret the verse to mean that God will act sovereignly and directly, as by some miracle, to meet ours. God seldom works that way. Usually, He uses ordinary people in ordinary caring ways to meet our needs. That means that He uses us to meet other people's needs and uses them to meet ours.

How wonderful. Through our caring for each other, God is supplying all our needs!

For Monday, August 14

ALL YOUR NEEDS?

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19, RSV).

In the presence of this inspired verse, think about the question, “What are my needs?” Not just a few of them, not just the primary ones or the spiritual ones, but all of them. I find the question a serious

and probing one—and realize that I don't really know how to answer it.

What were Paul's needs in the prison compound? Food and clothes; I guess he had shelter. He needed love and friends and meaning for his life. And he needed restoration for his soul. The Philippians sent a friend with a care package, and Paul said that all his needs had been met. Does that mean spiritual as well as physical, for his soul as well as his body? Since he refers to the gift as a “sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God” (v. 18), we've got to say yes.

It is interesting—actually, it is awesome—how our spiritual as well as our material needs can be met by the loving gift of something as ordinary as food and clothes and money given in love. Paul would say, “That's what happened to me, and my God will supply all your needs, too.”

The word that comes to mind is “sacramental.” Physical acts meet spiritual needs. Given service nourishes the soul of the served and server. Are we looking in the wrong direction for the meeting of our needs? Are we looking up to heaven in expectation instead of looking out in love to the brothers and sisters who give meaning and sustenance to our lives? In them we find God meeting our needs.

For Monday, August 21

SAINTS IN CAESAR'S HOUSEHOLD

All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household (Phil. 4:22, RSV).

Caesar and his palace stand for the power and the vainglory of this world. They epitomize the egotism, the greed, the lust, and the hypocrisy of depraved human society. Everyone in the palace had a hidden agenda; everyone was on the make, paying whatever price was necessary to keep in vogue and in favor.

No, not everyone. There were saints there, friends of Paul and of the Philippians, whose values were not defined by the politics of power and whose goals were not seduced by the pleasures of the court. And their name is Laymen.

We do not live there. We live in an environment of our own making. We live with books and study, prayer and devotion. We live among good people and relate to them pretty much on our own terms. This Monday is our day to both celebrate and intercede for the saints who keep the faith in the environment of Caesar's household. They live in an atmosphere permeated with greed and saturated with lust. They work every day in earshot of foul talk.

We make our pastoral forays into this world in which they live, but we don't live there—they do. These saints in Caesar's household don't belong to Caesar; they belong to God; and they greet us and pray for us and pay for our life-style and ministry. Let's pray for them today, let's affirm them today, and love them today. They are “the household of God” (Eph. 2:19).

For Monday, August 28

THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit (Phil. 4:23, RSV).

Philippians ends the way it begins—with grace. “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (1:2, RSV). We have thought together about a lot of things from this book, some of them encouraging, some of them probing and disturbing. Some have called for gratitude and thanksgiving; others have called us to confession and repentance. And it is all of grace! Grace that comes to us in God's gift of Jesus.

What comes to your mind with the word “grace”? It is a word that goes with mercy. I have read that mercy means that you don't get what you deserve. And what we don't deserve is the free, unmerited, unearned, undeserved love and kindness of God in Jesus. But we get it—and that is grace.

Another word that goes with grace is *gift*. The undeserved love and kindness of God are given—not worked for, not “worthed” for, but

Continued on p. 57

FAILURE FEELINGS IN A PASTOR

by Johnson Corners

My wife and I finally arrived home from our annual state assembly of the churches. Most of the eight-hour ride had been in silence. Something was wrong. The church I pastored had done well. My report was outstanding. We should have felt good.

Instead, my wife and I both felt like failures. What we had accomplished was not enough. We had missed the mark. For days afterward that feeling sat in my stomach like a big, raw biscuit. Nothing I did would shake it. I was confused. I had thought a good report would take care of my traditional after-assembly blues. I was so sure it would that I had worked long hours throughout the year to be sure my report was good. I went to assembly confident that there would be no postassembly emptiness inside to fight. I was wrong. My good report did nothing to stop the feelings of failure, worthlessness, and subtle despair. My long hours of extra effort seemed to increase the empty, I-have-failed feelings instead of preventing them. Their sudden appearance had shocked me because I had left home thinking this year would be different.

Arriving back home with these surprising inner pains, I was forced to quit looking outside myself and to begin looking inside to find out their cause. Up to then I had assumed the feelings were prompted by poor performance on my part. I am not an earthmover and thought these feelings were the price nonearthmovers had to pay. But for once, I was an earthmover. Any pastor would have been pleased to have given a report

like mine. Yet the great report did not stop the hollow feelings that appeared deep inside. I had to know where they came from if I was ever to be free from their torment.

During my week of anguish I probed what was happening inside. The feelings whispering inside my heart said, "Not good enough, not good enough!" I felt I had been judged by my church and been found inadequate. I found that I was too ashamed to talk with anyone about my failures. Any solutions would have to come alone or with a few trusted friends. I had no access to a counselor, nor would I have been brave enough to use him if I did.

At the end of the week the pressures of life took over, and the feelings were shelved like a disease in remission, waiting to erupt once more.

I was not long in waiting for the next attack. In late winter my wife and I rode with two other pastors and their wives to preachers' meeting. On the way home I had the post-preachers' meeting blues (the only difference between it and the post-annual-report blues is the time of year). I again felt my work had been pronounced not good enough. With six in the car I could not ride in silence the whole way. In a weak moment I confessed my failure to measure up. The response from the others was like a tidal wave. What I felt was exactly what they were feeling. We compared experiences for two hours. We all felt the same, "not good enough" feelings inside. Since then I have talked openly about postassembly and post-preachers'

meeting blues. Most pastors and wives experience it, yet I have never heard it addressed in a public forum. Most pastors become uncomfortable when I bring up the subject. Most of them deny ever struggling with such feelings.

One day I grew weary of the hassles. I told the Lord I could go no further. I was tired of living in failure and judgment with the ensuing despair. I was developing a cynical attitude that only made matters worse. In my prayers I reaffirmed that more than anything else I wanted to please Jesus and be used by Him to build His kingdom on earth. I did not want to spend the rest of my ministry and life feeling that judgment: "Not good enough, not good enough." Gradually the Holy Spirit began teaching me the folly of my thinking. He used experience, observation, scriptures, and others to show me that I had been making the demands of the institution the voice of God.

As a young pastor, I had thought that by fulfilling the demands of the church, I was fulfilling the demands of the Kingdom. If the church said that more numbers was a sign of growth of the Kingdom, then I had to have more numbers to be used by God to build His kingdom. If the church said paying budgets was building the Kingdom, then I must pay budgets. If the church said sending in reports, getting subscriptions, passing out magazines, reading books, teaching certain classes, or winning contests was building the Kingdom, then I must do all of them to be used by God to build His kingdom. Without realizing

it, I had placed the law of my church as the standard to judge that part of my life that could only be judged by the grace of God.

Paul had warned that no one was ever freed by law. Law only pronounced guilt. In the law there is always one thing lacking. In my case, I usually fell short on a dozen things.

The law of the institution had become for me the law of God. Church leaders are prone to attach the authority of the kingdom of God to everything from reporting weekly statistics to paying budgets. Even promotional slogans use God-language to give them clout. In my early pastoral years I heard all official voices as the commands of God. It has only been recently that I have realized that those voices are not always Kingdom voices. The leaders do not always take time to sort out the two. Besides, God can become a powerful ally to reach institutional goals. By keeping all things together on God's side, there is no need to face human weakness, failure, and temptation. Who of us is going to argue with the Lord?

Today I see two forces at work in my professional life: One is the demand of the institution; the other is the demand of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes they are the same; more often they are not. I and I alone can determine which is which for me. I may or may not meet the demands of the institution; but I must meet the demands of the Holy Spirit at any cost. The institution demands through intimidation; the Holy Spirit through inspiration. The institution moves through emotions; the Holy Spirit moves through the heart.

The institution's demands are constantly changing. Its successes are generally measured against others in the race. After the moment of accountability is over, the demands and their successes are forgotten. The demands of the Holy Spirit are constant; they cannot be measured against anyone else and can never be escaped.

The institution's demands leave each person with his own devices to achieve success, whereas the Holy Spirit's demands are accompanied by personalized instructions, adequate personal power, and physical resources to succeed.

My postmeeting blues came when institution demands got scrambled with Holy Spirit demands. I could not reconcile my commitment to Christ with my failure. My anguish flowed from a deep

They know something is wrong when I make doughnuts part of the Great Commission.

sense of failing God, when in reality I was only failing the institution. Because I could not separate the two, I could only conclude I had a serious spiritual problem. What shocked me most the good year was that the feeling of failure appeared even when I had done virtually everything I had been told to do.

Today I am better able to separate the two. I have accepted the fact that I will never rise to the full demands of the institution. Its demands are unattainable—and they never end. Each need calls out—demands—my absolute support. Even if I do exceptionally well today, my success has no merit tomorrow. If I do extremely poorly, it carries no demerit for tomorrow. Failure and success have value only one season.

When I sense the institution using my commitment to the leadership of the Holy Spirit to judge me “not good enough, not good enough,” I picture myself as the manager of a doughnut franchise. Most of the institutional demands help me run a better shop. They are neither right nor wrong. They are just part of running a business. I do my best to pay franchise fees (budgets), send in reports, and support all the other shops in the chain. I am proud to be part of the chain, and I respect my bosses. I know they have to see that the whole corporation survives. Once in a while they do some really dumb things, but then, so do I. I work hard as the manager, and I want to excel. I give it my best.

The demands of the Holy Spirit are different. They are my life, my breath, my all. I probably would not die for a doughnut shop, but I would die to fulfill the demands of the Holy Spirit.

This dichotomy of worlds has a

serious problem. I pastor a church. Is it a Kingdom, or is it an institution? I assume it is an institution constantly trying to line itself up with the Kingdom. The natural drift is toward the institution and away from the Kingdom. Institutions have powerful forces at play within them to protect and sustain them. The Kingdom is one generation from extinction. The effort to keep the institution lined up with the Kingdom never ceases. The institution is a clay pot holding the treasure of the Kingdom. It is a clay pot that keeps cracking and letting the treasure seep out.

Sometimes the seepage is great, and the church becomes more pot than treasure. At those times it is easier to understand the workings of the church as a franchise than as the Kingdom. The demands sound more like “Thus saith the board” than “Thus saith the Lord.”

Viewing the church like a franchise may be crude and insensitive, but it allows the church to criticize itself and work toward correcting the flaws in its alignment. The church leader who gets God on his side in an argument shields himself from any criticism because no one with any sense is about to take on God. The end result of a closed system is an inept institution. An open environment leads to a strong, efficient system.

As a leader I must ask myself if the people who are part of the church I pastor are hearing a doughnut salesman or a Kingdom speaker. If I am selling doughnuts, I can only convince them a few times that selling doughnuts is Kingdom business. They may not be able to explain it, but they know something is wrong when I make doughnuts a part of the Great Commission.

Nowadays I go to assembly to report to the institution. I accept the judgment that is passed down. So far, I have never left the meetings without feeling like the institution needed just a little more from me than I gave it. But after about a week, the pressure is off. I have received many institutional honors. They make me feel great, but after a day, the euphoria wears off.

Each day before I sleep I face my God. He reveals weaknesses, failures, and unchristlike ways. He also whispers, “Well done.”

STREAMS IN THE WASTELAND



Glimpse of Time

A Pastor's Personal Renewal

by Ron Rodes

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When it looked like my ministry and my dreams for the local church I was pastoring were slipping away, one of the great promises God gave me was found in a remote passage in Isaiah:

"Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not
perceive it?

I am making a way in the desert
and streams in the wasteland"
(43:18-19, NIV).

I was certainly in the desert; but like an oasis bubbling up out of nowhere, this promise was given to me. It was mine and I knew it. It became richer as the weeks and months passed by and was fulfilled in my own life and ministry.

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past." If you don't forget, you will dwell. That's how you know you have a problem. You dwell and brood, and your energy is di-

verted into negative channels, draining you emotionally and focusing on your fears.

The first five years of this pastorate were the greatest. Attendance had doubled, and people were finding love, acceptance, and forgiveness. I caught a glimpse of a church "coming alive," and it was beautiful.

We broke ground for a new sanctuary, and we were soaring to new heights, we thought. The next three years were to be different. Little did I realize the valley into which I was about to descend.

Then problems began mounting; the economy sagged, and the building program bogged down. Conflicts and difficulties arose on every side until it seemed that all that had started so well was going to collapse. The rapid growth and consequent change was threatening to some. Others had doubts and fears concerning the future direction of

the church. The problem was further complicated by personality problems, lack of communication, and misunderstanding. Attitudes hardened, and the liberty and unity once enjoyed began to vanish.

The conflict widened, infecting others. Groups began polarizing, and the services began to feel the negative impact. The sense of God's presence diminished. The crowds began to thin, and the people seemed listless and lifeless. I heard rumors of people leaving. The sanctuary was 60 percent finished. We had been in a building program for four and a half years and gone through six building fund drives. Doubts began to arise whether we should ever have started the sanctuary. Satan was dancing on our grave.

I made several attempts to resolve the conflict by confrontation, but everything I did seemed to boomerang. I decided something had to

be done about the undercurrent of talk that seemed to center around me. But I couldn't seem to get a handle on it or do anything to stop it.

"Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past."

How I needed that! My energies were diverted into destructive, negative channels or emotional, mental, and spiritual conflict. Fear and bondage affected my preaching, my pastoral work, and my approach to people. I could hardly drag myself to the church. I prayed each week that the Lord would see me through one more Sunday. A chicken ranch looked good to me. Anywhere but here. My prayers did not get through. I was hedged in, and I could barely function the last part of the three-year period. I could feel the death throes of my ministry and sensed the cold breath of the death of my dream. I was weepy and on the verge of exhaustion.

I was certainly dwelling and brooding over my problems. I was obsessed. It took all of my attention and energy and was a very painful time.

But how does one forget the former things? The answer is to forgive, though I hadn't thought I was harboring unforgiveness. But one who dwells on the past does not forget "the former things." I remembered perceived wrongs in great detail, which signaled to me that I had collected some garbage along the way. I needed to forgive and be forgiven so that I could forget and get the past behind me.

Did you know that Jesus was crucified in a garbage dump? He was crucified "outside the gate," where the refuse of the city was collected (Heb. 13:12, NASB). The Cross, then, was the place for me to bring my accumulated garbage; my sin of unforgiveness, my wounded and infected spirit. But I couldn't seem to lay hold of the grace I needed.

My custom was to jog several times a week. As I jogged, I would quote scripture and pray and claim fulfillment of Eph. 3:16: "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strength-

ened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." But no deliverance seemed forthcoming.

One morning when I could not pray, I decided to jog. About a quarter mile down the road, the heavens opened up, and the Spirit enabled me to pray. My prayer flowed like water from a dam that had burst. What a sight! Early in the morning, pitch dark, jogging down the road, I blubbered out my heart-wrenching prayer. How wonderful it was to really pray! I reminded the Lord that I was His child, and He did not die and rise again that I might be defeated but that I might be free and victorious and Spirit-filled. I claimed it over and over again and would not be denied. I confessed my need and claimed cleansing, deliverance, and

**Instead of walking
away broken and
bleeding, I came
away victorious and
free.**

a new, beautiful infilling of the Holy Spirit.

By the time I had finished running, the burden, fears, and bondage were gone. I was totally free, filled with the Spirit. I had a new anointing, a new freedom, a new sense of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit—and I had a new love for my people. Nothing had changed, but Eph. 3:16 had been fulfilled in me. The congregation sensed it, and the services were transformed. Altar services commenced; the people rallied. Christ was magnified in my heart. The freshness of the Spirit blew across my soul, and my spirit was drawn to the Word.

Then it dawned on me. "See I am doing a new thing! . . . do you not perceive it?" It was as though the Lord was saying, "Are you catching on? The things you think are breaking you are actually *making* you."

How easy it is to sing, "Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me." Yet when the Lord begins to answer that prayer, we cry, "Help! Deliver me!" It's very uncomfortable when the Lord begins to "turn on the heat" and melt us. Tom Landry, coach of the Dallas Cowboys, said he had to make his players go through what they didn't want to go through in order for them to become what they wanted to become.

"I am doing a new thing! . . . I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."

He is doing it in me in the midst of my hurt. While I am out in the wilderness, having lost my way, thirsty for the spiritual waters I cannot find, He is doing a new thing. He has His spiritual soul-moving machinery operating day and night, making a way for me in the desert and digging out streams in the wilderness.

Yet I had not perceived it! I had a problem of recognition.

Several consequences of this great infilling happened in this sequence during the following months:

I approached people differently, which in turn enabled them to respond positively toward me.

I had a growing sense of His abiding presence, a new sense of victory, and new appreciation for the person of the Holy Spirit.

The church began growing, the atmosphere changed, the altar calls were fruitful.

After months of delay, construction on the sanctuary began again, and within six months we had our first service—filled to capacity. It was a moment of glory and victory.

A spiritual breakthrough occurred on a regular Sunday morning that brought healing. It was an unplanned, one-day, in-depth revival, and the testimonies of victory continued on in the evening service.

Nearly two years later, the Lord released me and gave me a new assignment. Instead of walking away broken and bleeding, I came away victorious and free. It only happened when the pastor was revived, cleansed, and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Scripting the Drama of Worship

CREATIVE WORSHIP PLANNING

by Keith Schwanz

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and Instructor in Music, Western Evangelical Seminary*

With the recent renewal of interest in worship, many discussions and articles refer to Kierkegaard's model: Worship is a drama. Sometimes worship leaders present a play for the congregation's approval while hoping God will prompt their words and actions. Deficient theology. Denigrating practice. Legitimate corporate worship occurs when worship leaders prompt the congregation to act out their faith for God, who is the Audience.

The goal of the worship leader, then, is to involve every worshiper in the drama. The stage reaches to every corner of the sanctuary. Everyone

participates; no person feels excluded.

What does the script look like in this worship drama? How does the worship leader plan for total, meaningful involvement?

This article presents four methods used by worship planners to script the drama of worship: Configuration, Content, Conversation, and Canon. Evangelical pastors use all four methods, but the first three are the most common. Detailed examples illustrate the fourth method, which may provide new territory for the worship leader to explore.

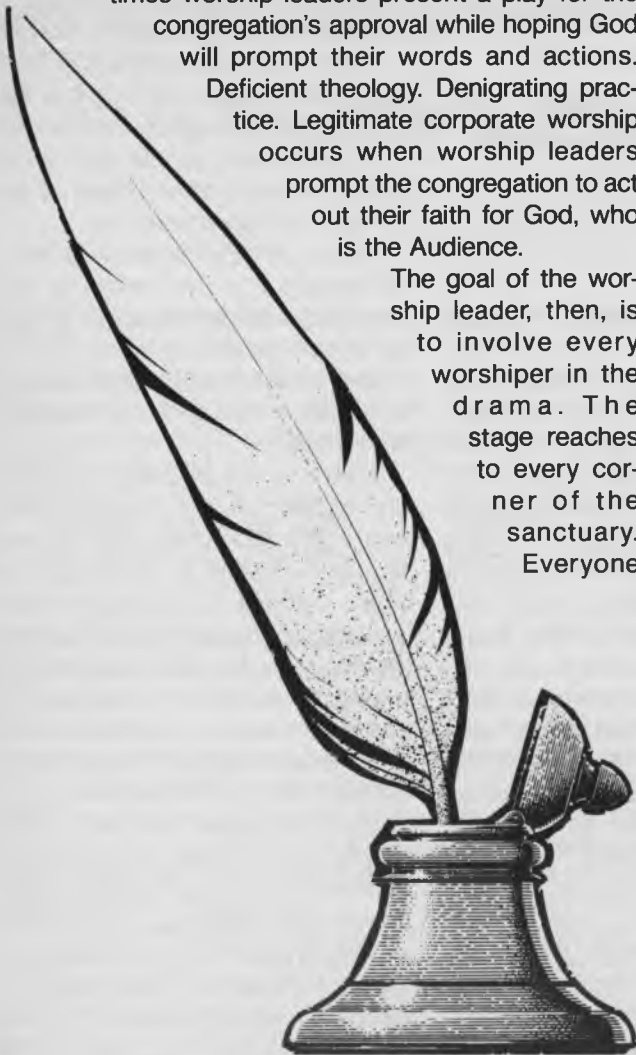
CONFIGURATION

The service always begins with a choral introit. After a pastoral prayer of invocation, the congregation stands to sing a hymn of praise. Ushers receive the offering, the choir sings their anthem, and Scripture is read. A solo or duet always precedes the sermon.

The person planning this service uses a blueprint. The outline of worship seldom changes; only the content varies. Many worship leaders use this method because of its simplicity. Once the pattern is designed, a worship leader has only to plug new hymns and Scripture readings and anthems into the appropriate slots.

The pastor, after careful design work, knows every aspect of the corporate worship experience will receive adequate attention in every service. The church office secretary likes this method because it is quick to prepare when a printing deadline approaches. The choir director uses whatever anthem the choir has ready. The congregation feels comfortable with the predictability of this type of service.

Sometimes the congregation becomes too comfortable in this routine. The people of God stand to sing and kneel to pray out of habit. The moves become mechanical. Nuts and bolts have replaced flesh and blood.





Allow your personal experience and relationship to God to mold the structure of worship.

The head switches into the automatic mode, resulting in a "heart bypass."

Woe to the leader who pulls the plug on this worship machine by changing the service order! Fuses pop and radiators boil over. Charges of desecrating the "sacred form" pummel the innovator.

Another caution flag waves when the worship service built on a prefab configuration appears disjointed and awkward. The parts don't fit together. The hymn does not relate to the choir anthem, which does not relate to the Scripture reading, which does not relate to the text of the sermon.

Consider a jigsaw puzzle. Colors and lines flow from one puzzle piece to another as they are locked together. Likewise in worship, correlation heightens the understanding and impact of worship activities.

Leaders in congregations of nonliturgical traditions may exhale a sigh of relief at this point. "We're Spirit-led. Our worship is spontaneous." I know of a church that provides a time in each service for simultaneous, individual expressions of praise. The whole congregation stands: one person prays while another person sings while another person . . . all at the same time.

A visitor asked, "How do you know when it's time to stop?"

"Listen to the organist. When she plays this certain chord progression, we know that it's time to sit down."

Even improvised services develop patterns just as a composer can be identified by recurring melodic shapes, harmonic progressions, or rhythmic patterns.

Repetitive structure can have value. Often, form provides a stability that keeps chaos and insecurity locked out. The worship leader strives to keep worship vibrant and fresh within the structure used to plan a worship service so that the congregation may freely respond to God.

CONTENT

The heading in the bulletin identifies the theme for the day. As the worshiper glances over the service order, he sees everything relates to the subject stated in the headline. The congregation and choir sing about it, the Scripture reading describes it, and the sermon explores it.

Elements of this service were selected because of their content. The worship planner chose a theme, then searched for ways to present the concepts involved. The elements of this service are like spotlights focused on the topic. As each light turns on, it illumines the theme with clarity, bringing understanding to the worshiper.

The worship planner may choose a theme for any of a number of reasons. A Scripture passage or sermon topic may spawn the direction for an entire service. Christmas and Easter services are often thematic. Congregations that closely follow the liturgical year use this organizational method for many services. I attended a funeral where the pastor arranged the whole service around a subject important to the deceased (the Word of God).

I have heard music ministers responsible for worship planning lament the fact that they do not know the pastor's sermon topic until late in the week. They lack adequate preparation time needed to plan a unified thematic service. The content method may still be used. Begin with the most inflexible part of the service. In many cases this is the choir anthem, which has been in preparation for several weeks. Weave a service around the subject expressed in that anthem. Several related thematic packages may be used in the same service.

The content method of worship planning requires more from both worship leader and congregation than the configuration method. The congregation looks intently for nuances of the theme. Worshipers, in a sense, walk around the subject, viewing it from several angles. This requires thoughtful consideration of the theme for maximum benefit.

Care must be taken to insure that the worship service does not become mere academic exercise on a religious theme. True worship is more than cerebral stimulation. It must challenge the congregation to respond obediently to God's revelation. Leaders, in every service, strive to communicate God's Word with clarity so that each person knows God's will, then challenge the hearers to act out a response in holy living.

The worship planner can invest large amounts of energy and creativity with the content organizational method. He may find it difficult to develop some themes. Long-range planning helps assure a complete range of subjects.

Several resources make the worship planner's job easier. Scripture passage on a specific theme can be located with the aid of a Bible concordance or *Nave's Topical Bible*. A topical index helps identify appropriate hymns. Congregational songs may be selected with the use of an index of Scripture references in hymns and a hymn concordance. (NOTE: The author has compiled both for the *Worship in Song* hymnal.) Scripture references are provided in many chorus books. Lillenas Publishing Company offers books for soloists and an index of choral octavos that groups songs according to topic and lists Scripture references.

Sparks of insight ignite a creative flame that requires development and preparation, but the enhanced worship experience makes the extra planning effort worthwhile.

CONVERSATION

Imagine a pastor visiting a home of a church member. They talk about issues facing the family. The conversation progresses naturally as the pastor reads a passage of Scripture, then prays for the family. Every element of the visit relates to what precedes and follows it. The dialogue moves smoothly from topic to topic.

The same conversational quality can be built into a worship service. The Scripture reading begets a sermon, the sermon prompts confession, confession expresses itself in prayer, victory in prayer leads to a testimony, the testimony results in a corporate hymn of praise.

This type of service emphasizes the dynamic flow of the worship experience. The plan for such a service may be described as a worship crescendo as each action grows out of the preceding event.

Often a worship planner will try to alternate between God's voice and man's voice in the worship conversation. We find this pattern in Isaiah 6: God reveals His holiness, Isaiah confesses his sinfulness and is cleansed; God calls for a holy messenger, Isaiah responds with eager readiness. This design illustrates worship in its simplest form—man responding to God's revelation of himself.

The worship leader also considers pace and balance when organizing a conversational service. He wants the movement to be quick and energetic at times, slow and tender at other moments. Walt Disney discovered early that his most successful work elicited both laughter and tears. A worship service needs a similar balance.

The worship organizer must "converse" while planning a service. Imagine your congregation gathered for worship. What might you do that would compel them to join the celebration? What song will encourage an encounter with God? What Scripture passage will be meaningful at this juncture of the spiritual journey?

Better yet, actually worship as you plan a corporate worship service. Allow your personal experience and relationship with God to mold the structure of worship as you guide fellow believers. Allow God to breathe life into your corporate worship through your own revived spirit.

As you might guess, this process makes demands on the leader not seen in the previous methods. It engages the leader's identity as a believer. The order of worship will probably change each week as form becomes secondary to the dynamic considerations. The worship planner must know the content and mood of all songs sung by choir and soloist prior to arranging a service order. All participants must have at least a limited involvement in the planning process.

One potential danger of this method is slipping to a

subjective extreme. If the experience becomes bloated by the starvation of content, this hazard may bring harm to corporate worship. The worship leader strives to balance objective and subjective elements in every service. Both are necessary.

The conversation method may require a significant time commitment, but the result is a worship experience that feels spontaneous and natural even though carefully planned.

CANON

As the organist concludes the prelude, the worship leaders move to the platform. A pastor steps to the pulpit as the reverberation fades. He invites the congregation to turn to Phil. 4:8 and reads this verse out loud.

He continues, "Sometimes we read God's Word without putting what we find there into practice. For example, Scripture gives us specific instruction concerning what we think about. But when was the last time you reserved your thoughts for only that which is true and pure and excellent? This morning we will be 'doers of the word, and not hearers only' (James 1:22). Let's begin by considering things that are true."

This congregation experienced an order of worship prompted by Scripture. The order and content of a biblical passage directly determined the order and content of the worship service. Usual activities were used: congregational songs, pastoral prayer, choir anthem, offering. The sequence, however, resulted from a leader's interaction with Scripture. Worship becomes a *Dramatic Paraphrase* of God's Word when a leader uses this method of worship planning. The entire worship service becomes an exposition of a Scripture passage.

