

ADVANCE

Fall 1995

Pentecost Now!



Thomas E. Trask

George O. Wood

James K. Bridges

Charles T. Crabtree

R.L. Brandt

Alton Garrison

Ask the Superintendent

An interview on the Fellowship's present and future.

It's Pentecost—When First Love Is Present

Is there a growing coldness toward God behind all our activity?

Pentecost Now—in Our Leaders

The mark of a true Pentecostal leader is his aversion to the glamorous and the sensational.

Pentecost in Our Churches

What will it take for churches to be truly Pentecostal?

Pentecost in Preaching

Pentecost in preaching manifests itself in at least six notable ways.

Is Pentecostalism Seeker-Hostile?

Are Pentecostal churches going to new extremes to be relevant?

Also inside...

H.B. London

Restoration and Renewal in the Life of the Pastor

An interview with assistant to Focus on the Family's president, James Dobson.

Ithiel Clemmons

Racial and Spiritual Unity in the Body of Christ

An interview with chairman of the newly formed Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America.

John C. Maxwell

Seven Habits of Highly Ineffective People

Continual success in the ministry is the result of repeated good habits.

Paul L. Walker

Integrity: Reality or Illusion?

Is integrity in the ministry possible in today's challenging times?



A JOURNAL FOR PENTECOSTAL MINISTRY

Ministry Matters

BY WAYDE I. GOODALL

WITH THIS ISSUE OF *Advance* we begin a new format—from a monthly magazine to a quarterly journal. The magazine's history has been a good one and appreciated by the ministers of our Fellowship. The previous outstanding editors have given their gifts and talents to our Movement without restraint.

Now we want to offer more resources—more articles and interviews, ideas for ministry, discussions of key theological issues, and inspiration to help our ministers do all they want to do for the kingdom of God. The approximate length of each issue will be 128 pages.

Advance has been largely a promotional tool to give information on various headquarters ministries. We will continue to keep you informed about these programs and events; however, the new design will be more of a ministry journal.

Having served in various pastorates and ministry positions for approximately 20 years, I have always looked for additional tools to help me in the work to which God has called me. I have read other ministry magazines and journals and often wondered why there was not a Pentecostal journal such as this one. Many of you have wondered the same. After much discussion and prayer with numerous ministers—from the Executive Presbytery to the Bible college student—it was decided that the timing was right for a change.

Each issue will focus on a theme and address many other issues concerning the minister's life and occupa-

tion. This issue's theme is "Pentecost Now." Our next issue (winter) will look at "The Minister and His Priorities." The spring 1996 issue will address "The Minister and His Private Life."

Future issues will consider integrity, character, women in ministry, the associate minister's role, the minister's marriage, and more. While we hope this journal will be something you will want to keep for future reference, we desire more that it will equip you to respond more effectively to the call God has placed on your life.

We live in one of the most exciting times in the history of the Church. More than ever we need to keep abreast of what God is doing in Pentecostal ministry. A sense of revival is in the land as more and more churches are experiencing it. Many nations are being touched by it. The *Advance* staff wants you to have the tools to encourage it and experience it.

George Sweeting's *Great Quotes and Illustrations* (Word, 1985, page 219) includes RA Torrey's prescription for revival—advice Torrey felt would work anytime, anywhere:

"First, let a few Christians get thoroughly right with God. If this is not done, the rest will come to nothing.

"Second, let them bind themselves together to pray for revival until God opens the windows of heaven and comes down.

"Third, let them put themselves at the disposal of God for His use as He sees fit in winning others to Christ. That is all. I have given this prescrip-

tion around the world ... and in no instance has it failed. It cannot fail."

It is my prayer that this journal will inspire you to move to greater heights in Christ and motivate you to evangelize your community. We want to offer you theological truth that will equip you to be the minister you want to be and give practical help for your personal life as a child of God, a parent, and a spouse. Most of all, we want to encourage you in the revival you desperately want and are praying for. ||



Wayde I. Goodall is editor of *Advance* and coordinator of the Ministerial Enrichment office in Springfield, Missouri.

ADVANCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THEME: PENTECOST NOW!

Ask the Superintendent

Interview with Thomas E. Trask

The general superintendent addresses *Advance*, ministry to ministers, revival, and the overall Fellowship.....6

It's Pentecost—When First Love Is Present

By George O. Wood



The Holy Spirit has been in all the places of Pentecost—the Upper Room, Azusa Street Mission, the opera house in Hot Springs—and He is available today with the same dynamic, presence, and vitality.....10

Pentecost Now—in Our Leaders



By James K. Bridges

Pentecostal leadership today has the privilege of living in the same fullness of the Spirit as the Early Church leaders.....16

Pentecost in Our Churches

By Charles T. Crabtree

The necessity of waiting on God and believing for the gift of the Holy Spirit is still valid.....26

Prayer: Key to Revival

By Charles E. Hackett

When God has our attention
He will pour out His Spirit again.....30

Pentecost in Preaching

By Robert L. Brandt



Perceptive, profound, passionate, penetrating, persuasive, prophetic, and productive describe Pentecostal preaching.....35

The Mystery of the Great Commission

By Loren O. Triplett

To “make disciples of all nations” first requires the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, not man's techniques, oratory, or skilled administration.....42

Is Pentecostalism Seeker-Hostile?

By Alton Garrison

The approach used to reach this generation must not exclude the dynamics of the Holy Spirit. God and the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit are still the same.....48

FEATURES

Restoration and Renewal in the Life of the Pastor

Interview with H.B. London

Instead of asking, “God, what's next for me?” ask, “How can You help me succeed where I am?” Ministers are admonished to take another look at their priorities56

Racial & Spiritual Unity in the Body of Christ

Interview with Ithiel Clemmons

How far apart are the Assemblies of God leadership and the membership in racial issues? asks the chairman of the newly formed Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (formerly PFNA)66

Seven Habits of Highly Ineffective People

By John C. Maxwell

Poor time management, negative attitude, lack of growth and planning, unwillingness to change and pay the price for success, and failed relationships are habits every minister will want to reexamine70

New Coordinator of Media Ministries Shares Goals for the Future

Interview with Jeffery L. Brawner

Technology and the media can help pastors and churches reach communities for Christ. Know-how and help are available from the Media Center76

Dead Wrong

By Rich Wilkerson

Our mission to know God and make Him known must include those in the inner city 84

**The Decade of Harvest—
for a Moment in Time
or Timeless Momentum**

By Efraim Espinoza

The Decade of Harvest is a cry to see believers anointed, equipped, and commissioned to reach the lost 88

Integrity: Reality or Illusion?

By Paul L. Walker

Integrity must be understood in the context of behavior and will be disciplined, determined, and demonstrated 92

EDITORIALS

Ministry Matters

By Wayde Goodall 1

In Closing

By Thomas E. Trask 128

COLUMNS

SERMON BUILDER**Pentecost Now**

By Richard L. Dresselhaus 24

FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY**Seeing the Glory—Anointed,
Effective Leadership**

By Nancie Carmichael 38

WORD STUDY:**STENAGMOS AND ALALĒTOS****The Groanings
of Romans 8:26**

By Anthony D. Palma 46

MINISTERIAL ENRICHMENT**Sexual Ethics in the Ministry**

By Wayde Goodall 52

CLERGY, CHURCH, & LAW**Tips on Reducing Legal Risk**

By Richard R. Hammar 62

FOCUS ON AMERICA

By Charles E. Hackett 82

WORLDLINK**Permanence—
a Priority in Missions**

By H.H. "Spud" DeMent 83

**CONFRONTING
CONTEMPORARY ISSUES****Christians and Lawsuits**

By George O. Wood 86

MANAGING YOUR MINISTRY**How To Treat
a Visiting Missionary**

By Howard L. Cummings 96

WIT AND WISDOM**Your Call
Is Very
Important
to Me**

By Richard L. Dresselhaus 98



DEPARTMENTS

SERMON • SEED 100**ILLUSTRATE • IT** 104**MINISTRY • IDEAS • THAT • WORK** 106**BOOK REVIEWS** 112**NEWS & RESOURCES** 116**READER RESPONSE** 125**WITH CHRIST** 127

Advance (SSN 0001-8589), is published quarterly, ©1995 by The General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, Missouri 65802. Assemblies of God ministers may reproduce nonbyline material from *Advance* in church publications, giving credit to the magazine. Signed articles may not be reprinted without permission of the authors. **Subscription rates:** USA—1 year \$18; 2 years \$32. Outside USA add \$6 per year. **Subscriptions:** All subscription correspondence, including change of address, should be sent to *Advance*, Customer Services, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, MO 65802, phone 1-800-641-4310. Second-class postage paid at Springfield, Missouri. Printed in the USA.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to: *Advance*, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, MO 65802.Wayde I. Goodall,
EditorRick Knoth,
Managing EditorGraphics: Jim Darnell
Technical and research
editor: Helen BraxtonAdvertising/Production coor-
dinator: Kathy WrinkleEditorial secretary:
Nancy WilliamsCirculation manager:
Terry KingPrepared under the
direction of the
Executive PresbyteryThomas E. Trask (general
superintendent); David W.
Argue, Almon Bartholomew,
Robert L. Brandt, James K.
Bridges, Glen D. Cole, Charles
T. Crabtree, Charles Hackett,
Ronald F. McManus, Armon
Newburn, Robert K.
Schmidgall, Loren Triplett,
Philip Wannemacher, George
O. WoodEditorial
Advisory CommitteeWayde I. Goodall, chairman;
Rick Knoth, vice-chairman;
Dayton Kingsriter, interim; Hal
Donaldson; Joseph W.
Kilpatrick, Michael Messner,
Terry Raburn, Juleen Turnage

Contributing Editors

A/G Foundation—Orlando
Logelin; A/G Loan Fund—Phil
Illum; Archives—Wayne
Warner; Benevolences—Owen
Wilkie; Broadcast
Ministries—Stephen J. Vaudrey;
Christian School
Services—Glen Percifield;
Decade of Harvest—Efraim
Espinoza; Home
Missions—Traci Countryman;
Foreign Missions—Joyce
Booze; Media Center—Jeff
Brawner; Men's
Ministries—James Erdmann;
Ministers Benefit
Association—Ethel Campbell;
Ministry Resources
Development—Randall Howard;
Music—Carmen Wassam;
Pentecostal Evangel—Jodi
Harmon; Postsecondary
Education—Melinda Booze;
Public Relations—John Ivaska;
Sunday School Curriculum
and Literature—Gary Leggett;
Sunday School Literature
Sales—David Houghton;
Sunday School Promotion
and Training—Sylvia Lee;
Women's Ministries—Aleda
Swartzendruber; Youth—
Richard Percifield.

INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS E. TRASK

I Ask the Superintendent

To introduce the first quarterly issue of *Advance*, the editors interviewed Thomas E. Trask, the Assemblies of God general superintendent, to hear his heartbeat concerning *Advance*, the minister and his ministry, and the church at large. He also discusses our roots as a Fellowship and where we are going under the Holy Spirit's guidance.



PHOTOS BY MEL SNYDER

"Our headquarters exists for the sole purpose of ministering to the minister and the church."

A *dvance* has been a monthly magazine since its inception, October 1965. Give us a little background—what its purpose was and the direction it is going now.

THOMAS TRASK:

Advance has served the Assemblies of God Fellowship well and has been a marvelous tool. It was designed originally for the ministries at headquarters. Many appeals go out from headquarters, understandably so because people have different interests in the Lord's work. It is appropriate that churches and ministers have the privilege of responding to varied appeals, and that sustains the ministry.

Also there was a need for promotions: national and district events, products, etc. *Advance* was designed to put together a

periodical representative of the promotions that would go to the church and to the pastor. It also gave opportunity for addressing pertinent subjects and sharing testimonies. The greater need today is for a periodical that addresses ministers' needs.

From my vantage point we have not done that well in the *Advance* format. My heart's desire is to help the pastor and the local church. Our headquarters exists for the sole purpose of ministering to the minister and the church.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE MAGAZINE IN ITS NEW FORMAT AS A QUARTERLY?

TRASK: I'd like to see the new journal become a tool that every minister is excited about. It is imperative that our Fellowship provide pastors, evangelists, and other cre-

dential holders with resources to meet the great needs and pressures in ministry today.

The journal will convey our doctrinal position, what God is doing, and testimonies of what the Spirit is accomplishing in the hearts of pastors and laity. I want it to be a resource of vision for the pastor, headquarters, and the editors' offices. By being in touch with the Fellowship regularly we can learn from others—we *must* learn from their successes as well as their mistakes. The new format is timely, particularly in light of the Ministerial Enrichment office, our new service to ministers.

Never has there been a more crucial time for this Fellowship to have in place a ministry to the minister. We can only lift the level of the church as we lift the level of the minister. The church will never rise above the level of the leadership.

The majority of our churches have 100 or below in attendance. I said to someone recently, "We are growing bigger churches, but are we growing bigger pastors?" Church boards from large churches constantly contact my office asking, "Whom can you recommend to us?" Therefore, it is imperative that we provide resources for our pastors to help them grow, mature, and have the joy of seeing their churches grow.

Thus we see two things happening: (1) the church growing and (2) the minister growing alongside. It is critical for this Fellowship to be a structure.

THEN YOUR PRIMARY FOCUS IS HELPING MINISTERS GROW IN CHARACTER, FAITH, MATURITY, AND INTEGRITY—WALKING CLOSER TO THE LORD?

TRASK: It comes back to character. We can learn to say and do all the right things, but unless it's in our spirit man—unless it's part of our character—flaws will continually show up. Concerning the maturity

process, Peter said we should "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." It makes no difference how long we've been in the ministry, God's plan and purpose for our lives is that we will always be in school, always learning.

I've been in the ministry 39 years, but it's a continual learning and stretching process. If that ceases, we become stagnant, dormant. Then it isn't a leveling off or a neutrality, it's retrogression. That is never God's purpose and plan for His church and the ministry. Thus it is imperative that we stay fresh, grow, develop and mature, and allow God to stretch us, always believing for greater things for the kingdom of God.

SINCE TAKING OFFICE 2 YEARS AGO, DO YOU HAVE AN OVERRIDING BURDEN FOR THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD?

TRASK: God dropped it in my heart that what the Fellowship needs is revival—we must come back to the basics of what brought us to where we are. When we were experiencing growth, what elements were in place that caused it? Industry has to do a check periodically: Where did the company get off course? What happened when it was profitable? If it's no longer profitable, what happened? Where was a change made?

The church should also do a check and balance from time to time. We're not in a growing mode right now. Our statistics are critical. Why? We've gotten away from the basics. Growth must come through the local church, not through the national office. Where a local church is doing the basics, growth is taking place.

So we come back to those factors. One of them is very critical: We must give place to the work and the person of the Holy Spirit. We are a Pentecostal church, and that sets us apart. Those who do not acknowledge, give place to, and recognize the person of



Thomas E. Trask is the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.

Growth must come through the local church, not through the national office. Where a local church is doing the basics, growth is taking place.



"The greater need today is for a periodical that addresses ministers' needs."

the Holy Spirit do not have His power available to them. Thus the Pentecostal church around the world is on the cutting edge, and God is using it profoundly.

The work of the Spirit is not by accident but by design. I'm encouraged, but we have some challenges. It's not of our wisdom nor our own ingenuity that we enjoy success. We dare not ever take that posture. Nor can we move along or operate on the successes of the past. That will spell disaster.

WHILE MANY OF OUR PASTORS DESIRE REVIVAL THEY ARE OVERWHELMED WITH CONFLICT, LACK OF GROWTH AND THE DAILY ADMINISTRATION OF THE CHURCH SO THAT THE REALITY OF REVIVAL IS BLURRED. HOW CAN PASTORS CATCH THE SPIRIT OF REVIVAL IN THE MIDST OF THIS STRUGGLE?

TRASK: It is a priority. Our scriptural flagship is, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." We're not building automobiles. We're in the Kingdom-

building business. Only God by His Spirit can build the Church. Jesus said, "I will build my church." David said, "Except the Lord build the house [church], they labor in vain that build it."

What produced revival for the Early Church? That is the pattern for this church. They did not neglect the assembling of themselves together nor the Word but continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, the Word of God, breaking of bread, fellowship, and prayer. That's very simple.

The priority has to remain upon our dependence on the work of the Spirit. The enemy would love nothing more than for the church to get caught up in the throes of mechanics. There can be great solace in the fact that "I'm busy-very busy." Busy in what? Are we busy in what's producing and what's going to produce revival?

When families used to come to me from denominational churches and say, "Pastor, should I leave my church?" I would reply, "You must answer that. Are you being fed? Is there fellowship apart from the services? prayer? the breaking of bread? If these four elements are in place where you are, you

can stay there. If they're not, it's a matter of survival-you have to get out. The Spirit must guide you in whether you come here."

That has to be in place in the church today. We are a Pentecostal church, and the Early Church is our pattern. The challenge, therefore, is that our pastors do not become distracted or diverted from what has to be priority-prayer and fasting, the ministry of the Word, waiting on God, evangelization, and allowing the Holy Spirit to be the centerpiece. That's what has made our church. We have to have the auxiliary in the church, but when the auxiliary becomes a priority, the cart is before the horse.

God brings excitement and freshness when we follow the biblical patterns.

ARE YOU ENCOURAGED AS YOU VISIT OUR CHURCHES AND DISTRICTS AND MEET PASTORS, YOUNG AND OLD?

TRASK: I am encouraged as I see some marvelous indicators or signs. Last year we celebrated our *Both* anniversary as a Fellowship. We have what we call some aging problems, which goes with the territory. But I'm encouraged to see young men and women who are hungry for God; who are willing to pay the price; who have good focus, vision, and discipline.

The ministry is a calling that requires great discipline. No one is there to tell ministers to get up in the morning. They don't punch a time clock. But men and women in the parsonage will only be successful as they discipline their lives. It begins with personal discipline in devotions and study of the Word. They *must* set aside time for their own personal spiritual well-being. Then allot time for study of the Word in preparation to minister the Word.

I see young and old alike focusing on this. They have watched the program and the futility of the church program that doesn't satisfy. They're not enamored with numbers. For example, I recently received a letter from a young man who, by the standard of numerical evaluation, should have been happy. He took the church when it was small; it now averages about 400 in attendance.

"I'm not happy," he wrote, "because most

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

The challenge, therefore, is that our pastors do not become distracted or diverted from what has to be priority.



It's pentecost- when first love is present

WE IN THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD REMEMBER some rooms where Pentecost came: the Upper Room in Jerusalem; Stone's Folly (unfinished mansion) in Topeka, Kansas, where modern Pentecost began; the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles from whence the flame of Pentecost blazed to the world; and the opera house in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where our forefathers organized to fulfill the Great Commission with Pentecostal empowerment.

In 1995 we are subject to nostalgia with a theme like "It's Pentecost"-prone to minimize what God is doing today or what He wants to do tomorrow, because we have the memory of what He did in the past. The Holy Spirit does not replicate His past work. God stays the same, the message stays the same, biblical methods stay the same, but the manifestations of how He works His mighty deeds take on individuality, peculiarity, and singularity to each generation.

The good news is that we have One with us, our Companion and Counselor, the blessed Holy Spirit, who has been in all those places of Pentecost. He filled the 120 in the Upper Room. He was present in the modern rebirth of Pentecost at Topeka. He presided in the meetings at the Azusa Street Mission. He walked the aisles and sat in the seats of the Hot Springs opera house. He has been in all those rooms, and He is here with us now. And it will be Pentecost if He is here, and we are ready to welcome Him and receive Him.

We cannot reenter those rooms; yet we want the same dynamic, the same presence, the same vitality manifested in those places to apply to us in the present hour.

What can be said about Pentecost to people who already have been in a Pentecostal room, who have had a Pentecostal experience?

The Holy Spirit has given me a text about Pentecost for Pentecostal veterans. It's a letter from the Lord to a church 40 years after its first

taste of Pentecost (half the age of the Assemblies of God). I submit that the letter to a decades-old church is different from one written to those in the Upper Room.

At the initial Pentecost, the people had not yet known divisive struggles, false apostles, opportunistic leaders in the ministry for power or money. Neither had they known persecution, hardship, struggle, or the fierce antagonism of doctrinal controversy. Nor had they known dynamic evangelism and growth. But time brings all these things. Hence the Lord's message to a Pentecostal church decades down the line from its first experience of Pentecost will be different from a letter to a church just starting out.

The Lord wrote seven churches (Revelation 2,3), but the one that most closely parallels the Assemblies of God is Ephesus. It had great pastors, great maturity, great evangelism and church growth, great miracles, great financial resources, great Bible education, great home groups, great doctrinal vigilance and orthodoxy (those claiming apostleship had been tested).

Concerning the latter, the Assemblies of God from its inception has stood for commitment to the Word as opposed to many Pentecostals who were more attracted to experience alone. Over the years, the great weakness of the Pentecostal Movement has been its willingness to embrace a variety of beliefs and practices.

Five months after the Assemblies of God had been formed, the fledgling church was already seeking to distinguish itself from those who brought Pentecost into shame and disrepute through heretical doctrine or extremes in emphasis or personal conduct. We are still, today, having to deal with some of the same problems.

What do you say to a church decades down the line from its first experience of Pentecost? "Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love" (Revelation 2:4*).

The Ephesian church's first love was marked



George O. Wood, D.Th.P., is the general secretary of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.

ARE WE
READY
TO SERVE
HIM IN
FIRST LOVE
WITHOUT
REASONING OR
QUESTIONING
UNTIL OUR
WORK IS
DONE?



missions
ABROAD IS
BEST DONE
THROUGH
COOPERATIVE
EFFORT, NOT
THROUGH
INDEPENDENT
ENTREPRE-
NEURS USING
THE PUBLICITY
OF AN OVERSEAS
PREACHING
EFFORT TO
BOOST THEIR
OWN MAILING
LISTS AND
REVENUE
BASES.

by an intense devotion to Christ and to one another (Acts 20:37). It had maintained its orthodoxy, but it had left its first love. All the orthodoxy in the world will never take the place of love. But the Lord has never left His first love for the Church. He tells us to reawaken our first love for Him, and that's my message on Pentecost—it will be Pentecost as long as we have a first love for Jesus.

How can we recover our first love?

REMEMBER

"Remember the height from which you have fallen" (Revelation 2:5).

In October 1994, we gathered in Seoul, Korea, for the first World Congress of the Assemblies of God, which culminated in a prayer meeting on Yoido Plaza with over a million present.

How did the church in Korea become so vast? Had some unknown saints begun to pray for that land before a Pentecostal church existed? An account from a 1916 issue of *171e Weekly Evangel* (forerunner of the *Pentecostal Evangel*) carried a request for prayer that Spirit-filled laborers enter Korea and preach the baptism in the Holy Spirit and that many open hearts may be found to welcome the truth.

Thus we know there was a burden for Korea, and saints over the years shared in the growth by praying, sending, and going.

Are we yet filled with first love to pray for countries of the world where God's work may not exist or only be composed of a few? Could it be that a great church waits to be born in as unlikely a place as Korea was 80 years ago? What if we prayed concertedly for Japan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey? Is it possible, if Jesus tarries, that eight decades from now a million believers will gather in one place at one time in these countries for prayer? It can happen if we bring our first love to the Lord and pray.

Let me reach back into our history for several stories. The first is from 1924, the year my mother, Elizabeth Weidman, then single, went out as a missionary from her home church in Cleveland, Ohio, to the end of the world, Northwest China and Tibet. She answered the application's questions affirmatively, including this one: "Is it your

purpose, under God, to enter foreign missionary work for life?"

Several years later my dad answered the application's question, "Have you fully considered the difficulties and trials of missionary work in heathen darkness where no one may understand your language?" He wrote, "I understand and have caught a vision of what it really means and am willing to lay down [my] life if necessary that souls might be won to Christ."

First love is willing to make those kinds of commitments.

That same year the Assemblies of God mission in upper Volta (now Burkina Faso) was in its infancy. Missionaries Eric and Lucile Booth-Clibborn and their baby Phyllis left the United States and arrived in Ouagadougou. Wilbur Taylor, one of the first missionaries to arrive in 1919, met them.

Within 2 weeks Eric became ill with dysentery and malaria. Within a week he was ushered into God's presence, leaving his baby and wife, who was expecting their second child.

First love-remembering the heights from which we have fallen. Here is a strange example of a call to duty—a desperately needy mission field and a lonely grave that held the earthly remains of a man eminently qualified to meet that need. But at age 29 the grain of wheat fell into the ground and died.

We cannot doubt the first love of these early Assemblies of God missionaries and their love for Christ. Are we ready to serve Him in first love without reasoning or questioning until our work is done? At the time of Eric's death God was preparing three young couples in America for missionary service. When they heard of Eric's death they each said, "We will take his place."

The willingness to sacrifice was repeated as other fields were opened, and missionaries gave their lives. For example, in the same year on another continent a young Assemblies of God missionary couple, Clarence and Dorothy Radley, went to Nicaragua. They were there only a short time when Clarence came down with malaria. He died with an infection thought to be from blood poisoning. Before he died his wife overheard him repeat slowly, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course."

A fellow missionary, who crossed enemy lines in the Nicaraguan civil war to reach Clarence—only too late, wrote in the *Evangel*: "There are happenings in the course of our lives and in our

work that we fail to understand; we know not why God allows such things to take place, but one thing is sure: He knows and He doeth all things well."

First love can make that kind of confession of faith.

Clarence Radley's death stirred another young couple, Wesley and Ruth Steelberg, to volunteer for missionary service in Nicaragua, but the civil war in that country made it impossible for them to go the year they were ready, 1926. God had other plans for the Steelbergs (he later became general superintendent) and provided a long-range backup the year they could not go: A couple, the Steelbergs' friends, had a baby named Loren Triplett, who became a missionary to Nicaragua and today heads the Division of Foreign Missions.

A few years later Oren and Florence Munger arrived in Nicaragua (1943) where they gave themselves unreservedly to spread the gospel. Oren was noted for his praying, and he covenanted with God to pray for revival. Revival did come. When he arrived only 2 of 12 Nicaraguan pastors

had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. With the revival scores of believers were filled.

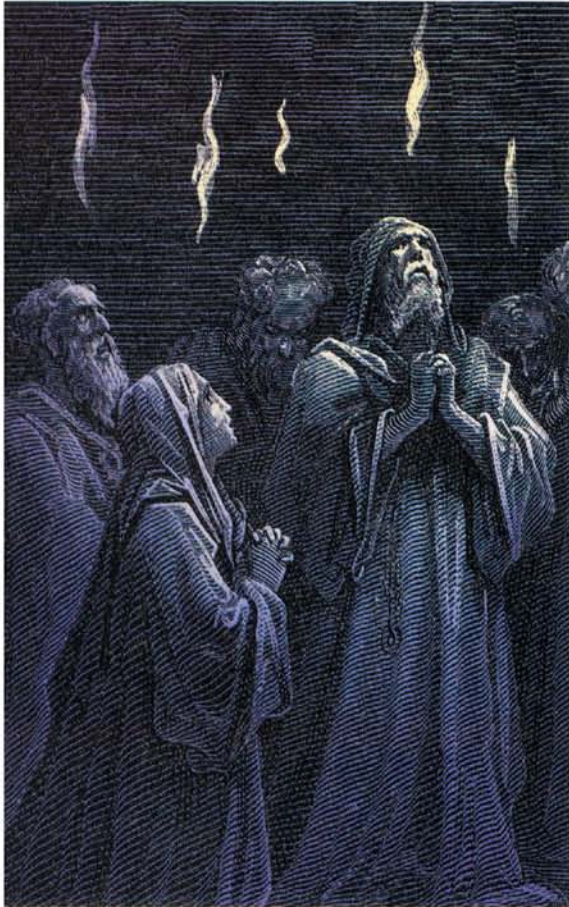
Oren Munger was stricken with typhoid in March 1945 while ministering in a remote area. He reached home and fell into bed, never to make another missionary trip. In the months of his illness Oren received reports of the growing revival in Nicaragua. A national pastor brought the good report to Oren, and the Holy Spirit gave him a special message: "Rest. Do not struggle any longer to fight the battle. Consider the victory won. You came to Nicaragua, saw the need of revival, prayed, and God has answered. Now rest and praise the Lord. Rejoice."

Thus Oren died in peace August 25, 1945, at the age of 25. In a letter home he had written, "It is not in the great numbers of missionaries that the evangelism of the world lies but in the intense glow with which the firebrands burn." Oren Munger was God's firebrand.



First love—we are remembering, for these are our stories, our history as a people of God.

So many of our concerns today look petty alongside such firebrands of first love. First love always gives itself; things and material goods are incidental. In light of these accounts of persons from our collective past who served Him with first love, could we evaluate our own heart attitudes toward service of the Lord and the cause central to His heart, missions?



The Ephesian church's experience and many within the Assemblies of God is that it is possible to be successful at getting the work of the church done and yet not have first love. Outward appearances showed the Ephesian church as a shining light, but the Lord noted that behind all the activity was a growing coldness to Him.

Today Nicaragua reports 648 churches and 1,100 new preaching points. Many churches meet in the open air under trees or in homes because of insufficient church buildings. By the year 2000 they will have over 1,000 organized churches.

Burkina Faso counts 400,000-plus believers in 2,000-plus churches with four Bible schools, their own missions-sending program with missionaries in six African countries, radio and TV ministries, schools, and the largest

Protestant church in the country with continuing growth confirmed by signs and wonders.

Four months after the organizational meeting in Hot Springs the *Evangel* carried an appeal for missionaries to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth in response to Jesus' Great Commission. Do we have the same passion today?

REPENT

The second thing the Lord asks His church to do is repent. We do not repent and then remember, for it is as we remember that we find the need to repent. This appeal was

made to a church that had lost its first love.

Attitude and perspective need to change. Over the years there has been a growing attitude of callousness toward our missionaries-paying the monthly missionary pledges has all the emotion of making out a check for the church's electric bill.

In 1971 I became pastor at the church I served for the next 17 years, Newport-Mesa Christian Center in Costa Mesa, California. I am embarrassed to admit that as a 29-year-old pastor, fresh out of seminary with a doctoral degree, I felt I was God's answer to what that small congregation needed. To my surprise and chagrin, that church went from 73 to 49 members in my first 6 months there.

We fell behind on all the bills, including our missions commitments. Then a deacon suggested that we take an offering the next Sunday and pay at least 2 months' missionary commitments before other bills, including the pastor's salary.

It was August 1971, the lowest income month. After the evening service the two deacons who counted the day's offerings told me our offering was \$1,330, the second largest in the church's history.

Later I got on my knees and asked the Lord to help me learn from this. I felt the Holy Spirit say, "George Wood, I am not interested in building this church on your personality or any other. You put the Lord and His interests first, and the needs of the church will be taken care of."

Within 4 months the church had almost tripled, and over the years the commitment to missions grew until now \$.5 million is given annually to world missions.

What happened? We repented for ignoring the Great Commission. We placed it front and center. We learned that the last thing we should ever cut in a time of financial shortage is the missionary commitment of the church. I felt it my obligation to take a decrease in salary before cutting support for a missionary.

First love—we are remembering and repenting.

REPEAT

The Lord tells us to repeat, "And do the things you did at first" (verse 5).

What did we do at first?

The last issue of the *Evangel* before the first General Council convened carried a practical concern expressed by W.S. Norwood, a missionary to India, even as the saints were getting ready to travel to Hot Springs:

"He himself is laying upon many a similar burden; namely, that of concerted action in a combined response to His call to preach the gospel to the heathen Our blessed Head is waiting for a response of the Body...to...recognize their unity in the Spirit... No water can flow through separated lengths of pipes.... For the flow of the rivers of living water we must be connected not only with our Head but with one another-a fellowship of love that is worldwide, converging and focusing through one organization to spread again in divergent rays to the uttermost parts of the heathen world."

Missionary effort and expense are being wasted in the Christian church because individuals do not want to cooperate. However, our Fellowship was formed so that we could not have "separated lengths of pipe" unconnected to each other. May we be willing to repeat what our spiritual fathers knew at first-missions abroad is best done through cooperative effort, not through independent entrepreneurs using the publicity of an overseas preaching effort to boost their own mailing lists and revenue bases.

Examination of the first four General Councils reveals that from the outset we were formed to help conserve missionary endeavor by organizing and cooperating to advance the missionary cause better. God gave us the Division of Foreign Missions as the conduit through which to cooperate.

Part of repeating is to return to the sense of cooperation in missions rather than a lone-ranger mentality. Let us determine to educate our people to place their financial resources in the Lord's work where it will be safeguarded. Thus we will be repeating what our spiritual forefathers did-we gather together for the purpose of conserving God's work. The Great Commission compels us to concentrate on both the near and the far, both home and foreign fields.

First love-we are remembering, repenting, and repeating.

CONCLUSION

What happens if we do not remember, repent, and repeat? "I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place" (verse 5).

The lampstand is the sphere of influence. The Lord has given the Assemblies of God a bright lampstand, but He will also personally remove it if we do not remember, if we do not repent, and if we do not repeat the things we did at first. In regard to destiny, our future always hangs in the balance. What kind of church shall we be?

The Lord himself is walking among us. What's our influence? How brightly is our lampstand burning? A Pentecostal church is one whose lampstand lights the world.

A Pentecostal church is never content with the number of persons already reached with the gospel. The passion of a Pentecostal church is for people who are still not saved. Only in having such a passion is its lampstand secure.

Remember Jesus' parables in Luke 15? We cannot be content if only 50 percent of the world is reached--one of two sons saved is not enough. We cannot be content if only 90 percent of the world is reached--9 or 10 coins secured are not enough. We cannot be content if only 99 percent of the world is

reached so long as there is one lost sheep.

We cannot go back into the past rooms of Pentecost--the Upper Room, Stone's Folly, Azusa Street Mission, the Hot Springs opera house. Even if the rooms existed, they would all be too small now. Pentecost explodes the church. As we return to first love, however, the Holy Spirit will come into the rooms of the present and fill the rooms of the future.

He seeks a response so vast because Jesus died for all, and the promise of God's Word is that the Spirit will be poured out on all flesh. Let's be first-love Pentecostals and thereby remain saturated with the presence of the Spirit. In our own generation let us commit ourselves to the greatest evangelism the world has ever seen. II

—Abridged from a message given at the 1995 Division of Foreign Missions Fly-Ins.

**Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*



In Our Leaders

BY JAMES K. BRIDGES

God anoints people for the fulfillment of His purposes. Without question, the success of the Assemblies of God can be attributed to God's holy anointing upon the people He has called into leadership at all levels of governance: local, sectional, district, and national.

EARLY PENTECOSTAL LEADERS

A noteworthy observation made by Carl Brumback in his classic history of our Fellowship, *Suddenly...From Heaven*, points up the truth that Assemblies of God history cannot be told apart from the individuals whom God chose and anointed to take their places as leaders throughout our ranks. He wrote: "The Assemblies of God has not experienced a prodigious growth simply through 'a fortuitous concourse of atoms,' that is, a blind and nondirected evolution. God has set in this revival movement 'governments,' men who, under divine guidance, have molded its character. Their sound, spiritual, and progressive leadership has been a major factor in lifting the Assemblies of God...from an obscure and despised Pentecostal sect into world prominence."

From its inception in 1914, the Movement has been blessed with Pentecostal leaders who have believed and practiced walking in the Spirit and have conducted their ministry and administration under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Word of God.

When we study the lives of our founding fathers, they provide exemplary Pentecostal models of leadership required for building and maintaining a great church. Just to mention names like E.N. Bell, Arch P. Collins, J.W. Welch, J. Roswell Flower, T.K. Leonard, D.W. Kerr, and SA Jamieson elicits our deepest admiration and thanksgiving for such solid and gifted brethren God raised up to bring our Fellowship into existence and set it on a right course.

E.N. BELL'S EXAMPLE

Upon the death of Elder E.N. Bell, J. Roswell Flower eulogized him: "To know Brother Bell was to love him. I had the privilege of testing out my first impression that he was the sweetest, safest, and sanest man I had ever met in Pentecost. I am glad to be able to testify that I never had occasion in all the years that followed to change that first impression."

Brother Flower proceeded to speak of Brother Bell's vision, sacrificial spirit, frugality, prayer life, soundness in the Word, gracious and courteous spirit, faithfulness, and accountability. He was described as a man of peace, deeply committed to the principles of cooperative fellowship. His was a laid-down life like his Master's.

What a tribute paid to our first general chairman whose vision and venture of faith led to the organizational meeting of the Assemblies of God in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Brother Bell was a thoroughgoing Pentecostal and never ceased to rejoice in the baptism in the Holy Spirit. His holy joy and freedom of praise were infectious and heartwarming.

It is important for us to know how he came into Pentecost and at what cost. A deep desire for walking in the Spirit and pleasing God led him to take a leave from his Baptist church pastorate in Fort Worth and journey by train to Chicago where the Lord told him, "Abide in this city until you are endued with power from on high." For 11 months he tarried in the old North Avenue mission for the infilling of the Spirit. On July 18, 1908, the Lord filled him with the Holy Ghost according to Acts 2:4.

