

ENRICHMENT

Summer 1996

The Minister and Preaching



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A JOURNAL FOR PENTECOSTAL MINISTRY

M^{inistry Matters}

BY WAYDE I. GOODALL

PREACHING THE GOSPEL of Jesus Christ is the key to changing lives, renewing the church, and even moving cities toward righteousness. People like Martin Luther, George Whitefield, John Wesley, D.L. Moody, Charles Spurgeon, and a host of others had a powerful effect on people's lives and their communities. It is happening today as well: At preaching posts around the world lives are being changed and churches are being powerfully affected by this glorious gospel.

Paul instructed Timothy, "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2, NKJV). C.H. Spurgeon wrote, "Eat into the very soul of the Bible until, at last, you come to talk in scriptural language and your spirit is flavored with the words of the Lord...and the very essence of the Bible flows from you."

The preacher is also the teacher. People should walk away from a sermon not only having heard what was said but knowing what to do with what was said. Spurgeon again taught, "Sermons should have real teaching in them, and their doctrine should be solid, substantial, and abundant. Sound teaching is the best protection from the heresies which ravage right and left among us." Congregations are less susceptible to false teaching when their ministers give solid, consistent, biblical instruction.

This issue of *Enrichment* focuses on preaching. While the authors of the various articles give excellent information and inspiration, let me quote Burt McCafferty who wrote '~ Few Hints to Preachers' in *The Weekly Evangel* (January 27, 1917):

"Make no apologies. If you have the

Lord's message, deliver it; if not, hold your peace. Have short preface or introduction. Say your best things first and stop before you get prosy. Do not spoil the appetite for dinner by too much thin soup. Leave self out of the pulpit and take Jesus in....

"It takes a cold hammer to bend a hot iron. Heat up the people but keep the hammer cold. Do not bawl and scream. Too much water stops mill wheels, and too much noise drowns sense. Empty vessels ring loudest. Powder isn't shot. Thunder isn't lightning. Lightning kills. If you have lightning, you can afford to thunder; but do not try to thunder out of an empty cloud.

"Do not scold the people. Do not abuse the faithful souls who come to meeting on rainy days because of the others who do not come. Preach the best to small congregations. Jesus preached to one woman at the well, and she got all Samaria out to hear Him next time....

"Do not repeat, saying, ~s I said before.' If you said it before, say something else after. Leave out words you cannot define. Stop your declamation and talk to folks. Come down from stilted and sacred tones and become a little child. Change the subject if it goes hard. Do not tire yourself and everyone else. Do not preach till the middle of your sermon buries the beginning and is buried in the end. Look the people in the face and live so that you are not afraid of them.

"Take long breaths, fill your lungs, and keep them full. Stop to breathe before the air is exhausted. Then you will not finish each sentence-ah with a terrible gasp-ah and so strain the lungs-ah as if you were dying for air-ah as some preachers do-ah Inflate your

lungs. It is easier to run a mill with a full pond than an empty one. Be moderate at first. Hoist the gate a little way; when you are half through, raise a little more; when nearly done, put on a full head of water.

'~im at the mark. Hit it. Shoot and see where the shot struck and then fire another broadside. Pack your sermons; make your words like bullets.

'~ board hurts a man worse when it strikes him edgewise."

Every preacher understands what McCafferty was getting at. When we preach, much is involved. I believe it begins when God speaks to the preacher's heart through His Word. Then the preacher gives his very best, saturated in prayer, in the preparation and delivery of the very oracles of God. ~



Wayde I. Goodall is executive editor Q/Enrichment and coordinator Q/the Ministerial Enn'chment Q/fice, Springfield, Missouri.

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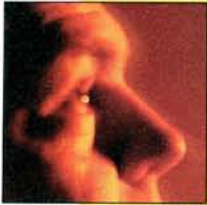
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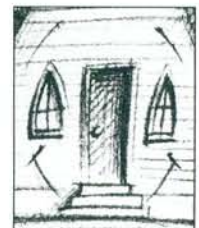
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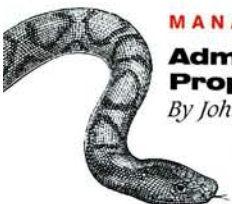
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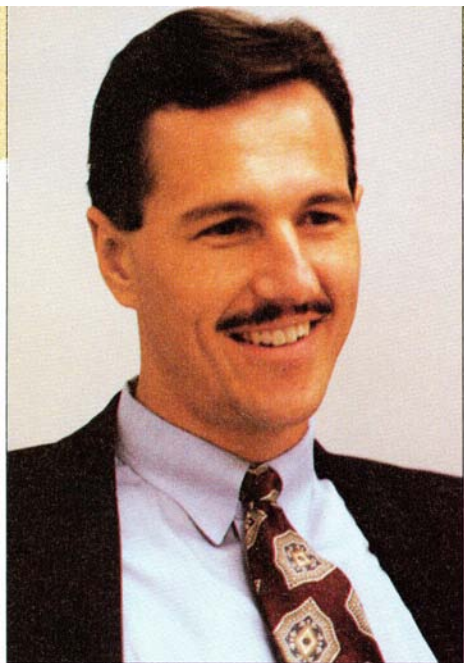
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INTERVIEW WITH M. WAYNE BENSON, JIMMY DAVIS, ALTON GARRISON, AND JOHN LINDELL

Preaching- Style, Relevancy, and Preparation

Enrichment editors met with three pastors and an evangelist to discuss preaching—its style, relevancy, preparation, convictions, and dynamics, among other things. Those participating in the discussion included M. Wayne Benson, pastor, First Assembly of God, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Jimmy Davis, national evangelists representative, Springfield, Missouri; Alton Garrison, pastor, First Assembly of God, North Little Rock, Arkansas; and John Lindell, pastor, James River Assembly of God, Springfield, Missouri.



John Lindell,
pastor, James River
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Springfield, Missouri

M. Wayne Benson,
pastor, First
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HOW DOES A YOUNG
PREACHER TODAY GO
ABOUT DEVELOPING A
PREACHING STYLE?

LINDELL: I not only learned to preach by preaching but by listening to preaching. I looked for role models to emulate. By watching and listening to preachers I determined the personality style and if it was congruent with my own. For example, I used to listen to Chuck Swindoll's tapes just to hear how he told stories. I observed how others looked at texts and their rhythm of speaking.

A word of advice: Don't copy sermons, for they must become a part of you. But by observing others you learn delivery technique, which is something you grow into.

BENSON: Someone said that practice makes perfect. That isn't true. Imperfect practice will make imperfect more solidly set in its ways. Those whom we emulate help tailor our lives



PHOTOS BY JIMMY DAVIS

and our thinking. I am shaped and developed by the people around me and have probably never had an original thought in my life.

I am aware of what others have taught me. For example, I was in the evangelistic field under Bruce Thum, a classical evangelist preacher and an altar call giver par excellence. From him I learned the importance of moving toward the altar in commitment.

From Bond Bowman I learned pastoral caregiving. He could preach with authority in situations where he found strong conviction—even if it brushed someone the wrong way. Those things have impacted my life profoundly.

Also, books and articles, tapes, and Council speakers have influenced me. What sounds original from me is probably an eclectic gathering of things handed down from others. I am indebted to those who have made an impact on my life. The resource from which we draw is deeply in the Word of God and those who fed that Word to us.

THROUGH PREACHING, HOW DOES A PASTOR MOVE PEOPLE FROM BEING CONSUMERS TO COMMITTED BELIEVERS?

GARRISON: First, you have to be where the people are. My dad used to say, "Don't scratch where nobody is itching." That is the difference between being a functional preacher and one who is only interested in theology. Therefore, you have to determine how to say something in a theological way that will interest and educate them. D.L. Moody said the Bible was not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives-to produce godly character. If I want to turn people from consumers into committed believers, I must be in tune with the questions they are asking.

When I started out as an evangelist 19 years ago, I never thought I would distribute outlines, but it seems to be the best way to move people from where they were to where they need to be. If I give instruction in the sermon but fail to tell them how, I tell them to write "YBH" (yes, but how). Therefore, sometimes I'll spend two or three Sundays on something as simple as how to have a quiet time. I've always been told to have daily devotions, but nobody ever told me how.

I talk about things that are bugging the people. They get angry. Then I tell them about my own frustrations, fears, and problems. I was not taught to do that. However, I walked in and said, "Hey, I have fears too." And the

church says, "Our pastor's human." Soon I've drawn them in and can see the light come on. They are not just consumers but become committed when they see how their pastor conquered problems and how they, too, can conquer-and it clicks.

HOW DO YOU PREPARE AND KNOW WHAT TO PREACH? AND HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND IN PREPARATION?

BENSON: My problem is always how to find time to preach all that I want to. It is never, "Oh God, what can I say?" There are so many problems, broken hearts, broken people, broken marriages, broken families. I feel their pain.

So for me it's, "God, how will I say all I need to in the short amount of time I have with the people. They will get 40 hours of TV this week; input from school, work, and a thousand other sources; and I have virtually 1 hour with them, including my altar call. How can I ever say all that is in my heart in that amount of time?"

In terms of preparation, God came to a showdown with me. When I came to Grand Rapids I had stars in my eyes. I envisioned studying in my special quiet prayer time in my office off the sanctuary in a little church and would go from the prayer closet to the pulpit. To my amazement, I could not get alone with God. The phones and other interruptions kept me from quality time with God.

It was the wee hours of Sunday morning, and I was crying out to God to give me a message when He had an issue with me. He said, "When are you going to love Me more than you love My sheep?" God and I made a covenant that day that I would give Him quality time. Since then my time of preparation has become more of a time to get alone with God and hear His voice than to prepare a message. He has never failed to keep His end of the bargain.

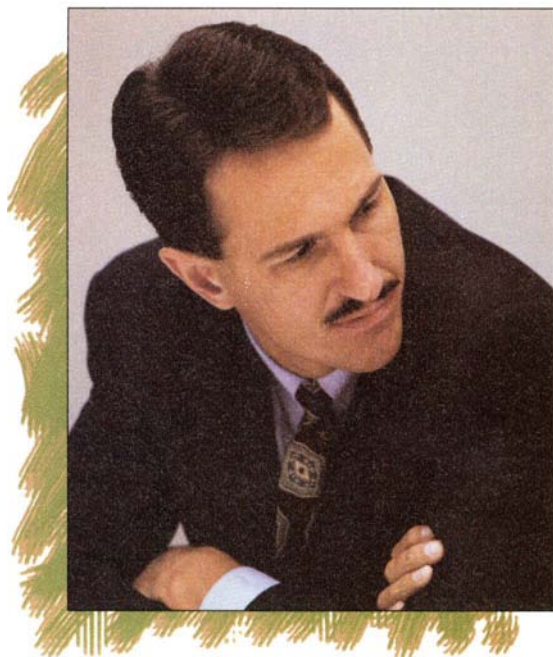
Alton Garrison. pastor, First Assembly of God, North Little Rock, Arkansas



Jimmy Davis, national evangelists representative, Springfield, Missouri.

If I want to turn people from consumers into committed believers, I must be in tune with the questions they are asking.





I announced that Sunday that I was going to get away with God and not be available unless it was a serious emergency. Only my wife would know how to reach me. I would not be home until I had a message from God. It was wonderful. Since then God has provided a place where I can get alone with Him. I don't recommend that for everybody, but it was necessary for me.

You have to discipline yourself to focus when you get alone and away from everything. Without that, I don't recommend it—you need to be in an office environment. I need to be alone with God on a regular basis to get a message from the Holy Spirit.

Many times it was more the quality time alone with God in prayer than it was the actual preparation time. Sometimes I was still trying to get the message on paper Saturday morning, but it was with a foundation of hearing from God. One word from God is more powerful than a thousand messages written out. That's what resonates in the hearts of people and produces change—the Spirit of God working in His Word to blow over the valley of dry bones and make them become an army.

Leadership is taking people from where they are to where they need to be and when they get there they think it is their idea.

JOHN, YOU PASTORED SMALLER CHURCHES BEFORE YOU CAME TO SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, WHERE YOUR CHURCH HAS GROWN FROM 125 TO NEARLY 3,000. HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR STYLE? ARE YOU PREPARING DIFFERENTLY? PREACHING DIFFERENTLY? IS YOUR MESSAGE DIFFERENT?

LINDELL: I looked at a couple of men whose ministry was well received and asked some friends in those churches what they liked about their ministries. They said, "When you leave a service you know what he said. He always has a couple of principles—a couple of points that are easy to remember."

I purposed that my message would henceforth be easy to outline and follow. I don't think I changed the structure of my sermon as much as the road signs along the way that let people know where we were. Automatically people take notes and are more attentive. That is critical.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD SERMON?

GARRISON: A good sermon produces godly character—that is the bottom line. Balance is the key. Paul emphasized balance between belief and behavior, doctrine and deity. Some people reach a point where they feel a sermon is not successful unless they see a certain response or prepare a certain way. To maintain the balance you have to go to the tension point. Emotionalism and intellectualism are not wrong if you pull the two together in balance. Give people the freedom to walk out, to tarry, to feel, and to think. That's success.

In our church I did a survey, "Why I continue to attend First Assembly." Preaching was number one. I told the board that if this is really true, my highest priority must be the pulpit and my time away with God and in prayer.

A successful sermon has to accomplish what I think God wants me to accomplish. I want people to be able to remember and practice, so I often use alliteration. I try to determine what the people are crying for—what they need—and balance four things all the time: the doctrine (head), the devotion (heart), the duty (hands), and the demeanor (holiness). Diversity is important. Sometimes I just want people to hear; other times I want them to feel, act, or be convicted. People must come to our church more than once to know what it is all about, for we are on a journey.

WHAT MESSAGE ARE WE SENDING THE CONGREGATION WHEN THE PREACHER HASN'T PREPARED?

DAVIS: Unfortunately, evangelists have often been labeled as not spending much time in serious study and sermon preparation. We lower the office of the preacher if we do not study, and we insult people when we come to the pulpit unprepared. A person who is hard to follow in the pulpit didn't spend much time out of the pulpit writing and preparing. If he is easy to follow, he worked hard behind the scenes getting ready—a paradox but true.

Certainly, the Lord can change our minds at any moment when we preach the gospel and may lead us down or up a different road. However, serious Bible preaching requires hard work behind the scenes.

IS THERE A TEMPTATION TO SIDESTEP COMPLEX ISSUES THAT DON'T PREACH WELL?

LINDELL: I've never been afraid to preach on social issues, for I feel it educates and gives our people—in a kind way—ammunition to deal with what they're hearing about.

Sometimes we're afraid of what people are going to think. However, the church is reclaiming its role and position by speaking on social issues—it has to. We've seen the terrible effects of the church's failure to do so. We need to give a clear call to our congregations regarding such issues as gambling, abortion, and family responsibilities. God's Word addresses these.



Our attitude must not be mean-spirited and pit us against the world. Those in the world often don't know any better. They need to see the gospel modeled. Help people see this. We have to remind our people to go out and help others understand, not fight them.

***One word from God is more powerful
than a thousand messages written out.
That's what resonates in the hearts
of people and produces change.***

DAVIS: Dr. Walter Kaiser said, "The truth neglected today becomes a heresy tomorrow." Because the church failed to address many of the problem issues in our culture, we have to come back to the plate. I appreciate what the church is doing to deal with these issues today.

MOST PREACHERS HAVE DEEP-SEATED CONVICTIONS ON CERTAIN LIFE ISSUES, AND THE LINE BETWEEN WHAT GOD IS SAYING AND OUR PERSONAL CONVICTIONS CAN BE BLURRED. HOW DO WE RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO EXPECT PEOPLE TO SHARE OUR CONVICTIONS, OR SHOULD WE?

BENSON: A preacher should have deep conviction about everything he preaches. One who preaches truth without conviction will not preach with fire but a dead theological premise that will not motivate or inspire change. Some things are not worth fighting for, such as issues that have absolutely nothing to do with the Word of God or violation of it. It's wrong to develop a strong sense of importance concerning nonbiblical values. It is just as great an error to preach morality without deep conviction.

Leaders cannot be middle-of-the-road, fence-walking, straddling kinds of people. The Holy Spirit motivates and creates the passion and fire within them. They must take sides on issues that relate to clear moral directives. That is critical.

GARRISON: Someone has said, "You teach what you know; you reproduce what you are." Thus we have to have conviction. To keep from

We lead people through the message, and if they finish the sermon before we do, it's over—regardless of how eloquent we are.

preaching my hobbyhorse sermons, I vary my messages, such as book studies or verse-by-verse, because 50 percent of my people have no Pentecostal roots. Hence a good percentage of my messages must be functional rather than doctrinal. They don't know.

Sunday night I use more of the old core. Members are pleased because I don't use outlines but preach more like camp meeting style. We have a strong percentage of attendance on Wednesday night. I have to be fair about dealing with the text, not just preaching about what I think is wrong. If Paul deals with issues in the books we are studying, then I deal with them. People seem to respond that way. They have the choice of responding, not because I said something is right but because they see that it is right scripturally. I try not to polarize an audience.

BENSON: There is a danger in becoming issue-oriented preachers and churches. We should never be afraid to tackle controversial subjects or deal with life from a biblical perspective, but using controversy to draw crowds is wrong. It is easy to become an issue-oriented church (e.g., the family church, the antiabortion

church, the women's-issues church).

All those issues were present in Christ's time, but He didn't focus on slavery, women's rights, or other issues. He was constantly bringing people from the swirl of issues to God. That's an important balance. The one thing that will keep us from polarizing our churches and becoming hobbyhorse preachers and Christians is if we always bring the issue to God. We can't build a church on anything less than Jesus Christ, and anything that is not Jesus-oriented in its ultimate answer is not worthy of our time and effort.

LINDELL: When I address a controversial issue, it is usually in the context of what is happening in our city. I give a biblical base for what our response should be—not to be contentious or polarize people but because I feel the people need to know.

DAVIS: God's Word is not a club but a sword. We're labeled "hobbyhorse preachers" when we pound people rather than letting the Word of God be the sword that cuts deep into the heart of man.

WHAT KINDS OF CHALLENGES DO YOU CONFRONT IN PREACHING WHEN YOU'VE BEEN AT ONE PLACE A LONG TIME? HOW DO THE DYNAMICS OF WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO SHARE CHANGE? DO YOU FEEL YOU'RE PLOWING OLD GROUND AGAIN TO SOME EXTENT?

BENSON: We do have to plow fields again in seasons of time. The Spirit of God flows in cycles, and those things the Spirit was saying 10 years ago may need to be dealt with again—for several reasons:

First, those who know the truth of 5 years ago need to go on in faith to a new level of understanding on that same issue. For example, tithing. Jesus often said, "Remember . . . We forget, and for that reason those issues are always relevant, for the Bible is always relevant."

Second, new people are constantly coming. I often admit to the people, "Folks, many of you have heard me preach on this subject a dozen times. But for the sake of those who don't know these truths and need to learn, you can help by giving hearty amens at the appropriate times."



The fascination of long-term ministry is trying to present those great old truths that you have already presented about 20 times in such a way that the 50-year Christian will still have something to hang his coat on, and the new convert will be on the edge of his seat to learn how to grow up.

GARRISON: Basically people don't change that much and their needs are the same. I'm kind of a series preacher on Sunday morning, so 4 or 5 years later when we have a lot of new people I review certain topics. As long as I tell the people I know I'm doing it, nobody seems to mind. It's when I act like they didn't hear it before that it bothers them.

Leadership is taking people from where they are to where they need to be, and when they get there they think it is their idea. I believe church ought to be fun-not in a giddy sort of way but creative. People want to attend then and don't mind hearing subjects preached twice.

WHEN DOES THE INVITATION BEGIN? CAN WE SEPARATE THE INVITATION FROM THE PROCLAMATION?

DAVIS: The invitation begins with the introduction. The whole point of the message is to create godly character and life change. We lead people through the message, and if they finish the sermon before we do, it's over-regardless of how eloquent we are. We must take them through the message to the point of the altar call for salvation, healing, or whatever.

Constantly reminding the people of where we are headed in the message is important. Billy Graham is a master of that. He begins his message and says, "Later we are going to come down here and make a public confession." He preaches some more and says, "In a little while I'm going to ask you to come down from your seats." After preaching a little longer he'll say, "Someone will meet you when you walk down those steps." He has already given the invitation before he gets there. Therefore, when he gives the invitation the natural thing is to respond.

IS IT WRONG TO PREACH ON TOPICS PREACHERS DON'T CONSISTENTLY PRACTICE THEMSELVES?

BENSON: No, I don't believe it is. I think this makes us real. My people can articulate my



Emotionalism and intellectualism are not wrong if you pull the two together in balance.

weaknesses before I do. They need to know I have some of the same struggles they have.

DAVIS: People appreciate a preacher's transparency. When my wife and I tell people about our daughter's death and our struggle to have a family, many people thank us for revealing a little bit of our hearts.

LINDELL: Some of the best sermons I have preached have been on personal conviction-things on my heart. Sometimes it will be things I have not even been aware of, but in studying for a message God begins to deal with me. I don't pull anything out of balance, but at times God works me over.

BENSON: Integrity necessitates that we be honest in our delivery of messages. We should never imply we have arrived. We're not on some lofty perch, but we must be at the bottom of the mountain where the demon-possessed boy is and deliver truth at a level people understand and that we walk in. Truth doesn't change. I may have weaknesses in practicing the Word of God, but that doesn't change the truth. Admission to where we are is the key. We are fellow strugglers. All of us are. ■■■

The preacher
is a person
with a heavy
obligation...
a heavenly
outlook,
and...a holy
obsession.

Profile of a

BY STEPHEN F. OLFORD

One of the greatest statements concerning God's eternal, inerrant Word is found in Psalm 119. Of the 176 verses, eight (see verses 121-128*) spell out the richness and relevance of God's revelation to man. All through this giant psalm we discern a profile of the preacher whose task is to explain and apply God's message to human need. We observe that:

PREACHER

**THE PREACHER IS A PERSON
WITH A HEAVY OBLIGATION.**

"I am Your servant" (verse 125). Three times over in this strophe the word *servant* is mentioned. Its meaning is bonds slave and carries the thought of total commitment and obligation to a master. As we study these three mentions we learn that *the preacher has to flight*

spiritual hostility, "Do not leave me to my oppressors, [Stand by] Your servant for good" (verses 121,122). To preach truth is to invite spiritual hostility. Paul experienced this firsthand: "We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12). We may despise preachers and televangelists who have fallen and have been scandalized by the world, but we fail to comprehend the fierce spiritual hostilities they are up against. We may have criticized them, but how often have we really interceded for them?

The preacher has to fear biblical authority, "Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy, and teach me Your statutes" (verse 124). That is an amazing prayer. The Psalmist was saying, "In mercy give me grace to bring my life under divine authority." Once again, the average Christian is ignorant of the stand preachers have to take when they open the Word of God. St. Augustine said, "When the Scriptures speak, God speaks." The greatest authority on earth, under God, is the word that comes from the pulpit. Thus Christian congregations are reminded to "obey those who rule over [them], and be submissive [to them]" (Hebrews 13:17).

When Ted Koppel addressed the 1987 graduating class of Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, he declared:

"We have spent 5,000 years as a race of rational human beings trying to drag ourselves out of the primeval slime by searching for truth and moral absolutes. In its purest form truth is not a polite tap on the shoulder; it is a howling reproach. What Moses brought down from Mount Sinai were not the Ten Suggestions. They *are* [not *were*] commandments. The sheer brilliance of the Ten Commandments is that they codify in a handful of words acceptable human behavior, not just for then or now but all time."²

Alas, we have watered down the moral absolutes of God's eternal truth. On the other hand, when we *do preach* God's law, we do it with fear and trembling, for we are under divine authority.

The preacher has to face personal integrity. "I am Your servant; give me understanding, that I may know Your testimonies [how I

ought to live]" (verse 125). Preachers are to be role models of personal integrity before their people and the world at large. As conscientious people, they should spend hours on their knees in prayer and the study of God's Word to know how to flesh out the biblical standards for holy living.