Examples will help clarify the design of a Dramatic Paraphrase service. Three types are discussed in this article: Dramatic Reading, Dramatic Instruction, and Dramatic Reenactment.

DRAMATIC READING: An entire worship service may be woven around an interpretive reading of a passage of Scripture or biblical story. One person may read alone, or several readers may assume specific roles. The script pauses at several points to allow the worshipers the privilege of responding to God's Word. In these moments each person is encouraged to personalize eternal truth through song, prayer, testimony, or quiet meditation.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT Matthew 5—7

A preacher may place the sermon at any place in this service. Begin the homily after the reader has read the Scripture text to be expounded.

READER Matt. 5:1-12

SONG: "Jesus, If Still the Same Thou Art" (WH 14)

READER: Matt. 5:13-16

SONG: "We Are the Light of the World" (STS 42)

READER: Matt. 5:17-37

SONG: "Spirit of God, Descend" (WIS 267 or octavo PAAT-1155)

READER: Matt. 5:38-48

SONG: "The Servant Song" (EH 57)

READER: Matt. 6:1-11

PRAYER: Pastor

READER: Matt. 6:12-15

SONG: "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" (SSAS, page 198)

READER: Matt. 6:16-24

OFFERING: Pastor

SONG: "Consider the Lilies" (STS 21)

READER: Matt. 6:25-34

TESTIMONY: Victory over worry

SONG: "Seek Ye First," stanza 1 (EH 10)

READER: Matt. 7:1-8

SONG: "Seek Ye First," stanza 2 (EH 10)

READER: Matt. 7:9-14

SONG: "My Lord Is Leading Me On" (SSAS, page 200, or octavo PAAT-1183)

READER: Matt. 7:15-27

SONG: "The Solid Rock" (WIS 92)

NOTE: All songs used in this service are printed in books from Lillenas Publishing Company: *Exalt Him* (EH), PAMB-528; *Scripture Solos for All Seasons* (SSAS), PAMB-491; *Scriptures to Sing* (STS), PAMB-439; *Wesley Hymns* (WH), PAMB-510; *Worship in Song* (WIS), PAMB-287.

The use of several Bible translations may prove helpful when writing the script. Any dynamic Bible narrative can be developed in this manner: Biographies (Joseph, Moses, David, Elijah, Jesus, Peter, Paul); Events (Solomon building the Temple [1 Kings 6—8; 2 Chronicles 2—7], Rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem [Nehemiah], The New Jerusalem [Revelation 21—22]).

DRAMATIC INSTRUCTION: A young mother asked her two-year-old to pick up the toy and put it in the toy box. The child stood motionless. The mother took the child by the hand, waited while the youngster picked up the toy, and led him to the toy box. Dramatic instructions; active learning.

The worship leader can guide worshipers in a similar fashion, not as a parent to a child, but as a fellow worshiper. The leader may help the congregation experience the principles of Scripture through bodily actions. Together they hear the Word, then "do" the Word with corporate worship activities. The worship planner will discover the ease with which this type of service can be developed.

A PRAYER FOR REVIVAL 2 Chron. 7:14

I. We Are God's People

Read 1 Pet. 2:9-10.

Sing a hymn and/or chorus about the church.

Prayer of thanksgiving for the church.

II. The Prayers of God's Humble People

Sing "He Has Shown Thee, O Man" (Mic. 6:8).

Four readers: Eph. 4:2; Isa. 66:2b; Ps. 25:9; 1 Pet. 5:6.

Sing "Humble Thyself in the Sight of the Lord" (James 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6).

Several prayers of confession.

III. We Seek God

Soloist sings "I Am Thine, O Lord," "Nearer Still Nearer," or other song with similar theme.

IV. We Turn to God

Sermon: "If My People."

Prayer of consecration.

The congregation will benefit by knowing the Scripture passage used to organize the service. A worship leader may read the whole passage at the beginning of a service. A scriptural phrase or verse may be read just prior to each worship activity. Consider using an overhead projector to display the scripture during worship.

Passages containing a list or progression of ideas lend themselves to this type of treatment: Psalm 95—Shouts, Silence, Submission; Matt. 5:3-12—The Beatitudes; Gal. 5:22-25—Spiritual Fruit; Heb. 10:19-25—Four Varieties of "Let Us"; James 5:13-16—Happy Songs and Powerful Prayer; 2 Pet. 1:5-8—Spiritual Addition.

DRAMATIC REENACTMENT: Worship leaders often use this method during holiday seasons. The Christmas story is told in Scripture and song with costumed characters. The seven last words of Christ provide organization for a Good Friday service. The apostle Paul used this method in 1 Cor. 11:23-26 when he outlined the Communion service.

This type of dramatic paraphrase restates a biblical event in a contemporary setting. This is more than a play on a stage. This reenactment reaches every person, drawing them into the action. Since this method uses the greatest amount of resources, it requires the most preparation.

The following example blends elements from the Old Testament celebration of firstfruits with an American Thanksgiving celebration. This informal worship service occurs in a fellowship hall with everyone seated around

**The desire for a
free flow of the
Spirit does not elim-
inate the need for
preparation.**



tables. Announcements in previous services encourage each family to bring canned food and/or a freewill offering for needy persons. A Thanksgiving Table with two offering baskets is prepared for the reception of these donations.

GIVING THANKS

Leviticus 23; Numbers 28—29; Deuteronomy 16

- I. Thanksgiving and Song
- II. Thanksgiving and God's Goodness
 - A. Sharing: Each person in the small group takes an apple from the center of the table. One at a time, each says, "This apple represents . . ." or "I am thankful for . . ." Before the next person shares, the group member directly opposite the one who has just shared prays, thanking God for His goodness. "Lord, thank You for . . . in (person)'s life."
 - B. Read Lev. 23:9-11. Describe the action in the celebration of firstfruits. Our apples represent God's goodness. Our "priest" offered a prayer of thanksgiving to God. One element of the firstfruits festival we have yet to do: wave offering. Hold apples up as we sing "God Is So Good" and "I Will Bless Thee, O Lord."
- III. Thanksgiving and Atonement
 - A. Sermon
 1. Sacrifice for atonement part of Israel's celebration (Lev. 23:12; Num. 28:26-31, especially v. 30).
 2. Thanksgiving begins with a righteous heart (Ps. 33:1-3; Isa. 61:10-11; Phil. 1:11).
 3. Jesus, the Atonement, brings righteousness (Rom. 3:21-26).
 - B. Communion (1 Cor. 11:23-26).
- IV. Thanksgiving and Giving
 - A. Israel's harvest celebration and the needy (gleaning—Lev. 23:22; freewill offering—Deut. 16:10).
 - B. Giving march: While the congregation sings, everyone moves by the Thanksgiving Table placing canned food and/or money on the table.
 - C. Benediction: The pastor reads Num. 6:24-26, one line at a time. The congregation repeats that line in unison before the pastor reads the next line.
 - D. Sharing: The service concludes with open-ended sharing. Everyone is encouraged to cut the apples and eat the fruit as they visit with each other.

Trying to duplicate details in a dramatic reenactment may become frustrating to the worship planner. Instead, match the general flow of a passage by paraphrasing the main ideas and events. Most of all, think creatively. God has charged ministers of the gospel to speak His unchanging Word in fresh, vibrant language. Tell the story of redemption in new, creative ways.

Be careful to keep the focus on God. If people begin elevating creativity above the Creator, then worship becomes unbalanced, and potential danger exists.

The dramatic paraphrase method of worship planning causes a congregation to worship with eyes opened wide in wonder. Services become invigorating. Worship

activity requires the direct involvement of the congregation as each person responds to God.

SUMMARY

Each of the worship planning methods described in this article can be used with integrity. The worship leader is encouraged to vary the basic structure of worship on a regular basis. One method may become the usual operating procedure, but others should be utilized regularly.

Different planning techniques may be combined. For example, a sermon series uses the canon method for its general structure. Each service, however, is developed thematically, the content method. The dramatic instruction method is another multitheme form based on Scripture. Other combinations can be used effectively.

Ultimately, the success of any worship service depends on the congregation's awareness of God's presence. The mechanics of a service may operate without flaw, but if people are not drawn to God, the energy has been expended needlessly.

*Except the Lord conduct the plan,
The best concerted schemes are vain
And never can succeed.
We spend our wretched strength for naught;
But if our works in Thee be wrought,
They shall be blest indeed.
Lord, if Thou didst Thyself inspire
Our souls with this intense desire
Thy goodness to proclaim;
Thy glory if we now intend,
O let our deed begin and end,
Complete in Jesus' name!*

—CHARLES WESLEY

However carefully the worship leader may plan a service, there may be times when he releases his plan, allowing the Holy Spirit to substitute one of divine design. The desire for a free flow of the Spirit does not eliminate the need for careful preparation. A worship leader serves the Lord and is open to His direction.

Plan well. Hold it loosely. Pray fervently.



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SIGNS AND WONDERS: WIMBER OR WESLEY?

by Levi Keidel

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During my term of missionary service in Zaire, I was astounded by nonrational phenomena in a home prayer meeting. People shrieked, moaned, and growled. Bodies shook so violently that heads were a blur. People fainted or had visions.

My theology gave me no frame of reference for such happenings. These were sincere, devoted Christians. Their tribal grouping has a history of revivalism. They were convinced such things came from the Holy Spirit.

The experience became part of my lifelong interest in spiritual renewal movements. Subsequently, a graduate study program provided me the occasion for research toward resolving my perplexities. A thesis resulted, "The Relevance of Nonrational Motoric and Psychic Phenomena to Personal Christian Experience."¹

In further pursuit of that interest I attended two Vineyard conferences. The sudden outbreak of dramatic revival movements has always produced controversy. The acclaimed "signs and wonders" of the Vineyard Movement have fueled such controversy. In the light of all that had preceded, I wanted to evaluate the movement firsthand.

I affirm some aspects of the Vineyard Movement. First, the initial long periods of praise singing with free, uninhibited worship backed by contemporary music are spiritually uplifting. This factor attracts the generation of young singles and "baby boomers." On occasions when I visited, such persons constituted 70 percent or more of the congregation.

Second, the movement teaches a "realized eschatology." With the coming of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God broke into history. It is among us now. I believe this understanding of Scripture adds excitement, expectancy, and potential to one's faith.

Third, God performs signs and miracles to witness that His kingdom power is among us. Such happenings validated the ministry of Jesus and of Paul (John 2:23; Rom. 15:18-19). There is no reason that such things should not validate our ministries today.

Fourth, signs and wonders have been part of every great revival movement in history. Some Anabaptists and Huguenots in the 16th and 17th centuries spoke in tongues, fainted, had visions, and made prophetic utterances.² The New England revival of 1734-35 under Jonathan Edwards produced tremblings, shrieking, convulsions, and faintings. When John Wesley, in England,

read of such phenomena in an account of Edwards' ministry, he longed for such "wonderful bodily effects" in his own.³ Soon thereafter they began occurring from time to time in Wesley's ministry, as recorded in his journal.

The famous American revivalist C. G. Finney experienced what he described as "a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost." During the early years of his revivals, faintings and prostrations were consistent and anticipated. Inasmuch as signs and wonders, whatever their value, have been a part of important revival movements in history, we should not be surprised at their occurrence in spiritual renewal movements today.

Notwithstanding, at least two aspects of the Vineyard Movement cause me concern. First, I am uneasy about the **prominence** given to signs and wonders. Dr. John White, psychologist, theologian, and prolific writer, is a primary teacher within the movement. Instruction he gave in the sessions I attended was clear, forthright, and biblical. He taught that we must, above all, seek God. If a sign happens as incidental, let us affirm it. He warned of Satan's power to counterfeit the power of God. It appeared that White endeavored to define theological parameters for the movement.

John Wimber was next on the program. Seeking signs as evidence of the presence of God rather than an incidental consequence of seeking God, his ministry exceeded the parameters defined by White. He announced approaching "waves of the Spirit." He waited for and anticipated such signs as evidence that the Holy Spirit was at work. Signs came: shakings, faintings, hysterical laughing, ejaculatory shouts, convulsions; I'd seen nothing like it since that village home prayer meeting in Zaire.

Seeking signs and wonders as an end in themselves has always proved counterproductive. Jonathan Edwards came to discountenance them. He saw they had become a source of spiritual pride and self-confidence, which provoked God. By the fall of 1748, acrimonious slander by those who had enjoyed such signs under his ministry drove him from his pastorate.⁴

John Wesley's attitude toward such happenings went full circle. During the early years of his ministry, French Huguenot immigrants brought their trances, visions, shakings, and tongues into England. Wesley sternly warned against such "excesses." However, in 1738,

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FARMER'S REPORT

by M. V. Scutt

*Director of Evangelism Ministries
Church of the Nazarene*

Hear now the allegory of the agriculturist: "This has been a good year. The farm is in great shape, and everyone around here is experiencing a real sense of contentment. Oh, we may have a problem here or there, but minor difficulties are to be expected with this kind of operation, and we have simply determined that we will not be discouraged.

"We believe it was a genuine miracle that provided our new barn addition. The space was really needed for the farmers' dinners, and we have just had no place at all for recreation. Our children have always needed a facility of their own; it would be a real tragedy if they were forced to mingle with those unwashed children down the road. We have just surveyed our investment and determined that ours may be one of the most highly val-

ued farms in the land. It is a beautiful place, too. Why, during these warm weather months, we have spent untold hours on the shrubbery, we have erected a new ownership sign, and we even installed a new fence to keep the animals out.

"We have some great plans that will mean success for the future. One whole week has been scheduled for us to look at ourselves and each other. We have invited a farm expert to come and spend those days reminding us what farmers are supposed to look like and how they should act. We have also scheduled a time to study the principles of sowing and reaping. I know that will be a rich resource, for each year it has been getting greater attention. I think we are all a little bored, however, when we spend so much time studying the sowing and reaping that is going on in other lands. We do not mind helping them with our 'helping hand farmers' program, but those studies are not the most popular events on the farm, even if there are things to be learned through them.

"We are all a little puzzled by the difficulty we experience in keeping the machinery in working order. We try to keep it oiled and polished, but it is so imperfect we have never been able to make it very effective outside the barn. It all looks great until we get it outside the

door, then it loses power. We have tried different generators and fuels, and the noise has been earth-shaking when we revved the engines, but just outside the door it loses power and can barely pull itself along. We have come to believe there must be something about the air-mixing or atmosphere inside the barn that makes it better, so we are confining our operation there.

"We had a beautiful program to celebrate the birthday of the One who put us in the farming business. Our children are all so bright-eyed and excited at that time of the year. Of course, the story of His birth has been worn out, so we have spiced it up with fantasies and fairy tales to maintain a high interest in the celebration. There were also lots of other special events. We even attracted many from neighboring farms for the 'hoopla.' We had fiddlers and singers until we nearly shook the rafters. Things sure seemed quiet when they were gone, but it was some of the best entertainment money can buy.

"We have all been very busy this year. One of our high priorities has been training our young people and children in the advantages and conveniences of farming inside the barn. We have also spent a lot of time working on the 'farmer image' so that the world will know by



M. V. Scutt

looking at us that we are farmers. We really had high hopes that we could do some planting this year; but with the high level of energy necessary to run our program in the barn, everyone was just too exhausted. That kind of toil is just so dirty and hot, we can hardly find anyone interested in doing it anymore. We are doing our best, though, by sending out seeds in the newspaper and supporting farm radio and television.

"Of course, the Master Farmer keeps spreading seeds everywhere. Someone in our barn had

the nerve to suggest, during one of our harvesting seminars, that we had some responsibility to gather in His crops. He even said that the harvest was in danger of being lost; but we all believe that our barn is available, and if the harvest really wanted to come in, we are here and it is welcome. Besides, sometimes this harvesting enthusiasm drags in fruit that is not like ours, and we can't tolerate that in our barn. We try to keep an open-door policy, though, and some of His fruit did blow in the door this year.

"We will all be glad when this

harvest emphasis is over, for it sometimes makes us feel guilty. But why should we feel guilty? We know our priorities, and we are too busy to get involved in this harvest thing. We have to earn money to keep the farm going, we have our families and friendships, we have our recreational interests, we have the responsibilities of meeting in the barn and keeping the activities alive, and we must spend all that time polishing fruit! Why, it's a miracle that we keep this thing running at all! All in all, I'd say it was a great year!"

Wimber or Wesley?

Continued from p. 17

upon reading the account of Edwards' ministry, he viewed such "wonderful bodily effects" with "profound thankfulness." He saw them as manifestations of God.⁵

By 1750 Wesley no longer encouraged "signs and wonders" (his wording). He wrote in a journal entry of April 3, 1786:

*Satan strives to push many of them to extravagance. This appears in several instances . . . Some of them, perhaps many, scream all together as loud as they possibly can . . . Several drop down as dead; and are as stiff as a corpse; but in a while they start up, and cry, "Glory! Glory!" . . . bringing the real work into contempt.*⁶

C. G. Finney, in his early ministry, encouraged the outbreak of emotional manifestations. However, in later years he came to denounce them. In 1836 he said that of all the converts of the revivals of the preceding 10 years, "the great body of them are a disgrace to religion." Of a group of eight evangelists who had gotten their inspiration from Finney, all but two had abandoned, or were forced out of, the ministry by 1845, four of them for sexual immorality.⁷

History intones a consistent somber note of warning to any Christian movement that gives primary attention to nonrational phenomena.

My second concern is this: A renewal movement that is biblical must address itself to **human need**.

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice . . . to set the oppressed free . . . to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe him . . . ? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear . . . Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say, Here am I (Isa. 58:6-9, NIV).

No spiritual renewal movement in the history of Christianity so impacted society for good as that which was led by John Wesley. It changed social ethics. It ad-

ressed human need. It is credited with sparing England the horrors of revolution like that which later ravaged France. Wesley preached a lot about money. He feared storing treasures on earth. He gave away all he earned above living expenses. In 1776 English tax commissioners would not believe his return and accused him of hiding silver plate. He replied, "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread."⁸ A full-orbed Kingdom theology must address social need.

Followers of the Vineyard Movement constitute, for the most part, a body with great material resources. I have lived with Third World people for 25 years. What would the world's 2½ billion hungry think if they saw that we attach more importance to enjoying some esoteric emotional worship experience than to meeting human need in a manner that impinges upon our pleasure-oriented, affluent life-styles?

I have read an occasional article in Vineyard's periodical *Equipping the Saints* that expressed concern for meeting social need. Notwithstanding, to the present a theology of social concern has not visibly impacted the movement. Rather, its theology centers primarily upon the biblical basis for signs and wonders.

These concerns do not suggest an encouraging long-term prognosis for the Vineyard Movement. Given the choice, I choose Wesley over Wimber.

NOTES

1. C. G. Oosthuizen, *Post Christianity in Africa* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), 151.
2. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill., 1984.
3. Frederick Morgan Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1917), 133.
4. *Ibid.*, 130-31.
5. Hoell N. Bloch, *The Pentecostal Movement* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1964), 190, n. 103.
6. Nehemiah Curnock, *The Journal of John Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1938), 7:153.
7. William G. McLoughlin, *Modern Revivalism* (New York: Ronald Press, 1959), 132, 147.
8. Charles Edward White, "What Wesley Practiced and Preached About Money," *Mission Frontiers* (April 1987): 15.



DO YOU REALLY WANT TO BE A DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT?

Best job in the church, isn't it? What more could anyone want than to be a district superintendent? Big money, secretarial help, lavish expense account, freedom to set your own schedule, and all that power. . . . Isn't that the way it is? Well, believe it or not, being a D.S. is not all fun and games. Or as Ogden Nash might have said, "Roses are things that the district superintendency is not a bed of which."

Problems nag you, elections hover like omens of doom, and disasters keep you as nervous as a mole who hears a black snake behind him in his burrow.

In this feature, a Nazarene district superintendent shares four case studies that illustrate typical occupational hazards encountered by superintendents.



CASE
STUDY
PROBLEM
1

THE MALAVISTA VACANCY

District Superintendent Jones has a church open on his district. The Malavista church has 325 members. It is located in a university town, and the lay leaders of the church are, for the most part, highly educated and pursue a fairly sophisticated life-style.

The church came open just 10 days before the district preachers' meeting. During the two days of the preachers' meeting, four different pastors called the D.S. aside to tell him that the Lord had been talking to him about the Malavista church. The four pastors are good ministers and sincere Christians, and the D.S. regards them as friends and colleagues. He also knows in his heart that the Malavista board will not give any one of them a second look.

A. The first pastor to whom "the Lord has been speaking" about Malavista has pastored for the last 12 years in a rural setting. His church attendance has grown over that time, from 60 to 80. This man has little education, and his every sermon leaves the landscape cluttered with misplaced modifiers, mismatched plurals and singulars, and mismated subjects and verbs.

B. The second pastor praying about Malavista is highly educated. He has a seminary degree, flawless grammar, and good potential. But he is short on experience. He has pastored 18 months at a little church that has grown from 10 to 50 during that time. He certainly has potential, but Malavista most assuredly will want a more experienced pastor.

C. The third pastor who chatted with D.S. Jones is well educated and has done well at a church of 120 members. The problem is that this pastor is a woman. D.S. Jones knows that the key leaders on the Malavista board were Baptists before being converted to the Holiness Movement, and they are strongly prejudiced against any woman preacher.

D. Pastor No. 4 has pastored on this district for 27 years. He has pastored six churches on the district, none bigger than 150 members. Everyone knows his strengths and weaknesses. He has never had spectacular growth nor significant losses. He has been a journeyman pastor. But he is 60 years old.

A few weeks later, the Malavista church calls a pastor from off the district.

FOR REFLECTION

D.S. Jones now has several things to consider:

1. Will the pastors who collared him because "the Lord was speaking about the Malavista church" still regard him as a friend?

2. Will tension enter their relationships?
3. Will they avoid confiding in the D.S.?
4. Will their morale fade?
5. Will they privately or publicly accuse the D.S. of not properly presenting their names?
6. Will they have less enthusiasm for paying district budgets?
7. Will they think the D.S. has lost confidence in them?
8. Will these pastors participate in zone and district projects?
9. D.S. Jones has a renewal vote coming up in a few weeks. Will the disappointed pastors vote for him?
10. What biblical or theological resources can D.S. Jones draw on in this case?

What is D.S. Jones to think, feel, and do? If he were to ask your advice, how would you counsel him?



CASE
STUDY
PROBLEM
2

ABOUT THAT NEW STAFF MEMBER

The "in thing" on the district is to hire full-time staff. Many pastors on the East Central District with churches in attendance of around 125 have hired one full-time staff person, and many other pastors (in churches of 200-500 in attendance) have hired two, three, or four full-time staffers.

The past three years has seen an economic crunch hit the East Central District. Every church has felt the pinch, and every church has had to tighten its belt. Most pastors cut every budget item possible before facing the problem of cutting staff. Finally several pastors made the decision: There was not enough money coming in to keep their paid staffs *and* to pay all connectional budgets, so the staff was retained, but the connectional budgets were only partially paid.

Several pastors from churches of around 125 in attendance recently approached D.S. Jones, asking permission to hire one full-time staff person. When asked if they could handle this added expense and also keep all connectional budgets paid, they admitted that they

doubted it. "But," they chimed, "Brother Joys and Brother Moss have full-time staff, and their budgets were not paid last year!"

The D.S. took his stand by quoting (Nazarene) *Manual* Par. 166: "When paid assistance in the local church, whether ministerial or lay, becomes necessary for greater efficiency, it must be such as will not . . . tax the church's financial resources."

The furor started! These pastors got on the telephone and told others on the district that they could not hire paid staff because they would not guarantee their budgets would also be paid, but there were pastors on the district last year who now have staff, and their budgets were not paid. "Where is the fairness in that?" "What kind of D.S. do we have?" "Why would he say no to us but let the others get by?"

D.S. Jones started taking the heat! He could feel resentment building from those pastors and church boards who were denied associates. He knew he had to take a stand and be consistent with it, so he told *everyone* that if their connectional budgets were not paid in full, he could not approve some or all of their paid associates. The resentment really started to build then. The pastors who had staff (who didn't have all budgets paid in full) felt like the D.S. was after them. The staff members from involved churches didn't like the D.S. one bit and told everyone within earshot about it. The church boards of the involved churches felt D.S. Jones was trying to destroy their ministries and programs. "How can we ever see this church come out of it if we have to let staff go and lose those ministries?" "What will happen to our youth?" "What will happen to our singles?" "What will happen to our choir?"

Stress mounts on the district superintendent! What should he do? He doesn't want to hurt the churches that are struggling financially further, and he realizes if he demands that staff be cut, there will be morale problems in those churches. D.S. Jones inwardly wants every church to have every ministry possible, but he also wants to be consistent with these pastors who are asking for staff (but knowing it will take budget money to pay them). What is a D.S. to do?

FOR REFLECTION

Discuss these options:

1. Back off. Let every church retain their staff members even if they can't pay all connectional budgets.

2. At the beginning of the new church year, refuse to approve some or all of the paid staff if the church did not meet all financial obligations during the previous year (including connectional budgets). (The Nazarene *Manual*, Par. 166.2, states that the D.S. must approve all paid staff in writing *each year*.)

3. Explain the problem clearly from the superintendent's view in a letter to the pastor and church board of every church that did not pay all budgets in full. Give both the board and the pastor a one year's notice of the D.S.'s policy of not approving one or all paid staff if all financial obligations are not met, including all budgets. Write the letter in a positive way that indicates the D.S.

fully expects the church to meet all obligations including all budgets being paid in full.

4. Don't tamper with those who have paid staff but all budgets not paid (because they are larger churches who carry weight on the district, plus many potential votes at the D.S.'s next recall vote), but refuse to grant approval to churches who want to hire paid staff when they admit it will take their budget money to fund the new associate.

5. Never mention *Manual* Par. 166 to anyone, always grant approval for staff when asked, and when budgets are not paid in full, say nothing to the senior pastor about it.

6. None of the above. I would _____



There has been "low level" tension in the Corringtown church for years. Two distinct groups make up the congregation—two churches under one roof, two very different personality groups. There is no doctrinal problem, just two very different kinds of people meeting together as one congregation.

Across the years it seems that every situation that comes to the church causes these groups to polarize. Such situations as:

Should we sell this church and relocate, or stay here and spend big bucks on fixing up this facility?

Should we hire staff, or use our laymen in such key ministries as music, youth, and Christian education?

Should we call a "white collar, professional type" pastor or a "blue collar, good-old-boy type" pastor?

One group (about one-half of the church) finally decided that the continual tension was not pleasing God. They reasoned that another Nazarene church was needed in Corringtown anyway, since the population is 40,000, and there is only one holiness church in the city. They talked among themselves until they were all convinced a new church was needed, and that was the only solution to the Corringtown First Church problem. Twenty years of tension is enough!

Three representatives went to the pastor with the plan. The pastor reacted negatively to the plan! His

blood pressure went sky-high, and he made a late-night call to the D.S., telling him of the subversive plan. With both pastor and people talking about the issue, the entire church soon knew of the plan. Old Corringtown First Church exploded! "You're splitting our church!" "You will ruin us!" "You'll take half of our Sunday School teachers, half of our finances, half the teens, and half of the choir. We will never survive! We'll be nothing but a little home-mission church again!"

The tension mounts. The rumors fly. Words are spoken that should never be spoken between Christians. Both groups feel clearly "led by the Lord," and both groups feel the other group is carnal—or worse!

The telephone blitz to D.S. Jones starts! From one of the persons who wants to leave and start the new church, "We are leaving. Twenty years of tension is enough. We need another Nazarene church in this town, and you should give us your blessing!"

Within 30 minutes, another call comes from "the home church." "Don't you dare give them permission to become a church in our denomination! They are dividing our church. They have said this, this, this, and even *this*, and you will be wrong if you let them form another church!"

The next call comes from one who wants to leave. "It will never work to stay. The decision has been made. We are leaving January 1 to form a new church. We want to be Nazarenes but if you refuse to allow it, we'll be Wesleyans, Free Methodists, or independent. *Someone* will take us! We are leaving! Will you grant us church-type mission status?"