When he returned to Fort Worth he offered to resign, but the church would not accept it. He stayed in the Baptist church a year longer before taking the Pentecostal work in Malvern, Arkansas, where he joined in the call for a Pentecostal Fellowship. In less than 100 years this Fellowship has become known for its Pentecostal witness around the world with an established presence in over 130 countries.



James K. Bridges is the general treasurer of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.



*We who preach
Pentecost
must practice
Pentecost.
We who preach
revival must
experience
revival
personally
to lead our
church into
revival.*

No doubt this great Pentecostal pioneer is continuing to rejoice in heaven over the great victories we have gained in these 80 years of history. What an example Elder Bell is to our leaders today. He gave us a benchmark that remains a standard for the leaders of our Fellowship. We must maintain the same level of hunger for the Spirit that he exhibited.

AVOIDING DENOMINATIONAL PITFALLS

We constantly face the grim picture which church history paints for us, a picture of denominational dereliction and retrogression. H. Richard Niebuhr in his book, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, wrote: "Rarely does a second generation hold the convictions it has inherited with the fervor equal to that of its fathers, who fashioned their convictions in the heat of conflict and at risk of martyrdom."

John Wesley wrote concerning Methodism in 1786: "I am not afraid that the people called Methodist should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America, but I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power." This must be our concern for our Fellowship. Only Pentecostal leadership can prevent this from happening in our church. If we lose the anointing of the Holy Ghost, we will surely go the way of the historic churches.

It is up to our Pentecostal leadership to prove history wrong and to show our generation that by walking obediently in the power of the Holy Spirit our church can avoid the dangers which have shipwrecked others. We serve one who is "able to keep [us] from falling, and to present [us] faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). However, to overcome we must build ourselves up in most holy faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, keep ourselves in the love of God, and look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life (Jude 20).

The same Spirit of Christ who guided the Early Church through the danger-

Leadership Guidelines

Upon his retirement from 20 years' service as Assemblies of God general superintendent, Ernest S. Williams spoke to the General Council in 1949 regarding the qualifications for the person who would succeed to the office of general superintendent. Based on Nehemiah, the governor, such a person would:

- *Accept the office not because he wants an office but because he feels the burden on his heart.*
- *Be one who feels, sympathizes, prays, and is willing to deny himself in the interests of others.*
- *Know how to repent, not for himself alone, but for the people as well.*
- *Be willing to sacrifice for the cause.*
- *Be cautious and wise.*
- *Be an encourager and get results.*
- *Be possessed with the Spirit of Christ to think and act like Christ, not like the world.*

These guidelines also apply to all Pentecostal leaders today.

ous waters of the first century is more than adequate to navigate the frail bark of the 20th-century church to her divine destination. If we succeed, it will be because we have taken seriously the Scripture we place on the masthead of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

AVOIDING SPIRITUAL DECLINE

When the prophet Habakkuk prayed, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years" (3:2), he was reminding us of what can happen with the passing of time. In the midst of our days we can be guilty of allowing our Pentecostal experience to dissipate. This is why the apostle Paul gave the directive to keep on being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

The tragedy of a lost experience is the tendency to develop a lifestyle that no longer needs or depends on the Holy Spirit for daily renewal. Consequently, our daily habit of reading the Word, intercessory prayer, and doing those things that are well-pleasing in Jesus' sight is lost—we find ourselves in a lifestyle which walks according to the flesh instead of the Spirit (Romans 8:1).

When Pentecostal leaders adopt such lifestyles, it is not long until our ministers, our churches, and our colleges lose a zeal for Pentecost. Could this be the reason recent surveys indicate that a very high percentage of adherents who attend Assemblies of God churches have not been baptized in the Holy Spirit? Let Pentecostal leaders be the first to invoke Habakkuk's prayer: "O Lord, revive the Assemblies of God in the midst of the 1990s and start with a mighty baptism of fire on the leadership of our Movement."

Let us keep in mind that "the husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits" (2 Timothy 2:6). We who preach Pentecost must practice Pentecost. We who preach revival must experience revival personally to lead our church into revival.

THE GENUINE VERSUS THE COUNTERFEIT

If the genuine exists, then look out for the counterfeit. Pentecostal leadership can have the genuine New Testament Pentecostal experience and does not have to settle for a counterfeit experience. We don't need a virtual Pentecost which looks, acts, and talks like old-time Pentecost but doesn't measure up in substance and fruit. We can have the genuine article. Pentecostal leadership must be able to discern between the real and the unreal. Leaders must constantly be on guard as to whether it is a demonic spirit, human spirit, or the Holy Spirit being manifested in our meetings.

We must not be guilty of substituting anything for the blessed work of the Holy Spirit. Nothing the human spirit can produce will be worthy to replace the genuine Pentecostal power intended for God's people. Those of us who have been around Pentecost over many years have become familiar with the genuine move of God, and we can tell when a Pentecostal meeting is the real thing. Pentecostal leaders must discern spiritual manifestations, know if they are in harmony with the Word of God, and are conducive to building up the church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PENTECOST IS NOT CULTIC

Genuine Pentecostal leadership is not cultic. One of the characteristics of a cult is its blind devotion to gifted leaders who generally become quite autocratic and soon require unquestioned allegiance. To the contrary, the mark of a true Pentecostal leader is his aversion to the glamour and sensationalism so often accompanying successful ministries. Rather than building a fan club and a following of radical devotees, he rejects self-aggrandizement and adheres to the admonition of John the Baptist who said, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). The Pentecostal leader takes seriously the words of the apostle Paul "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has

*We must
have sound
Pentecostal
leaders who
can be trusted
to be faithful
to God, His
Word, and
His church.*



*The mark
of a true
Pentecostal
leader is his
aversion to
the glamour
and sensation-
alism so often
accompanying
successful
ministries.*

dealt to each one a measure of faith" (Romans 12:3, NKJV).

Even in our day we see the carnage of Pentecostal preachers strewn all along the pathway—those who allowed their lives and ministries to become cultic. Some Pentecostal leaders have, like Balaam (Numbers 31:8), started out with right intentions, but avarice, self-indulgence, and covetousness have led to doctrinal error, moral corruption, and eventual loss of the blessing of God and the Pentecostal anointing.

Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).

SOUND, WELL-BALANCED MINISTRY

The work of the Holy Spirit coupled with the Word of God in the Pentecostal leader produces a Pentecostal experience that is sound and well-balanced. Paul urged Timothy to "hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Timothy 1:13).

Sound words meant healthy words, as opposed to the unhealthy fables, endless genealogies, profane and old wives tales, vain babblings, empty and meaningless words which he constantly warned Timothy about, and summed them up as "other doctrines." These heterodox teachings were contrary to the Word of God and Timothy was authorized to command that they not be taught in the church (1 Timothy 1:3).

This is a day of much flaky leadership in many charismatic and Pentecostal circles. People are uncertain of where such leaders are trying to take the church. We must have sound Pentecostal leaders who can be trusted to be faithful to God, His Word, and His church.

THE GREATEST PRIVILEGE

Bishop Wilke in his book, *And Are We Yet Alive?* quoted John Wesley when he wrote to his preachers in 1772: "It is not your business to preach so many

times and to take care of this or that society but to save as many souls as you can, to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord."

We in the Assemblies of God identify with this call to evangelism and edification and believe that the power we receive from the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) has energized us to (1) seek and save that which is lost, (2) worship God in spirit and in truth, and (3) build a body of believers in the image of Christ. We must never be guilty of grieving the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit is our source of anointing and strength to accomplish the work God has called us to do.

Pentecostal leadership today has the privilege of living in the same fullness of the Spirit as the leaders of the Early Church described in the Book of Acts.

Pentecostal leaders are to be full of the Holy Spirit, wisdom, faith, grace, and power. Such fullness will come as we "give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).

Pentecost came in the Book of Acts in conjunction with a praying church. "Pentecost Now" will come in the same way. Pentecostal leadership has the opportunity of leading our people into one of the greatest prayer movements since the turn of the 20th century. Such travailing, intercessory prayer will open the door to Pentecostal revival and usher in the glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

These are days of wonderful opportunity. Let Pentecostal leaders courageously lead our Fellowship into their Pentecostal heritage. Fear and unbelief will take us into the wilderness. Faith and courage will bring us into our promised inheritance .•



*"If we do it, it will be futile.
If He does it, it will be productive."*

of these people have come to us from other denominational churches. They were saved when they came. They like our style of worship, the friendliness, and the ministry of the Word. But I haven't seen people saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. I'm hungry for that. I want that. I'm willing to come to Springfield if you'll take time with me. How can God work through my life?"

That's marvelous. He is not satisfied to live in the accolades of people. Paul taught that those who compare themselves among themselves are not wise. If this pastor were to compare himself with some of his colleagues, and I'm sure there were many smaller churches, he could find himself in a state of lethargy and complacency. But he has a hunger. The Holy Spirit will continue to prod us and move us and bring us into that place in God so that He can accomplish His will and purpose through us.

You HAVE BEEN A PEACEMAKER FOR SEVERAL GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS IN THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH. HAVE YOU EVER READ ABOUT THE MIRACLE IN MEMPHIS. WOULD YOU COMMENT ON THAT?

TRASK Making peace is a biblical posture, for Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." The kingdom of God is bigger than the Assemblies of God. I believe in our doctrine and in this church. The Lord's hand is upon it without question. This church has been kind to me and has allowed me to carry out God's call on my life. I am deeply indebted to it, but I am more indebted to the lordship of Jesus Christ. My heart must be in tune with where the Spirit is and to what the Spirit is saying.

The miracle that happened in Memphis was ordained of God. Some might question that, for one preacher called and said, "Brother Trask, I'm glad you were there and you did that. I wouldn't have done that." What a shame! We dare not ever become pharisaical or spiritually proud. God hates spiritual pride. And simply because we are the largest Pentecostal church doesn't mean we don't have our faults.

However, as I stated in Memphis, I wasn't a part of this church when these matters took place, so I can't speak to that. But I can speak to what we do today. God is going to hold us accountable for what we do today. The bond He has put in my heart and in the hearts of these black leaders is thrilling. It isn't the doing of man but of the Spirit. The love and bond are a testimony to the world. If it doesn't start in the church, how can we expect it to start in the world? Let the church be the example.

Christians in the Early Church were known by their love. I want the Assemblies of God to be known, not just by our doctrine but by our love. When people come into our churches, I want them to sense God's love in the place (that's what 1 Corinthians 13 is all about) so powerfully there won't be a question in anyone's mind, "This is where Jesus the Lord is."

As a team we want Jesus to be glori-

fied and His kingdom extended throughout the earth.

TRASK: Someone recently said, "I see the big ship is turning." We want it to be the work of the Holy Spirit so that it's lasting. If we do it, it will be futile. If He does it, it will be productive. ~

*The Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) was founded in 1948 to foster fellowship among the Pentecostal organizations and leaders of North America. At the PFNA meeting October 17-19, 1994, in Memphis, Tennessee, a resolution was passed to dissolve the group of 22 white Pentecostal denominations in favor of a new multiracial fellowship that will reflect the integrated roots of Pentecostalism. Thus the name was changed to Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). The organization's purpose is to provide a framework for fellowship, dialogue, and cooperation among the vari-

ous Pentecostal and charismatic denominations, churches, and ministries in North America.

The first order of business for PCCNA was to adopt a "Racial Reconciliation Manifesto," called the single most important development in the 88-year history of Pentecostal Christianity in the United States.

Prayers of forgiveness for past racism and intolerance punctuated the Wednesday afternoon meeting, and demonstrations of humility and unity accompanied the manifesto's adoption. Thus the miracle of Memphis has brought us back to the roots of the Holy Spirit's outpouring early in this century.

***It's not of our wisdom nor our own
ingenuity that we enjoy success.
We dare not ever take that posture.***



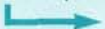
THE CHURCH BUDGETED FOR MY
TRAVEL AND LODGING, BUT WHAT I
REALLY NEEDED HELP ON WAS
MY WIFE'S GENERAL COUNCIL
WARDROBE FUND.




Pentecost NOW

Acts 2:38,39, NIV

ITS TIMELESS INVITATION

Peter replied
Repent and be baptized (every one of you)
 in the name of Jesus Christ

ITS TRANSFORMING PROVISION

So that
1. Your sins may be forgiven
and
2. You will receive the gift
 of the Holy Spirit

ITS INEXHAUSTIBLE OFFER

The promise is	1. for you	} for all whom the Lord our God will call
	and	
	2. your children	
	and	
	3. for all who are far off	

Lexicography and Syntax

Repent: *Metanoesate*

An aorist imperative signifying specific action.

Baptized: *Baptisthato*

Another aorist imperative denoting immediate and concrete action.

So that your sins

may be forgiven: *Eis aphesin amartion*

"For remission of sin" signifying the result of obedience to the two imperatives of command noted above.

Gift: *Dorean*

Intended to denote the total work of the Holy Spirit in contrast to *charismata* (1 Corinthians 12:4,9,28), which more specifically speaks to the particular work of the Holy Spirit. The terms, however, are basically interchangeable. (As in 1 Corinthians 13:2, when *dorean* is used where we would have expected *charismata*.)

Spirit: *Pneumatos*

Literally, "breath, wind."

Promise: *Epaggelia*

"Announcement," but later with the special sense of "pledge, offer, and promise."

BY RICHARD L. DRESSELHAUS

Before beginning preparation

on the subject, "Pentecost Now," it would be well to consider the following:

- (1) Familiarize yourself with the syntactical outline included here, along with the notes on lexicography and syntax, and
- (2) reexplore the path over which you have been led that has resulted in your becoming a Pentecostal minister.

This reflection will provide vital background as you prepare to challenge your people to experience Pentecost in a personal, present way.

I have been asked repeatedly to explain why I am a Pentecostal. Usually the inference behind the query has been that Pentecostals are slightly right of center, given to emotional excesses, and rather tenuous in their grasp of doctrine.

Especially do I remember my experiences as a student in non-Pentecostal educational institutions. In one instance the instructor listed Pentecostals among the cults. (Interestingly, several years ago I was a guest speaker on that very campus as a participant in an interdenominational conference on the Holy Spirit.) I confess to feelings of isolation at best and rejection at worst.

I also vividly recall the intriguing invitation of college buddies to join them at a rather prestigious seminary as a step toward affiliation with that particular denomination. It was at that critical juncture that I had to face the question: Why am I Pentecostal?

The theme of this message provided the answer. Pentecost is now. The events of Acts are continuous. first-century phenomena and miracles are to mark the church of the 20th century. This is the fabric of my Pentecostal testimony.

I am bound both by conviction and doc-

trine to differ with the cessationists. How can you draw a line at the end of the first century and pronounce that miracles are now only history? The witness of Scripture everywhere disagrees with that conclusion, and the text before us is a vital part of that witness. The promise is ours as well as theirs.

As a boy I knew quite well what it meant to be part of a church that was literally on the wrong side of the tracks. We were located there, our numbers were small, and our reputation as Holy Rollers far too widespread. More than once while growing up I wondered if the sense of obscurity would ever be broken.

Today it all looks wonderfully different. According to statisticians, there are over 400 million Pentecostals worldwide—the greatest Christian movement known to man. We are literally experiencing the fulfillment of Acts 2:38. Joel would have rejoiced to see our day. An outpouring of the Spirit is embracing all flesh.

What will be your objective in developing this message? Create within the hearts of your listeners a deep desire to experience the fullness of the Spirit in their own lives. Help them to participate in the thrill of first-century spiritual power. Encourage them to have an unquenchable desire to encounter personally the life and joy experienced by the first Pentecostal believers. Speak of the empowerment, the energizing, and the motivation of the Spirit-filled life.

ITS TIMELESS INVITATION

proclamation demands response. Neutrality is impossible. Rightly, Peter gave his listeners just that opportunity, "Repent and be baptized." Simple, clear, compelling. And 3,000 responded. Pentecost worked. It was a proven reality.

You will need to provide an explanation for the baptismal formula used here. Jesus

used the Trinitarian formula: "Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). In our text Peter used only the singular name of Jesus. Some have argued that this is the only right formula for use in the New Testament church. In fact, some have gone so far as to say that the doctrine of the Trinity is here replaced by a oneness understanding of the Godhead.

How should we answer? The formula given in Matthew 28 can hardly be considered suddenly obsolete and inappropriate. The sermon Peter had just preached focused on the identity of Jesus as the Messiah. His singular use of the name of Jesus would seem appropriate in this context. However, there is nothing here to support an invalidation of the formula instituted by Jesus himself. It is proper to conclude that the formula Peter used in Acts 2 was unique for that moment and not mandatory for the church of every generation.

Another doctrinal matter calls for clarification. Is water baptism regeneration? If so, does that make it a necessity for salvation? True, Peter linked water baptism to repentance but only as an inevitable consequence of the act of repentance. Repentance produces pardon, and water baptism is but its consequence. This position is well-supported by the total witness of Scripture. Typically, saving faith is not categorically linked to water baptism. According to Romans 6:1-10, we may conclude that repentance is an inward work, and water baptism is its outward sign.

ITS TRANSFORMING PROVISION

The benefits of repentance and its witness through the outward sign of water baptism is (1) forgiveness of sins and (2) the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit. As noted under "Lexicography and Syntax," the

Greek word used here for "gift" is general in its focus. It speaks of the "dispensation" of the Holy Spirit—that period of time often referred to as "the last days" (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17).

Exactly at this point Pentecostalism becomes wonderfully defined. To be a Pentecostal means more than experiencing the charismata (grace gifts) of the Holy Spirit. It also includes the total work and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Yes, we speak in tongues, prophesy, and perform miracles in Jesus' name, but the thrust here is all-inclusive of the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in our day—Pentecost now.

May we never allow our detractors to describe Pentecostals as shallow phenomenologists or gullible sensationalists. We are a people anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do the greater works commissioned to us by the Lord himself (John 14:12). Even more, however, is an enablement and a gifting that transforms us into the likeness of Christ by producing within us the fruit of the Spirit.

ITS INEXHAUSTIBLE OFFER

Your message will strike home with the greatest power here. All that is so gloriously offered is now available for every generation until Jesus comes. This is the clincher. The promise of the Spirit breaks the generational time barriers and reaches ahead to our very day. It is a promise for me, my children, and to everyone else whom the Lord will call.

With ecstasy and joy we boldly declare, "Pentecost Now!" ■



*Richard L. Dresselhaus, D.Min.,
is pastor of First Assembly
of God, San Diego, California.*

"~E::~""!7IE::4C?:iCt~T),i,i,i,, <.i,i> "0a!" ! f,i?

In Our Churches

WHAT IS TRUE PENTECOST? What are we believing for? How will we know when a genuine work of the Holy Spirit is operating in the church?

These and other questions asked by sincere spiritual leaders can only be answered properly by going to the original Pentecostal church to ascertain the genuine. We believe the Scriptures to be our authoritative rule of faith and conduct. Therefore, a true Pentecostal church of any age or culture will have the same spiritual principles and dynamics as the Early Church.

Great harm has been done to the PerHec~stal cause by those who have mistaken one type of supernatural experience or a popular pattern of worship as the fullness of Pentecostal life in the church. It is imperative for leaders to be open to new and wonderful expressions of supernatural power but not at the cost of losing in any measure the centrality of Christ. Anything that would detract or distract from Jesus Christ is spurious, no matter how spiritual or attractive. No one thing is everything in Pentecost. We are not seeking an *it-we* are seeking *Him* in all His glory and fullness.

To maintain Pentecost in the church, a spiritual leader must understand the full-orbed ministry of the Holy Spirit within a Pentecostal context. I cannot emphasize enough the need to stay true to the genuine prototype of the New Testament church. I have no desire to go back to the early 1930s or 1940s, but I have a desire to go back to the first century and learn again the dynamics of true Pentecost. I have little interest in tradition; my desire is for the eternal and the supernatural.

True Pentecost in the church begins with a Pentecostal experience growing out of a hunger for God. I could just as easily say the experience grows out of a hunger to obey God.

When Jesus prepared to pass the baton of leadership to His disciples, He clearly stated their need for fullness of power from on high. He was well aware the Church would be a miserable experiment in human failure without supernatural power and strength. Without the fullness of the Spirit, there would inevitably exist the fullness of the flesh and the carnal, leading to spiritual death.

To have Pentecost in the church, the church must experience Pentecost and be led into it by men and women who have faith in God's promises and a deep hunger for the church to realize those promises.

The promise of Pentecost in the church is still in force. The necessity of waiting on God and believing for the gift of the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking with other tongues is just as valid as when Jesus commanded His disciples to go to the Upper Room and wait for that endowment of power. The goal or reality of everyone's being filled with the Holy Spirit is not only attainable but a necessary objective for every conscientious leader.

The church, of course, is not a building but a people. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. Everybody needs to be filled with the Spirit. Indeed, that is the promise of the Father. It is the task of every pastor and preacher to make people hungry to experience the Holy Spirit's baptism through fervent prayer, strong Bible preaching, and teaching as well as frequent testimonies of the Spirit-filled life.



BY CHARLES T. CRABTREE

**Great haitm litit\$ J:Jile/J i:l.Qt:le.. to tne Pentecostal cause by
those who
have mistaken
one type of
supernatural
experience
or a popular
pattern of
worship as
the fullness of
Pentecostal
life in the
church.**

The New Testament church experienced the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but throughout the Book of Acts are accounts of subsequent outpourings. The Day of Pentecost ended nothing; it started everything. The true Pentecostal church in any culture will have a continuous flow of Pentecostal experiences and supernatural demonstrations.

People who choose to go to an Assemblies of God church should see physical evidences of the Holy Spirit beyond the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues, as needed and wonderful as that is. They should witness the miraculous through all the gifts as God chooses and see the power of the Lord demonstrated, not debated; desired, not denied; demanded, not denounced.

when Pentecost ceases to be experienced in the individual believer and the corporate body, it soon deteriorates to a theory and becomes nothing more than quaint history. We are always one generation away from losing the genuine Pentecostal church. Leaders are responsible to preach, teach, and provide each generation the opportunity to know and experience the blessings of Pentecost.

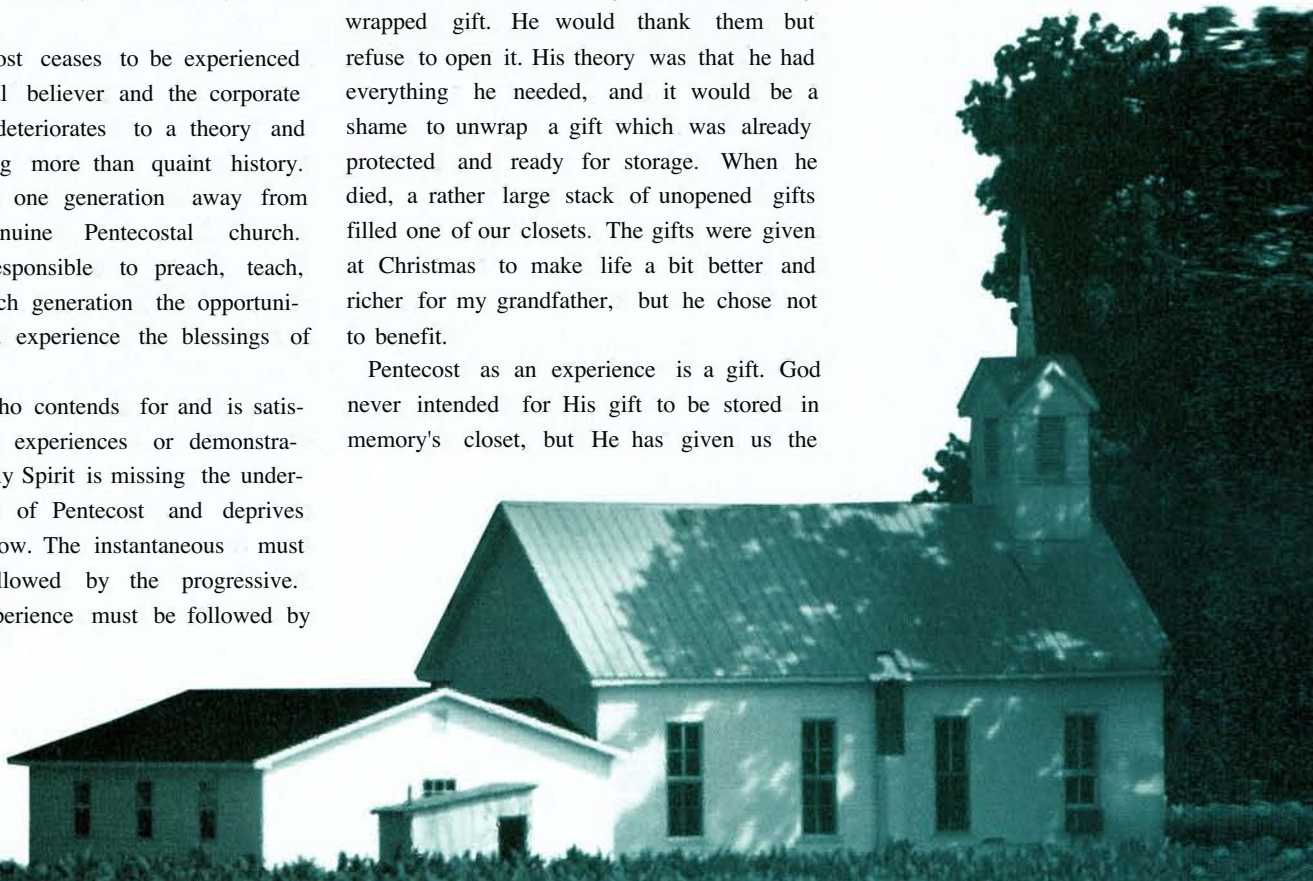
The leader who contends for and is satisfied with only experiences or demonstrations of the Holy Spirit is missing the underlying purposes of Pentecost and deprives those who follow. The instantaneous must always be followed by the progressive. Pentecostal experience must be followed by

a consistent Pentecostal lifestyle or the experience contributes nothing to character and development.

After the experience of the Upper Room the disciples continued steadfastly in the Christian disciplines (Acts 2). The gift of the Holy Spirit was received with great joy, emotion, and attention, but the disciples contended for a holy life and day-by-day growth. Too many Pentecostals are seeking experiences at the cost of seeking truth. Many want God to do a powerful work for them but shun the God who wants to do a daily work in them.

My grandfather was a strong individualist with a colorful personality. He always did things a bit differently. Every Christmas my dad and mom would give him a nicely wrapped gift. He would thank them but refuse to open it. His theory was that he had everything he needed, and it would be a shame to unwrap a gift which was already protected and ready for storage. When he died, a rather large stack of unopened gifts filled one of our closets. The gifts were given at Christmas to make life a bit better and richer for my grandfather, but he chose not to benefit.

Pentecost as an experience is a gift. God never intended for His gift to be stored in memory's closet, but He has given us the



***Too many
Pentecostals
are seeking
experiences
at the cost of
seeking truth.***

Holy Spirit to thrust us into a new dimension of effectiveness.

The disciples continued steadfastly in spiritual disciplines and in the apostles' doctrine. They did not look upon study and learning as an antipathy to spiritual life. To the contrary, they gave attention to doctrine on a daily basis. Paul commended Timothy to study and give attention to doctrine. A genuine Pentecostal church will be known for its strong Bible teaching and Pentecostal curriculum. The danger of being destroyed for lack of knowledge is still very real.

The disciples continued steadfastly in the apostles' fellowship and maintained strong, wholesome social interaction with believers. A Pentecostal church will be earmarked by great fellowship in the church building and at each other's tables. (In our culture, house-to-house could be translated restaurant-to-restaurant.) Pentecost means the right kind of fellowship. We must love sinners and reach out to them in ministry but not for the purpose of fellowship. Many Christians have been dragged down spiritually and destroyed because they sought fellowship in the world, which is enmity to God, rather than building wholesome relationships in the church for the purpose of edification.

The disciples continued steadfastly in prayers. Prayer was an integral part of the New Testament church. In nearly every chapter in Acts, the prayer life of those first-generation Pentecostals is recorded and highlighted. A genuine Pentecostal church will be a praying church, and it will be Pentecostal praying as opposed to saying

prayers in an apathetic, unbelieving ritual.

Pentecostal praying is prayer in the Holy Spirit. That means the Spirit himself infuses prayer with a fervency and faith the human mind cannot understand and the human tongue cannot express. When will we learn that without Him we can do nothing-even pray? We do not know what to ask for, but the Holy Spirit knows. The limitation of the flesh is no problem with the Holy Spirit. When our understanding cannot grasp what the Spirit wants to articulate, He will pray through us in heaven's language. The power of the Pentecostal church is discovered and demonstrated through Pentecostal prayer.

That which followed Pentecostal prayer in the New Testament will follow Pentecostal prayer today-such miraculous signs that fear (or the awe of God) came upon those who witnessed the supernatural and resulted in addition and multiplication of the church. Pentecostal praying always has and always will preclude Pentecostal revival.

The Pentecostal experience in the New Testament church was followed by a Pentecostal lifestyle in the believer. It produced a Pentecostal mission that impacted their world to such an extent that those around them claimed they had turned the world upside down.

What is a Pentecostal church without Pentecostal experience and demonstration? It is just another church with a form of godliness which denies the power of God.

What is a Pentecostal church without Pentecostal teaching, fellowship, and prayer? It is a church that builds on extremes, breeds unwholesome relationships, and is void of true power.

What is a Pentecostal church without a mission beyond its four walls? It is a self-serving organization that ultimately dies for



initial physical evidence of speaking with other tongues is just as valid as when

lack of purpose and vitality. The New Testament church was a powerful church because it was faithful to the Master's Great Commission.

A genuine Pentecostal church does not exist for itself but for the purpose of making Christ real to the world so that lost men and women will hear the good news and be saved.

The record of the New Testament church is one of powerful witness and evangelism. The first ministry of a newly empowered church was to the lost. The first sermon was not to believers but to unbelievers. Peter did not invite people to the newly formed First Assembly in Jerusalem. He proclaimed Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit and presented His claims with such clarity people repented, were baptized, and identified with Christ. Because the New Testament church stayed true to its mission, it multiplied.

Evangelism in the New Testament church never wavered from the Pentecostal priority to win the lost at any cost. When persecution broke out, they simply moved their ministry of witness to other people and places. The church was a world missions church.

The ultimate message of Pentecost is Jesus Christ revealed by the Holy Spirit. The

ultimate method of Pentecost is total dependence upon the Person and work of the Spirit. The ultimate ministry of Pentecost is the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Without question, to have Pentecost in the church is to have a contemporary, unfiltered Christ living through every member of every church until every sinner in every nation is confronted with the good news of salvation.

Pentecost is a supernatural experience, but it is more than an experience-it is a way of living. It is a spiritual lifestyle, but it is more than a lifestyle-Pentecost is a divine mission. We dare not settle for just a part when we are offered-yes, commanded-to be filled with the Spirit personally. We are responsible not only to bring Pentecost into the church but to be Pentecostal in experience, lifestyle, and mission ourselves.

The desire for a true flow of Pentecostal power through our Assemblies of God churches should be more than a passing wish-it should become a desperate hunger linked with a tenacious faith. 4)

Charles T. Crabtree is the Assemblies of God assistant general superintendent, Springfield, Missouri.

***Jesus
commanded
His disciples
to go to the
Upper Room
and wait for
that enduement
of power.***

*Pentecost
Now!*



prayer: key to revival

THE DISTANCE IS TOO GREAT

to go from light bedtime prayers to the heavy responsibility of intercessory prayer for revival in one quick step. As we experience answers to prayer in smaller, tangible ways, the Holy Spirit prepares us for the most enriching and demanding task of all: interceding for spiritual change in people's lives.

Literally, through the power of prayer we are marching into territory held by satanic forces and capturing it for the kingdom of God. This seems impossible to the human intellect. Even experienced people of prayer may sometimes doubt the power of prayer.

My introduction to the power of prayer began when I was 10. I remember being too sick to attend school because of sharp stomach pains. After my sister and brothers had boarded the bus, my mother came into the bedroom, laid her hands on my stomach, and prayed a simple prayer. Instantly, the pain was gone. This answer to prayer left an indelible mark on my life. In subsequent years, no matter what I questioned or how much I doubted, I could not deny the reality of that single experience.

Another step in the development of intercessory prayer in my life occurred during my first year at what was then Southwestern Bible Institute. I was on a work scholarship, which meant my school bill was paid each month, but I received no cash. After a month, I needed items such as toothpaste and razor blades and had no cash flow to purchase them. I remember a mixture of panic and dismay as I considered my dilemma.

One night the Holy Spirit directed me to Matthew 21:22. Faith filled my heart. I needed some things, and Jesus said *ask* and *believe* and I would receive. I quickly wrote

down the items I needed and the approximate cost, which totaled \$2.50. (This was in 1952 when the minimum wage was 75 cents per hour). I went down the list and asked God for each item and went to bed rejoicing because God had come to my rescue. It never occurred to me that my needs would not be met.

The next day a lady, who worked part-time for the school and whom I hardly knew, thrust some money into my hand and said, "God told me to give this to you." I could feel some bills and change, so I knew without looking that my need had been met. As I counted the money, I discovered the amount was not \$2.50 but \$3.50. God had met the need plus a bonus. That one answer to prayer provided a beginning foundation of faith for me to believe God for Kingdom money. In subsequent years I have seen God supply millions of dollars for His work, plus enough for my own family needs, in answer to simple prayer. It began with a \$2.50 answer to prayer.

Praying for health and money does not compare, however, to the kind of prayer that literally takes souls from the kingdom of darkness and ushers them into the kingdom of God. If our prayer life does not go beyond health and wealth, we have missed God's highest reward. At best, health and wealth are temporary, but the salvation of a soul has eternal rewards. Jesus' primary mission in coming to earth was to seek and to save the lost.

This must be the primary mission of the church, and intercessory prayer is the vital link to victory. We cannot and will not see a spiritual awakening unless there is much prayer. No conference, seminar, retreat, book, committee, or tape will serve as a sub-



BY CHARLES E. HACKETT

If prayer is the key—in fact, the very foundation for a spiritual awakening, why don't we take care of business and get down to the basics of intercessory prayer so we can have revival?



stitute for prayer. Simply put---no prayer, no revival.

The central question is, "How do we pray for revival?" Some are waiting for an extraordinary sign, feeling, or to hear a voice. None of these is needed. God has already spoken, and we do not need to hear another message until we obey what we have already heard. Jesus said, "Look at the crops; they are ripe for harvest." A farmer does not gather in the harvest because he has a feeling but, rather, because the grain is ready and will be lost unless it is put into the barn.

We must not make prayer for revival something that is strange, weird, and accompanied by goose blimps. We begin by looking at the unsaved in our families or neighborhoods with the realization that they are eternally lost unless they come to know Christ. It helps to write down their names and intercede before God on their behalf, allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through us.

No matter how we feel, we must be faithful. Sometimes the greatest answers come when our feelings are the lowest. It is the faith level that is important to God, not the feeling level. God answers the prayers of the

righteous who passionately cry out to Him day and night. Too often we faint and give up when God's command is "pray without ceasing."

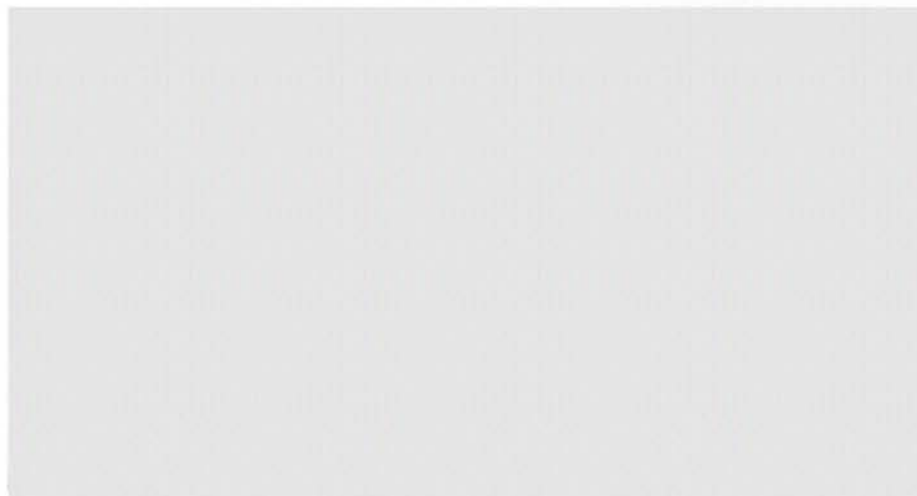
Some are perhaps waiting for a kind of ministry break that will open up great success for them. It has already happened, and it took place on the cross. It was forever sealed on the Day of Pentecost. We don't have to wait for victory to find us when we know the Victor. Our victory lies in daily communication with God, not by the breaks we get or how gifted we are. Gifts and talents actually become traps of destruction for Christians unless they are continually sanctified by prayer.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord" is more than an often-quoted verse of Scripture. It is the very foundation for revival. We cannot create revival or put a spiritual hunger in the sinners' hearts. We cannot renew the church or make it happen.