THE PREACHER IS A PERSON WITH A HEAVENLY OUTLOOK.

"It is time for You to act, O Lord, for they have regarded Your law as void" (verse 126). Preachers who walk with God have a twofold vision: (1) *Thy see the heart if man* (verse 126). The pronoun *thy* refers to the people who nullify the demands of God's holy law, either through ignorance or arrogance.

This ignorance is true of thousands of teenagers across our land who have not been taught the Bible in their homes, schools, or even their churches. Therefore, they can pull a gun on the innocent without blinking an eye.

Another class of people, with brazen arrogance, tramples the moral absolutes of God's Holy Word. While we have the motto, "In God We Trust," stamped on our currency and coins, we ban prayer from our schools and neglect Bible reading, even as literature. Truly, we have made God's law void, even in a country that was founded on Christian principles.

But what is even more important is that (2) *the preacher shares the heart if God*. "It is time for You to act [or work-KJV], O Lord" (verse 126). Someone has said that "the hush of heaven is the hope of humanity." When God acts He does so either in blessing or cursing, in revival or retribution.

It is wonderful when God elects to pour out His blessing, but it is even more solemn when He chooses to judge. Evangelist Billy Graham once declared that "if God does not judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah." Judgment does not always come in lightning bolts and roaring thunder. Sometimes God gives up people who follow their evil passions, pride, and prostitution (Romans 1:24,26,28).

One wonders if this is not happening right now with the spread of AIDS, drug abuse, the increase of violence and crime, and destructive hurricanes, fires, and floods. Is God allowing these disasters as a judgment upon America? (See sidebar for statistics.)

The preacher's goals must not be prosperity, popularity, power, and prestige... [but] to meditate upon the Word of God day and night until it becomes a holy obsession.

We may despise preachers and televangelists who have fallen and have been scandalized by the world, but we fail to comprehend the fierce spiritual hostilities they are up against .

THE PREACHER IS A PERSON WITH A HOLY OBSESSION.

"Therefore I love Your commandments more than gold, yes, than fine gold! Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way" (verses 127,128). Here we have a man with a holy obsession.

We notice, first, that *the preacher values God's Word*. "Therefore I love Your commandments more than gold, yes, than fine gold!" (verse 127). No preacher is worth his/her salt who cannot echo these words. They should be persons who value God's Word above every other precious thing this world affords. It was to a preacher that Paul wrote, "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Timothy 6:10). The preacher's goals must not be prosperity, popularity, power, and prestige; the aim should be to meditate upon the Word of God day and night until it becomes a holy obsession. When everything else has crumbled to dust the Word of God will abide forever. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Mark 13:31). God has provided His creatures with a self-revelation which is consistent with His holy character and integrity. Therefore, we need to value God's Word.

Second, *the preacher voices God's Word*. "Therefore all Your precepts concerning all

things I consider to be right; I hate every false way" (verse 128). What a statement! Here is not only a holy obsession but a holy dogmatism. That is preaching! There is no picking or choosing here. *All* the precepts and *all* the things God has to say are right, and this is final.

On the other hand, any alternative to that—any false way—the preacher is to hate and to exhort the people to do likewise. This is not popular today, but who said the preacher is to be popular? Paul, writing his last word to Timothy, commanded: "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears... will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth" (2 Timothy 4:2-4).

How important it is to understand that even when people turn to false ways the true preacher is to go on preaching the Word.

Thus from the longest chapter in the Bible we have this profile of the preacher. My prayer is that this simple exposition will inspire a new respect for the preacher and stir us to support any endeavor to help preachers to be faithful and fearless expositors of God's Word.

To reiterate what I've been saying, the preacher is a person with a heavy obligation, a heavenly outlook, and a holy obsession. Anything less than this falls short of God's profile of a preacher. 111

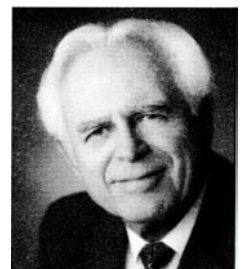
Our Fractured Families

Consider these devastating statistics. Every day in the USA:

- 2,795 teens (women under 20) get pregnant.
- 1,106 teens have abortions.
- 1,295 teens give birth.
- 67 babies die before 1 month of life.
- 105 babies die before their first birthday.
- 10 children are killed by guns.
- 6 teenagers commit suicide.
- 135,000 children take guns to school.
- 7,742 teenagers become sexually active.
- 623 teenagers get syphilis or gonorrhea.
- 211 children are arrested for drug abuse.
- 437 children are arrested for drinking or drunken driving.
- 3,288 children run away from home.
- 2,556 children are born out of wedlock.
- 2,989 children see their parents divorced.³

*Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version.

Stephen F. Olford, Th.D., is Founder of Encounter Ministries, Inc., Memphis, Tennessee.



ENDNOTES:

¹Signifies to stand in anyone's place as furnishing a guarantee and in general as a mediator (Job 17:3; Isaiah 38:14). From Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament (Psalms), vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 258.

²Jeanne Pugh, "Koppel Drops Objectivity To Deliver a Sermon," St. Petersburg Times (St. Petersburg, Fla.: Oct. 17, 1987), 2E.

³Children's Defense Fund. Quoted by Sermons Illustrated (Powell: Ohio), 3/90.19.



Anyone
who has preached
for a period of time
knows the difference
between preaching
with
and without the power of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit and Preaching

BY THOMAS LINDBERG

Jesus Christ's last words to His disciples before His ascension are instructive for all preachers for all times. He stressed at least two principal issues: (1) Jesus commanded His ministers to go to all people with the purpose of preaching the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15), (2) He stressed the need for being filled with the power of the Holy Spirit before commencing the task of preaching the gospel (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4).¹

Why? Preaching is a divine task, and divine tasks require divine power. It is impossible to separate the Holy Spirit from the preaching process when the latter is understood in biblical light.

The purpose of this article is to present several of the links between the Holy Spirit and the all-important duty of preaching.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND PREACHING

A few selected incidents from the Bible where the Holy Spirit came upon people and moved them to speak for God will help our focus.

Concerning Saul's being named and anointed king over Israel, Samuel told Saul, "The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy...and...be changed into a different person" (1 Samuel 10:6).² As Samuel predicted, Saul prophesied--evidently in a compelling way (1 Samuel 10:10,11).³

The Book of Acts is replete with accounts of the apostles being filled with the Holy Spirit and then preaching the gospel. For example, three times in Acts Luke recorded that Peter was filled with the Spirit (2:14; 4:8; 4:31) and preached the gospel of Christ.⁴ Luke used the

passive voice of the verb in each verse to demonstrate the Spirit was the active agent of power, not Peter,

Pentecostals have long maintained that to be filled with the Spirit, one must first be emptied of self. This principle and its relationship to preaching is evident in Paul's Corinthian correspondence. When Paul first went to Corinth, he said he came in *astheneia*, *phobos*, and *tromos* (1 Corinthians 2:3). The first of these words, *astheneia* (weakness), occurs 25 times in the New Testament. Of those occurrences, eight are in the two Corinthian letters. Of those eight, Paul used the word six times to describe himself. Two of those passages are found in 1 Corinthians 2:3-5 and 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

Three specifics tie these passages together: (1) Both are autobiographical in nature. (2) Both express the "power of God through human weakness" motif. (3) Both passages use the Greek word *hina* ("so that"). If I were to paraphrase the two passages, the first would read, "When I was in Corinth, I had little confidence in myself. Therefore, I relied on the Holy Spirit *so that* your faith would not be in me but in the power of God." The second could be paraphrased, "The Lord told me His power is greater in human weakness. Therefore, I am glad about my weaknesses *so that* the power of Christ may rest upon me."

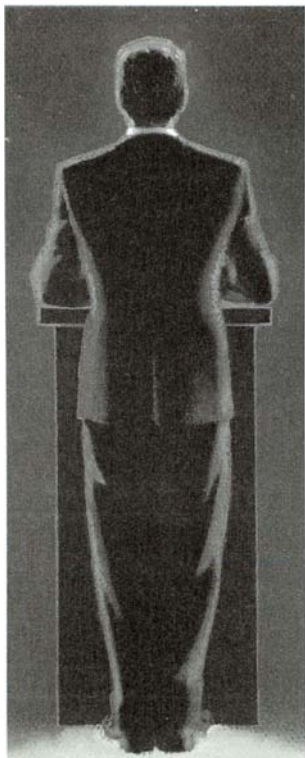
It is difficult or nearly impossible to argue that Paul was not dependent upon the Holy Spirit in his life and specifically in his preaching, for the Spirit was his source of power in preaching.

A final example of a biblical personality who

Preaching is
a divine task,
and divine tasks
require divine
power.



Ministers
of the gospel
need the power of
the Holy Spirit
upon
their sermons
to break
through sin
and lead
people
into life.



was dependent upon the Holy Spirit for His preaching is none other than our Lord Jesus. When chronicling the early days of Jesus' ministry, each of the Synoptics follows the same order: water baptism, anointing from the Spirit, temptation, and (finally) preaching. The descent of the Spirit preceded Jesus' proclamation of the Word.

ERRONEOUS IDEAS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT AND PREACHING

At least two erroneous ideas about the Holy Spirit and preaching need to be addressed and corrected for Pentecostal preachers:

Appealing to Matthew 10:19, one erroneous idea argues that since a preacher can be filled with the Holy Spirit, that eliminates the need for preparation prior to preaching. The context does not address preaching directly. The passage has one principal, exegetical thought: The Christian may depend upon God to help him in any situation.

To illustrate, if you are planning to build a small doghouse, you must first cut the boards to proper lengths. Would you rather use a dull or a sharp saw? Similarly, the preacher is a tool in God's hand. Do you think God would prefer a dull or a sharp tool? While there may be exceptions, a prepared preacher is usually a sharper tool in God's hand than an unprepared one. (Remember, rules are built from normal situations, not exceptional ones.)

People can go to extremes, and preachers are not exempted from that tendency. Some Pentecostal preachers may rely only on their preparation and little else. Others distrust too much preparation and put their trust in unction or the anointing alone. Why must a preacher view these two aspects as either/or? It is more biblical and wiser for the preacher to embrace them as both/and (see in combination Mark 12:30; 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 John 2:20).

Another erroneous idea concerning the Spirit's involvement with preaching is that the Holy Spirit will do all the work of applying the Word which is preached. I have heard preachers end their sermons by saying, "Now, may the Holy Spirit apply this message to our hearts." The preacher who ends a sermon with those words is not being fair to the minister's calling or the congregation. If God is using you to preach the sermon, He can certainly use you

to apply the Scripture to the people. The preacher who does not apply the sermon is like a ball carrier running the football to within 10 yards of the goal line and then asking the fans to carry it the rest of the way.

Apostolic preachers rigorously and fearlessly applied their sermons to their hearers through the power of the Spirit (see Acts 2:36-40; 3:14-20; 24:25). As Pentecostal preachers, we ought to do the same—totally depend upon the Holy Spirit. Our applications should be clear, precise, personal, and accurate.

WHY THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NEEDED IN PREACHING

Preaching is divine work. It follows logically that a preacher certainly needs God's power to do God's work. One of God's power agents is the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

Since the Holy Spirit is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, the preacher needs the Spirit's abilities before, during, and after the sermon. For example, the Spirit is able to lead an itinerant preacher where to preach (Acts 16:6-10). The Spirit is also equipped to guide a preacher concerning what to preach, for He is the Spirit of wisdom (Isaiah 11:2).

Spurgeon, addressing this issue, said: "Certain important doctrines of the gospel can be so proclaimed in excess as to throw the rest of truth into the shade, and the preaching is no longer the gospel in its natural beauty.... The Spirit of God will teach you the use of the sacrificial knife to divide the offerings."⁶

Another important reason why the Holy Spirit is needed in preaching is contained in the Old Testament *sheliach* principle. (The word is derived from the Hebrew word *shalach*; that is, "to send.") In Old Testament theology, this principle stated that when a lesser person was sent to perform a task for a greater person, the lesser carried the authority of the greater. For example, when Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac (Genesis 24), he invested his servant with full authority (see verse 9).

The *sheliach* principle may also be observed in Exodus 3 and 4 as God sent and equipped Moses to return to Egypt as His spokesman. Jesus also employed this principle as He sent His disciples out (Matthew 10). Since authority is an essential in preaching God's Word,

ministers today must not only know that God has called them but that God has sent them and is with them.

Anyone who has preached for a period of time knows the difference between preaching with and without the power of the Spirit. When the Holy Spirit anoints you to preach, there is power and blessing. Billy Graham calls it preaching so "another Voice is heard,"⁷ When you preach in your own strength and skill, the results are embarrassingly sparse. That contrast, which any experienced preacher understands, is the reason every preacher needs the Holy Spirit in preparation and presentation of the sermon.

CHALLENGES CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT AND OUR PREACHING

The dedicated Pentecostal preacher is always ready to receive new challenges to be a better communicator. Some of the challenges we face in this generation concerning the Holy Spirit and our preaching are:

1. All preachers ought to prepare themselves by allowing the Holy Spirit to make them holy. Perhaps God's church has known no greater model of a godly, righteous pastor than Puritan Richard Baxter, who exhorted ministers to be holy through the power of the Spirit: "Take heed to yourself...lest you unsay with your lives what you say with your tongues. We must study as hard how to live well as how to preach well."⁸

2. Pentecostal preachers should take seriously the challenge to preach the Word. After all, the Spirit only promises to anoint and bless God's Word, not our words. Let us draw a fine, clear line between oratory and preaching. Oratory may be included in preaching, but preaching doesn't automatically encompass oratory.

A preacher is interested in announcing God's Word. At ordination, a candidate is handed a Bible, not a *Reader's Digest*. Biblical preachers proclaim the Scripture. That is what the Holy Spirit attends. The preacher's God-given task is to *deliver* the goods, not to *manufacture* them. To use an analogy, the preacher is a waiter, not the chef.

3. Preachers must be open to the work of the Spirit in our churches and services. It is possible to be caught up in gimmicks and manipu-

lations in preaching. Such activity is a clear sign of the lack of faith in the power of the Spirit and God's sovereignty. By trying to build churches by ourselves, we can actually find ourselves in competition with the One who alone can build His church (Matthew 16:18),

The supernatural power of the Holy Spirit must be welcomed into the pulpit and the entire church if the present-day body of Christ is to fulfill her New Testament portrait.

Gordon Fee prophetically wrote: "It is perhaps an indictment of Western Christianity that we should consider mature our rather totally cerebral and domesticated-but bland-brand of faith with the concomitant absence of the Spirit in terms of His supernatural gifts. The Spirit, not Western rationalism, marks the turning of the ages, after all; and to deny the Spirit's manifestations is to deny our present existence to be eschatological, as belonging to the beginning of the time of the end."⁹

To Fee's words, add Spurgeon's passionate plea:

"If we do not have the Spirit of God, it were better to shut the churches, to nail up the doors, to put a black cross on them, and say, 'God have mercy on us!' If you ministers have not the Spirit of God, you had better not preach. A church in the land without the Spirit of God is rather a curse than a blessing. If you have not the Spirit of God, you stand in somebody else's way. This is a solemn work-the Holy Spirit or nothing and worse than nothing."¹⁰

CONCLUSION

Certain things in life are nice; a few things are necessary. The Holy Spirit in a person's preaching ministry absolutely must be placed into the category labeled "necessary." Propagandists might depend upon glittering half-truths to sway the masses and disguise their weak ideologies, but ministers of the gospel need the power of the Holy Spirit upon their sermons to break through sin and lead people into life.

Once a friend of the great Scottish preacher, Alexander Whyte, said to him, "You preached today as if you had come straight from God's presence." Whyte answered softly, "Perhaps I did." That was just it; he had! That was

Some

Pentecostal

preachers may

rely only on their

preparation and

little else.

Others distrust

too much

preparation and

put their trust in

unction or the

anointing alone.

The preacher
who does not
apply his sermon
is like a
ball carrier
running the
football to within
10 yards of the
goal line and
then asking the
fans to carry it the
rest of the way,

Whyte's secret of power, Really it's no secret at all. There is an open door and a straight path to the presence of God where preachers can find the Spirit of God, who will empower them to preach the Word of God. [I



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ENDNOTES:

There are many names in the Bible for the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Just within the first two chapters of Acts, the experience of Pentecost was described as "the promise of the Father" (1:4), "being baptized with the Holy Spirit" (1:5), "receiving power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (1:8), "being filled with the Spirit" (2:4), and a "pouring out of the Spirit" (2:17). Thomas Smail wrote an excellent word to this battle over slogans: "By whatever name receive!" Reflected Glory: The Spirit in Christ and Christians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 137.

All Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.



AARON THORGWALLER HAD A DIFFICULT TIME DELIVERING HIS FIRST SERMON, DUE TO THE FROG IN HIS THROAT.

Pentecostals have regularly maintained that the Holy Spirit operated in people's lives differently in the Old Testament in contrast to the New Testament. It is not the purpose of this paper to examine that difference, but the promise of Jesus in John 14:17 marked a new era in the Spirit's residency within the believer. For a sound discussion on the work of the Holy Spirit upon individuals before Pentecost, see Leon Wood, The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 39-77.

One of the significant advances in New Testament scholarship in recent years has been E.H. Dodd's crystallization of the early kerygma. Dodd demonstrated that the central message of apostolic preaching was the person and work of Christ. He noted five emphases: the fulfillment of OT Scripture about the Messiah's coming, the early life of Jesus, His death, His exaltation, and repentance toward God and faith in Christ because of coming, certain judgment. The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development (New York: Harper and Row, 1944).

As Pentecostals, most of us are willing to build theology and draw application from narrative sections of Scripture. See Roger Stronstad, "The Biblical precedent for Historical Precedent" paraclete 27 (Summer 1993). One word of caution, however: An accurate application from the Bible cannot be based solely upon the fact that "so and so" in the Scripture did or said something; and, therefore, we ought to do or say the same thing. One biblical scholar wrote, "I avoid especially the principle of imitation (the idea that because someone in the Bible does it, we can or ought to do it too). This is the most dangerous and irreverent of all approaches to application, since virtually every sort of behavior—stupid and wise, malicious and saintly—is chronicled in the Bible." Douglas Stuart, Old Testament Exegesis (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 73.

Charles Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980 rep. ed. of 1894), 189.

Billy Graham, "How to Communicate the Gospel: Address at International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists" Christianity Today 2 (September 1983): 30.

Richard Baxter, The Reformed Pastor (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1979 rep. ed.), 63, 68.

Gordon Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 115.

Charles Spurgeon, quoted in D.L. Moody Secret Power (Ventura: Regal Books, 1987 rep. ed. of 1881), 70.

INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS E. TRASK

I Ask the Superintendent

With a successful preaching ministry spanning more than 40 years, Thomas Trask, general superintendent, shares in this quarterly interview some practical and timely thoughts on the subject of preaching.

WHAT KINDS OF PREACHERS HAVE HAD THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR LIFE?

Individuals who have stayed fresh in the Word and alive in their spirits are the most influential. When they come to the pulpit I know they aren't just picking material or a sermon, but it is a fresh revelation. They project a freshness from God, whether it is an expository or a teaching session. They don't exalt self but Jesus. They don't promote a program or a product but the propagation of the gospel, for they know the power of the gospel.

Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation." Men have to know that, not just a mental expectation but a spirit that's born out of relationship with God.

Therefore, those I've enjoyed hearing preach over the years have lived in the prayer closet where a message was birthed in their spirits, and they have come from that experience with a revelation of the Word.

IN CONVERSATIONS YOU HAVE MENTIONED PREPARING YOUR SPIRIT TO RECEIVE THE MESSAGE. PLEASE EXPLAIN.

I first try to have an ear tuned toward what the Spirit wants to say. Then in my spirit man I feel what I'm preaching. If a salesperson is not convinced of his product, he will be a poor salesman. As preachers, we must (1) be

convinced that we've been called, (2) that the gospel is the greatest message the world has yet to hear, and (3) that we've been entrusted with an awesome responsibility to be messengers. Someone has said we are really the newspaper boys for God, calling, "Extra! Extra! Hear all about it!" This is the good news of the gospel. When we feel that, there is a quickening in our spirits; then when we stand before the congregation they know we have heard from God.

Thus preparation is twofold: (1) I prepare myself spiritually, and (2) I prepare myself intellectually in absorbing the material for the messages.

MANY PASTORS PREACH SUNDAY MORNING AND NIGHT AND USUALLY WEDNESDAY NIGHT. HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE YOUR SCHEDULE WHEN YOU WERE A PASTOR?

I always prepared for Sunday morning's message on Tuesday. For Wednesday night I prepared Wednesday morning. And Thursday I prepared for Sunday night. By Friday I had my Sunday messages, and Friday was a time to review. I wrote my messages out in longhand twice. Then I typed them and put them in final form. Writing messages out twice familiarized me with the material sufficiently so that I wasn't bound to notes. The notes and references were before me, but I had some liberty both in the style of preaching and in the use of the material.

HOW LONG DID YOU SPEND IN STUDY? WAS IT DIFFERENT FOR EACH SERVICE?

I probably spent a minimum of 5 hours preparing for each session. Additionally, I had germinating experiences where God gave me an inspiration, and I left it in my spirit to germinate. When I finally sat down to write and put it together, it just flowed. Nothing is more rewarding or satisfying than having material

Those I've enjoyed hearing preach over the years have lived in the prayer closet where a message was birthed in their spirits.

flow, which is accomplished by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

I like that, but not all messages germinate. It's unreasonable to expect it.

EVERY PREACHER IS UNIQUE. HOW CAN TODAY'S PREACHER FEEL CONFIDENT IN A UNIQUE STYLE?

Ministers should not try to be something they are not. God has given gifts to us, and He deals with the personality, spirit, and abilities of each one. A preacher must be comfortable within. Nothing will turn people off more than a preacher who is an actor-acting out somebody else, trying to be something he or she is not.

Sincerity is critical in the ministry. People can tell when preachers are themselves and sincere. God never intended for us to be somebody else. He made each of us unique, and we can be comfortable in that. The unique person who is anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit becomes a tool in God's hands. This gives a preacher confidence to obey the Spirit's promptings.

YOU'RE SAYING A PREACHER DOESN'T HAVE TO BE LIKE SOMEONE ELSE TO BE SUCCESSFUL. WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER PEOPLE BUT SHOULDN'T TRY TO BE ANYONE ELSE.

Yes. Over the years I have carefully watched ministers, particularly successful ones. We can watch their mannerisms, deportment, communication, and delivery, not for the purpose of copying them but learning from them. They are mentors, and that is critical. We never outgrow the learning curve,

The pulpit is not the place for a person to be a clown. The pulpit is a sacred trust. Humor has its place, but preachers should not be clowns. Ministry is a higher calling. Those who have taken that posture have a shallow ministry, for they move from preaching to entertaining. We are not called to be entertainers,

WHEN YOU PREPARE A MESSAGE, DO YOU PRACTICE IT BEFORE YOU PREACH?

No, I like to have it so worked in my spirit that I can't wait to deliver it. At times I have written the material out so fully it would be like I've practiced. But I've never practiced preaching. I don't say that is not good. Many preachers do and have done so successfully, however.

DO YOU OFTEN SHARE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN YOUR MESSAGES?

Life stories and testimonies relate to people, and the gospel relates to where people are. Personal experiences help them to identify with us.

Pastors must mix with the congregations—get to know each other. If the only time they hear and see us is when we are behind the pulpit, they get a warped view. We are human but represent divinity. We handle the Word of God carefully, and people need to see our human side. We make mistakes and learn lessons from them. When we share our experiences with the congregation they may laugh at us, but they can also identify with us.

HOW CAN PENTECOSTAL PASTORS HELP BRING REVIVAL TO THE COMMUNITIES THROUGH THEIR PREACHING?