By now, the calls coming to the D.S. from Corringtown average around six per day. He feels the pressure mounting higher and higher. Sure enough, the phone rings again, this time from a person from "the home church." "You can't let them go! If you just put your foot down and say no, they will settle down. Besides, D.S. Jones, this isn't fair to our pastor. He came to a church of 200 only months ago, and now we'll only have 100. How can we keep his salary at the same level? How can we keep at the same level? It isn't fair! Say no, Brother Jones, just say no!"

The next call comes from one of those leaving. "We have found a building that will work well for a church-type mission. We want to lease it for one year. We have the money committed. We aren't asking the district for money, only for district approval and blessing. This isn't a split, *it's a birth!* Brother Jones, will you help us, or must we contact the district superintendent of another holiness denomination?"

The stressed-out D.S. hears the phone ring again, and this time it's from one from the "home church." "This is no birth! It is not a church planting project! This is a *divorce!* They are leaving. It isn't right. How can we survive? How can we pay our budgets? Just say no!"

This phone blitz continues for three weeks. The D.S. is under incredible pressure. The phone rings around six to eight times per day from this situation alone—besides all the pressures from the other 75 churches. It seems to the D.S. that there is an organized effort from both sides at Corringtown to "keep calling the D.S. Keep the pressure on him. If we keep it up, he will stand by us!"

What should D.S. Jones do in the midst of this never-ending pressure cooker? Yes, the District Advisory Board will be called into session, and a decision will be made, but—

1. The District Advisory Board will basically do what the D.S. feels is right in this situation because they know he is much closer to the situation than they are. The D.S. knows all of the dynamics, and they do not. Truthfully, the Advisory Board will only know what the D.S. tells them. What recommendation should the D.S. give the Advisory Board?

2. When the decision is made, one-half of the Corringtown church is going to be upset. Those upset church members won't be calling the Advisory Board members—they will call the district superintendent! As high as their emotions are running, they will be calling by the dozens! "I can't take any more phone calls from Corringtown," declares Jones. "But can I refuse their phone calls and still be a responsible district superintendent?"

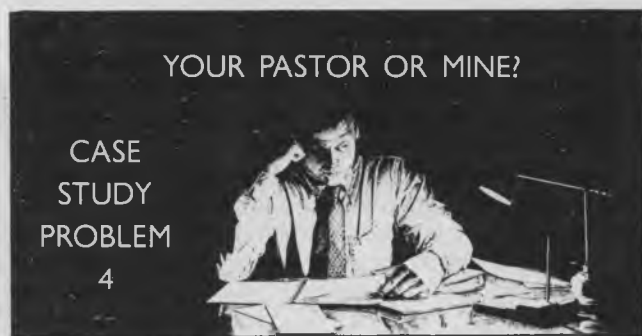
3. The D.S.'s vote is scheduled for next August. Eight months after the proposed date for the new church to start, he is on trial before the entire assembly. "I don't need a block of 'no' votes any more than a pastor needs them," Jones reasons. "How can I turn this 'no-win' situation into a 'win-win' one?"

4. Our common enemy, Satan, sees a chance to topple a well-known district superintendent! He starts in. He plants seeds of hurt, disgust, and resentment in his heart. The D.S. feels himself growing cynical. He grumbles, "The harder I try, the worse it gets. No matter what I say, it is wrong with someone! I hate this job! Is there an honorable way to quit? I didn't create this problem, but it's for sure, I must handle it. What is right? What is wrong? Who is right? Who is wrong? What is God's will? What should we do?"

While the Rev. Jones is crying out to God late at night, the phone rings. Corringtown again! "D.S., let me tell you . . ."

FOR REFLECTION

1. List three things you would say to D.S. Jones. Then discuss your list with the list of others if you are considering this in a group meeting. _____



St. John's congregation heard their pastor's resigna-

tion and, in a few days, heard from their D.S. about the start of the pastor-calling process. At the first meeting of the D.S. and church board, all went well. Board and D.S. both said they felt good about the spirit of the meeting and believed that progress was made.

At the second meeting, the superintendent presented the names of five good pastors; the board submitted one name. As the discussion developed, it was evident that a feeling about "our man vs. the D.S.'s men" was emerging. When the vote was finally taken, "their man" was first by a landslide. "Their man" was a pastor three states away, who had been suggested to an influential board member by an old college friend. The D.S. had never met nor heard of him.

"Their man" came for the interview; everyone seemed to like him—except the D.S.—and the board voted to nominate him to the congregation. The D.S. expressed hesitancy to the board, stating that "his personality and the personality of this church just don't match." The church board wanted him, however, and voted unanimously to recommend him to the congregation. He carried the congregational vote with a 97 percent "yes." Everyone felt good about the call except the D.S.

Eight months later an influential board member called the D.S. at 11:30 P.M. With great emotion the board member told the D.S. about the new pastor's peculiar ways, that there was great tension in the church, that the attendance was dropping, and that this man just didn't fit in at St. John's. Of course, the board member said he had been talking to other board members, and everyone he talked to felt the D.S. must come for a board meeting!

The D.S. called the pastor the next day, and the pastor agreed that there was growing tension in the church, that attendance was falling, and that the adjustment at St. John's was difficult. Nevertheless, he was sure it would all work out!

Four board meetings later (with the D.S., pastor, and board all involved) and three from the first phone call to the D.S. about the situation, the problem became intolerable. The pastor had never pastored a church more than half this size, nor did he have the gifts and graces to do so. But he wanted to stay and "bring it around." The church board was adamant that he leave. The D.S. was in the pressure seat again! He knew that 11 months ago he had told them of his hesitancy about calling this man, but that would not solve the problem now. If this pastoral arrangement continues, the church that once ran 200 in attendance, and now is at the 125 level, will soon be south of the 100 mark.

The D.S. asked for time and patience from the board so that he could attempt to move the pastor. However, no other church would call him! Would *you* call a pastor who had only been at his church 11 months where the attendance had fallen nearly in half? The board members ran out of patience. Two or three phone calls were charged with emotion! The D.S. felt that funny sting in his stomach start up again. He knew what that meant four years ago, and he feared about his future.



The D.S. finally came to the conclusion that the pastor must resign to save both the church and the pastor. The pastor reluctantly agreed. Three days later, however, the pastor called the D.S. to announce that he was staying at St. John's church. "I just talked to my brother-in-law who works at headquarters, and he told me I have *Manual* grounds to stay. I was elected for two years, and I've only been here 11 months. I don't have to leave, so I won't leave. The church may fall to 100, but I'll build it back to 200 with 'my kind' of people."

Then the phone rang from the key board member who made the original call at 11:30 P.M. some months ago. "I thought you told us you had a solution worked out for our pastor. I thought the pastor was resigning. Now I hear he isn't. The church is being destroyed. We only had 53 last Sunday night, and all but two of our teens are gone. We've asked you for three months to help us, but nothing has been done. Are you trying to destroy our church? You've had other open churches; why didn't you move him? Do we have to take this into our own hands and throw him out? When is this man going to leave? When are you going to exercise leadership and get him out?"

"By the way," the board member continued, "I've given \$1,000 per year to your home mission projects; but if you don't help us when we have a need, I'll not be helping you when *you* are in need! Are you going to move this preacher out or not?"

The pressure mounts. The D.S. gets so he doesn't like to hear the name St. John's, even on the television news. He clenches his teeth when the phone rings. His wife cries.

The D.S. didn't create the problem; in fact, he warned them about the potential problem back at the time of the interview. But now he has the problem squarely in his lap. The pastor doesn't fit. The church is falling apart fast. The superintendent has no power to force him out, and the pastor knows he can stay for the full two years—if he's stubborn enough to do so. The only power he has is the power of persuasion. But the pastor listens to his brother-in-law at headquarters more than to the D.S. There won't be much church left at the end of two years. Desperately, the D.S. cries, "Dear Lord, what am I supposed to do?"

FOR REFLECTION

1. What would you suggest this D.S. do or say to the pastor, the church board, the \$1,000-a-year man, and the brother-in-law?

2. How can he cope with his own feelings, nerves, and stress? How can he help his wife cope?

3. What kind of shaping influence do such experiences have on a superintendent's leadership style?

4. What resources do the Bible and Christian theology offer for this sort of problem?



STEWARDSHIP OF HEALTH

by John Oster

*Editor, Board of Pensions and Benefits USA
Church of the Nazarene*

As the cost of medical treatment for illness skyrockets, the cost of staying healthy looks better all the time.

Good health costs mostly the employment of common sense and good habits: eating good food, exercising moderately, obeying God's laws, enjoying life, and taking care of the biological equipment that God has given us to use on earth.

Eating right and living right fit the holiness life-style like a hand in a glove. We start out with a tradition that keeps us away from many of the most harmful elements of modern life. Smoking, drinking, and illicit adventuring no doubt contribute to the higher incidence of disease upon the general population than upon holiness people in particular. But there are harmful elements of modern life for which we have no protection in our tradition. Overeating is one. Overstressing ourselves is another. Lack of moderation in exercise is another. We tend to be either a couch potato with no physical exercise or a burn-at-both-ends achiever who does not know how or when to take it easy. Neither rusting out nor wearing out makes sense as sound strategy for stewardship of the health that God has given us.

Certainly, physical ailments can strike anyone, even those who take the best care of themselves. Hereditary conditions can bring even the most avid practitioner of good health to illness. Accidents can strike anyone, often due to no fault of the one who is injured. In time, the aging process claims each one of us. All of this being true, it is still fact that we are responsible for much of our own general health.

How much better stewardship it would be if we were to become responsible for improving the status of our health. We can start by designing a profile of the person we should be as to weight, exercise, physical condition, and so forth. A thorough medical exam may help us

identify potential problems and institute corrections before they become problems.

A diet strongly inclined to vegetables and natural foods with minimal intake of starches, fats, and sugars helps our system do its own maintenance work.

By surrounding mealtimes with good friends and easy conversation, there may be less tendency to substitute food for emotional filling.


Aerobic exercise (walking, swimming, etc.) keeps the body alive and feeling fit. Harsh exercise hurts. Pain is God's way of telling us something is wrong, not a catalyst for strength and growth. We can gain without pain through free and easy, yet disciplined, exercise.

Combat stress by controlling time; don't let time control you. In a word, take time to smell the roses. Take time each day to deliberately think a happy thought. Count your blessings! It could be life-saving. High blood pressure is a common killer among us. Know your blood pressure, and if it is high, do what it takes to bring it under control now. The common sense rules of living that help us control blood pressure also can help prevent cancer and make us feel and look better.

Preventive medicine is almost always cheaper than remedies, plus it's a lot more fun than being sick.

When you do get sick, seek medical counsel early and follow it to the letter in order to prevent more serious and expensive remedies later. Get a second medical opinion before authorizing drastic surgical remedies.

Whenever possible, avoid long hospital stays. The environment for recovery is likely better in a peaceful home once the need for instrumented monitoring by a hospital is past.

The best all-purpose medicine is a positive attitude that allows the body's built-in health maintenance systems to work at peak efficiency. Prov. 17:22 puts it well: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." 

20 QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE YOU BUILD

by Ray and Sally Bowman
Consultants in Church Building Design
Caldwell, Idaho
with Eddy Hall

Ray and Sally Bowman



On Sunday mornings, your worship space is filled to 90 percent capacity. The junior high and young married classes have standing room only. The fellowship hall can no longer seat everyone at once during your potluck dinners. Obviously, it's time to build.

Or is it?

For most churches in this situation, we have found that the answer is no. Certainly such a church has urgent facility needs, but a major building program is only one of many options for meeting those needs. Rarely is it the best one.

When a church asks us to help them assess their building needs, one of the first things we do is ask the pastor and board members to fill out a questionnaire—a tool we have developed to help identify motivations for building and the congregation's readiness to take on a major building program.

If you think the time has come for your church to build, simply answer each of the following questions "Yes," "No," or "Maybe."

WHAT IS YOUR MOTIVATION FOR BUILDING?

1. Do you expect the building to create growth? _____
2. Do you think better long-term stewardship (giving) will result? _____
3. Is "bigger will be better" a motivating concept? _____
4. Do you believe that building a building is the work of the church? _____
5. Do you expect the building program/process to unify your people? _____
6. Do you want a new building primarily so that you can better serve your present members? _____
7. Do you see the building as a way to make a statement to the community about the church's significance? _____

8. Do you believe that the building will bring people to Christ? _____
9. Is building buildings one of your church's primary goals? _____
10. Do you expect a building program to motivate your people to minister? _____

IS YOUR CHURCH READY TO BUILD?

11. Are you still paying debt on the last building? _____
12. Will paying for the project depend on future growth? _____
13. Will you have to borrow a major part of the finances? _____
14. Will paying for the building take funds away from ministry—meeting needs of the body, meeting needs of people at your doorstep and far away? _____
15. Could you pay cash by waiting to build and so save the interest? _____
16. Are you building when an alternate solution is possible at less cost? _____
17. Is there any division among your people concerning building? _____
18. Will a building program shift your people's focus from ministry and outreach? _____
19. Is your church more oriented to maintenance of the body than to growth? _____
20. Could you use your existing building more efficiently, as by multi-use, two services, two Sunday Schools, change of format or time frame? _____

* * * * *

Now, add up your "Yes" and

"Maybe" answers. Every "Yes" or "Maybe" is a possible reason not to build, to delay building, or to seek another more appropriate solution through prayer, research, and re-evaluation.

Interpreting Your Answers

If you answered "Yes" or "Maybe" to questions 1, 2, 5, 8, or 10, you may be trying to solve a nonbuilding problem with a building program. The needs for greater church growth, better stewardship, unity, winning people to Christ, and motivating people to minister are all nonbuilding needs. If your church expects to meet these needs through a building program, you are sure to be disappointed.

If you answered "Yes" or "Maybe" to questions 3, 4, 7, or 9, you may be in danger of substituting the world's standards of success for biblical standards. We are bombarded daily with the message that "bigger is better" and that money and buildings are signs of a successful institution. But we are not called to build "successful institutions"; we are called to minister to people. Because the world's values are so pervasive, we must constantly be on guard, or they will influence how we set goals and measure effective ministry.

If you answered "Yes" or "Maybe" to question 6 or 19, your church may have drifted into a "maintenance" mind-set, focusing primarily on your own needs rather than continuing to reach out to the needs of others. Leading the church in recovering its sense of mission is more urgent than a building program. You may be surprised how different your building needs look when you design a building for others more than for yourselves.


A "Yes" or "Maybe" answer to questions 11, 12, 13, 14, or 15 is a flashing red light warning of financial danger. While it is customary to follow the example of the secular business world by financing church buildings through debt, our experience has convinced us that this is seldom necessary. It usually cripples a church financially, hindering its ability to reach out creatively in

ministry. Most churches, with expert advice, can develop a plan for becoming debt-free. Building future buildings without debt allows the church to expand ministry.

Most churches we have consulted with have answered questions 16 and 20 "Yes." Seldom does a congregation thoroughly explore the creative options available. These options include multiple use of space, rearrangement of space, minor remodeling, multiple services, and many other possible solutions that require only a fraction of the time, money, and energy of a major building program.

If you answered "Yes" or "Maybe" to question 17, have you prayerfully considered that opposition to building, even from a small minority, may be the Holy Spirit's way of trying to slow you down? Do you need to take another look at some of the issues raised in these 20 questions? Consider other alternatives? One of the most common confirmations of the Holy Spirit's guidance in the New Testament Church was unity.

Question 18 points to a danger of which many growing churches are unaware. A rapidly expanding church, afraid that a crowded facility will slow its growth, may plunge into a building program only to discover that growth stops when the building begins. Why? Because much of the time, energy, and money that has been channeled into the ministries of outreach that brought growth has been redirected to the building program. So, instead of promoting more growth as intended, the building program stops the growth.

When a church builds for the wrong reasons, before it is financially ready, or when other more appropriate alternatives have been passed over, the true work of the church suffers. But when a church is building for the right reasons, at the right time, after fully utilizing its existing facilities, a building can be a highly useful ministry tool. These 20 questions, prayerfully considered, can help your church approach facilities needs in ways that will help you carry out your God-given mission. 

LECTIONARY PREACHING

by David L. Vardaman
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Special-day sermons can be one of a minister's greatest challenges. To speak freshly and creatively year after year can drive a parson to distraction. One may "do a series" at Advent or Easter, or continue with the current series from wherever, trying to work in a seasonal emphasis. However, I have discovered a challenging and rewarding alternative. It is lectionary preaching.

A lectionary is a schedule of weekly Scripture texts intended to be read and/or expounded in the local church. Lectionaries may contain listings for one year or as many as three. Followed regularly, such programs expose a congregation to a well-balanced diet. I decided to give my congregation a taste of the lectionary menu by following through Advent.

I chose *The New Common Lectionary* (NCL), developed by The Consultation on Common Texts. The NCL follows a three-year cycle, designated as Years A, B, C. Year A took me into Matthew's account of Christ's birth. Year B listed readings from Mark, John, and Luke. I started with Year C. It led me through the Advent season with readings from Luke.

For weekly preparation I subscribed to *Preaching the New Common Lectionary* (PNCL), published by Abingdon Press. Several preaching aids based on the NCL exist and are available through your publishing house. This paperback is published three times a year. (Lent: PA068-733-8492, \$11.95; Pentecost: PA068-733-8506, \$11.95; Advent: PA068-733-8404, \$9.95.)

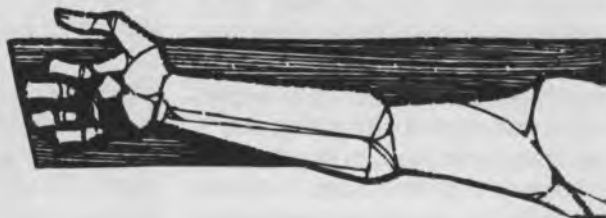
I didn't jump into this experiment without reservations. Two questions troubled me initially. First, I was concerned that it might be like subscribing to a "sermon service." The last thing I wanted was to preach someone else's warmed-over material. While sermon preparation is work, it undoubtedly contributes to the vibrancy of what is spoken on Sunday. Much to my relief, use of a lectionary doesn't spare the preacher from the toil of thinking. In fact, it may require a bit more.

Four Scripture readings (one each from the Prophets, Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles) are included for each Sunday. Often it is a challenge just to find the common link (if any) between these four. Another task is to discover what these scriptures have to do with the season at hand. A third concern is to discern the theme that fits the needs of one's congregation. From there the work is very much like developing a series from scratch. However, following a carefully planned schedule such as this should keep one from riding the same texts annually, neglecting fresh mounts.

The following excerpt from the introduction for PNCL indicates that my concern for proper preparation was not unique.

This volume is not designed as a substitute for work with the biblical text; on the contrary, its intent is to encourage such work. . . . There are no sermons as such here. . . . Only the one who preaches can do an exegesis of the listeners and mix into sermon preparation enough local soil so as to effect an indigenous hearing of the Word.¹

A second concern was whether worship services would automatically become more formal, less



Spirit-led, and lukewarm. Gladly I found that the services continued to be visited by the Spirit. In addition, since the lectionary covers the entire Christian calendar, not just Advent, I was directed toward preaching on the theme of Epiphany. Prior to this I didn't even know what Epiphany meant. I discovered it to be a season in January focusing on texts in which Jesus revealed himself as the Son of God.

These texts almost demand an evangelistic emphasis. If Jesus said, "I am the Christ, the Son of God," the next question ought to be, "What are you going to do about it?" An invitation to decision naturally follows such a question.

In addition to these questions, I wondered where others in the evangelical/Wesleyan tradition stood in regards to lectionary preaching. In John Wesley's "Letter to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and Our Brethren in North America" of September 10, 1784, he said:

I have prepared a Liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England . . . which I advise all the Travelling Preachers to use on the Lord's day, in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. . . .

If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present, I cannot see any better method than that I have taken."²

Robert Webber, professor at Wheaton College, wrote:

I believe the current move toward following the cycle of the church year will assist us in recovering the variety in worship which so many evangelicals feel is a priority. I have often found that worship which does not follow the church year is often characterized by sameness. Sermons are built around the study of a particular biblical book or a series on the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, and the fruit of the Spirit. This pattern is then interrupted only then by "special" Sundays of Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, and so on. For me, this has become a routine that

tends to dull the richness of our faith. But worse than that is the experience of having major feast days such as Christmas and Easter go by without adequate preparation for them and no larger context in which they can be understood. This is a trend of secularism that an increasing number of Christian people want to avoid.³

I was reassured by these comments that using a lectionary could be done profitably. When I began implementing it, experience confirmed that notion. For instance, use of a lectionary has prompted me to include a greater quantity of Bible in each service. Lectionaries were developed centuries ago partly as a response to the cry for Scripture. With literacy levels low, and printed texts



available only to a few, congregations received their weekly ration of God's Word in church meetings. I liked the idea of feeding my people more "meat" and began opening worship with several verses of Scripture in addition to the usual reading and sermon text.

Now our worship typically includes two readings of several verses in addition to the sermon text. The theme of the service is announced before the first reading with hints as to how the scripture relates. Hopefully the congregation does not hear a disconnected jumble of scriptures but perceives the voices of prophet, historian, Gospel or Epistle writer in concert.


Dr. Melvin H. Shoemaker, professor of New Testament and theology, Azusa Pacific University, wrote in a personal letter about the continuing need for regular public Bible reading and teaching.

The tragedy today is that so few people are attending worship on a regular basis in our society, and so many who do have not

read the Word privately. With Sunday School attendance also on the decline, there is less study of the Scripture among our people. The primary place or setting for the systematic reading of the Scripture remains with the worship service. This places an enormous responsibility upon most leaders of worship. Do we each develop our own systematic reading list or use "the roulette method," praying that the Holy Spirit will guide us each week? The former requires wisdom and knowledge beyond our ability for the most part. Further, it requires more preparation time for planning worship than many are able or willing to give.

A benefit of using PNCL pertains to ritual of lighting Advent candles. Complete Advent candle lighting thoughts are available each year from Christian bookstores, but I have chosen to write "original" thoughts based on commentary included in PNCL. These are usually thoughts not included in, but complementary to, the sermon.

While I am enthusiastic about lectionary preaching, I do have one or two reservations. First, following the lectionary through Lent, and especially after Easter, was difficult. It was hard to find common themes or reasons why a scripture passage was chosen for a particular Sunday. After six months I began to feel lost in someone else's territory. I wanted to go back to the Bible and find the way for myself. So I did. I have preached from Genesis, Mark, and Colossians, emphasizing truth my congregation and I myself needed to hear. But, with Advent coming soon, I will be picking up the lectionary again.

Lectionary preaching is a valuable experiment for the parson striving to present a balanced diet of God's Word to his people. It will give a more even emphasis on the "high days" of the Christian calendar and draw us away from those texts and issues we tend to overwork. 

NOTES

1. *Preaching the New Common Lectionary: Year C. Advent. Christmas, Epiphany* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 9.

2. *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978), 13:252. For this reference I am indebted to Dr. Melvin Shoemaker, professor of New Testament and theology, Azusa Pacific University.

3. *Worship Is a Verb* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985), 167-68.

PREACHING

Here's What I Want from Your Sermon

After 40 years in the ministry and after preaching 2,000 sermons, I retired in 1972. Since then I've been in the pew as a listener in scores of churches across the country. I don't claim to be competent to teach you how to preach, but of one thing I'm sure: *what I want from a sermon.*

1. Clear auditory reception

Preachers who don't use adequate voice volume or have never learned to enunciate or to use a microphone are wasting my time and theirs.

2. Acknowledgment of my presence

This is not a TV sermon where the preacher and I have never met. You are my pastor; I am a member of your flock. The true shepherd knows his sheep—their particular scars, needs, hopes. If you keep your nose in a manuscript or continually stare at the ceiling, I feel that you might as well be delivering a radio sermon. I expect you to glance at me a few times. That tends to transform a dull monologue into a living dialogue.

3. Simplicity

I don't want seven points nor five points, nor even the classic three points—just one distinct point. To try to do more in 20 minutes is sheer folly. I am not pleading for simplistic thinking but for effective communication. The parables of Jesus are famous because they gave His hearers one clear and impressive point to take back into daily life.

One of the most helpful suggestions I ever received from a homiletics professor was this: Decide on one clear, specific purpose for your sermon. Write it in large let-

ters and pin it above your desk so that you never lose sight of it as you prepare. Avoid generalities. Keep it specific.

4. This sermon is based on a message from God

To most people the term *preacher* means the typical popular clergyman on TV who continually assures us that God loves us and therefore everything will turn out right.

The biblical meaning is derived from the word *prophet*, one who speaks for God. As I listen to you, I want to feel that you have had an intimate conversation with God and that you were a good listener. I want the feeling that the ultimate authority is the God of Moses, David, Jeremiah, and Paul. I want to feel that you are not speaking casually but that there is a sense of divine compulsion and urgency in your message.

I want a feeling that you are thoroughly grounded in biblical theology. This is in contradistinction to myopic concentration on your favorite Bible passages and the ability to cleverly use the concordance to fortify your position.

5. You are in touch with reality

We are not in a Levantine country of the first century. We are not in medieval Wittenberg, nor Elizabethan England, nor in a celestial kingdom surrounded by angels and saints, nor in a science-fiction world of the 21st century. We are in the United States in the 20th century, enjoying more material advantages than any nation in history but facing desperate problems in crime, nuclear warfare, moral decadence, and economic instability. I want to feel that

you are not living an insular life but are involved in the real world.

6. Intellectual stimulation

I want to feel that you have wrestled with various concepts and philosophies and are challenging us to do likewise. The famous preachers of our tradition—Isaiah, Jesus, Paul—were not preoccupied with creating euphoria but appealed to the powers of reason with which God has endowed us. As I watch the popular TV preachers, I see camera shots of flowers, water fountains, swaying singers but merely crumbs of intellectual nourishment.

7. I want color and warmth

We who are in the pews are not a seminary class prepared to listen to a theological exposition. We are all sorts of people trapped in a pew with our minds easily diverted, especially if the speaker lapses into lengthy rationalizations. Nothing puts me to sleep quicker than drab, pedantic, predictable theologizing. No doubt an X ray of Miss America is accurate and scientific, but it's not going to grab my attention. Something in me is attracted to beauty, grace, and color. The effective preacher knows how to use adjectives, illustrations, similes, analogies, and so on, to dress up the bare bones of a sermon.

8. A renewal of my faith in God and hope for the future

In this world of violence, international tension, increasing computerization and depersonalization, there isn't much to sustain us. We urgently need—as never before—the strength that the sacraments, the church community, and the sermon can bring to us.

HERS:

DON'T STRAIN YOUR I'S

There is a reason to be concerned about the excessive use of the word "I" in the pulpit. More than one minister with whom I am acquainted has received considerable criticism for talking too much about himself. After noting how many times one pastor referred to himself, an unsaved hearer stated he felt the pastor was "too full of pride." One man who had just joined a holiness church, after hearing one of our evangelists speak, declared, "The problem is, they talk too much about themselves." I've heard similar comments about other men. Preachers, don't "strain your I's."

One concern is that we turn people off, and in doing so, we lose a chance to win them for Christ. The person in the pew will be perturbed by too many references to oneself.

Another concern is that when a pastor speaks too frequently of himself, his people will probably tend to follow suit. If we're not careful, our testimony services can become times to let God and the congregation know how much we love Him. The songwriter wrote, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," not "What a Friend We Are to Jesus." The focus of our worship must be His di-

vine love. Worship must be God-centered, not self-centered.

The rich man in Luke 12 used "I" several times in those few short verses. He was caught up in his own little world. It is so easy to see conceit or self-centeredness in this parable, but each minister should look into his own mirror for "I strain."

In a revival service I attended recently, the word "I" was used 180 times during the course of the message, not including the opening and closing remarks! Nor were the words "I've," "I'd," "me," "my," "mine," and so on, included in the count. One hundred and eighty times! While it's hard to pinpoint just how many times are appropriate, 180 seems excessive. After hearing this evangelist speak for several nights, it became increasingly difficult to handle the "I strain." There is a real danger of speaking more about self than of the Savior!