What a relief I felt when these truths became clear. The responsibility is not on me but on God. He wants to send a spiritual awakening more than we want to receive it. He is not unaware of our plight. He knows full well the state of mankind and what must be changed.

In light of these statements we must ask the classic question, "Why no revival?" This cannot be answered by a simple cliché but requires an in-depth look at the church and its reason for being.

We must recognize there is unprecedented revival in many parts of the world. We in America tend to think that if it isn't happen-



ing here, it isn't happening. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Great and mighty revival is occurring all over the world in response to the desperate cry of the local church. We have pockets of revival in America but no sweeping move from God.

God loves America as much as He loves the rest of the world, but the church in America does not love God as much as others do. There is still no respect of persons with Him. He does not play favorites nor show partiality. He will meet people anytime, anywhere they call out to Him in prayer.

We have not because we ask not. Spiritual leaders have not taken responsibility for our sins and backsliding. We tend to blame bad laws, crooked politicians, the economy, abortion, lack of prayer in schools, and a host of other things for our lack of revival. Many of these things have contributed to the moral decline of our country, but the spiritual tone of our nation has never been set in the halls of Congress, a vote of the Supreme Court, nor by dishonest politicians. The spiritual level of any nation is determined by the church-the body of believers-those who say they are followers of Christ.

In America we are in a spiritual drought because the church has lost its first love. Instead, we love money, popularity, position. We lust after many things that dull our spiritual appetite and keep us from intercessory prayer, justifying our lusts rather than repenting. The Bible is still true, "You cannot love God and the things of the world." One will dominate and win.

Sacrifice is almost a forgotten virtue. We seek the favor of a worldly system rather than God's approval and have substituted the efforts of human flesh for the supernatural power of God. We honor one another for performance rather than for character. The spirit of jealousy and envy runs rampant among us. We have difficulty forgiving one another. No wonder revival is lacking!

If prayer is the key-in fact, the very foundation for a spiritual awakening, why don't we take care of business and get down to the basics of intercessory prayer so we can have revival? Simply stated, the church has always done its best in bad times and its

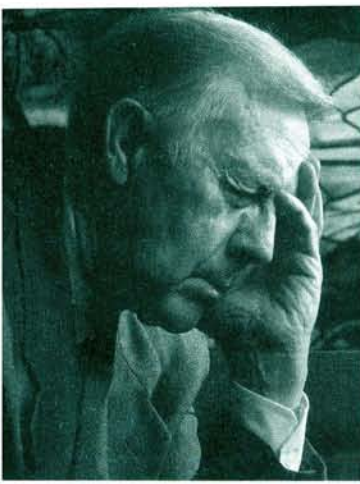
poorest in good times. Peace, prosperity, and the horn of plenty do not drive the church to prayer and repentance.

In many countries great revival has come because the church has been stripped of all possessions and political favor, and they have had no place to turn except to God. They have had to look to Him for their daily provisions; in so doing they have developed the discipline of intercessory prayer to a level seldom found in this country.

To summarize, God does not have the American church's attention. We are preoccupied with many things but are doing very little with His agenda. This will change because God is going to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh in the last days, and that includes America. He will get our attention, and there will be a spiritual awakening in this country before Jesus comes.

Like other nations of our day, we will respond to the call for revival when the things we worship are taken away and God becomes first in our lives.





What can one person or one church do today that will make a difference? It is still true: When God's people humble themselves and pray and seek His face, and turn from their wicked ways, then He will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and heal their land. No contingencies are connected to this; God will do what He said. He is not waiting to hear from Congress or the Supreme Court; He is waiting to hear from the Church. Intercessory prayer by a

person or a local church is the key to revival.

We need tracks to turn on if we are to be consistent in praying for revival. Some things that help me include setting a specific time for prayer, having a prayer list, walking the streets, driving through neighborhoods, turning off the Tv; reading books on prayer, praying with others, forgiving my enemies, and loving all people. I will not see revival in my life if I cannot freely love all people and believe that Christ died for all.

We are not in the brick-and-mortar business but the soul business. Our measuring stick is not the amount of the offering or the size of the crowd. The questions are: Did anyone get right with God? Was Jesus lifted up? Does the world see Him in the church? Did the Holy Spirit convict, convince, edify, and comfort the people of God? Did people leave the services with enough of the power of the Holy Spirit to live godly and upright lives in the coming week? Was there joy and victory in the camp?

True revival comes when we can't stand the status quo any longer—when our hearts long for God more than anything else. Then we move into a supernatural realm of prayer that lifts us at times into the very throne room of God, and at other times we are plunged into the agony of the lost. This kind of prayer always produces great results.

The Holy Spirit is calling us to intercessory prayer for America. God will send revival one more time—either with or without me. I am determined to be a part of this last-day outpouring. •

Charles E. Hackett is executive director of the Division of Home Missions, Springfield, Missouri.



ILLUSTRATION ART SOURCE

PENTECOST

in Preaching

COLETTE WAS 10 and in a musical team that ministered at a seniors camp where I was the speaker. My messages were geared to the senior adults present. The final night of the camp Colette asked me if I would exchange one of my books for one of the group's tapes?

I responded affirmatively.

Then in childlike simplicity she bared her soul: "I have terrible trouble with my thoughts. In fact, sometimes I wonder if there really is a God. But while you were speaking last night something happened inside of me which I can't explain. It has



BY ROBERT L. BRANDT

never happened to me before. I don't understand it."

"I believe that was the Holy Spirit revealing God to you, Colette," I explained.

How remarkable, I thought. I was addressing seniors, yet the Holy Spirit touched the heart if a young child through my message.

The camp ended and all went their separate ways. Soon I received a letter from Colette. "Mr. Brandt, will you be my pen pal?" she asked.

Joyfully I wrote back assuring her I would be very pleased to be her pen pal.

Two years have passed. She continues to write to me about some of the most profound theological matters, and I always answer. I have a strange sense that God's hand is upon her for a special reason.

When I think of Pentecost in preaching, I am compelled to think of the elements in Peter's preaching following his Upper Room experience on that first Pentecost. If the same Spirit who filled Peter on that memorable day fills me, I should expect those same elements in my preaching. My audience and circumstances are quite different, making equal results impossible. Yet the same elements ought to mark my preaching.

What were the characteristic elements of that preaching?

IT WAS PERCEPTIVE.

Peter perceived exactly what had happened to make the 120 behave in an unorthodox way. "No, these strange-acting Galileans are not drunk. But you are witnessing specific fulfillment of certain prophecies," he declared. I doubt this was the fruit of his own

thinking. It was by the Spirit that he perceived the connection between the prophecy and its fulfillment, and that is what he boldly proclaimed.

By the same Spirit, Peter, while ministering to the newly converted in Samaria, perceived Simon the sorcerer's true condition. "For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:23).

Paul, newly filled with the Spirit, had a similar perceptiveness related to his preaching. While he sought to bring God's Word to Sergius Paulus, deputy of the country, he perceived devilish opposition and forthrightly denounced

Elymas, the sorcerer, with "O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10).

While Paul was preaching the gospel in Lystra, a man crippled from birth sat in the audience. Paul, beholding him "saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, 'Stand up on your feet!' At that, the man jumped up and began to walk" (Acts 14:9,10, NIV).

True Pentecostal preaching has in it an element of supernatural perception.

IT WAS PROFOUND.

At times Pentecost in preaching can be sublimely profound. Peter, though a simple and ignorant fisherman, declared in his first Pentecostal sermon, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). Where in Scripture is there a more profound revelation of truth!

Peter's remarkable insight into Scripture must be understood to have sprung from his Pentecostal encounter. His insight into David's prophetic declarations and his explanation of them related to Christ's resurrection (Acts 2:25-35)-testify to more than human brilliance. They exemplify what Paul declared in 1 Corinthians 2:10-12: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

Many a Spirit-filled believer will testify to greatly enhanced understanding of Scripture resulting from personal Pentecostal experience.

IT WAS PASSIONATE AND PENETRATING.

Quickened as it is by the Holy Spirit himself, Pentecost becomes alive when it gets into preaching the Word of God. It fastens on people's hearts. It is as Martin Luther said of Paul's words, "They are like living things. They have hands, and they have feet."

Pentecost in preaching makes the Word decisively effective. It is that which makes the Word of God "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). It is also that which enables the preacher to emulate his Master when He said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

Listen to Peter: "Him...ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts

PENTECOST in Preaching

Pentecost in preaching manifests itself in at least six notable ways. It will be:

1. Perceptive
2. Profound
3. Passionate & Penetrating
4. Persuasive
5. Prophetic
6. Productive

2:23,26). Can anyone doubt the passion and the penetration of those Spirit-enabled words?

IT WAS PERSUASIVE.

Pentecost in preaching has a powerfully persuasive influence upon the hearers. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). One of the central functions of preaching is persuasion. Yet, much of preaching is woefully lacking in persuasive force. Why? Because the preaching falls short of that facet of Pentecostal preaching which made the early Pentecostals so undeniably effective.

Observe Paul's testimonial regarding his own preaching. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Corinthians 2:4).

IT WAS PROPHETIC.

Pentecost in the preacher makes him a prophet in the pulpit. This is not to say he is always predictive, though he may be at times. It is to say it enables him to speak in the tones and authority of a prophet. He speaks forth the Word, as Peter did, with an authoritative ring. Men feel they are hearing directly from God and are instructed in the ways of the Lord. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you ... for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

Pentecost in preaching may issue in a measure of predictiveness. To the crowd on the Day of Pentecost Peter foretold what could be expected if his words were heeded: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38,39).

Through the Holy Spirit faith rises to

announce the forthcoming works of God, as when Paul, standing on the deck of a doomed ship, announced, "For there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship" (Acts 27:22).

IT WAS PRODUCTIVE.

Pentecost in preaching yields its own harvest. It may be in the awakening of a single soul, as in the case of 10-year-old Colette, or it may be in the conversion of 3,000 as on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41). Pentecost in preaching will in due season be productive.

This is my prayer: God grant to every one of us, who is Pentecostal in name, the to-be-coveted experience of Pentecost in our preaching .•

Robert L. Brandt is executive presbyter for the Northwest Area and lives in Billings, Montana.



Seeing the Glory – Anointed, Effective Leadership

BY NANCIE CARMICHAEL

*“The best way to
minister is to
keep your heart
broken and soft
before Him,
knowing how
much you need
Him. Then He’ll
use you.”*

In our fractured and problem-laden society leadership is difficult. Life is filled with conflict. Sometimes the challenges seem too great, and I’m tempted to opt out and take up something like herbal gardening. Then I see the rewards—people finding Christ, marriages and families restored, the Word of God having its powerful impact—and I realize nothing is more fulfilling than being involved in ministry.

I lost two friends recently: Gen Rose, former head of the Oregon District Women’s Ministries, and Mattie Ann Collier-Spears, of Portland, Oregon, who was a gifted musician and very involved in her church, community, and the women’s prison. Both Gen and Mattie Ann, ironically, had pancreatic and liver cancer. (We three had been involved in a mutual ministry outreach.)

It’s difficult to understand why these things happen, and I feel their loss keenly—not only because we were friends but because they were outstanding women leaders of courage, vision, and compassion. Through their lives I saw effective leadership demonstrated, the kind that makes a difference in our world.

Effective ministry anointed by the Holy Spirit has several key ingredients.

AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS UNDER OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

Joshua got his marching orders from God (Joshua 1:2-9). “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (verse 9*). **If** we are called by the Almighty, He will equip us (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

It is absolutely essential to hear what God is saying to us personally. He deals with us in unique ways and knows us intimately.

The only way we can hear His voice is to spend time in His Word and on our knees, not just to give out to others but for ourselves—to know that He is Lord of our lives in all aspects.

AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS NOT THREATENED BY PREVIOUS LEADERS.

After Moses died, Joshua went on to follow in his steps. Good leadership builds on the godly work of others who have preceded us and moves forward. Why not start where you are and build on others’ successes?

Often when a leader takes the helm for the first time, she is tempted to start everything new, to make it her program. Building on the solid, Christ-centered, biblically based work of the one we’re following, however, is a great way to take some positive steps of faith and go on to greater things. (See Deuteronomy 30, 31.)

AN EFFECTIVE LEADER HAS VISION AND KNOWS HOW TO COMMUNICATE IT TO OTHERS.

After we spend time with God—the priority for leaders—He can expand our vision and help us to dream new dreams with Him. I’ve pursued some dreams I shouldn’t have; they weren’t mine. When we became pastors of a church, I discovered that the previous pastor’s wife, a gifted woman, had developed an effective outreach for women in the community. Not waiting on God to see if this was for me, I plunged in and carried on her dream.

The outreaches under my direction fizzled and flopped. Devastated, I felt like a failure and wondered what went wrong. Later I had to admit that taking on her ministry had felt forced and artificial to me. **It** wasn’t the vision God had for me. I did it because it

was a good idea, and because it worked for her I thought others expected it of me.

Humbled, I began a Bible study with two other women which, to my surprise, thrived and became a successful ministry of the church. The Bible studies I began built on the evangelistic outreaches of my predecessor, and ministry moved forward.

AN EFFECTIVE LEADER KNOWS HER OWN PAIN, HER OWN HUMANITY.

Shortly before Mattie Ann died, I spoke with her on the phone and shared some of the pressures I was facing—feeling overwhelmed, as usual. "Of course you can't do it!" she said. "The best way to minister is to keep your heart broken and soft before Him, knowing how much you need Him. Then He'll use you."

I jotted down her comments and tucked them in my Bible under Psalm 51. I pray continuously for a soft, broken heart before God as I minister in His name. Mattie Ann's simple advice has revolutionized my approach in ministry—from a strength-oriented position to a place of weakness, knowing my strength in Him.

A few months before Gen died, she asked me to speak to the women leaders in her district. After she passed away, I spoke at her conference using her Bible. In it I found a note she'd written: "God's greatest gifts to us often are disguised—wrapped in problems, trials, and sufferings." Gen clearly understood her own trials and struggles, but in knowing her humanity she saw her risen Lord and incredible strength.

AN EFFECTIVE LEADER NURTURES HERSELF.

The night before Joshua led his army across the Jordan to great victory, he went to the

officers of the camp and told them, "Prepare provisions for yourselves" (Joshua 1:11).

Women are often very good at taking care of everyone but themselves. Some of us have gotten the idea that it isn't spiritual to do good things for ourselves. If Jesus needed to get away frequently to the mountains and the seashore to be quiet and listen to the Father, how much more we need to take quiet time.

I went through a difficult time of illness 3 years ago. Diagnosed with a chronic condition, I experienced much pain. The bottom line of wisdom from my doctor was this: "You are sick because you have so much stress in your life."

I thought, *What's wrong? How is it that I, a follower of Christ (whose yoke is supposed to be easy and burden light), have so much stress that I'm in this much pain?*

Through several months of honest evaluation I realized I was badly out of balance. I did not nurture myself. I spent time in prayer and Bible study, but in taking care of my physical body, my emotions, and mind, I had not provided the balance I needed. (Maybe some occasional gardening is a good idea.)

I have learned the hard way the importance of taking responsibility for my own needs. If I am giving out to others, I must have something to give. The battle is the Lord's, but His Word teaches us that we are to prepare ourselves.

AN EFFECTIVE LEADER SEES GOD'S AWESOME GLORY.

Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it... How awesome is this place!" (Genesis 28:16,17). Under the stars in that lonely, isolated place, Jacob found God was awesome.

**Women are
often very good
at taking care of
everyone but
themselves.
Some of us
have gotten the
idea that it isn't
spiritual to do
good things for
ourselves.**

*How is it that I, a follower of Christ
(whose yoke is supposed to be easy
and burden light), have so much stress
that I'm in this much pain?*

Shortly before Mattie Ann died, she told me, "Well, it's God-time! Doctors have told me they've done everything possible for me. So now I am in His hands." As hard as the impossible places are, to be in the hands of our awesome God is a good place to be.

Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through a great victory at the Red Sea. At a mountaintop retreat with God, he received the Ten Commandments. However, as he came down from the mountain, he was stunned to see his people worshipping a golden calf. His plea to God: "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us?" (Exodus 33:15,16). God hid Moses in the cleft of the rock, and as Moses saw His glory pass by he was able to continue.

Discouraging times come to those in ministry leadership. We sometimes face impossible situations, give it all we have, and still fail. We can identify with Moses, "God, we can't go one more step if we don't have a concept of Your glory!"

God is faithful, though, and as we sit in His presence His glory is reflected from us (2 Corinthians 3:18).

A LEADER REMEMBERS WHY SHE'S LEADING.

Why do we do the things we do, assume certain roles? The things that motivate us, the great quests in our lives, often are like chasing rainbows. They are illusionary and evaporate before our eyes even as we move toward them. We want to be loved, to have significance, to make a difference for God. Sometimes our motives get all blurred between doing things for love and doing things out of love.

We do enormous things to make love happen—marry the right person, engage ourselves in ministry, get our biblical doctrines straight, attend seminars, and read books on how to love. However, love cannot be forced. It is like

the blossoming of a beautiful rose. God plants the seed of love and encourages, "Learn of Me." It is in the learning, in letting myself be drawn to Him, that it happens. When I am all caught up in the doing, I expect results-payment due for service rendered. Real love is a by-product of relationship: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear. We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:18,19).

We must realize the debt is paid. God said, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you" (Jeremiah 31:3). I find myself arguing, "I must learn to accept Christ's love so I can love in return." However, as I study His Word, He says to me in a myriad of ways, "No, that is not the way of love. You do not accept this love to do more. Only accept this love. As you abide in the vine, you will bear fruit-out of humility, gratitude, and fullness." This is how compassion is born: love experienced, that reaches out to touch another

with that love. "For the love of Christ constrains us" (2 Corinthians 5:14). ■

**Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version.*

Nancie Carmichael is editor of Virtue Magazine and lives in Sisters, Oregon.

The *mystery* of the Great Commission



BY LOREN O. TRIPLETT

About 2,000 years ago Jesus declared what the mission of the Church would be—a staggering and seemingly impossible mission. He did not present it as an idea to be discussed or worked around but as a direct command. Today we call it the Great Commission.

It is the Great Commission because—

- it was given by Jesus Christ, to whom was given all authority in heaven and on earth.
- it actually picks up the story of the whole Bible—God's love for a lost race and His plan to save it.
- Jesus gave His life to make it doable.
- it was given to bless *every* person on earth.
- it is 2,000 years old and yet has not lost one bit of its meaning or validity. Our Lord's command is still, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16: 15, KJV).
- it is the functional centerpiece of God's plan to raise up a people for His own.
- it contains a great mystery. The Great Commission cannot be accomplished without understanding the key to the mystery.

Jesus knew He had almost finished His time on earth and sent word to His disciples to meet Him in Galilee. They trembled with uncertainty and doubt. Nevertheless, they went.

The Bible is so explicit in its revelation of the weakness of man. Here were 11 men who for 3½ years had partnered with Jesus, had seen all the miracles, heard the wisdom of His teachings, and knew He had risen from the dead. However, when He appeared to them some believed and some doubted. Jesus was ready to make His great pronouncement, and He didn't have a committed, united group to give it to.

The Eleven were not the most obvious candidates for missionary commissioning. The Son of God stood before them, and yet some were not sure who He was. How could they make up the original group of world changers? What kind of risk was God ready to take? It was obvious they were still 11 weak, imperfect, untrained men.

Jesus began to speak and immediately commanded their attention with His astonishing pronouncement: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." His tone and demeanor made them somehow understand that He was the One before whom "every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2: 10, 11*).

His next word was *therefore*. It underscored the reason they should listen and respond: "I am the ultimate authority. Therefore, obey what I say to you." They must have somehow caught the inference of His imminent departure and urgently needed to know what they should do next. Now they were 11 alert, believing men, held fast

in their readiness to obey their divine Commander.

This is the command He gave them: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28: 19,20).

Ways To Accomplish Great Commission Success

To be Pentecostal is to be a missionary. The disciples' experience on the Day of Pentecost explains the ways Great Commission success can be accomplished today. That original outpouring of the Holy Spirit brought these things:

- *Supernatural boldness to witness. "When the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8).*
- *Supernatural motivation to go everywhere to obey the Great Commission—not just in Jerusalem but to the ends of the earth.*
- *Divine acceptance of the differences of the human race—the removal of racial barriers.*
- *Expectation of and the use of signs and wonders as Jesus promised.*
- *Understanding of the worldwide dimension of God's plan for all people.*

God did not give us an impossible task. The key to the mystery is the promise of the Spirit.

***The plan
was simple:
make disciples
and teach
them to make
disciples, who
would teach
others to make
disciples.***

They must have been stunned. What could have gone through their minds at the radical lifelong implications of His command? Jesus did not keep them waiting long but revealed the mystery of the Great Commission.

They were not to go and obey in their own strength and understanding but were to expect empowerment as a promised gift from God.

The Gospel of Luke mentions Jesus' instructions twice. The disciples were (1) to return to Jerusalem and (2) stay in the city until they were clothed with power from on high (24:49). In Acts 1 Luke recorded it again (1:4-8).

The disciples returned to Jerusalem, and in a few days they were ready to obey the Great Commission. Their empowerment by the Holy Spirit came, and the mystery of their commission to

change the world was solved. The secret was the coming of the Holy Spirit. Peter's first attempt at preaching resulted in 3,000 new disciples. He began teaching them all that Jesus had commanded, which included the last command to "make disciples of all nations."

Now there were at least 3,011 Great Commission Christians with the mandate of their Lord burning in their hearts. It was only a few days until thousands more were added to the cycle that the Great Commission was designed to produce. The plan was simple: make disciples and teach them to make disciples, who would teach others to make disciples. This method was so successful the Eleven (untrained men) and those they trained were identified as "these that have turned the world

Our Vows to God

I vow not to turn aside but use every means and sacrifice to reach the lost and disciple them until they do the same.

Like the first 11 disciples, I vow to:

- *Accept the authority of Jesus Christ.*
- *Accept the challenge to obey Him all the way to the ends of the earth.*
- *Accept His plan of discipling and teaching all believers that they too must obey the Great Commission.*
- *Accept the unchanging urgent need for the anointing and empowerment of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.*

The promise of the Father is the secret to successful obedience to the Great Commission.

upside down" (Acts 17:6, KJV).

They went everywhere preaching and demonstrating power. They didn't turn the world upside down with techniques, oratory, or skilled administration but with the power of their secret—the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Those first generations of the Early Church saw Rome and the known world recognize the power of the kingdom of God. Those 11 men were a tiny beginning that proved mighty as the exponential factor of the Holy Spirit empowered them.

My prayer is, "Oh, God! Do it again!" If that prayer is answered, it will come as a result of at least three fresh revelations to an obedient Church.

THE GREAT COMMISSION DEALS BASICALLY WITH JESUS' AUTHORITY.

The spiritual impertinence of our day is the heartbreak of heaven. What kind of relationship do we have with the King of the Kingdom when we allow ourselves to pick and choose the commands we are willing to recognize and obey? Our open refusal to live in acceptance of the full authority of the Lord Jesus Christ allows the plan of the Great Commission to be undermined and even set aside by many who call Him Lord. With all authority in heaven and on earth having been given to Jesus, there is only one correct response to His command, "Yes, Lord." Any other reply is a refusal to acknowledge His authority.

His authority is established forever. We must bow before it. The light of the gospel of the Kingdom has come to us to be passed on to others. This is not optional. The King of kings and Lord of lords speaks with the authority of heaven and earth. We must arise to the highest level of commitment to obey literally the Great Commission—His will for us all.

THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A DOABLE TASK.

The enemy wants us convinced that the challenge of giving an adequate expla-

nation to our entire generation cannot be done. He wants us to believe the task is too big, too complicated, too demanding, and too costly.

We need a new revelation of the raceless scope of God's saving grace and must believe that God is not willing that any of earth's 5.7 billion inhabitants be lost. What would happen if every believer would literally obey the Great Commission? The obvious is haunting. It is doable, but everything we do seems tragically targeted toward only a small part of the whole.

So few make plans with the dimensions worthy of the Kingdom and have dreams as big as God's willingness to save. What can cure us of the tragic plague of small expectations? The task is doable. Ask the Lord of the harvest to reveal the significance of that truth.

WITHOUT THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE ARE TOO ORDINARY AND TOO WEAK TO HANDLE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION.

Jesus warned the Eleven they should not leave Jerusalem—not to begin being world changers—until they received the promise of the Father. We, too, must take the same warning. It is still not by might nor human power but by the Spirit.

Every generation must accept the Great Commission responsibility as its own—the authority given to Jesus Christ. They must accept the challenge to obey Him to the ends of the earth, accept the plan of discipling and teaching others all that Jesus has commanded, and accept the unchanging, urgent need for the anointing and empowering of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. •

**Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.*

Loren O. Triplett is executive director of Division of Foreign Missions, Springfield, Missouri.



The Groanings of Romans 8:26*

A two-word phrase in Romans 8:26 is the subject of much discussion and difference among New Testament scholars. Sample translations of this phrase

(stenagmois alalētois) follow:

- * "groanings which cannot be uttered" (KJV and NKJV)
- * "sighs too deep for words" (NRSV)
- * "groans that words cannot express" (NIV)
- * "groanings too deep for words" (NASB)

BY ANTHONY D. PALMA

This article focuses on the noun *stenagmos* and its modifier *alalētos*. For ease of discussion, these singular, nominative forms will be used.

THE NOUN

The meaning of *stenagmos* is simple--sigh, groan, or groaning. It occurs only twice in the New Testament and about 20 times in the Greek version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint), where it translates six different Hebrew words. In its different verb forms (*stenazo*, *sustenazo*, and *anastenazo*) it is found eight times in the New Testament and about 20 times in the Greek Old Testament, where it translates nine different Hebrew words. The verb, like the noun, generally means to sigh or to groan.

Stephen quoted Exodus 3:7, "I have certainly seen the oppression of My people in Egypt, and have heard their groans" (Acts 7:34). Examples of usage in the Septuagint include the intense pain felt by a woman in travail (Jeremiah 4:31-"the anguish as of one giving birth to her first child") and the groaning that takes place when one is in distress (Psalm 38:8-"I groan because of the agitation of my heart").

The verb in the Septuagint expresses a number of different but related ideas: crying out for help (Job 30:25), sighing as an expression of grief (Ezekiel 9:4), mourning (Isaiah 19:8),

sighing or groaning (Isaiah 24:7; Lamentations 1:8,21), groaning of the wounded (Ezekiel 26:15). New Testament examples include grumbling, complaining or groaning against someone (James 5:9), and grief in contrast to joy (Hebrews 13:17).

Jesus, in His humanness, was twice the subject of this verb. When a deaf man was brought to Him, Mark said that "looking up to heaven, he sighed [*stenazo*] and said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened'" (7:34, NRSV). In the next chapter Mark recorded Jesus' reaction to the sign-seeking Pharisees: "And sighing deeply [*anastenazo*] in His spirit. He said, 'Why does this generation seek for a sign?'" (8:12).

The verb occurs twice in the immediate context of Romans 8:26. Verse 22 states that "the whole creation groans [*sustenazo*-groans together] and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." The following verse says, "Even we ourselves groan [*stenazo*] within ourselves." These three occurrences of the *stenagmos/stenazo* words are in an eschatological context which must be understood in the light of the original creation and the fall of man.

In our present, not fully redeemed state we, along with the rest of creation, groan for the reversal of the curse. A close parallel is in 2 Corinthians 5:2,4. Concerning the redemption of the body, Paul said that "in this house, we groan [*stenazo*], longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven" and further that "while we are in this tent, we groan [*stenazo*], being burdened, because we... want... to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life."

This is reminiscent of the eschatological note struck by Isaiah which, while applying strictly to Israel's return from captivity, foreshadows the ultimate redemption of God's

people: "They will find gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing [stenazo] will flee away" (Isaiah 35:10; 51:11).

THE MODIFIER

Alalitos generally means "unexpressed, wordless, not to be uttered, unutterable, not to be expressed in words." It, along with its cognates, is a negative of the verb *lalea-to* speak. This modifier occurs only once in all of Scripture. Since it is virtually impossible to think of groans/sighs as being inaudible or silent, it is important to investigate the connection between *alaletos* and *stenagmos*.

A related adjective (*alalos*) describes persons who are mute or dumb (Mark 7:37; 9:17,25); the idea is that of speechlessness. But it is the verb form (*alalazo*) that occurs most frequently in Scripture, with meanings such as: to wail or lament (Jeremiah 4:8; 25:34; Mark 5:38); to ring loudly or to clang (Psalm 150:5; 1 Corinthians 13:1 ["clanging cymbal"]); to utter a joyful shout (Psalms 47:1; 66:1); to repeat frequently the cry *alala*, which was a battle cry (Joshua 6:20): "The people shouted [alalazo] with a great shout [alalagmos]" just before the walls of Jericho fell.

All of the foregoing militates against the idea that Paul was speaking about silent groaning-an obvious oxymoron. *Alaletos* and its cognates involve some kind of vocalization, though it may be in sounds and not words-or at least words not understood by the speaker or his hearers. At this juncture the ministry of the Holy Spirit comes into play.

SPEAKING IN TONGUES?

Equally competent scholars are divided on whether the expression *stenagmois alaletos* refers to speaking in tongues, exclusively or partly, or to some unrelated phenomenon. This phrase is unique in Scripture; therefore, it will

be helpful to look at a passage that is conceptually parallel.

Since Romans 8:26 is related to the ministry of the Holy Spirit in prayer on behalf of believers, it can be associated with Paul's statements in 1 Corinthians 14:14,15: "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.... I shall pray with the spirit." According to Romans 8:26, the Holy Spirit "helps our weakness ... the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words."

Eminent scholars like Ernst Kaesemann identify these groanings as "glossolalic utterances." F. Godet, a well-known Swiss exegete of the late 19th century, made the same identification: "We here find ourselves in a domain analogous to that of the glossais *lalein*, speaking in tongues, to which 1 Corinthians 14 refers; compare verses 14 and 15."

Others like F.F. Bruce and C.K. Barrett, in their respective commentaries on the Book of Romans, allow for the possibility that the expression includes speaking in tongues. I cite these individuals because none of them, to my knowledge, had or has a bias in favor of Pentecostal exegesis.

Note the connection between Paul's and Jude's concept of praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20). Responsible exegesis requires some restraint in making an absolute and exclusive identification of the groanings in Romans 8:26 with glossolalia, but the evidence points in that direction. *Alaletos* may indeed mean that the groaning is wordless to the speaker, since he does not understand what the Spirit is praying for and through him. This would be parallel to Paul's statement that when he prays in tongues, "my mind is unfruitful" (1 Corinthians 14:14). ■■

**Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.*

Anthony D. Palma, Th.D., a long-time Assemblies of God educator, lives in Phoenix, Arizona.

Is Pentecostalism Seeker-Hostile?

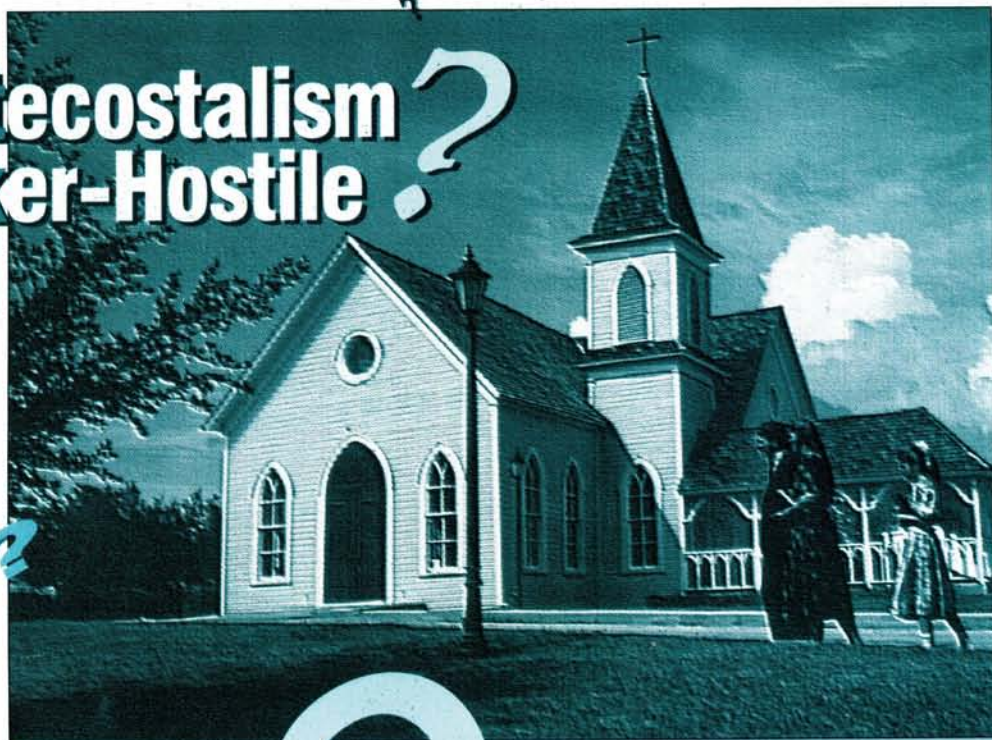


PHOTO BY TRUIT ROGERS



BY ALTON GARRISON

Churches are going to new extremes to be contemporary and relevant. Harry and Mary have been introduced to the church world. Reaching them and others like them is the goal of many churches. A strategy has been developed to make Harry, Mary, and their son Larry welcome and comfortable in our churches. This seeker-driven ministry model is the new paradigm for the church in the 1990s.

The seeker-driven church attempts to introduce the unchurched to religion without making them feel uncomfortable or confronted. Hymns, altar calls, stewardship education, gifts of the Spirit, and confrontational preaching are subordinated to the comfort level of the unbeliever. The guest must feel safe, secure, accepted, and loved without being pressured for any kind of emotional, financial, or spiritual response.

Conviction, confrontation, response, and sin doctrine are relegated to other services when the guest is not likely to be present. All aspects of the church's ministry must be presented in a refined, elegant, and excellent way—one which is capable of competing with the world. Music programs use current instruments instead of the traditional organ and piano. Preachers should not

stand behind a pulpit and should consider dressing in a more casual and contemporary way. People choose to attend this kind of church because of the beautiful building, fashionable crowd, professional printing, dramatic drama, and thoughtful lectures.

The question which confronts us is: Should we sacrifice our traditions and Pentecostal heritage to conform to this new paradigm? Pentecostalism by its very nature is seeker-hostile. Imagine first-time guests walking into a building and being surrounded by people with tears flowing down their faces, hands uplifted to heaven, and speaking in different languages.

Imagine their surprise when, in a quiet moment of worship, someone begins to speak loudly in a different language, followed by an interpretation. If we believe the pundits, Harry, Mary, and Larry would race for the nearest exit to escape their discomfort. If they stayed through the worship, they would undoubtedly be offended by the offering and appalled by the altar call.

Should we, a Pentecostal movement, abandon our distinctive in order to be palatable to the unchurched? Is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, and the unshakable truth of the

Word of God able to shake today's world as it did in the Book of Acts?

Some churches in the Assemblies of God will not allow a message in tongues on Sunday morning, relegate the gifts of the Spirit to a back room, and embrace this contemporary paradigm. In their quest to reach the unchurched, they have knowingly sacrificed many traditional elements.

I believe in the importance of the seeker. In this era of transfer growth we desperately need to reach those to whom the gospel has not been delivered. Unchurched Harry, Mary, and Larry need a place where they can be taught, trained, and discipled. However, First Assembly in North Little Rock has decided not to become a seeker-driven church. Instead we strive to be seeker-aware.

The unchurched must be confronted with their sinful nature and ultimate destination if they choose to continue in their life of sin. They, like others in this tumultuous age, need the power of the Holy Spirit to energize their lives, enhance their convictions, and empower them to witness. However, we recognize that an excellence in programs, preaching, printing, and productions may lead them to visit our congregation first.

How can we maintain our Pentecostal heritage and still reach the unchurched? "The man who fears God will avoid all extremes" (Ecclesiastes 7:18*). At First Assembly we preach and practice balance. We have determined balance points which we strive to maintain to accomplish both objectives.

ALLOW ANONYMITY OF GUESTS BUT APPRECIATE THEIR PRESENCE

Guests to First Assembly are directed by an outgoing parking lot crew and shuttle dri-

verso Upon reaching the building they are welcomed by our corps of greeters and assisted in finding the class or ministry they desire. Directions are displayed on large, easy-to-read signs in every hallway. Information packets are easily found. Guests are invited to a reception after each week's service if they wish to meet the pastor and staff.