Pentecostal pastors have an edge (see John 16: 15) because we have the work of the Spirit within us. We should be on the curve of what God is doing, what He wants us to do, and what He proposes to do. Wherever pastors are sensitive to that, are tuned to the Spirit, and are hearing what the Spirit is saying to the church, they are on the cutting edge—doing what God has ordained them to do. God is blessing the church, and there's revival.

It is God's will to save the lost, so we should be seeking the lost in every service. He gave gifts to the church in the form of pastors,

If a salesperson is not convinced of his product, he will be a poor salesman.

evangelists, and teachers for the perfecting of the saints. A maturing of the saints should be in those settings and for the work of the ministry.

God's plan is that pastors preach to create a desire within people-the laity-to be a part of the ministry. Let them have hands-on ministry. That's where it's at.

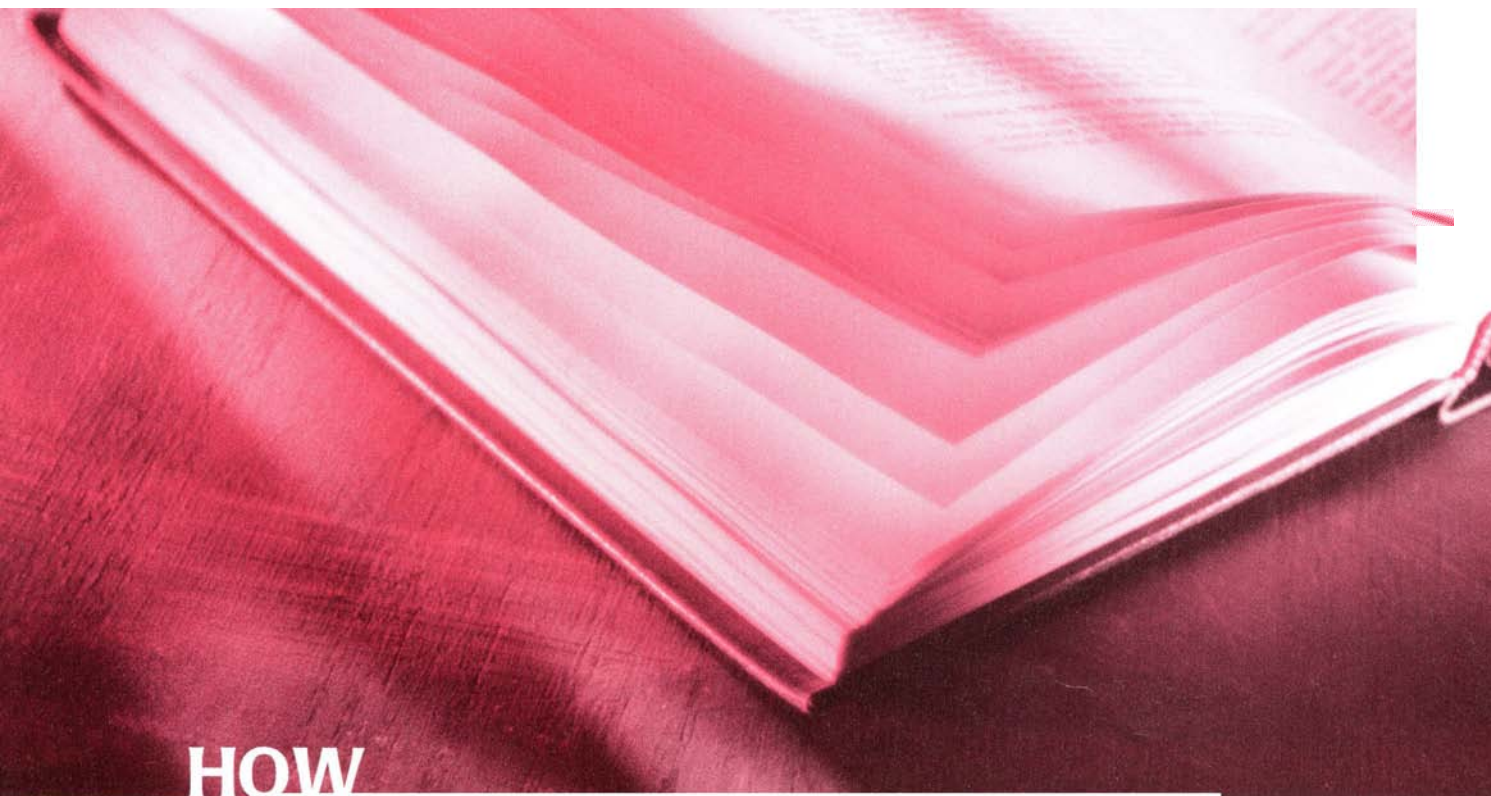
The unique person who is anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit becomes a tool in God's hands.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INSIGHTS. WE APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS EACH QUARTER THROUGH *ENRICHMENT*.

I am thankful God has called me into the ministry to be a preacher of the gospel. It's a high, a holy, and a heavenly call-3 H's. 111



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



HOW

Expository Preaching

Helps the Church

BY GEORGE O. WOOD

While attending seminary I picked up a copy of *Christianity Today* which carried an article by W.E. Criswell, who had been the pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas 25 years. When asked the reason for his longevity in one pastorate, he replied, "Expository preaching." Upon his arrival at the church he said he began preaching from Genesis 1:1 and, through those 25 years, preached straight through the Bible to the end of the Book of Revelation,

Criswell said the Bible was inexhaustible,

and if you preach it, you won't run out of things to say. I was amazed and intrigued, *If that's how I can stay in one church a long time, then I'm going to be an expository preacher also*, I thought.

That was a poor motive for getting into expository preaching, but I soon found many other good reasons. And I did stay 17 years in my one and only pastorate.

My fundamental duty as a pastor is to preach the Word. My secondary duties may



***If you get your people into
the Word, you will get the
Word into your people.***

include administration, promotion, overseeing development of physical facilities, visitation, etc. But unless I give the preaching of the Word my first priority, the heart of the church has collapsed,

The heart is a pump. God has ordained that through the preaching of the Word, a constant supply of spiritual life and power be pumped into the church, His people.

Churches die when the pastor has nothing from God to say to the people. The congregation may be in a beautiful building; the educational, social, and organizational emphasis may be superb; but unless the pulpit rings with a vibrant word from God, that church has a terminal illness. The illness may be short or long, but eventually death is sure to result.

The study of God's Word must be at the top of my personal priorities if I expect members of my congregation to have it as one of theirs.

The best definition of preaching I ever heard was "Preaching is you." It's the divine communication of truth through your human personality. None of us will preach exactly the same way from a given text, but those who "preach the Word" will find the Lord at work in their own lives and the lives of the people they pastor.

What is expository preaching? It involves taking a block of Scripture (a verse, a paragraph, a chapter, a book) and answering two questions: *What did it say?* and *What does it say?*

In answering those two questions the proposition, main points, and subpoints of the message are all controlled by the text itself. In topical preaching the preacher can choose the outline. In textual preaching the main points are controlled by the text, and the preacher can fill in whatever he or she feels led. However, in expository preaching the text totally controls the content of the message: One is not free to hunt or pick what is to be emphasized or ignored.

Let's consider the two questions above. To preach expositively, I must answer both.

WHAT DID IT SAY?

This question involves exegesis and hermeneutics. I want to understand as best I can what each word or phrase meant to the biblical writer and to the people of God to whom this word first came. Thus I hit the Bible dictionaries, lexicons, concordance, commentaries—anything I can get my hands on to understand this text better.

Too often we want to skip the hard task of really understanding the Scripture to get immediately to the application. This is one reason difficult parts in Scripture are often skipped (such as Leviticus).

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

No sermon is complete, however, if we have only answered the first question. We must also consider, "What does it say?" In other words, I must move past exegesis to application. How does this ancient living Word relate to the contemporary needs of persons to whom I will preach?

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Preaching must always involve one foot planted firmly in exegesis and the other in application. Sermons will be as dry as chips if they are only exegetic. Exegesis tells what the Scripture *said*; application, what it *says*.

Many a congregation has been put to sleep by a sermon which never made it into the here and now of experience. It becomes a dry, dull history lesson. However, sermons which neglect exegesis for the sake of application will eventually produce a biblically illiterate congregation, prey to false winds of doctrine and the gales of satanic adversity. Generally, if a sermon fails to interest, inspire, or challenge, it is because one or both of these questions were not answered by the preacher,

Paul told Timothy to keep "the pattern of sound teaching" (2 Timothy 1:13). Essentially Paul was saying that he followed a system of teaching, that his own preaching-teaching methods had not consisted of isolated pieces of information and scattered spiritual exhortations. One has only to read Paul to detect how orderly he was.

In Bible study the hop-and-skip method is not recommended. Imagine trying to study a foreign language, history, or science textbook in that unsystematic fashion. Study of the Bible is not exempted from the same principles which apply to study in other areas,

If the above comments are true about personal study, they also apply to preaching. Does my preaching carry on the systematic exposition of truth? Am I giving forth a pattern of sound words?

What would happen if a construction worker tried to build a house by putting the bricks down in unconnected places rather than fitly joining them together? Too often our sermons from week to week are unrelated bricks.

Should there not be a relationship between last week's sermons and this week's? or last month's and this month's? or even last year's and this year's?

Some feel that following a sermon plan wherein the preacher takes weeks or months

to walk the flock through a book in the Bible sequentially actually inhibits the Holy Spirit. I believe the Spirit can give me direction for a whole series just as easily as He can for one message. But I must never get inflexible. If while in the midst of a series the Holy Spirit puts upon my heart some special word, I have no hesitation to interrupt the series.

Over the years I have found great advantages in expository preaching for both myself and the church,

Here is how expository preaching helps the church.

OVER A PERIOD OF TIME, THE CONGREGATION IS EXPOSED TO THE TOTALITY OF GOD'S WORD.

If I just preach "how to do it" messages (how to make a marriage work, raise children, be financially secure, become a success, defeat stress—all the popular topics of the day), I will completely omit essential truths upon God's heart. On the other hand, if I faithfully preach the Word, I will address all the felt needs of people, since God's Word is fantastically relevant.

By preaching through major blocks of Scripture I am forced to preach on subjects I would not normally choose, but God has ordained they be given consideration. Such exposure to God's Word will ground people's faith, not in the opinions of men nor in hobbyhorse doctrines nor latest fads but God's written revelation.

If you get your people into the Word, you will get the Word into your people.

SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS BUILT.

The Pentecostal/charismatic world has been through waves of fads in the past 20 years: extremes in discipleship emphasis, fascination with coughing up demons, health/Wealth gospel, dominion theology—you name it.

During this time, I simply kept preaching the Bible systematically to our people. We lost almost no one to these elements of charisma-

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nia. Why? Our people had been grounded in the Word. They had become accustomed to having Scripture dealt with in context, line by line, word by word. They could smell a Scripture twister a mile off. They knew when someone was lifting a text out of context and distorting it.

In our emphasis on revival we must never forget that the first hallmark of an apostolic church is commitment to the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42). How can people become grounded in the teaching of the apostles if all they get is someone's latest revelation? Expository preaching helps our people not become prey to every wind of doctrine.

THE ISSUES GOD WANTS DEALT WITH ARE DEALT WITH IN GOD'S TIME.

I have never ceased to be amazed how God would apply a sermon with a series at just the right time of need either for the congregation or an individual in it.

I think of the runaway girl who found herself in our church one Sunday evening. I happened to be in a series on the Ten Commandments. Which one do you think I preached from the night that girl wandered into our midst and was saved? "Honor your father and mother" *.

I think of the second series I did on Leviticus, 10 years after the first one. My text that Sunday was from chapters 13 and 14—a lengthy passage on leprosy. I explained to the congregation that the biblical word *leprosy* embraced many skin conditions, including psoriasis. I didn't know that a local community college professor and his wife were visiting the church that morning, that he had a long-standing and painful condition of psoriasis which was untreatable and inoperable. This couple came in and heard a minister preaching on the theme, "What Your Skin Is Telling You About God." How odd but peculiarly relevant!

If I were simply selecting what I wanted to preach week by week, I would never have chosen Leviticus 13 and 14. But the Lord knew this couple would be there that Sunday. They were so intrigued they came back the next Sunday. At the close of the service, they responded to the altar call and God

healed him instantly.

Preaching expositively gave me great liberty to deal with sensitive matters—the congregation knew I wasn't personally picking on them when I came to a text that was uncomfortable to them. This wasn't the preacher's opinion—it was God's. The preacher hadn't singled them out; the passage simply fell open to them that day because that's where the pastor was in his journey through that book in the Bible.

PREACHING EXPOSITIVELY BUILDS A SENSE OF RELIABILITY.

Persons in our congregation knew they could bring unsaved family and friends to the service, and they would not be surprised by an unprepared, rambling sermon. Often in Pentecostal circles we almost venerate unpredictability. I think we need to place more emphasis on predictability. Our people knew where to open their Bibles when it came time for the sermon.

If there are advantages for the church in the pastor's preaching expositively, the plusses are even greater for the preacher himself.

1, There is no Jumbling Jor direction each week.

I don't know how many hours I would have wasted over 17

years if every week I would have started from scratch trying to figure out what I was going to preach that week. I always knew—the next chapter or the next paragraph.

My weekly pattern of sermon preparation was: Monday, day of study and exegesis for the sermons to be preached that week; Tuesday morning, more study; Wednesday morning, I put the outline together with supporting illustrations and finished Wednesday night's message; Thursday, the day was spent completing Sunday's sermons. About 24 hours a week were given to sermon preparation. This pattern almost never varied over the length of 17 years in pastoring except for weeks I had guest speakers.

This meant I was able to avoid the Saturday night panic. In 17 years of pastoring I failed only twice to have Sunday's sermons ready for delivery by the end of the workday on Friday.

Each Monday I went to my office early in the

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morning, opened my Bible, and started with God's Word for my life and our church that week. Never once did I sense God failing to speak to me from His Word, God is not silent when we approach His Word. He always spoke to me even though I was not always a good conduit for His message. Yes, even expository preachers lay an egg from time to time.

Expository preaching provided me ample opportunity to develop sermon resources.

As I entered into a new series, I visited Christian bookstores and libraries to cull out the tools I needed to purchase for the new series. I bought those commentaries or helps which assisted me in answering well either of my two foundational questions: *What did it say?* and *What does it say?*

Over the course of years I was able to develop a good library as well as a rich resource of illustrations and applicational materials.

Nothing fosters personal spiritual growth in a pastor more than expository preaching.

Why? One is forced to study systematically to inculcate God's Word personally. I always had more material than I could ever use in the preaching event and was the beneficiary of the overflow.

Expository preaching enables one to minister from the overflow rather than a half-full or empty cup.

Expository preaching promotes longevity in the pastorate.

I lasted 17 years and never felt I had run out of things to preach.

Why do so many pastors leave the ministry? Surely, one reason is burnout, a depletion of the minister's energy-physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, I found the systematic study and personal spiritual preparation

required for expository preaching an irreplaceable source of renewal. The congregation never grew tired of God's Word, and I didn't either.

A pastor cannot be all things to all people. Early on I determined my major concentration

would be upon the ministry of the Word and that I would allocate the time necessary to do that well. After all, we are called upon to be workmen who do not need to be ashamed and who correctly handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). This meant I had to give lesser priority to counseling, administration, visitation, and other sundry aspects of the ministry. This did not mean, however, that these other ministries were neglected. As pastor I could delegate many things, but the one thing I could not delegate was the preaching ministry.

The apostles came to this conclusion for spiritual leadership long before I did: "We... will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:3,4). Keep your priorities straight, and God will build His church through you.

You don't have to be an expository preacher to proclaim God's Word faithfully. The Holy Spirit blesses all kinds of preaching styles and methods. But expository preaching will certainly enrich your own life and the lives of the people to whom God has called you. ■■■

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

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

PREACHING

THE VALUE OF PREPARATION

BY CHARLES T. CRABTREE

The power of the pulpit has amazed me. The Primacy of the pulpit has confronted me. Preparation for the pulpit has challenged me. In spite of these obvious dynamics at work in the preaching ministry, I am quick to confess how far short I have fallen in the disciplines of becoming a better spokesman for God. If I could repeat my pulpit ministry, I would pay closer attention to the details and techniques of preaching.

Recently I made a fresh commitment to preaching preparation. For I am convinced I can greatly improve—even after nearly 40 years in the pulpit.

One of the subtle designs of the devil is to use spiritual language to undermine responsibility and demean human instrumentality in preaching. The Word of God tells us, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5), "Nor by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). The same Word says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). In Pentecostal circles we must be careful to

depend wholly on the Holy Spirit while believing He can better use a well-trained and well-prepared instrument.

Many have difficulty with the side of preaching because they feel it is natural and a substitute for reliance upon God. In some cases this is a sincere concern, in others it is an excuse for laziness. Preparation for preaching is hard work. Sometimes it is a temptation to avoid the time and effort it takes to be at our best. Many among us want to preach well, but few want to prepare to preach well.

The fundamental problem in neglecting the more technical side of preaching is developing bad habits which diminish effectiveness. Some preachers' habits cancel their effectiveness by irritating or distracting the listener. Preachers need to remove every hindrance possible through proper discipline.

The one who wishes to develop better techniques to be a complete preacher should keep in mind that every skill in life began with a bit of awkwardness. Attention to detail and consistent practice overcome handicaps.

By emphasizing several areas in preaching where all of us can improve and become more effective, my intention is to be practical without being careless and realistic without being derelict in our duty to God and man.

VOCAL FACTOR

God has given us a marvelous gift in the human voice. Every preacher should give careful attention to the proper use, development, and care of this powerful tool—this unparalleled gift with incredible potential.

The voice should be used so that every listener can clearly understand the spoken word and maintain interest in receiving truth.

A couple of vocal sins (missing the mark by the wrong use of the voice) committed in the pulpit follow:

1. Hearing strain. Occasionally I have had to sit near the back of a church or classroom, and it was difficult to hear the preacher or teacher because he did not use his voice to include everyone.

Every elocution teacher insists that a speaker project his or her voice so every person on the back row can hear every word spoken. We are in the communication business. Anything that detracts a congregation from hearing the preacher defeats the whole purpose of preaching.

2. Single pitch. The voice is an instrument and should be used like an instrument. Speak distinctly and with varying degrees of volume. The voice must be used to bring emphasis and variety to hold the audience's interest. I have found it helpful to treat my message as a three-stanza song. After each "verse" I return to a conversational tone before building to a strong proclamation.

Many preachers

start at full throttle and never let up.

I took a few voice lessons when I was young and learned the importance of proper breathing through the correct use of the diaphragm, enunciating, and throwing the voice. The same principles can be applied to preaching.

Today we have sophisticated sound systems in church sanctuaries seating under 200.

There is no substitute for a strong, controlled voice which is trained to communicate truth in such a way the listener is not straining to hear or wanting to cover his ears.

VERBAL FACTOR

The verbal factor relates to the use and structure of language—not so much what you say but how you say it.

Several times I have taught the subject of preaching at the postgraduate level. A disturbing deficiency in most of the students was in English grammar—glaring grammatical errors which are offensive to educated people.

This is an unnecessary barrier to the preaching of the gospel. Many well-educated people have been lost because a preacher has been unconcerned with the proper use of language in the presentation of the gospel. Most preachers speak to well-educated people.

There is no defensible reason for consistently using poor grammar in the pulpit.

If you want to improve your use of language, find an English teacher and enlist help. Some preachers give sermon audiocassettes to teachers, who help them hone their skills.

Many preachers have a good understanding of English, but over time they fall into bad habits. Periodically preachers should listen to their sermons on tape and judge themselves. If they don't, others will do so every Sunday.

Listen carefully for repetitive statements, filler words, and clichés. You may be tempted to deny what you are hearing, but don't fool yourself—everyone you preach to is hearing. If

you don't like what you are hearing on tape, chances are people are not liking what they are hearing from the pulpit. Take responsibility for what you are say-

ing and how you are saying it.

Another way to overcome bad habits in preaching is to write out your sermons. In over 20 years I have not taken a manuscript or outline to the pulpit, but I have made it a practice to write out my sermons. This exercise helps me to formulate my thoughts, flesh out the truth, and deal with language properly. A

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VISUAL FACTOR

The visual factor is seldom mentioned or discussed in Pentecostal circles; yet some of our greatest preachers in the past were concerned about this aspect of their preaching.

A marvelous tool to help the modern preacher is the video camera, which permits you to see yourself preaching and correct your visual mistakes. These include such things as perpetual movement that detracts, a gesture that started as a nervous response and has become a bothersome habit, or a distracting facial expression everyone notices but does not mention. Try watching yourself preach.

Start with correcting obvious negative habits you do not like in your own preaching. If you move around too much, choose points in every sermon where you plant your feet. Stand in place for periods of time. If a hand movement is perpetual, focus on correcting that distraction.

It is wise to deal with one thing at a time and force the changes over a period of time. If you take on more than one change at a time, you will become so tied up in the technical side of preaching you will lose focus.

It has been my joy to study preachers and preaching a long time, and I have seen and heard the best and the worst. As a viewer and listener the lack of attention to the visual factor has produced the greatest distractions. Some of the bad habits I have observed are:

- Constantly running back and forth.
- Pulling at an earlobe every few minutes.
- Straightening a tie every few seconds.
- Constantly putting a hand in and out of a suit pocket.

Such things steal the listener's attention and the trend of the message.

After correcting obvious visual distractions in preaching, concentrate on the positive use of body language and gestures. Choose parts of your sermon where the dramatic could be heightened by the proper use of body and hands. Use pauses. Keep in mind the dimension of the visual as a useful tool to communicate the message.

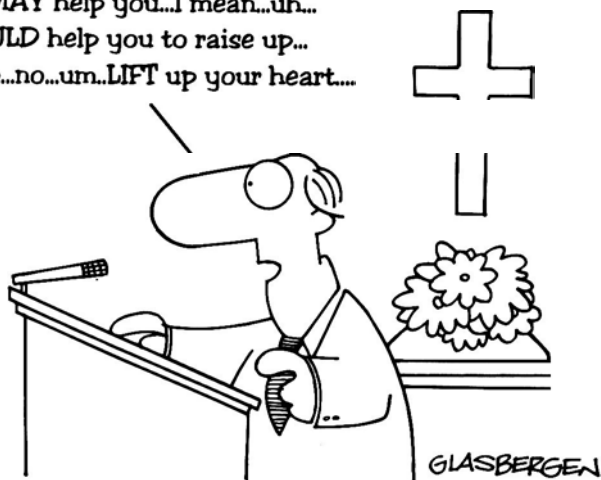
In focusing on the dramatic in preaching, be careful not to step outside your character. All aspects of preaching should project your personality at its best to the glory of God. While studying to improve, be comfortable

with your own style and presentation.

While pleading for better preaching and greater attention to the technical aspects of the sermon, all of us should place our abilities and preparation under the control of the Holy Spirit. Those who prepare themselves to be their best are used by the Holy Spirit to influence a greater number of people for God. Do not neglect the details in preaching. Study preaching in all its dimensions. Strive to master the technical part of this great calling, and the Master will have an instrument He can better use to call the lost and draw the saints closer to His side. 111

The **VOICE** must
be used to bring
EMPHASIS and **VARIETY**
to hold the
audience's interest.
Speak **DISTINCTLY**
and with varying degrees
of **VOLUME**.

The Lord can help you...
uh, MAY help you...I mean...uh...
COULD help you to raise up...
RISE up...no...um...LIFT up your heart....



Pastor Jim's sermons took a turn for the worse after his old high school English teacher joined his congregation.



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

Jesus: Express Image of the Father

PART 1

TEXT: HEBREWS 1:1-3, NIV

As you have discovered, the Book of Hebrews stands alone in its single focus on the incomparable Christ. The writer compares Jesus to the angels, Moses the lawgiver, the Levitical priesthood, the old covenant, the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the entire sacrificial system of the old economy and concludes that Jesus is better by far.