Let's make a comparison. In the sermon "Handpicked for Greatness" the author, Randal Earl Denny, uses "I" twice, referring to himself. It is possible to preach effectively without constantly referring to oneself!

Use of the word "I" shouldn't be necessarily avoided in the pulpit.

The apostle Paul used "I." In Phil. 3:14, he states, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." A chapter later, in verse 13, he states, "I can do all things through Christ." In 2 Tim. 4:7 he testifies, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Christ himself used I. In John 6:48 He declares, "I am that bread of life," and in 9:5, "I am the light of the world." "I am the good shepherd," He announced in John 10:11, 14.

There are appropriate times to use personal illustrations. The concern is for the excessive use of "I" in our pulpits. "I" can't be your favorite subject. Have a valued friend check you and see how many times you're using the first person, or record a sermon and count for yourself.

One well-known evangelist spoke about winning people to the Lord. His advice was to look them in the eye and talk about Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Jesus tells us in John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Fellow preachers, lift Him up, and don't "strain your I's."

—Larry T. Allen
Chandler, Ind.

Postscript

Here is an acid test for a sermon: Will it hold up if you change the setting from a public to a person-to-person situation? Take away the pulpit, the pews, the choir. Move to a kitchen table with you on one side and a couple of your friends on the

other. Notice how things change: The volume of your voice and the frequency of your gestures decrease. Your theology becomes more modest, less confident. Notice your increased concern for the response of your listeners—and perhaps even a *request for their help* in

this vital quest for God's Word, God's love, God's peace.

—Eldred Johnston
Columbus, Ohio



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COMING TO TERMS WITH THE DOCTRINE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

by David D. Durey

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Prior to my ordination as a minister in the Holiness Movement, I began asking other pastors what their views were concerning the doctrine of entire sanctification. The resistance and confusion that I encountered came as a surprise. Few were willing to offer an explanation of the doctrine. One pastor stated that most Wesleyans who had worked through this doctrinal issue had probably done so outside of traditional Wesleyan-holiness theology. For example, one stated that he held a view of sanctification that was more in line with the Keswick movement, not the Wesleyan. Is the doctrine of entire sanctification facing a theological identity crisis?

Having grown up in the Holiness Movement and having served for 13 years within three of the larger holiness denominations, I assumed that my understanding of entire sanctification was accurate. However, in reading the works of John Wesley, it became clear that there was a great deal of difference between Wesley's definition of entire sanctification and the "folk theology" that I had been taught as I grew up. The prospect of being ordained within the Holiness Movement without resolving this tension between folk theology and Wesleyan-holiness scholarship provided the initial motivation for the following study.

Kenneth Grider states that entire sanctification is "the most crucial and definitive nomenclature" within the study of Christian holiness.¹ It is clearly the distinctive doctrine of Wesleyanism and the Holiness Movement. However, establishing clarity and consensus regarding this doctrine has been difficult, even during the time of John Wesley. Wesley's emphasis was on the experience itself, not the systematic and comprehensive statement of the doctrine. His associates set out to clarify and develop the doctrinal structure, but in doing so they introduced terms and nuances that Wesley did not include, or to which he only alluded. The refining of the doctrine of entire sanctification during the past 200 years has led to scores of splinter groups, many of which emphasize some specific element of belief or behavior.² By 1971 there were more than 150 denominations and organizations who held membership in the Christian Holiness Association.³ However, the fact that this association exists indicates that there is strong agreement within this segment of evangelicalism, even though there have been differences in the past.

One reason that this doctrine has been plagued by misunderstanding is the lack of clarity and exactness in terminology. Wesley was more con-

cerned with understanding entire sanctification and pursuing it as a life passion than he was with using correct phrases and terminology. Wesley was not troubled when others expressed this doctrine in terms that differed from his.⁴ Grider calls this problem "nomenclaturitis." Wesleyanism's terminology has long been misunderstood and sometimes misappropriated, even within the movement. A simple listing of terms commonly used as synonyms for entire sanctification illustrates the need for clarity. These terms include "perfection" or "Christian perfection," "perfect love," "the second blessing," "the second work of grace," "Christian holiness," "holiness," "scriptural holiness," "second blessing holiness," our "Canaan," "Wesleyanism," "the baptism with the Holy Spirit," "heart purity," "the fullness of the blessing" or "full salvation," and "sanctification."⁵ All of these terms have been used to refer to the act of God, subsequent to regeneration, whereby the Christian is cleansed from the sin nature and filled with the Holy Spirit.

I have examined the writings of over 20 current Wesleyan-holiness scholars from various holiness denominations to see if these scholars could provide a consensus definition of this important Wesleyan doctrine. The purpose of this investigation is

Nazarene

Update

UPDATE EDITOR, MARK D. MARVIN, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION
—OR ELSE

Ever since our Master mandated the Great Commission, evangelism has been the highest priority of His Church. From its inception, the Church of the Nazarene has made this its key objective. But Church history records the fact that in too many denominations the initial priority placed on evangelism has slackened with the passing years, supplanted by concern for nurturing and Christian education. This has resulted in a critical shift from crisis to process—growing *into* grace rather than growing *in* grace.

The truth is, evangelism and education are two sides of the same coin. It all began with Jesus. He made it clear to Nicodemus that his progress in piety, evidenced by the religious disciplines of Judaism, would not get him into the kingdom of God. "You must be born again," He told him (John 3:7, NIV). The Savior was setting the timeless entrance requirement for discipleship. Both physical and spiritual births are instantaneous experiences. But in each case, birth is just the beginning. After His disciples had responded to His call to follow Him, they had a lot of growing to do. Their Master patiently taught them the basic principles of Christianity and nurtured them in their newfound faith. The Great Commission still includes both "Go and make disciples," and "[Teach] them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20, NIV).

Our Wesleyan roots go down deep into this spiritual soil. Mr. Wesley carefully followed Christ's example of calling men and women to make definite decisions to follow Him. Multiplied

thousands of sinners repented and believed under Wesley's ministry in 18th-century England. But this was just the beginning. As soon as they were converted, they were enrolled in small groups. The Methodist class meetings, with their emphases upon careful study of the Word, prayer, and personal introspection, were critically important in conserving the fruits of evangelism.

And the two still go together—it is not either/or but both/and. By his own admission, Billy Graham's greatest frustration is at the point of making disciples out of believers. In every crusade, thousands come forward to accept Christ as their Savior. But relatively few of these converts demonstrate their faith by becoming responsible members of His Church.

Nazarene pastors are well aware of the fact that although we still see great numbers of people respond to our evangelistic invitations, the attrition rate is tragically high. Even after becoming "new Nazarenes," many fall by the wayside—up to 50 percent in a 10-year period! It is time to spend more time in intentional nurturing, without decelerating our evangelistic efforts. Candidates for church membership must be carefully indoctrinated in our basic beliefs. They must know what they are joining. Both new and older Christians should be urged to participate in small prayer and Bible study groups. Grounding in the Word is the best "preventive medicine" for spiritual illnesses. Adult Sunday School classes serve this purpose effectively, as well as providing excellent opportunities for fellowship, which is a vital part of the nurturing process.

But Christian education must begin long before a commitment to Christ has been made. The Board of General Superintendents recently met with George Gallup, the well-known pollster. He shared some rather alarming data with us from his most current religious survey. Although four out of five Americans classify themselves as Christians, fewer than half attend church with any degree of regularity. A considerable number of those surveyed could not correctly identify who preached the Sermon on the Mount, or state how many apostles were called by Jesus! American spiritual illiteracy is almost unbelievable. Some futurists predict that by the turn of the century, 50 percent of all U.S. residents will have no Christian memories or orientation.

These harsh realities make it imperative that we prioritize Christian education in our programming. Sunday School is important business. Buses should be taken out of mothballs and put back into action. Biblical seeds must be planted in young minds if an evangelistic harvest is to be reaped.

It is, in fact, Christian education, or else!



by General Superintendent
Eugene L. Stowe



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a Few Good

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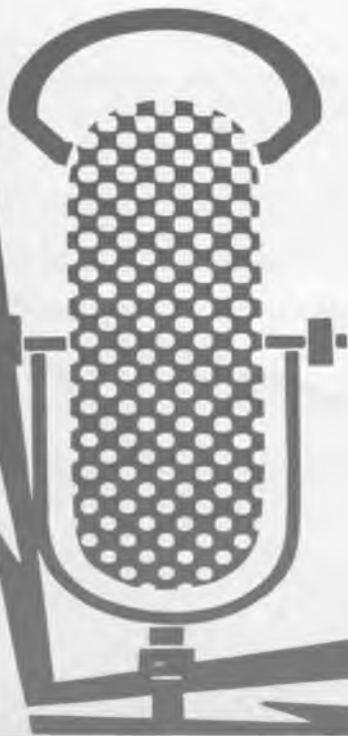
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The NWMS monthly emphasis for **August** is World Mission Radio. Each church will receive a complimentary audiotape of Dr. Louise R. Chapman, president emerita of the NWMS, presenting a challenge to give to the **World Mission Radio Offering**.

The goal for the offering is **"Every Church Participating."** To achieve this, the secret lies with you as pastor. Encourage your church to give to this ministry of **evangelism**.

World Mission Radio program requests are being turned down because of lack of funds. **Your church** can have a part in changing this.

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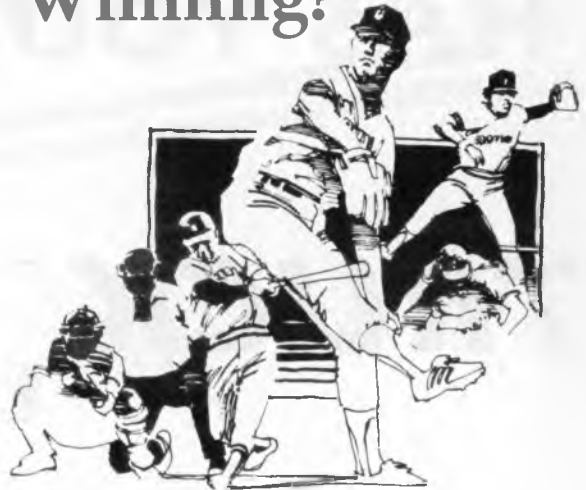
TRAINING CAMP:

16th General NWMS Convention

Hoosier Dome

Indianapolis

June 21-23, 1989



The NWMS team depends on you, pastor. Your participation could determine the outcome of the season.

You need to be at the Convention to know all the new plays, as well as rule changes.

SCHEDULE:

Tuesday, June 20

- Registration of United States/Canadian Delegates—4-9 P.M.
- Orientation and Registration of International Delegates—7-10 P.M.
- Open Visitors' Registration

Wednesday, June 21

- Workshops on All NWMS Emphases—Morning and Afternoon
- Prayer Brunch—Delegates and Missionaries

Thursday, June 22

- Legislative Committees (Delegates)—8:15 A.M.
- Opening Session—9:30 A.M., in the Hoosier Dome
- General President's and Director's Reports
- Theme Presentation—11 A.M.

March of the Flags, missionaries, international delegates, and music from around the world

- Elections
- Exciting Reports from World Mission Regions
- Inspirational Mission Rally—7:30 P.M.

Great missionary choir and brass ensemble; dynamic speaker—Dr. Jeanine van Beek, director of Nazarene Theological College in Haiti; 75th Anniversary Project Lift-off

Friday, June 23

- Opening Session—8:30 A.M.
- Reflections from World Mission Regions
- Induction of General NWMS Council
- Adjournment

Daily Events

- Prayer Room—7 A.M. to 9 P.M., open to all
 - Exhibit Hall—open to all
- Alabaster Fountain, 75th Anniversary Display, Creative Center (more than 100 new ideas on display)

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Attend the 16th General NWMS Convention and be informed and inspired.

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MEMO TO: All Pastors
 FROM: Paris Thrust Office
 RE: Prayer Request

"I've decided to leave God out of my life for the moment," Charles told me. "I am young, and I need my freedom. Someday, I know, I will have to come around and put my trust in Jesus, but not now."

"How much of your life do you want to waste before you 'come around,'" I pled. "What will it take for you to decide that the time has come?"

We had just finished a language lesson. Yvette had helped me outline a gospel presentation in French. Moved, she fought back tears. "You need Jesus in your life, don't you," I asked her.

"Yes," she answered, "and my husband does too. But it is just too difficult to accept."

André is 16. He laughed when I first told him that I was praying for him. Weeks later, I asked him if he was ready to invite Jesus into his life. "I just can't," he told me. "I have to have some proof that God even exists before I can accept the gospel."

If the people of France are going to be won for the Kingdom, it will be as the result of your prayers. The goal of Paris '89 is to develop a self-supporting holiness movement that will reach the French-speaking world and result in 10 new Churches of the Nazarene in France by 1991.

Please enlist maximum participation by your congregation by your prayer for the Paris Thrust!



If we
could see
tomorrow

As usual, God's forward planning was perfect! The photo above was taken through a dense filter every 10 minutes, starting 30 minutes before and ending 30 minutes after an annular eclipse of the sun on May 30, 1984, by photographer William P. Stern, Jr., in Picayune, Miss. The next annular eclipse of the sun in the United States will be May 10, 1994. At that time some photographer will get a spectacular shot of the eclipse because he or she will prepare for it by being in the right place at the right time with the right equipment to make the photograph.

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THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE

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GRACE IS NO EXCUSE!

GRACE.

What a liberating concept! Without our deserving it, God accepts us as His children. He freely forgives us, no strings attached. We are loved unconditionally! Incredible? Who can fathom it?

However, even "grace" can be a tool the grand deceiver uses to lure the best of us into sin. Paul asserted, "Where sin was multiplied, grace immeasurably exceeded it." Then he played the devil's advocate and argued, "Shall we persist in sin, so that there may be all the more grace?" In holy rebuttal, he shouted, "No, no!" (Rom. 5:20; 6:1, NEB).

Furthermore, he declares our freedom from legalism: "You are no longer under law, but under the grace of God." Again he argues the tempter's point, "Are we to sin, because we are not under law but under grace?" The logic of righteousness insists, "Of course not," because if we do sin we become its servant. The purpose of God's great grace is so we may "yield [our bodies] to the service of righteousness, making for a holy life" (Rom. 6:14-15, 19, NEB).

Personal morality has been so compromised these days that most can only faintly discern right and wrong, if at all. This moral insensitivity has had a devastating influence on the conscience and behavior of the church in general, including the ordained clergy. While preaching grace, we have too often tacitly excused sin! Then, without noticing it, we have made unacceptable accommodations for our own unfaith-

fulness—discovering the error only after irreparable damage has already been done.

A crisis faces our civilization. The fallout of nuclear armaments, ecological disasters, and the international monetary situation are constantly being dramatized. The moral failures of public figures are also exposed, even if those failures have been admitted, corrected, forgiven, and forgotten long ago.

Isn't it ironic that the toppling of great men from high places is by the very society that encourages the compromised morality they condemn? Pornographic books and videos have invaded our homes and polluted the streams of Christian influence. Physical and sexual abuse in families has now been so widely made known that even the Christian community has been embarrassed.

Paganism is in the air we breathe. It captures us; it converts the young and it subverts the church. Ignoring the very laws of God written into the fabric of our moral character has left us broken, fallen, and confused. The effects have destroyed both lay and clergy members of the church.

I could not rest after hearing of a fellow minister having to leave his church. The question that kept pressing my attention was, "Would he have done it if we had kept the line between right and wrong more clearly defined?" Righteousness does not give us the right to be judgmental. Yet neither does grace give us an excuse to sin. □



Wilbur W. Brannon
Pastoral Ministries Director

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CERTIFICATION OF LAY MINISTERS MEETS

An ad hoc committee met in Kansas City on November 29, 1988, to discuss how the roles of pastor and lay minister relate to the mission of the church. The lay minister was identified as one who is recognized as a leader, recognized for his spiritual gifts, demonstrates fruitfulness in service, and is motivated beyond maintenance responsibilities. The lay minister may fill roles such as a significant lay leader in church growth-related ministry, pulpit supply, rural pastor, or a facilitator in establishing satellite or extension classes.

Level I in the ministerial Course of Study, supervised by the district Ministerial Studies Board, was recommended

as a prerequisite to receiving a certificate in lay ministry. It would be further expected that the lay minister receive a certificate in a specialized concentration of study through Continuing Lay Training (CL/SS). The Ministerial Studies Board would provide support in recommending an assigned practicum to be implemented by the pastor of the church issuing the certificate.

Manual changes were made to comply with these recommendations, including the provision for districts to utilize lay ministers for special assignment. More and more laypersons are being identified to fill the role of pastor as a viable alternative to the "ordained clergy" as leaders for growing numbers of churches.

This special effort has been made to give added importance and an element of accountability to the certification of lay ministers.

For further information, contact Pastoral Ministries. □

CONSULTATION ON MINISTERIAL PREPARATION HELD AT TNC

A Consultation on Ministerial Preparation was jointly sponsored by Pastoral Ministries and Trevecca Nazarene College, October 19-20, 1988, at Trevecca Nazarene College in Nashville. District superintendents, members of the Ministerial Credentials Boards and Ministerial Studies Boards, college religion faculty, and representatives from Nazarene Theological Seminary participated.

The program included "Foundations for Ministerial Preparation." The characteristics, competencies, and aptitudes of a model minister were presented. Discussions then centered on how to develop these in the educational process.

"Facilitating Preparation for Ministry" was a section in which representatives of Pastoral Ministries, TNC, NTS, and the districts presented their roles in the process of ministerial preparation. Such topics as fostering the call to ministry, the developmental patterns of ministerial candidates, and the practical issues in ministerial preparation stimulated helpful responses.

The "nuts and bolts" of district boards were included in "Functioning to Help Qualify Ordinands." Question-and-answer periods helped bring to the surface important perspectives that have no other forum for discussion.

"Focusing on New Dreams" gave an opportunity to deal with ways to refine the process of ministerial preparation. The Ministry Internship concept was raised several times as having high value in the preparation of ministers. The creative exchange of ideas made the experience of those present comment that this kind of dialogue should be repeated.

This is the third time a regional college has cosponsored a consultation on ministerial preparation. The others have been held at Mount Vernon Nazarene College and Southern Nazarene University. □



The ad hoc committee on lay ministry is pictured (l. to r.): Rev. J. B. Evans, Rev. Jesse Middendorf, Rev. Wilbur W. Brannon, Rev. David Felter, Rev. William Stewart, Dr. Howard Chambers.

COURSE OF STUDY UPDATE

Theology of Personal Ministry by Richards and Martin (optional reading book, Deacon—Christian Education track, Level II, 225b) has a new title, *Lay Ministry*.

Introduction to Christian Theology by H. Orton Wiley (text, all tracks, Level III, 132, 232, 332, 432) has been replaced by *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* by H. Ray Dunning.

Preaching Holiness Today by Richard Taylor has been added as a required reading book (Elder track, Level II, 124b).

Steps to the Sermon by H. C. Brown, H. G. Clinards, J. S. Northcutt (optional reading book, Elder track, Level II, 124d) has been dropped.

To Spread the Power by George G. Hunter II will be used as the text for an additional course added in the Elder track, Level IV under the category of Evangelism/Church Growth (146). The reading books for this new course have not been selected at the time of printing. Contact Pastoral Ministries for their titles. □



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Welcome to the Church of the Nazarene: Introducing Our Family, an outreach tool scripted by Dr. Richard Parrott, was designed for use in membership preparation classes and to inform potential church members about the Church of the Nazarene. It is available for purchase on videocassette (PAVA-5995) for \$29.95, or can be rented on 16-mm film for \$7.50 (PAFR-5995).

This valuable tool for pastors projects a positive, yet realistic image of the Church of the Nazarene, and will help incorporate new people into the life of the church.

A companion book (PA083-411-2566, \$4.95) and leader's guide (PA083-411-2558, \$2.50) both titled *Welcome to the Church of the Nazarene: An Introduction to Membership*, are also available for use in membership preparation classes.

To order write your Nazarene Publishing House, P.O. Box 419527, Kansas City, MO 64141, or call the U.S. toll-free order number 1-800-877-0700.



**MEET "HEARTLINE"
COUNSELOR**

Michael (Mike) Malloy

Originally from Tulsa, Okla., Mike and his wife, Jeannie, moved to Nashville in 1975 to accept a position at Christian Counseling Services. He has been the center's director since 1977, watching the budget grow from \$56,000 to over \$330,000. Mike was instrumental in the creation of the "Promise" program, a resource to support groups working with individuals dealing with homosexuality and their families. Out of this has developed their work in AIDS education



and recruitment of support volunteers, *Beyond Fear*.

Mike, Jeannie, and their two daughters are members of Nashville First Church of the Nazarene and live in Williamson County.

Mike brings with him several professional credentials, including: M.S.S.W., University of Texas at Arlington
M.R.E., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

B.S., Oklahoma State University
Assistant Professor of Social Work,
Trevecca Nazarene College,
Nashville

President, The Association of
Nazarenes in Social Work

Writings:

My Brother's Keeper?
Currently editing—*AIDS: A Primer
for the Church*





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OCTOBER 10, 11, 12, 1989

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MICHAEL J. CHRISTIANSEN
Director, Golden Gate Ministries, San Francisco
"Pastoral Care for Victims of Addiction"



DR. CHESTER GALLOWAY
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"Theological Foundations of Pastoral Care"



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October 10, 11, 12, 1989

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Single: \$20.00 _____ per day Double: \$15.00 _____ per day

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(Before August 1, 1989 ... \$225)

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EVANGELISM MINISTRIES, CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

(Monthly states published in the first issue of the "Herald of Holiness" each month)

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An adequate budget for evangelism at the beginning of each church year is imperative for each congregation.
 A revival savings account is useful in building toward adequate support for the evangelist.

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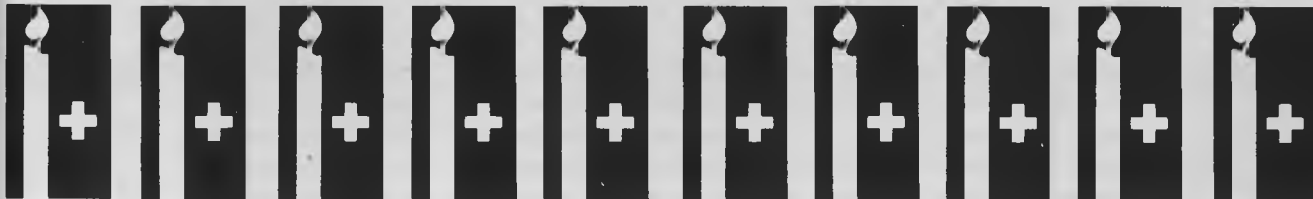


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to identify the essential theological elements of entire sanctification and determine if Wesleyan-holiness scholars agreed on these elements. In order to evaluate current scholarship, only books and articles written from 1970 to the present are cited in this article.

My intention for this study is not to evaluate the exegetical and theological support for entire sanctification. Instead, I want to present the theological distinctives of this doctrine that I have been able to identify in current holiness literature. I will attempt to illustrate the degree to which Wesleyan-holiness scholars provide a consensus definition of entire sanctification.

I. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION INVOLVES ALL THE PERSONS OF THE TRINITY

First, Wesleyan scholars agree that entire sanctification involves all the Persons of the Trinity. Entire sanctification is a definite act of God, secured by the blood of Jesus Christ through His sacrificial death on the Cross. The Holy Spirit serves as the Divine Agent of the Trinity, administering the grace of God in the work of regeneration and entire sanctification. The Holy Spirit inhabits those who are entirely sanctified, directing and assisting in discipling the human personality. This is why entire sanctification is commonly referred to as the Spirit-filled life.⁶

II. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION IS AVAILABLE TO ALL BELIEVERS

A. Subsequent to Regeneration

Wesleyan scholars agree that entire sanctification is available subsequent to regeneration. F. B. Stanger, former president of Asbury Theological Seminary, affirms that this experience is available for the Christian, not for the unregenerate sinner.

It is a "definite experience of God's grace through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, which is available for the Christian who has already been "born of the Spirit."⁷ Dayton also notes that promises of God addressed to believers exist that refer specifically to receiving the Holy Spirit. These promises to believers indicate that this experience is subsequent to regeneration.⁸

B. Conditions: Consecration and Faith

The two things that are generally stated by Wesleyans to be conditions for entire sanctification are consecration and faith. Consecration is the believer yielding or presenting himself totally to God for sacrifice or service (Rom. 12:1-2). This includes a surrendering of possessions, talents, loved ones, and the future. It is a commitment of unlimited obedience. God fully owns the consecrated believer. Consecration is both active and passive; it means "Thy will be done" *in me* as well as *through me*.⁹

Faith is also a condition for entire sanctification. God, through His Spirit, will not do in the Christian's life that which he does not accept by faith. The faith that justifies and sanctifies is the belief that God has spoken through His Word, the Bible, and that His Word is true. Faith also is an attitude of complete confidence in God's faithfulness to keep the promises of His Word. Faith is not the agent of change, the Spirit is the Agent. Faith is the attitude of the believer that allows him to receive the Spirit's work of entire sanctification.¹⁰

III. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION IS A SECOND WORK OF GRACE

A. Instantaneous—A Crisis Just as in Regeneration

Wesleyan scholars agree that entire sanctification is God's second

work of grace. Grider boldly declares that anyone who denies entire sanctification as being received instantaneously is actually supporting some non-Wesleyan doctrinal orientation.¹¹ It is a crisis experience, even as regeneration is a crisis experience. This position does not deny a process of growth preceding this crisis, but most Wesleyans believe that Scripture affirms a single complete act subsequent to regeneration called entire sanctification.¹²

B. Cleansing from Indwelling Sin

The cleansing of indwelling sin is the very purpose of entire sanctification. This indwelling sin, or the carnal nature, is the sin nature that has resulted from the fall of man and has been inherited from one generation to the next. This sin nature must be "crucified" if victorious Christian living is to be experienced.¹³

Stanger outlines several reasons why Wesleyans emphasize that two definite works of grace are needed. First, Wesleyans believe that sin is twofold, both outward acts and inward nature needing redemption. Initial salvation provides justification for the sins that have been committed and regeneration, which provides for a new life of righteous conduct; but this only deals with outward sins. The inward sin nature is cleansed in entire sanctification. Only after a person is regenerated does he sense the inward struggle with the inherited sin nature. At the point of initial salvation neither is he aware of this inward problem, nor is he able to do anything more than confess his outward sins. The sinner is not capable of total consecration to God.¹⁴ Sanctification begins initially at conversion, or regeneration, and is followed by growth until the crisis of entire sanctification, when the sin nature is cleansed. Following





this crisis of inward cleansing, there is a continual process of growth aided by the indwelling Holy Spirit.¹⁵

One source of confusion and debate is the emphasis that implies that the sin nature is a material-like substance that can be *eradicated* from the heart at the moment of entire sanctification.¹⁶ The term *eradication* has also brought this emphasis of the sin nature as a material-like substance into folk theology. Turner states that the term *eradication* is not a bad one if it is tempered by the use of other analogies that help avoid its materialistic connotations. One such analogy is that of light and darkness. When the Holy Spirit comes into the heart of a believer, sin is expelled just as darkness is expelled from a room by turning on a light.¹⁷ J. B. Chapman used another analogy recommended by Turner, the sin nature as an illness:

We hold that sin as a condition or state is like a virus in the blood, and is not in any way essential to one's life, is not inseparably bound up with life, and is, in fact, a menace to life and a hindrance to the functioning of life in both the body and the spirit. This virus can therefore be removed, the blood stream can be purged, and the person can still live; in fact, can live more abundantly in both body and spirit than before. This doctrine of sin lays foundation for a doctrine of sanctification that is both consistent and practical.¹⁸

Wesleyans agree that at initial salvation our own acts of sin are forgiven, but the sin nature remains. Therefore, a significant component of the second work of grace is a real cleansing from the indwelling sin nature.¹⁹

C. Assurance—The Witness of the Holy Spirit

John Wesley emphasized the witness of the Spirit both for justification and entire sanctification. Wesleyans have generally agreed that the



Holy Spirit grants this inner assurance, but great diversity is found in describing how and when this witness is accomplished. Grider suggests that an immediate witness is supported by Scripture and logic.²⁰ Taylor, however, states that we cannot dictate to God the manner in which the witness of the Spirit should be accomplished. He defines this witness as a "divinely imparted inner assurance." This inner witness may take several forms:

This assurance may take the form of a flood of ecstasy, a sense of cleanness, a profound inner peace, or an outpouring of love—or a combination of these. In any case the distress is gone, the struggling is over, the doubts are settled, and the mind is at rest.²¹

Taylor offers a valuable warning to all. We should never use another person's experience of the witness of the Spirit as the only form or model with which to receive personal assurance of entire sanctification. The direct witness of the Spirit is valid but it must be verified by the indirect witness of a changed life.²²

Due to the influence of Pentecostalism, there may be some question as to whether speaking in tongues might be a necessary evidence of entire sanctification. Traditionally, Wesleyan scholars have never associated this physical manifestation as an evidence for the infilling of the Spirit. Modern-day tongues-speaking has no association with the Holiness Movement, though many early Pentecostals came out of the Holiness Movement. "This practice has never had any place or part in the standard Wesleyan-holiness movement in America, as it did not in the English Wesleyan revival of the 18th century."²³

IV. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION PREPARES THE BELIEVER FOR CONTINUED GROWTH

Whether or not the process that precedes and follows the crisis of entire sanctification should be called "progressive sanctification," "growth in grace," "abiding in Christ," "living in the Spirit," or some other term, the fact remains that entire sanctifica-

tion is only a point in the larger life process of holiness. The Wesleyan message affirms the act of God in entire sanctification as well as the process of grace that precedes and continues the act.²⁴ Regarding the relationship between crisis and process, Metz states:

To regard entire sanctification as a crisis does not minimize the revolutionary nature of regeneration. Nor does a second crisis nullify the possibility of further growth in grace. Sanctification as a crisis conserves the work of regeneration, magnifies the power of God, and makes possible the greatest spiritual growth.²⁵

Entire sanctification is not the end or goal; it is just a crisis point in the believer's journey that prepares for greater growth. In fact, continual growth must be the mark of the Spirit-filled believer.²⁶

A. The Concept of "Perfect Love"

Perfect love was a favorite term used by Wesley to describe one of the results of entire sanctification. Perfect love does not imply perfection in performance or a perfection inconsistent with finite humanity; rather, it implies a heart cleansed from the sin nature and filled with the Holy Spirit. Perfect love is an "unmixed love," an undivided love. It is an unselfish concern to please God and care for the needs of others. This love is a gift of God's grace that makes it possible to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love others as oneself (see Deut. 30:6; Matt. 22:36-39). This love consists of perfect motivation within the obvious limitations of human finiteness and the limited resources of health, time, and money. The believer, motivated by perfect love, may be frustrated when he is humanly unable to perfectly express that love.²⁷

B. The Concept of "Empowerment for Life and Service"

Jesus stated that the Holy Spirit's





presence in the life of His followers would bring empowerment—"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses" (Acts

1:8, NIV; cf. Luke 24:49). The Wesleyan view of empowerment includes moral purity, or power for holy living, and power for service, especially that of effective witnessing.²⁸ Dayton further reveals that Wesley's concept of power was simply that the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer enabled him to do whatever God required of him.²⁹

V. SEVERAL ELEMENTS THAT ARE NOT TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

Misconceptions introduced by folk theology often necessitate an explanation of what should not be associated with entire sanctification, either in belief or practice. Criticism, conflict, and disappointment often result when the expectations of folk theology take the place of sound biblical theology. The purpose of this section is to present those elements that Wesleyan scholars agree should not be identified with the doctrine of entire sanctification.