However, our guests are not asked to stand, wear a button, or paste stickers on their lapels. People want to feel welcomed but also may wish to view our service quietly and anonymously.

The church world offers many options. Church growth experts champion the super-market approach to ministry where varied opportunities and programs are found under one roof. Unchurched Harry and Mary want the opportunity to shop our church and ensure that it is their correct choice.

I understand that First Assembly is not the right church for everyone who visits. I remind our congregation often, "If God led you here, you will not leave. If He did not, you probably won't stay."

Our church retains approximately 21 percent of those who visit; the others continue their shopping.

FUNCTIONAL TEACHING BUT FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS

Baby boomers and baby busters want principles they can apply to their everyday lives. How-to sermons are popular in this age of information. However, our congregation not only receives the how-to sermons but also you-should principles contained in Scripture. Timeless truths are presented in the context of life application.

In my preaching I seek to balance the head (doctrine), the heart (devotion), the

*We cannot
compromise our
Pentecostal
heritage
to reach
those who
are seeking.*

hands (duty), and holiness (demeanor). The mature believer must not only understand the appropriate behavior of Christianity but also the corresponding beliefs.

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE BUDGET BUT RECEPTION OF THE BLESSING

Many have abandoned offering appeals in their quest to accommodate the boomers and busters who are apt to respond, "They are just after my money."

First Assembly still needs offerings. I have not yet discovered the method to finance the spreading of the gospel and avoid financial commitment. However, our people are not motivated to give by pressure, predicaments, or personal recognition. Instead, we teach stewardship education, celebrate God's faithfulness, and practice fiscal integrity. I want our congregation to be motivated to give by God's promises, not by my fund-raising techniques. We acknowledge God's blessings on the giver but refuse to make wealth our objective.

Before every major building-fund offering our church takes, we first adopt a major missions project. I want to ensure that our priorities and God's priorities are the same.

SEEKER SENSITIVITY BUT THE POWER OF PENTECOST

At First Assembly we welcome Harry, Mary, and little Larry. We want seekers. I believe in excellence in music, elegant edifices, efficiency, and enthusiasm. We have computers, fax machines, video enhancement, laser printers, television equipment, beepers, mobile phones, E-mail, and Internet. I love using technological tools to reach our world better. (How did the church in the Book of Acts ever grow without these advancements?)

Technology has changed our world, but it has never turned a hell-bound sinner into a Christian. Samuel Chadwick said, "The sign of Christianity is not a cross but a tongue of fire." We must not compromise our original Christianity. Pentecostalism did not begin with the information age but 2,000 years ago in the Upper Room. Boomers, Busters, Generation X, and generations to come need to be touched by the life-altering power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot compromise our

In his book,

Prepare Your Church for the Future, Carl George lists several needs that the church must address if it is to be successful. They are summed up in these statements:

- 1. I still value a personal touch.*
- 2. Help me know how to filter the 1990s.*
- 3. Enable me to cope with change.*
- 4. Capitalize on what motivates me.*
- 5. Show me an organizational structure where people matter.*
- 6. Show me people who care.*

Pentecostal heritage to reach those who are seeking. We are sensitive to their wishes but know they need to experience the power of Pentecost. Seekers may see things in our service they do not understand or agree with, but God can supernaturally draw them in spite of moments others would deem seeker-hostile.

A.W Tozer wrote, "The Great Commission is not the first call to the church." He reminds us Jesus first told His disciples to go to Jerusalem and tarry until they were endued with power from on high. Tozer concludes Jesus had no desire for them to do the work of God until they had a powerful

*Many churches
have traded
holiness for
hype; forgotten
righteousness
for ritual;
mastered
the form of
religion but
forgotten the
force, the Holy
Spirit of God.*

encounter with Him. Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17, KJV). Churches that have diluted the original mission statement of our Lord have "committed two sins: they have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water" (Jeremiah 2:13). Many churches have traded holiness for hype; forgotten righteousness for ritual; mastered the form of religion but forgotten the force, the Holy Spirit of God.

Whatever our approach may be to reach this generation, we must not exclude the dynamics of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "The wind blows wherever it pleases" (John 3:8). I believe in structure and desire an ordered, mannerly, and excellent worship celebration. But I recognize that the Spirit of God cannot be programmed. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will interrupt our agenda to do as He pleases. When God arrives on the scene, people quickly forget if the service style conforms to their individual preferences.

On the Day of Pentecost, when many thought the disciples were drunk, Peter did not apologize for their actions; instead, he said, "Let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say" (Acts 2:14). His

explanation must have satisfied those confused seekers-3,000 of them were saved. Has God changed? Can the same Spirit that brought 3,000 into the Kingdom touch Harry, Mary, and Larry?

God and the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit are still the same. Methods may change, but the message must not. The practices may need periodic adjustment to be relevant, but the principles are eternal, ageless, and abundantly powerful.

I thank God for renewing our emphasis on the seeker. We must reach our generation. I have learned much from the seeker-driven model. I want the unchurched to enjoy our services. But my prayer is "Pentecost now." ~

**Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.*

Alton Garrison is pastor of First Assembly of God, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

*Technology has
changed our world,
but it has never
turned
a hell-bound sinner
into a Christian.*



Sexual Ethics in the Ministry

BY WAYDE GOODALL

Ethics are the rules or standards governing the conduct of the members of a profession. Evangelical faith without Christian ethics is a travesty to the gospel. We understand the incredible damage that comes to a minister's life, his family, and the congregation when he violates sexual ethics. We also need to understand in our profession the necessity of continually reminding ourselves and our peers that we must hold the standard high in this area so as to protect our Christian testimony and the precious body of believers we serve.

QUESTIONS MINISTERS NEED TO ASK

1. Do you know your risk areas?

The 1988 *Leadership* poll surveyed nearly a thousand pastors (30 percent response rate) and equivalent number of nonpastor subscribers to *Christianity Today* magazine. The findings reveal a pervasive and painful problem in Christian ministry, one that a pastor revealed "covers the greatest agonies of marriage life." In the survey 12 percent of pastors and 23 percent of the subscribers admitted to extramarital intercourse. Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of the pastors acknowledged some form of sexually inappropriate behavior while in local church ministry.

Among those with whom pastors were involved sexually, 69 percent came from within their own congregations, including 17 percent who were counselees. Physical and emotional attraction was noted as the major reason for the misconduct by 78 percent of the respondent pastors while marital dissatisfaction was noted by 41 percent.

2. Do you consciously or subconsciously advocate or engage in nonerotic contact (hugs, pats, putting your arm around a shoulder) with opposite-sex parishioners only?

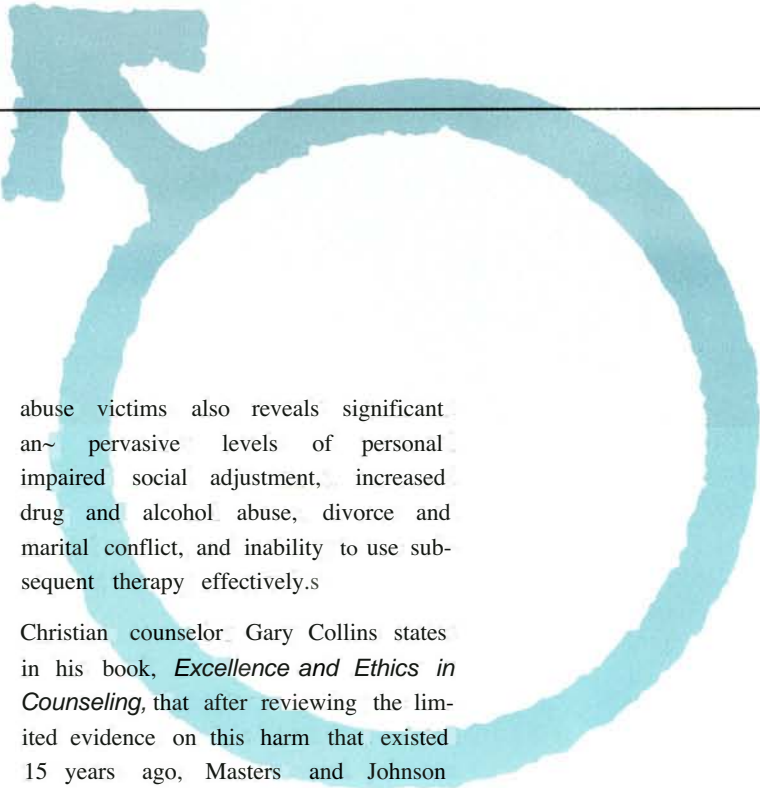
It has been discovered that such action among counselors is not only sex-biased but a practice at high risk for later sexual indiscretion.² Ministers must be careful of this kind of behavior.

In the *Leadership* Family and Ministry Survey it was found that the ministers who completed the survey fantasized about sex with someone other than their spouses on an average of 23 times a year.³ This activity can only lead to pain and damage to all involved. James tells us that when lust "has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:15*). Do you allow yourself to engage in sexual fantasy about your parishioners? The writer of Proverbs reminds that as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7, KJV).

3. Do you ask unnecessary questions or details about a client's (parishioner's) sex life?

Do you share about your own sex life? Do you initiate conversation about sexual problems, preferences, or fantasies for the purposes of sexual gratification? Do you make comments on sexual or physical characteristics or imagined sexual performance? Counselor licensing boards consider this sexual exploitation, and it may be punishable as a felony criminal offense.

Ministers must use extreme caution when discussing anything sexual, especially with a person of the opposite sex.



Remember Jesus' counsel, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart; and they defile the man" (Matthew 15:18).

4. Do you take advantage of the perceived power differential you hold over the parishioner because of your position of authority and expertise?

We must continually remind ourselves that the people we minister to put us on pedestals. When you use your power as a minister to take advantage of a parishioner, you are courting trouble. Our directive should be, "Do to others what you would have them do to you" (Matthew 7:12).

5. Are you aware that people with past sexual assault and/or abuse may be more vulnerable to successive victimization?⁴

This awareness must lead ministers to be extracautious in avoiding sexually questionable behavior with people who suffered in this way. The pain these people have gone through is something that only the Lord can thoroughly heal. Should a minister take advantage of such a person, the damage done is not only sinful but often tragic.

Significant personal, marital, vocational, and financial harm is suffered by the majority of people who become involved sexually with another person in a ministry-related relationship.

A study of California psychologists who worked with clients who had been involved sexually with former therapists reported that 90 percent had suffered adverse effects; 11 percent required hospitalization; and 1 percent committed suicide. Direct assessment of therapeutic

abuse victims also reveals significant and pervasive levels of personal impaired social adjustment, increased drug and alcohol abuse, divorce and marital conflict, and inability to use subsequent therapy effectively.⁵

Christian counselor Gary Collins states in his book, *Excellence and Ethics in Counseling*, that after reviewing the limited evidence on this harm that existed 15 years ago, Masters and Johnson asserted that it should be viewed and prosecuted as a form of rape. The charge of a "conspiracy of silence" that works to deny, minimize, and ultimately protect male-dominated professions and ministry cannot and should not be dismissed by the church in view of the manifold evidence regarding this epidemic. Again, as in all other areas of ministerial and professional misconduct, failure of the professions and the church to control its harmful members invites the legal control it detests.⁶

6. Do you consider yourself to be above or beyond temptation?

If so, this can be a dangerous conclusion. Even the Lord in His human state was tempted, "yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15, KJV). Jesus used the Scripture as His defense when He was tempted (Luke 4:1-13).

The *Leadership Ministry Survey* asked the question, "How often in the past year have you looked at sexually explicit media or pornography (in print, video, or movies)?" Of those who responded 2 percent said they did so regularly, 11 percent said "sometimes," 17 percent said "seldom" (yearly), 32 percent said "rarely," and 38 percent said "never."⁷

Temptation is a reality in the minister's life just as it is in anyone else's life. We constantly need to guard ourselves from anything that would encourage sinful temptation. What a person feeds through the eyes, ears, or conversations becomes part of his life.

7. Do you maintain a consistent and devoted time of prayer and study of God's Word daily?

Our personal devotional life will give us a defense against Satan's attacks. It is critical that we maintain a life of prayer and study in God's Word. Most of the ministers who have failed morally did not have a consistent devotional life.

8. Do you have an accountability group of other ministers with whom you meet regularly?

The *Leadership Ministry Survey* found that 55 percent of ministers do not have an accountability group or even a close friend with whom they could discuss sexual temptations.⁸

"Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed" (James 5:16).

9. Have you confronted an individual with sexual abuse, exploitation, or harassment in your own life in counseling with a Christian counselor?

If a minister has experienced this kind of trauma, discussing it with a qualified Christian counselor is recommended. Bring the pain, loss, anger, and damaged self-esteem to Christ for healing; thus the same agony will not be passed on to others. A godly counselor can help.

10. If you have experienced sexual temptation, and if it is not quickly, easily corrected, have you referred that person to another Christian counselor and sought help for yourself? Have you immediately referred types of people or cases which seem to trigger sexual temptation in you and sought to discover why?

God instructs us to flee immorality (1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 5:22).

11. Have you committed and devoted time and energy to your own spouse to strengthen your Christian marriage and thus reduce the temptation of sexual sin?

People seldom yield to temptation when they have a physically and emotionally fulfilling marriage. Paul gave married couples instruction on this in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5.

12. Are you aware of boundary violations, manipulation, and dependence needs of borderline personality disorder people?

Ministers need to be aware of the learned subtle seduction-conscious or subconscious-of victims of sexual abuse. Parishioners who have experienced sexual abuse may not be able to distinguish between erotic and nonerotic hugs and that any touch at all might cause them fear, pain, sexual arousal, and flashbacks.

Cocounseling can alleviate the temptation to succumb to boundary stretching, dependency, manipulation, and seduction by borderline personalities. "Patients with borderline personality disorder apparently constitute the majority of those patients who falsely accuse therapists of sexual involvement."⁹

13. Are you on guard for transference, with its power to produce flattering attitudes in the counselee, and of countertransference, with its potential to trigger the feeling that the pastor and only the pastor can save the client?

Again the technique of cocounseling can help to eliminate the transference potential. "Psychodynamically oriented therapists believe that the use of cotherapists reduces the intensity of the transference by dispersing it among the two, thereby facilitating the treatment of severely dis-

turbid patit'utS, "H' /...\$ much a;:po;:iblc a
llln\$Ter .can munsL:!' with His sK:ILISr',
bDard membel, of. Slaff member.

14. Are you on guard against deviating from your standard of moral ethics?

Danger signs include rationalizations such as, "I don't usually do this with others, but for you...." "Although I really didn't think I'd be doing this...." "I can't believe the feelings I am beginning to have toward you."¹¹

One of the blessings of the Holy Spirit is the conviction He brings when we get into a questionable situation or have a sinful thought. God has given us the ability to discern good from evil (Hebrews 5:14).

15. If you counsel opposite-sex people, do you avoid secluded offices or areas?

I hu'to: dcv:jut'd [H' (H) (OH)\$d rhp: t1PIL1-Silt' \$<:x Ilrlr.5;: in il-i dUTing daylinc
hL'Ilrl-i when my ~uelalY G 1)lllSid~ my
q'lnlet' door, my <l(l(r is: pdrtrialy open,
and with my W:ili: Jm::clll Wht'd-Vt'1' po<:
:il'IC' 1 iio)L)rmeer them in it n:stauran t
)r anolher' establistll[t'N fVJl(HUIS'mig.

I recomitend thul pu:IVJ: pill withfow:
jn (he t1D)-S Of TjL-r)tkr:: where [ICop1:
(t1l b,k in bul pwbabLy n<:l J'rar lht'
WCN'r::iti-1 jD rhl-)ffke. L:inisICrs
:shmlld alway! f'xrer in <m<:lht'r (in jst:it)
colln:::VJ: ir lht-j' :111Ticp:m-() I'fohlem
Wjrh 5eXII(j) relnpl:ition on the L'd.it lff
the client (Ir minbICL.

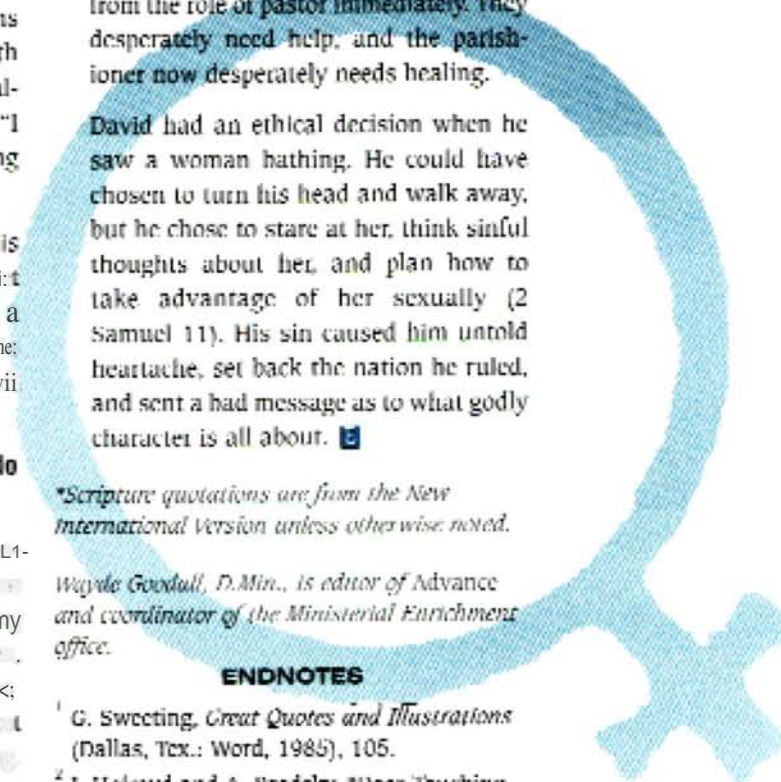
16. If you have reasonable cause to suspect a client has been a victim of sexual misconduct by a mental health services provider, even clergy, must states require that it be reported to the proper authorities.

17. Plan now a way of escape should you ever be in a compromising situation.

c:od (llw(Ys will proviut' a wuy if t'it:1pe
slilluld .l Ilun:::lt' l): in il l)t1~:;hle mln-
p'tomi"ll4~ siTUatIls (1 Corinhi'llls
1:0:1j). Helurt' my ~:clm~:ibilib) Of lht<:
h'appt'liu:: jI wL4let he etiod to t'rhC:it:it:
hlwr YClll will gel uul uf {hc daugt'r.

PreV'ChliV' plartulng and Thoi:~t' lls a
good (ollic)-

Ministers who dishonor God by betraying the trust of their parishioner in sexual misconduct must remove themselves from the role of pastor immediately. They desperately need help, and the parishioner now desperately needs healing.

David had an ethical decision when he saw a woman bathing. He could have chosen to turn his head and walk away, but he chose to stare at her, think sinful thoughts about her, and plan how to take advantage of her sexually (2 Samuel 11). His sin caused him untold heartache, set back the nation he ruled, and sent a bad message as to what godly character is all about. 

*Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

Wayde Goodall, D.Min., is editor of *Advance* and coordinator of the Ministerial Enrichment office.

ENDNOTES

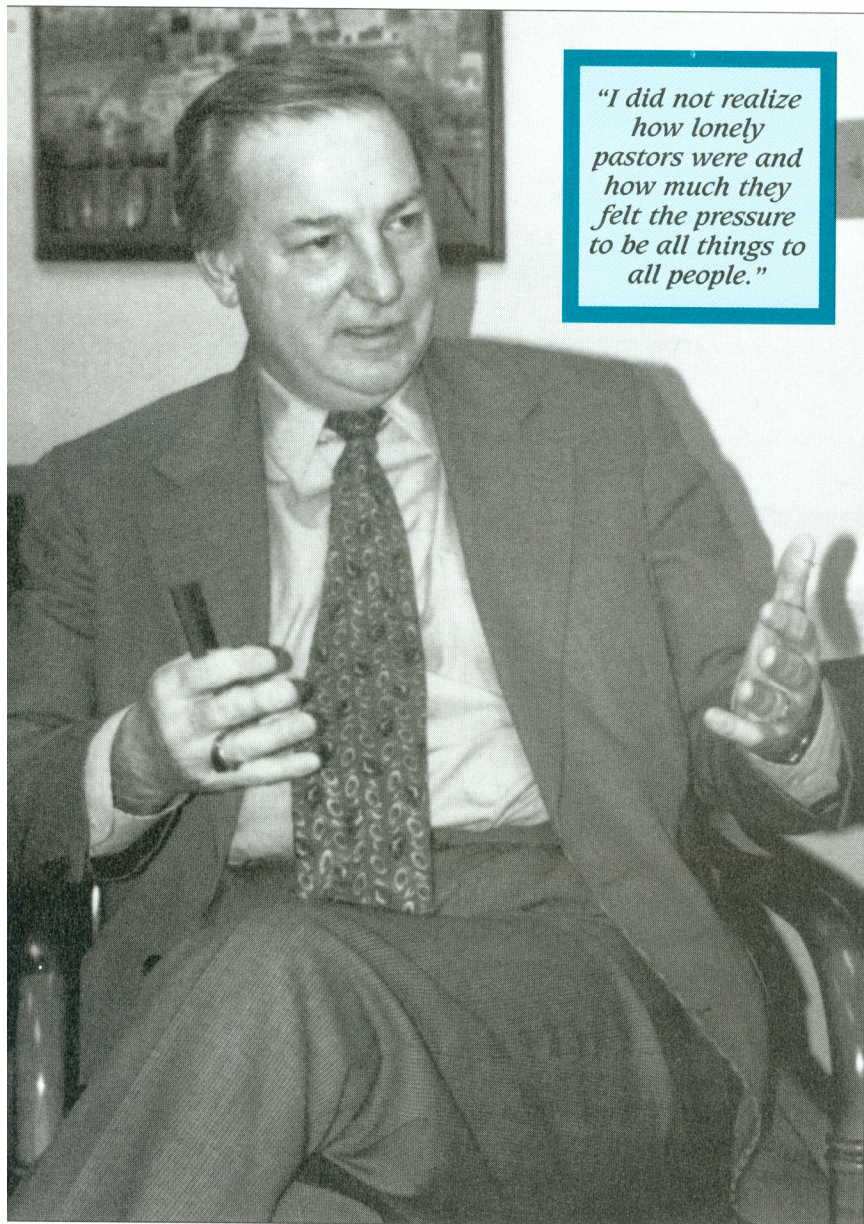
- ¹ G. Sweeting, *Great Quotes and Illustrations* (Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1985), 105.
- ² J. Holroyd and A. Brodsky, "Does Touching Patients Lead to Sexual Intercourse?" *Journal of Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 11 (1980), 807-811.
- ³ *Leadership Family and Ministry Survey Summary*, Christianity Today, Inc. (1992), 13.
- ⁴ R. Folman, "Therapist-Patient Sex: Attraction and Boundary Problems," *Psychotherapy*, 28 (1991), 168-173.
- ⁵ Gary Collins, *Excellence and Ethics in Counseling* (Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1991), 66-67.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.
- ⁷ *Leadership*, 17.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.
- ⁹ T. Gutheil, "Borderline Personality Disorder, Boundary Violations, and Patient Therapist Sex: Medicolegal Pitfalls," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 146 (1989) 600.
- ¹⁰ D. Benner, ed., *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 242.
- ¹¹ "The Christian Counseling Connection," *Newsletter of the American Association of Christian Counseling* (Fall 1994), 5.



INTERVIEW WITH H.B. LONDON

Restoration & Renewal

IN THE LIFE OF THE PASTOR



"I did not realize how lonely pastors were and how much they felt the pressure to be all things to all people."

Advance Editor Wayde Goodall interviewed H.B. London, assistant to Focus on the Family president James Dobson, Colorado Springs, Colorado, concerning his ministry to pastors and their families. London's insights, experience, and

wisdom provide a wealth of help that will strengthen pastors spiritually and guide them in setting priorities and establishing boundaries around their professional and personal lives.

PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT YOUR WORK WITH PASTORS ENTAILS.

H.B. LONDON: When I came to Focus on the Family in November 1991, there was no mandate, no job description. I had an office, a secretary, and a yellow pad with the mandate (if there was one) to create something.

The first thing we did was to try to come up with a reason for our being. It was simply stated, "To help facilitate restorations, spiritual restorations, and renewal in the life of the pastor," and then to come alongside and help them better organize their time, finance, and personal lives. So there was really a two-prong reason for what we do at Focus on the Family:

- (1) to strengthen our pastors and their families spiritually and
- (2) then try to strengthen the pastors' families in every other way.

WHEN YOU CAME TO FOCUS ON THE FAMILY, HOW LONG HAD YOU BEEN PASTORING?

LONDON: Thirty-one years—all on the west coast. I began a little Nazarene church in South Whittier, California, and then moved on to a little larger church in Bloomington, which was a steel mill town near Kaiser Steel. Next I moved to Salem, Oregon, where one of your colleagues, Denny Davis, and I worked in the same city. I stayed there nearly 18 years and took a little church to a big church.

Following this I moved to one of our largest denominational churches in Pasadena, California, where Pete Maravich

PHOTOS BY ROSALYN GOODALL

(the great basketball player) had a heart attack in our gymnasium. Jim Dobson also had a heart attack in our gymnasium. So my staff would say, "If H.B. ever asks you to go to the gym, whatever you do, don't go!"

I stayed 7 years. It was an unbelievable assignment because we had an indebtedness of \$7 million and a facility that was valued at \$25 million. One month our building payments alone were over \$140,000. I had the pressure of following a pastor who was near sainthood. He had been there 19 years and left the church with an unbelievable debt. I was still mourning leaving the church in Salem, so I wasn't much good for the first year and a half in Pasadena.

WHEN YOU LEFT PASTORING AND CAME INTO THIS WORK YOU SHIFTED FROM MINISTRY TO LAYPEOPLE TO MINISTRY TO PASTORS. WHAT SURPRISES DID YOU ENCOUNTER?

LONDON: I had not realized how lonely pastors were and how much they felt the pressure to be all things to all people. The other surprising thing I found was how dysfunctional many of the pastors' families really were—because of time restraints, financial problems, work schedules, children, and all the expectations of the churches, they really didn't get to be normal families. They battled it, but they just couldn't win. One of the great sorrows in the church today is the dysfunction we find in pastors' homes.

THAT LEADS ME TO MY NEXT QUESTION. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MAJOR CONCERNS IN PASTORS' LIVES TODAY?

LONDON: All the surveys (ours and other magazines) indicate that it is time pressure—the inability to minister successfully to a large congregation and then be a successful husband or wife to the family. It only makes sense when you think about it: 70

percent of all pastors' spouses work outside the home. They never have weekends free. Most pastors' days off are violated—for good or bad reasons. Most are underpaid and underappreciated—it begins to take its toll on how the family operates. Also, they begin to build up a resistance, not just to one another but to life itself. If they are not careful, they live an unnatural lifestyle as well.

YOU CAN BEGIN LIVING A LIFESTYLE THAT IS NOT REAL; THEN WHEN YOU COME HOME YOU FACE REALITY AGAIN. HOW DOES A PASTOR FIND BALANCE IN ALL OF THAT?

LONDON: It has a lot to do with who the wife is and who the kids are. My wife Beverly and I have been married 37 years. She never saw me as a pastor. I think she respected my profession, but when I came home I was husband. ("Here's the trash; take it out.") I was father. ("Here, go play ball with your kids.")

I battled her on that sometimes and tried to get her to understand how important I was, how busy I was, how significant I was, and what a difference I was making in the community. She would say, "Yeah, you can be as significant as you want, but if you are a failure in this household, then you really haven't accomplished anything." She said that as a pretty young pastor's wife and got my attention very early in the ministry.

AND HAS KEPT THAT ATTITUDE RIGHT ON THROUGH YOUR MINISTRY?

LONDON: As I am talking, I feel the thumb in my back. She has been a real leveler. I am hyper, emotional. I am not an extrovert, though people think I am. She keeps me focused. When I have a tendency to get down or to become somewhat depressed as I look at the world or the immensity of my



"We, as pastors, are collaborators with Christ."

task, she brings me back to reality and says, "Well, you are not God, so why should you think you have to solve all the problems anyway?"

That is an indictment to the whole church. Rather than realizing that we, as pastors, are collaborators with Christ, we tend to put Him on the side burner and think we have to build the church ourselves. That's really not the case.



Therefore, as I mentioned before, I see a lot of pastors being lonely, but I see a lot of them also feeling insecure because somebody has told them they have to be all things to all people. They realize that can't be. They have the frustration of realizing they are very human though God-ordained and God-directed. It is a realization all of us have to come to.

YOUR COUSIN, JAMES DOBSON, HAS ALWAYS HAD SUCH A BALANCED VIEWPOINT. IS A GOD SENT TO THE CHURCH AND OUR WORLD TODAY. YOU ARE A LOT LIKE HIM, H.B. IF YOU COULD TALK TO A PASTOR WHO IS WILLING TO DO WHATEVER YOU ASKED, HOW WOULD YOU TELL HIM TO PRIORITIZE HIS LIFE?

LONDON: Thanks for the compliment. Though I have grown up with Jim Dobson, I don't compare myself with him in any way. We are cousins-family, and I respect that part of our

lives so much.

I would say to the pastor and the family:

1. Your spiritual life is very essential. To have the audacity to go out into your world with your spiritual gauge half-empty or below is an insult to God, to the calling of ministry, and to your family. The number one thing you owe your congregation is a knowledge of your own reality in relationship with God.
2. The family is much more important than your ministry. When you are in it up to your eyebrows it is hard to realize that you can be a success in the pulpit and an abject failure at home and with your kids. Though you may be receiving men's applause, you boo yourself when you look in the mirror. You know better than anybody where you have failed.

We need to reestablish the home as a sanctuary for family where we understand each other, communicate better, affirm each other, root for each other, and everybody is a winner-nobody is a loser.

Beyond that, accountability is important. The average pastor is cordial, and we are friendly with one another, but we really don't lay our lives on the line for somebody. In the Assemblies of God as well as other denominations we have stood by and watched our colleagues destroy themselves simply because nobody would say, "Man, I'm not going to let you do this. I love you too much."

The list goes on and on. You probably notice that I haven't said anything about church growth because that is way down on my list. It may not have been when I was pastoring, so I have to be careful how I say that. However, 8 out of 10 college or seminary graduates will never pastor a church of more than 150. What that says for most of us is that we are never going to be megachurch pastors. We are going to be ordinary, wonderful husbands,

fathers, and churchmen who have been given the awesome responsibility of working with Jesus and building His church. If we don't keep that in perspective, we will always be chasing that elusive church or that elusive goal and will be unsatisfied with where God has us.

TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE, H.B. WHAT DO YOU DO?

LONDON: I have always been a kicker and screamer in my relationship with God--never moved gently into anything He has asked me to do. I have always wanted to know all the



answers to all the questions I had, and they didn't come.

I think two or three things:

1. I read a lot.
2. I surround myself with spiritual people.
3. I have a childlike faith, so when God speaks it doesn't take a lot to convince me.

I think I understand my frailty--that I am one step away from bankruptcy and heartbreak just because I am a human being. I am not a great prayer warrior, though I find myself praying all the time.

Someone said to Billy Graham: "If you had it to do over, what would you do?"

He said, "I would study more, travel less, and give more time to my family."

My deep regret is that in my early days of ministry I was married to the church and was an inadequate father and husband. I wasn't great. Suddenly, through various situations in my life, I realized that in some ways I was living a lie. I had to resurrect the whole concept of being the kind of father and husband that I needed to be.

HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN THAT HAPPENED?

LONDON: I think I was in my first church. I went there when I was 23. One night Beverly was so overwhelmed by the role of being a new mother and pastor's wife she said, "I can't do this. You are pastoring and being successful, but you are kinda leaving me out here to fend for myself. I can't do that anymore." That was a wake-up call.

The other wake-up call came when I had been in the ministry 10 or 15 years. I was traveling all over the country because whatever success was I had attained a certain measure of it, and they were flying me all over the country to tell my story. Then one night I was in my church study when suddenly an overwhelming feeling of failure came over me. I realized I was being a performer, not genuine.

We all have had moments of repen-

tance, but I walked down to the altar and asked God to take this whole thing away from me—let me sell shoes or do anything, just don't make me keep doing this and feeling as phony as I do. At that moment He kinda resigned my commission and started over.

Three things happened in my life:

1. I genuinely began to love people and put my family first.
2. The Word of God began to mean more to me than it ever had before.
3. I became bolder in my witnessing and my preaching.

I am sure I was filled with the Holy Spirit before that and don't know if it was a David Yonggi Cho "fourth dimension" or not, but it was a new dimension for me—a 38- or 39-year-old pastor—that catapulted me into a renewed kind of ministry.

WORKING WITH PASTORS NOW IS YOUR LIFE. DO YOU SEE SOME NEGATIVE NORMS THAT FRIGHTEN YOU?

LONDON: I see restlessness in the ministry. In my book, *the Heart if a Great Pastor*, I discuss how I see many pastors looking over God's shoulder rather than looking at His eyes. Looking over God's shoulder, we ask, "What do You have next for me? What's the next

church? Where is the next move? Where is the next step?" Rather, we should look into His eyes and say, "How can You help me succeed where I am right now?"

I think the other thing is (and I don't want this to seem disparaging because I am often accused of attacking the church growth world) that numbers, prestige, titles, buildings, and the accoutrement of position become more important to us than the genuine article. Like T.S. Eliot said, "The greatest treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason." Therefore, every pastor needs to ask himself often, "Why am I doing what I am doing? Is it really love for God, or is it just a profession?"

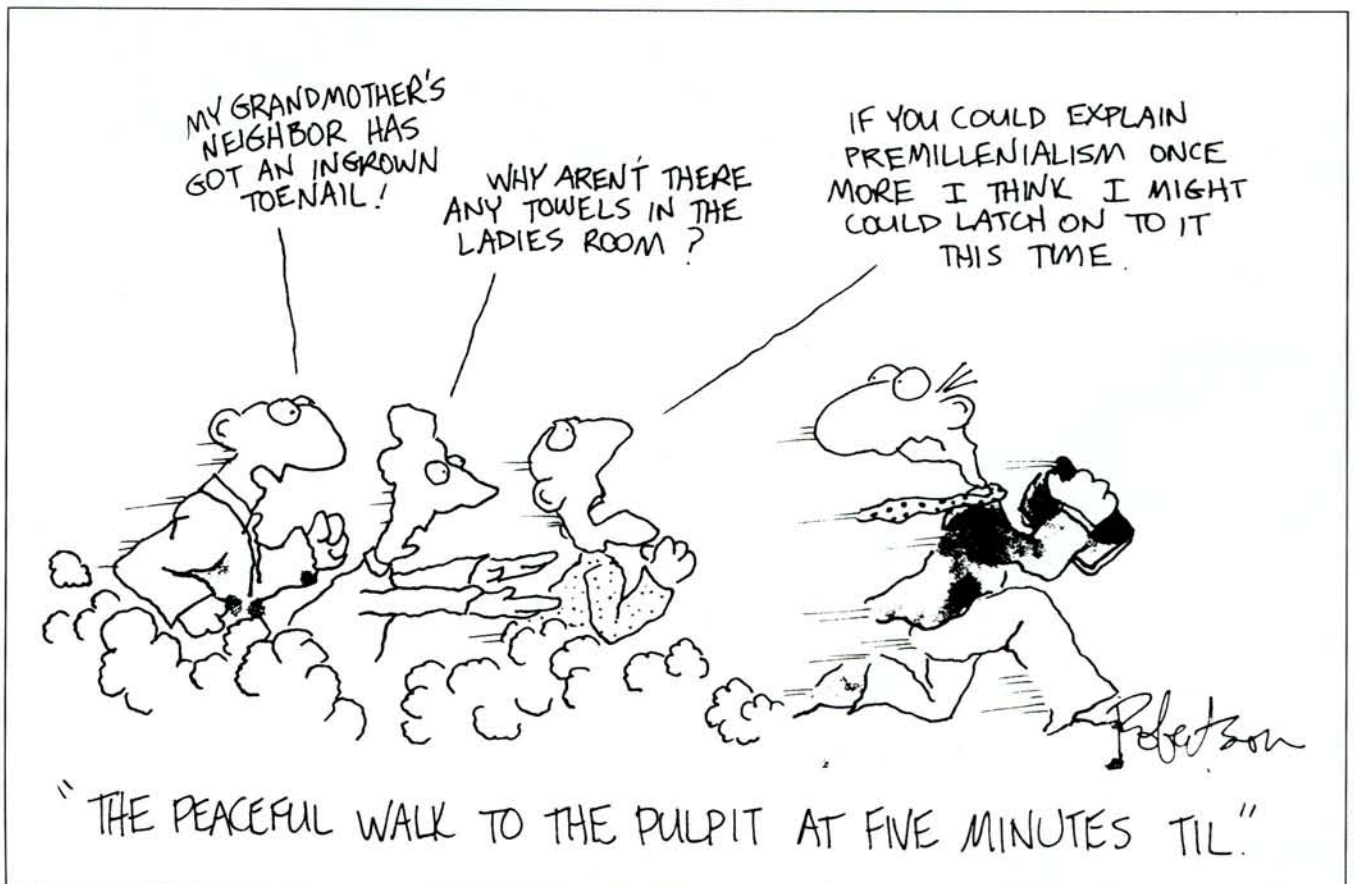
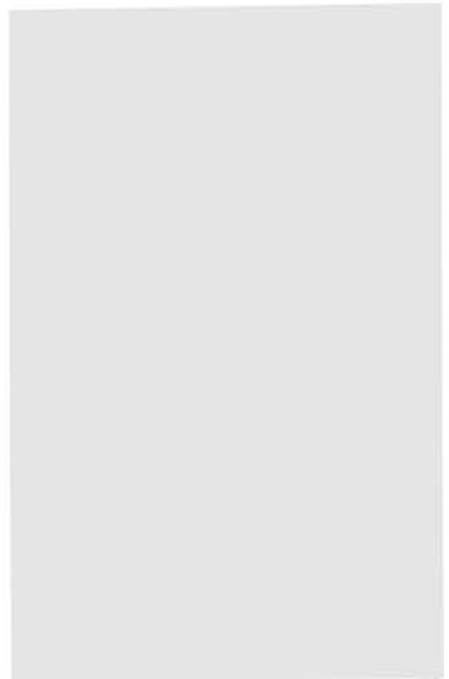
Another thing which may go along with that: We are developing CEOs and people with the ability to organize business plans (and all the surveys indicate we are not maintaining a strong servant-shepherd mind-set in the pastorate). Whatever happened to the servant-shepherd? I would suggest to your readers and pastors, go back

and read John 10. Hear Jesus talk about what a shepherd is—one who literally lays down his life for his sheep. Read John 10:10, and you will walk away with a whole new perspective of what you are supposed to do.