The repetition of themes and the converging strands of illustrative history make the case irresistible and undeniable-Jesus simply is better. The writer is determined to quell the doubts and uncertainties of Jewish converts who might have been wavering in the crucible of persecution and social unrest.

Some argue, with a degree of plausibility,

that the apostle Paul may have penned this epistle to the believers in the Jerusalem church who would shortly face the destruction of their city. If so, the writer was reminding that if all is taken away-the temple, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the Law-the best still remains, Jesus Christ.

The message is equally strong today. Forces and influences abound which rise up to challenge the superiority of Jesus. Secular humanism, hedonism, materialism, intellectualism, and a host of new age ideologies combine to make that challenge. But the message of Hebrews is wonderfully reassuring-Jesus is always better. He is the incomparable Christ.

I doubt there has ever been a time when the pressure has been so intense against the affections of the devout. From every side comes the message that modern life is too complex and

The Past

In the past
God spoke to our forefathers
through the prophets
1) at many times
and
2) in various ways,

The Last Days

but
in these last days
he has spoken to us by his Son,
1) whom he appointed heir
of all things,
and
2) through whom he made the universe.
[The Son described]
The Son is
1. the radiance of God's glory
and
2. the exact representation of his being,
sustaining all things by his powerful word.
[The position of the Son]
After he had provided purification for sins,
he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty
in heaven.

Preaching Outline

A compelling
communication

A participatory work

A defining identity

A shared exaltation

Significant Words

"at many times" *polumeros*
Lit.: "many allotments, sharings"
"in various ways" *polutropos*
Lit.: "many modes, styles"
"radiance" *apaugasma*
"radiance, effulgence, reflection"
"exact representation" *charakter*
"impress, reproduction, representation"

"being" *hupostasis*
"substantial nature, essence, actual being, reality"
"word" *rhema*
While used interchangeably with *logos*, some have seen in *rhema* a special quality of divine expression intended to produce faith.

demanding for the simplistic tenets of biblical faith. Moderns want to push faith aside as superstition and empty idealism. However, from Hebrews we're told: Put the gospel up against any force, ideology, religious system, or institution of man, and it will show itself to be better by far.

The writer's gift of persuasion arrests the reader. Repeatedly, he states the hypothesis, develops the argument, and then draws the irresistible conclusion: Jesus Christ is the incomparable and exalted One. In fact, the reader is left with the sense that all options of reason and illustration have been fully exhausted. The last word has been spoken. Say it any way you like-Jesus is still better.

In planning for this introductory message, define as carefully as possible how you want the message to be targeted. Exactly what is the Holy Spirit wanting to accomplish in each heart? How will the listeners' conduct be altered and their lives changed? What will be the essence of the altar call? Prayerfully consider the kind of challenge that will sensitize people to the competitive forces at work in their lives to move Jesus away from His deserved place of superiority. Or an invitation-al question: What is drawing you away from wholehearted devotion to Jesus?

A COMPELLING COMMUNICATION

We worship and serve a talking God whose speech has gone out into all the world. In more ways than we may know, He is reaching out to communicate with us. His voice is as big as the thunder that shakes the mountains and as small as the slight whisper in the human heart.

The psalmist expressed it well: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they

display knowledge, There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard" (Psalm 19:1-3).

Here, however, the writer was more defining and precise. He stated that in the past (the Old Testament period) God spoke to the patriarchs and forefathers through His prophets, but in the last days (the New Testament period to our day) He has spoken to us by His Son. Here then is the sharp contrast between natural and special revelation. Not only is God's voice echoed through the created heavens and is discernible on earth, but it is also the specific voice of the prophets and the words of Jesus.

The thought expressed here is devotionally rich. Challenge your people to listen for God. In fact, remind them that "at times" and "in various ways" His voice may still be heard. God calls loudly. Dramatically. Forcefully. Only the intentionally deaf will miss His voice. And most dramatic is Jesus' call. His voice in these last days is the most arresting of all,

A PARTICIPATORY WORK

This is one of the richest passages in the New Testament on Christology (the study of Christ). The writer began by characterizing the cooperative work of Jesus in conjunction with the Father. The Father has appointed the Son as Heir of all things and through whom the universe was created. It is a statement that focuses on the cooperative and eternal work of the Father and the Son.

It will be helpful to remind people that Jesus' identity is under attack today. Who is He? What is His relationship with the Father? But the writer was clear: Jesus is eternally one with the Father. He is Head of all and Creator of all, His full deity is unquestionable.

Count on it: Someone close at hand will agree with you up to the point where you declare that Jesus is indeed God come in the flesh. They will agree that He is a good man, a

The message of Hebrews is wonderfully reassuring-Jesus is always better. He is the incomparable Christ.

gifted teacher, and even the Son of God, But "God in flesh"? That will offend their intellect. But the writer of Hebrews was insistent that He is,

A DEFINING IDENTITY

Here the relationship is expressed more precisely: Jesus is the effulgence and reflection of God-the very impression, reproduction, and representation of the Father, But more, He is a full participant in the essence, actual being, and reality of God. Could it be expressed more clearly? I doubt it. Jesus is God.

The disclosure of God in Christ is the great miracle of all time. That God himself should be clothed in flesh and dwell with men, That the One who was born of woman should be the very impression and reproduction of God and share with Him the very same essence and being. No truth could be greater.

There is another dimension to this defined identity. The writer ascribed to Jesus the ministry of perpetuity and continuity-"sustaining all things by his powerful word." That is, the continued existence of all that is rests on

the Word (*rhema*) of Jesus Christ. Rightly, the writer calls this Word powerful. Here is the energy that generates gravity, holds molecular structures in place, assures the repetition of patterns and forms, and is the sustaining power of all life and existence.

Rightly, the writer used the word *rhema* rather than the more common word *logos*. While some may make too much of the distinction, for the two words are used interchangeably, it is also apparent from the context of Scripture that *rhema* reflects a more concentrated focus on the faith-producing Word of God (Romans 10:8). You will be on safe ground if you reflect this heightened focus but stop short of building a theology of faith upon it.

A SHARED EXALTATION

Jesus has provided purification for sins-good news for every sinner. All of us. Just to know again that Jesus has provided a cure for sin. Friends will be listening to you who desperately need to hear this life-giving word. Help them to experience the cleansing work of Jesus in their lives. There could be no greater joy than for them to leave the service feeling absolutely clean inside. This life-changing message is the preacher's joy. Proclaim it with power, And believe for great results.

Now to the final declaration: "He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven," But wait. Does this suggest repose? Has Christ retired to heaven? Is there a sigh of relief in these words? No! Jesus is indeed seated with the Father, but in that exalted position He carries on His ministry of intercession and will soon rise to return for His bride, the Church.

People will move quickly to the altar in response to your faithful proclamation of these incredibly wonderful truths.

He is the incomparable Christ. [I

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AUTHOR'S NOTE: *If you are looking for a series of messages that will add substance and depth to your preaching ministry, you may wish to consider the above Sermon Builder outline and commentary that begins a series on the Book of Hebrews. While each will only come to you quarterly, a simple file folder could collect them until you are ready to begin the series.*



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN TWO LOCAL PASTORS FISH IN THE SAME AREA.

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each, Able To Teach

of the qualifications laid down in the Pastoral Epistles for the minister of the gospel, all but one pertain to character traits. The one skill that is required of the pastor is being "able to teach" (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:24). The Greek term, *didaktikos*, meaning "able to teach," occurs only in these two verses in the entire New Testament and refers to the ability of the preacher to hand on (or pass on) biblical doctrine to the congregation. The term has nothing whatsoever to do with delivery style, which is a distinction often made in contemporary church life.

Specifically, preaching is often said to be characterized by a more demonstrative and captivating oratorical style, whereas teaching is said to be characterized by a more subdued style suited to a classroom lecture. This distinction is not made in the New Testament, where good preaching is, at the same time, good teaching. Preaching that is oratorically captivating should pass on sound, biblical doctrine. The ability to communicate biblical doctrine in sermons and other settings is the measure of whether the preacher is qualified.

This requirement was necessary when Paul wrote the Pastoral Epistles because there were competing interests for leadership in the church. False teachers had infiltrated and were attempting to lead the church astray, thus threatening both the body life within the church and the mission of the church relative to the world. This threat had to be overcome, and the remedy was for the pastor to pass on biblical doctrine to his flock.

Paul indicated that this threat will reach crisis proportions in the last days when many in the church will reject sound doctrine and turn to teachers who tell them what their itching ears want to hear rather than preaching biblical truth (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

Usage of the verb for "teaching," *didasko*, in the New Testament will determine our under-

standing of this crucial and required ability. The usage of a term in classical Greek often has no direct bearing on its usage in the New Testament. Assuming that classical usage is equivalent to or even related to New Testament usage has often led to the error commonly called the "etymological fallacy." Solely for the sake of understanding the historical development of the word, however, it is interesting to note that its usage in the New Testament is not wholly different from its classical usage. In the classical period the core of meaning within the range of usages for *didasko* related to the work of the teacher to develop a pupil's knowledge and abilities.*

In the Septuagint, *didasko* is used to translate forms of *lmd* and the hiph, forms *ofyada* and *yarah* (all various words for *teach*). In Hebrew usage (Old Testament, Qumranic, and rabbinic) these terms are related to the interpretation of Scripture and its application to life, especially the Law's instruction on how to live. This is reflected also in the Septuagint's usage of *didasko*. For example, the Septuagint never uses *didasko* for prophetic preaching, probably because of its close association with legal instruction.

In the New Testament *didasko* is used as a more comprehensive term for Jesus' preaching (cf., e.g., Matthew 9:35; Mark 10:1; Luke 4:15). It is no longer restricted to legal discourse but to the broader content of Christian proclamation, which is centered on "Christ and Him crucified." This same broader sense is seen in the teaching of the apostles, so that Luke lists the apostolic teaching first in his description of the worship of the Early Church (Acts 2:42). This absolute truth of revelation serves as the discriminant in determining whether someone's ministry is legitimate (cf., 2 Corinthians 11:4-6, 13-15; 1 John 2:21; 4:1).

When Paul used the term to refer to the function of teaching within the church, as opposed

BY DOUGLAS A. OSS

Preaching that is oratorically captivating should pass on sound, biblical doctrine.

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to within Judaism (cf., Romans 2:21; Galatians 1:12; Titus 1:11), he had in view the passing on of the doctrines of the Christian faith (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 4:17; Ephesians 4:21; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2; 2 Timothy 2:2). This usage serves as the background for the primary skill required of the pastor.

Teaching the objective, propositional content of God's Word is necessary for the health and continued allegiance of the church to our Lord Jesus Christ. The inerrant, infallible Word of God serves as our only rule of faith and practice.

Any supplanter will only lead the church astray. Thus the ability to teach biblical doctrine, once for all deposited in the church as the Holy Scriptures, is required of every minister of the gospel. ¹¹¹

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**K. Wegenast, "Teach," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, vol. 3, Colin Brown, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978) 760.*



"Next year let's buy two carnations for the oldest mother."

996 STEVE PHELPS

The Ground and Goal of Biblical Preaching

Through his examination of mainline American Protestant churches over 20 years ago, James Smart announced a startling conclusion:

"The voice of the Scriptures is falling silent in the preaching and teaching of the church and in the consciousness of Christian people, a silence that is perceptible even among those who are most insistent upon their devotion to the Scriptures."¹

Lest he be misunderstood, it was not that the Bible was being ignored, for it was still regularly present in sermons and curricula; indeed, it was still being widely purchased and read privately by individuals in their devotions. What Smart lamented was the growing silence of the message of the Bible, not merely in sermons and Sunday school lessons but as the basis of how Christians and denominational leaders think of themselves, their task, and their relation to the people of God in the New Testament.

"The seriousness of the situation is that the fading of the Scriptures from the consciousness of the church weakens and then ruptures the continuity of the church today with the church in which it had its origin, so that it no longer remembers the word that called it into being or the purpose that alone justifies its existence."²

Pentecostals cannot afford to see themselves as immune to Smart's assessment: Churches are increasingly ignorant about the main message of the Bible and thus are in danger of distorting and forsaking their God-given identity and purpose. This article proposes to address the growing silence of the Bible in Pentecostal pulpits by calling for a return to genuinely biblical ministry of the Word based on the following definition: Biblical preaching means using the Bible to communicate the message of the Bible. Because Pentecostal preachers have both access and familiarity with textbooks on

hermeneutics and homiletics, this discussion will limit itself to considering the ground and goal of biblical preaching as they bear on the message of the Bible.

THE GROUND OF BIBLICAL PREACHING

Proper use of the Bible in preaching depends on properly understanding the nature of the text itself. This foundation in no way guarantees that every sermon built on BY ROBERT C. STALLMAN it will be sound, but clarity on this matter is, nevertheless, of strategic importance. The following presuppositions are presented as foundational commitments which guide the process of reading, understanding, and communicating Scripture.

1. THE BIBLE IS AN HISTORICAL BOOK.

Geerhardus Vos pioneered what is commonly called the redemptive-historical approach to biblical interpretation and built his exposition of biblical theology on one main presupposition focused on the nature of Scripture: "The Bible is not a dogmatic handbook but an historical book full of dramatic interest."³ By this statement he meant the Bible is not a textbook of systematic theology neatly arranged by logical categories but that it is a divinely inspired interpretation of redemption. Just as God's accomplishment of redemption unfolded organically through successive historical epochs, so the Bible progresses in its account of redemption to the focal point of Jesus Christ who came "when the time had fully come" (Galatians 4:4*).

To assert that the Bible is not a textbook of systematic theology may seem obvious, but Vos was rightly responding to an abuse of Scripture common in the classroom and pulpit alike. Preachers and teachers had adopted a topical approach to handling God's Word,

Churches are increasingly ignorant about the main message of the Bible and thus are in danger of distorting and forsaking their God-given identity and purpose on the earth.

Preaching a whole passage together with its redemptive-historical connections anchors the preacher within the stream of biblical history.

sifting through its pages for "timeless truths" or spiritual principles that were dislodged from their historical settings and reorganized for presentation and easy consumption. The product was often lifeless; the process necessarily truncated and frequently distorted the overall message of the Bible.

Respecting the historical nature of revelation does not place the consideration of biblical topics off-limits for preachers, but it does imply they should pay due attention to the narratives of the Old and New Testaments and demonstrate how God's dealings with His people have progressed through the centuries to find their zenith in the work of Christ, who stands at the center of redemptive history.

For example, the nature of God's presence with His people in the Old Testament is powerfully evident in the architecture and furnishings of the tabernacle and later the Solomonic temple. But Jesus, who "dwelt among us,"⁴ pointed to the end of the temple in favor of His own resurrected body, which was the "temple" of God to be built in a mere 3 days (John 2:19-21),

Then on the basis of Jesus having given the Holy Spirit, Paul was able to speak of the physical body of each Christian as a temple (1 Corinthians 6:19) as well as the corporate body of believers as "God's temple" (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17). Peter expressed this same truth by telling his readers they were "living stones, [who] are being built into a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5). This motif culminates in the New Jerusalem with John hearing a loud voice from the throne of God saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them" (Revelation 21:3),

Thus the presence of God in the Old Testament anticipated the work of Christ, and His presence in the New not only rests on the incarnation of Christ but looks forward to His central presence in the New Jerusalem as the Lamb of God who displaces the need for a temple altogether (Revelation 21:22).

2. THE BIBLE IS A DIVINE BOOK.

Not only does the Bible speak of divine matters rooted in history, it has a divine origin: God is a speaking God. At His Word the cosmos came into existence (Genesis 1). He spoke "mouth to mouth" with Moses (Numbers

12:8, NASB). His Word filled the mouths of the prophets and their heads with visions and dreams. He opened the eyes and ears of Solomon and the sages after him to perceive His wisdom in creation (Proverbs 2:6),

The writer of Hebrews considers these modes of revelation and places Christ at the apex, "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1, 2). Paul affirmed the divine origin of the Bible when he wrote, "All Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The translators of the King James Version rendered the adjective *theopneustos* as "given by inspiration of God." While the English word *inspire* suggests that God influenced the human writer, Paul's use of *theopneustos* is clearly predicated to Scripture itself; the emphasis is on the product, not the process.

B.B. Warfield has convincingly argued that *theopneustos* has nothing to do with God breathing *into* anyone but, rather, indicates that Scripture was breathed *out* by God.⁶ The doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture is foundational for the doctrine of infallibility, which asserts that, like God, the Bible is completely true and worthy of full trust.

The usefulness of this presupposition lies in the value placed on the *text* of the Bible as over against the words of the preacher who ought to serve the interest of the text, not supplant it with a medley of personal illustrations and inspirational observations aimed merely at the level of religious instruction,

3. THE BIBLE IS A HUMAN BOOK.

The Bible took form over a period exceeding a thousand years through the instrumentality of many human writers, a fact which does not compromise the divine origin of the Scriptures or their unity. It does, however, provide cultural and linguistic diversity to the revelation which comes to us in a variety of literary forms: story, law, instruction, song, proverb, prophecy, parable, epistle, and so on. Interpreters ought, therefore, to respect the individuality of biblical authors and resist the temptation to flatten their testimonies.

Pentecostals are particularly interested in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, especially as

articulated by Luke, the theologian who wrote history. The theological nature of Luke's writing is not the issue; he clearly promoted a theology of the Spirit which emphasized worship and service. But given that Paul presented the Spirit as the Agent of regeneration and sanctification, the issue of theological compatibility comes to the fore,

Stronstad has convincingly demonstrated Luke's theological intentions regarding the work of the Spirit yet has managed to steer clear of driving a wedge between Luke and Paul, which would have compromised biblical authority. He wrote, "The literature of the New Testament reveals three primary dimensions of the activity of the Holy Spirit: (1) salvation, (2) sanctification, and (3) service. These dimensions are interdependent and complementary."⁷

4. THE BIBLE IS A SINGLE BOOK.

Human diversity arising from divine origin supports the conclusion that the Bible is a single book, hence the canon. The Bible is rightly called the "Word of God," not the "words of God," because it conveys a unified message of redemption. Christ himself commissioned His apostles to teach all nations the message of salvation and promised His presence as they went (Matthew 28: 19,20). The church which grew on their foundation recognized their writings alongside the Old Testament as having come from God. Those who still maintain that the Church wrote the Bible and, therefore, retains authority over it are reflecting thought more characteristic of Roman Catholicism than conservative protestantism.⁸

Indeed, Ridderbos has written: "By its acceptance of a fixed, closed collection of writings as an exclusive canon, the church has acted entirely in keeping with the structure and intention of the divine plan of redemption which appeared in Christ. The Scripture which as canon is authoritative for the church, in this sense, is therefore not to be regarded as simply being a posthumous document of revelation. It belongs, rather, to that very process of revelation which occurred in the fullness of time."⁹

John Stott affirmed the correct relationship of the Church and canon: "The Church is the creation of God by His Word. Moreover, God's

new creation (the Church) is as dependent upon His Word as His old creation (the universe). Not only has He brought it into being by His Word, but He maintains it and sustains it, directs and sanctifies it, reforms and renews it through the same Word. The Word of God is the scepter by which Christ rules the Church and the food with which He nourishes it."¹⁰

The unity of the canon must be reasserted in the light of its human diversity. As one book, the Bible has one story of redemption and one unified theology, James Dunn and those who follow his lead prefer to speak in terms of multiple theologies in the New Testament, theologies which are not merely different perspectives on the same essential truth of Christ but competing theologies which arose from Jewish, Hellenistic, and apocalyptic circles.¹¹

These diverse expressions of Christianity supposedly crystallized into a set pattern in response to a fading hope in Jesus' imminent return. Thus as Christians learned to live with their disappointment, they accepted a more institutionalized form of religion which demanded cooperation and eventually a unified expression of their faith; hence early Catholicism,

Although Dunn affirms the presence of a consistent, unifying strand of tradition throughout the New Testament which affirms that Jesus is the Christ, the diversity he posits is so extreme as to cross over into doctrinal disagreement, prompting his conclusion that "there was no single normative form of Christianity in the first century."¹² This view inevitably leads to affirming a "canon within the canon" and denies the divine origin of the specific contents of the New Testament.

5. CONCLUSION: THE CASE FOR EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

These presuppositions support the author's conviction that expository preaching best reflects the nature of the Bible. Preaching a whole passage together with its redemptive-historical connections anchors the preacher within the stream of biblical history which points to Christ.¹³ Sermons born out of exegetical study and careful reflection of the text naturally tend to communicate the message of the Bible. Topical sermons addressed to current issues may legitimately meet a congregation's

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specific need, but in the long run Christians mature best on a diet of expository preaching which must rise above the level of running commentary and demonstrate the practical relevance of God's revelation to His people today.¹⁴

THE GOAL OF BIBLICAL PREACHING

Many pulpits bear a plaque or inscription expressing the essence of the ministry or some other encouragement such as "Preach the Word" (2 Timothy 4:2). One pulpit bore an amusing message to the preacher. It was a simple but searching question: "What are you trying to do to these people?" The road from text to sermon lies in the region of hermeneutics, and, therefore, a consideration of the goal of interpretation may be of some help in answering that incisive question.

Biblical hermeneutics is a textual matter, and classic studies on the subject commonly reflect the same goal: to understand the meaning of the *text*. To be sure, modern hermeneutics has intensely scrutinized the role of the interpreter in the process of interpretation and has placed the locus of meaning variously in the author's intention, the *text* as an autonomous entity, and the reader or community of readers who bring their own meaning to an otherwise *meaningless* text. Nevertheless, Kaiser was right when he stated that "traditionally...exegesis and hermeneutics focused on the text itself in an effort to determine what the text said and meant in its own original objective."¹⁵

This approach is indebted to the work of Ernesti (1701-81) who was a champion of grammatico-historical exegesis. Yet for all his helpfulness in understanding the meaning of the text, Ernesti's conception of the goal of the hermeneutical enterprise (strictly formulated) was shortsighted. He was typical of interpreters who do not give serious methodological consideration to the spiritual dimension of

biblical interpretation; indeed, he claimed that prayer and an attitude of devotion to God were utterly useless in the work of discovering the truth of the Bible.¹⁶

A better conception of the goal of hermeneutics concerns coming to know *God* who speaks in the Bible. The implication for homiletics is that the preacher who desires to be biblical must first seek to know God through the Bible and then set this goal for preaching: To make God known, both to the unbeliever in evangelism and the believer in edification and equipping for ministry. Victor Furnish recognized the key element:

"Great preaching is not due to great preachers but to the greatness of the Word that is preached, to God's Word speaking directly and powerfully to the question about life."

-Victor Paul Furnish

"Great preaching is not due to great preachers but to the greatness of the Word that is preached, to God's Word speaking directly and powerfully to the question about life. The goal of preaching is not primarily to inform or to inspire or to scold or to promote programs and activities, The preached word is basically a *summons*: It is God addressing and calling men to life in Him,"¹⁷

Biblical preachers, then, read the Scriptures with humility as they aspire to be transformed by knowing God better so as to make Him known. This statement of the goal of preaching is

at once an aim and an indictment of lesser goals, which include extracting spiritual laws or impersonal principles from the text; such activity is better classified as moralizing. For example, Edmund Clowney observed that if all a preacher wishes to do is inspire Christians to be courageous before life's challenges, he does not have to use the story of David's confrontation of Goliath; all he needs is the fairy tale "Jack and the Beanstalk."¹⁸ But if the preacher uses this story of David to make God known, he will mention that Goliath's challenge to Saul's army was actually an attack aimed at Yahweh himself and that David acted as a royal figure, responding with divine ability to restore dignity to the theocracy as a witness to the reality of God's presence and power among His people, In so doing he typified Christ, the

ultimate King of Israel whose triumph at Calvary made a spectacle of Satan and all his forces.