A. It Does Not Bring Absolute Perfection

The term *Christian perfection* has long caused confusion regarding the work of entire sanctification. However, it should be noted that Wesleyans do not imply any kind of sinless, absolute, or mortal perfection.³⁰ Stanger further clarifies the point:

It does not restore Adamic perfection—the perfection which is reserved for heavenly beings. It is not philosophical perfection which strives for a perfect human existence. It is not resurrection-like perfection of which Christians will partake after they experience the resurrection of the body.³¹

Also, Wesleyans do not teach that the entirely sanctified believer cannot willfully sin against God and

lose this spiritual condition. Entire sanctification must be maintained by faith and obedience to the revealed will of God. However, the entirely sanctified believer is much more likely to remain free from willfully sinning against God.³²

B. It Does Not Dehumanize Persons or Eliminate Problems

There are natural physical and mental limitations that remain in the entirely sanctified person, for this experience does not dehumanize the individual. As Arnett explains, "It is not a perfection of knowledge, judgment, memory, power or service."³³ There is no escape from temptation in this life, even for those who are entirely sanctified. Nor is there freedom from ignorance or mistakes. Wesleyans hold that those filled with the Spirit in entire sanctification will still fall short of the perfect will of God due to limitations of our fallen human state. The Christian perfection that Wesley and his theological descendants speak of is a perfection that allows for "a thousand infirmities." Sin, as Wesleyans define it, is a *voluntary* transgression of the *known* will of God. There is freedom from intentional sin (voluntary transgression) for those who are entirely sanctified, but unintentional "mark missing" cannot be avoided.³⁴ Noble suggests the following concerning the entirely sanctified person:

The Christian who is wholly sanctified, that is, filled with the Spirit, still has an emotional life and a motivation based in his physiological drives: hunger, sex, physical fear, aggression, and so on. He is still engaged in ethical choices and personal and moral development.³⁵

C. It Does Not Bring Instant Maturity

Entire sanctification does not change the temperament, remove personality flaws, or bring instant maturity. If a Christian is extroverted or introverted, he will remain so after entire sanctification. All of the non-ethical and nonspiritual aspects of personality will remain, though they will be effected by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, maturity will not be instantly bestowed on the

Christian who is cleansed of the sin nature. He is pure as a result of the cleansing of the Holy Spirit's infilling presence, but he must continue to mature throughout his life. Entire sanctification does not end spiritual growth, rather it prepares the individual for the greatest possible spiritual growth.³⁶

D. It Does Not Bring About Eccentricity or Asceticism

Holiness and entire sanctification is not an unbalanced eccentric spiritual experience that requires legalistic or ascetic standards of behavior. The Spirit-filled life is not one of fanaticism, exclusiveness, or other eccentric behavior. It is not measured simply in terms of outward standards of appearance.³⁷

Some people seem to think—at least they act that way—that the more off-centered, unbalanced, and abnormal they are, the more deeply spiritual they are. . . . Jesus had the Holy Spirit without measure, and He was the most balanced personality who ever lived.³⁸

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. Wesleyan Scholars Are in General Agreement

This study of Wesleyan scholarship since 1970 reveals that nomenclature has remained a problem, and some theological tensions have existed. However, a general consensus can be found among Wesleyan scholars regarding the essential theological elements of the doctrine of entire sanctification. The following elements do not represent all that Wesleyan-holiness scholars have stated concerning entire sanctification during recent years. Instead, this listing reflects the elements that are more or less common to all:

1. It is an act of God.
2. It is secured by the blood

Continued on p. 56



The Minister's Mate

"IF HE WON'T, I WON'T!"

by Cledah Scutt
Olathe, Kans.

None of us wanted to touch the document lying on the table before us. We tried not to see it, but one by one we were drawn to it until it was the focal point of our attention. We groped for words to dispel the long, awkward silence. Sorrow, embarrassment, and fear forced us to stumble over thoughts that we dared not express. Words had been spoken, but nothing had been said that could change the inevitable outcome.

The pastor began to speak. He recalled the long, wearying hours of preparation for the ministry. He remembered the anticipation and then the moment when he was clutched in the handshake of the general superintendent as he was ordained. Thrill and exhilaration lifted him to a higher level of emotion than he could describe. He stared at the paper, soiled by the shame of his guilt, on the table.

This was a highly respected and loved pastor and wife! He had received top honors on the district at the previous assembly. How could this horrible, shattering incident of infidelity have taken place?

My district superintendent-husband and I sat quietly listening to both sides of the story being related through tears of remorse: *"He got so busy and tired; he had no time at home; he didn't talk to me anymore; he got short-tempered with us; he wasn't affectionate; he, he, he!"*

And then *"She was so caught up in everyone else; she didn't seem to think I wanted attention; she never trusted me; she stopped turning my undershirts right side out, she, she, she!"*

Through my years as a partner in the district superintendency, I have desperately tried to help in other similar cases. Counseling with pastors' wives, I have seen and heard the signals of approaching danger. They often begin, "He is so busy he doesn't have time for me," or "He doesn't help at home," or "He doesn't treat me as he treats others."

I wondered if I had experienced similar emotions during the early years of our ministry together. Looking into the reddened eyes of this pastoral couple, I reflected. Had I seen these emotions from a different perspective, or was I merely a different personality type? Where had our wisdom come from in those early years of ministerial stress? Had some kind of discipline been born out of logic or was it sheer, dogged determination to maintain our relationship? Both my husband and I were careful to preserve the precious opportunity that was ours in the ministry, and in these dark moments of grim experience, I tried to remember some of the specific decisions I had contributed that might have strengthened our home and ministry.

I remembered the day I decided that I would do everything I could to make our home a pleasant, peaceful, and fun place to be. I would make my pastor-husband anxious to come home for a good dinner, served at a specific time. I would help him relax, whether for 30 minutes or for the evening. I would guard our children from possible resentments that might be formed

from my complaints regarding the pastor's long working hours and demanding schedule.

I remembered concluding that even though some of his time each day might be spent in and out of the parsonage, my husband was working and could not carry an equal load of our home chores. As the mother of small children, this was not an easy lesson to learn, but it was a very important conclusion to reach. My husband could not give his best attention to ministry if my demands constantly placed him in conflict with his ministry priorities. We often found it necessary to talk through these priorities for the sake of my understanding, as well as his.

I also remembered the time I determined to allow my husband the leisure of shedding his "ministerial bearing" at home. I realized that he could not wear the clerical role incessantly. Even though I needed him to be my pastor, I knew that I must let him be his human, fragile self in our home. I reminded myself that I had fallen in love with his humanness. And sometimes, when I felt like screaming for attention, I had to stop, listen, and understand.

The trembling voice of the pastor's wife returned me to the gloom of the moment. "When I felt that he didn't listen and care," she said, "I became resentful. I began to tell myself, 'If he won't, I won't!' I purposely did small things to make him know I was ignoring him (like the undershirts). But soon I realized he wasn't communicating. He would take long drives or just sit and stare. He was in a different world."

After a period of suffering, struggling, depression, and deterioration of the marriage, the pastor confessed adulterous conduct to his wife. The "other woman," he said, listened. "She was interested. She boosted my ego. . . . She *needed* me." It was as though he felt his wife's inattentiveness justified finding comfort elsewhere. Now he was faced with the consequences of his self-deception.

"If he won't, I won't!" It is such a natural statement, yet it is a trap many pastors' wives have fallen into. Resentments, so expressed, are destructive—spiritually, emotionally, and even physically. The attitude erects an impassable barrier that will never yield to reasonable solutions.

Again, my thoughts were drawn

to my own experience. I remembered temptations toward those same attitudes, suggested to me by the enemy of our souls. "You deserve better," he said. I remembered the day when, on my knees before God, I had said, "Lord, You didn't get what You deserved. You gave with no thought of return. You were disgraced and neglected; and You still loved in spite of it all." I had to surrender the selfishness that kept saying, "If *he* won't, I won't," and commit myself to saying, "Even if he *doesn't*, I *will!*" I determined that I would stop thinking about receiving; I would find joy in giving. I would give my husband attention, even if he was too busy to give me attention. I would give him love, even if he was too preoccupied to show affection. And I

would give first, even if it meant receiving nothing in return.

Life changed for me that day. The parsonage was never again a burden. While I recognize that there is probably no such thing as a completely "normal" life-style in the parsonage, the quality of life was different in ours from that moment on. My work in the home became my ministry, and my home my sanctuary. The change in me affected the spirit of our home, and I found my husband giving greater attention to my needs than ever before. With my resentments cleansed, I found that there was room for our marriage to grow. Although I was giving with no thought of return, I discovered that the more I gave, the more I received.



TAKE TIME

by Mark Wilson

Assistant Pastor, Sunnymead Wesleyan Church
Moreno Valley, Calif.

"You've spent time with everybody else in the church this week; when are you going to spend some with me?" my wife, Cathy, asked at the end of a typically busy day. The stark realization of my foolishness slapped me in the face. In the midst of reaching out to parishioners, I had neglected the most important one!

Isn't it funny how quickly we can set aside the important things in life in order to address the many trivialities that clamor for our attention? The old saying is true: That which is important is seldom urgent.

Pastors are busy people. I have noticed that often the ones who have the most zeal are also the ones who are guilty of neglecting their spouses and children. Besides spending the entire day at the office, these pastors find themselves entrenched in Bible studies, prayer meetings, business meetings, board

meetings, and counseling sessions. Every night of the week is taken by the church, and the parsonage family suffers greatly.

Why do pastors become involved in such a rat race at the expense of their homes? Perhaps they are trying to live up to their congregations' unrealistic expectations. It is impossible to be "all things to all men" (1 Cor. 9:22) and still have the needed time at home. Maybe the pastor bases his self-worth on his business and willingness to sacrifice. Family health seems a high price to pay for the father's ego trip.

I spoke with a retired minister some time ago. With tears in his eyes he bemoaned the fact that he had spent most of his time in ministry and very little with his children. Things that seemed to be *the most important* had now faded away. His

children had all grown up before he noticed. The hands of time cannot be turned back.

My commitment to Cathy and to my son, Adam, is now stronger than ever before. I have decided to *make* the time for them! The other day I received a phone call from a pastor asking me to attend a ministers' meeting. It was scheduled for my day off. When I told him it was my day off and therefore I could not attend, he replied, "Well, what's more important, the Lord's work or your day off?" Poor man! He didn't realize that taking time to be with my wife and son *is* the Lord's work.

I am not making excuses for laziness. The Lord knows that He already has too many "slothful stewards" in His vineyard. It is possible, however, for a pastor to spend too much time at church and not enough time at home.



JOHN WESLEY AND “THE PRESENT SCARCITY OF PROVISIONS”

by Bob Black

Professor, Central Wesleyan College
Central, S.C.

The early 1770s saw a serious depression in the British economy. Crop failures led to widespread unemployment and eventually to riots. It was a turbulent time, and Wesley's *Journal* records his observations of the effect on the common man, especially in the harsh winter of 1772-73.

At Norwich he found an “abundance of people were out of work, and, consequently, in the utmost want (such a general decay of trade having hardly been known in the memory of man).”¹ At Colchester most of the Methodist society “were hard beset with poverty. So indeed they were ever since I knew them; but they are now in greater want than ever, through scarcity of business.”² At least the poor of London were healthy, he noted; “so wisely does God order all things that the poor may not utterly be destroyed by hunger and sickness together.”³

Complicating the economic picture was the policy of enclosure, under which small holdings were consolidated in central ownership, using the latest in the 18th-century equivalent of agribusiness techniques to create bigger, more specialized farms. Land that had once provided homes and income for hundreds of small farmers was swallowed up by the wealthy gentry, and the open English countryside was transformed into a maze of fence rows.

These enclosures drove families out and prices up, giving impetus to the growth and abuses of the burgeoning Industrial Revolution. Since political rights rested on property ownership, they also made second-class citizens of the poor.

John Wesley addressed the matter in a December 1772 letter to *Lloyd's Evening Post*, which was published as a tract a month later. In this widely circulated pamphlet titled *Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions*, Wesley placed the question bluntly:

Why are thousands of people starving, perishing for want, in every part of the nation? The fact I know; I have seen it with my eyes, in every corner of the land.⁴

He was acquainted with some who could afford to eat only one inadequate meal every other day, and others who took bones from dogs to boil for the broth.⁵ He had seen what the depression was doing to people, and he was concerned.

Wesley never stopped with “concern,” however; nor did he simply offer charity. He went past the effect to deal with the cause—or, in this case, the causes.

Now, why is this? Why have all these nothing to eat? Because they have nothing to do. The plain reason why they have no meat is, because they have no work.

But why have they no work?

... Because the persons that used to employ them cannot afford to do it any longer. ... They cannot, as they have no vent for their goods; food being so dear, that the generality of people are hardly able to buy anything else. But why is food so dear?⁶

With that question he came “to particulars.”

Distilling consumed almost half the wheat produced in England each year, by Wesley's reckoning, and robbed the market of grain otherwise available for a commoner's table. *Bred horses* were on the increase, an extravagance for the rich that England could not afford, since excessive amounts of grain were diverted to their use, and land formerly given over to raising animals for meat was now devoted to the breeding of horses. *Consolidation* of farm holdings was another problem, “perhaps as mischievous a monopoly as was ever introduced into these kingdoms.” In their pursuit of *luxury*, the wealthy wasted valuable commodities and forced up rents, which in turn fueled higher prices.

And *taxes* were oppressive. The only thing untaxed in England was its very air, Wesley declared, and he wondered aloud how long it would be before “the ingenious Statesmen” figured out a way to levy an assessment on even that!⁷

He followed this appraisal with

proposed remedies, and his solutions were sweeping.

1. Prohibit distilling.
2. Tax carriage horses in England and all horses exported to France in an effort to reduce the number of horses being bred.
3. Control the size of farms.
4. Restrain luxury, "which is the grand and general source of want."
5. Reduce the national debt by one-half and abolish useless government pensions for the purpose of lowering taxes.⁸

It was a comprehensive plan dealing with unemployment, taxes, prices, rent, monopolies, the national debt, exportation, and importation.⁹

Most economists agree that his plan would not have worked, however, and his theories are roundly disregarded. "In a word, the Reverend John Wesley was not an economist," one wrote.¹⁰ But Wesley's economic acumen is not the chief issue. The importance of *Present*

Scarcity lies not in its answers but in its approach.

Wesley saw the economic crisis in a moral light, which was the way he saw almost everything. Since his Christianity was not neatly compartmentalized in a pietistic pigeon-hole, he applied it to the problem at hand. His sense of social responsibility easily encompassed England's entire economy. Wesley the revivalist was also Wesley the reformer, and he was calling for economic reform in the name of Christ. For that reason, if for no other, the morality of *Present Scarcity* deserved attention.

There is another significant reason, however. Wesley was advocating reform *by law*, not satisfied with working for society's reformation one person at a time through personal conversions alone. He was committed to conversions, of course; he knew and preached new life in Christ, with all the changes that produced in character and conduct. But he was also ready to call in Parliament—in this case, to eliminate poverty at the root and secure the rights and economic

well-being of the common man.

John Wesley was not content to leave the economy to the economists. When he saw moral issues at stake, he applied his comprehensive gospel of holiness—social as well as personal—and worked for the change.

After all, as he reminded his Methodists, God had called them to do two things, not one—"to reform the nation, and to spread scriptural holiness across the land."

On second thought, perhaps that is *one thing* after all.

NOTES

1. *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978), 3:481.
2. *Ibid.*, 482.
3. *Ibid.*, 486.
4. *Ibid.*, 11:53.
5. *Ibid.*, 53-54.
6. *Ibid.*, 54.
7. *Ibid.*, 54-57.
8. *Ibid.*, 57-59.
9. C. Robert Haywood, "Was John Wesley a Political Economist?" *Church History* 44 (September 1964): 314-15.
10. *Ibid.*, 318. Still, Kathleen MacArthur argues that "no apologies need to be made for Wesley's economic sense . . . (He) was not without real insight into economic problems from his own point of view." *Economic Ethics*, 112.



"I typed your SODOM and GOMORRAH sermon for today, Reverend. Are you sure it doesn't need editing?"

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A WESLEYAN THEOLOGY OF SALVATION AND SOCIAL LIBERATION

by Timothy L. Smith

*Professor of History
Johns Hopkins University*

(A paper presented to the Caribbean Nazarene Regional Conference)

Many argue that Christianity does not offer a solution to the social problems of the modern age. They insist that Christian reformers, acting on biblical principles, must accept an alliance with systems of thought based on human experience, whether Marxist, Rastafarian, or Voodoo. That is not true, at least for Wesleyans. Granted, the Bible is not primarily a book on social or economic policy, and "liberty" means something quite different to Christians and Jews than it does to the secular world. But any person who suggests that God's Word does not reveal divine care and concern in this present world for the poor and oppressed is libeling the God of love whom we call Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The gospel of salvation and social liberation that we proclaim rests, first of all, upon a *scriptural analysis* of the condition of the poor. Poverty and the oppression and injustice that both the Bible and human experience tell us often accompany it stem from the rebellion of human beings against God. That rebellion is shared by men and women, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, whether they are white, black, or brown, and without regard to their places of origin on this planet. We all were there in the Fall. We are akin in sin. And we all may come together at the Cross, be joined together as living members of Christ's Body, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to build new lives of love and holiness for ourselves, and a kingdom of God for all humankind.

Moreover, the Word of God teaches that the oppression and exploitation of the poor is a persistent temptation to all those who have wealth or power. On this the Hebrew Scriptures are plainly in full agreement with the

New Testament. Moses warned all Israel of that exploitation in the Book of Deuteronomy, the prophet Amos made ringing declarations against it, and Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel promised that the Messianic Age would deliver all of us from it.

This scriptural analysis, furthermore, deplores the tendency of both those who have much of this world's goods and those who have little to defer any righting of the balance until the Second Coming. Our religion's ethical judgment upon exploitation as it is practiced now forbids this deferral of doing right until that great day. The gospel is set to deliver us from all sin, now, including any willing participation in social or economic evil. In my country, a burst of millenarianism in both North and South 150 years ago undergirded an appeal that human slavery be accepted as a necessary evil in the present age. When Jesus appeared, these persons professed to believe, the proper time to strike the chains of bondage from persons of color would come. By contrast, those who believed we must join our efforts to the unseen ones of the Holy Spirit to prepare a Kingdom for the King stood against slavery, at last violently, it turned out. And the bloodiest war in human history until that date left a heritage of bitterness that even now has not fully gone away. If those whose social hopes were in Christ had followed His methods of love and forgiveness toward evildoers, they would have raised taxes to buy the Negroes their freedom and brought reconciliation to our land. So, today, in the Caribbean; we must contend with the powers of darkness in high places, but with weapons that are Christian, not carnal. And always we must put our hopes in the God of kindness and mercy.

Secondly, Wesleyan religion, like that of the Early Church, preaches the biblical promises to the poor. Those promises are both individual and social, temporal and eternal. When Jesus appeared after His baptism at the synagogue in His home city, Nazareth, He asked for the scroll of Isaiah's prophecy and said that the passage in Isaiah 61 was now fulfilled before their very eyes (Luke 4:18-21).

When George Whitefield and John Wesley set out to revive primitive Christianity in 18th-century England, they kept before them both the Christian ideology (that Christ's kingdom was to spread over the whole earth) and the Christian ethic (that pure and undefiled religion was to care for the widows and orphans and keep oneself unspotted from the world).

Wesley's first church building in London, the Old Foundry, was located outside the walls of the city, among the *barrios*, the shantytowns where the poor people lived. So was the beautiful chapel he later built three blocks away. His habit in moments of great spiritual blessing was to celebrate liberation from the love of money by calling for the collection plates to be passed to enable the congregation to buy wool and flax to give to poor widows to spin. When he decided he should be married, as Frank Baker's recent complete edition of Wesley's correspondence makes plain, he chose Grace Murray, a godly but poor person. She had proved her mettle both socially and spiritually, among the unemployed working people of Newcastle upon Tyne. The long correspondence revealing John Wesley's deep sorrow and forgiving love of those who fetched her away from him because she was an impoverished commoner reveals the completeness of Wesley's identification with the poor.

The same expression of perfect love characterized the Church of the Nazarene's founding generation. The oldest congregation in what became the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene was organized at Providence, R.I. It was founded after the Methodist pastor and bishop refused to extend recognition to the mission to poor people that Fred Hillary and others had carried on. J. O. McClurkan, founder of Trevecca College and leader of the congregations in Tennessee that later became Nazarene but were then called the Pentecostal Mission, spent his lifetime lifting broken and poor people in East Nashville from the degradation and despair that sin had helped fasten upon them. Little wonder that when Phineas Bresee and other moderately well-off Methodists went "out under the stars" to found the California wing of the Nazarene denomination, he announced and carried on throughout his lifetime a church that would minister daily to both the bodies and souls of persons captive to sin.

It is so, today in Haiti, thanks in part to the role of missionaries and national leaders. Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, spreading from those who have responded to needs in this land and those of our other brothers and sisters in the Caribbean, are crying, "Justice," all over the world. The promise of salvation we preach to the poor is both social and spiritual. In the Body of Christ it is not right to withhold anything that is wholesome and liberating from a person in need.

Finally, the ways in which the Wesleyan form of salva-

tion theology gives hope to the oppressed needs careful reiteration. Its substance can be summarized in five points, an honorable number in Christian thought.

1. Temporal as well as eternal hope rests, in our view, upon the experience of sanctification. That experience, as Wesley never tired of saying, begins in the new birth, or regeneration, and continues daily as the Holy Spirit teaches us from the Scripture how to walk in Christlikeness. It comes to a second climax, a "second blessing, properly so-called," in the experience of cleansing from all that is properly called sin. But far from stopping there, as Wesley was wont to say, loving God with all our hearts enables us daily to deal with our human shortcomings, face up to our prejudices and long-held errors of judgment, and continually reexamine our ethical lives in the light of the glory that shines from the face of Jesus Christ. The result, of course, is power to live in ever-increasing holiness. To be daily delivered from the enervating effects of evil makes us better and more useful employees, more efficient in the use of our time, and triumphant over all those things that keep poor individuals from making the most of their lives. Such Christian liberation makes us better in our studies, in social relationships, in fellowship with other Christians, and in all aspects of our economic life. Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, and even the excessive use of harmless drugs like caffeine and sugar pose no threat to the well-being of such a redeemed person.

2. Christian prophets, whether laypersons or ministers, must recognize and challenge social or structural injustice wherever it appears. The poor are not oppressed simply by their sins but by an exploitative society. To face up to social wrong—unfair wages, desperate housing conditions, the reign of ignorance and deference to the idols of race or class or nationalism—is the obligation of every Christian. In both word and action we must resist evil, but always in loving willingness to turn the other cheek, go a second mile, and give our cloak to the one that demands our coat.

3. Another facet of Wesleyan liberation thought is deliverance from the terrible consequences of violence. The peaceableness of Jesus is as much our joy and duty to imitate as His courageous opposition to social sin. In Samaria long ago, beside a well, He spoke with both firmness and compassion to an immoral divorcee of a despised race. And He spoke the same way to the money changers in the house of the Lord. This righteousness and compassion, not a rope woven hastily of little cords, were the real symbols of His authority that day.

4. We are taught and enabled to rely upon the Holy Spirit's refusal to compromise in any way with discrimination on account of race or sex or national origin; with injustice done by those who for the moment hold political, economic, or military power over other persons; or with the covetousness, the greed, of both rich and poor. Deliverance of the oppressed from such evils is God's will, however slowly and incompletely we His creatures, including Christians, have managed to follow that will.

5. We Wesleyans, finally, hold that after all the good that we can do is done, life in this world will still often be unfair. Job discovered this fact long ago. The real argu-

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HOLINESS, RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND JUSTICE

Toward Concept Fulfillment

by Richard J. Stellway

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(A paper prepared for the third annual meeting of the
Association of Nazarene Sociologists of Religion, Kansas City)

A few years ago I was invited to attend a meeting called by the director of the proposed Billy Graham Center for World Evangelism. The director had just returned from a similar meeting in Latin America, where he had discussed the concept of evangelism with a number of Latin American theologians. It was apparent from his remarks that their concept and his were quite different. For one thing, they maintained that the communication of the gospel requires a concrete incarnate witness, not merely a verbal announcement. They also maintained that the proclamation of the gospel should be understood as a form of social action. Finally, they were laboring under the impression that discipleship should be conceived in an ethical context.