TO WRAP THIS Up, WHAT SHOULD TODAY'S MINISTER FOCUS ON? WHAT SHOULD BE HIS DAY-TO-DAY PASSION?

LONDON: I have used two sayings throughout my ministry: (1) "What happens to you matters to me." Every pastor—as he stands before his congregation or walks through his community—needs to look at every person he sees with the mind-set, "I care genuinely about you." (2) St. Augustine said it one way, but Jesus said it in John 3: "God loves you as though you were the only one in all the world to love." I have this hanging in my home, and it has stopped me in my tracks over and over as I realized I was looking at my success or my position or my needs more than I was looking at the needs and circumstances of the people I was pastoring.

We have to see ourselves as people for whom Jesus died but also as people God called to carry the mantle of His message into our world. If we are not doing that, then we are not doing what God has called us to do. !!!





Tips on Reducing Legal Risk

BY RICHARD R. HAMMAR

KEY POINT:

Richard Hammar has produced a resource kit devoted to reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The kit includes a 24-minute video tape, audio tape, and two books. It may be obtained by contacting *Church Law & Tax Report* at 1-704-841-8066.

Churches are more impacted than ever by legal concerns-and this trend will intensify in the future. Why? Largely, for two reasons. First, the dramatic increase in litigation will continue unabated. According to the most recent statistics released by the National Center for State Courts, over 93 million new cases were filed in state courts in 1991. These included nearly 20 million civil lawsuits, and this number is expected to double over the next 6 years.

This study proves that our society is drowning in litigation. If civil lawsuits double in the next 6 years, that will represent 40 million new civil lawsuits each year. Church leaders must recognize that this ominous trend will directly impact churches and other religious institutions. Litigation involving churches will reflect the general trends in society at large and can be expected to increase significantly.

Second, as all levels of government (local, state, and federal) become more regulatory, there will be more and more "points of intersection" between government regulation and the autonomy of the local church.

The good news is that churches need not be passive targets for aggressive attorneys. Churches can take simple, meaningful steps to reduce their risk of legal liability and litigation significantly. The following will review some of the major legal risks churches face and some simple recommendations on reducing risk.

CHILD ABUSE

The problem of child abuse on church premises and during church activities continues to plague churches. In fact, this is by far the most significant legal risk facing churches today due to the potential for astronomical jury verdicts coupled with liability insurance policies that either elimi-

nate or greatly reduce coverage for this risk. Most churches face a huge uninsured risk, many of them unwittingly.

Fortunately, more churches are beginning to take this risk seriously. Many incidents have been avoided through preventive action. Such action includes:

1. A process of screening and interviewing all applicants for youth work (whether paid or volunteer).
2. Contacting references (including prior churches or other organizations in which the applicant has worked with minors) to obtain an evaluation of the individual's suitability for working with minors.
3. Not using youth workers who have been members of the church for a minimum period of time (such as 6 months).

If your church has implemented a screening program, it is essential that you maintain a continuing commitment to it. Resist complacency. If you have not implemented a screening program, do so at once. You are not just protecting your church from a lawsuit and negative publicity but, far more importantly, protecting your children.

PASTORAL COUNSELING

Many churches have been sued as a result of the sexual misconduct of ministers during counseling activities. Sadly, many of these allegations are true. However, some are false, but it is very difficult for ministers to "prove their innocence," since it is "my word against theirs." A church can significantly reduce its risk of such incidents and of false allegations in a number of ways.

1. Adopt a rule forbidding any counseling by male pastors with unaccompanied females without a third person's being

present. The third person can be the pastor's spouse or another staff member.

2. Require the pastor to engage in opposite-sex counseling only by telephone.
3. A less-effective approach is to prohibit off-premises counseling without a third person present and to restrict counseling on church premises. Such restrictions could include a requirement that opposite-sex counseling occur only during office hours, be limited to not more than 45 minutes, and a maximum of four sessions with the same person. Of course, some exceptions would be in order for any of these approaches (for example, when the counselee is a relative or above a certain age).

NEGLIGENT SUPERVISION

Churches can be sued if they fail to exercise due care in the supervision of their activities. The basic rule to follow here is always to have a sufficient number of trained adults present during any activity. For example, do not conduct a youth activity involving swimming or mountain climbing without an adequate number of qualified adults.

Another common problem in many churches is releasing children from Sunday school or children's church before the end of the adult service. A church can be responsible for any injuries that occur to a child who is released before the return of the parent or guardian.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Child abuse is of epidemic proportion in our country. Ministers often learn of incidents of abuse in the course of counseling or from reports they receive from nursery or youth workers. It is essential for ministers to

understand clearly their responsibilities under state law to report known or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse. In many states, ministers are "mandatory reporters," meaning they can be criminally liable for failing to report. A number of courts have rejected the defense made by some pastors that they failed to report abuse because they wanted to deal with the problem "within the church" as a matter of discipline. A few states excuse ministers from reporting abuse if they learned of it in the course of a privileged communication. Be sure to check your state law often, for this one area of law changes often.

Through education and preventive maintenance churches can significantly reduce their risk of being sued. You do not have to wait passively to be sued and view litigation as inevitable. Yes, the level of litigation in this country is staggering, but you don't have to be a victim. By being apprised of the risks that face you and implementing preventive practices, you can significantly reduce your risk of being sued. ■■

Richard R. Hammar, J.D., LL.M., CPA, Springfield, Missouri, has served as legal counsel to The General Council of the Assemblies of God since 1978. He is editor of Church Law & Tax Report, a bimonthly newsletter addressing legal and tax developments that affect churches and clergy.

TIP:

One way to stay comprehensively informed on legal developments and their impact on your church is through the innovative Information Support Program from *Church Law & Tax Report*. This program provides an array of products designed to alert churches to legal risks and suggest ways to respond to those risks. Never has the need for education and preventive law been greater. You can sign up for this program by contacting the *Church Law & Tax Report* phone number listed above.

INTERVIEW WITH BISHOP ITHIEL CLEMMONS

Racial & Spiritual Unity in the Body of Christ

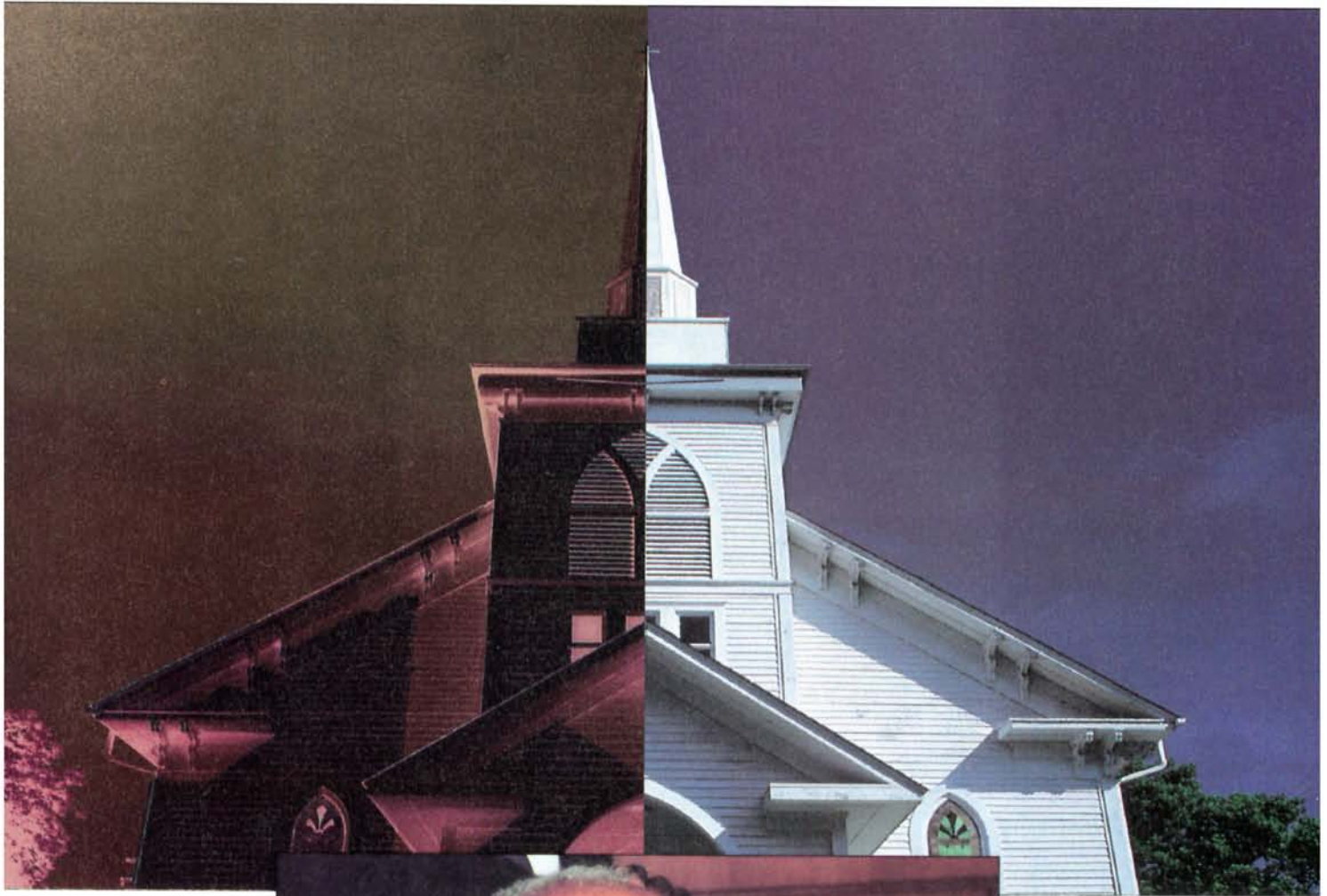


PHOTO BY TRUITT ROGERS



PHOTO BY MEL SAYOER

In February 1995 Advance Editor Wayne Goodall interviewed Bishop Ithiel Clemmons, chairperson of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA), concerning the ongoing racial reconciliation stemming from the historic meeting October 17-19, 1994, in Memphis, Tennessee. (See page 23 for related information.) The PFNA (Pentecostal Fellowship of North America) name was changed to PCCNA at that meeting as a first step toward uniting black and white Pentecostal churches. (Details of the October meeting were carried in the December 11, 1994, and the January 1, 1995, issues of the Pentecostal Evangel.)

Also present at the interview were Dr. John Little, pastor of Greater Deliverance Christian Center, Washington, D.C.; and Dr. Jimmy Haynes, pastor of Christ Church Temple, Hartford, Connecticut, and The Greater Holy Temple, Kansas City, Missouri.

BISHOP, IN OCTOBER 1994, YOU WERE ELECTED CHAIRPERSON OF THE PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA (PCCNA). MANY MAGAZINES SUCH AS CHRISTIANITY TODAY AND LEADERSHIP, HAVE REPORTED THIS. PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT THIS ORGANIZATION AND SOME OF THE VISION THE LORD HAS BROUGHT TO YOU SINCE YOU HAVE BEEN THE CHAIRPERSON.

BISHOP CLEMMONS: The dream of coming together was really born in the heart of the leadership of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America that had been in existence since 1948. This fellowship began as an all-white conclave of Pentecostal denominations, a burden the PFNA carried. Many of the brethren felt that something was wrong but did not know how to deal effectively,

honestly, and openly with what was wrong.

In 1948 David DuPlessis came and talked with Bishop Mason in Memphis. I was there during the conversation and know this was a great burden on his heart. When Bishop Underwood became the chairman of the series of 22 denominations that made up the PFNA, he said, "Look, the way we're going, we can only die. We have to go back and deal with our sins and repent of them, go back to our black brethren and let them know that we began wrong and want to get right—that whatever hurts we've caused, we want to change that."

The PFNA leadership voted to tear up the constitution of the PFNA and make a new start. I suppose there was a residuum of bitterness and anger on the part of the African-American denominations. So it was up to us to say, "Well, right, let's talk about this and see what we can do." As a result, at Paul Walker's church (Mount Paran) in Atlanta, December 1993, Jack Hayford called on Dean Haney, our dean at C.H. Mason Seminary, to come to the platform. He said to some 3,000 people that "we white brethren want to repent for our exclusionary ideologies, our racism. And whatever it takes to correct that, we want to do so."

Out of that meeting, we decided to meet in January 1994 with some 20 African-American leaders and 20 white leaders to talk about the final convention of the PFNA and the structuring of a new organization that would both mend the fences and also build a kind of partnering. Thus in October 1994 we had our Pentecostal Partners dialogue with some 100 African-American leaders, 100 white leaders, and some 1,000 observers.

One of the things we did differently prior to the meeting was that we had people from every sector of the Pentecostal witness of America write papers and deliver them so that we could come together for more than



BISHOP
ITHIEL CLEMMONS



"We're committed that the world will know us by our love, and that's what we seek to do concretely."

just a "hail and farewell" unity meeting and "now we repent." We would deal with some of the tremendous issues that are still there and face them head-on.

A lot of work was done leading up to that meeting. Dr. Little served on the commission for the rewriting of the constitution for the new PCCNA. Smaller groups came together in dialogue, especially at the headquarters of the Church of God in Christ in Memphis. What came out of that meeting was really a surprise to all of us. We had no idea that the Spirit of God was going to move the way He did. It was totally unexpected. We expected powerful preaching, which we got. We expected frank, open dialogue and facing hard issues as we did, but we had no idea the Spirit of God was going to descend as He did. In fact, He said, "You have only provided the runway for the plane from heaven to land on." So PCCNA and the miracle at Memphis were merely putting down the runway for the Holy Spirit to come. It's up to us now to possess the land.

JOHN LITTLE: BISHOP, YOU MIGHT MENTION WHAT HAPPENED IN TERMS OF THE UNSCHEDULED FOOT WASHING THAT WAS A SOVEREIGN ACT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HOW THE POWER OF GOD TOOK OVER.

CLEMMONS: Wednesday afternoon, following Dr. Vincent Synan's paper on "The Future: Strategy for Reconciliation," Bishop Charles Blake, black pastor of the West Angeles Church of God in Christ, Los Angeles, stated: "We must commit to be brothers and sisters or forget it all. We cannot wait or delay any longer. ... Brethren, I commit my love to you."

The response was spontaneous. Donald J. Evans, white pastor of Evangel Temple Assembly of God, Tampa, Florida, requested permission to wash my feet. In turn, Bishop Blake asked to wash the feet of Thomas Trask, Assemblies of God general superintendent.

I can still hear what the Holy Spirit articulated through Don Evans—all that could have been written anywhere: "For the hurts and wrongs that were done to Bishop Seymour, for the hurts and wrongs experienced by Bishop Mason, and for all the divisions and divisiveness, slights, and hurts, we come before God and we come before

you in repentance."

And Bishop Blake washing the feet of Superintendent Trask—I can still hear him saying, "For all of these things, we forgive, and we are one." And we're committed that the world will know us by our love, and that's what we seek to do concretely.

I'M AWARE THAT OUR SUPERINTENDENT FEELS THE SAME WAY BISHOP CLEMMONS. HE'S A FENCE-MENDER, A PEACEMAKER, A BRIDGE-BUILDER, AND HE WANTS THAT TOO. HOW CAN OUR CHURCHES AND PASTORS AROUND OUR FELLOWSHIP COOPERATE WITH WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR HEART?

CLEMMONS: Our Caucasian brethren have always wanted unity but without the price of justice. The African-American brethren have said, "Our interest is not in unity in a spiritual sense alone. Our interest is in justice, in how we behave. Whites talk about spiritual unity—unity of heart, unity of soul. But they seem unwilling to deal with the issues of power, wealth, and privilege in a real way that promotes justice and access. Even as we come together there is a kind of cautious optimism, because we are deeply aware that there is a price to pay for this unity. We are not sure whether the white brethren are really willing to pay that price for unity.

We rejoice that persons at the top level at your headquarters are saying, "Look, whatever it takes, we are ready." We're not sure whether you are able to bring your constituent along with that. This is something we need to explore. Just how far apart is the leadership with the membership of the Assemblies of God, the Church of God—Cleveland, Tennessee, and the Pentecostal Holiness in terms of understanding the dynamics of doing an effective analysis of power, wealth, and privilege and how we bring all of that together.

Therefore, as leader of PCCNA I'm asking the Lord now, "What am I supposed to do?" I've come to the Assemblies of God Headquarters to find out if the Lord would be saying something to me.

WE'RE GOING TO BELIEVE WITH YOU THAT IT IS GOING TO HAPPEN—THAT THE LORD WILL SAY SOMETHING TO ALL OF US. •

HABITS

of highly ineffective people

If leaders are not
change
they are agents,

condemning
organizations
to mediocrity
and a slow
death.

Everyone probably agrees that Jesus wants His followers to be effective, to be successful. Jesus is calling on their lives. He said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10, NIV). Yet, we often aren't as effective as we should be and want to be—sometimes because we get in our own way. We have habits that hold us back and may not even be aware of them.

Continual success is the result of repeated good habits—whether we are trying to succeed in ministry, business, or an area of personal life. Likewise, continual failure is the result of repeated bad habits. As Aristotle said, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, it's a habit." More than almost anything else, habit determines our effectiveness.

If we desire to be successful for Christ—to become more effective—we must examine

ourselves, discover our areas of weakness, and begin the process of changing our habits. Here are seven of the most common habits found in people who are highly ineffective. By reviewing and examining ourselves for habits we can change, we increase our effectiveness as leaders and ministers.

HIGHLY INEFFECTIVE PEOPLE ARE NOT GOOD TIME MANAGERS

Ineffective people usually don't know how to manage their time. They don't even know where their time goes. James A. Fields, noted management consultant, said the average worker is productive only 55 percent of the time. Of the remaining time, 15 percent is lost to personal time, but an incredible 30 percent is lost due to scheduling problems, unclear assignments, improper staffing, and poor discipline; in other words, poor time management—their own or someone else's.

Christians are called to manage their time well: "Don't be fools; be wise; make the most of every opportunity you have for doing good" (Ephesians 5:16, *Living Bible*). Everything we do has an eternal impact, so we cannot afford to waste time.

If you are like most people, and you aren't as effective as you would like to be, try using these steps to improve your time management habits.

1. **PRIORITIZE.** Someone once said, "You cannot overestimate the unimportance of practically everything." Each day you are bombarded with things that need to be done, but you cannot do them all. That's why you have to be able to prioritize. Spend 80 percent of your time doing the most important 20 percent of your responsibilities—the things that are required of you alone, that give you the greatest return on your time, and that give you the greatest personal reward.

2. **PLAN YOUR TIME.** Henry Kaiser said, "Every minute spent planning will save two in execution." If you don't plan your time, you will continually find yourself wondering where your time went at the end of each day.
3. **STEAL 1 HOUR A DAY.** Chuck Swindoll suggests that a pastor should steal 1 hour each day. You can do it by getting up a little earlier, taking a shorter lunch, working an extra hour at home in the evening, etc. The benefit is tremendous. It will give you 260 extra work hours a year-that's 6 weeks.

Everyone is born to win, but many don't approach life with that attitude. Christians have more to celebrate than anyone else, yet many live below their privileges. Because we are secure in Christ, we should all possess a winning attitude.

People with losing attitudes say things like, "I can't do it. It won't work." "It's not my job." "Life owes me." People with winning attitudes say, "I can do it." "Let's give it a try." "I'll be glad to help." "I owe it to others." And what we say habitually shapes how we think and act.

In over 25 years as a church leader, I have never seen a continuing successful person who had a negative attitude. Winners live with a positive attitude, one that reflects their belief that they can do all things through Christ. Be a winner. Develop the habit of thinking positively.

John Wooden, one of the greatest basketball coaches of all time, said, "It's what you learn after you know it all that counts." Wooden recognized a common trap that

people fall into--the wrong belief that they can graduate to or arrive at a place where they no longer need to keep learning and growing.

Chuck Swindoll said, "There is an enormous difference between growing old in the Lord and growing up in Him. One is automatic and requires no effort at all—just aging. But the other is never automatic or easy."

Effective people keep growing. Dr. Charles Garfield said, "Peak performers do not see accomplishment as a fixed state, nor as a safe haven in which the individual is moored, completed, finished." It is similar to what Paul told Timothy, "Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you.... Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, *so that your progress may be evident to all*" (1 Timothy 4: 13-15, NASB, emphasis added). Christian leaders are required to keep growing. If you are not doing this already, get into the habit of developing and stretching yourself. Read books. listen to tapes, and go to conferences. Get out of your comfort zone. Personal growth opens the door to effectiveness.

Anatole France said, "The average man does not know what to do with his life, yet wants another one which will last forever.¹ Most people don't have any idea where they are going in life; hence they don't go anywhere. Life is not a dress rehearsal. God has a plan for your life. If you don't already know what it is, it's time to find out.

Ask yourself these five questions:

1. What do I want to accomplish in my life?
2. Can I make this purpose specific?



John C. Maxwell

**If you
succeed
without
sacrifice,
you do so
because some-
one who went
before you
made the
sacrifice.**

**If we can keep
our eyes
on GOD'S
purpose
for our lives, we
will be able not
only to accept
change better but
to become positive
change agents.**

3. How am I going to accomplish this?
4. Am I currently accomplishing this?
5. What do I have to change in order to accomplish my goal?

Examine yourself, pray, discover your purpose. Then develop a plan for your life. Get into the habit of working every day to fulfill that plan. You have God-given tasks, just as Jesus did. He prayed, "I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do" (John 17:4, NIV). That should also be our goal.

HIGHLY ~~W~~EFFECTIVE PEOPLE ARE UNWILLING TO CHANGE

Most people have a natural resistance to change. In *The Ordeal of Change*, Eric Hoffer laid, "People will cling to an unsatisfactory way of life rather than change in order to get something better for fear of getting something worse." This natural tendency causes people to become stagnant.

To grow, a person must change. No one can improve and remain unchanged at the

same time. That is why effective people learn to accept and even embrace change. When they don't, they limit their future and that of the people they lead. If leaders are not change agents, they are condemning organizations to mediocrity and a slow death.

Getting used to change takes time, but it is certainly worth the effort. If we can keep our eyes on God's purpose for our lives, we will be able not only to accept change better but to become positive change agents.

HIGHLY ~~W~~EFFECTIVE PEOPLE FAIL: IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

All successful leaders are good at building relationships with others. Teddy Roosevelt said, "The most important single ingredient to the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people." He could have just as easily said an effective person is one who gets along with people.

Christian leaders are in the people business. Natural talent, intelligence, a great education—none of these guarantees effectiveness. But an understanding of what

people want and need and a willingness to give it to them provide the greatest chance for success.

It boils down to this: People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care. Your relationship with them determines your ability to lead and minister to them. When you get into the habit of putting people first-by first loving and then developing and equipping them-you can make a difference in their lives.

HIGHLY~FFEEcTIVE PEOPLE DO NOT PAY THE PRICE FOR SUCCESS

Every victory has a price. Jesus taught that. There is no success without sacrifice. If you succeed without sacrifice, ~ so because someone who went before you made the sacrifice. If you sacrifice and don't see success, then someone who follows you will reap success from it.

People who are unwilling to sacrifice, unwilling to pay the price for their goals and dreams, will never be effective. They may love God with all their hearts, arllnn-ey may be good people, but they aren't willing to take the necessary steps or make the

required sacrifices. Thus they never reach their potential.

You first form habits; then habits form you. That is why you must be so careful about how you think and act. You are likely to repeat the patterns you create for yourself, positive or negative. And those habits will be a great factor in determining your effectiveness.

Like Paul, we must go into training-do what it takes to make ourselves more effective so that we will be able to run the race God has put before us. And in the end, we can hope to hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." **II**

John C. Maxwell, D.Min., is Jormer pastor if Skyline Wesleyan Church in San Diego and Jounder if Iryoy, El Cajon, California. He speaks extensively across the United States on issues if leadership, relationships, and church growth.

IF

you

SaCrifilCe

and don't see

success, then someone who

follows you will reap success from it.

I

INTERVIEW WITH JEFFERY BRAWNER & JEFF NENE

NEW COORDINATOR OF MEDIA MINISTRIES SHARES GOALS FOR THE FUTURE



JEFFERY BRAWNER

IN VIEW OF PROJECTED CHANGES in Assemblies of God Media Ministries, Jeffery Brawner, the recently appointed Media Ministries coordinator, and Jeff Nene, general manager of the Michael Cardone Media Center, discuss where we have been and where we are going in media ministry, including the longtime Revivaltime broadcast.

JEFF, YOU HAVE BEEN AN EVANGELIST AND A PASTOR IN OUR FELLOWSHIP. SHARE SOME OF YOUR BACKGROUND AND THINGS YOU DID WITH MEDIA IN YOUR MINISTRY AS A PASTOR.

BRAWNER: I was born in Flint, Michigan, and raised in an Assemblies of God church where Ivar Frick was my pastor for 16 years. I appreciate the stability of a strong congregation and a pastor who gave me a profile of integrity and vision.

As a child I went forward in a revival meeting with Tommy Barnett and accepted Christ as my Savior. My mom and dad knelt and prayed with me at the altar almost every Sunday night. So that was my heritage. I have grown up loving this Fellowship and having a high esteem for ministry and for ministers.

I attended Central Bible College, Springfield, Missouri, 4 years and married Jewel Mitchell. We traveled 5 years as evangelists. I enjoyed the exposure to churches, styles, pastors, and ministry that traveling affords. It was a learning experience.

Then Jewel and I accepted the pastorate of a 7-month-old church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and we served there 4½ years. It was a time of development for us and the church.

From Lancaster I was called to the pastorate in Erie, Pennsylvania, a much larger church that was built by a great pastor. The church was ready to take the next step in

ministry development, and God gifted us to develop a staff, a team, and media ministry. We served there 6½ years before coming to the present position.

WHAT MEDIA MINISTRIES DID YOU DEVELOP IN ERIE TO GIVE THE CHURCH EXPOSURE TO THE COMMUNITY?

BRAWNER: A television program was in place when I arrived—a cable-access program that was kept simple. They used volunteers, had little editing, little production quality, and tried to capture the essence of a service.

Our board was progressive, and when I shared with them about using television as a tool to reach unbelievers in the community they said, "Let's go for it."

We hired a full-time television man, added equipment, and applied for time on a local CBS affiliate. The station gave us an hour with the statement, "Christian programs don't really do well, but we'll put you on." Within 6 months the rating went up; within a year and a half it exceeded their expectations and ours with a 4 rating.

The local NBC station then offered us a \$30,000 piece of equipment, four prime-time specials any night we chose (other than during sweeps week), and a more powerful station that cost \$16,000 less than we had been paying.

God continued to bless. Called *Fully Alive*, the program had a magazine format. With portable equipment we went on location to do testimonials such as a series on Christian businessmen and addressed such questions as, "How can you serve God and be successful? Doesn't it require compromise? How can you be honest in business and make it?" The local points of reference were powerful in that community because the people were known. Then we had the Sunday morning message in its entirety and a special closing with prayer lines.

Our prime times were unique in that they were based on a theme. For example, one was, "Is There Any Hope?" We traced four hopeless stories and how God brought hope to someone who had lost a loved one, someone whose child had cancer, someone who had been through a serious accident. We did four prime times a year with tremendous response.

YOU SAW GOD USE TECHNOLOGY AND THE MEDIA TO HELP REACH THE COMMUNITY FOR CHRIST. PERHAPS THOSE SEEDS PLANTED HELPED BRING YOU HERE TO MEDIA MINISTRIES FOR THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD. WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THIS MINISTRY?

BRAWNER: Our missions statement for Media Ministries is that we are committed to obeying the Great Commission. Our reason for being is to partner with the local church in evangelizing the lost and equipping the saved. Local churches are our reason for being, for that is where missions is birthed and people are touched, grow, and develop in Christ.

SO YOU'RE HERE TO SERVE THE LOCAL CHURCH. HOW LONG HAS THE MEDIA CENTER BEEN OPERATIONAL?

BRAWNER: It was begun under Lee Shultz' direction when he served as national director of the Division of Communications through a gift from the Michael Cardone family. They had a vision to see technology and media become tools for Assemblies of God evangelism efforts.

HOW CAN THE MEDIA CENTER PARTNER WITH THE LOCAL CHURCH?

BRAWNER: I try to think as a pastor and ask myself, "What were the needs I faced at different stages in the churches I pastored?" I also talk with many pastors and ask what their needs are and how we can help or partner with them. For example, I have asked them about a video subscription that would go out monthly with information, instruction, and inspiration. It can be used in classes and Sunday school, with ministers of music, and actually create a library of materials to train and equip their people for works of service and ministry.

We are also working on an audio tape subscription that we could provide to min-

isters. It would carry the latest in what is happening and how-not just tools and techniques but what God is doing and how they can be inspired and instructed to be a part of it.

We also hope to help local churches consider media ministry. My philosophy of media ministry as a pastor was that television was one seat beyond the balcony where people could look in. Television is less threatening. People watched for weeks before actually coming. By the time they came they felt they knew me and the ministry.

I hope to get pastors to begin to pastor communities. If they see it is a God-given tool for building believers, it will be an exciting day for them. In Erie the station personnel often told me that my congregation on Sunday was 10 to 15 times bigger than I could see because of the media.

HOW CAN THE WCAL CHURCH USE VIDEO TO INCREASE THEIR COMMUNITY OUTREACH?

BRAWNER: We are moving to a visual society where most Americans have radio, television, and VCRs. Churches can use video in promotional packets to reach the community-to show a visual message, for teaching, instruction, and small-group settings to share a vision with the whole church. Sharing a message in as many ways as possible gives that message a better chance of being received.

SO YOU ARE GOING TO PRODUCE VIDEOS THE LOCAL CHURCH CAN ORDER AND USE TO ENHANCE THEIR MINISTRY. WHAT ABOUT THE CHURCHES THAT CAN'T VISIT THE MEDIA CENTER-HOW CAN THEY UTILIZE WHAT YOU'RE DOING?

BRAWNER: Jeff Nene, our new general manager, comes to us with a great background and has been involved in some subscription video services in a previous ministry. He will address this question of how we and our churches may be able to partner.

NENE: In addition to the subscription videos and audios, churches can contact us for help, even if it is only for advice. We can direct them to the right people, for we are in contact with consultants, vendors, and technology specialists.

We also have a multitude of products



JEFF NENE

available such as video/audio tapes. If churches can't come to use our facilities, for example, we're working on developing a national spot that we can provide to them—a national commercial campaign for local church use. This will give the advantage of state-of-the-art production technology used in feature films today. These commercials can be tagged for local use, and people in the community will connect the spot with the local church.

BRAWNER: In the past *Revivaltime* has been basically our only area in broadcasting. Our expanded efforts in broadcast ministries are to equip churches that have broadcast ministries. We hope to have some seminars, training, and teams to send out to help local churches in radio and television ministry. Churches may not have great budgets for this, so we will ask how we can help them get the most out of what they have.

YOU'RE HERE TO HELP THE CHURCH OF 50, 100, OR 1,000—THE SIZE DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

NENE: We want to build a database at the Media Center of all churches actively involved in some form of video production, radio, or TV ministry. From this resource we can connect inexperienced churches with those who have experience. This will give pastors someone to talk to and work through difficulties together. Thus the Media Center becomes a facilitator.

THE AVERAGE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCH RUNS AROUND 100 IN ATTENDANCE WHEN THEY THINK MEDIA. MANY PASTORS FEEL THEY CANNOT AFFORD IT EVEN THOUGH THEY WOULD LIKE TO. MANY OF THESE ARE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES. WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP THEM?

NENE: First, begin where you are. Step out and take the first step—do something. Contact your local cable company. Sometimes cable-access channels cost little or nothing. It is possible to acquire something prepackaged that costs little and just add your church name, address, and that sort of thing.

CAN YOU SHOW PASTORS HOW TO WORK THE FREEBIES THAT GIVE EXPOSURE TO LOCAL MINISTRY AT LITTLE COST?

NENE: We want to provide that, but we have not decided on the format—video? workshop? at district councils? at General Council? We would welcome feedback from pastors.

BRAWNER: A large percentage of communities have cable, and it is often cheaper than radio. If you can produce the programming, time is sometimes free. We are working toward resurrecting an idea of a magazine format that will include national stories and open spots for a local church to tag into. This will give them top-notch programming without having to invest in all the equipment—networking and partnering. Thus we could help churches of 100 or 50 that want to be aggressive in reaching their communities for Christ.

NENE: Pastors have to condition themselves not to be afraid to ask.

BRAWNER: We want to help pastors know what to ask so they won't feel ignorant and intimidated by a media ministry. Also we want to educate them on some of the tremendous opportunities available.

DO YOU HAVE IN MIND SPECIFIC WAYS TO EXPAND THE TECHNOLOGY FOR FUTURE MINISTRY?

BRAWNER: Some pastors have asked if we are looking toward a satellite linkup in which we could have interactive conferences without people having to fly to other locations. Groups could come together in regional settings and fax questions to be addressed by our Fellowship's leaders. We are looking at that. Computers also offer a variety of opportunities.

NENE: The more technology expands, the cheaper it often becomes. We want to take advantage of the technology that is going to be around for the long term, whether satellite, teleconferencing, landlines, or computers. We must make our decisions on the long-range advantages from a financial perspective.

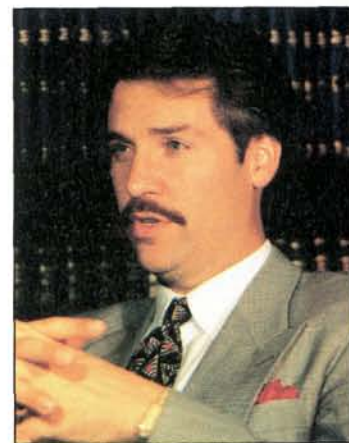
Many churches have already invested in satellite dishes. We will explore this area.

WHAT ABOUT *REVIVALTIME*'S FUTURE? WE HAVE HAD SOME REAL HEROES PREACH IN THAT MINISTRY. JEFF BRAWNER, YOU WILL BE THE NEW SPEAKER. WHAT OTHER CHANGES ARE COMING?