Christians, then, ought to realize that the battle against sin and evil is not won by human strength or ingenuity but only by those who "come in the name of the Lord" (1 Samuel 17:45). This theme of biblical theology provides a rich historical context for interpreting and applying Paul's instructions in Ephesians 6 about putting on the full armor of God. Preaching the Bible this way is faithful to the text in that it first reveals the glory of God in Jesus. On that basis it also instructs believers about their identity in Christ and the nature of their ministry, particularly in defense of the gospel before a hostile and demonic world system,

To succeed in moving beyond textual exposition in the pulpit to actually making God known, one must first move beyond merely reading the Bible to actually listening to God in the text. The point is basic yet remains a challenge. In his excellent exposition of the pastor's calling, Eugene Peterson has recognized that pastors who spend long hours reading and studying the Bible are especially prone to making the false assumption that reading Scripture is the same as listening to God; it is not.

"Listening and reading are not the same thing. They involve different senses. In listening we use our ears; in reading we use our eyes. In listening, another initiates the process; when I read I initiate the process. In reading I open the book and attend to the words. I can read by myself; I cannot listen by myself. In listening the speaker is in charge; in reading the reader is in charge."¹⁹

In Scripture we not only hear God speaking but speaking as One in charge. As the Parable of the Sower shows, however, the Word of God falls sometimes on ears which do not understand it, sometimes on ears which receive the message but fail to live by it when persecution comes, sometimes on ears deafened with the sound of money and the concerns of living, but also sometimes on ears which both hear and understand it, resulting in a changed and productive life for the Kingdom (Matthew 13:19-23). Listening to God in the Bible always involves reading, so it is appropriate for preachers to pray with the Psalmist, "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in

your law" (Psalm 119:18), and also heed Jesus' words, "He who has ears, let him hear."²⁰

CONCLUSION

For preaching to be truly biblical, preachers must advance beyond merely employing parts of the Bible to make a point to focus on the message of a biblical text in its canonical context. Biblical preaching is thus grounded in the nature of the Bible itself as a message from God, the Creator and Redeemer, who entrusts His servants with the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20),

Additionally, biblical preaching aims past explaining the historical meaning of a passage to bringing this understanding to bear on the matter of knowing God through evangelism and discipleship which fosters worship to God, conformity to Christ, and Spirit-empowered ministry. When preachers honor the Scriptures as a unified divine message by focusing on the redemptive work and will of Christ, the Church may yet again year God's voice with renewed clarity and conviction. [I

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

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ENDNOTES:

¹James D. Smart, *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church: A Study in Hermeneutics* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 15-16.

²Smart, 24.

³Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 26.

⁴The expression is actually tabernacled (John 1:4).

⁵This is Peter's point (2 Peter 1:21).

⁶B.B. Warfield, "The Biblical Idea of Inspiration" in *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, ed. Samuel G. Craig (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1948), 133. Construing theopneustos this way accords with other references to the breath of God in Scripture which usually have to do with His almighty and creative power.

⁷Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1984), 83.

⁸John R.W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 109.

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W.H. Ridderbos, *The Authority of the New Testament Scriptures*, *International Library of Philosophy and Theology, Biblical and Theological Studies Series*, ed. J. Marcellus Kik, translated by H. De Jongste (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1963), 33. Modern challenges to this understanding of canon come through Brevard Childs, James Sanders, and Stanley Fish who assert the authority of the church (or any interpretive community) over against the authority of the Bible (or text under consideration).

10 Stott, 109.

11 James D.G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977).

12 Dunn, 373.

13 Consider the summary of Paul's redemptive-historical message delivered at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 14:16-49).

14 The following texts are especially directed to the promotion of responsible expository preaching: Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988); Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for*

Preaching and Teaching (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981); and John R.W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982).

15 Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 44.

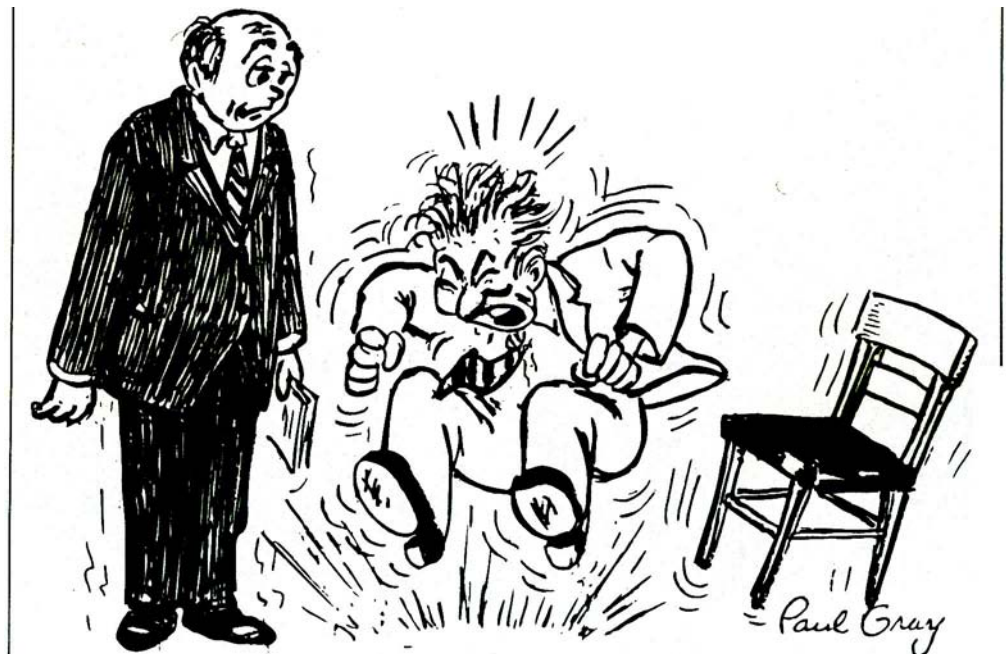
16 J.A. Ernesti, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation* (Edinburgh, 1882), 5 referred to by Bruce K. Waltke, "Hermeneutics and the Spiritual Life," *Crux* 23/1 (March 1987), 5.

17 Victor Paul Furnish, "Prophets, Apostles, and Preachers: A Study of the Biblical Concept of Preaching," *Interpretation* 17 (1963) 60.

18 Edmund P. Clowney, *Preaching and Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 82. He calls the hairy tale 'Jack the Giant Killer.'

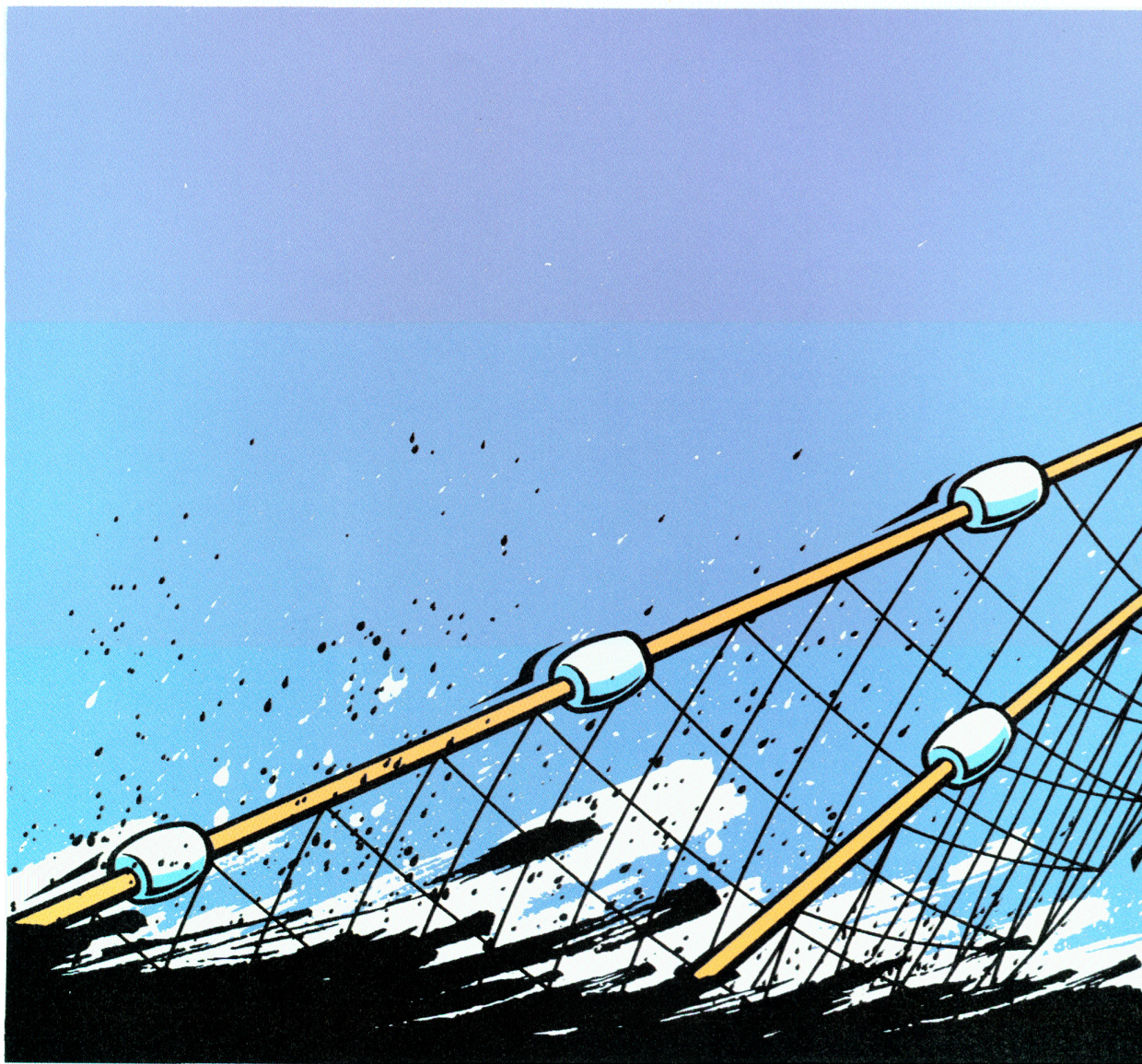
19 Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 61-62.

20 Matthew 13:9; cf. Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22. Also Revelation 1:3, "Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."



"I'm not too immature to be a deacon...I'm not! I'm not! I'm not!"

**When
the Word
has been
preached,
the
Holy Spirit
has
illuminated
truth and
convinced
hearers.
The
preacher
must
pull in
the net.**



THE ALTAR INVITATION.

BY H. MAURICE LEDNICKY

"PULLING IN THE NET" is an expression commonly used among Pentecostal preachers, and it refers to the altar invitation or public response to a sermon. It originated in Scripture after some fishermen had a miraculous catch of fish in their nets, and Jesus called them to become "fishers of men." (Any good fisherman knows you have not caught a fish until it is in the boat.)

This is of utmost importance. At the precise moment the Holy Spirit has illuminated the

Word through preaching, the opportunity to call for action is at its highest level. What happens here often determines the future growth of the planted seed. Amazingly, the same message strikes a responsive chord in a host of individuals who have distinctive personalities and a broad range of circumstances. Surely, this is the supernatural work of the Spirit.

During 25 years of ministry travels, I have asked many pastors how often they give an altar invitation. In churches that are experi-



ILLUSTRATION: THE ART SOURCE

PULLING IN THE NET

encing continuous revival and seeing new converts on a regular basis, without exception the answer is, "In every service." People are responding to the preaching of God's Word when given an opportunity to do so.

Some pastors/preachers may not extend invitations for fear no one will respond. Such concerns should be laid aside. Better to have given opportunity with no response than to bypass even one small child whose heart has been made tender by the Spirit and is

ready to respond.

The preacher should prayerfully plan the invitation and consider it an integral part of the message. This in no way places restrictions on the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit as the minister remains sensitive to the Spirit's guidance. If there are unavoidable time restraints (e.g., two or more Sunday morning services), the length of time allocated for the sermon should be sufficient to include an appropriate response from the congregation.

**Do not
shortchange
the altar invitation.
Modify other
things.**

The preaching of God's Word and its personal application by the Spirit should be the highest priority of every worship service.

Also, there should be frequent instruction (preaching/teaching) on the priority of meeting God at the altar. This not only builds faith and confidence in the power of God but also serves as a reminder of our utter dependence upon Him in every situation of life.

Not all desired responses are identical—they could be categorized as *immediate* and *long-term*. Of course, all the Holy Spirit's work is life-changing and ultimately has a *long-term* effect on the believer. However, *immediate* implies a public response for salvation, divine healing, baptism in the Holy Spirit, or other needs for which a work of divine grace could occur while at the altar. Those commitments requiring additional and/or continuous action (e.g., reconciliation, restoration of relationships, disciplined prayer, being a witness for Christ) could fit into the description of *long-term*.

BE SPIRITUALLY PREPARED.

Public presentation is validated by private preparation. Have we repeated the necessity of spiritual preparation so often that we only give brief lip service to it before passing to other concerns? This is the foundational prerequisite for effective ministry at any level. In his classic book, *Power Through Prayer*, E.M. Bounds says: "The preachers who gain mighty results for God are the men who have prevailed in their pleadings with God ere venturing to plead with men. The preachers who are the mightiest in their closets with God are the mightiest in their pulpits with men."

BE PASSIONATE IN THE APPEAL.

Attorneys, politicians, and advocates of a cause are far more effective if they are passionate in their presentations. Mankind's lostness is no ho-hum, take-it-or-leave-it matter. Eternal destinies rest on the decision—a heaven or hell choice. If the gospel is true—and it clearly is—the message of redemption, hope, deliverance, healing, restoration, and countless other present and future promises need no apology. Be convinced. Then and only then can you convince others.

DO NOT BE DISTRACTED.

Time, announcements, and other planned activities (as valid as they may be) often impinge on the altar invitation. To rush through an invitation and dismiss the congregation at the same time sends a loud signal to those who are moved by the Holy Spirit to move to the altar. People will interpret that the invitation is not significant.

Do not shortchange the altar invitation. Modify other things. Some of the worship time can become effective ministry around the altar following the message and invitation. The preaching of God's Word and its personal application by

the Spirit should be the highest priority of every worship service. An immediate time of waiting on God allows that to happen as no other future moment affords.

BE SPECIFIC.

If you preach an evangelistic message, target your invitation to sinners. The same is true of the baptism in the Holy Spirit or divine healing. But having a specific appeal should also be true when preaching about marriage or family relationships, tithing, a call to ministry or missions, or unity in the local congregation.

I prefer to ask people to come forward for prayer. Certainly there is no intention to embarrass anyone but rather a public confession of need. Until a person is willing to declare his inability to rectify his depraved nature outside of divine intervention, it is quite unlikely that he will ever experience spiritual deliverance and victory.

USE A VARIETY OF METHODS.

As Pentecostals we pride ourselves on our informality, but even what could be classified as a nonliturgical approach can become very formal. "Bow your heads, close your eyes, raise your hands, stand, come forward" must not be our only approach to prayer times. It is valid, but other methods are also effective. Allow the Holy Spirit to use you creatively. Again, plan the invitation as part of the message. Pray earnestly about it. Think it through. The Spirit can surely guide your heart in advance.

HAVE TRAINED, PREPARED ALTAR WORKERS.

It is disheartening to find that many churches across the nation do not have trained altar workers. Often I have to request that someone come and pray with those who have responded to the altar call. The eternal benefits of having spiritually sensitive and scripturally prepared workers can be dramatic. Individual, personal guidance to the seeker will provide answers to questions and lead to an understanding of truth that may not have been previously comprehended.

USE SPIRITUALLY ALERT MUSICIANS.

Sociologists have long since concluded that the philosophy of a culture is most clearly expressed through its music. For believers the inner spirit is expressed through spiritual songs and hymns. The pattern is articulated repeatedly in Scripture. Music was an integral part of worship and praise.

Anointed musicians who are ministering in harmony with the Spirit can greatly enhance the altar service. Prepare them through united prayer. Advise them of the theme of the message. In some situations plan specific songs or choruses so

there are no breaks in the music while they frantically search for an appropriate song. Consider the musicians an extension of the message.

FOLLOW THE SPIRIT'S LEADING.

This is closely akin to being spiritually prepared. Being personally on course with the Spirit is no accident. In my experience, which is most often to a congregation about whom I know nothing, I have found my mind being directed to address specific issues which are beyond the scope of any prior information. This has a powerful impact on both believers and nonbelievers. Faith is increased.

Learn to hear the Spirit's voice and follow it reverently and humbly,

PERSONALLY MINISTER TO THOSE WHO RESPOND.

This does not diminish the ministry of the other altar workers. Nor does it indicate a performer/audience concept of leadership. Rather, it expresses faith emanating from a caring, compassionate heart. Greeting people as they leave the sanctuary is valuable; however, if a choice must be made, give precedence to ministry to the hurting around the altar.

GIVE OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY.

The old-fashioned testimony service has fallen on hard times—in some situations, perhaps, justifiably so. Again, by the Spirit's anointing, be creative. Ask certain people to testify (based on personal knowledge or information from an altar worker) in advance. Stand with the person. Hold the microphone. Pose questions to keep the speaker on the subject. What an encouragement to hear how God has intervened in human circumstances!

The altar invitation is not an afterthought or add-on to the conclusion of a service. When the Word has been preached, the Holy Spirit has illuminated truth and convinced hearers. The preacher must pull in the net. 111



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grace

sanctification

stewardship

baptism

love

?

faith



THE CHALLENGE

My challenge as a pastor was preaching three times a week with the expectation that the congregation would remember the lessons and put them into practice. It was unrealistic. I needed to reduce the amount of material we covered each year.

Since the first law of learning is repetition, I chose to focus on one theme a month for the Sunday sermons. With all the best-laid plans, most people only remember three or four sermons a year. Perhaps we could learn 12 things a year as a congregation. My plan was to spend an entire month teaching on some relevant topic,

The challenge of thematic preaching is to make sure it is not just a compilation of stories, quotes, etc. Thematic preaching should be as biblically based as any other type of preaching. It needs the same amount of study. Careful exegesis is mandatory to maintain the integrity of consistent biblical preaching.

A SUGGESTED PLAN

Here is a suggested way to think through the calendar year for preaching.

January is a great month to teach on goals or stewardship of time, talent, and treasure,

Since February includes Valentine's Day it is the ideal month to speak about marriage and family.

The 40 days before Easter are called Lent on the church calendar. Rather than avoiding these liturgical customs or criticizing them, why not use Lent as an opportunity to teach on sanctification? I found that people from other traditions appreciated understanding the real meaning of giving up something if it will help one to become more like Christ.

From Easter to Pentecost is perfect for teaching on life in the Spirit. One can teach on the fruits and gifts of the Spirit as well as the power for witnessing that comes with the baptism in the Spirit.

Mother's Day and Father's Day are special opportunities to touch families with the themes of love and responsibility.

For July, use the theme of freedom with a special emphasis on the Sunday nearest July 4.

A September series, "Managing Life," was popular with my congregation. The four patriarchs of Genesis provided perfect material for this series. Abraham managed his life by faith; Isaac by love; Jacob by grace; and Joseph by a dream.

The last Sunday in October is Reformation Sunday. What a great opportunity to preach on justification by faith and to set the day in its historical context! It enhances the service to sing "Mighty Fortress Is Our God," noting the verse that declares, "The Spirit and the gifts are ours."

Veterans Day and Memorial Day are opportunities to touch the military people of the community. Themes of authority and honor bring a warm response.

Thanksgiving rivals any holiday of the year. Remind the congregation of the biblical admonition to give thanks and to set the historical context of this national holiday.

Advent (the four Sundays before Christmas) can be a prime time to connect with people in the congregation who have liturgical backgrounds and to expand the understanding of those who are unfamiliar with the church calendar. It also provides opportunity to invite friends to church and to preach the four cardinal doctrines of the Assemblies of God: Jesus is our Savior, Jesus baptizes us in the Holy Spirit, Jesus is our Healer, and Jesus is our coming King. Isaiah 9:6 is made for Advent: "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace."

These suggestions are intended to be impressionistic rather than exhaustive.

Preaching in a series with attention to special days creates a pattern for learning and living.

FAVORITE QUOTES ABOUT PREACHING

"Most people think once or twice in a lifetime. I've made a reputation of thinking once or twice a month."

—H. G. Wells

"Preach to the suffering and you will never lack a congregation. There's a broken heart in every pew."

—Joseph Parker

"When I begin my sermons, I dare the person not to listen to me. Not that I am that great—it's just that I've got something to say that is too important to ignore."

—Charles Swindoll

CONCLUSION

I like to ask myself some questions as I prepare a sermon:

1. Would I want someone to talk to me this way?
2. If I weren't the pastor, would this sermon interest me?
3. If I lived near this church, would I come to hear a sermon like this?
4. Will this be easy to remember?
5. What difference will this make in the listener's life?

Ministers know the power of a deadline. Every time you turn around, it's Sunday. Wasn't it just yesterday you last preached? Now another sermon preparation stares you in the face.

As you prepare for Sunday with thoughts about the entire calendar year, may the words of Jeremiah 5:14 live in you: "I will make my words in your mouth a fire." [I

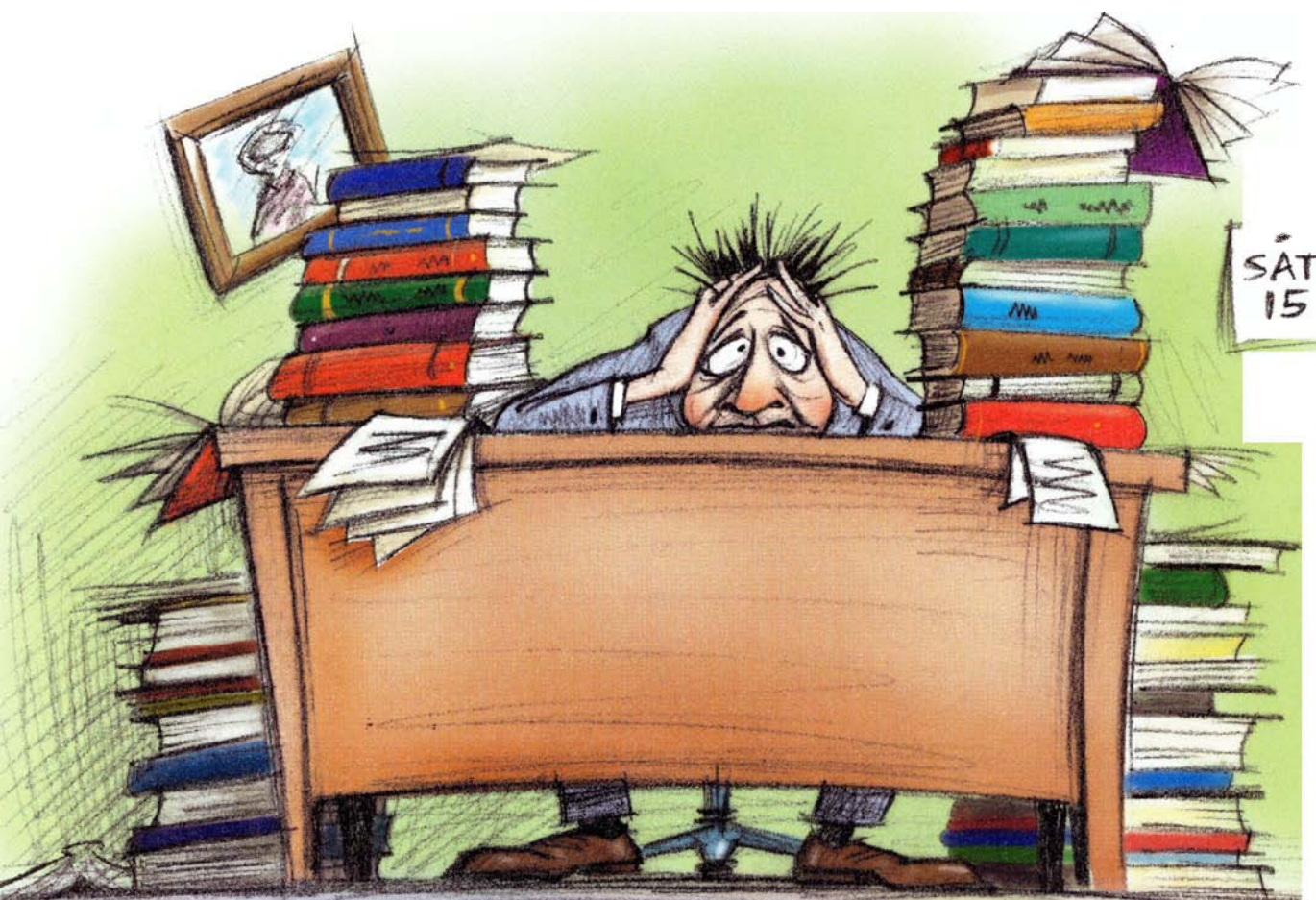


**Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*

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G U A R D N G A G A I N S T T H E

SATURDAY NIGHT SCRAMBLE



THE PREACHER—SHARPENED AND EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT—WILL ALWAYS BE ONE OF GOD'S FINEST TOOLS.