It was clear from this director's remarks that these ideas were not only very different from his own but that he believed them to be quite unacceptable. "You know," he said to me after the meeting, "many hospitals have been built in the name of spreading the gospel. Yet often scarcely a handful of patients have responded to the care they received by accepting Christ." (I didn't stop to inquire whether he thought Jesus should have healed the 10 lepers; only 1 returned, you recall, and he was a Samaritan. Perhaps I should have. His response would have been interesting.)

A similar situation confronts our church as it embarks on the fragile experiment to devise a truly international denomination. Unless we have totally succeeded in reproducing Christians abroad in our own image, we are bound to discover some Nazarenes out there who have come up with some "incredible" ideas as they've put the concept of holiness into the context of their own culture and circumstance.

I was particularly reminded of this possibility last month while listening to a presentation by Andrew Young, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. and now mayor of Atlanta. Young observed that we do a grave injustice to our missionaries and our Christian schools when we insist that third world revolutionaries have in-

variably gotten their radical ideas from the Soviet Union. When you teach people that they are children of God and that they are made in His image, Young reminded us, that is revolutionary!¹ (The U. S. used this concept to *justify our own revolution*—see our Declaration of Independence.)

HOW WILL WE RESPOND TO THE "INCREDIBLE" NOTIONS OF OTHER CHRISTIANS?

Upon hearing the strange ideas of some of our international church members, our first response might be simply to dismiss them as ignorance befitting new and not-so-experienced Christians. We may possibly write them off as merely another annoying form of syncretism. ("If only these people could separate authentic Christianity from the trappings of culture," we might say.)

What appears to us to be strange and possibly unorthodox ideas may in fact emanate from ignorance and even syncretism. Before jumping to these conclusions, however, we would do well to reflect on one man's experience. Ron Frase is chaplain at Whitworth College. During his presentation at a conference in Pasadena, Calif., Ron reflected on his years of experience in Latin America. Preparing for his ministry there, he had attended all of the best schools—Wheaton College, Princeton Seminary, Fuller, and so on—and in the process, he had devised answers to all of life's pressing questions. After he had his theology all packaged and systematized, he departed for Brazil. To his dismay, he discovered that people there were not interested in his answers. They wanted to know what Christianity had to say about human rights, whether a Christian can be a Marxist, and whether revolution was compatible with the gospel. "Sadly," he confessed, "I had to face the fact that I had spent most of my post-high school years studying answers to questions no one was asking." (I find his comment reminiscent of Tom Skinner's book, *If Christ Is the Answer, What Is the Question?*)

The poor, threatened, humiliated, and hopeless Christians of the first, second, and third worlds have some important things to tell us. My concern is that we hear and heed the questions they and their spokesmen are raising in a context of religious persecution, flagrant human rights violations, political and military corruption, sickness, hunger, and malnutrition. Moreover we need to wrestle with—even agonize over—how our theology of holiness relates to these realities.

CONTEXTUALIZATION FOR A NEW DAY

In their effort to convey Christianity within the context of non-Christian cultures, contextualization has become a byword for missiologists. A less-than-profound illustration of this concept comes from Eugene Nida. He recounts the problem a Bible translator was having trying to communicate the concept of sanctification to a tribal group in the Mexican interior. After considerable struggle, he hit upon a word that these Indians used to describe a garment that had been washed and remained clean.²

According to Chuck Kraft of Fuller Seminary, contextualization in the fullest sense involves fitting Christian concepts within the worldview of the culture of concern.³ A concept that is central to the Nazarene theological worldview is holiness. If third world peoples (the poor, disadvantaged, and exploited people of all nations) and their spokesmen are to meaningfully convey the reality of their circumstances and the substance of their concerns to those of us more fortunate Wesleyans, it will probably have to be via our concept of holiness. If this is true, then it is most important for us to ask, "*What potential does our concept of holiness have for comprehending issues of structural evil, collective sin, and social injustice confronting third world peoples today?*" In short, what potential does Christian holiness have for comprehending and productively dealing with justice issues?

The way this concept has been dealt with in the past has left little room for dealing with such issues. While we have preached that God is love, we have neglected the fact that He is also justice. While we have proclaimed holiness, matters of structural evil and social sin have either been written off as irrelevant or redefined as matters emanating from personal sin. We have become so accustomed to the comforts of our first world yacht that we scarcely notice the struggling, sinking masses who are desperately paddling in the murky sea of injustice on which we float, struggling to somehow stay alive for a few more hours. When on occasion they do catch our attention, our all-too-frequent response is to hand them a copy of our *Manual's* statement on holiness.

While this is my fear, my hope and faith is that our passion for holiness will force us to consider and constructively relate to the justice issues of our day. But by what means will this take place?

CONCEPT FULFILLMENT

Don Richardson employs the term *concept fulfillment* to refer to tapping a concept's latent but pregnant potential.⁴ What is the untapped potential of our concept of holiness? In their *Introduction to Christian Theology*, Wiley and Culbertson define holiness as the very nature

of God. They go on to link the concepts of righteousness and justice to holiness. Righteousness, they maintain, refers to God's standard; a standard that emanates from and manifests this nature. Justice, in turn, refers to the administration of this standard.⁵ The suggestion seems clear enough; justice has something to do with holiness, and holiness as a concept contains some concern with justice. However, by acknowledging a connection here, we have only barely begun the process of concept fulfillment as defined by Richardson. We must proceed to examine just what justice is and what its administration involves. And we must link up the results of our inquiry with the concept that comprehends it, *holiness*.

This latter task, linking the fuller implications of justice administration with holiness, may necessarily require further elaboration of the holiness concept itself. To comprehend the fuller implications of God's nature, it is helpful to reflect on the nature and activity of His incarnate Son. As we consider the epitomizing of God's nature in the person of Jesus, what do we attend to? Jerry Hull, a sociologist at Northwest Nazarene College, suggests that our conventional approach has been to focus on the spiritual aspects of His message and to view His healing of the sick and feeding of the hungry in terms of a symbolic reference to His concern for the spiritual welfare of mankind. But what might a third world Christian abstract about God's nature upon reading the same scripture? Hull suggests that they might be more inclined to consider His concern for meeting the material needs of the masses while giving special heed to the "disrespectful" way in which He challenged the wealthy and upset the religious hierarchy of the day. They would also surely find Mary's Magnificat to be particularly revealing of God's nature:

My soul magnifies the Lord . . .

He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and exalted those of low degree;

he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.

(Luke 1:46, 52-53, RSV)

As John Howard Yoder suggests in his book, *The Politics of Jesus* they would likely see the theme of Jubilee justice—cropping up in such places as in Jesus' inaugural sermon (Luke 4:18-19), His model prayer (particularly the passage referring to forgiving our debts as we forgive our debtors), and His parable of the ungrateful man who, after being forgiven a debt by his Lord, harshly demanded full payment from his own debtor—as positive proof that a concern for justice is integral to comprehending God's nature. The prophet Jeremiah put it quite simply: To know God is to do justice (Jer. 22:16).

HOW DO WE DO THEOLOGY?

How do we avoid missing the fuller implications of God's holiness within the context of our contemporary world? Sensing that the theologians of the North Atlantic have remained oblivious to the realities of much of their world, people such as Orlando Costas, Bill Pannell, Vinay Kumar Samuel, Robert McAfee Brown, and a host of other theologians are now suggesting that a new way of doing theology is in order. Orlando Costas outlines three key ingredients of a new approach:

1. *A Different Starting Point: The Poor*

This starting point is not as new as it might first appear. Robert McAfee Brown cites two passages from Barth's writings to illustrate this point:

God always takes His stand unconditionally and passionately on this side and on this side alone: against the lofty and on behalf of the lowly; against those who already enjoy right and privilege and on behalf of those who are denied it and deprived of it.

The Church is witness of the fact that the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost. And this implies that . . . the Church must concentrate first on the lower and lowest levels of human society. The poor, the socially and economically weak and threatened, will always be the object of its primary and particular concern, and it will always insist on the State's special responsibility for these weaker members of society.

That it will bestow its love upon them . . . [is] the most important thing; but it must not concentrate on this and neglect the other thing to which it is committed by its political responsibility; the effort to achieve such a fashioning of the law as will make it impossible for "equality before the law" to become a cloak under which strong and weak, independent and dependent, rich and poor, employers and employees, in fact receive different treatment at its hands: the weak being unduly restricted, the strong unduly protected.⁶

While there is some evidence of a concern for the circumstances confronting the poor within the writings of the so-called theologians of the North Atlantic, such a concern can scarcely be considered a starting point for most theologians writing in the holiness tradition. If we are to come to grips with the social and political forces impacting the poor and exploited peoples of the world—those to whom God has manifested a special concern—a reorientation to our way of thinking must occur. Basic to such a reorientation is a fundamental change in, or expansion of, what sociologists refer to as our *reference group*. In our achievement-oriented society, it has become conventional to compare our circumstances with those who have more than we do. However in doing so, we invariably feel overworked, underpaid, underrecognized, and, through a little transvaluational logic, just a bit pious and self-righteous. In *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, sociologist Donald Kraybill challenges us to fix our gaze downward rather than upward. As we revise our focus, our whole outlook changes. We begin to understand that to feel overworked and underpaid is a form of self-indulgence—a luxury which, in light of the magnitude of human need, we can ill afford. Furthermore, we begin to take the conditions plaguing these masses seriously. It is possible that as we identify with their plight we may for the first time become genuinely indignant over the injustices that victimize them!

2. *A Different Mode of Engagement: Praxis*

This increasingly popular term, *praxis*, means something more than mere practice. Robert McAfee Brown defines it as an ongoing two-way exchange between action and theory. But Brown is quick to point out that not just any action will do . . . only action of a transforming nature. The early Christians described in Acts 17:6 fit the model well. They were referred to as those who "have turned the world upside down."⁷

The underlying premise of this mode of engagement

is that theology must both issue from engagement and lead to renewed engagement. In this sense theology is not done via a logico-deductive process of bystander reflection. Neither is it done via a logico-inductive procedure in which grass roots experience becomes the only teacher. Rather, it incorporates both approaches. Action forces me to look at my theory again. Yet by reexamining my theory, I am compelled to reappraise my action.

This means of doing theology, like the first, is not entirely new. The self-reports of many a respected religious figure manifest this process. At some point they dared to launch out on the light that they had. But by engaging in a continual process of theorizing, acting, reflecting, retheorizing, and action revising, they have developed a maturity of insight and a genuine integration of head and heart knowledge while leaving behind them a theology for successive generations to pursue.

I suspect that the Holiness Movement has gone through a somewhat similar process over the years. I seldom hear the pulpit pronouncements on holiness today that I recall hearing so often during my early years. This is sometimes seen as an indication that we have somehow backslidden from an original commitment. But could it be that as we have acted on the implications of these former pronouncements, we have revised our "theory," and that what has emerged over the years is a more contextually relevant theology of holiness? Furthermore, as we continue to engage in this process, could it be that it will carry us further in the direction of concept fulfillment?

3. *A Different Set of Tools: The Social Sciences*

Tradition causes us to look to philosophy to provide the tools for crafting our theology. Having grown up with this tradition, it seems logical to include heavy doses of philosophy in our seminary curricula and to incorporate the philosophy major into the religion departments of our colleges. When we need assistance in dealing with some social issue or another, we call upon the philosophers for assistance. When the resident pastor is unable to fill the pulpit, we may even invite a philosopher to take his place.

Theologians have grown so comfortable with philosophers that the latter are surely assured a legitimate place in the church in the foreseeable future. But what about social scientists? Do they not have something important to contribute as well? Could it be that their tools might provide valuable insights into the nature of historical, social, political, and economic forces conditioning the circumstances under which men think, feel, and act? Could their insights be of use in addressing holiness theology to the issues confronting our contemporary world?

NOTES

1. For a provocative exposure to the way the context of Nicaragua during the Sandinista revolt affected the interpretation of Scripture, see *The Gospel in Solentiname*, Vol. IV, by Ernesto Cardinal (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1982).

2. Eugene Nida, *Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Mission* (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 1981), 221.

3. Charles Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theology in Cross-cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), 362.

4. Don Richardson, "Concept Fulfillment" in Ralph D. Winter and Stephen C. Hawthorne, eds., *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader* (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 1981), 416.

5. H. Orton Wiley and Paul T. Culbertson, *Introduction to Christian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1946), 107.

6. Robert McAfee Brown, *Theology in a New Key* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 142.

7. *Ibid.*, 71

Women in Ministry

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO OUR WOMEN PREACHERS?

by David Ackerman
Spokane, Wash.

It is evident that there is a lack of women in the preaching ministry today. It has not always been this way. Women have proclaimed God's truth throughout Scripture from Esther in the Old Testament to Phoebe in the New. Within the last 150 years, women have had a prominent role in the preaching ministry.

Beginning in England in the 18th century, John Wesley gave a handful of women the opportunity to preach. In the early 19th century, during the revivals of Charles G. Finney, women gained freedom to preach in America. Finney's revivalism paved the way for the practice of full ordination of women. Church historian Donald Dayton says, "The most controversial of Finney's new measures in his revivals was his encouragement of women to speak and pray in public and mixed meetings."¹ Even when he was opposed by church officials and congregations, Finney stood his ground and gave women opportunity to speak in public. In most cases, this public speaking was not full-fledged preaching, but it gave women more power to speak than they had ever had.

This tradition carried on into Oberlin College. Asa Mahan, the first president of Oberlin, had close ties with Finney and was undoubtedly influenced by him. Dayton says, "Oberlin was the first coeducational college in the world. Later feminists found it still a little stodgy, but a very high percentage of the leaders of the women's rights movement were graduates of Oberlin."² Asa Mahan was so proud of this heritage that he suggested this epitaph be put on his tombstone:

The first man, in the history of

the race who conducted women, in connection with members of the opposite sex, through a full course of liberal education, and conferred upon her the high degrees which had hitherto been the exclusive prerogatives [sic] of men.³

Sarah Anders says, "Education enabled some individual women to pioneer in public life, decades before they would be organized to effect national changes."⁴ The better educated that women became, the more they began to see the inhumanity of men toward other men and women. The war to free slaves led to a war to free women. Dayton gives several reasons for this connection:

The basic egalitarianism of evangelicalism that supported abolitionism was also extended to women. Those who had mustered the courage to attack one social institution found it easier to attack another. Women who mastered the antislavery argument found unexpected parallels to their own situation. But probably most important for the Evangelicals were the parallel problems in the interpretation of Scripture.⁵

As the Scriptures were explored to find answers to the slavery issue, passages were also found that liberated women. Gal. 3:28 was one key passage: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Passages that had kept women quiet in churches for ages were no longer valid in light of the newly discovered universal truths.

These views led to the ordination of Antoinette Brown, the first

woman ordained in the United States, in 1853. Brown, a Congregationalist, graduated from Oberlin College three years previously and was "deeply indebted" to Asa Mahan's leadership. Luther Lee, a Wesleyan Methodist, preached Brown's ordination sermon, "Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel," using the Galatians passage as his text. He said,

Females have a God-given right to preach the gospel. I take it upon myself as my portion of the effort on this occasion, to defend and substantiate the above proposition. To make any distinction in the Church of Jesus Christ . . . purely on the ground of sex, is virtually to strike this text from the sacred volume, for it affirms that in Christ there is no difference between males and females, that they are all one in regard to the gospel of the grace of God.⁶

As time went by, more women became involved in several facets of ministry, including work in rescue missions and soup kitchens. They seemed to have a natural sense of compassion, perhaps because they themselves felt oppressed. Seeing the opportunity and need for ministry, they began going to the places men were neglecting. This led to women's involvement in missions. Timothy L. Smith sums up the situation thus:

Practically all of the group had at first believed that their "call" was to *foreign* missionary work, at that time the only public ministry in which women were actually welcome. All insisted that "providential" circumstances had thrust them out into the ministry, first as

"home missionaries" and rescue workers, then as evangelists and, in some cases, pastors.⁷

Sandra L. Myres makes the distinction: "Men directed and administered the local churches as well as denominational organizations, but women were in charge of an increasing number of auxiliary groups."⁸ The auxiliary groups they became involved in included Sunday Schools and home/foreign mission societies. They also helped build churches and schools and entertained traveling ministers.⁹ Lyle E. Schaller makes this important observation:

The greater the sensitivity of a denomination to the oppressed and the downtrodden, and the larger the proportion of the membership that is drawn from among those at the bottom of the social class scale, the greater the probability that that denomination has a long history of accepting women as ministers.¹⁰

Another reason why women became involved in ministry comes from the theology of the Holiness Movement and "the essential nature of the place of public testimony in the holiness experience which gave many an otherwise timid woman the authority and the power to speak out "as the Holy Spirit led her."¹¹ C. B. Jernigan tells how, even in the midst of opposition, many women began to get "into the experience of entire sanctification" and would shout and testify at every opportunity they could.¹²

A closer look at this theology is important. Two of the major biblical passages in support of women in the ministry are Gal. 3:28, which we have looked at, and Acts 2:17, a quote from Joel, which reads, "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy" (NIV). These verses appear to break down any barriers that there might have been between men and women. In addition, the holiness message is a message of the possibility of freedom from indwelling sin by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Dayton's summary of the correlation between holiness theology and feminist theology is worth noting.

Feminist theologies generally emphasize the extent of the new that is created in the Christian dis-

pensation and identify patriarchal patterns with the old. Thus those theologies that are the most optimistic about the change that is possible in human life are the most likely to accept feminist principles . . . the perfectionist theologies tended to see the subordination of women as part of the sinful state out of which redemption was being effected . . . the subordination of women . . . was merely descriptive of the sinful state in which we find ourselves and without any normative value.¹³

One person who had a great impact on the Holiness Movement was Phoebe Palmer. It was largely because of her influence that many denominations in the movement were committed to the ordination of women.¹⁴ Phoebe Palmer's influence started when she began holding testimony and prayer meetings in conjunction with her husband's preaching campaigns, where women were encouraged to pursue gospel work. These meetings became known as the "Tuesday Meetings," and by 1886 there were 238 in operation. Smith says, "These intimate little gatherings brought together the most earnest Christians of all evangelical sects under the leadership of women."¹⁵ One of Palmer's most famous books is *The Promise of the Father*. Harold Raser sums up some of the impact of this book, saying, "She argues at length for women's right to minister in the Church. . . . The book appeared in a day when women were not generally given important places of ministry in American churches and most certainly not allowed to be ordained."¹⁶ In broader terms, the book shook many traditional foundations of the subordination of women.

Phoebe Palmer influenced Catherine Booth, cofounder of the Salvation Army. Catherine's husband, William Booth, was a preacher. Catherine often went on campaigns with him, and soon she herself began preaching. It is said that she was a better preacher than her husband. Thousands flocked to attend her revival services, sometimes advertised: "Come Hear a Woman Preach." Her sermons were based on the Pentecost account in Acts 2, by which she argued that the Spirit was poured out on *all* people,

women included. Because of her influence, the Salvation Army was built upon the premise of equality of women, which it still advocates today.¹⁷

Women preachers were influential in the early holiness churches. According to Melvin Dieter, "The new holiness churches, which were organized out of the movement in the closing decades of the century, were among the first to grant full ministerial rights to women."¹⁸ By the mid-1880s the Mennonite Brethren church gave full privilege to women ministers. Since its beginning, the Church of the Nazarene has given women full opportunity to preach. H. C. Morrison said of the Church of the Nazarene at the turn of the century, "Women are ordained to preach, and may sit in yearly conventions as delegates."¹⁹ One in eight churches in the United Missionary church were started by women.²⁰ As many as 20 to 25 percent of the preachers and leaders in the Church of God (Anderson, Ind.) were women. Also, the Pentecostal churches supported women in the ministry.²¹ As many as 20 percent of early Nazarene preachers and as many as 30 percent of Pilgrim Holiness preachers were women.²²

It has not remained this way for most holiness churches. Since World War I, the number of women preachers has declined. Floyd Cunningham gives several possible reasons for this. The first reason he gives is the rise of fundamentalism in the church. The church began to look at the Bible legalistically. This new scriptural outlook resulted in a new emphasis on rules and laws. John R. Rice, in his book *Bobbed Hair, Bossy Wives, and Women Preachers*, gives the attitude of many during the period between world wars. Rice uses New Testament passages such as 1 Tim. 2:11-15 and 1 Corinthians 14 to prove that women should not preach but should, in fact, keep silent in the church.²³

Cunningham's second reason for the decline of women preachers is also a result of fundamentalism, dealing with the *absolute* ethic versus *interim* ethic. The interim ethic places a woman in the traditional role, subject to her husband and silent in the church. Rice's view falls

into the interim category. People began focusing on specific passages in the New Testament that seem to belittle women. On the other hand, the absolute ethic is based on the universal principles found in such passages as Gal. 3:28 and grants women equality with men. The shift of the 19th century was toward the absolute ethic, but the shift in the 20th has been back toward the interim ethic.²⁴

Ruth Graham, wife of evangelist Billy Graham, sums up the view of many, saying,

I personally am "agin it" [women preaching]. For one thing, I do not feel that we have much of a shortage of men. For another thing, I believe that it basically goes against the principles of Scripture. . . . I think if you study you will find that the finest cooks in the world are men . . . the finest couturiers, by and large, are men; the greatest politicians are men; most of our greatest writers are men; most of our greatest athletes are men. You name it, men are superior in all but two areas: women make the best wives and women make the best mothers.²⁵

Many denominations have fewer women preachers today than at the turn of the century. At that time, at least 20 percent of the ministers in the Church of the Nazarene were women. In 1973, only 6 percent were women.²⁶ Once firmly committed to women in the ministry, the Nazarenes are now letting this commitment fall to the wayside. Not all churches, however, are marked with a decline in female ministers. The United Methodist church, for example, is experiencing an upswing of women preachers. Nancy Van Scoyoc even says, "In some churches more women hold leadership positions than men."²⁷

Several things are keeping

women from entering the preaching ministry. First, there is the problem of ecclesiastical politics. There appears to be a "club mentality" among male ministers. The "brotherhood" is represented by the typical white male married to a lovely, obedient wife with three children. Women have a hard time fitting into this club and are often excluded. Though the official standing of the church is friendly toward women preachers, the people of the church are not. Seth Cook Rees writes,

Nothing but jealousy, prejudice, bigotry, and a stingy love for bossing in men have prevented women's public recognition by the Church. No church that is acquainted with the Holy Ghost will object to the public ministry of women.²⁸

A recent article in the *Christian Century* states:

Women are dropping out of the parish ministry more frequently than their male counterparts. . . . A primary reason for the drop-out rate was the reluctance of parishioners and church staff people to acknowledge authority when it is vested in women.²⁹

The problem is that district superintendents and local churches are not looking for women preachers. Women are forced to enter other fields of ministry.

A second cause keeping women from entering the pastoral ministry is the decline in interest among women wanting to enter the ministry. Though education is available, the number of women studying for the pastoral ministry is dropping. Women either transfer to denominations that welcome women preachers or they switch to religious education or missiology majors.

In summary, it is a sad reality that the number of women preachers is declining in holiness churches. Our heritage in the Holiness Movement

is rich with godly women who toiled as preachers. Our theology is one of freedom, yet we keep many from fulfilling God's call on their lives. A restructuring of attitudes and practice must occur.

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Pontius' Puddle



Church Growth

NATURAL CHURCH GROWTH

by Louie E. Bustle
*South America Regional Director
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During World War II, missionaries were run out of China, and the church was forced to go underground. Some of the greatest persecution in the history of Christianity fell upon the Chinese church. One would naturally think that the church would die and disappear.

However, instead of dwindling, the church has actually flourished. The fastest church growth in the world today is found in China. Many of the major cities have turned to Christ until in some, approximately 10 percent of the population is Christian.

The church in China has found the answer in natural church growth. Great temples and expensive Sunday School facilities are not necessities. Chinese believers do not have the modern conveniences that we in most places of the world feel we must have. Most have retreated to worship in houses and to secret places. Restrictions as to whom they can even invite hinders evangelism. However, the church is growing naturally.

Have we let Satan fool us into thinking that the church is a building? Do we think that the church is completely dependent upon money? Have we built a system that limits church growth as we become dependent upon professional pastors and nice facilities? Do we think, The more money, the more the growth?

Christ surely wanted to win the world. That is the reason He gave His disciples the Great Commission. However, the Church today cannot win the world until we change our mentality!

Satan wants us to deviate from the biblical plan that Paul used. He has tricked us into building a non-reproducible system of church growth. We cannot start new churches unless we have great amounts of dollars. We cannot run our programs unless we have more money.

God is challenging the church today. We need a radical change of mentality. Could it be that God really wants church growth that does not depend upon money? A work can be small in the beginning. De-

pendence is never good, not even dependence upon the district.

For the church to grow today, we must continue to develop and plant new churches. New churches give possibilities for new leadership and new pastors. This new blood has a tendency of challenging and inspiring the church at all levels. There is something about new entities that keeps sharpening our vision.

New churches can be started in homes, in rented buildings, almost anywhere until their congregations can purchase their places of worship. The problem is that many times we are afraid to try new ideas.

One of the great problems that we face in the church today is that we feel that every pastor must receive a full-time salary. We also feel that it is the parent church's or the district's responsibility to provide either the rent or the property and build the building.

We have lost the biblical pattern of church growth. There is a great need for the church to return to this biblical base. Some ideas that we could develop are:

1. The greatest day for the church is when it is in



Louie E.
Bustle

revival. When the Holy Spirit has control of us, the dynamics of the power of God become more evident. Phineas F. Bresee declared that he never called evangelists to give revival to the church, only to raise the tide of revival. We have become accustomed to going through the motions of church services. How we need the power of God upon every service of the church! Every church service should be special.

2. The church's vision must be renewed. We have been calloused to the fact that man is lost without Christ. A renewed vision of the need to win the world must be imprinted upon the mind of every believer.

3. The desire to sacrifice for the kingdom of God has been diverted to a love for pleasure and ease. How many times have I heard a Christian worker say that a certain sacrifice would be an imposition upon his family. How familiar the phrase, "No, I cannot do that, I have other plans." Many have gone on spiritual vacations and left the building of the church to others.

4. The church today needs God-called pastors who are willing to preach the gospel at any cost. The ministry is not a call to ease and a better life, though the Bible teaches that the pastor is worthy to receive remuneration for his work. The call of God is to the will of God.

5. The minister's responsibility is to challenge and inspire the church to greater heights and greater responsibilities. Satisfaction with a superficial ministry is unpardonable.

6. Let the church expand its teaching ministry to inspire every pastor to train a new pastor every year. One of the ways of doing that is to have extension theological education classes on every district, probably several places on every district. Anyone who is interested in the ministry should be enrolled in these classes. Let us train them and send them out to start new churches and to develop new ministries around the world.

7. If the church will develop the biblical idea of the mother church starting daughter churches, we would have a greater impact upon the world. We could start talking about each church starting a new church instead of leaving that responsibility for the district superintendent. This could be done with little money. How much does it cost to start a new church? It doesn't cost money. All God needs are people who are willing to do it. The new group's tithe will provide for the financial needs.

8. Some years ago the church began to emphasize the full-time pastor. This is ideal for us even today. However, if we are going to have fast church growth, we can't wait for churches to afford pastoral salaries, nor can the district be responsible for them indefinitely. If we develop the idea that every local church pays their pastor what they can and make the pastor responsible for the balance of his support, we can start more churches, giving us more growth.

9. House churches, started as satellite groups of a mother church, not only help to start new congregations

but also help to build the mother church. Once there is a good group of believers, they can rent their own building, and then begin to save money for property and a permanent building.

10. Even new churches can call pastors to start other churches. Sometimes we have the idea that only the large churches can sponsor new churches. However, I have seen young churches have a greater ministry in this area than many large churches.

11. Even laypeople can pastor and start new churches. Let us not underestimate the power and the willingness of the laity.

What do you say to a growth rate of 156 percent?