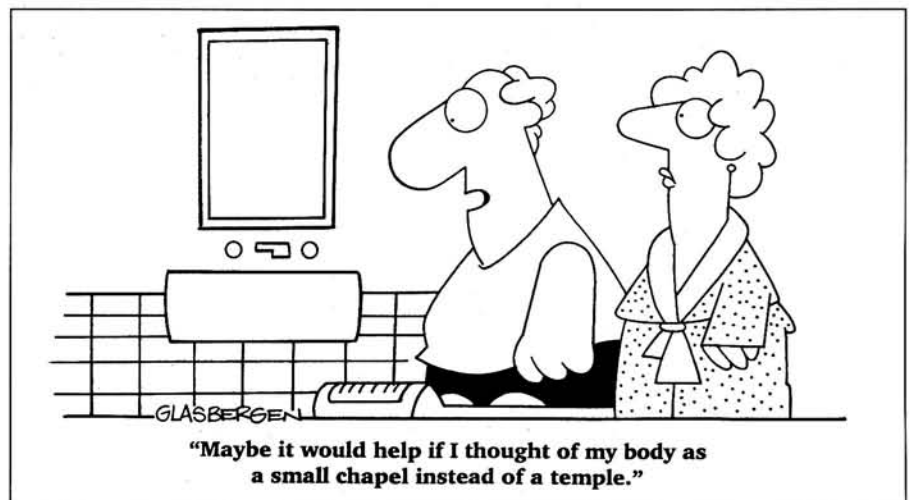
BRAWNER: *Sermons in Song* was the forerunner of *Revivaltime*. Speakers included greats like Ernest S. Williams, Wesley R. Steelberg, C.M. Ward, and Dan Betzer. Some of the pillars of our faith and Movement were a part of our media ministries in the past—C.M. Ward for over 20 years and Dan Betzer, one of the most talented, creative men of our Fellowship. Someone asked how I could fill their shoes. I can't fill them—God hasn't called me to fill their shoes but to pick up the baton of ministry of *Revivaltime* and move it into the next century, building on the foundation others have laid.

We will be starting the new broadcast in September, using *Revivaltime* to tell the story of our Fellowship; sharing from God's Word; giving on-location stories, miraculous events that are happening around the world, and *always* a salvation appeal. The program will be designed to equip people in their faith.

We will look at ways to expand this ministry beyond Sunday mornings, but my heart is to build on the great past, taking the baton and running with all our might, believing God has great plans for *Revivaltime*. ■■



*"My heart is to build on the great past...believing God has great plans for *Revivaltime*."*





ocus on America

BY CHARLES E. HACKETT

- / Teen Challenge of Southern California in Riverside sponsors a week-long summer camp for gang members every year. Last year 60 of the 87 gang members who attended made decisions for Christ.
- / The Michigan District is leading the nation in Invasion 39 strategy implementation. The district plans to open 3 to 5 churches and one Urban Bible Training Center in 1995.
- / A conservative estimate indicates MAPS (Mission America Placement Service) RV Volunteers and construction teams have saved the Assemblies of God over \$30 million by providing assistance to home missions churches, Teen Challenge centers, native Bible schools, and other home missions ministries.
- / Eight acres of commercial property have been purchased in Springfield, Missouri, for the construction of a Teen Challenge National Training and Resource Center. The center will provide curriculum, staff training, accreditation, education, prevention, and resources to minister to those with life-controlling problems.
- / The Black Inner-City Workers Conference (ICWC) is the recognized black fellowship group of the Assemblies of God and part of the Division of Home Missions. Founded in 1980 by a group of Assemblies of God African-American ministers, ICWC's pur-

pose is to provide fellowship for all ministers who are ministering in the inner cities of America. From its humble start of some 30 ministers and 20 churches, it now has a membership of 300 ministers and 160 churches that minister in America's diverse urban population centers.

- / When the Campus Ministers Conference ended in Glorietta, New Mexico, Chi Alpha Campus Ministries Department secretary said it was the most spiritually powerful conference they have ever had. Services extended late into the night with manifestations of the Spirit and prophetic words bringing healing and refreshment to campus leaders. Each worship session was an anointed time of ministry to God and one another. The staff laid hands on and prayed for the campus leaders. That service lasted until 3 a.m. with 24 slain in the Spirit. Twelve responded to a call for foreign missions service.
- / Chinese student Sarah Zhu is studying at Portland State University in Oregon. After being in America 1 year she said, "I've changed my mind about many things in America. I have learned that many Americans are nice and friendly, especially the Christians. They have helped me know Jesus Christ. Through reading the Bible, I accepted Jesus as my Savior and Lord, and He has changed me. I have turned from my old life."
- / *The Book of Hope* is a chronological life of Christ taken from the four

Gospels. The cover design and introductory pages are designed for use in the inner city. Nearly 100,000 copies have been distributed free in several major cities, and a second printing is now ready for distribution. The New Church Evangelism Department reports many great effects from this literature distribution endeavor.

- / In 1994 the 224 Assemblies of God endorsed chaplains conducted nearly 14,000 services in military, industrial, and institutional settings with some 717,000 in attendance. They reported 8,318 decisions for Christ and 374 baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- / In Minot, North Dakota, missionaries in ministry to American Indians report many people coming to Christ, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and receiving physical healing.
- / God is moving among the 250,000 Iranian Muslims in California's San Francisco Bay area. New people regularly visit Christian services, some have prayed the prayer of commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, and others have been baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- / The Division of Home Missions ministry to the blind touches the world. Over a third of our braille material is sent overseas. Since braille material is hard to find in most countries, when it is received, it is passed around. ■■

Charles E. Hackett is executive director of the Division of Home Missions, Springfield, Missouri.

Permanence – a Priority in Missions

Obedience to the Great Commission is the fundamental marching order for the Church. Christ's command is obligatory.

From its beginning the Assemblies of God has been committed to the divine imperative of making disciples of all people by going and declaring the gospel of salvation. The history of the last eight decades is full of accounts describing missionary zeal. The Fellowship still is committed to being a sending agency for career missionaries worldwide.

Observing the Holy Spirit at work recruiting missionary laborers is thrilling. I am privileged to meet each year with the missionary candidates, and I tell them they are an answer to prayer. Jesus asked us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers, and He is.

At the same time I am concerned that it takes longer to get these "sent ones" to the fields. The average time for candidate missionaries to raise their budgets is now 19 months.

Since career missionaries for the fields of the world must be our priority, we should review our giving patterns in that light. If the thrill of short-term involvement on a mission field has become our focus, or if a special project seems more appealing than permanent laborers, we must consider our priorities again.

Identification with people of other cultures is at the core of missions effectiveness. In countries where the national church is strong and indigenous the work most often was reinforced by the efforts of missionaries who learned the language and the lifestyle and manifested the love of Christ on a long-term basis.

I occasionally observe retired missionaries. After 60-plus years of missionary service, one woman is still active in a writing

ministry. A six-lesson evangelism series she wrote over 25 years ago is still distributed in many languages of the world. Thousands of written testimonies of salvation have been received from her efforts.

Though long retired, a couple with over 40 years' service in Nigeria remain highly respected by that dynamic national church. Their permanence in Nigeria resulted in raising up strong leaders who have duplicated their efforts in church planting and training.

These missionaries accomplished what they have because of their willingness to obey the Great Commission and to stay on the field. The very reason we can offer such a variety of short-term opportunities today is the result of their long-term ministry.

As faithful investors in the Kingdom, we must understand the importance of helping career missionaries in their efforts.

Christ came to earth and identified with mankind. Missionaries must also be sent to identify with people and cultures around the world. Ensuring permanence in foreign missions must be a priority of the church. ||

BY H.H. "SPUD" DEMENT



H.H. "Spud" DeMent is secretary of foreign missions relations in the U.S., Division of Foreign Missions, Springfield, Missouri.

THOSE WHO BELIEVE THE INNER CITY IS FILLED WITH TRASH ARE—

DEAD WRONG

It was around 6 p.m. like most other nights at the Ida B. Wells Public Housing Project on Chicago's south side. The sun had set, and the fall weather had brought a bitter chill as children in the hood struggled to stay warm.

Thirteen-year-old Lena Horne was typically bored as she walked the streets. Like most junior highers her age, she battles to stay free of gangs and the continual allure of cocaine in the project.

Out of the corner of her eye she saw what seemed to be a large bag of trash fall and hit the ground just 20 feet away. She didn't think much about it because it just added to the rest of the garbage in her neighborhood which never gets put away.

Earlier that day A.J. and P.R. had enticed little 5-year-old Eric Morse to come to their clubhouse on South Langley Avenue. A.J. and P.R. (10 and 11 years old, respectively) were like heroes to little Eric, but they were already working for the gangs.

"Come to the 14th floor at number 1405, Eric. We have a surprise for you," they said. But Eric's 8-year-old brother Derrick begged his little brother not to go. Eric refused to listen and said he was going to the clubhouse for a surprise.

Derrick insisted on going with him because he didn't trust A.J. and P.R.

When Eric arrived at the apartment, A.J. and P.R. grabbed him and dangled him out the 14th-floor window.

Derrick screamed and ran to the window and held Eric's leg as the little guy screamed in terror. While Derrick held on-trying to pull Eric back into the apartment-A.J. bit his arm and Derrick let go.

What Lena Horne initially thought was a bag of trash hitting the ground was actually the body of 5-year-old Eric Morse. At 7:56 p.m. on October 13, 1994, little Eric went to be with Jesus. While on earth, he had been mistaken for a bag of trash.

How has it come to this in America? A 5-year-old boy being dropped out of a 14th-floor window for fun and little children dying in American ghettos every day are no longer unusual. Drive-by shootings, gang war, drug overdoses, infant deaths, and infants born addicted to heroin and cocaine are the order of the day.

At the Assemblies of God General Council in San Antonio, Texas, in 1985 Philip Hogan spoke at the foreign missions luncheon. One of his key statements was that the apostle Paul was a city preacher and a church planter. He went on to say that the world had changed from an agrarian to an industrial society and now, most recently, an information-driven society. Consequently, people have left the farms and moved to the city. If we are going to reach the world, we are going to go to the center of the struggle, which is the city.

At 7:56 p.m. on October 13, 1994,

little Eric went to be with Jesus.

***While on earth, he had been
mistaken for a bag of trash.***

That message forever changed my life. Much of my own ministry had been to the suburbs, not the city. I'm certain I had good reasons. There is comfort in the suburbs—it's what I have known. People like me are



BY RICH WILKERSON



in the suburbs-white, upwardly mobile, and mostly married with children. Most of all, there is money in the suburbs.

On the other hand, to me the city represented the unknown, a hodgepodge of religious beliefs, fractured families where 70 percent of inner-city children live without their fathers, a place of terror, and a place where the Assemblies of God is largely nonexistent. If that wasn't enough, I knew it was a place where a lot of trash sometimes gets thrown out but not put away.

While those were good reasons not to go to the city, they were all carnal reasons that had their roots in self-preservation, which is foreign to Christ's teaching. He said, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39*).

Historically God has blessed the Assemblies of God. The Fellowship has grown rapidly because its leaders and constituents have had a disdain for self-preservation. Because of this we have always been attracted to the challenge. When others said, "It can't be done," our people have rolled up their sleeves and proved them wrong.

Our foreign missions outreach is unparalleled. Our love for God is solid. Our mission has always been to know God and to make Him known to others. These statements are not made in arrogance but from a humble heart that is thankful to God for being a part of such a wonderful group of people.

Now a new challenge looms. Actually it's not new, but we are now-by the grace of God-opening our eyes to the needs of America's inner cities. Over 50 percent of America's population lives in 39 urban city centers throughout this great land. We must reach them, plant churches, and believe God

to raise up men and women to go.

In Jeremiah 29:4-7, God speaks of an invasion of love by His people into the city. God tells us to seek for the peace and prosperity of the city. We are promised that as the city prospers, we too will prosper. Conversely, it must be said that as the city struggles, we will struggle also.

Invasion 39 is a call to our Fellowship to answer the challenge of America's urban areas. Peacemakers Project has been developed to conduct evangelistic crusades in each of these cities and to assist districts in the planting of at least 39 churches by the end of this decade.

Through Urban Bible Training Centers thousands of local people will be trained for area ministry in each of these cities. Supplementing their work will be Holy Spirit-filled young people who desire to become a part of the answer to America's struggle. In every great city of this land are little children of all colors whom Jesus loves. If anyone doubts God's love for one of these little children, that person is dead wrong.

If for one second the devil believes he can defeat this God-ordained mission, He's dead wrong. If there are those who believe America's inner cities are only filled with trash, they're dead wrong. Because lying just 20 feet away in the dark may be one of those children for whom Jesus died. ||

**Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*

Rich Wilkerson, an Assemblies of God evangelist, Tacoma, Washington, heads the Peacemakers Project.

***In every great
city of this land
are little children
of all colors
whom Jesus
loves. If anyone
doubts God's
love for one
of these little
children, that
person is dead
wrong.***



Christians & Lawsuits

WHAT POSITION DOES THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD TAKE IN REGARD TO CHRISTIANS AND LAWSUITS?

Since the Bible is our authoritative rule for conduct, the Assemblies of God person's first obligation, when considering a lawsuit, is to ask, "Does the Scripture permit or prohibit such action?" (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

BY GEORGE O. WOOD

Redress of injuries was clearly provided for in the Old Testament (Exodus 18:17-26; 21:23,24; 22:12-23:13; Ruth 4:1-12; 1 Kings 3:16-28).

Jesus taught His disciples a standard of behavior higher than required under Old Testament law (Matthew 5:38-48; 6:14,15) as did the apostle Paul (Romans 12:17-21). When an offender refused to obey the judgment of the church, he was to be treated as a pagan (Matthew 18:15-20).

In 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 the apostle Paul addressed the problem of a believer who brought a lawsuit against another believer in the Corinthian courts. It appears the plaintiff had filed the suit rather than following the admonition of the Lord given in Matthew 5:38-48 or employing the process of involving the church according to Matthew 18:15-20.

To Paul's horror, the Corinthian church had sat on the sidelines and done nothing while the Christian community was scandalized by the airing of dirty linen between believers before a pagan court. Here was a church which prided itself on its wisdom (2 Corinthians 11:19) but who had not had anyone wise enough to judge a dispute. Paul chastised the plaintiff by telling him he would have been better to have suffered wrong rather than disgrace the church (1 Corinthians 6:1,7), chastised the defendant

for having cheated and done wrong (6:8), and chastised the church for not taking care of the matter (6:2-6).

Paul never addressed the theme of whether a lawsuit would be appropriate once the church had declared a party to be a "pagan and a tax collector." Perhaps such would be permitted under the teaching of Romans 13:1-5 that the secular government exists to uphold justice, prevent lawlessness, and punish the wrongdoer.

To summarize, when a believer is wronged by another believer the offended believer must seriously consider whether he or she should simply drop the matter by allowing the wrong to be committed, leaving the judgment to God alone. Following prayer and careful consideration, if the believer determines the matter should be pursued, then he or she should first seek a solution face-to-face with the offending party. Failing that, a third-party believer should be sought as a mediator. If a solution is still not present, the dispute should be brought to the church (Le., the pastor, recognized board of elders or deacons, or perhaps the membership itself).

Sometimes the legal issue does not pit believer against believer but believer versus unbeliever.

What should the stance of the Christian be in such a case? Paul exercised the right of defending himself under Roman law (Acts 16:37-40; 18:12-17; 22:15-29; 25:10-22). Clearly, he did not interpret "turning the other cheek" to include forfeiture of all legal rights pertaining to his citizenship. No doubt he exercised those rights consistent with his Spirit-given Romans 13 understanding that the function of government is to uphold justice and punish wrongdoers

(which conversely means the protection of the innocent).

Thus the question for the believer never is, "How do I get personal vengeance?" but, "Which action on my part (involvement or noninvolvement in a lawsuit) will best promote justice in society, punishment of the one who does wrong (either intentionally or through negligence), or protection for the innocent?"

In American society another matter needs to be considered: liability and other forms of insurance. Public policy has established insurance as a means of compensating an individual for a wide variety in *types* of injuries suffered. In many cases, while a litigant may be the legal defendant in a suit, the actual payer for the injuries may be an insurance company.

Suppose, for example, a Christian is severely injured by the bad driving of another believer. A suit between the two really does not stem from personal animus or malice, but it is an effort on the part of the injured person to reclaim financial losses stemming from the accident, which will be compensated by the insured's automobile liability policy. In such a case the believers have not brought the church into censure before a worldly court (as was the situation in Corinth) but have simply availed themselves of a legal system which seeks, as a matter of public policy, to help victims be made whole from their injuries.

In many American communities, attorneys who are believers have formed Christian conciliation or mediation groups, which a wronged person may also seek out. The legal advantage to seeking mediation from such a group is that, upon proper stipulation by the parties, the judgment of the

Christian conciliation group may be recognized by the secular courts as a substitute for their own involvement.

If all avenues of adjudicating a matter within the context of believers have been exhausted and the offending party refuses to correct the wrong, then the offended believer must balance Matthew 5:38-48 and 6:14,15 with Romans 13:1-5. The pivotal questions will be:

1. Is my desire for a redress of injury motivated simply by personal gain, or am I involving the secular power of the court to uphold justice and prevent lawlessness?
2. If I bring action before a secular court, will such, in the context of American (rather than Corinthian) society, bring the church and the cause of Christ harm?
3. Am I totally honest with my claim (or defense), or am I seeking through deception to obtain (or avoid) an unjust compensation which is more (or less) than the injury suffered?
4. Since the Holy Spirit will never counsel a believer contrary to the Word He has inspired, after a thorough season of prayer what course of action "seems good to the Holy Spirit"?
5. As an additional safeguard, what is the counsel of other believers who are in a position of leadership or eldership in the body of Christ of which I am a member? II

George O. Wood, D.Th.R.j.D., is general secretary if the Assemblies if God, Spn'ngfield, Missouri, and a member if the California State Bar.



THE DECADE

THE MOVEMENT the Assemblies of God embraced the Decade of Harvest as our vision for the 1990s—a vision for spiritual empowerment to reach a lost and dying world.

Numerical goals were announced. Leadership was selected to propagate the call for revival. It was a challenge that could provide the momentum for ministry, not merely a strategy for a moment or for 10 years.

Birthed in Spiritual Passion

At the 1987 General Council, the Spiritual Life Committee's report resulted in a clarion call for the nineties to be a decade of harvest for the Assemblies of God. It was not a resolution calling for a new structure, department, or another church program. Decade of Harvest is a cry from the heart of the church to see believers anointed, equipped, and commissioned to reach a lost world.

The Decade of Harvest was never intended to be a theme but a call for spiritual hunger that will usher in a supernatural visitation of Pentecostal power.

THE DECADE OF HARVEST

*is a cry from the heart
of the church to see
believers anointed,
equipped, and
commissioned to
reach a lost world.*

•

BY EFRAIM ESPINOZA

OF HARVEST

FOR A MOMENT IN TIME OR TIMELESS MOMENTUM

Beginning with Specific Purposes

The Decade of Harvest has specific direction, a definite purpose, and a vision of the church for America. Four key words describe our goals:

1. PRAYER. A call to revival without prayer is like a car without a motor. Prayer has always been the lifeline of the church. It birthed the Early Church on the Day of Pentecost, has ushered in every spiritual awakening, and is the only way to seek a divine move of God for these last days.

The call to prayer from our national leadership has resulted in congregations becoming actively involved in the ministry of prayer. For example, Tuesday is a day of fasting and prayer at Wasilla Assembly of God in Alaska. Through prayer Pastor Tim McGraw and the congregation have experienced revival and growth as they have reached out with a strong witness to the community.

In the Indiana District, David Wigington, former district church ministries director who is now serving as secretary-treasurer, has led a yearly prayer sign-up since the beginning of the Decade of Harvest. This has resulted in up to 7,000 individual commitments to prayer from all ages. New churches planted during the Decade of Harvest, as well as already established congregations, are experiencing revival as people pray.

The National Prayer Center, under the leadership of Sandra Clopine, was birthed as a vision of the prayer subcommittee of the National Task Force. It is revitalizing the focus on prayer. Intercessors meet daily in the headquarters chapel to pray for the requests that the volunteers receive daily.

2. EVANGELISM. The church must be a soul-saving station. Every believer must accept the challenge of being a light in a dark world. The church cannot afford the luxury of waiting for sinners to come to church on Sunday to be saved. Believers must be willing and ready to go out and share the good news. The church's purpose is soul winning-obedience to the Great Commission.

Pastor Ron Hawkins and his congregation at First Assembly of God, Fort Wayne, Indiana, continue to experience growth as people are saved in their community. Recently, 22 people came forward for salvation in a Sunday morning service. The pastor attributes this sovereign move of God to the strong ministry of prayer in the church. They are believing God for 400 souls to be saved in 1995 through the ministries of the church.

***The church cannot afford
the luxury of waiting for
sinners to come to church
on Sunday to be saved.***



3. **DISCIPLESHIP.** Investing in discipleship will equip those who are saved to share in the ministry of the local church. As believers study the Word together, the church cultivates an environment where others can respond to a divine call to ministry. Discipleship in the Decade of Harvest is an investment of time and resources to equip saints for the work of ministry.

At Templo Calvario Assembly in Santa Ana, California, Pastor Daniel de Leon reports that departmental ministries are equipping laypeople for service. Dividing their city into districts (sectors), Missionettes and Royal Rangers leaders are opening extension groups in various neighborhood apartment complexes. God has honored this step of faith, and one apartment manager has donated an apartment rent-free for this purpose. Already a junior high group of 35 teenagers, a Royal Rangers group of about 40, and a Missionettes group of up to 60 all meet there. Pastor de Leon said, "These are children who do not come to our church. They are brand-new, and all have given their hearts to the Lord. We are currently operating in two more apartment complexes, and the plan is to do the same there. The ultimate goal is to open churches in these districts (sectors)."

Templo Calvario Assembly has set a goal of opening 15 new churches in the decade. By the end of 1994, they had already started 11 new congregations. Discipleship is equipping believers for ministry and providing opportunities for them to respond in service to the Lord.

***Discipleship in the Decade of
Harvest is an investment of
time and resources to equip
saints for
the work of ministry.***

●

4. **CHURCH PLANTING.** Jesus described the world as "ripe, ready to harvest" as

He challenged His followers to pray for workers. The call for laborers for the harvest also includes the establishing of preaching points in areas where there is no regular gospel witness. Our strong commitment to missions abroad must also be reflected at home wherever there is a need to plant new congregations.

Pastors and congregations met in late 1994 to unite their efforts under the banner of St. Louis Metro Harvest, which covers four districts, to reach the greater St. Louis metro area for Christ. Walt Ligon, pastor of Grace Assembly in Florissant and St. Louis Metro Harvest coordinator, and James Hembree, sectional presbyter, are directing these efforts.

By early 1995, St. Louis Metro Harvest reported three new church-planting efforts with the prospect of an additional three by the end of the year:

1. Jubilee Worship Center in Florissant, on the north edge of St. Louis, is led by Pastor Aubrey Kishna. By the end of their first 3 months, they were already meeting in their own building and with 60 in attendance.
2. Freedom House, with Pastor Tony Marshall, is an interracial congregation in the inner city. Already their children's outreach has ministered to 100 kids.
3. Nuevo Vine (Nuevo Vino) Assembly is the newest church-planting project. Led by Edwin Marroquin, this is the first Hispanic Assembly of God in the St. Louis metro area. They began with home Bible study groups, and already the church has a strong outreach to adult men.

St. Clair Mitchell, Potomac District Decade of Harvest director, reports the opening of an Urban Bible Training Center in Washington, D.C., with initial enrollment of 33.

An additional 17 churches were opened in 1994, including two in Washington,

D.C., according to Mitchell. October 9, 1994, 800 friends and well-wishers attended the inaugural service of the National Community Fellowship at Capitol Hill Assembly of God. Special guests included a 200-member choir, Larnelle Harris, and a New York State Supreme Court judge. Pastor Robert Schenck has reported things are going well with the new church.

Based on Scriptural Promises

God's message to mankind is unchanging: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV).

His promises are true. The Decade of Harvest must be a constant reminder to believers to return to the biblical principle of agreeing together for spiritual renewal that can heal our land. He has done it before. He can do it again.


Pentecost was intended to be for spiritual equipping of believers for ministry. It must continue to be our Pentecostal priority. Jesus' words prior to His ascension clearly describe the purpose of the Pentecostal outpouring (see Acts 1:8).

Bathed with Supernatural Power

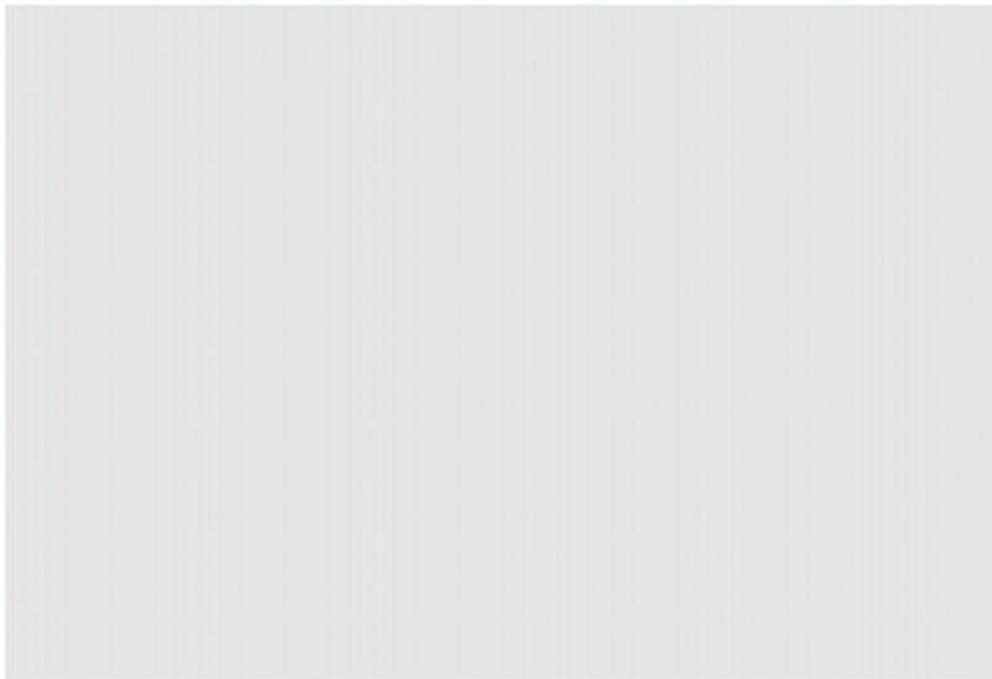
The Decade of Harvest is a call to empowering believers to live their faith. The signs and wonders follow as the church begins to seek God in earnest. The church cannot afford to be entrapped in seeking signs and wonders but to seek God and let Him honor His Word in our midst.

THE DECADE OF HARVEST

**is a call to empowering
believers
to live their faith.**

Ten years is but a moment in time. Eternity is timeless. Revival in the Decade of Harvest is spiritual momentum that is timeless as it affects people's eternal destiny until Jesus returns. We need Pentecost now for a Decade of Harvest-God's way. 

Efraim Espinoza is coordinator of the U.S. Decade of Harvest, Springfield, Missouri.



integrity: **REALITY** or ILLUSION?

By Paul L. Walker

We switch on our favorite nightly news program, and the announcer lambastes the immoral acts of a well-known evangelist. Christians reel in shock while unbelievers scoff. And we wonder, "What has happened to integrity?"

The headlines in the morning newspaper scream, "Elected leader succumbs to greed and graft." A nation shrugs, and the malfeasance is soon forgotten. And we wonder, "What has happened to integrity?"

At a prayer breakfast a friend confesses to an adulterous affair. Hearts shatter, and families suffer irreparable damage. And we wonder, "What has happened to integrity?"

Integrity-is it reality or illusion?

In America today morality based on religious truth has all but disappeared. Instead, we rely on our feelings to do what is right in our own eyes. For many integrity is an illusion.

Yet, for over 300 years this country's moral conduct was based on the absolute truths of Scripture. The Ten Commandments God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai was a code for right and wrong behavior in human interaction.

In 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville, French historian, visited America and wrote the following account:

"The religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention ...they hold it indispensable to their republican institutions Moreover, all the sects of the United States are comprised within the great unity of Christianity, and Christian morality is everywhere the same. In the United States the sovereign authority is religious, but there is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in

America." (Excerpts from *Democracy in America*, Vol. 1.)

As few as 50 years ago we lived in a nation where a man's word was considered his bond, a handshake sealed a transaction, and people took pride in honest and upright behavior.

Yet secular influences have replaced the religious influence of the church, and we must ask ourselves, "Is it possible for integrity to be a part of ministry in today's challenging times?"

Anyway we look at it we live in the best of times and the worst of times for ministry. It is the best of times because today's pastor has at his fingertips more resources than ever before. Conferences, workshops, and seminars are plentiful. Christian materials abound in bookstores. Knowledge and know-how are the norm rather than the exception.

It is the worst of times for ministry

as few as 50 years ago we lived in a nation where a man's word was considered his bond, a handshake sealed a transaction, and people took pride in honest and upright behavior.

because we live in a predominantly secular age that would be impossible for our forefathers to recognize.

Secularism teaches that man is the measure of all things and can solve all problems of humanity without God. To the secularist, morality is relative and ethics are autonomous-there are no absolutes, and the supernatural has no relevance in human affairs.

During March 1994, a *USA Today/CNN* Gallup poll resulted in 69 percent responding that religion as a whole is losing its influence on U.S. life.

while the polls tell us that 40 million Americans attend church at least four times a month, they also reveal that 86 percent of the politicians, journalists, and media personnel infrequently or never attend church.

Thus the secularizing influences of our government, educational system, and entertainment industry have polluted our nation.

This secular triumph has left many Americans isolated, confused, and alone. Clearly, the nuclear person is disconnected historically, disoriented personally, and disfranchised spiritually. But the Bible comes crashing through, and we hear the Psalmist say:

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish" (Psalm 1).*

By definition the word *integrity* comes from the root word *integer*, which means whole, complete, or entire. It is firm adherence to a code of morals, values, and behavior.

By demonstration integrity is uprightness of character, trustworthy action, and responsible commitment.

By determination integrity is a standard of incorruptibility—a refusal to be false to a trust, responsibility, or pledge.

For example, "He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he" (Deuteronomy 32:4; also see Job 1:1; Titus 1:8; 2:12).

The bottom line is: Christian integrity is a reality that sets the standard for the normal Christian life. Thus integrity must be understood in the context of behavior. The Greek word *schema* is translated "fashion" and signifies that which comprises the manner of life, actions, etc., of humanity in general.

It means to fashion one's behavior code after the image and life of Jesus Christ.

INTEGRITY IS DISCIPLINED BEHAVIOR

Every day we make choices—what to do and how to live. Our lives must reflect that we are governed by a code of absolutes that we will not violate. This is the message of Joshua 24:15 and Ruth 1:16.

We are what we choose, and behavior is a result of choice. We make an intellectual-emotional-spiritual decision to function in a way that brings the highest productivity to our lives.

INTEGRITY IS DETERMINED BEHAVIOR

The key to integrity is to determine a sense of inner directedness that does not yield to the pressures of the age—that identifies with the highest rather than the lowest, the best rather than the worst, the ideal rather than the average, the excellent rather than the mediocre.

It reaches for the deepest resources in Christ, stands up, and says, "I'm taking charge of my behavior. I'm not going to bend to the temptations and frustrations of the world." It says, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day" (2 Timothy 1:12, NKJV).

INTEGRITY IS DEMONSTRATED BEHAVIOR

Integrity is a lifestyle characterized by the indwelling of God's Word. It means having one's act together and exemplifying the Christ-like life in every circumstance. The apostle John put it this way: "But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:5,6, NKJV).

The proof of our behavior is in the morality we demonstrate. Albert Schweitzer once



Paul L. Walker

**Christian
Integrity**
is a reality
that sets the
standard for
the normal
Christian life.

at a prayer
breakfast a
friend confesses
to an adulterous
affair. Hearts
shatter, and
families suffer
irreparable
damage. And
we wonder,
“What has
happened to
integrity?”

based on the authority of God's Word and its intrinsic value, the following statements from Paul Walker's book, *The Ministry of Church and Pastor*, 29-30, give us a broad, practical framework for moral Christian behavior.

Moral actions, decisions, and attitudes produce:

1. *The capacity to internalize faith.*
2. *The strength of integrity in relationships.*
3. *The appreciation of human dignity and worth.*
4. *The acceptance of freedom in responsibility to God and the Christian community.*
5. *The attitudes of love and creative cooperation.*
6. *The fulfillment of capability.*
7. *The development of absolute convictions.*

On the other side of the coin immoral actions, decisions, and attitudes produce:

1. *The capacity to manipulate and deceive.*
2. *The weakness of dishonesty and fraud.*
3. *The degradation of human dignity and worth.*
4. *The promotion of freedom of self at the expense of God and the community in exploitive behavior.*
5. *The attitudes of disrespect and rebellion.*
6. *The failure to fulfill capability.*
7. *The lapse into relativism in which the end justifies the means.*

said, "Example is not the main thing in influencing others, it is the only thing."

Perhaps the reality of integrity is best illustrated by the life of Eric Liddell whose life inspired the movie, *Chariots of Fire*.

Eric was a man who demonstrated the reality of integrity. Because he would not run in the Olympics on Sunday, he entered a different race and won a gold medal in the 1924 Olympics. Liddell was called to be a missionary to China and became a teacher at the Anglo-Chinese College in Tientsin.

After teaching for some time, he went into the interior and traveled from village to village on foot and by bicycle-spreading the gospel over hundreds of thousands of miles.

During World War II the Japanese invaded China. Liddell was branded, along with many others of Western heritage, as an "enemy national," and in 1943 he was confined in a prison camp 150 by 200 yards with a thousand other so-called nationalist enemies. While there he had an impact on the prison camp-organized athletic events,

conducted worship services, preached the gospel (to which many responded in faith), counseled people, and comforted the sick and the dying.

His determined influence is reflected in the writings of David Michell, who was a child in the camp during that time. Michell wrote: "None of us will ever forget this man who was totally committed to putting God first, a man whose humble life combined muscular Christianity with radiant godliness" (Eric Liddell, *The Disciplines if the ChristianLife*, 18).

In 1945 Eric Liddell died of a brain tumor in that prison camp.

Liddell's story gives insight into the meaning of integrity, and he articulated that integrity in a Christian manual that gives four tests of the moral law by which we are to measure ourselves:

"1. *Am I truthful?* Are there any conditions under which I will tell a lie? Can I be depended on to tell the truth no matter what the cost?

"2. *Am I honest?* Can I be trusted in money matters? in my work, even when no one is looking? with other people's reputations? with myself-or do I rationalize and become defensive?

"3. *Am I pure?* in my habit? in my thought life? in my motives? in my relations with the opposite sex?

"4. *Am I selfish?* in the demands I make on my family, spouse, or associates? Am I badly balanced, full of moods-cold today and warm tomorrow? Do I indulge in nerves that spoil my happiness and that of those around me? Am I unrestrained in my pleasures, the kind I enjoy without considering the effect...to take reasonable rest and exercise? Am I unrestrained in small self-indulgences, letting myself become the slave of habits, however harmless they may appear to me? Let us put ourselves before ourselves and look at ourselves" (Liddell, *ChristianLife*, 29-30).

Integrity-reality or illusion-that is the question. As ministers, church leaders, and believers there is only one answer-the words of Jesus Christ:

"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth" (John 17:17-19, NKJV). !!!

**Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.*

Paul L. Walker, Ph.D., is senior pastor of Mount Paran Church of God, Atlanta, Georgia.

integrity
integrity
integrity
integrity
integrity
integrity
integrity

!ntegqty

!ntegqty

!ntegqty

!ntegqty

!ntegqty

!ntegqty

Integnty



How To Treat a Visiting Missionary

BY HOWARD L. CUMMINGS

Entertaining missionaries reminds me of the story about a naughty boy who had endured progressive disciplinary measures that climaxed with the maternal threat, "Just wait until your dad gets home!"

Surely enough, when Dad arrived, further discipline preceded an early trip to bed. Remorseful for the way they had punished their wayward son, the parents peeked into his room before retiring and discovered him asleep on his knees. They lovingly tucked him in, hoping for a better tomorrow.

Rising early, the father noticed a note in childish scrawl pinned to his son's bedroom door: "Be kind to your children, and they will be kind to you! [Signed] God."

Precisely! Be kind to your missionaries, and they will be kind to you. Some suggestions:

RESPOND.

Answer itinerating missionaries' communications. Sure, we're busy but not that busy. If the governor of your state called, you'd respond. Missionaries are just as important and deserve the courtesy of a return phone call or an answered letter.

BE HOSPITABLE.

Let the visiting missionaries know you're glad they came. Say and do things that communicate hospitality. Reserve a nice hotel room if your church can afford it. Otherwise, go out of your way to house them in a home where they will have privacy and time to pray and rest.

Our laymen's missions council does a little extra: They prepare an attractive food and fruit basket and place it in the visiting missionaries' hotel room prior to their arrival. A personal note expressing love and appreciation for their visit is enclosed.

Assign someone to meet the missionaries

if they are flying and someone to take them to a meal shortly after arrival. Our laymen's council divides up these duties, and each person who entertains our guests is richer for it. Exercise care not to overwhelm the guests with more dining engagements than are practical, however; ask them their preferences. Be sure they know you're flexible.

A car is provided for missionary guests who stay a number of days with us at Aurora First Assembly, which gives them a degree of independence. If renting a car is cost prohibitive, someone in the congregation usually is more than willing to lend a car to God's servants.

TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHERE THEY'RE COMING FROM.

I don't particularly mean the country of their calling. Missionary guests who have just arrived from the field may have jet lag, which does strange things to the reflexes. They may have been preaching in another language for years and will have to pause periodically to think through a phrase or a word in English.

They may be going through culture shock in reverse. Some missionaries return to the States after a term in a primitive culture and are shocked by such simple things as the quantity of food in the supermarket, clothing styles, or just the fast pace of the American culture. You expect them to exhibit the public persona of an American TV evangelist while they feel more like Rip van Winkle. Consider the possibility that they have been traumatized by repeated rejections from U.S. pastors and may genuinely need a word of assurance from you.

Tell your guests exactly what you expect from them. Basically, pastors preach to the same crowd each week. Itinerant missionar-

ies *are* in a different church every service, and each church and pastor has its own personality. They need to know how many minutes you will give them to speak, the type of people who make up your congregation, any particular theme you're emphasizing, and how you want them to approach the offering.

Encourage your missionaries to mention their financial needs, thus challenging your people and making it simpler to receive an offering for their work. Make *sure* the ushers have a supply of prayer cards and/or offering envelopes to distribute at the appropriate time, generally as the people enter the sanctuary.

To introduce our guests to the church, we provide a welcome letter upon their arrival which has instructions regarding schedule, when to speak, and who will provide transportation and hospitality.

BE GENEROUS TO GOD'S SERVANTS.

Your people will be blessed as you encourage them to give generously to the ministry of the missionaries. In addition to the offering for their work, you may want to consider a personal honorarium in keeping with your normal guidelines. Don't substitute an honorarium for the offering. Give them both, but a personal gesture of generosity is always appreciated.

We experience additional joy when the missionaries' families accompany them, and we receive an extra love offering for them. Some of my most treasured mementos *are* letters from MKs expressing appreciation for a little cash gift. Some remark that it is the first time anyone has given them a personal offering. You may just be impacting another generation of missionaries.

Pray over the missionaries corporately. We

have developed what we call the 'Antioch experience," when the laymen's missions council and deacons join the pastoral staff at the altar to lay hands on the missionaries and families and commission them to represent our church in the lands of their callings. We publicly commit to pray regularly for them as they return to the field. The congregation, with outstretched arms, enters into this corporate prayer of support.

GIVE THE MISSIONARIES A ROYAL WELCOME.

They are our frontline troops, God's choice servants, extending the Kingdom boundaries in a cooperative effort with the church at home. They deserve special treatment. Why shouldn't we give our returning warriors a royal welcome?

From this inspiration developed the 'Aurora First Assembly's royal missionary welcome." All guest missionaries are afforded this treatment upon their introduction. Our congregation gives them a standing ovation-honor to whom honor is due (Romans 13:7). We've discovered that every missionary delivers his or her best missions message. The adrenaline flows as the Spirit of God anoints.

"Be kind to your missionaries, and they will be kind to you. [Signed] God." •

Howard L. Cummings is pastor of First Assembly of God, Aurora, Colorado.

our call is very important to me!

Someone passed along a recorded phone message:

"Your call is very important to me. Please stay on the line. You have reached my office. For a list of options please press pound. I cannot emphasize enough how important your call is to me. If you wish to leave a message, press star, then 235. Then using your telephone pad as a keyboard, press the first three syllables of the message you are about to leave, along with the last three syllables concluding your message. If you wish to interrupt your message at any time, press star, then 55, then pound. If you wish to leave a message longer than 3 minutes, press star, then 327, then the approximate length of your message as measured in seconds. Please stay

on the line for even more options. Remember, your call is extremely important to me personally, even though I do not have the time to talk to you."

Being a busy pastor, I immediately thought of the incredible time-saving and energy-conserving possibilities of such a high-tech and contempo-

rary way of handling all those phone calls which jam the church office circuits. How does this sound?

"This is the voice of your loving and caring pastor. Your call is very important. please stay on the line. If you desire help in accurately calculating your tithe, please press 1. If you would like to know your rank among all donors, please press 2. If you would like to hear Sister Alice's recorded apology for criticizing the music pastor, please press 3. If you would like the pastor's confidential prediction for next month's deacon board election, please press 4. If you would like the results of the most recent popularity poll on the minister to seniors, please press 5. For a personal word of encouragement recorded just for you, please press 6. Please stay on the line for further options. Remember, your call is very important to me even though I don't have time to talk to you."

What if Jesus had had access to such a wonderful tool? For example, remember the blind man who attempted to slow down the whole parade by calling after Jesus? With modern technology available, one of the disciples could have stepped over and said: "Say, don't you know that Jesus now has an sao number? All you have to do is dial I-SaO-JESUS, and you will hear a recorded message just for you."

Then consider the father whose son threw himself about uncontrollably. Understandably, the father was persistent in his demands on Jesus. Just think how helpful it would have been if Jesus could have screened those kinds of insistent calls. How good it would have been if He could have politely distanced himself from the persistent demands of so many people.

Then I thought about those Pharisees and Sadducees who bombarded Jesus with questions: "Whose wife will she be in the Resurrection?" "Who gave You the authority to say what You say?" "Why do You do good on the Sabbath?" These are the kinds of questions that could very nicely be handled with a present battery of recorded answers. Just think

BY RICHARD L. DRESSELHAUS

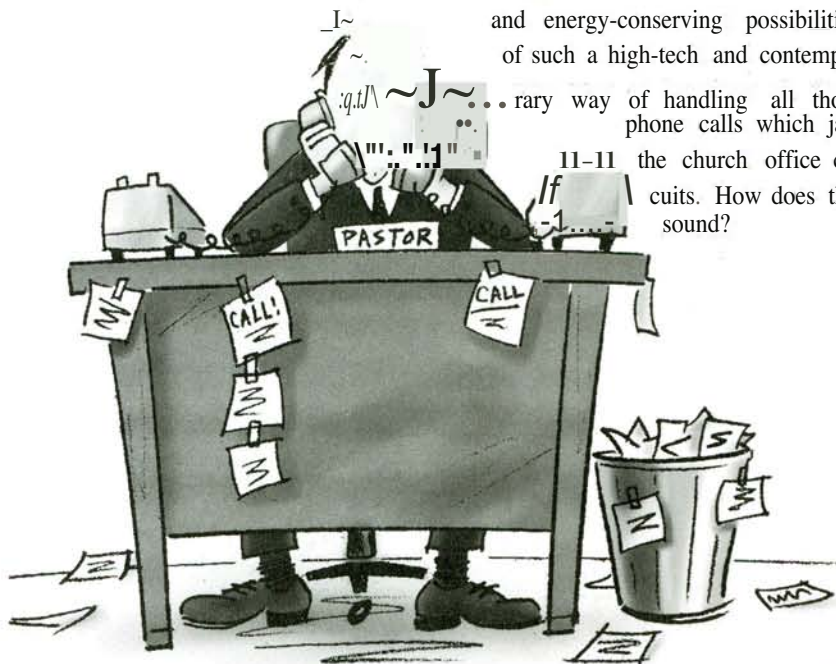


ILLUSTRATION: ART SOURCE

of the time Jesus could have saved, for it was people who took away His precious time.

I think modern telecommunication techniques have great possibilities for the on-the-go pastor. With a cellular phone it would be possible to call in from the 16th green and catch the few calls that slipped through the system. Usually an associate can be dispatched for such rare emergencies.

By distancing yourself from people, you will free yourself for the more important aspects of ministry. With the kind of technology proposed here, it will finally be possible to control compassion, meter mercy, and regulate love. Thus the hurried pastor will have the necessary time to stay refreshed, relaxed, and alert to any new requirements of a caring ministry.

The key is to discover ways of distancing yourself from people. People have a way of unpredictably placing demands upon your time. If you can shield yourself from them with some well-programmed message devices, you can save that important time for those

really significant requirements of ministry. Again, keep your distance from people.

If you perfect this modern approach to a caring ministry, you will find yourself with more time on your hands than you could ever imagine. Just an occasional change of message, a little reprogramming here and there, and your time will be your own.

In fact, finally all of it will be yours.

"I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:24,25, NIV).

Please, just let me take the next call myself. ■■

Richard L. Dresselhaus, D.Min., is pastor of First Assembly of God, San Diego, California.

A THANKSGIVING PRAYER YOU CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT

Ephesians 1:17-23

INTRODUCTION:

In the early 1970s William Randolph Hearst's name became a household word when his daughter was kidnapped. During the same period he sent his agent to the art galleries of the world in search of a famous painting to add to his multimillion-dollar collection.

After months of unprofitable efforts the buyer returned home to search through Mr. Hearst's art warehouse one more time. The painting had been purchased years earlier and was there all the time.

In essence Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:17-23 that the saints would be spared from frantic searches for what is already theirs—that they would search for God as the source of all they needed. His prayer flowed from a thankful heart for his fellow servants.

Many Christians today spend much time and effort vainly looking for blessings already available to them. This prayer of thanksgiving for the Ephesians reveals some of the most profound truths in the Bible. For many reasons this thanksgiving prayer is one that Christians cannot live without.

1. We need insight into God's person (Ephesians 1:17).

Paul prayed specifically that God would give us the understanding to know our resources—shown through the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of

Christ. The word *revelation* means an unveiling or uncovering of truth. It implies the removing of the veil of mystery. The word *wisdom* represents the use of knowledge or revelation. The word *knowledge* means a full perception or recognition.

Paul prayed that the saints would obtain wisdom to appropriate the amazing revelation and abundant resources the Lord had already given. These blessings are so vast the human mind cannot comprehend them. We cannot fathom the riches of being in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit alone can search the deep things of the mind of God and bring them to our understanding.

2. We need instruction into God's purpose (Ephesians 1:18).

Paul prayed that "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened." The word *enlightened* comes from *phos* which means light. God wants His children to obtain instruction into His purposes through wisdom, revelation, and knowledge of Christ (verse 17) by having the eyes of their understanding opened to the deep truths of God.

3. We need an interpretation of God's plan (Ephesians 1:18).

Paul prayed "that [we] may know what is the hope of his calling" To "know" is the root word for "to see." "Hope" in the Word of God always means a certainty that needs no visible foundation on which to rest. He desires the saints to be certain of "His calling." In

other words, God will finish what has been started. He consummates what He commences.

4. We need illumination into God's prosperity (Ephesians 1:18).

The apostle continued his intercession: "and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" This does not pertain to our inheritance but God's. God's inheritance is not the solar systems but sanctified saints; not stars but souls; not planets but people; not the riches of the resources but the redeemed of the Redeemer.

The riches of the glory of His inheritance is in the saints. We who are saved make up His treasured inheritance. Paul prayed that we might perceive how great are His riches because we are His own.

5. We need inspiration from God's power (Ephesians 1:19-23).

a. *Christians have resourceful power*
(verse 19).

The Greek has four words for power. Paul used all four in this verse, beginning with *dunamis* (power), from which comes dynamite and dynamo. He emphasized the strength of this power by using "exceeding" and "greatness." "Exceeding" means to throw beyond, to surpass, or immeasurable capabilities. "Greatness" is a derivative of the modern word *megaton*, used to describe the destructive power of the atomic bomb. It means the destructive equivalent of 1 million tons of dynamite.

"Working" (*energeia*) is the force of the Spirit that energizes the believer to live for the Lord. "Mighty" (*kratos*) can be translated "strength" or "dominion." This is our strength to gain an end or dominion. "Power" (*ischus*), at the end of verse 19, would be better translated "might." It carries the idea of endowed might or power to maintain.

Simply stated, Paul said Christians have an equivalent amount of immeasurable atomic power at their disposal to energize them to live for the Lord, to gain dominion over the devil, and to maintain victory throughout their lives.

b. *Christians have resurrected power* (verse 20).

The supernatural power and working strength that God gives every believer are exemplified when Christ was raised from the dead and was seated at the Father's right hand in the heavenly realm. The power of resurrection and ascension is the same energy made available to every believer.

c. *Christians have respectable power* (verses 21,22).

Paul moved from the might of Christ to His majesty. It is sad when more is said about the peripheral things of the Christian life and so little about the Person who is the source of the Christian life. Christ is "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion."

Furthermore, Christ is far above everyone and everything else—the seas, the sand, the sun, the sins of the world, the saints of God, the stars in the heavens, and Satan himself. He is above the celestial and the terrestrial, the temporal and the eternal. Christ is above all names, ranks, titles, levels, powers, and jurisdictions in the universe. In fact, all things are under His feet (verse 22). He sits on the throne of God and rests His feet on the earth.

d. *Christians have redeeming power* (verse 22).

Christ has not only conquered death, hell, and the grave, He is in control of the Church. He is "the head over all things to the church."

e. *Christians have relational power* (verse 23).

Christ is not only the head of the Church but its fullness also. He is completely over us and in us. Just as a head must have a body to manifest its glory, so Christ must have the Church to manifest His glory (Ephesians 3:10). He fills all in all by giving His fullness to believers. By grace the Church is the fullness of Christ.

CONCLUSION:

Paul's thanksgiving prayer is a petition we cannot live without—it gives the Christian an insight into God's person, instruction into God's purpose, an interpretation of God's plan, an illumination of God's prosperity, and an inspiration from God's power.

Jimmy Davis, Springfield, Missouri



GIVING THANKS

Ephesians 5:20

INTRODUCTION:

The ultimate act of worship is to possess a thankful heart which recognizes God as the source of everything. A heart filled with gratitude sees beyond the difficult circumstances and sees the sovereignty of God.

1. When to be thankful

- a. Always
- b. "In everything"
(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

2. What are we thankful for?

- a. For God's pardon
(Romans 6:17, 18)
- b. For God's provision
(Acts 27:35)

3. How to be thankful

- a. In the name of our Lord
- b. Because of who He is

4. Whom do we give thanks to?

- a. Unto God, the Father
- b. For all good gifts
(James 1:17)

CONCLUSION:

Thanksgiving from the heart is always an expression of *trust* in Christ.

Harley Allen, Concord, California

THE GLORY BEHIND THE GRIND

INTRODUCTION:

The word *praise* is mentioned 346 times in the New International Version, which emphasizes its importance. Our society knows little of praise but is eaten up with a critical attitude, disrespect, indifference, and selfish arrogance. These attitudes have infiltrated the church—even impacted our worship—so that *mine* has taken the place of *thine*, and *apathy* has replaced *awe*.

1. Two principles regarding praise

- a. Praise is an eternal exercise. Before time began, God was praised, and after time is no more, God will be praised (Nehemiah 9:6; Job 38:4-7; Psalms 72:19; 86:12; 92:8;

102:12; 111:10; Isaiah 6:2,3; Revelation 5:13).

- b. Everything was created to praise God.

Not only is God praised in heaven, He made everything to praise Him (Psalms 19:1-4; 148:1-13; 150:6; Isaiah 43:20).

2. The cause of praise

- a. What praise is not:
 - (1) Praise is not dependent on a certain style or worship leader.
 - (2) Praise is not positive thinking.
- b. What motivates praise?
Praise is the result of a proper perspective.
The scene of Revelation 4:4,8-11 is the fountainhead of all praise.

3. The kinds of praise

- a. How should we praise God-what is the proper way?
 - (1) We praise Him with singing (Psalms 96:1,2; 105:2; 135:3).
 - (2) We praise Him with our mouths (Psalms 34: 1; 145:21; 149:6).
 - (3) We praise Him with music (Psalms 92: 1; 150:3,4).
 - (4) We praise Him with shouting (Psalms 66:1; 81:1; 95:1; 98:4,6; 100:1).
 - (5) We praise Him with our hands (Psalms 47:1; 63:3,4; 134:2).
 - (6) We praise Him by dancing (Psalm 149:3,4).
 - (7) We praise Him by kneeling (2 Chronicles 20: 18).

4. The contribution of praise

- a. Praise will bring God into the situation (Psalm 22:3).
- b. Praise dispels darkness (Psalm 149:4-9).
- c. Praise helps cast off the spirit of heaviness (Isaiah 61:3).
- d. Praise brings about God's blessing (Psalm 67~5-7).
- e. Praise is a prelude to deliverance (2 Chronicles 20:21,22; Psalm 50:23; Jonah 2:9; Acts 16:25,26).

CONCLUSION:

What motivates us to praise God? When we are aware of who He is, our response is to praise Him.

How should I praise God? Step out, obey the Scriptures, and see the blessings.

What will it do for me? Find out-it will change your life.

John Lindell, Springfield, Missouri



GEORGE WASHINGTON

How much of our history has been rewritten to eliminate the memorials to God? For example, some of the original history regarding George Washington, our first president, is astounding. An account was discovered in many of the 19th-century American textbooks that never appeared in any of the history books after 1934.

The account occurred during the French and Indian War when George Washington, at age 23, fought with the British against the French, who were allied with the Indians. On July 9, 1755, in a certain battle, the British regiment was ambushed by the French and Indians. Of the 86 British and Virginia officers, only Washington was not shot off his horse, injured, or killed.

After retreating to Maryland, Washington wrote his mother: "After the battle was over... I had four bullet holes through my jacket, but not a single bullet had touched me. I had several horses shot out from under me, but I was not hurt in any way. God must have had His hand on me. God protected and kept me through that battle."

The story goes on to say that in 1770, Washington traveled back to the region. An old Indian chief, having heard Washington was in the area, traveled some distance to meet him. The chief told Washington, "You don't know me, but 15 years ago you and I were in the same war. I commanded the Indians who were fighting against you that day. We saw you riding through the woods and knew you were the leader. If we could kill you, we knew that your troops would scatter, so I

instructed my braves to fire at you as the primary target. I personally fired at you 17 times, but when I saw that none of our bullets had any effect on you, I told my braves to stop shooting. I have traveled all this way to meet the man that God would not let die."

M. Wayne Benson, Grand Rapids, Michigan

WHY THE DOCTOR WAS TOO LATE

It was almost 1 a.m. when the phone rang in the Winters' home. Dr. Leo Winters, the highly acclaimed Chicago surgeon, was awakened with a start.

It was a young boy, they said, tragically mangled in a late-night accident. Could not someone else handle it? Not this time. His hands were possibly the only ones in the city-or maybe even in the whole region-which were skilled enough to save this life.

The quickest route happened to be through a rather tough area, but to save time it was worth the risk. At a stoplight, his door was jerked open by a man in a gray hat and a dirty flannel shirt. "I've got to have your car!" the man screamed, pulling the doctor from the car. Winters tried explaining the gravity of his situation, but the man did not listen.

The doctor wandered for over 45 minutes looking for a phone. When the taxi finally got him to the hospital, over an hour had passed. As he burst through the doors and into the nurses' station the nurse on duty only shook her head. Too late. The boy had died about 30 minutes earlier. "The dad got here just before the boy died," she told the doc-

tor. "He is in the chapel. Go see him. He is confused-could not understand why you never came."

Without explaining, Dr. Winters walked hurriedly down the hall and entered the chapel. At the front knelt the huddled form of a weeping father in a gray hat and dirty flannel shirt. Tragically, he had pushed from his life the only one who could have saved his son's life.

Abridged from Moments for Each Other by Robert Strand. Reprinted by permission.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT

A housewife called the Sanitation Department to come *out* and pick up a dead mule from her yard. Several men and a truck were sent to do the ~leanup.

Then the housewife changed her mind. She ran out and asked the men to take the dead mule upstairs and place it in the bathtub. "I'll give you \$20 each for doing this little job," she said.

The men didn't really understand, but \$20 is \$20. After much struggle and heavy lifting they finally managed to get the mule upstairs and deposited in the bathtub. When the task was completed and she was giving each man his hard-earned \$20, the foreman asked, "Ma'am, why did you want this dead mule placed in your bathtub? Thank you for the \$20, but why?"

"Well," she replied, "my husband has come home every night for the past 35 years and has gone through the same routine without change. He pulls off his coat and shoes, grabs the

newspaper, sits down in his easy chair, and always asks, 'What's new?' In those 35 years there has never been anything new, so tonight I'm going to tell him!"

Life really is exciting! For too many of us life has been the same old routine, same old sixes and sevens, the same ho-hum, nothing different, nothing new. That's so sad.

Abridged from Moments for Each Other by Robert Strand. Reprinted by permission.

SINGLE BUT LOOKING

Preachers can fall into the trap of trying to be all things to all people, which reminds me of the single man who was looking for a wife. As he boarded a plane one day, a beautiful woman also boarded and sat down by him.

He couldn't believe his luck, so he decided to ask her what kind of man she was looking for. She said, "Well, I like Indian men—they are tall, dark, and silent." She added, "But then again, I like Jewish men—they are good businessmen and smart. Then again, I like outdoors men who are—you know the kind...with a truck, a flannel shirt, and like to camp out."

"By the way," she said, "what's your name?" to which he responded, "Geronimo Goldberg, but my friends call me Bubba."

John Lindell, Springfield, Missouri

DEAR GOD:

Most of us have more questions than answers. That's due in part to our

dealing with a God whose ways are not our ways, whose thoughts are not our thoughts. That's why I like the little book entitled *Dear God.' Children's Letters to God.*

A little girl named Lucy asks God: "Dear God, are You really invisible or is that just a trick?"

Norma asks, "Dear God, did You mean for a giraffe to look like that or was that an accident?"

And Neil writes, "Dear God, I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that OK?"

Joanne asks, "I would like to know why all the things You said are in red."

Daria asks, "Did You really mean, 'Do unto others as they do unto you'? Because if You did, then I'm going to fix my brother."

Peter requests, "Will you please send Dennis Clark to a different camp this year?"

When it comes to our walk with God, most of us have more questions than we have answers.

John Lindell, Springfield, Missouri

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR OUR GOOD

Wallace Johnson, builder of numerous Holiday Inns and convalescent homes, said:

"When I was 40 years old I worked in a sawmill. One morning, the boss fired me.

"Depressed and discouraged, I felt like the world had caved in on me. It was during the Depression, and my wife and I needed the small wages I had been earning. I went home and told her I had

lost my job.

"What are we going to do now?" she asked.

"I told her, 'Tomorrow I am going to mortgage our little home and go into the building business.'

"My first venture was the construction of two small buildings. Within 5 years, I was building Holiday Inns and convalescent hospitals and was a multimillionaire.

"Today if I could locate the man who fired me, I would sincerely thank him for what he did."

Not everything bad that happens to us is bad.

John Lindell, Springfield, Missouri

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

Are you looking for another place to use that great sermon illustration you used in last week's message? *Advance* will pay up to \$25 for each sermon illustration it uses. If the material has previously been published, please indicate the original source. Send your contributions to:

Illustrate It
Advance
1445 Boonville Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802-1894



SANCTUARY SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

To give proper pastoral respect and support to Sunday school enrollment and, at the same time, personally impact the worshipers who have not enrolled in Christian education, I take opportunity two Sundays each quarter to inform and enroll worshipers from the sanctuary during Sunday morning worship.

To do this the director of adult Christian education publishes a Christian Education Guide that lists all adult classes, teachers, texts, and brief descriptions of the material to be covered. These, along with a Christian education registration form, are distributed to worshipers.

I encourage and remind the people to register for one of the classes and stress the importance of doing so, urge them to give a week of prayerful consideration to determine the class for

enrollment, and assure them they can call the minister of Christian education with any questions.

I ask them to fill out the registration form and bring it with them to worship the next Sunday. This is further amplified during the Sunday and Wednesday evening services. A clear pastoral statement regarding the vital discipleship process is helpful, pointing out that it is an active part of every Christian's advancement in spiritual maturity. This small-group Bible study is a vital ingredient.

Frequently a few testimonies are shared that emphasize the personal importance of adult Christian education. Regular students are urged to reregister along with the first-time students. Worshipers clearly understand the importance the spiritual leadership places upon Christian education.

Prime Sunday morning time is devoted quarterly to Christian education reg-

istration, recognition of teachers, and teachers certification awards.

It is rewarding to observe the registration of new students. Without question, God honors our placing the study of His Word at the top of Christian priorities.

Our Christian education enrollment is increasing and a continuing air of excitement permeates the entire congregation. Enthusiasm is contagious, and the student body becomes involved in Christian education recruitment. We have stayed with this recruitment process for 12 years because of its great success.

Earl J. Banning, Houston, Texas

MIDSERVICE PRAYER MINISTRY

Each Sunday morning the Braeswood congregation enters the sanctuary for worship after having attended Christian education classes. We recognize the necessity of giving them a second, undelayed opportunity to respond to the Word previously received.

Approximately 15 minutes into praise and worship I invite the body ministry people—those who have been trained to minister at the altar—to come to their assigned places of ministry in prayer. They stand shoulder to shoulder across the front of the sanctuary. I tell the congregation this is a time of praying one for another and invite them to come forward for prayer with the elder of their choice.

Elders ask simply, "What do you want from the Lord?" Each elder shares a verse of Scripture and joins with the seeker in prayer.



"SORRY WE'RE LATE, PASTOR. WE OVERSLEPT!"

During this time of prayer at the altar, the congregation is encouraged to be either praying for those coming to the altar or to continue worshiping as the minister of worship and the choir continue to lead. This continues until all who come forward have received prayer-usually about 15 minutes-and is a vital part of the worship.

Persons accepting Christ or rededicating their lives to the Lord are directed to assigned people standing by prepared to get their names, addresses, and phone numbers for follow-up. It is not uncommon for people to be saved, healed, or receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit along with encouragement.

Another altar call is given as a response to the sermon at the conclusion of the worship. We have discovered that two altar opportunities per Sunday service is very practical and serves an eternal purpose.

Earl J. Banning, Houston, Texas

GIVING FOOD TO THE NEEDY SHOWS THE CHURCH CARES

Renton Assembly has become recognized in the community as a caring church through the ministry of providing food for the needy.

People in need come daily to the church office, fill out a short informational form, and walk away with a 2- to 3-day emergency supply of nonperishable food items. The food sacks are given to anyone who asks. In fact, government agencies, businesses, and even other churches send people to us.

The church spends no ministry money on the food-it is all provided by mem-

bers of the congregation. When stock runs low, such as peanut butter and jam or breakfast cereal, flyers asking for donations of those foods are given to the adult Sunday school classes.

Included in each sack are a gospel tract and a leaflet which says:

"We are happy to be able to help you with this emergency sack of groceries. Because of their concern, individuals at Renton Assembly have purchased the items you are receiving today.

"We believe God answers prayer. If we can pray with you about anything, please let us know."

At Thanksgiving, the church makes up baskets of yams, olives, stuffing mixes, cranberries, pumpkin, canned milk, flour, sugar, and gelatin. We receive a cash offering for the purchase of turkeys to be delivered with the baskets.

To avoid families receiving more than one food basket at Thanksgiving, we clear the names through a local Salvation Army master list. This



ensures holiday help reaching as many as possible.

At Christmas, no one else in the community provides food baskets, so various departments within the church adopt needy church and community families and bring holiday food items, plus gifts appropriate for the adults and children in each family.

This idea works for any size church by adjusting the number of baskets distributed.

Rick Ross, Renton, Washington

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS AT THANKSGIVING

A special all-church Christmas celebration on the Sunday after Thanksgiving Day was a new concept. In spite of several possible reasons the idea could fail, it worked. Beginning the Christmas season with Christmas at Thanksgiving has become one of the highlights of the year. Members of our congregation say this special service makes their Christmas celebration complete.

THE IDEA

The project began as Robert Strand, senior pastor of Park Crest Assembly in Springfield, Missouri, shared the idea with the missions committee. The concept was to begin the Christmas season by sharing it with pastors of small congregations or district home missions churches and their families. It would require cooperative efforts of the missions committee and the Sunday school youth and adult classes.

Christmas at Thanksgiving has taken on an identity of its own. The congrega-

tion refers to it as Home Missions Christmas.

THE PURPOSE

Smaller congregations or home missions ministries and their pastors/leaders sometimes have a very limited Christmas celebration due to financial restraints. A larger congregation can bless and encourage them and, at the same time, propagate the true Christmas spirit of giving.

Thus our church adopted these families as special guests of the church for the holiday season. We begin the Christmas season by giving each honored family their Christmas from us in November.

THE PLAN

Working with the sectional and district leaders, Pastor Strand and the missions committee obtain the names of pastors and congregations that could be encouraged as recipients of Christmas at Thanksgiving. The pastor and the committee make the necessary contacts and extend the invitations to pastors from small congregations in the city or from the surrounding communities, Teen Challenge workers, and pioneer pastors of new churches—usually three or four ministers and their families. The invitation process is completed by late October to finalize the guest list.

Those invited are asked to participate in the Sunday-after-Thanksgiving evening service by sharing a brief overview of their ministries. They are assured the church will pray for them, and the offering received in the service will be designated for their church or ministry.

Once the church receives a positive response from those invited, the missions committee assigns members of the invited guests to the Sunday school classes. Each class receives information as to clothing sizes, personal interests, etc., which will help the classes in purchasing gifts for their honored guests. Coordinators in each class collect special offerings during the month of November to buy the gifts.

At the same time, groceries are collected in Home Missions Christmas boxes located throughout the church during November. These groceries are then shared with the invited guests at the end of the special missions service.

THE PROGRAM

One of the keys to the success of this ministry is the element of surprise, for the honored guests are not apprised of the Christmas aspect of the event. Their invitation has been clearly described as a special winter missions emphasis at the church.

Pastor and the missions committee introduce the individual speakers, and each is given opportunity to share a 5- to 8-minute presentation of their ministries. Afterward a special offering is received which will be divided equally among the represented ministries and churches. This offering is not for the minister/pastor and family but for their church or ministry.

The much-awaited surprise then begins to unfold. Families join the invited pastors/ministers on the platform so the congregation can pray for them at the conclusion of the service.

As the congregation sings a Christmas carol, members of the respec-

tive Sunday school classes enter. They have Christmas gifts for each member of the honored families. From our church missions fund, a designated cash offering is given to family members to spend as they wish. They are also given cash offerings designated for their personal use.

Christmas at Thanksgiving (Home Missions Christmas) concludes with a special altar service. Each honored family is surrounded by members of the congregation, especially members of the Sunday school classes, for prayer.

THE RESULTS

Christmas at Thanksgiving has blessed both givers and receivers. Those who have been honored have shared that this special service was the encouragement they needed. Their churches have been blessed as they also received the assistance and encouragement from our church.

Christmas at Park Crest Assembly has taken on special meaning for our congregation. We have become prayer partners with these small but needed churches and their pastors. We have embraced and become involved with ministries like Teen Challenge of the Ozarks or some of the church-planting efforts.

Christmas at Thanksgiving makes the joy of giving a meaningful experience to our church and families.

The uniqueness of this special service is that it can take place in churches of all sizes. A willingness to share the joy of Christmas and a bit of coordination and work can make the Home Missions Christmas a reality in any church.

lifraim Espinoza. Springfield. Missouri

FRIDAY NIGHT HANGOUT HELPS COMMUNITY YOUTH

Concerned about reaching community youth who were looking for fun things to do on Friday nights, Troy Jones, our youth pastor, began Friday Night Hangout, an outreach designed to attract unchurched youth. Pastor Jones created an environment of wholesome fun by providing basketball, volleyball,

and other games; food; and even a room where the quieter youth could play board games.

An important, integral part of the evening is assembling everyone in the auditorium where Troy gives a powerful 5-minute devotional. For many youth it is the first time they have heard the gospel.

From the first, it was advertised as a drug-free community activity center,



and the effort received areawide support. Local businesses provided coupons for free pizza and soft drinks. The police department appreciated the provision of a place where youth could get off the streets on Friday night.

Of course, inviting youth into the church building to have fun requires an attitude of tolerance from the staff and congregation. Broken windows, scuffed walls, and other accidents are to be expected. Even when gang "wannabe's" showed up one night and caused a disturbance, it was viewed as a learning time. After that ID stickers were

required, more adult leaders were recruited, and off-duty police officers were hired for a time.

The benefit was that Renton Assembly made the front page of several local papers and was the subject of an editorial. A neighborhood meeting was called, and the church neighbors voiced overwhelming support for the outreach. The resulting attention for the outreach provided a lot of free publicity for the church and made the name Renton Assembly synonymous with caring about the youth of the community.

But what the newspapers did not

report was that in just the 6-month period surrounding these events, about 50 young people accepted Christ as Savior. A number of families joined the church after their teenagers became involved in the outreach.

Although 250 to 400 youth often attend this event at Renton Assembly, many smaller churches in the area have begun similar outreaches of their own. All it takes to be a success with this idea is a community with young people and a congregation with vision.

Rick Ross, Remon, Washington



"I quit my job, sold our home and enrolled in seminary. I'm not sure how much longer I can keep it a secret from my wife!"

© 1995 GLASBERGEN

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

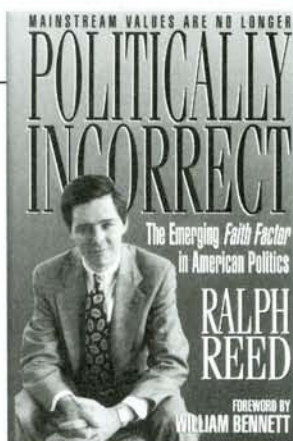
Is there a program idea, outreach activity, or creative approach to ministry you have used that has worked? Tell us about it. We would like to know, and other church leaders will want to know too.

Advance will pay up to \$50, depending on the length, for each published account of a ministry idea.

Send your ideas, along with a detailed description, to:

Ministry Ideas That Work
Advance
1445 Boonville Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802-1894





Ralph Reed (Word, 320 pp., hardback, \$19.99)

B O O K R E V I E W S

Politically Incorrect: What Religious Conservatives Really Think

Ralph Reed (Word, 320 pp., hardback, \$19.99)

Ralph Reed leads the Christian Coalition, a political action organization started by Pat Robertson. As one might expect, Reed writes from that platform and gives a good account of his responsibilities as a spokesman for fundamental values in a deteriorating society.

While this book is not unlike Pat Robertson's recent book, *The Turning Tide* (1993), it will easily stand alone as a catalog of the ills of society and how the Christian community should view them. He begins by calling for a mutually profitable ecumenism of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews for political advantage in effecting moral change in America.

One of the nuggets of the book is a concise look at the First Amendment and Thomas Jefferson's expression, "wall of separation between church and state." Reed puts it in clear perspective (the quote was taken out of the text of a letter Jefferson wrote) with a refreshing overview of Thomas Jefferson's solid conviction that God and religion should ever remain a part of the foundation of a sound nation. It clearly identifies the fraud that has been perpetrated upon the American public in the misuse of the phrase in a manner never intended by Jefferson himself.

Anyone without a strong stomach would be advised to skip the chapter, "Adventures in porkland," which deals with outrageous government waste.

Midway through the volume the author gets to the inevitable confrontation between

our nation's religious heritage and the growing hostility toward common decency. Reed says, "The time has never been riper for a new reformist impulse of religious faith. People of faith must stand up and be counted"

The second half of the book looks at the current personalities (including a chapter on President Clinton) and issues with scattered injections of how Reed and the Christian Coalition have been involved in attempting to keep proper perspective on issues such as crime, education, health care, taxes, racism, etc.

Reed tracks developments and shows how far we have come with our Benjamin Franklins, Noah Websters, and a host of other notable leaders of our adolescent nation in arriving at a time of popular absolute disdain for religion in public life. Example: We have come from Theodore Roosevelt's saying, "A thorough knowledge of the Bible is more important than a college education," to a Supreme Court ruling that the Ten Commandments could not be posted in a public school because it might "induce the schoolchildren to read, meditate upon, perhaps to venerate or obey the commandments." (That from a court which has the Ten Commandments chiseled in granite on its walls!)

The author does not hold religious conservatives blameless in this arena of secular disdain for religion. He suggests that in our aggressiveness we "sometimes speak in a way that reflects poorly on our Christian faith" and that we sometimes present a harsh side of religious belief that is "inappropriate and counterproductive."

Politically Incorrect is a good volume for Christian leaders who wish to be informed on public issues the church should at least be looking at. Ralph Reed handles many difficult issues with a mature level of sensitivity.

Reviewed by Everett Stenhouse, formerly Assemblies of God assistant general superintendent, Rancho Mirage, California.

BebNeen Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America

Mark A. Noll (Baker, 271 pp., paperback, \$13.99)

In this second edition of his 1986 work, which was very helpful to many of us in theological education, Mark Noll adds an afterword in which he updates and reiterates his theses: The Bible "tells the truth and in some senses the entire truth about God, the world of nature, the human condition, and the course of human history" and that "many of the instincts, assumptions, and practices of academic scholarship grow out of a covert trust in God and His work" (page 200).

Noll believes that evangelicalism must have responsible scholarship that will faithfully explicate biblical truth with honesty and rigor in the contemporary milieu. To that end, the book is a history and evaluation of the state of evangelical scholarship and its grappling with the scientific method from 1800 to the present. The book has enormous value for Christian teachers and thinkers who want to understand how their evangelical predecessors have dealt with the problems of faith and reason in the face of the modern higher critical assault.