BY WARREN D. BULLOCK

EVERY MINISTER KNOWS about the Saturday night scramble. Tomorrow's Sunday, and you're not prepared to preach. The spiritual cupboard is bare. No ideas. Little creativity. Even less inspiration. No message.

Your library is crammed with lexicons, commentaries, and source books. Bible study software is as near as your computer, but on Saturday night you are convinced there is not a sermon to be found in any of these tools. You are probably right. Even the best tools rarely help in the tardy formation of a word from the Lord.

Obviously the preacher must discover and develop other tools, which will be employed long before Saturday night. Such tools do not solve the problem of procrastination, but when used on an ongoing basis they will guard against

scrambling for sermons and provide a strong foundation for building the preaching calendar.

PREPARATION BY INDUCTION

Inductive Bible study is time-consuming, hard work. If you have waited until Saturday night to do it, you are in trouble. But if you have consistently studied the biblical text, examined the context, reviewed its historical and cultural setting, outlined the thought structure, and completed key word studies, you have begun to form the bases for many messages.

The topical sermon is often easier to construct than the expository message. It does not offer the constraints of keeping to the text of Scripture but allows development of an idea in a form that is less limiting than adherence to what the text

itself suggests. The core idea should be biblical and supported by a variety of key verses of Scripture. Certainly, preachers must be more creative in presentation since they do not have the benefit of using the creativity of Scripture verse by verse.

However, continued reliance on topical preaching may result in a ministry that has become biblically barren. It does not "feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28), nor is it a well-balanced diet that would cause the flock to become spiritually healthy. Because it lacks continuity, the preacher must start new each week, which in turn contributes to the Saturday night scramble.

Inductive Bible study, on the other hand, allows the text to speak for itself. Preachers dare not impose their presuppositions on the Scriptures but must submit to the clear meaning of the text. They do not seek to use Scripture to prove their own ideas or pet theories but allow the Word to deliver its own message. Sermons taken directly from the text are filled with nourishing spiritual food that brings satisfaction to the hungry hearer.

Adherence to the text allows the minister to deal with subject matter which could be offensive if it were addressed topically. For instance, a message from 1 Corinthians 7:3,4 on the topic of "rendering due benevolence" may be so pointed as to be inappropriate but could be treated with dignity and reverence in the wider, general context of this passage on marital fidelity.

The minister who uses the inductive method of Bible study will uncover a limitless supply of spiritual food for the congregation. In the process the weekly preparation for Sunday ministry becomes less stressful and more joyful.

PRESENTATION WITH IMAGINATION

Translating the results of our study into interesting and relevant sermons is a challenge. Brilliant scholars do not always make great preachers because they do not package truth so that people want to listen. The pastor who speaks to the same congregation week after week must guard against monotony. Creativity and variety are essential.

That the Holy Spirit is infinitely creative can be readily seen in the Scripture itself, but the Spirit can also stir the preacher's imagination to new and unique presentations of God's Word. In addition, we can check the imagination level by asking questions such as these:

Is my sermon title intriguing? Does it match the sermon?

Do I tend to use the same approach in introducing the message? Do I always start with an illustration? Do I discuss the historical aspects of the text too much? Does my first sentence arrest my people's attention?

Do my main points come from the text? Are they presented

in a creative way? Will people be able to remember them? Are they adequately illustrated for understanding?

Am I clear in what response is expected from the people? Have I thought through my conclusion so as to elicit response?

Is my heart preparation such that the Spirit can speak to me while I am preaching? Am I willing to move beyond my sermon notes, as prompted by the Spirit, to make creative application to the needs of those present?

Preachers dare not be boring. We have the most important, exciting, life-changing message to declare. It cries out for a presentation that awakens hearers, fires their souls, and prompts their response.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION THROUGH ILLUSTRATION

Biblical truth and practical human need meet in application. If that truth is presented only in terms of Hebrew/Greek analysis, cultural perspectives, or theological minutiae, the people in the pew are left feeling that the Bible has no answers for what they are presently experiencing. The preacher must constantly ask himself, "Am I answering questions no one is asking? Am I offering irrelevant platitudes? Am I failing to help the person in great need?" The right illustration at key points in the message can help the preacher to answer "No" to these questions.

Illustrations reveal to hearers how a biblical principle works. Seeing and knowing how that principle works allows the listener to make it relevant to life. Illustrations may come from the Scripture, the morning's newspaper, an international event, or the preacher's own experience. Daily life offers a

wide menu of illustrative material. But always it must link a principle of Scripture to the life of the listener.

Illustrations provide an added benefit. They spice the sermon with interest and variety. The illustration may be remembered long after the sermon is forgotten. With that remembrance the Holy Spirit can make application of the illustrated principle long after the message is delivered.

PERSUASION IN THE INVITATION

The preacher's final goal is that the listener would not only know but act. A positive response is expected. Faith anticipates the people hearing the Word will also be doers of that Word (James 1:22). Pentecostal preaching in particular has the altar call as the practical culmination of the preached Word.

When sermon preparation first begins, the desired response must be in view. The thesis statement will often reflect that response, and the development of the message will maintain

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focus on it. The conclusion will lead to an immediate response via the altar call. The entire message will point toward living the Christian life in harmony with that which has been preached.

Persuasive preaching should not be confused with the conviction of the Holy Spirit. It is not the preacher's task to convict but faithfully to preach the Word. Spirit-anointed preaching links the Word and the Spirit to "convict... of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8, NIV). When the preacher tries to convict, condemnation is usually the result. When the Spirit convicts, the believer and unbeliever both are required to come to grips with the demands of the Word. Even if the initial response is negative, the seed of the Word has been planted and will eventually bear positive fruit.

The preacher must be especially careful not to allow the personal desire or need for a response to push the power of persuasion into manipulation. Experienced pulpiteers have learned it is possible to elicit audience response and to control the crowd's emotions through methods that are less than spiritual. Internal expectations or the expectations of others may steer them into using such methods. But in doing so they erode their own integrity, encourage counterfeit response,

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deny the power of the Spirit and the Word, and devalue the altar call.

However, such specious methods are unnecessary. The Holy Spirit can be trusted to help the preacher give a persuasive, effective altar call and to create the desired response in the heart of the hearer. Then the altar call will result in "fruit that will last" (John 15:16, NIV).

Computer technology has allowed the minister to tap into an unlimited array of tools for sermon preparation. Resources for preaching are almost numberless, but the primary tools discussed above remain the same. The enhance-

ment of these tools through technological advances is important. Yet the preacher-sharpened and empowered by the Spirit-will always be one of God's finest tools. (t



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INTERVIEW WITH GARY SMALLEY

Staying in Harmony with Your Congregation and Your Mate

Enrichment executive editor Wayne I. Goodall talked with Dr. Gary Smalley, president of Today's Family Ministry, Branson, Missouri, concerning resolving conflict and couples in ministry. Smalley's insights provide resources which ministers and their wives may access for application both in the home and church.

I UNDERSTAND YOU PASTORED 11 YEARS. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR EXPERIENCES?

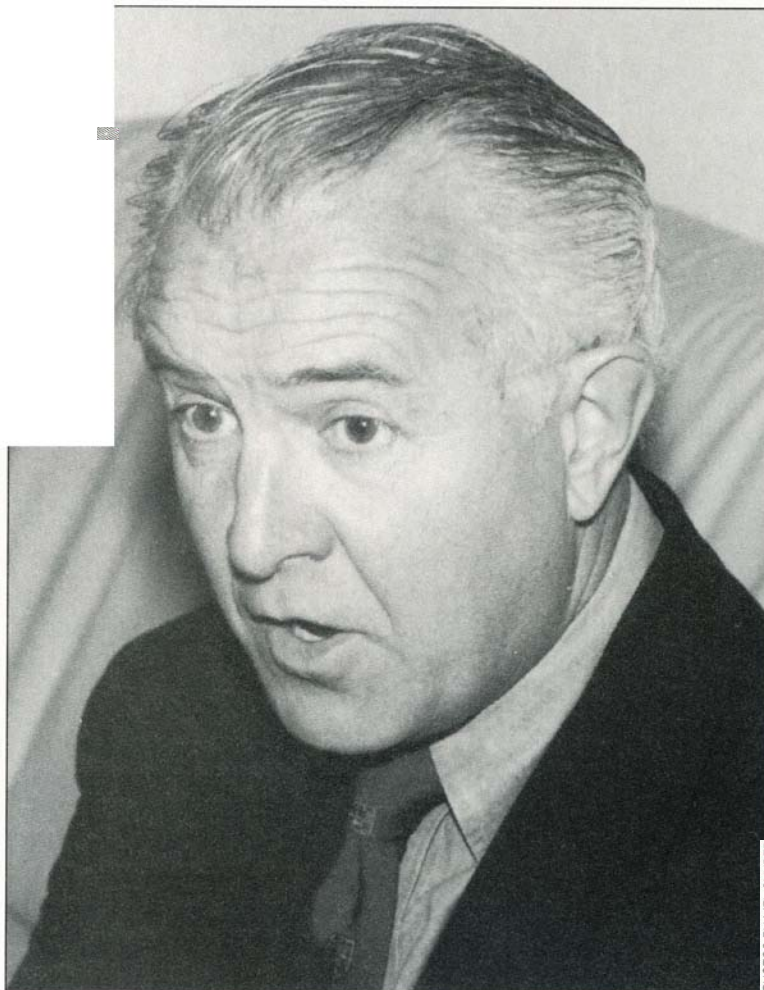
In seminary I learned how to read the Scriptures, how to read Greek and Hebrew, and how to preach using different methods. But I didn't know how to get along with people nor how to resolve conflicts.

I learned in my first pastorate that you can't come out of seminary and lay all your highfalutin ideas on the people. I fell flat on my face.

I had to take time to listen-to find out what the people needed, where they were, where they wanted to go in their spiritual walk, and help them get there. When I became a servant of the people they loved it, and they loved me.

The key is understanding. I began printing what I taught, and I saw unexpected growth.

WHAT IS THE KEY TO HANDLING CONFLICT? Never get involved in solutions until both parties in conflict feel maximized and understood. To do that, get a 3- by 3-inch card. The person who has the card is the speaker-the one who wants to be understood. The one who doesn't have the card is responsible for understanding. Don't pass the card to the listener until the listener understands. This method de-escalates an argument.



PHOTOS BY MEL SNIDER

WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS ENCOURAGING THE COUPLE TO LISTEN TO EACH OTHER.

Yes. Argument is one of the worst things you can do in ministry and in marriage. Stay in harmony with your congregation and your mate. Statements such as "You said...", "No, I didn't say...", "Yes, you did..." escalate arguments and are a total waste of time.

You can have a written document (the card) that controls your conversation with your congregation's members or your wife-anyone you want to have harmony with. It instantly de-escalates the argument and is wonderful.

Many pastors try to counsel couples with

Argument is one of the worst things you can do in ministry and in marriage. Stay in harmony with your congregation and your mate.

I had to take time to listen-to find out what the people needed, where they were, where they wanted to go in their spiritual walk, and help them get there.

marital problems and don't know what to do. This method of solving conflicts gives pastors specific guidance and helps couples want to help themselves.

For example, at McDonald's you drive up to the box and tell the person at the other end of the intercom what you want. Your order is repeated via the speaker box. You correct any errors in your order, pay, they hand you the bag, and you know you have understanding when the order is correct.

Thus I encourage people to use the speaker (the card) and give the order. What they do is share their feelings: "I'd like to have you understand my feelings and my needs." The listener says, "Let me make sure I understand this. You're saying " People are encouraged to avoid suggesting solutions until they have complete understanding. This de-escalates argu-

ments and creates safety in the relationship.



THIS PRINCIPLE COULD BE APPLIED TO THE CHURCH BOARD, BUSINESS, AND STAFF MEETINGS AS WELL AS COUNSELING.

Yes, pastors can get the board or the church to communicate in this way.

HOW CAN PASTORS FIND BALANCE IN THEIR LIVES WITH HEAVY WORK SCHEDULES?

When I was a pastor, I had board members who understood the value of my wife and me being in harmony. They used to say, "You work on Sunday; take Friday and Saturday off. Don't take Monday off because that's when you want to quit the ministry."

Following my 2-day seminars, I know ahead of time that I'm going to want to quit the ministry. I feel discouraged. I may have 4,000

people at the seminar who appreciate it, but the next day I can feel like a total failure. That's adrenaline. A pastor needs to recognize that he is going to feel that way and not take that day off. He is going to have arguments with his wife and kids and say things he doesn't want to say.

So I learned to take Friday and Saturday off, not Monday. We went camping, etc.-one of the best things our family found for bonding.

HOW CAN PASTORS AND WIVES FIND BALANCE?

In the last 5 years I've been learning about the concept boundaries: "Take control of your life." Stop blaming other people and circumstances for your conflicts. If you're working 75 hours a week, who's responsible for that? You are. Ministers need to get with their spouses and kids and write up a constitution that fits the individual situation. Address such questions as: "What are the needs in your home?" "How much time do you have to spend in intimate conversation with your wife and kids?" "How much time should you spend doing fun things?"

Families in the ministry need to plan and have fun times. Get together as a family and decide together what fun things to do and list a bunch of them. You may say, "We'll do this in November, or let's do this one in January." With the calendar, take control of your lives.

Then ask, "What do we need as a family?" Agree to talk occasionally. Pick one night a week-one time a week-and stick with it. Revise it as you have to, but write it out as a family constitution. Pastors know what their families need and what makes them feel safe and valued.

The pastor then goes to the church, considers what the church needs, and writes a church constitution, a board constitution, or whatever. Look at it. Determine what the family needs and what the church needs. Ask how you are going to manage those 75 hours. Adjust it through the communication method.

I used to be afraid to let people know I didn't want to work all the time, but I don't do that anymore. I've taken control of my life even though I'm working more today than ever because my wife and I are running an empty nest. We plan the ministry a year ahead and know what we are going to do for the year.

SOMETIMES A PASTOR ACTS ON THE URGENT, NOT THE IMPORTANT.

Exactly. A written document or agreement eliminates that. It will control potential damage before they get into the conversation.

WHERE DO PASTORS AND WIVES NEED THE MOST HELP?

Communication-how to honor each other and feel equally valued and committed. Pastors are committed but don't always know how to show their mates how they value them. Wives say many things that are a foreign language to their husbands. We're studying the newest ways to interpret what wives are saying.

WHAT IS THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE FORCE TODAY AGAINST THE PASTOR AND THE CHURCH, AND WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

Unresolved anger that comes from unresolved anger is the most destructive force. I have come to this conclusion after 30 years' observation and experience.

I can speak from personal experience. When I worked for another organization I got angry

with the director, and the misunderstanding escalated. He said things, and I said things that offended both of us. My heart became darkened, and I had no spiritual insight.

A brother gave me a verse which helped me resolve my anger: "Whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him" (see 1 John 2:9-11, NIV).

So many people in our churches are angry. The Word specifically addresses this: "In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold" (Ephesians 4:26,27, NIV).

What is Satan's world? Darkness. I was in darkness.

Whether it is angry parishioners or pastors and their mates, they are in darkness. Our purpose at Today's Family Ministry is to help them resolve their differences and come out of darkness into the marvelous light. (;t



Never get involved in solutions until both parties in conflict feel maximized and understood.

Church Membership: Some Biblical Answers

BY WAYDE I. GOODALL

In a world where commitment and loyalty is nonexistent, the church serves as a standard of commitment.

MANY CHRISTIANS ASK, "Is joining a local church necessary?" The New Testament

— has ample evidence that when a person trusts Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and takes on new identity in Christ, that person immediately attaches to a local band of believers.

10 REASONS FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

1. *It was an apostolic precedent* (Acts 2:42--47).

In the Early Church believers met with the apostles daily for teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. No indication is given that any believers remained separated from the local church. For example, the apostle Paul tried to "join the local disciples" when he relocated to a new community (Acts 9:26.).

2. *The first-century believers kept track of each other* (Acts 2:42--47).

Several times in the Book of Acts the phrase, "The Lord added to their number daily," is recorded. The church kept track of who was becoming a part of the body of Christ. Numbers represented believers, and they added those believers to themselves. Other places in Acts reaffirm the first-century church practice of "adding to their number" (Acts 2:47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1,7; 9:31; 11:21; 16:5).

3. *Ekklesia is the original Greek word for "church."*

Ekklesia means "the called-out ones." The word itself denotes being called *out* of something (the world) and *into* something else (the church). This includes both the Church universal and the local church. Spiritually speaking, we become a part of the Church (the body of Christ) worldwide. Practically speaking, however, we become a part of the local church in our own communities and spheres of influence. We cannot be called out of one thing without being called into another. The Book of

Acts does not mention an "invisible church."

4. *Church membership is an expression of commitment.*

In a world where commitment is diluted and loyalty is nonexistent, the church serves as a standard of commitment. Jesus is looking for those who will not look back, have counted the cost, and are willing to give up everything to follow Him (Luke 9:62; 14:33). Church membership is a commitment to the Body through the times of blessing as well as times of trial.

5. *Church membership models caring.*

Church members exist to accomplish many functions, including devotion to each other, honoring one another, sharing with each other, and practicing hospitality (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12). The apostle Paul went so far as to say that the members belong to each other. This model of a caring community can best take place when the individual members of the Body make a commitment to one another. In the Assemblies of God church membership is considered the best means to accomplish these standards of caring in our pursuit of becoming a Romans 12 church.

6. *Church membership shares the burden.*

We are instructed to carry each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2). The picture here is of a beast of burden (the mule) who can carry 10 times more baggage than one man can bear. It is the same with the church. Sometimes we need each other to carry the heavy burdens life hands out. A commitment to church membership says, "I'm willing to share the load and help carry someone else's burdens. I'll be available when needed." This also allows the individual members to rest assured that someday they'll need help carrying a burden, and someone will be there to help—much as a healthy family functions (1 Corinthians 12:26).

7. *Church membership breeds encouragement.*

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24,25). Being spurred on (motivated, energized) and encouraged are just two of the blessings we receive and are called to give out as a result of being committed to the local church.

8. *Church membership says, "I'll serve."*

As one must join the military to have the privilege and duty of serving one's country, so it is with the church. We must join the ranks of the committed to receive the full benefit of serving God. Someone has said, "You are either a spectator on the sidelines or a participant in the trenches." God is looking for participants in His army. Ephesians 4:12 declares that the members of the church are to be equipped for service. Only true members are issued equipment to carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). All spiritual gifts are intended to operate within the context of the local church (1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 4:10).

9. *Church membership is an attitude if submission.*

Church members submit first to each other and then to Christ (Ephesians 5:21-24), for Christ is the head of the Church, His body, of which He is the Savior. Scripture is clear that the church is not an organization with a ladder of hierarchy, encouraging its members to climb the ladder. In sharp contrast, the church is like a body with Christ as the head-at the controls. All members are to submit to the head, her one and only leader. The result should be mutual submission to one another and to Christ. This allows accountability with each other and enables others to add counsel and correction to our lives if necessary (Matthew 18:15-17).

10. *Church membership is symbolic of our heavenly citizenship.*

"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household..." (Ephesians 2:19). Being committed to the family of God grants us citizenship and eliminates our alien status. When foreigners want to become official citizens and gain access to the rights and privileges of a different country, they must make a commitment to and take responsibility for the safety of, defense of, constitution of, and authorities of that country. Christians are God's people through faith in Jesus Christ (John 14:6) and are added to God's household.

CONCLUSION

Making a commitment to the local church means much more than adding your name to a roll book. It means taking the responsibilities that come along with the privileges, being blessed and blessing others, and saying "No" to the world's standard of commitment and "Yes" to God's. These are good reasons to encourage people to join the local church. (t

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

Wayde I. Goodall, D.Min., is executive editor of Enrichment and coordinator of Ministerial Enrichment Office, Springfield, Missouri.

Church membership is a commitment to the Body through the times of blessing as well as times of trial.



Small Churches *CAN* Excel

BY MILTON E. DYKES

Shortly after arriving at district council one year, I overheard two pastors of large churches talking—one boasted a record attendance of 800, and the other was elated over the surplus in his church budget. They obviously meant me no harm, but their conversation discouraged me, the pastor of a small congregation. In fact, I turned to my wife and told her we were going home. I didn't want to stay if I had to listen to more of the same. (Of course, we didn't leave.)

The problem wasn't with these pastors or with my church. I had a wrong perspective. Generally, the most attention is given where the biggest splash is being made. This places small congregations and their pastors behind the scenes,

sometimes bruising egos and crushing dreams. Few awards are given to the churches that don't grow the fastest, aren't the largest, or don't give the most.

At that time, I was equating my personal and ministerial worth with the size of my congregation—a huge mistake. I had to learn that small churches have a valuable place in the Kingdom, and God is looking for faithfulness, not fame. It wasn't an easy process, but once I learned that small churches can excel and dealt with my petty jealousies and unfair comparisons, I became more secure and effective.

This process is one that many pastors of small churches face. Kevin Deck, a pastor in Marion Oaks, Florida, has had to

reevaluate his ministry in a small congregation. Comparing it with the larger congregations where he had served as an associate, he struggled with low self-esteem. Under his leadership, the church was thriving and growing, but not by the leaps and bounds of the megachurches in the state.

"Once I settled my call to Marion Oaks and understood that this was exactly where God wanted me, I had new confidence and peace about my ministry," Deck said. "I realized we were doing something for God that was important, and this church counted for the Kingdom. The fact is: We were doing exciting things for God, and I needed to learn contentment in my place of ministry."

Terry Roberts, church planter and pastor of a small but growing church in Columbia, South Carolina, has dealt with the small-versus-large-church comparison by putting megachurches in proper perspective. "Megachurches are the exception, not the rule," he said and pointed out that Paul mentioned four house churches in the Book of Romans. "They weren't megachurches but small enough to fit inside homes-and they were very effective."

Roberts feels that "we should rejoice in the successes of the megachurches but also realize they are rare and should not be the standard of measurement for all ministries. Sometimes we have the feeling that if the small church could only learn from the large church and make certain corrections, it too could achieve megagrowth. This isn't always the case."

SMALL CHURCHES MAKE LARGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE KINGDOM.

During that discouraging time in my life, God helped me understand I was not in competition with my fellow pastors, regardless of the size of their churches. We were collaborators who were committed to the work of the Lord. I also discovered that the pastors of the large churches desired to see my church succeed.

It was impossible for my church to have the pageantry or programs offered by large churches, but we could still effectively serve the Lord by providing intimate relationships in our small setting. We didn't have a 300-voice choir like a megachurch, nor did we have an auditorium which seated thousands, but we could still enthusiastically and effectively impact our community. We did have Jesus' presence and the Holy Spirit's anointing and were touching lives for Him; only these really mattered.