12. One problem is that we desire to control all aspects of church growth. The statement "Control kills church growth" does not mean there should be no supervision or administration. However, many of our administrators have strangled church growth in the sense that they control every aspect of the outreach. District superintendents should receive reports of these new works. However, they should be giving direction and inspiring our local pastors to begin new churches. That means giving liberty to the pastor, turning them loose to build the Kingdom. Could we not develop a system of praying one for another as we are challenged to begin new churches? Is it not the responsibility of administration to give advice and guidance and also to lay the responsibility of building the Kingdom back on the local church?

The Church of the Nazarene in South America has grown at the rate of 156 percent in the last five years. Is it difficult to keep up with training and administering a church that is growing so rapidly? Yes, it is difficult. However, I would rather have that problem than to be able to take all the time I need to train a few new leaders.

I find that it is also the responsibility of the Holy Spirit to train and help our people. Of course, we want them to be guided in the area of doctrine and administration of the church. However, we do not want them to be stifled, nor to slow down the growth of the Church of Jesus Christ.

It is my prayer that God will help us find the dynamic of natural church growth. Could it be that God is talking to you about being that kind of person who could be used to develop natural church growth in your area?



“Every Believer Is a Minister”



WE PLANTED OUR CHURCH AT A GARAGE SALE

by David Wesley
Pastor, Seeds of Abraham, Kansas City





Florie Abraham (back row, third from l.) and an early gathering in her home.

We planted an urban, Black-American church at a suburban, White-American garage sale.

It all started in the outskirts of Kansas City, when a young couple decided to collect their uncollectibles and sell them. As they prepared for the sale, they prayed that they would meet someone who needed the Lord.

Among the people who visited the sale, rummaging through boxes of bargains, was Scarlet. She was a middle-aged woman who prepared meals for a hospital in the area. The young couple struck up a conversation with Scarlet, inviting her to church.

The following Sunday, Scarlet and her 19-year-old son visited the church. From the moment the first greeter shook her hand, she felt welcome. "The greeters and the other members of the church," she said, "made me feel like I was already part of their church family." She returned the next Sunday, and the next, and the next.

It wasn't long after Scarlet started attending the church that tragedy struck: Her son drowned in a swimming accident. The people of the church immediately reached out in compassion to this grieving mother. They offered her flowers and gentle words and shared her tears. They also offered Jesus, whom she accepted as her Savior.

Scarlet began working through the church's Bible study series designed for new Christians. And she began telling people about her new faith. One of the people she told was Florie Abraham, a Black woman who also worked in the hospital kitchen. Scarlet showed Florie one of the Bible study leaflets she was using.

Florie confided to Scarlet that her family was being torn apart by some serious problems and that perhaps a Bible study like this would pull them back together. She asked Scarlet if she would come to her house and share the Bible study with her family.

A few nights later, Scarlet arrived with Beverly Burgess and a couple of evangelism students from Naza-

rene Theological Seminary. At Florie's house, 10 family members whom Florie had invited waited. Beverly gave her testimony, presented God's plan for salvation, and invited any who wished to accept Christ as their personal Savior. Seven did just that! They asked the visitors to come again the next week so that they could begin a weekly Bible study.

For the next few months, Beverly led the Bible study in Florie's living room. Then a seminary couple, Ben and Lisa, joined the group. Ben began leading the Bible study while Lisa led the children in their own study in the kitchen. As the group grew, the leaders began looking for ways to accommodate the people.

Meanwhile, I was midway through my seminary training. My wife, Glynda, and I were feeling God's call into some kind of cross-cultural ministry. We were praying for His direction. Then Ben and Lisa accepted a pastorate in California. Looking for someone else to direct the study, Beverly told us about it, wanting to know if we had any ideas about who might want to direct the study. It was as though the Lord himself was saying, "Here is the open door you've been praying for, David. Will you walk through it?"

The next week, Glynda and I visited the Bible study. By this time, Florie's house was overflowing with 20-30 people. We were immediately drawn to these new Christians. And we agreed to work with them.



While the adults study Scripture in the living room, the children go to the kitchen to learn about Jesus.

Within a couple of months, summer was on us. We decided to reach out to the neighborhood. With the help of some Christian college students, we conducted a "Sunshine Club." For two hours every Tuesday for six weeks, we met in an empty lot. Scores of children came and played, sang, watched puppets, and listened to Bible stories. We registered the children's names and later visited their families, inviting them to our Bible study. We discovered that nearly 50 families in the area not only

had no church home but also were interested in knowing more about our Bible study.

One of these people was JoAnn. We visited her once a week for six weeks. Each time, we made sure she knew she was welcome to come to the Bible study. But she never came. And every week, our group prayed for her.

One Monday evening, JoAnn called me. She was having trouble with alcohol and said she needed to make a change in her life. Could I help? I told her I would be over the next day.

Tuesday, Florie, a seminary student, and I went to JoAnn's home. Florie told JoAnn how God had changed her life and how He had given her a satisfaction she had never found in alcohol, drugs, or sex. As Florie continued her testimony, it became clear that God was speaking through her. We could see the spiritual hunger on JoAnn's face. I asked her if she wanted to invite Jesus into her life. Tears spilled onto her face as she nodded.

After we prayed, JoAnn asked if we could begin a Bible study in her home. "I've used my house for Satan for so long, I would like to use it for God in some way," she said. She invited us to come back the next week to begin the study and to help her tell her family and friends what God had done for her. So we did just that. That group has decided to continue meeting each Tuesday evening.

Meanwhile, the other group, meeting on Wednesday evenings, has grown to the point that we can't fit them all in Florie's house. There are now 60-80 of us! The adults still meet in homes, but because there are so many of us, we don't always meet in the same house each week. This eases the burden on the hosts.

The children and teens currently meet in buildings that Nazarene Headquarters has allowed us to use, free of charge. The children meet in one building, the teens in another.

When we started this ministry in Florie's house, we called it the Wabash Bible Study (Florie's house is on Wabash Street). But now we have Bible study groups of varying ages meeting in other places. So we asked the adults about a name for the group. Seeds of Abraham, they decided.

Why this name? For one thing, the ministry began in the home of Florie Abraham. But the promises of God, which our people are learning about, go back to a time long before the Abrahams of Wabash Street.

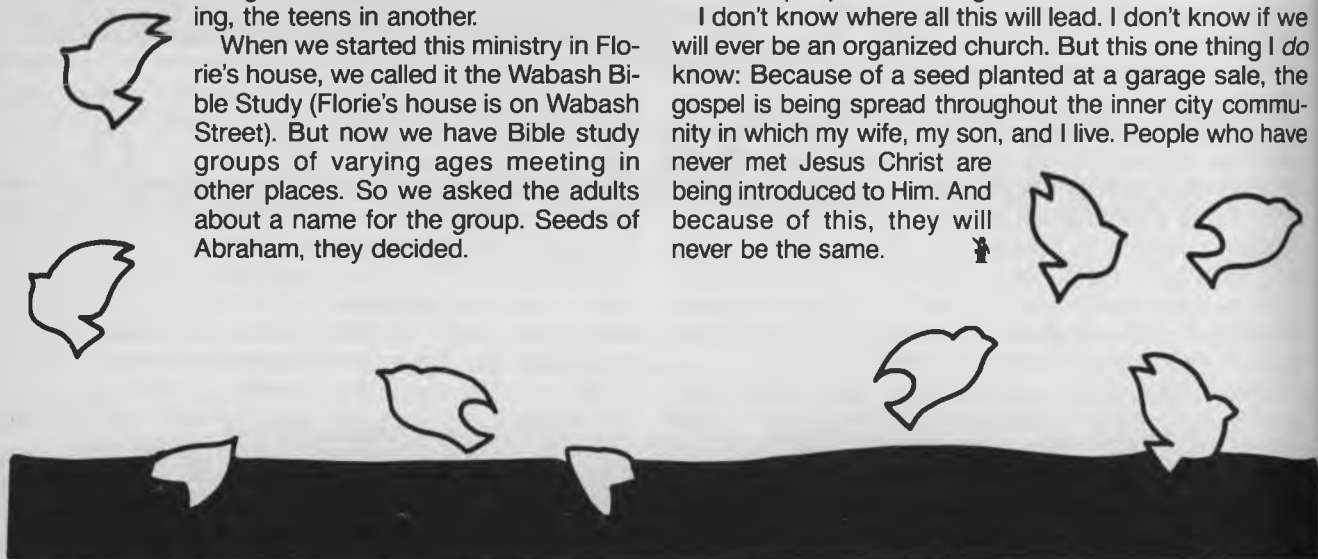
About 2,000 years before Christ, God said to Abraham, "I will establish . . . an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants . . . to be your God" (Gen. 17:7, NIV). The apostle Paul explained that this promise and invitation was made to "all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law [the Jews], but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all" (Rom. 4:16, NIV).

The people who call themselves Seeds of Abraham have a burden for the thousands of unchurched people who live in inner Kansas City. Many of these neighbors of ours have never heard the Good News of salvation. Some only occasionally go to church. Others are Muslim. All need Christ.

Seeds of Abraham's adopted motto reads, "Every Believer Is a Minister." As this New Testament fellowship grows, they continue to look for ways to reach their community. We're now negotiating the purchase of a three-story house in the neighborhood. Renovated, this would house afterschool tutoring for neighborhood children and teens, a youth center, a worship center for one of our cell groups, adult education, and lay pastoral training. We're planning two new cell groups, and we're tentatively planning a basketball camp for young people this summer. JoAnn has successfully completed an alcohol recovery program and is now training to be a lay pastor.

Seeds of Abraham wasn't drawn up in a planning meeting of district officers. Its location wasn't determined by the proximity of neighboring churches. But God opened a door for ministry, and He opened our hearts to people who hungered for Him.

I don't know where all this will lead. I don't know if we will ever be an organized church. But this one thing I *do* know: Because of a seed planted at a garage sale, the gospel is being spread throughout the inner city community in which my wife, my son, and I live. People who have never met Jesus Christ are being introduced to Him. And because of this, they will never be the same.



The Biblical Basis for CHRISTIAN CONFRONTATION with the DEMONIC

by Terry Read

*Assistant Professor of Missiology
Nazarene Theological Seminary*

One of the most striking characteristics of our Lord's ministry on earth is the confidence and authority He demonstrated while dealing with the demonic. It is instructive to note that neither Jesus nor the apostle Paul sought out opportunities to confront the demonic. Yet both encountered fierce opposition to their ministry through the demon-possessed.¹

The Western world is shot through with the occult: Horoscopes, covens on university campuses, numerous reports of the outbreak of the demonic (even in church services), the New Age Movement,² and other manifestations inform us that we are face-to-face with a worldwide movement, a resurgence of the "forces of evil" (Eph. 6:12, NIV). Merrill Unger concludes:

The scope and power of modern occultism staggers the imagination. Millions are unwittingly oppressed and enslaved by the occult. No wonder mental and emotional problems increase at an alarming rate. Unless the reality and purpose of Satan and de-

mons are acknowledged, some of these problems will not be solved.³

The minister or missionary in training today will need to develop a Christian confidence based upon biblical principles. This type of preparation has largely been neglected. A former missionary to West Africa writes: "I look back on my own missionary experience in a tribal village in West Africa with a combination of regret and incredulity, that I attempted ministry there with almost no understanding of either the biblical teaching on demons nor of the reality of the demonic world to the people with whom I lived and worked."⁴

Those brave enough to discuss the demonic today generally fall into two widely divergent groups: Those who find the demonic everywhere, and those who find it nowhere. "Both extremes are un-biblical, and most of us have sought a place of safety in simply avoiding the subject. Unfortunately, there is no place of safety in this conflict, only places of ineffectiveness."⁵



Terry Read

POWER ENCOUNTER DEFINED

Power encounter is the term given to the confrontation between the ministers of God and the forces of Satan. "It is not simply a point of contact—it is a point of attack."⁶ The classic illustration from the Old Testament is found in Josh. 24:14-15. Joshua appeals to the Israelites: "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (v. 15, NIV). This demonstration of power encounter was very public!

In the New Testament, a similar public demonstration led to a riot in Ephesus. "A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly" (Acts 19:19, NIV). It is recorded immediately afterward that "the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power" (v. 20, NIV). Opposition soon came to those who were now in "the Way" (v. 23, NIV), and the goldsmiths (those who stood to gain or lose the most, depending on the outcome of the issue) led the opposition. Alan Tippet notes: "Be it noted that this demonstration was both an act of commitment and an act of rejection, a spiritual encounter."⁷

The conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan came to a head during the earthly ministry of our Lord. "Whenever He came into personal contact with demonic possession He cast out the demon and set the victim free."⁸ Power encounter is further illuminated by the "strong man" passage. "How can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house" (Matt. 12:29, NIV). John tells us that "the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8, NIV). Paul adds this victorious note: "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them,

triumphing over them by the cross" (Col. 2:15, NIV).

A demonstration of power linked with the faithful preaching of the gospel often results in significant church growth.

In the Philippines a number of people in a small fishing village challenged a Christian layman, "If you can cast out the devil from the woman, we will truly believe and embrace immediately the faith in Jesus Christ!" As unlikely a candidate as he was from our point of view, he accepted the challenge and set a date that would allow him time to prepare himself in prayer. At the appointed hour the confrontation took place, the demon was cast out, and the woman was restored to total freedom. "The following day, those who had issued the challenge made good their promise." This demonstration of the power of God has resulted in the only known people movement among Muslims in the Philippines.⁹

CHRIST DELIVERING THE GADARENE DEMONIAK

(Mark 5:1-20 and parallel passages Matt. 8:28-34 and Luke 8:26-39)

Jesus and the disciples move into Gentile territory, having crossed the Sea of Galilee. This region is called the region of the Gerasenes, Gadarenes, or even Gergesenes in different manuscripts. P. L. Hammer tells us that this account is the most important New Testament reference to demoniacs.

Mark and Luke refer to a single demoniac; Matthew refers to two. The periscope especially serves to show the power of Christ over all uncleanness and demonic might. In the Orient knowing the name of a person meant power over him, but for the demons such recognition of Jesus was their doom. Thus a demoniac is made to testify to Jesus as the Son of God.¹⁰

1. The account of the Gadarene demoniac "indicates more graphically than any other in the Gospels, that the function of demonic pos-

session is to distort and destroy the image of God in man."¹¹ The fact that demons enter into men and control them in what we call "demon possession" with several resultant dysfunctional elements, is spelled out by the following: (a) He had superhuman power. Dr. Ralph Earle indicates that verse 3 has three negatives for emphasis: "And not even with a chain no longer no one was able to bind him."¹² Further every word in the text testifies to his pathetic condition. (b) He lived among the subterranean caves, which served as tombs for the poorest of the poor. (c) He would be seen periodically, shrieking as he was tormented by the evil spirits, and would

Satan is furious in his obsession to overthrow Christ's rule.

cut his own flesh with sharp stones (v. 5). There is a self-destructive, suicidal tendency in demon possession that sets it apart as a special case. (d) Luke tells us that he wore no clothes (8:27).

Is there a difference between the demon-possessed and the non-converted? Yes, there is a difference. A nonconverted person may live respectably. His conduct, relations with his fellows, work on the job, and treatment of his family may all be above reproach. He has not yet invited Christ into his life. The situation of the demoniac is very much different. The spiral of behavior in his life was constantly downward, including self-destructive tendencies. That suicidal tendencies were a part of the influence of the demons is seen by what happens next. What the demons could not do to the demoniac, Jesus allowed them to do in the swine, "and they were drowned in the sea" (v. 13, NASB).

2. In this incident, the features presented prove to us that "the purpose of demonic possession is to

distort and destroy the divine likeness of man."¹³ In the parallel passage (Luke 8:26-39), Geldenhuys tells us that the demons have brought this man down to the level of an animal.¹⁴ He wanders about naked, a menace to all who pass by. The demoniac is not good publicity for the kingdom of Satan, for he is reduced to the level of the brute. It is only after the demons leave that we begin to see signs of normalcy in his life (Luke 8:35).

3. There is full recognition of the superior power of Jesus here. Note: (a) the demoniac runs and kneels before Jesus; (b) the demoniac begs Jesus not to torment him. "Behold the tormentor anticipating, dreading, and entreating exemption from torment."¹⁵

4. Jesus demands to know the demon's name. A fuller view of the complicated situation of this victim gradually emerges. Not one, but thousands (a legion was 6,000 Roman soldiers) of demons inhabited this tormented soul. The tragedy of the person steeped in spiritism anywhere is the fact that he is totally unable to help himself, unless there is a Christlike intervention, a power encounter in his life, where a higher power confronts and replaces a lesser power.

5. There is a restoration to wholeness. The man is now clothed, in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and desires to accompany Him. Those who placed material possessions ahead of the welfare of a human soul "began to entreat Him to depart from their region" (v. 17, NASB). The newly freed begins to witness all over the Decapolis.

6. There is not one instance recorded in Scripture where we are told that Jesus physically touched the demon-possessed. In curing the physically ill, Jesus often touched the person; not so with His deliverance of demoniacs.

THE SUMMING UP

Several conclusions for Christian workers may be drawn from this study:

1. To deny the existence of demons in the world today is to ride roughshod over the evidence from both Old and New Testaments, the history of Christian missions, and contemporary mission work anywhere in the world. "People who deny the activity of demons in contemporary life betray their ignorance of significant portions of the Bible."¹⁶

2. If we do not prepare to deal meaningfully and confidently in the authority and power of Jesus, we will bypass the opportunity of ministering to one of the neediest segments of our society. In most cases, the victim of demon possession is no longer able to help himself.

3. Not all of the relationships between demons and men will result in demon possession. These relationships fall along a "continuum of influence ranging from temptation and harassment to actual control in the more classical concept of demon possession."¹⁷ The Christian may suffer from oppression from demons, but not actual possession. This seems to be the point of the parable of the "strong man" (Matt. 12:29).


4. Prayer is the believer's resource against Satan and the invasion of demons (Eph. 6:10-20). In Luke 22:31-32, Jesus tells Peter: "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon" (NIV). In Eph. 6:18-19, Paul reminds us of the importance of praying for one another: "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me" (NIV).

5. Our concern in this whole matter of power encounter ought to be for the individual, the victim oppressed by the demonic. This was Jesus' emphasis. We can never lose sight of the individual even in the midst of a pitched battle, namely a power encounter. Paul reminds us of this priority in Col. 1:28: "We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so

that we may present everyone perfect in Christ" (NIV).

6. Victory is possible only through a confrontation, a conflict. Mankind is caught in the midst of a warfare. Satan is furious in his obsession to overthrow the rule of Christ. He has a missionary vision also—full-scale warfare against the Church (see Rev. 12:17 and 13:6). But our victory in Christ is assured: "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, NASB).

Martin Luther spoke of the battle in his classic hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God:"

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath
willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim—
We tremble not for him.
His rage we can endure,
For, lo, his doom is sure;
One little word shall fell him. 

NOTES

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5. *Ibid.*, 68.
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10. P. L. Hammer, "Demoniac," in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, George A. Buttrick, ed. (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 824.
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12. Ralph Earle, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), 70.
13. Lane, 182.
14. Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), 255.
15. Earle, 171.
16. Unger, 17.
17. Warner, EMQ, 69.

Coming to Terms

Continued from p. 35

of Jesus Christ through His atoning death on the Cross.

3. It is the work of the Holy Spirit as the Divine Agent of the Trinity.
4. It is available to all believers subsequent to regeneration.
5. It is conditioned by consecration and faith.
6. It is instantaneous, a crisis, just as in regeneration.
7. It provides cleansing from the sin nature that remains in the believer after regeneration.
8. It is accompanied by a sense of assurance through the witness of the Holy Spirit.
9. It prepares the believer for continued growth in relationship to God and man-

kind because the heart is filled with perfect love.

10. It prepares the believer for continued growth, ministry, and service for God because the Holy Spirit empowers the believer.
11. It does not bring an absolute perfection.
12. It does not dehumanize or eliminate problems.
13. It does not bring instant maturity.
14. It does not bring about eccentric or ascetic behavior.

B. The Remaining Challenges

I have attempted to clarify the distinctives of current Wesleyan-holiness thought regarding the elements of the doctrine of entire sanc-

tification, but several challenges remain. As pastors and leaders within the Wesleyan-holiness tradition, we not only have an obligation to understand the theological elements of entire sanctification that I have listed, we also must investigate the *biblical validity* of this doctrinal statement. Finally, if the Wesleyan-holiness doctrine of entire sanctification is found to be true to Scripture, it must be communicated to those under our care. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification must not be neglected because of past confusion in terminology or current theological debate. Every pastor must be diligent in proclaiming all that God has provided for those He loves.³⁹

NOTES

1. J. Kenneth Grider, *Entire Sanctification: The Distinctive Doctrine of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1980), 7.

2. W. T. Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, vol. 1, *The Biblical Foundations* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983), 7.

3. Thomas A. Langford, "Holiness Theology," in *Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 133.

4. Clarence L. Bence, "Not Worth Contending For," *The Preacher's Magazine* 57 (December/January/February 1981/82): 57-58.

5. Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 34-42.

6. William M. Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," *Asbury Seminarian* 30 (October 1975): 30; Wilber T. Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," in *A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology*, vol. 1, ed. Charles W. Carter (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, Francis & Taylor, 1983), 563; W. T. Purkiser, Richard S. Taylor, and Willard H. Taylor, *God, Man, and Salvation* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1977), 491; Frank Bateman Stanger, "What Does It Mean to Be Sanctified?" *Asbury Seminarian* 33 (April 1978): 6, 10-11.

7. Stanger, "Sanctified," 6.

8. Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," 30; Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 543; Donald S. Metz, *Studies in Biblical Holiness* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1971), 111, 171.

9. Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 564; Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 115; Richard S. Taylor, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, vol. 3, *The Theological Formulation* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985), 171; Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1972), 337, 347.

10. Milton S. Agnew, *Transformed Christians: New Testament Messages on Holy Living* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1974), 189;

Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 564; Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 115-18; Taylor, *Theological Formulation*, 174-82.

11. J. Kenneth Grider, "Entire Sanctification: Instantaneous—Yes; Gradual—No," *Preacher's Magazine* 55 (June/July/August 1980): 43.

12. Agnew, *Transformed Christians*, 188; Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 552; Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 112; Wynkoop, *Theology of Love*, 337, 351-52.

13. Agnew, *Transformed Christians*, 187-88; Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," 30; Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 171; Stanger, "Sanctified," 10.

14. Frank Bateman Stanger, "The Wesleyan Doctrine of Scriptural Holiness," *Asbury Seminarian* 39 (July 1984): 21-22.

15. Agnew, *Transformed Christians*, 188-90; Charles W. Carter, *The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit: A Wesleyan Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974), 186; Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 111-13.

16. Melvin E. Dieter, "The Wesleyan Perspective," chap. 1 in *Five Views on Sanctification*, Melvin E. Dieter et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, Academic Books, 1987), 41-42.

17. George Allen Turner, *Christian Holiness: In Scripture, in History, and in Life* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1977), 85.

18. Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 22-23.

19. *Ibid.*, 23; Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 250; Turner, *Christian Holiness*, 17-18.

20. Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 118-19.

21. Taylor, *Theological Formulation*, 182.

22. *Ibid.*, 182-83.

23. Carter, *Holy Spirit*, 189.

24. Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 541.

25. Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 111.

26. Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," 30; Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 541, 563; Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 171; Wynkoop, *Theology of Love*, 353, 357.

27. Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 532-34;

Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 31; Taylor, *Theological Formulation*, 204-5; Wynkoop, *Theology of Love*, 355.

28. Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," 30; Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 181-84; Taylor, *Theological Formulation*, 160-61.

29. Dayton, "Entire Sanctification," 536.

30. Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," 31; Turner, *Christian Holiness*, 79.

31. Stanger, "Sanctified," 7-8.

32. Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," 30; Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 119-20.

33. Arnett, "Entire Sanctification," 31.

34. Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 232-33; Stanger, "Sanctified," 8; Taylor, *Theological Formulation*, 205.

35. T. A. Noble, "Humanity and Full Salvation," *Preacher's Magazine* 56 (December/January/February 1980-81): 37.

36. Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 111; Metz, *Biblical Holiness*, 233, 238-39; Stanger, "Sanctified," 9; Turner, *Christian Holiness*, 85-88.

37. Stanger, "Sanctified," 9; Turner, *Christian Holiness*, 79.

38. Stanger, "Sanctified," 9.

39. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City has undertaken two major projects that provide tremendous resources for further study. They have recently published a three-volume, in-depth study titled *Exploring Christian Holiness*; another series, *Great Holiness Classics*, is a six-volume collection, of which volumes 2, 3, 5, and 6 are now available. A source for continued investigation is the *Wesleyan Theological Journal*. This publication is sent to the members of the Wesleyan Theological Society. The journal is the platform used by many Wesleyan scholars to address current issues within the Holiness Movement. Membership information can be obtained from Dr. William M. Arnett, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY 40390.

Monday Morning Devotions

Continued from p. 7

given—and must be received in the only way love can be received, with gratitude and love.

Such words give a person pause. We know them and use them all the time, but they are radically opposed

to the world's way of thinking and behaving. Ours, too, much of the time. The grace word is that God's love and His kindness are given to us when we don't deserve them, can't earn them, are not worthy of

them. This grace is free; it is a gift.

Do you need grace today? How much do you need? How many would you like? If it is a gift that is freely given, then take some! Take several! "Here's my cup, Lord."



Continued from p. 1

that's life. You can see, of course, that neither M and S nor the board, nor really Pastor Smerdley, is personally responsible for Curggie's release. If you must fix blame, which I wouldn't do, it's either Pastor Pre-Smerdley or just *The System*."

Soon it was time to go, so I put my hand on Uncle M and S's shoulder and said, "So you're convinced that nothing nor anyone in particular is responsible for Curggie Smith's release from duty?"

"Nothing and no one in particular," he said, as if being granted absolution.

Now, Uncle had given me a new angle. Off I went to chat up ex-Pastor Pre-Smerdley, who now preaches two towns west of here. "Ah," said ex-P P-S, "really, the issue in my term at Sixth was partly spiritual and partly institutional, but we dared not say that publicly lest it rile the folks and embarrass the conference superintendent.

'Better a bit of subterfuge than a lot of questions,' I say—but not to the folks, of course. They would only misunderstand. 'Keep it positive,' I always say. When I first went to Sixth, the C.S. told me that it was in the spiritual doldrums. 'Haven't paid their assessments,' he said. 'That's always a sure sign of spiritual trouble. Best way out of the doldrums is to act as if you aren't in them.' So we borrowed money and spent big. Got into live-wire worship packages—mod music with lots of sound tracks and stuff, and a big visiting star now and then, put together a 'with-it' staff, preached upbeat, paid assessments, and did a lot of PR. Obviously, it didn't really work, but that's not my fault. All that just wasn't their style or mine. The board and I bought bad advice. And you know what it's like if you don't do what C.S. tells you to do. But *The System* puts the heat on him, too, I guess. At least I was loyal."

As I turned to leave, I said, softly, "So in your opinion, nothing nor anyone in particular is responsible for Curggie's dismissal?"

"Nothing nor anyone in particular," he repeated, grateful that I had understood.

Such was my education last Wednesday. I went to prayer meeting that evening chastened and much wiser. How could I ever have put Danny, a mere dog, on so high a pedestal? I do devoutly hope that I may be forgiven.

Too bad about Curggie, though.

The Ark Locker

Salvation and Liberation

Continued from p. 41

ment in that book was not between Job and his miserable comforters or Job and his wife, but between the man on the ash heap and God. His wife, indeed, realized that fact and said in so many words that if there was trouble between Job and God, she believed in her husband, and God was wrong. His Heavenly Father, however, taught Job that despite the general rule that good persons are better off even in this life than if they had been bad, those who love God with all their hearts sometimes suffer unbearably. At such times, as all the race knows, their only recourse is a vision of our eternal

Redeemer standing in the latter day upon the earth and the assurance that with our own eyes we shall see Him and not another. He is Lord. The King is coming. *Mar-anatha*.

Christians stand in wonder and thanksgiving before this vision. It is not an opiate, not simply pie in the sky. It is, at bottom, a far wiser estimate of human realities than either Marxism or the social gospel or professedly Catholic liberation theology ever thought of. It combines in the Christian's gaze faith, hope, and love. That love will outlast both faith and hope. It is eternal.