The reader may be sometimes hesitant about certain of Noll's conclusions and may very well feel that he does not always adequately chart the inherent limits and dangers of the scientific method. However, one cannot fault his obviously sincere desire to serve Christ and the church through scholarly reflection and reasoned proclamation of Christian truth. He deserves our careful reading and our commendation for a credible effort to guide us through some very dense intellectual thickets which are quite unavoidable in the late 20th-century marketplace of ideas.

Reviewed by Edgar R. Lee, S.T.D., academic dean, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri.

A Nation Without a Conscience

Tim and Beverly LaHaye (Tyndale, 285 pp., hardback, \$16.99)

The LaHayes have written the best book I have ever read on the subject of conscience. It is factual but fascinating, profound but practical, contemporary but biblical, informative and important.

A Nation Without a Conscience is important to all who live in America, whether Christian or non-Christian. It deals primarily with the American conscience, using historical facts to reveal the polluting streams which have contributed to the river of filth now contaminating nearly every segment of contemporary culture.

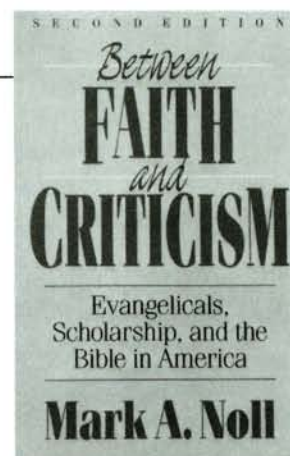
The message of the book is sobering. It would be difficult for anyone who reads it to reach any conclusion other than the fact that secular humanism is not working and, if allowed to continue unabated, will soon destroy the nation from within.

The book is important to all American Christians. It is rooted in the Word of God and reaches from the Garden of Eden to the White House Rose Garden to bring a proper perspective to the concerned believer. The writers have succeeded in taking a theological and often theoretical subject and making it relative and applicable.

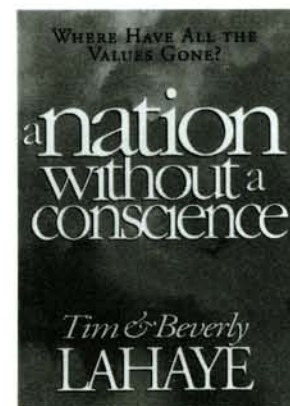
At times the book strays afield from the subject and is used as an opportunity for the authors to address and even promote other concerns on their agenda. However, this does not weaken the central message.

One of the main reasons I am positive about the book is because it is ultimately a call to action and not despair. Practical guidelines are given with clarity. The reader is not left with a sense of hopelessness but a strengthened moral conscience ready to contribute to the restoration of a national conscience.

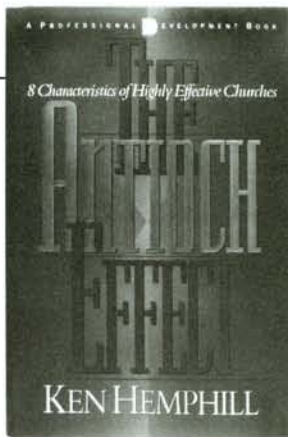
Reviewed by Charles T. Crabtree, Assemblies of God assistant general superintendent, Springfield, Missouri.



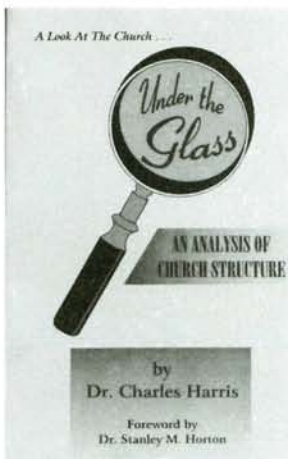
Mark A. Noll (Baker, 271 pp., paperback, \$13.99)



Tim and Beverly LaHaye (Tyndale, 285 pp., hardback, \$16.99)



Ken Hemphill (Broadman and Holman, 240 pp., hardback, \$17.99)



Charles Harris (Central Bible College Press, 349 pp., paperback, \$11.99)

The Antioch Effect: Eight Characteristics of Highly Effective Churches

Ken Hemphill (Broadman and Holman, 240 pp., hardback, \$17.99)

The premise of *The Antioch Effect* is tailor-made for Pentecostals. Ken Hemphill seeks to demonstrate, based on the model of the church at Antioch, that church growth is dependent on spiritual dynamics that go much deeper than "methods, models and marketing."

Hemphill, director of the Center for Church Growth for the Southern Baptist Home Missions Board, argues that the church must grow, not by catering to the market but by following the model of the New Testament church.

In so doing, Hemphill does not demean all church growth theory but makes the important point that the problem of focusing on methods is the inability to transfer context. Methods only work in the right spiritual environment. A healthy spiritual environment, he argues, has all eight of the Antiochian characteristics.

The eight characteristics for which Hemphill contends are supernatural power, Christ-exalting worship, God-connecting prayer, servant leaders, kingdom family relationships, God-sized vision, passion for the lost, and maturation of believers.

All this is music to the ears of a Pentecostal, but one must realize before rushing out to purchase this book that Hemphill is writing from and for a Southern Baptist perspective. He draws from a wide array of current literature, but I believe most Pentecostals would be sadly disappointed in his description of supernatural power.

Hemphill sees the New Testament church through different lenses. For instance, a Pentecostal reader may well be offended by his characterization of 1 Corinthians 14:2-25 as a "prohibition of public displays of the gift of tongues."

Hemphill has a relatively balanced view of church depth as well as church growth, however. If the reader has an adequate appreciation of the perspective from which Hemphill comes, he will be able to glean a lot of good material.

Reviewed by Paul E. Grabill, D.Min., senior pastor, State College Assembly of God, State College, Pennsylvania.

Under the Glass: An Analysis of Church Structure

Charles Harris (Central Bible College Press, 349 pp., paperback, \$11.99)

Under the Glass promises to take an important place in every minister's library. Pastors are frequently asked to explain the organization and structure of the Assemblies of God and of their own churches. Here are the answers in clear and concise form. This is not a book on church administration but church government. It is well-researched and draws from a wide variety of works written over a considerable span of time—the only work of its kind written from the perspective of the Assemblies of God. Therefore, it is an essential work which can be used in the classroom as readily as by the pastor or layperson who desires to know the whys and wherefores of church structure in our Fellowship. The reader will glean a clear and focused understanding of the various forms of church government along with a scriptural defense for that of the Assemblies of God.

Reviewed by Elmer E. Kirsch, Ed.D., vice president of academics, Central Bible College, Springfield, Missouri.

Where Is Theology Going? Issues and Perspectives on the Future of Theology

Millard J. Erickson (Baker, 230 pp., paperback, \$14.99)

Dr. Erickson, research professor of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, points out that the future of theology is important to us. He said, "Our theological beliefs affect the nature of our relationship with the Lord" as well as our ministry.

Anticipating the future directions of theology will enable us to prepare and thus to minister from the very start of a new situation If, for example, any of us had anticipated the arrival of the so-called New Age movement, we could have designed our teaching and preaching to prevent the inroads of that American adaptation of Eastern religion into Christianity."

Erickson holds that any theological trend will grow until it becomes extreme, and then there will be a reaction in the opposite direction. He uses several methods to identify trends today. One of them is the examination of popular chorus books because people choose to sing "what they feel and believe."

Today there is a shift "toward a more informal, experience-centered style of religion. Celebration is replacing meditation, praise choruses are supplanting hymns, worship teams have succeeded robed choirs ... hymnals are replaced by words projected on a screen."

Among other changes that Erickson anticipates is a reversal of current assimilation of sacred and secular; a renewed commitment to holiness instead of self-gratification; a renewed exaltation of God, serving Him instead of desiring to have Him serve us. On the other hand, he sees at present a shift of primary authority from the Bible to personal experience and, with the general decline in reading, a decline in reading the Bible. But he recognizes that the charismatic movement has brought a renewal of belief in God's miraculous working, which

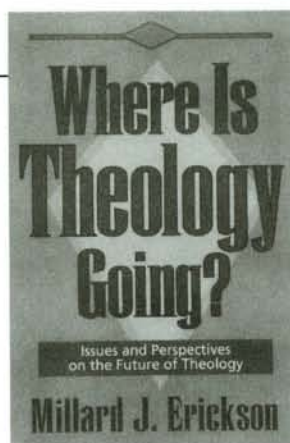
strengthens the doctrine of God.

Above all, he calls for an ethical lifestyle that conforms to biblical standards of behavior—instead of molding our theology to fit our conduct. Then he gives several suggestions on how to meet future trends with the Lord's help.

Reviewed by Stanley M. Horton, Th.D., distinguished professor emeritus of Bible and theology, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary; coordinator of the Pentecostal Textbook Project; and general editor of Logion Press, Springfield, Missouri.

A S E R V I C E

Advance reviews books we feel our readers would like to know about. These books are not always in accord with our point of view, and the reviews do not constitute a recommendation of the books. As a service to readers the Gospel Publishing House will supply any of these books, but books cannot be returned for credit.



Millard J. Erickson (Baker, 230 pp., paperback, \$14.99)



NEWS & RESOURCES

AMA DAY BULLETIN INSERT AVAILABLE

Sunday, November 19, is Aged Ministers Assistance (AMA) Day in our churches. Each church will want to take advantage of that Sunday or another day to express gratitude to our retired ministers for the tremendous sacrifices they made for our Movement during their years of ministry.

A new AMA Day bulletin insert has been designed to give our congregations more information on AMFs ministry that currently gives financial help to nearly 500 needy aged ministers and their spouses.

To receive the AMA Day bulletin insert, check rsc # 14 and indicate quantity.

**CHURCH CONSTRUCTION CORPS
VOLUNTEERS-THE ANSWER TO
HOME MISSIONS CONSTRUCTION**
Church Construction Corps (CCC) lay volunteers are constructing high-quality home missions church buildings for under \$20 per square foot. At the same time, talented laymen are finding avenues for ministry while enjoying fellowship with their brothers in Christ.

Unlike MAPS RV Volunteers personnel who are usually retirees, CCCmen are still in their working years and can only donate Saturdays, a few days, or a week's vacation. Also, they need a building project close to home due to the travel-time factor.

In the last 5 years the Illinois District alone has helped 57 CCC projects. Illinois District Superintendent Ernest J. Moen said, "One of the most positive contributions to the Decade of Harvest is the Church Construction Corps.... Pastors confirm that without the help of the men of our state, they would not presently be occupying new facilities. The Illinois District now has a full-time CCC foreman and a newly constructed 40- by 80-foot warehouse for receiving and distributing donated materials or those purchased at below-wholesale prices for these endeavors."

Though the Illinois District has set the pace in the CCC program, it is the hope of the national Men's Ministries Department that laymen nationwide will get involved with their time, talents, and finance in this worthy program.

For further information about the Church Construction Corps, check rsc #15.

FREE 1996 HIGHLANDS BABY CALENDAR AVAILABLE

A colorful 5- by 8-inch Highlands calendar has been a fixture in many homes, church offices, and businesses during the past 23 years. It is available free to individuals and churches. Major secular, religious, and Benevolences days are marked for convenience.

Highlands Child Placement Services and Maternity Home makes this calendar available as a reminder to pray daily for this ministry. The calendar also makes people aware that Highlands, with its maternity home and adoption agency, is a resource for each church.

To order, fill in the postage-paid return card and indicate quantity. Supply is limited.

NEW REVIVAL TIME

SERMON BOOK ANNOUNCED

Revivaltime Media Ministries has announced the upcoming release of *Revivaltime Radio Sermons*, 1995, sixth volume in the Decade of Harvest series. The 320-page hardback book contains the sequence of radio messages heard on the broadcast this year.

In late February 1996 this collector's volume (available at \$15.95) will be mailed free to senior pastors whose churches regularly contribute to World Ministries support and/or sponsor a local *Revivaltime* release.

For more information check rsc # 16.

SECOND WORLD PRAYER MEETING PLANNED FOR OCTOBER 1

The World Assemblies of God Fellowship (WAGF), with participants in some 150 nations, has designated the weekend of

October 1, 1995, for the second annual World Prayer Meeting.

The first World Prayer Meeting took place in Seoul, South Korea, October 3, 1994, where some 1 million people gathered to pray on Yoido Plaza.

No world gathering is planned for the second prayer meeting. Instead, Assemblies of God churches around the world have designated October 1 as a day for fasting and prayer.

The World Assemblies of God Fellowship has announced that the first Sunday in October will be the time for each annual international prayer meeting. Dr. David Yonggi Cho, pastor of Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, is chairman of the fellowship. The U.S. Assemblies of God is an active participant in the WAGE

THREE DFM FLY-INS SCHEDULED FOR 1996

The Division of Foreign Missions has announced the dates and locations for two of its 1996 Fly-Ins: February 2, 3 in Baltimore, Maryland; and February 23, 24 in Portland, Oregon. The dates and location of a third Fly-In will be announced later.


The 1995-96 missions convention theme is "Jesus!"

Each Fly-In will highlight significant developments in the missionary cause around the world. All missions-minded pastors and laypeople are encouraged to attend the nearest one. More information is available from the Division of Foreign Missions.

ANNUAL FOREIGN MISSIONS DAY, NOVEMBER 12, DEDICATED TO HELP WORLD'S HURTING

November 12, this year's annual Foreign Missions Day, has been designated for Foreign Missions Disaster Relief (FMDR), the U.S. arm of the World Assemblies of God Relief Agency (WAGRA). U.S. believers will join their brothers and sisters around the world in giving to assist the hurting.

Funds given through FMDR will extend



the ministry of the Assemblies of God to victims of war and natural disasters.

"We encourage each church to participate in the November 12 FMDR offering," General Superintendent Thomas Trask said. "We need your help and support."

Gifts designated to FMDR will receive foreign missions credit.

INTERCULTURAL MINISTRIES DEVELOPS ETHNIC CHURCH- PLANTING GUIDE

The Division of Home Missions Intercultural Ministries Department has developed a 22-page guide for planting ethnic churches in America. *Reaching Our Distant Neighbors* by David J. Moore, Intercultural Ministries Department secretary, addresses such topics as how to obtain workers, planting self-sustaining churches, helps for supervisory min-

istries, and our distant neighbors.

The booklet is available at \$1.25 by checking rsc #17.

CHURCHES TO PARTICIPATE IN REVIVALTIME WORLD PRAYER- MEETING, NOVEMBER 19, 1995

"Lord, Grant Us Boldness," based on Acts 4:29-31, is the theme of the *Revivaltime* World Prayermeeting scheduled for Sunday, November 19. Thousands of churches, prayer groups, and individuals will participate in this Thanksgiving Sunday event sponsored by Revivaltime Media Ministries, broadcast outreach of the Assemblies of God.

Churches and prayer groups that participate in the prayermeeting this year will receive a free Leadership Packet and a supply of prayer requests from the *Revivaltime* office. A pastor or designat-

ed person may fill out and return the drop-in postcard to register and request materials. Use the card only if not already registered. Estimate as closely as possible the expected number of participants.

CHI ALPHA CAMPUS MINISTRIES DAY SLATED FOR SEPTEMBER 24

Chi Alpha Campus Ministries Day is September 24. please remember the campus pastors and college and university students in prayer.

The college and university campus is rich with opportunities to win students to Christ. Some 15 million students, including 500,000 internationals from 211 countries, are furthering their education on American campuses. The church must target the campus to reach future leaders of the world.

NEWS & RESOURCES

NEW CHURCH EVANGELISM DEVELOPS CHURCH BLUEPRINTS PACKAGE

The Division of Home Missions New Church Evangelism Department has developed a sample blueprints package which contains building plans for quality houses of worship. Sixteen floor plans with seating capacities ranging from 130 (3,660 square feet) to 700 (13,429 square feet) are available for review. Plans for larger buildings are available on request.

The sample blueprints package includes information on the structure panel building system and is available for \$24.95. To order, check rsc #19.

NATIONAL PRISON SUNDAY TO BE OBSERVED IN OCTOBER

The annual National Prison Sunday for the Assemblies of God will be observed October 8. Each church is encouraged to emphasize ministry to prisoners and their families and receive a special Prison Sunday offering for this ministry.

Currently 58 nationally endorsed Assemblies of God chaplains are serving in jails and prisons across America. Assemblies of God Prison Ministry supplies Bibles, tracts, and study materials for these chaplains.

For information on the requirements for chaplains, check rsc #20.

Pentecostal Christians have the answer to America's crime wave. Check rsc #21 to receive the *Ministry in Action: Jail and Prison Basic Training Guide*, which addresses the opportunities for being part of that answer.

DEAF CULTURE MINISTRIES OFFERS CONTINUING EDUCATION

Deaf Culture Ministries is dedicated to keeping Assemblies of God pastors, interpreters, and others working in deaf ministry up to date on ministry to the deaf culture through continuing education conferences.

The first Interpreter Continuing Education (ICE) Conference was held in June 1993 in Springfield, Mo. Future ICE conferences are being planned.

Another form of continuing education offered by Deaf Culture Ministries and the National Deaf Culture Fellowship is Deaf Ministers NETT (Nurturing, Equipping, Training, Together) Conferences. Ministers come together to stand with each other in ministry, providing a network of strength and support vital to all who are a part of the group.

More information on these conferences and how you can get involved in Deaf Culture Ministries is available by checking rsc #22.

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD OPENED 263 CHURCHES IN 1994

According to the Division of Home Missions New Church Evangelism Department, 263 churches were opened in 1994.

The top 12 district openings were: Pacific Latin American, 19; Potomac, 17; Gulf Latin American, 16; Peninsular Florida, 15; Pennsylvania-Delaware, 13; North Carolina, 11; Southeastern Spanish, 10; Northern California-Nevada, 9; South Texas, 9; Southern California, 9; Alabama, 8; Minnesota, 8; Puerto Rico, 8; Louisiana, 7; New York, 7.

U.S. DECADE OF HARVEST HOSTS TOWNMEETING, USA

Townmeeting, USA, held March 9, 1995, was a call from the National Task Force for a middecade evaluation. The participants came in response to invitations (mailed to a randomly sorted list of ministers) from Thomas Trask, general superintendent and executive director of the U.S. Decade of Harvest.

The 29 ministers who came included 17 pastors with congregations ranging from 25 to 800-plus in Sunday morning attendance. The remaining 12 participants served in other church-related

ministries.

The meeting's format was an all-day dialogue with the National Task Force. A written survey completed by the participants provided valuable information. Several key observations include the following:

1. The refocus of the Decade of Harvest strategy, which is a call to prayer and spiritual renewal, is on target. Strong affirmation was given: The Decade of Harvest is a spiritual vision, not a program, that must be perpetuated through divine manifestation.
2. There is a call for more discipleship resources that can be used through the ministries of the local church.
3. There is a strong desire from pastors and ministers to provide input to national strategies and the development of resources. The fact that Townmeeting, USA provided this forum for pastors and ministers to dialogue with national leadership on the Decade of Harvest received positive affirmation from the participants. This was also underscored by the ministers who received invitations but were unable to attend.

LIGHT-FOR-THE-LOST TO RAISE FUNDS FOR 1996 ATLANTA OLYMPICS

A multitude of athletes and spectators from around the world will converge on Atlanta, Ga., for the summer Olympic Games next year.

Bible and tract societies are developing a variety of evangelism literature pieces designed to catch the interest of athletes and sports enthusiasts—special editions of the New Testament with testimonies from great athletes, booklets that highlight winning in life with eternal life, and high-impact tracts. Many different outreach teams, including those from the Assemblies of God, will be distributing this literature during

the Olympics.

Light-for-the-Lost hopes to raise at least \$50,000 for this project, primarily in regular LFTL banquets across the nation. Contributions can be sent to the LFTL Olympics project, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, Mo. 65802-1894.

DIVISION OF HOME MISSIONS CREATES NEW AREA

The Division of Home Missions has created a new area, Missionary Family Ministries, to help departments develop and coordinate a support network for nationally appointed home missionaries in their ministries, families, and finance.

Responsibilities include tracking missionary itineration; coordinating missionary candidate interview and orientation; handling missionary renewals; and maintaining missionary records. Expanded training and regional seminars for missionary families are also being implemented.

A missionary kid (MK) ministry will include newsletters, retreats, and support for MKs.

Joseph A. Filancia, a nationally appointed home missionary, has been appointed missionary field representative for this area.

LIGHT-FOR-THE-LOST JUNIOR COUNCILMEN COMPLETE FIRST LITERATURE PROJECT

The Light-for-the-Lost Junior Councilmen have completed their first evangelism literature project. The Royal Rangers office, in conjunction with the New Church Evangelism Department and LFTL, printed 200,000 copies of an urban edition of *The Book of Hope*, which is designed to minister to African-American youth of inner cities.

Missionaries across America are testifying how the Gospel portions are changing lives in the inner cities.

Each local church is encouraged to involve its Royal Rangers outpost in this exciting missions opportunity and train-

ing ground. Call or write the LFTL office or check rsc #23 for information.

LIGHT-FOR-THE-LOST FALL BANQUETS TO BEGIN SOON

Light-for-the-Lost (LFTL) fall banquets will soon be under way. Banquets are the primary vehicle for raising literature funds for Assemblies of God missionaries.

Pastors are encouraged to call their district LFTL representative to receive additional information about the closest LFTL banquet.

During 1994, LFTL sent well over \$3 million to foreign and home missionaries for gospel literature.

For more information on LFTL evangelism literature projects, call (417) 862-2781 or check rsc #24.

ROYAL RANGERS OFFERS TRAINING FOR THE NINETIES

During Royal Rangers Week, October 1-7, 1995, Royal Rangers celebrates 33 years' ministry to reach, teach, and keep boys for Christ.

To address issues that today's boys face, the Royal Rangers office offers two new training programs to leaders who want to strengthen their skills in counseling and urban ministry: (1) the Turning Point Seminar and (2) the Urban Commanders Seminar.

The Turning Point Seminar was developed by Turning Point Ministries, Inc., and adopted by the national Royal Rangers office to help boys avoid or overcome life-controlling problems.

The Urban Commanders Seminar provides several workshops for inner-city

NEWS & RESOURCES

commanders who are on the cutting-edge of outreach evangelism. New advancements dealing with current youth issues are also available through the Royal Rangers office.

Additionally, Teen Challenge centers are offered training for their students that will help them become urban commanders.

Numerous training camps are held throughout the nation each year to offer the local commander in-depth training on the Royal Rangers program. For further

information on training seminars and camps, contact the Royal Rangers office, your district office, or check rsc #25.

To order the Royal Rangers Week bulletin, contact the Royal Rangers office or check rsc #26 and state quantity.

PROMISE KEEPERS PLANS PASTORS CONFERENCE

The Promise Keepers leadership team met February 28-March 2, 1995, with various denominational and ministry leaders in Colorado Springs to pray and

plan an interdenominational pastors gathering to be held in Atlanta, Ga., in April 1996. Promise Keepers expects 70,000 to 75,000 pastors and Christian leaders to attend.

Various Christian leaders will speak in the plenary sessions. Electives that address the many aspects of pastoral ministry will be held during the day sessions.

The relatively new ministry expected over half a million men to attend the summer men's conferences this year.



"OF COURSE WE MAKE A GOOD MINISTRY COUPLE, DEAR. I'M WISE AS A SERPENT AND YOU'RE HARMLESS AS A DOVE."

**1995 ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
"CURRENT FACTS" BROCHURE
AVAILABLE**

"Current Facts" brochure contains a wealth of statistical information on the Assemblies of God for the 1994 calendar year.

The brochure is an excellent piece to add to visitor packets or to distribute in door-to-door visitation. Also, it is a valuable resource of accurate information for publicity and promotion in the local media.

To order "Current Facts" call 1-800-641-4310 and request item number 739-086 or check rsc #27. Prices are \$10 per 50 and \$14 per 100.

**1996 SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF
TRAINING BOOK-NEW
RESOURCE FOR PEOPLE
HELPERS**

The 1996 Sunday school staff training book is *Renewing Hope: Help for Helping Others* by Dr. Billie Davis (Gospel Publishing House, 176 pp., paperback, 02-0327, \$3.95). It focuses on the important relationship between Christian education and contemporary life.

The first chapter is foundational and points out that Christians have a message the world desperately needs. The chapter describes how the Holy Spirit prepares and works through believers to help others recognize their need for salvation and growth.

Chapter 2 introduces skills and strategies for people helping people. Of practical benefit is a discussion of people-helping characteristics, a five-step helping plan, and the value of working in small groups.

Chapters 3 and 4 deal with families and teens. The author's focus on helping single parents is instructive. Understanding teens in their unique growth stages and needs is the key to

helping them through their transitions.

Chapters 5 and 6 discuss ways to help the sick and dying, including the necessity of prayer, healing, and faith.

Chapters 7-1a deal with midlife issues, substance abuse, aging, and unemployment. If our teaching ministries are going to be relevant and effective today, we must understand these issues.

This book is practical, insightful, and applicable. The bibliography and sources at the end of each chapter are additional benefits that make the book a powerful resource for anyone's personal library.

William Martin, Richmond, Va.

THE COUNCIL TODAY

The General Council newspaper, *The Council Today*, is available in packaged sets for \$8.95 (postage included) from the Office of Public Relations. Each set contains all six issues from the St. Louis General Council.

Each issue contains news stories of events, seminars, and meetings as they occurred throughout General Council, along with feature articles by our leaders. To reserve your set(s), check rsc #28 and indicate quantity.

**COLLEGE COMMITMENT DAY,
SEPTEMBER 10**

September 10 is College Commitment Day. Assemblies of God colleges need and deserve support. Last year only 30 percent of our churches gave as much as \$1 to Assemblies of God higher education. Our colleges are a vital part of the Fellowship's future.

Undated free materials are available to help promote Assemblies of God colleges on College Commitment Day, during a missions convention, or any special day. Check rsc # 1a for a poster, #9 for bulletin insert, # 11 for prayer card,

and #8 for *The Assemblies of God College Guide* (2nd edition); state quantity of each.

**RADIANT LIFE CURRICULUM
ANNOUNCES NEW RELEASES**

Radiant Life Curriculum announces the release of two new titles in The Spiritual Discovery Series for use beginning in the winter 1995-96 quarter.

Parenting: The Early Years by Kay Marchand is designed to address issues-prenatal through preschool-that new parents confront.

Spiritual Devotion by Dr. Nathan Nelson explores the art and discipline of developing one's spiritual relationship to God.

The Spiritual Discovery Series offers individual and group study curriculum for contemporary adults. Study guides are designed in workbook format. Leaders guides include the study guide material as well as resources and methodology designed to facilitate a group learning experience.

When completed The Spiritual Discovery Series will contain 40 new titles divided into four tracks of study.

The first two titles of the series will be released this fall: *A New Way of Life* by Robert L. Brandt and *Bible Prophecy* by Stanley M. Horton. Radiant Life projects the following release schedule for The Spiritual Discovery Series over the next 12 months:

Winter 1995-96-*Parenting: The Early Years* and *Spiritual Devotion*

Spring 1996-*Parenting the Elementary Child* and *How To Study the Bible*

Summer 1996-*Parenting the Teen* and *Spiritual Warfare*

Fall 1996-*Baptized in the Spirit* and *Sanctity of Life*

NEWS & RESOURCES

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO AID IN COLLEGE DECISION

What is the spiritual, academic, and moral climate on secular college campuses? How does this compare with what is happening on the Christian college campus?

In an attempt to answer these questions, Dayton Kingsriter, Postsecondary Education Department secretary, has prepared a research paper which deals with these topics.

The paper, entitled "The (Social) Pit and the pendulum: A Case for Christian Higher Education," is a viable source of information for parents, pastors, and prospective students and is available free. Check rsc #31 and indicate quantity.

POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS ANNOUNCE FIRST DAY OF CLASSES AND FALL 1995 COLLEGE DAYS

The first day of fall 1995 classes and College Days (listed respectively) have been announced by the following Assemblies of God postsecondary schools:

American Indian College, Phoenix,
Ariz.-Aug. 31; Oct. 19-21.

Assemblies of God Theological
Seminary, Springfield, Mo.-Aug.
31; no College Days.

Berean College, Springfield, Mo.-
Rolling enrollment (correspondence
courses and degrees).

Bethany College, Scotts Valley, Calif.-
Aug. 31; dates not available at press
time.

Central Bible College, Springfield,
Mo.-Sept. 7; dates not available at
press time.

Central Indian Bible College, Mobridge,
S. Dak.-Aug. 30; Oct. 20,21.

Evangel College, Springfield, Mo.-Aug.
31; dates not available at press time.

Latin American Bible Institute, San
Antonio, Tex.-Aug. 23; no College
Days.

Latin American Bible Institute of
California, La Puente, Calif.-Sept.
12; no College Days.

North Central Bible College,
Minneapolis, Minn.-Aug. 30; Oct.
12,13.

Northwest College, Kirkland, Wash.-
Aug. 28; Sept. 22, Oct. 27, Dec. 1.

Southeastern College, Lakeland, Fla.-
Aug. 31; no College Days.

Southern California College, Costa
Mesa, Calif.-Aug. 30; Nov. 13,14.

Southwestern University, Waxahachie,
Tex.-Aug. 22; Nov. 2,3.

Trinity Bible College, Ellendale, N.
Dak.-Aug. 31; Oct. 19-21.

Valley Forge Christian College,
Phoenixville, Pa.-Aug. 23; dates
not available at press time.

Western Bible Institute, Phoenix,
Ariz.-Aug. 28; Aug. 22-24.

"OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM" CONFERENCE DATES ANNOUNCED

The third "Of Such Is the Kingdom" children's ministries conference will be held in Springfield, Mo., February 12-14, 1996.

With its theme, "Rescue the Children," the conference will focus on ministries and strategies for reaching this generation's kids.

A large slate of headline speakers will grace the conference. More than 70 workshops, directed by noted children's ministers, will add a practical dimension to the 3-day event. Exhibitors will also display the latest resources for local church ministries.

Conference delegates may select from special-interest luncheons. The Boys and Girls Missionary Crusade banquet

will be the closing plenary session for the conference. Tickets for meal functions are not included in the registration fee and must be bought separately.

The early deadline for individual and group registrations is January 2, 1996. District registrations must be received in the district offices no later than December 1, 1995. All delegates are responsible for making their own housing arrangements.

For registration and housing information, contact the Children's Ministries Consultant, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, Mo. 65802-1894 or call (417) 862-2781.

WOMEN AND GIRLS INVOLVED IN FALL EVENTS

September 19, Etta Calhoun Day, is an important date on the church's fall calendar-significant to all women and girls, pastors, and churches.

Etta Calhoun Missions Fund provides indoor furnishings and equipment for home and foreign missions and national benevolences institutions owned by the Assemblies of God.

Missionettes participate in the Etta Calhoun Missions Fund through Coins for Kids and the Nationwide Sleepover the fourth Friday in September each year. This year's Sleepover will be September 22, 23.

Theme and promotional materials are sent to churches reporting on the Annual Church Ministries Report. Program materials and fund-raising suggestions are in *Woman's Touch* and *Memos*. A complimentary copy of the "National Women's Ministries Projects" brochure and other Etta Calhoun Missions Fund information are available. Check rsc #29.

For more information on the Missionettes Nationwide Sleepover and Coins for Kids, check rsc #30.

A Leader

A leader, not a servant,
Is what I sought to be;
A leader, not a servant,
Would be my destiny.

For stardom I was suited,
More talented than most,
Yet God in His great mercy
Dealt wisely with my boast.

A leader, not a servant?
Is this your muddled view?
What's a leader if not a servant?
Asked the One who
makes hearts new.

He brought my life true models
Of what a leader is-
Men and women, always serving,
They were completely His.

Fame was not their portion.
They did their work
unknown.

Yet it was filled with power
That comes only from
the throne.

The Lord demands our service
If ever we would lead,
For only from a servant's heart
Can we truly touch the
need.

A leader is a servant.
This is the truth of grace
So honor Him and others serve.
That is your rightful place.

Don Coley, San Diego, California

You Know a Church Is in Trouble When—

- All the dedication plaques are dated in the 1950s.
- They still have a penny march in the sanctuary.
- Preserving the building is more important than reaching the neighborhood.
- Only the King James Version of the Bible is allowed on the premises.
- A piano is the only musical instrument used in worship.
- Halfway through the service the pastor asks if anyone wants to sing a special song.
- The same lady volunteers again.
- The pastor preached last Sunday's sermon again.
- No one in the congregation noticed.
- Announcements are longer than the altar service.

Charles E. Hackett, Springfield, MO

With Christ

Adelina Archuleta
Oakland, California

Nellie M. Norton
Sardinia, Ohio

Curtis M. Carlton
Live Oak, Florida

Olga V. S. Olsson
Downey, California

Kenneth L. Crouse
Pueblo, Colorado

Fred W Prather
Salinas, Kansas

james M. Fouts, Sr.
Booneville, Arkansas

Leon M. Reese
Gainesville, Georgia

Fred B. Garcia
San jose, California

Lala Rivera
Bronx, New York

Dwain L. Grell
Carlinville, Illinois

james E. Royals
Hampton, Georgia

Leo Guen'n
Gretna, Louisiana

Carlos L. Roybal
Everett, Washington

V. Inez Kreiss
Walnut Creek, California

Isaac Sanchez
Rio Grande City, Texas

Raymond K. Levang
Hibbing, Minnesota

Helen I. Schneemann
Novi, Michigan

Clarence D. McCall
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Homer L. Smith
Lakeview, Oregon

joseph W Miller
Farmington, Missouri

Travers Van Der Merwe
Holý, Michigan

Raymond v. Mitchell
Snellville, Georgia

Albert L. Wilson
El Paso, Texas

In Closing

BY THOMAS E. TRASK

CONCLUSIONS are sometimes the hardest part of a sermon for the preacher. You think of things you meant to say and squeeze them into your conclusion. Or you restate something you mentioned but want to give it renewed emphasis.

The apostle Paul must have understood this dilemma because his conclusions often summarized the essence of his epistles. This column serves that purpose in the new format of *Advance*. So "In Closing" I want to borrow from one of the apostle Paul's closing injunctions.

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances *Do not put out the Spirit's fire*" (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-19, NIV). Paul reminded the church at Thessalonica of four important aspects of its ministry. This first issue of the new magazine has focused on one of these—"Do not put out the Spirit's fire."

Alton Garrison's article states so well the need to be sensitive to those who come into our churches while, at the same time, maintaining the message and fervor of Pentecost. Charles Hackett reminds us Pentecostal revival only comes through fervent, intercessory prayer. James Bridges has sounded a clarion call for a fresh Pentecost to come to our leadership. R.L. Brandt has reminded us again of the characteristics of Pentecostal preaching. George Wood has challenged us to return to our first love if we would be Pentecostal. And Charles Crabtree has shown what a Pentecostal church will be.

To all of these, I say a hearty '~men!' How we need a fresh Pentecost in our lives, our homes, our churches, our col-

leges and institutions, and the entire Fellowship. We must have a day-by-day, fresh, up-to-date experience in the Holy Spirit ourselves if we would have churches that are on fire with Pentecostal fervor.

I believe there are two major areas in which we need to guard against putting out the Spirit's fire. These are *Pentecostal doctrine* and *Pentecostal experience*.

PENTECOSTAL DOCTRINE

Acts records that the new converts who joined the church on the Day of Pentecost "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching" (2:42).

What we believe is important. The Assemblies of God, like every Bible-believing group, must speak God's eternal truth to each generation and to each person. God's Word serves as the guide for our beliefs and behavior. We must proclaim this Word faithfully and clearly to a lost world.

Our people lack knowledge of God's Word. We must never compromise nor water down the truths in His Word but preach from our pulpits, teach in our classrooms, and show in our lives that this infallible Word is our guide—the bedrock on which our faith rests.

The one aspect that has set us apart as a Fellowship is the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This church is raised up to be Pentecostal. We must teach our people about the Third Person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit—and allow Him to operate through His gifts and graces in our churches, our lives, and our ministry in these last days.

"Do not put out the Spirit's fire" by failing to teach and preach Pentecostal doctrine.

PENTECOSTAL EXPERIENCE

I was privileged and blessed to grow up in a Pentecostal preacher's home. My life was molded and shaped by godly parents and other men and women in our churches who were Spirit-filled believers. Thus I've had the advantage of seeing that Pentecost is meant to be lived and experienced—not just written or talked about. Just as experience without doctrine can deteriorate into fanaticism, so can doctrine without experience bring sterility into our lives.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is more than an event 2,000 years ago—it is to empower us to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ today. People must be taught. The Baptism must be modeled: "Here is what the Baptism will do for you."

So "In Closing," I beseech you to seek a new Pentecost in your life and church. The Early Church prayed; then Pentecost took place. If we pray, Pentecost will take place again. Finally, "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances Do not put out the Spirit's fire." gj



Thomas E. Trask is the Assemblies of God general superintendent.