Churches which average fewer than 100 in Sunday morning attendance comprised 65.1 percent of the total number of Assemblies of God congregations in the United States in 1994. Located in metropolitan, urban, and rural areas of our nation,

they are the glue in the spiritual fabric of our Fellowship. Their prayers, support of home and foreign missions, ministry to the body of Christ, service to local communities by being salt and light, and development of leaders are invaluable. It is esti-

estimated that small churches make up 60 percent of all mainline denominational churches. Imagine the spiritual state of our nation or Fellowship if there were no small congregations!

Pastors of small congregations have faithfully proclaimed the gospel since the beginning of the church and fulfill all aspects of ministry: They comfort bereaved families; rejoice with parishioners at weddings and baby dedications; passionately preach the Word; nurture disciples in the knowledge of God; minister Communion emblems; and lead young converts in water baptism and the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

I grew up in a small church where my parents pastored. We had limited facilities, meager budgets, and no paid staff. Hence Mom served as the youth leader and teen Sunday school teacher, and Dad supervised all the ministries of the church. Their faithfulness, along with a few key lay leaders, kept me in the Kingdom. I'm

thankful my parents were faithful to their calling.

Small congregations are not necessarily large churches that never grew up. Just as small businesses are the backbone of the nation's economy, so too are small churches indispensable in God's economy, according to Fred Smith, Sr., businessman and *Leadership* contributing editor. They are the very heart and strength of our nation. While every church should aggressively respond to the mandate of the Great Commission, some churches remain small. Yet they fulfill an effective ministry to the Lord, the church, and the lost.

We should never be passive or unconcerned about church growth; however, success in the Kingdom is not singularly measured by the congregation's size. Paul said the Lord gives the increase. Our responsibility is to be faithful.

SMALL.CHURCH PASTORS MUST BE GENERAL PRACTITIONERS.

Small congregations need pastors who have a good working knowledge of all the ministries of the church. The pastor of a small congregation is like the general practitioner who handles a variety of ills. He may refer people to a specialist, but he has to be able to examine, treat, and care for all the needs of his patients.

When I served as a pastor of a larger church, I had the advantage of paid associates who handled areas such as youth, music, and education. However, in the small church, there was no staff except my wife and me, and we did it all.

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Success in the Kingdom is not singularly measured by the size of the congregation.

Success or failure in my ministry was dependent upon my general ministry skills and the development of laity to help with the workload. I had to have enough general knowledge to inspire, train, and oversee laborers for the work of the church. This is where pastors of small congregations find their value. Not just anyone can be a good general practitioner.

SMALL CHURCHES CAN BE EXCITING, EFFECTIVE, AND EXCELLENT.

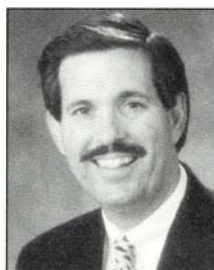
Phil Cook began his pastoral ministry in Hernando, Florida, with 10 present for his first service and 5 for the next, including his wife and child. Survival was his primary goal when he accepted the pastorate. "Our facilities and pay were not adequate, but we knew God had called us, so we dug in for the long haul," he said.

God gave the Cooks a vision that required a long-range commitment. Their church is now exciting with a caring core group that is committed to each other and to reaching their community.

"It hasn't been easy, but we are growing and have moved from a leased storefront to our own church facilities," he continued. "We are committed to ministry with excellence, and God has blessed our small beginnings. It's exciting to see Him build His church."

As home missions director for the Peninsular Florida District, I receive monthly reports from over 100 pastors of small congregations, and these constantly remind me that small churches can excel. They aren't well-known and probably won't ever be listed in the Who's Who of megachurches, but when we gather around the throne all that will matter is that these pastors have done God's will and have been faithful. No one will ask, "And how large was your church?"

As the pastor of a small congregation, is your church excellent, effective, and exciting? It can be. (t



Milton E. Dykes is the home missions/new church evangelism director for the Peninsular Florida District, Lakeland.

KEYS TO PASTORING THE SMALL CHURCH EFFECTIVELY

1. Be confident in God's calling. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).
2. Specialize in the personal touch. By their very nature, small congregations expect warm, intimate relationships. Develop good people skills, patience, and tender, loving care.
3. Refuse feelings of inferiority. Self-pity is the greatest handicap pastors of small churches face, for it thwarts visionary planning and risking new ventures.
4. Commit to excellence in the little things (e.g., start church on time with a prayerfully planned agenda, be friendly, neat, and well prepared for ministry). Don't waste people's time with ill-led services or off-the-cuff preaching. (The crowd may be small, but the King is present.)
5. Complement rather than compete with larger churches. Learn to enjoy the extra ministries that larger churches can provide. Allow the youth or singles to participate in activities in other churches when your church is not meeting. At the same time, small churches can do some things more effectively than large churches (e.g., church dinners, family nights, and home gatherings). Learn to capitalize on your small size.
6. Focus on those things you do well. Momentum is important for successful, exciting churches, but don't burn out people by assigning too many ministry duties. Determine those areas you can do well and concentrate on them. As the Lord gives the increase, add other ministries.

Administering Church Property Purchases

BUYING PROPERTY FOR CHURCH expansion may not be in the immediate plans of your church. But if and when the opportunity comes, will you know what to do? This article addresses, from a church administrator's viewpoint, how to go about the process—from investigating property through closing.

BY JOHN P. JOSEPH

INVESTIGATION

First, create a file entitled "property acquisition"; otherwise, you run the risk of losing key notes and bits of information which may be necessary or beneficial in the future. Ask the county property appraiser's office (called "assessor's office" in some areas) to send you a copy of your plat showing the subdivision of your church. This will allow you to see your church in relation to other possible vacant land for expansion. Sometimes aerial photographs are available from the county at a nominal cost.

Next, determine who the surrounding property owners are. This, too, is available from the property appraiser's office for the legal description and owners' names of record. Realtors can help with local sale prices in the area to establish a fair market value. After these initial inquiries you may decide to make an offer on an adjacent parcel. If so, you will need board approval and authorization.

BOARD AUTHORIZATION

Get church board approval and document it. Most churches are not-for-profit corporations whose decisions require the board of directors' or deacons' approval. Not only should a motion be passed, but the secretary should draft a "corporate resolution authorizing the purchase of property."

Certain elements should make up this document:

1. Name the person authorized to make the offer and sign the "contract for purchase."
2. Include financial terms for the purchase.

3. State the legal description of the property and street address.

4. Certify the resolution was duly adopted by the board.

5. After verifying, state the purchase does not conflict with any governing documents of the church.

6. Have each board member, president, and secretary sign the document.

Besides having this document in your minutes in case a question is raised at the annual business meeting, the closing agent, seller, or lending institution may require it; therefore, have it prepared and executed. Next get your congregational approval through a properly announced special business meeting. With this and the money in hand, you are now ready to make an offer to purchase.

OFFER TO PURCHASE

Contact the owner directly. If the property is already listed by a real estate agency, consider retaining your own buyer's broker, which would allow him/her to represent the church in the negotiations and assist your attorney. Usually the listing agent will split the commission with the buyer's broker so there is no charge to the church.

A valid offer presented with a money deposit or consideration becomes a valid enforceable contract upon the seller's acceptance. Only make an offer when you are ready to close.

Regarding elements in the offer, it is advisable to ask the seller to "hold paper" or keep a mortgage on the property. Include a fixed rate the church is willing to pay on the loan. A 15-year loan is good for maximum principal reduction. Having the seller agree to holding a mortgage often works well for both parties, since the church's expenses are usually less than a bank loan, and the seller gets a higher rate than a money market's fund may offer.

If your offer is considered low by the seller,

Get church board approval and document it. Not only should a motion be passed, but the secretary should draft a "corporate resolution authorizing the purchase of property."

be innovative. For example, last year I represented a seller who rejected a church's offer on her property. I asked the church to provide my client with a donation certificate for the difference an appraisal would reveal. My client paid for the appraisal, which was only a few hundred dollars. The offer was \$190,000, but the appraisal was \$230,000. My client, the seller, received credit from the church for a \$40,000 donation, and we closed the deal. The result pleased everyone. The church bought the property needed for a school at their price of \$190,000, and my client was happy.

Before making your offer, hire legal counsel. Your attorney will be interested in several issues such as whether your offer should be contingent on zoning. Verify the property can be used for the purpose you intend. If it is an adjacent or bordering parcel, your local authorities may look favorably on rezoning, but this is no guarantee. Many churches are facing more and more hostile local governing agencies because of environmental concerns and impact on the community. You may state that closing is contingent on rezoning to protect the church.

Suggested language may be helpful:

"This contract is contingent upon the buyer's receiving all governmental and zoning approvals, waiting periods, and receipt of all permits for use of the property to build a church, school, and family-life center. Sellers will cooperate with this process and provide whatever material or signatures required."

Contingent offers have risks. The seller may be reluctant to accept your offer because by accepting, the property will be off the market until the contingencies are satisfied. Also, other offers may not contain contingencies resulting in your offer's not being seriously considered. Also, the seller will have to continue paying property taxes while the church's process churns through the system. Agree to reimburse the seller at closing for these expenses.

It is necessary to include with your offer not only a deposit but a deadline for your offer to be accepted. Set your closing date on a weekday when it is slow in your office, and you will not have any problems attending the closing.

ESSENTIALS TO PROTECT ALL PARTIES

1. *Hire an attorney.* This is important especially at the earliest part of the process. Your own legal counsel will advise you according to local requirements such as environmental reviews and tests. This article addresses only general matters.

2. *Order a survey.* What is a survey? Technically it is a document that determines the boundaries of the land you are looking to purchase. It will show what you are buying. Since your offer stated you desired a survey, contact your agent or attorney to order one. The usual cost is a few hundred dollars, but it is extremely valuable for several reasons. The survey will reveal any encroachments or easements on the property. Encroachments are movements on the property by someone or something which interferes with your property right. In other words, a trespass upon the land. Exactly how much any encroachment will interfere with your use will be the focus of your attention.

An easement is a little more technical. It is a burden on the land which does not yield any benefit to you. It may be an electrical line or right-of-way, so the survey is simply a tool to inform you what property is available for your use. After you have reviewed the document, it is helpful to speak with the surveyor to go over it with you.

Always walk the property before closing. You will notice the surveyor's pink flags or stakes designating the boundaries of the subject property. This will not only give you a feel for the size of the parcel and the landscape but also any noticeable deficiencies to raise with the seller before closing.

Contingent offers have risks. The seller may be reluctant to accept your offer because by accepting, the property will be off the market until the contingencies are satisfied.

Hire an attorney. This is important especially at the earliest part of the process.

3. *Purchase title insurance or attorney title.* Most contracts for purchase of real property require that an updated abstract (a chronologically arranged compilation of all recorded documents affecting title to a property) or attorney/title insurance be provided. Attorney title/title insurance is a contract whereby the insurer (insurance company) for a fee agrees to indemnify the insured (church) in a specified amount against loss through defect of title to real estate. State in your contract for purchase that the seller will pay for the insurance.

Also verify the title insurance is being issued under the church's correct legal name (e.g., Upper Room Assembly, Inc.). Make sure the property description is complete with the coverage equaling at least the gross purchase price.

FINAL PREPARATION TO CLOSE ON THE PROPERTY

Before closing, the closing agent needs to send you the closing package, which contains the papers you will have to sign at closing. Three of the most important documents to receive are the note/mortgage, deed, and settlement statement. A review of each and its importance follows:

1. *Promissory note/mortgage.* The note is simply a written promise to pay another a certain sum of money at a certain time. Basically it evidences your indebtedness. In some states it is a combined document. Usually there is a note and mortgage. Our focus will be the note.

Make sure there are no personal guarantees. Remove any "guarantor" provisions in the note and sign in your corporate capacity (e.g., John P. Joseph, president). This evidences your signature as a corporate agent and not individually. Additionally make sure the note states, "This note shall be prepayable in whole or in part at any time without premium or penalty." This will allow you to payoff the seller (mortgagee) earlier by making additional principal payments.

A software program such as Mortgage Minder may help you in this regard. Mortgage Minder allows you to calculate how soon your mortgage would be paid off if the church made an additional monthly payment toward principal. Conversely, it can also advise how much of a prepayment would be necessary to payoff

your mortgage by a certain date. Finally, do not sign multiple notes. There is no reason to run the risk of owing more than the purchase price.

2. *Warranty deed.* This conveys the property to the church. In each transaction involving the sale of real property a deed must be prepared. It should be a warranty deed and not a "quit claim deed," which only transfers the seller or grantor's present interest as distinguished from a warranty of title. Warranty deed provides the church with a warranty of title providing a bundle of rights unavailable through a quit claim deed.

The deed itself will have to be looked at very closely. First, make sure the marital status of the seller(s) or grantor(s) is stated. If the seller is married, ask that the spouse also sign the deed. If the seller or grantor is divorced, verify such by asking the closing agent to record the "final judgment" papers showing the property was conveyed to the seller.

Second, the legal description on the deed must be identical to the deed he/she received, on the plat you received earlier, and as set forth in the title insurance commitment or attorney title.

Third, the deed will state "exceptions"-items excluded in the transfer of a free title. Generally the only exceptions in the deed should be the following:

- Taxes for the current year.
- Easements, restrictions, and covenants of record.
- Zoning ordinances.
- Declaration of condominium (where appropriate).
- Existing mortgage if being assumed or title being taken subject to the mortgage.

Fourth, the deed must be signed using the full and complete names of all the grantors as set forth in the title insurance commitment or attorney title. They must be executed with witnesses and notary as required in your state.

3. *Settlement statement.* This document itemizes the seller's and buyer's expenses and discloses the settlement charges for such items as prorated taxes, title search, recording fees, city/county tax/stamps, state tax/stamps, survey, etc. Review carefully each item and make sure the closing agent is not overcharging the church for items the seller is supposed to pay according to the contract. Subject to

your attorney's review and counsel, you're ready to close.

CLOSING THE DEAL

The closing is the name given wherein the parties sign all the necessary papers to complete the transaction. It usually takes place at an attorney's or title insurance/closing agent's office. However, the church still needs to address a few loose ends:

1. Find out from the closing agent how much you need to bring to closing. You would have an idea from the settlement statement. Ask if a cashier's check is required. Do not assume a church check is O.K.

2. Ask if you will need to bring a copy of your Articles of Incorporation and the corporate seal.

3. Verify the necessary parties required at the closing. The president should be present, but in your state the secretary may also be required.

4. Ask the closing agent to mail you the closing package, which will contain copies of the executed documents.

Relax, you have done your homework, and your attorney was there from the beginning. Let it be an enjoyable experience. Who knows?

This property may not be developed for years, but the leadership ahead of you will be thankful for your foresight as they endeavor to reap the same harvest.

CONCLUSION

Pray and ask the Lord what vision He has for your church. He might impress upon you a certain parcel of property to begin praying about. He did with us at Upper Room. The leadership felt impressed to contact the owner of an adjacent parcel, but the Lord told us to wait a week and pray before we were to make contact. We did just that, and within days the owner desired to sell the property and contacted us. At closing she revealed that the week we prayed she remembered a promise 10 years ago to offer us first chance to buy. Our Lord is the Lord of the present and the future. Ask Him now what His desire is for expanding your vision and His kingdom. (:t

John P. Joseph, Esq., is the business administrator for Upper Room Assembly of God, Miami, Florida.

**Order a
survey....
It will show
what you are
buying....
The usual
cost is a few
hundred
dollars, but it
is extremely
valuable.**



WHERE DID THAT FIFTY GO THAT WAS IN HERE?.... WAIT!.... OH, NO!!

THE POWER OF



BY DANNY THOMAS

EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO I STOOD

in the hallway of the men's dorm at North Central Bible College in Minneapolis and heard two words, "Come home." My dad was asking me to return to East Millinocket, Maine, to be his associate pastor.

Little did I realize that his invitation would be the first in a series to fill a secondary role in ministry. I have served in churches of 200 to 6,000, each role preparing me to minister more effectively in the next. I have found all varieties of senior pastors—some like dads; others, quite honestly, more like dictators. The key has always been to find what kind of associate they needed and diligently strive to fulfill their expectations. The trick has been to stay true to my own calling. The road of the associate is one of balance.

I am convinced that the power of WE is far greater than the power of ME.

I recently read the story of Marcus Allen, the Heisman Trophy winner from the University of Southern California. For 2 years during his career in college football his task was to be a blocker for Charles White, the great running back. His assignment was simply to find an oncoming defensive lineman from the opposing team and hit him. The power of *me* was subjected to the power of *we*. Why? So the team could win.

After these years of serving, I am convinced the power of *we* is far greater than the power of *me*. The associate pastor who tries to create his/her own stage of ministry is doomed. Regardless of ministry position (Le., children, youth, singles, seniors, Christian education),

the associate pastor needs to remain a team player, not the coach. That's the senior pastor's job.

The Old Testament tells of Aaron and Hur, two godly men of strong character, whom God called to a seemingly insignificant job: to hold Moses' hands up so the battle could be won. They weren't called to be warriors nor armor-bearers but to be the strength for the leader.

Shortly after I went to Maine to work with my father, he suffered a mild heart attack. For 6 weeks I was responsible for preaching and leading. I became his alter ego, adapting his style of worship and teaching. It wasn't my pulpit. I was there to give him rest and strength. not trouble and worry.

***The power of
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and tenure.***

TEN WORDS OF WISDOM FOR THE ASSOCIATE MINISTER

BY STAN NELSON

Before going to my first full-time ministry position Pastor Bobby Wilson gave me 10 words of wisdom for the associate pastor, which are timeless and effective for any associate minister

1. Set apart a time of prayer and studying the Word.

Don't let other things take your time with God. Ask yourself, "How can I minister to people if I am dry and haven't spent time with God?"

2. You are an outreach of the pastor, who has allowed you to work in his ministry.

You are not a single ministry but a part of the pastor's-called to lift up his arms.

3. Learn the pastor's heartbeat and burdens.

Try to intertwine your heartbeat with his by spending time with him-in prayer, running errands, eating, fishing, etc. Ask where he wants to take the church. It's important for the church body that you and the pastor are moving in the same direction.

4. Don't get into debt.

Be a wise steward of God's money. God is faithful and will meet all your needs. Differentiate between need and want. Debt will divide your heart between ministry and how to get out of debt.

5. Be willing to accept ideas from other ministers.

Learn what other ministers are doing and customize it to fit your ministry. Think about the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea-one gives out and one only receives. Give and receive new resources. Your church can miss

out on spiritual growth if you are not willing to use others' ideas. Learn to use the resources around you. Don't be afraid of networking.

6. Continue to be a student.

Learn new things. Read books, magazines, and papers. Take classes through your local college or extension studies. Pick up a new hobby or skill. Learn from every situation in life. Never think you have arrived.

7. Be loyal to the pastor.

Be a friend in good times and bad. Your pastor needs to know that you support him. Loyalty is another way of lifting your pastor's arms.

8. Don't let people manipulate you.

Don't side with people but confront those who are divisive.

9. Be yourself.

Don't try to be somebody else. God has made you the way you are and called you to be yourself

10. God is always with you.

God cares about you and will never leave you. He did not place you in the ministry to build your own kingdom nor to build His kingdom in your own skill and talent. He has called you to build His kingdom with His resources.

"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain" (Psalm 127:1, NIV).

Stan Nelson is associate pastor at Austin Bluffs Assembly of God, Colorado Springs.

In 1978 Pastor John Walker asked me to join the staff of Glad Tidings Assembly in Omaha, Nebraska. Pastor Walker was a tremendous leader in this vibrant, growing, community of faith. He needed support staff to accomplish the vision of gathering the harvest of souls in the greater Omaha area.

Pastor Walker led the staff by example—early morning office hours (5:30 a.m.), late evenings and practical ministry, clean car, shined shoes, well-groomed business attire bought at reasonable prices. His spirit was contagious, his life infectious. He allowed growth for my ministry by bringing definition and strength to his. I hope someday to lead the way he led me. He taught the power of *we* in one simple statement: "There's no telling what God will do if I won't take the credit."

The roles for team players change as relationships develop. What begins as a professional relationship with very defined hours of interaction can become a cherished melding of kindred spirits. It is up to the associate pastor to pursue the growth of this unique working partnership.

I have experienced the mental, emotional, and spiritual drain of wanting to be on the good side of my boss only to find out I was becoming a clone, not a helper.

The need for integrity mandates that each person on the ministry team understands the uniqueness of one's own giftings. Then each works toward the molding and shaping of attitudes to create the body ministry of Paul's letter to Ephesus.

Staying clear of egos is a learned asset. Too often the need to prove yourself as an equal creates a forced confrontation because you develop *discussion*, not *dialogue*. The word *discussion* comes from the same root word as *concussion* and *percussion*. When egos get involved it's like being the ball in a Ping-pong@ game—you get hit back and forth. The end result of a discussion is, "I win—you lose."

The position of a person committed to the power of *we* is to create dialogue. To have strong relationships, senior pastors and associates must each work toward allowing a free flow of words that does not endanger the positions, giftings, or callings of the other—a selection of words that permit meaning and

purpose to be exchanged between people of different generations, philosophies, and positions. The resulting dialogue is like a stream that runs through a valley, flowing between the boundaries of two strong banks.

The power of *we* allows this dialogue to go beyond the individual strength of one person. The end result is a position where the understanding of the issue is examined from the vantage point of all those concerned. Winning is not the central issue—maturing and being God's vessel is.

The road of the associate is one of **BALANCE.**

The power of *we* diminishes emotional threats; eliminates the hierarchy of titles, positions, and tenure; encourages people to grow beyond their rigid preconceived assumptions; and is a God-based outgrowth of leadership as one era mentors the next.

I am indebted to mentors who have empowered me to be sensitive to my uniqueness in the kingdom of God. Occasionally I have felt the severity of their correction. In retrospect, however, their need as a senior pastor was not being met by me or others sent to serve. I became distracted with the battle and forgot to hold up their hands. God's instruction was for Aaron and Hur to hold up Moses' hands, not the reverse.

The art of being an associate is the continued practice of people watching. In people watching the attention is directed to others, not yourself. The ability to focus on the senior pastor's needs isn't developed overnight: it takes time. For a season you are watching—watching in ministry; counseling; board meetings; people interactions; time with friends, family and (yes) even enemies: time spent in prayer and in play. The time invested in developing a team pays dividends in the work of the Kingdom and in relationships that last a lifetime.

After nearly 20 years of being a team player in ministry, my closest friends are my mentors—gentlemen I have served, spent time with, and have grown to communicate with via dialogue. Through this growth and time of serving I have observed four styles of the senior pastor-associate pastor relationship: first, brother to brother; second, father to son; third, friend to friend; fourth, grandfather to grandson.

Where men of similar ages join together, the

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brother to brother relationship exists-built in similar vision-and the older of the two (by age) leads the way. The younger is expected to follow.

The *Jather to son* is a unique expression because it is generational by nature. The styles differ, but the characteristics of the leadership role are the same. This relationship has its drawbacks because the son has difficulty developing his own ministry style and form. The father in this role must openly encourage the son to succeed and develop.

I have found the greatest freedom in the *Jriend toJriend* relationship, which allows for the power of *we* to mature. Age has little to do with this staff relationship. The roles are defined by giftings and vision. Yes, there is a definite leader, but the staff room is an open exchange of ideas that is allowed because of trust, understanding, and a mutual agreement to succeed. The importance of one particular approach to problem solving is set aside, and a free discourse of Holy Spirit inspiration comes from many sides of the table. The challenges set before the staff are ultimately solved by the creative approach.

Finally, the *granc!father to grandson* relationship unfolds. To some extent this characterization is involved in every pastoral situation. Each of us needs to be needed, not neglected. Grandparents have valuable life experiences that can save hours and years of hurts if only the grandchildren will listen. The same is true in the pastor-associate role. Senior pastors, by virtue of election and years, have insights to share. As a 40-year-old associate, I am constantly seeking the advice and direction of Pastor Buntain, especially when it comes to pastoral counseling. He is the master at people problem solving.