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS



TO BEGIN AGAIN

Sir Edward Burne-Jones, a 19th-century painter, was an invalid at the end of his life, confined to his chair.

The day before Burne-Jones's death, a young artist eagerly asked him if he might see some of his paintings. The famous master expressed his regret that he was unable to escort the young artist through the studio but bade him show himself around as long as he wished.

When the student returned, he paid Burne-Jones one of his highest compliments he had received: "Sir, I enjoyed looking at your paintings. And now I am going home to begin again."

Source

The Minister's Manual, ed. Charles L. Wallis, Harper and Row, New York

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated:

No matter what level of spiritual maturity we reach, when we compare ourselves to Christ's example, we can only resolve to make our present level our beginning. Day by day, we must commit to be imitators of Christ.

Supporting Scriptures

Eph. 5:1; 1 Pet. 2:21

—Submitted by

James E. Parker, Jr

PARADOX

A young bank clerk was promoted to the vice presidency. Feeling ill-equipped for his new position, he asked the bank's president, "Sir, what is the secret to success in my new position?"

The president replied, "Right decisions."

"And what, sir, is the secret of making right decisions?"

"Experience," the older man quickly responded.

"But what is the secret of gaining experience?"

The president gave him a knowing smile and replied, "Wrong decisions!"

Source

Pulpit Helps, October 1981; also *Daily Walk*, July 1981

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated:

Our spiritual growth and maturity comes from learning from God's Word, obedience to His will, and from practical experience—living the Christian life.

Supporting Scriptures

2 Tim. 3:14-17; 2 Cor. 4:17

—Submitted by

Mark Mohnkern

SPIRITUAL STIMULATION

According to the botanists, trees need the powerful March winds to flex their trunks and their main branches. The flexing draws the sap up the trunk and out the limbs to nourish budding leaves.

Perhaps the gales of life serve the same purpose for us. A blustery period in our lives is often the prelude to a new spring of life and health, success, and happiness when we keep steadfast in faith and look for the good in spite of appearances.

Source

Nazarene Theological Seminary's *Daily Announcer*, March 27, 1985

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated:

Struggle builds character; trials produce fruit in our lives.

Supporting Scriptures

Rom. 8:28; James 1:2-4, 12

—Submitted by

Joe Colaizzi

DECEPTION

Distant seas held naught but terror for 15th-century mariners. Strange but natural phenomena were endued with supernatural power. One of these natural phenomena was the powerful undercurrents found off the African coast. Ships caught in these undercurrents were drawn to destruction against the rocky shore.

Pietro D'Aiano explained this phenomenon thusly: Magnetic mountains on the African continent pulled ships to

their doom on the coast. "Men laugh while being attracted," he wrote, "and at last are held fast."

Source

Kenneth Maxwell, "The Right Stuff, 15th-Century Style," *The Wilson Quarterly*, Jan. 1, 1985, 9:56-57.

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Sin may be deceptively attractive, but once in its clutches, it holds fast, bringing men to destruction.

Supporting Scriptures

1 Cor. 15:33; Heb. 3:13 (with Rom. 6:23)

—Submitted by

Dan Powers

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Young John Fletcher was intrigued by the report of a ship making ready to set sail for the New World. Its quest was gold. An adventuresome youth, Fletcher met with the ship's captain and made arrangements to come aboard and make the voyage with the crew.

One morning prior to the trip, John called his servant for some tea. Entering the room with the scalding beverage, the servant tripped, spilling the tea on Fletcher's leg. Before the burns could heal, the ship left port, slipping over the horizon toward the New World.

John was greatly disappointed. It seemed the end of his grandest hopes and dreams, a tragedy. Yet as it turned out, the real tragedy was the ship's. For after she sailed, she was never heard from again.

Source

Basil Miller, "Our God Is Able," *The American Pulpit Series*, Book 1. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Our Heavenly Father cares for and watches over us.

Supporting Scriptures

Dan. 3:17; Jer. 31:10; 1 Pet. 3:17

—Submitted by

Phil Kizzee

THE MEASURE OF LOVE

A professed Christian was seriously ill. With the prospect of death looming before him, he became troubled about the little love he felt in his heart for God. A friend in whom he confided answered, "When I go home from here, I expect to take my baby on my knee, look into her eyes, listen to her prattle, and, tired as I am, that will rest me. I love that child with unutterable tenderness—but she loves me little. If my body were racked with pain, it would not interrupt her play. If I died, she would forget me before long. She has been a constant expense, yet has never returned a penny to me. I am not rich, but there's not enough money on earth to buy her from me. How is it? Does she love me, or do I love her? Do I withhold my love from her until she loves me? Am I waiting for her to do something worthy of my love before extending it?"

Tears streamed down the sick man's face as he exclaimed, "Oh, I see! It is not my love for God, but God's love for me that I should be thinking of. And I *do* love Him now as I have never loved Him before."

Source
Unknown

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Our love for God is secondary to His love for us.

Supporting Scriptures

1 John 4:10

—Submitted by
Chun Sup Chung

THE COST OF FREEDOM

A child stuck his hand in an expensive, rare Chinese vase and couldn't get it back out. Frightened, he began to cry. Summoned by the commotion, his parents began trying to pry boy and vase apart. But all their efforts were to no avail. Finally, in desperation, the boy's father took a poker from the fireplace. In an instant, the vase was transformed from an exquisite, rare work of art to a miserable heap of fragments. And then it became apparent why the child was so helplessly stuck. His little fist was tightly clenched around a single penny he had discovered at the bottom of the vase. In his childish ignorance, he would not let go of his treasure, even at the price of his freedom.

Source

Helmut Thielicke, "The Meaning of Prayer," *20 Centuries of Great Preaching*, ed. Clyde E. Fant, Jr., and William M. Pinson, Jr., Word Books, Waco, Tex.

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

We can hurt our relationship with God by praying only in moments of need for "pennies" instead of seeking to please Him and to truly be His children. Seek the vase instead of the penny.

Supporting Scriptures

Matt. 6:7-15; Luke 11:9-13; John 15:7

—Submitted by
Samuel C. Harris

THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING

An ambitious farmer, unhappy with his yield, bought a new hybrid seed corn. His resulting crop was so abundant that his astonished neighbors asked him to sell them a portion of the new seed. But the farmer, afraid that he would lose his profitable advantage, refused.

The second year the new seed did not produce as good a crop. The third year, the crop was still worse. Finally, it dawned on the farmer that his prize corn was being pollinated by the inferior grade of corn his neighbors were still using.

Source

C. R. Gibson, quoted in the April 1986 *Reader's Digest*

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Greed doesn't pay.

Supporting Scriptures

Prov. 1:18-19; Eccles. 5:13; Luke 12:15-21

—Submitted by
Charles Williams

WE ONLY SEE THE BACK

In a salon of Marshall Field's in Chicago, magnificent tapestries are on display. I was curious about one, whose rare beauty of design and marvelous skill in execution made it particularly impressive. Stepping over and turning up the corner, I found the price tag—\$6,000.

But I found something else, too. I discovered that this expensive tapestry had two sides. And if Marshall Field's had hung the wrong side out, it would not have brought \$6.00, let alone \$6,000. The back side appeared to be utterly devoid of design. Threads ran crazily in all directions. It looked like the work of a nitwit. Yet those threads, worked by the masterly hand of the artist, had produced the exquisite picture on the other side.

The point that confronts us is this: Have we put our lives into the hands of the infinite Artist? We must! And we

must have the faith and courage to believe that, however strangely the threads may seem to run, however cruelly the needle may stab us, it is God's hand at work, the Master Craftsman.

Source

Paul S. Rees, *If God Be for Us*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

God takes the tangled threads of our lives and transforms us into His children. Also, we can't know the mind of God. Sometimes when He works in our lives, we can't see the finished masterpiece He wants to make of our lives—we can only see the random strings, the "back of the tapestry."

Supporting Scriptures

1 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:28; also 1 Cor. 13:12

—Submitted by
Russell Hosey

OPPORTUNITY LOST

Medieval legend tells of a beautiful young maiden. One evening, as twilight was falling, she rowed out in a skiff on a lake that lay before her father's castle. As the twilight deepened, the maiden fell asleep. While she slept, the string of her pearl necklace broke. One by one, the precious gems dropped into the still waters of the lake. When the maiden woke, she found that her pearls were lost forever.

How many of us have allowed ourselves to slip easily along while we slumbered, unaware of or unheeding the golden opportunities that were slipping away?

Source

Frank W. Scott, *The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids.

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

We must make the most of our opportunities to do good and to improve ourselves spiritually.

Supporting Scriptures

Matt. 25:26-27; John 12:35

—Submitted by
James E. Parker, Jr.



SERMON OUTLINES



TWO BAPTISMS

Matt. 3:11-17

Introduction:

A. National Revival with John the Baptist (vv. 1-6)

1. Suit of camel hair; locusts and wild honey
2. Preaching repentance; baptizing converts

B. Judgment of Israel (vv. 7-10)

1. Salvation does not come by birthright.
2. "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance" (v. 8, NIV).

PROPOSITION: There are two baptisms for the believer.

I. THE BAPTISM WITH WATER

A. For Repentance

1. Agent: John; Subjects: repentant people; Medium: water
2. Water baptism presupposes repentance.
3. Having done with sin
4. Forgiveness of sin

B. Metaphorical Emphases

1. Cleansing
 - a. Washing of regeneration (John 3:5; Acts 22:16; Titus 3:5)
 - b. Cleaning from the guilt of committed sin
2. Death
 - a. To sin and sinful living
 - b. Implication of regeneration (Rom. 6:2-4; Gal. 5:24; Eph. 2:1-2)
3. Induction
 - a. Immersion into a new kind of life
 - b. Life focused on Jesus Christ himself

C. Reasons for Jesus' Baptism

1. Fulfill all righteousness
 - a. Consecrated to God and approved by God
 - b. All God's righteous requirements for the Messiah were met in Jesus.
 - c. Vv. 16-17—All three Persons of the Trinity are clearly seen here.
2. John publicly announced the arrival of the Messiah and the inception of His ministry.

3. Jesus completely identified himself with man's sin.

D. Difference This Baptism Makes

E. Have You Received the Baptism with Water for Repentance?

II. THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. For Cleansing

1. Agent: Jesus; Subject: believers; Medium: Spirit
2. Purity (fire)
3. Separation (wheat and chaff)

B. Metaphorical Emphases

1. Cleansing
 - a. Principle of inherited depravity
 - b. Carnal mind—chaff (v. 12) (see H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology*, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City)
2. Death
 - a. To the sinful claims of the sinful nature
 - b. Sometimes spoken of as crucifixion or death to self
3. Induction
 - a. Completion of the induction process
 - b. Endowment of power by the infilling of the Holy Spirit whereby the entire personality comes under the unreserved and uncompromised direction of the Spirit of Christ (W. T. Purkiser, Richard S. Taylor, and Willard H. Taylor in *God, Man, and Salvation*, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City)
 - c. Full induction, or immersion, into the complete rule of the Spirit

C. Provided for Man by Jesus

1. Heb. 13:12
2. Eph. 5:25, 27
3. John 17:19

D. Difference This Baptism Makes

E. Have You Received the Baptism with the Holy Spirit for Cleansing?

CONCLUSION: There are two baptisms for the believer. Have you received the baptism with water for repentance? Have you received the baptism with the Holy Spirit for cleansing?

NEGATIVE HOLINESS

Rom. 6:14-23

Text: Rom. 6:18: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

I. Holiness Is Not Absolute Perfection.

A. Absolute perfection is an attribute of God.

1. God has absolute perfection of knowledge.
2. God has absolute perfection of love.
3. God has absolute perfection of presence.
4. God has absolute perfection of purity.

B. Absolute perfection is not an attribute of man.

1. Man has limited knowledge.
2. Man has limited love.
3. Man has limited presence.
4. Man has limited purity.

II. Holiness Is Not Adamic Perfection.

A. Adam was perfect.

1. In the garden.
2. His fall from grace.

B. Man under Adam's curse.

1. Source of inbred sin—Adamic nature.
2. Need to be relieved from curse of Adamic nature.

III. Holiness Is Not Angelic Perfection.

A. Angel's role: heavenly servants.

B. Man's role: earthly servant.

IV. Holiness Is Not Freedom from Temptation.

A. Adam and Eve in the Garden.

B. Jesus' temptations.

1. Rock changed to bread.
2. Given all the world.

C. Man must obey God to overcome temptation.

—Derl Keefer

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH WHAT YOU HAVE?

Matt. 25:14-30

Introduction

1. Illustrations
 - a. Moses
 - b. The little boy and his lunch
 - c. Rich young ruler
 - d. The widow's offering
2. What are you doing with what you have?

I. The Charge

A. Opportunity

1. "Talents" can be interpreted three ways:
 - a. Money; \$1,000
 - b. Abilities; mental gifts
 - c. Opportunities; sphere of duty
2. Opportunities for Kingdom service includes the money and abilities concepts.
3. You have been given opportunities to serve.
 - a. The quantity of opportunities differs with each person according to the will of the Master. But all of the Master's servants have been given opportunity to serve.
 - b. It may sound pious to say, "I can't do anything for the Lord; I don't have any talents," but it just isn't biblical.

B. Responsibility

1. This parable is about responsibility.
 - a. The Master entrusted responsibility to His servants.
 - b. The Master increased responsibility for faithfulness.
 - c. The Master judged inexcusable irresponsibility.¹
2. He has entrusted His kingdom to us (v. 14b).
 - a. We are responsible to build the kingdom of God.
 - b. If we don't do it, it won't get done.
3. God is not concerned with what has not been given to you. He is concerned about the opportunities, the responsibility, the charge He has given you.

II. The Choice

A. You have a choice.

1. You may take what God has given you and use it in service for the Kingdom.
2. You may take what God has given to you and hide it for yourself.

B. Reward or Punishment

1. Reward

- a. Based on faithfulness, not ability.
- b. Two things God requires of everyone—goodness in character and faithfulness in service.
- c. Not adherence to a list of rules; rather faithfulness in the performance of Kingdom service.
- d. Twofold reward
 - (1) increased responsibility
 - (2) superlative joy

2. Punishment

- a. The unfaithful servant was basically a good man. The problem was that he was not interested in the Lord's cause but rather in saving his own skin.
- b. The man who is punished is the man who will not try. The impossible is not demanded, but the unattempted will not be excused.
- c. Twofold punishment
 - (1) loss of further opportunity
 - (2) loss of the Lord's presence

C. Application

1. Money

What are you doing with what you have?

2. Abilities

What are you doing with what you have?

3. Opportunities

What are you doing with what you have?

4. Time

What are you doing with what you have?

5. Health

What are you doing with what you have?

6. Church activities

What are you doing with what you have?

III. The Context

A. Preparation for the Second Coming and Judgment

Chap. 24—signs of the times; watch and be ready

Chap. 25—3 parables; 3 areas of preparation for the Second Coming and Judgment

1. Virgins (vv. 1-13)

- a. The importance of up-to-date spiritual experience

- b. Shut out for their negligence
2. Talents (vv. 14-30)

- a. Necessity of faithful, vigorous service

- b. Cast out for doing nothing

3. Sheep and Goats (vv. 31-46)

- a. Kindness and compassion for those in need

- b. Punished for failing to notice the many opportunities for showing kindness that had been given to them

B. What you do with what you have has a direct bearing on judgment.

1. This is not salvation by works

- a. Eph. 2:8-9 (by grace through faith)

- b. Notice also 2:10 (created to do good works)

2. Testifying to great faith, which being irresponsible with the opportunities given to us is the precise problem of the unfaithful servant.

3. Matt. 16:24-27 (especially v. 27)

4. James 2:18b—"Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do."

Conclusion: What are you doing with what you have?

1. Myron S. Augsburger, *The Communicator's Commentary: Matthew* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1982), 281.

—Richard Knox

PERFECT UNITY

Eph. 4:12-15

Text: Eph. 4:13. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

I. Unity Comes Through the Spirit.

- A. Requirement one—faith in Christ.

- B. Requirement two—intimacy with Christ.

- C. Obedience to Christ.

II. Unity Comes by Love.

- A. In Christ.

- B. In the church body.

III. Unity Comes by Destruction of Pride.

- A. Meekness or self-control installed.

- B. Long-suffering or persistence installed.

IV. Perfect Unity Ultimately Wins.

- A. It wins people.

- B. It wins the world.

- C. It wins over Satan.

—Derl Keefer



TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

PREACHING ABOUT FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS, by Elizabeth Achtemeier (Westminster Press), 1987 (PA066-424-0801; \$8.95)

Are you looking for some new thoughts and ideas in the field of family relationships that are relevant scripturally and sociologically? If so, you will profit from Elizabeth Achtemeier's work on preaching and the family. She has distinguished herself in the text as one who is aware of family stress, pressures, relationships, and the impact of preaching in meeting needs in these areas.

Achtemeier rightly distinguishes the task of the preacher as being a "responsible" interpreter of the Word of God. She states that to be a responsible interpreter, the preacher must understand the social context of his people's lives. Her challenge to the preacher of today is that he would tackle the primary themes that relate to family life.

The thesis of the book is that if the preacher will develop an ongoing program of family ministry, there will not be the need to react in crises to the life of the congregation. The author establishes her concerns about the silence in our pulpits over the plight of the family. She proceeds on this thesis by stating numerous statistics of social concern for the home and family.

Achtemeier examines a number of biblical passages as they relate to current family issues: human nature, marriage, sex, divorce, male and female roles, children, and the elderly. She then provides insight on how to construct the material in sermon fashion.

The last chapter is a brief but clear challenge to honest sermon construction.

I found the book easy to read, interesting, and insightful. I have already used ideas gleaned from the text in my preaching. Any preacher wanting to communicate on the family would be profited from reading the book, for Elizabeth Achtemeier has provided us with some good insight practically written.

—Dennis A. Brenner
Lansing, Mich.

CHRIST AND THE DECREE: CHRISTOLOGY AND PREDESTINATION IN REFORMED THEOLOGY FROM CALVIN TO PERKINS, by Richard A. Muller, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, paperback (PA080-106-2314; \$12.95)

This "essay" (so described by the author) reviews and interprets an in-house debate among Reformed theologians. At issue is the question whether the theologians who wrote during the century following the great Reformers (Luther and Calvin especially) were discontinuous or continuous with them.

The author concludes that they were discontinuous in form but continuous in content—discontinuous in their scholastic reasoning but continuous in their "orthodoxy."

At the core of the issue is the placement of the doctrine of predestination (the "Decree"). Did Calvin and his successors make predestination a central dogma (gathering all other *loci* around it), did they relate it to the doctrine of God (theology, in the exact sense), or to the doctrines of salvation (soteriology)?

Muller finds that both the "master" (Calvin) and his "disciples" placed predestination with the *ordo salutis* (the order of salvation), hence the title of the book, *Christ and the Decree*. It is only by means of the "decree" that the infinite, eternal, holy God could reach finite, mortal, sinful man.

This book is very difficult to read, not only because the central thesis is obscure and abstruse, but also because the author, a skilled linguist, uses a great many Latin terms and phrases, often to clinch his point, as well as frequent quotations from German sources, sometimes as his punch line. The essay is written by a very learned scholar for the benefit of other very learned scholars.

Wesleyans will find no comfort in these pages. Muller refers to Arminius or Arminianism six times, always critically and only as a ploy to establish the Reformed position. John Wesley, a sworn foe of Calvin's view of predestination, appears not even once, but Augustine, Calvin, et al., and even Karl Barth, scores of times. The author, associate professor of historical theology

at Fuller Theological Seminary, is a clearly dedicated and erudite Calvinist.

—A. Elwood Sanner

Northwest Nazarene College

THE EERDMANS ANALYTICAL CONCORDANCE to the REVISED STANDARD VERSION OF THE BIBLE, Richard E. Whitaker, compiler, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988, hardback, 1,548 pages (PA080-282-403X; \$49.95)

Here is a volume that can be of great help to serious Bible preachers, particularly those who include the RSV in their study. Whitaker provides for us an analytical concordance to the RSV. It will do for the RSV everything that *Strong's* and *Robert Young's* analytical concordances do for the King James. Here are some of its features:

- The entries are listed by dictionary form in alphabetical order followed by every context in which any form of the word is found.

- All forms of a word (e.g., *sing, sings, singing, sang, sung*) are found under the same heading.

- All uses of each word are given in one list, not divided into separate lists for each Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, or Latin word.

- Original-language words are numbered and listed at the head of each entry, where the reader can easily find them.

- Quotations of context for each word have been chosen by biblical scholars, not simply by a computer.

- Words not needed by most users of a concordance (e.g., *and, the, of*) have been excluded, thus reducing the size of the concordance and making access to significant words much easier.

- Separate sections are included for proper names and for numbers.

- A generous system of cross-references is used to aid the reader.

- Indexes of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin words appear at the end of the volume.

The concordance makes use of the very latest in programming and research techniques now being developed by scholars in computer-assisted Bible

study at leading universities. The information has been arranged for the greatest possible convenience and accessibility, making this volume an easy-to-use reference tool for laypersons, pastors, students, and scholars alike.

This one volume can be more useful to the biblical preacher than some whole sets of commentaries.

—Lillith Hoffstedder

MASTERING YOUR EMOTIONS, by Adrian P. Rogers, 167 pages, Broadman Press, Nashville (PA080-545-0653; \$9.95)

Mr. Rogers treats the emotional side of man in conjunction with his spiritual man, relating to problems through such areas as insecurity, depression, stress, frustration, inferiority, guilt, loneliness, fear, doubt, bewilderment, and bitterness.

These areas are outlined well for sermon ideas. There is, however, the strong Calvinistic slant of unconditional eternal security and the non-cleansing of the carnal nature. Much of what he says can be very helpful to the established Christian. It does challenge the reader to loudly proclaim the victory over the nature of sin as a remedy to much of man's spiritual struggle. The material is outlined well and could be excellently accented by the teaching of scriptural holiness.

—E. Wales Landford
Colorado Springs

TO SPREAD THE POWER: CHURCH GROWTH IN THE WESLEYAN SPIRIT, by George Hunter III, 1987, by Abingdon (PA068-742-2590; \$9.95)

This is not just another book on church growth! With the proliferation of church growth books today, finding one that provides truly fresh insights is tough. Yet Hunter's book does just that. John Wesley is used here as a primary source, and an effort is made at presenting a distinctively Wesleyan model for church growth. The genius of *To Spread the Power* is that the methods of John Wesley and the study of modern church growth theory complement one another. The result is an up-to-date plan of church growth that takes the best of modern-day theory

and presents it in a manner consistent with Wesleyan thought.

After an examination of Wesley as a church growth strategist, a series of six "MegaStrategies" are presented. These MegaStrategies are a product of vast study of current church growth theory. They are (1) identifying receptive people, (2) utilizing social networks, (3) multiplying recruiting units, (4) ministering to people's needs, (5) indigenizing the church's ministries, and (6) strategic planning for a church's future. "That's gold in them thar' pages," friends! Unlike many books in this field, the reader does not get bogged down in statistics, nor is our intelligence insulted by being encouraged to accept gimmicks. Instead, we are given practical guidelines, "strategies," which will help any church in the development and implementation of a plan for growth.

The insights gleaned from Wesley permeate the book. Wesley drew primarily on three of the above mentioned MegaStrategies; reaching receptive people, designing indigenous ministries, and the multiplication of units. However, the influence of Wesley extended far beyond his methodology. His belief that the Holy Spirit is at work in the life of every person reminds us that that same Spirit must be a vital part of any plan for growth from beginning to harvest. It is the Spirit at work in a person that makes him receptive to the claims of the gospel. And it is that same Spirit that gives us "church growth eyes" that we might know how and when to approach others with the gospel. But perhaps more than anything else, it is the confidence that because He is at work within us, our work will not be done in vain, that we desperately need to recover today.

Any pastor, teacher, student, or layman interested in the growth of God's kingdom should give serious consideration to this book.

—Tim Barber
Greensburg, Ky.

DESIRING GOD: MEDITATIONS OF A CHRISTIAN HEDONIST, by John Piper, Portland, Oreg.: Multnomah Press, 1986 (PA088-070-2214; \$9.95)

John Piper has written a challenging book with a controversial subtitle. He risks instant disapproval by using the word *hedonist*, but Piper is deliberately

provocative and intends to make a strong statement about the low level of joy that is normative for evangelical Christians. He says, "Christianity has become the grinding out of general doctrinal laws from collections of biblical facts." If at times Piper strains to keep his theme of "joy in God" supreme, his main argument is well taken: Most of us probably do settle for far less delight in the Lord than we might have.

This is not a "how to" handbook or a weak treatise on avoiding the rigors of discipline. Quite the contrary, it is a challenge to live the life of radical Christianity, as Piper sees it. His contention is that "deep and disciplined exercise of soul" enables Christians to take up the Sword of the Spirit in victory "and wield it with joy and power"! Piper advocates a simple life-style: "No Christian Hedonist desires to be rich," but goes a step beyond Richard Foster when he says, "It is more helpful to think of a 'wartime' life-style than merely a 'simple' life-style. Simplicity can be very inward directed and may benefit no one else. A wartime life-style implies that there is a great and worthy cause for which to spend and be spent."

But along with this call to discipline, Piper underscores the absolute necessity of going past the self-seeking, and past the sense of duty, and past the pain of sacrifice into the sheer joy of God. "Worship is nothing less than obedience to the command of God, 'Delight yourself in the LORD!'" "The great hindrance to worship is not that we are a pleasure-seeking people, but that we are willing to settle for such pitiful pleasures." Of evangelical worship services, he complains that "childlike wonder and awe have died. The scenery and poetry and music of the majesty of God have dried up like a forgotten peach at the back of the refrigerator."

The book has stoppers like "Our lives depend on NOT working for God" and "Not to pursue our joy every day in the Word of God is abandonment of the revealed will of God. It is sin" sprinkled through its 281 pages. There is a strong Reformed doctrinal slant, as one might expect from the author's background. Senior pastor since 1980 in Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, John Piper taught the Bible at Bethel College in St. Paul for six years, and holds degrees from Wheaton and Fuller, as well as the University of Munich.

—Russell Metcalfe
Quincy, Mass.

PRIVILEGE AND PRICKLY DREAD

Heraclitus was right—things change. A man cannot step into the same river twice, he said. Both the river and the person will have changed before the second wading trip occurs, even if he comes back before his socks get dry. A lot of rivers and men have changed since I first signed on with the then “new” *Preacher’s Magazine* nearly 12 years ago. I worked with editor Neil Wiseman at first, becoming the editor myself in 1980. But editors and magazines change just like rivers and men, and the time has come for me to move on from this labor of love.

I want to thank our readers for reading this magazine throughout the troubled decade of the ’80s. Thanks for your generous expressions of support and appreciation. Thanks, too, to all of you who have offered constructive criticism from time to time.

Thanks and kudos are in order for the brave souls who have worked with me on the editorial staff. Those who shared this adventure as assistant editors include Stephen Miller, Susan Downs, Nina Beegle, and Mark Marvin, my current capable helper. These persons worked as part-time assistant editors one at a time helping a very part-time editor

provide a useful (we hope even helpful) professional journal for ministers. As I have often said, “They did all the work, and I got all the credit.”

I want to say a public “thank you” also to M. A. Lunn, Robert Foster, Mark Moore, Bill Sullivan, Wilbur Brannon and Cecil Paul. These men have provided funds, counsel, and friendly supervision. They have gone out of their way to provide a great deal of editorial freedom—and you know how journalism types like me treasure that.

Although two future issues lie in the files—their destiny in the hands of the new editor, one on Assimilation and Retention of Church Members, and another on Worship—this is officially my last issue and my last editorial. Through the years the planning, editing, and writing have seemed more like recreation than work. Serving the church as editor of the *Preacher’s Magazine* has been a privilege worth prizing. Some things I won’t miss too much—deadlines that constantly hover like storm warnings on the horizon, and that feeling of prickly dread that creeps up the back of your neck when a new edition appears and you wonder if maybe this time the *Ark Rocker* has gone too far.

... Wesley Tracy

**In the flow of things
rivers and editors
change**



Stephen Miller



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