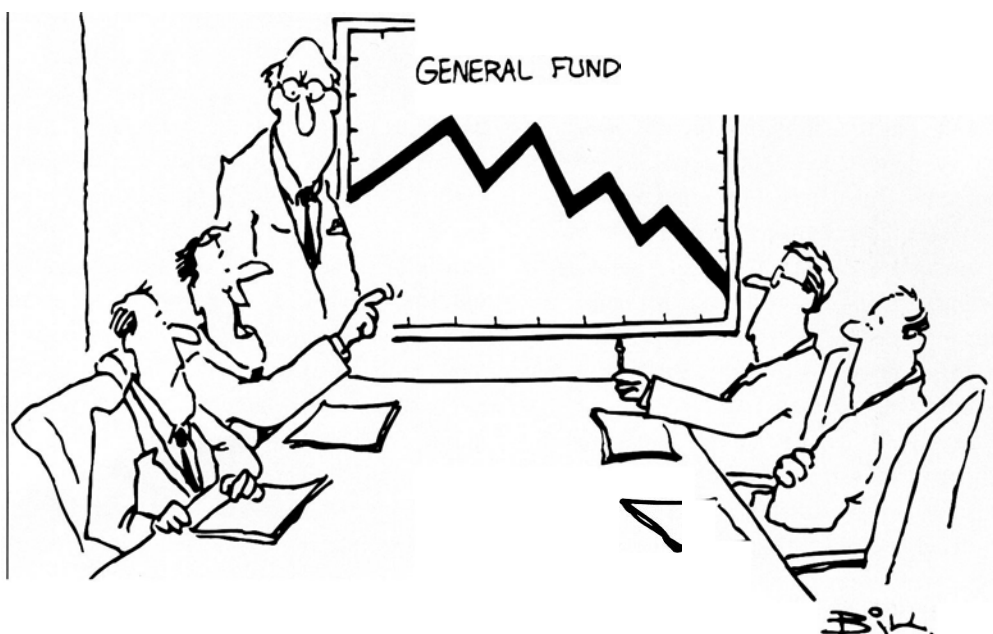
The power of *we* is the single greatest lesson I have embraced in ministry. I am one of a team where each one is dedicated to the cause



of the Cross-the Cross where I die and we win. That is the power behind the *we!* (;t

Danny Thomas is an associate pastor at First Assembly of God, Tacoma, Washington.

The power of *WE* is the single greatest lesson I have embraced in ministry.



"That's a lovely mountainscape, pastor, but shouldn't you add some trees, a lake, and maybe some clouds?"



Sexual Harassment

THE CLARENCE THOMAS HEARINGS elevated sexual harassment into the national consciousness with predictable results—the number of sexual harassment claims skyrocketed. Church leaders need to be aware of this potential basis of liability so that appropriate preventive measures can be taken. This article will define sexual harassment and suggest ways churches can reduce the risk of sexual harassment claims.

BY RICHARD R. HAMMAR

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

What is its relevance to churches and church leaders? Consider the following:

Frequency. Several recent surveys demonstrate that sexual harassment is a common occurrence in the workplace. One major study found that 42 percent of female employees and 15 percent of male employees claimed to have been victims of sexual harassment on the job. Another survey found that over 50 percent of all female employees claimed to have experienced unwanted sexual attention on the job.

Who is the most likely offender? One survey found that 46 percent of all sexual harassment complaints allege that the victim's immediate supervisor is the perpetrator (33 percent name a coworker and 9 percent a supervisor in another department).

Key point. In a survey conducted by Christian Ministry Resources in 1993, 8 percent of church secretaries claimed they had suffered sexual harassment on the job. In 29 percent of these cases the alleged offender was a minister; in 16 percent of the cases the alleged offender was another staff member; and in 55 percent of the cases the alleged offender was a church member.

Sexual harassment defined. Sexual harassment has been determined to be a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII only

applies to employers that (1) have 15 or more employees and (2) are engaged in interstate commerce. Accordingly, it does not apply to most churches (it does apply to many denominational agencies engaged in interstate sales). Nevertheless, many state and federal courts have permitted women to file sexual harassment lawsuits even though their employers are not subject to Title VII, and such courts often follow cases decided under Title VII. Therefore, Title VII cases are relevant in any discussion of sexual harassment, as are the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulations interpreting Title VII. A current EEOC regulation entitled "EEOC Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Sex" specifies in part:

(a) Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Section 703 of Title VII. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

This regulation confirms the conclusion reached by numerous state and federal courts that sexual harassment includes at least two separate types of conduct: (1) "Quid pro quo" harassment, which refers to conditioning employment opportunities on submission to a sexual or social relationship, or (2) "hostile environment" harassment, which refers to the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment through unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

An employer should take all steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring.

Liability under state law. Many employers who are not subject to Title VII have been sued for alleged sexual harassment under state law. In fact, many victims of sexual harassment prefer not to sue on the basis of Title VII even if their employers are covered under Title VII. The reason: Victims typically receive much higher awards of monetary damages in state court. Lawsuits brought under state law typically allege that the employer is guilty of one or more of the following: (1) "intentional infliction of emotional distress," (2) defamation, (3) negligent selection or supervision, (4) assault and battery, (5) loss of consortium, (6) invasion of privacy, (7) wrongful discharge, or (8) false imprisonment. In addition, many states have enacted their own laws banning sexual harassment, and such laws are much more likely to apply to local churches.

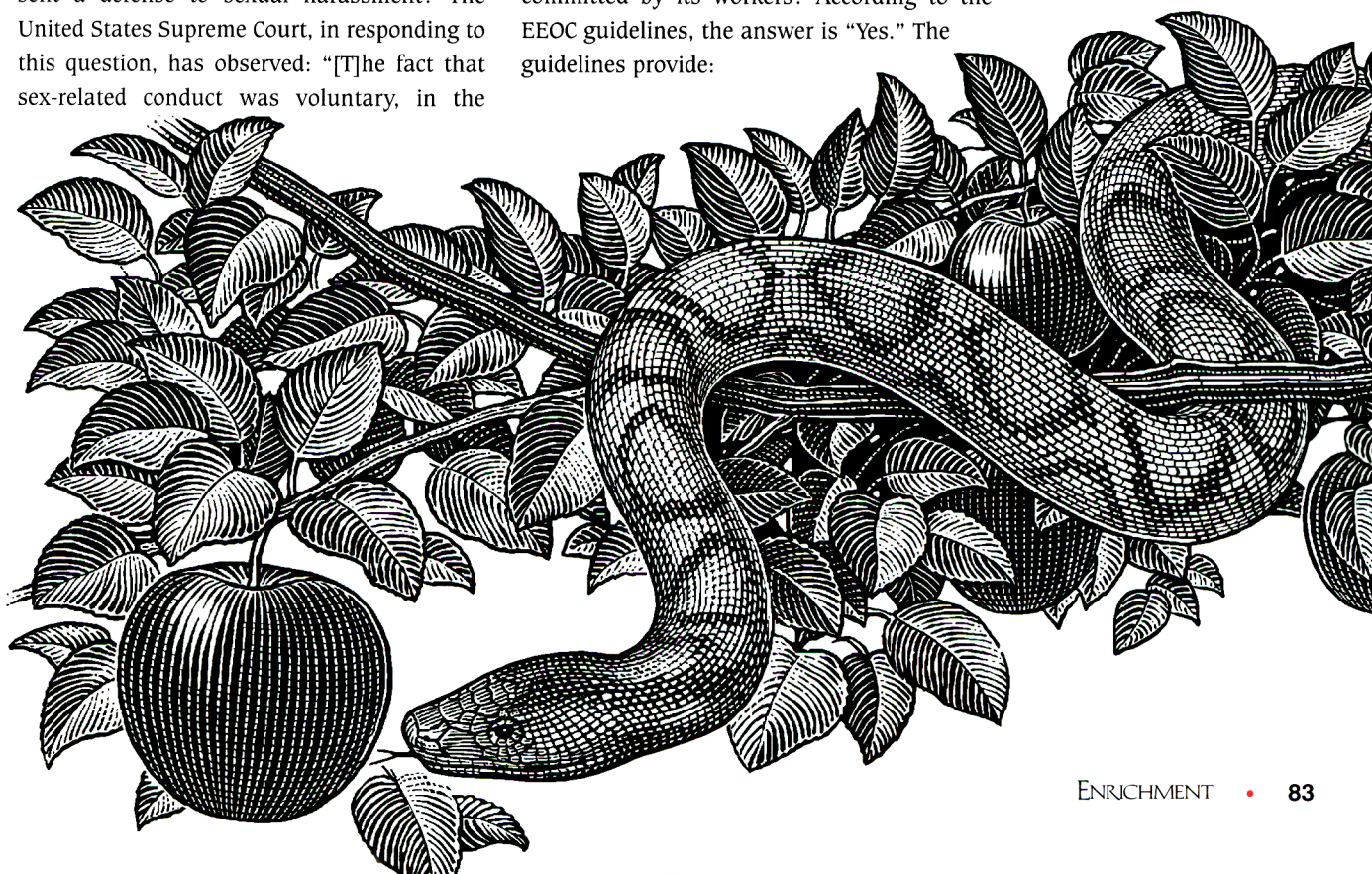
Consent not a defense. Is the victim's consent a defense to sexual harassment? The United States Supreme Court, in responding to this question, has observed: "[T]he fact that sex-related conduct was voluntary, in the

sense that the complainant was not forced to participate against her will, is not a defense to a sexual harassment suit.... The gravamen of any sexual harassment claim is that the alleged sexual advances were unwelcome.... The correct inquiry is whether [the victim] by her conduct indicated that the alleged sexual advances were unwelcome, not whether her actual participation in sexual intercourse was voluntary."

In other words, a female employee may engage in voluntary sexual contact with a supervisor because of her belief that her job (or advancement) depends on it. While such contact would be voluntary, it is not necessarily welcome. Sexual harassment addressed unwelcome sexual contact, whether or not that contact is voluntary.

Church liability. Is a church (or other employer) liable for acts of sexual harassment committed by its workers? According to the EEOC guidelines, the answer is "Yes." The guidelines provide:

One survey found that 46 percent of all sexual harassment complaints allege that the victim's immediate supervisor is the perpetrator.



The fact that sex-related conduct was voluntary, in the sense that the complainant was not forced to participate against her will, is not a defense to a sexual harassment suit.

[A]n employer... is responsible for its acts and those of its agents and supervisory employees with respect to sexual harassment regardless of whether the specific acts complained of were authorized or even forbidden by the employer and regardless of whether the employer knew or should have known of their occurrence. The Commission will examine the circumstances of the particular employment relationship and the job functions performed by the individual in determining whether an individual acts in either a supervisory or agency capacity.

With respect to conduct between fellow employees, an employer is responsible for acts of sexual harassment in the workplace where the employer (or its agents or supervisory employees) knows or should have known of the conduct, unless it can show that it took immediate and appropriate corrective action.

An employer may also be responsible for the acts of nonemployees, with respect to sexual harassment of employees in the workplace, where the employer (or its agents or supervisory employees) knows or should have known of the conduct and fails to take immediate and appropriate corrective action. In reviewing these cases the Commission will consider the extent of the employer's control and any other legal responsibility which the employer may have with respect to the conduct of such non-employees.

Many state courts have adopted similar conclusions in sexual harassment cases not brought under Title VII. The key point to understand is that an employer (including a church) can be legally responsible for the sexual harassment of its agents and super-

visory personnel even if the employer was unaware of the conduct and the conduct violates the employer's written policy prohibiting sexual harassment. The reason: Supervisory personnel are considered to be agents of the employer; accordingly, their

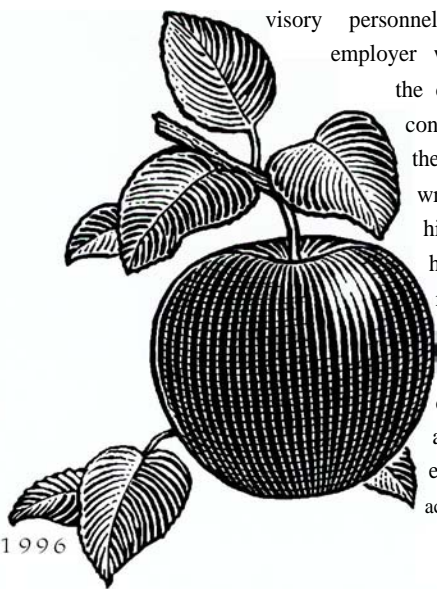
work-related misconduct is imputable to the employer whether or not the employer is aware of it.

Example. A woman was hired as an associate pastor of a church in Minnesota. A year later she filed a discrimination charge with the state department of human rights against her supervising pastor. She claimed that her supervising pastor repeatedly made unwelcome sexual advances toward her. He allegedly referred to themselves as lovers, physically contacted her in a sexual manner, and insisted on her companionship outside the workplace despite her objections. The woman informed her local church leaders as well as her synod before filing the complaint with the state. Although the church and synod investigated the woman's allegations, no action was taken to stop the alleged harassment. Less than 3 months after the complaint was filed with the state, the church held a congregational meeting at which it voted to dismiss the woman as pastor. The reason stated for the discharge was the woman's "inability to conduct the pastoral office efficiently in this congregation in view of local conditions." A state appeals court ruled that the woman could sue her former supervising pastor for sexual harassment. The court also rejected the supervising pastor's claim that the woman was prevented from suing because she had consented to the supervising pastor's conduct.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Because of the substantial threat that sexual harassment allegations pose to an employer, it is important to engage in preventive measures. Consider the following:

Adopt a written policy. Adopt a written policy prohibiting sexual harassment. The policy, which can be adopted by the board of directors, should define sexual harassment (both quid pro quo and hostile environment) and state unequivocally that it will not be tolerated and will be the basis for immediate discipline (up to and including dismissal). The policy also should (1) contain a procedure for filing complaints of harassment with the employer, (2) encourage victims to report incidents of harassment, (3) assure employees that complaints will be investigated promptly, (4) assure employees that they will not suffer retaliation for filing a complaint, (5) discuss



the discipline applicable to persons who violate the policy, and (6) assure the confidentiality of all complaints.

A policy containing these elements can reduce an employer's risk of liability in a sexual harassment case. In a landmark 1986 decision, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the adoption of a policy prohibiting harassment would not automatically insulate employers from liability. However, the Court stated that the existence of such a policy and a procedure for filing grievances were "plainly relevant" in evaluating an employer's liability. Further, the Court noted that an employer's position would be "substantially stronger" if its policies and procedures were "calculated to encourage victims to come forward."

Communicate. Communicate the written policy to all workers.

Investigate. Investigate all complaints immediately.

Discipline. Discipline employees who are found guilty of harassment. However, be careful not to administer discipline without adequate proof of harassment. Discipline not involving dismissal should be accompanied by a warning that any future incidents of harassment will not be tolerated and may result in immediate dismissal.

Follow up. Follow up by periodically asking the victim if there have been any further incidents of harassment.

HANDLING DIFFICULT CASES

Unfortunately, many sexual harassment cases end up being one employee's word against another's (precisely the same impasse the nation witnessed in the Clarence Thomas hearings). How should an employer proceed in such a case? This presents employers with a difficult task. Consider the following measures:

Interview the victim. Obtain a detailed account of the alleged acts of harassment. Look for inconsistencies in the victim's version of the harassment. Also, note the victim's demeanor. Assure the victim that you take the accusations seriously and that he or she will not be subject to any retaliation for filing a complaint.

Prepare a detailed history if the case. Begin with the date of employment and record every significant date in the alleged victim's work history (promotions, demotions, pay

raises, changes in responsibilities) and every alleged act of harassment. See if there is any correlation between the victim's work history and the dates of the alleged incidents of harassment. Does such a correlation suggest a possible motive in filing an allegation of harassment?

Interview the accused. Interview the alleged perpetrator and look for inconsistencies in this person's story. Observe the person's demeanor.

Review work record. Review the work record of the alleged perpetrator. Have similar complaints been filed against this person?

Interview witnesses. Do not suggest answers or disclose information. For example, in speaking with a coworker of the victim, you might ask, "Have you ever seen anyone engage in inappropriate behavior with [the victim] during work?" Do not ask, "How often did you see John touch [the victim]?"

Documentation. Look for any documentation that would support the victim's charges (e.g., notes and letters).

Additional evidence. If the case is still in doubt, ask the alleged victim for any additional evidence to support his or her claim. If there is no additional evidence, and the employer determines that the allegations of harassment were not proven, then the employer should assure the alleged victim that (1) the employer takes such charges very seriously, (2) the allegations were fully investigated, and (3) there will be no adverse consequences for filing the complaint. Further, the alleged victim should be encouraged to report immediately any additional evidence or any further incidents of harassment.

The EEOC guidelines state: "Prevention is the best tool for the elimination of sexual harassment. An employer should take all steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring, such as affirmatively raising the subject, expressing strong disapproval, developing appropriate sanctions, informing employees of their right to raise and how to raise the issue of harassment under Title VII, and developing methods to sensitize all concerned. (t

Richard R. Hammar is an attorney and CPA. A graduate of Harvard Law School, he serves as legal counsel to The General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.



Because of the substantial threat that sexual harassment allegations pose to an employer, it is important to engage in preventive measures.

United States Military Personnel on Assignment

THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD began extensive ministry to military personnel during World War II and has continued that outreach to the present. Supporting this ministry is the Chaplaincy Department in the Division of Home Missions, which provides free gospel literature, counsel, and other help. Enrichment's executive editor Wayne I. Goodall recently spoke with Lemuel D. McElyea, Chaplain, Colonel, USAF (Ret.), Chaplaincy Department secretary, concerning Military Personnel Day, July 7, and matters pertinent to chaplains and other military personnel.

... " ... "

WHAT IS THE BASIC JOB DESCRIPTION OF A MILITARY CHAPLAIN?

A chaplain's job is to keep the commander informed of unit morale, the moral climate within the unit, and to provide services as needed for the individuals who make up that unit and their families. This includes all types of counseling, worship services, Bible studies—anything with religious content.

DO CHAPLAINS HAVE FREEDOM TO PREACH AND WITNESS?

Chaplains have a lot of freedom. They do not have to speak or state anything in sermons that they don't believe, and they can never be required to do something that violates their consciences. That's an important point: The conscience is the predominating factor.

HOW MANY MILITARY CHAPLAINS DOES THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD HAVE?

We have 104 active-duty chaplains—Army, Navy, and Air Force—and 49 reserve chaplains. This is an increase of 42 during the past 12 years that I have been in the department; thus we have seen considerable growth.

TO WHAT DO YOU ATTRIBUTE THIS GROWTH?

Several things: Number one, the military has changed from a quota system (which allows denominations quotas based on their memberships) to what they call the best-qualified system (based on education, experience, pastoral training, etc.). Assemblies of God chaplains are viewed as having higher standards. As they leave their assignments, commanders often request other Assemblies of God men to take their places. Thus we have credibility from the inside.

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE CHAPLAINCY AND THE MILITARY AS A GREAT MISSION FIELD?

It is a great mission field and a wide-open field. For example, it is reported that approximately 20 percent of all the troops involved in the Gulf War found the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. Our chaplains were involved in this—winning them to the Lord, baptizing them, introducing them to Christian literature and Christian schools, etc. Many of the churches overseas began under the auspices of military people.

DURING TIMES OF WAR OR PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS, WHAT IS THE CHAPLAIN'S MAJOR CONCERN?

The chaplain's primary mission is to be with the troops, hold services in the field, counsel—just to be there with them. It's what they call "the ministry of presence."

HOW MANY ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHAPLAINS ARE INVOLVED IN BOSNIA?

At the time of this interview (December) we have four; however, it's too early to know how many will be involved. I believe the Army will be sending in around 30: four of them are Assemblies of God-a fairly high percentage. That number will grow as we hear from the Navy and the Air Force.

HOW CAN PASTORS AND CHURCHES HELP ON MILITARY PERSONNEL DAY, JULY 7? AND HOW CAN THEY HELP OUR CHAPLAINS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN BOSNIA?

The most important thing anyone can do is pray. At the same time we use this day to appeal for funds for our office operational budget that provides many of the services we offer to military personnel. Therefore, we would ask them for offerings, to set up prayer vigils for our people, and to correspond with the military personnel from their churches. It is helpful to remind them periodically, "We're thinking of you, and you're still a part of our Eves."

If this is done, when military people come home they return to the church. But if the

church forgets them, then the military people will forget the church. We want to hold on to them.

One pastor said he considers military people missionaries. He trains and equips them 3 years and sends them out into the world as missionaries paid by the U.S. Government. Many of them work diligently in the chapel programs overseas and establish missions programs. It would be helpful if pastors could think of sending military personnel out as missionaries rather than losing people whose financial support will be missed.

THANK YOU, CHAPLAIN MCELYEA, FOR THE FINE JOB YOU ARE DOING WITH OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL WORLDWIDE. §



*Chaplain Lemuel D.
McElyea*

Model of Ministry to Victims of Catastrophe

PART 1

In the early 1970s I was part of a team of hospital chaplains who responded daily to over 500 emergency room patients and families at a 1,000-bed trauma center. In my first 24

BY ROBERT D. PARLOTZ

hours as the duty chaplain I ministered to 18 families where death had occurred in addition to over 32 critical and serious-care emergencies. This became routine daily ministry. Because of the high volume and intense needs, a special form of pastoral care was necessary. I called it trauma pastoral care.

**Trauma
pastoral care is
a specialized
form of
emergency
pastoral care
with victims of
catastrophe.**

Trauma pastoral care is a specialized form of emergency pastoral care with victims of catastrophe. It is the immediate response of a pastor to people in the midst of and following catastrophe, a disaster, or other threatening event, including life-threatening experiences. Catastrophic events occur most often without much warning. The pastor must assess the overwhelming needs of people quickly and respond in brief supportive intervention. The magnitude of these situations is great. Hospital chaplains in the highest intensity "trauma one" medical centers, combat military chaplains, and police chaplains to departments in high violence areas are probably the only clergy who will see this ministry regularly. Yet natural disaster, multiple casualty accidents, and violence can suddenly thrust a pastor into situations of catastrophe where this ministry must be provided.

The principles and techniques of this trauma ministry are not complex.² Indeed, they must be as simple as possible to avoid further traumatization of the victim of catastrophe. Essentially the pastor forms a partnership with the victim.

THE PASTORAL PARTNERSHIP

A trauma pastoral care partner must (1) understand the nature of trauma,³ (2) be sen-

sitive to the effects of traumatic events upon human experience, (3) have the ability to intervene pastorally and therapeutically with trauma victims,⁴ (4) be a high-level empathic listener who is not threatened by the expression of intense feelings, (5) be flexible, (6) be religiously pluralistic in awareness of spiritual expressions, (7) be capable of quick insight, (8) have effective leadership abilities, and (9) be open to deal effectively with one's own conviction status and need for support as others minister to the pastor.

TRAUMA MINISTRY

Trauma pastoral care supports the person in growth from victim to survivor. The scars of the trauma will always exist because the trauma occurred. Victims reexperience the traumas of the past with a focus on the past, attempting to rewrite history without including the threatening experiences. Survivors refocus on the future. Survivors work to accept emotional and physical scars of the trauma. They work to adapt to the continuing effects of the incident as present reminders of the past. Surviving trauma is a process. However, to facilitate this adaptation, acute pastoral care through a very special ministry of presence should be initiated within 72 hours of the event if possible. Usually this occurs outside the physical sanctuary of the local church. Trauma pastoral care provides the concrete factors symbolizing security through interpersonal presence and bonding during and immediately after the traumatic event and continues throughout adaptation.⁵ It is important that the victim be supported by caregivers who are seen as supportive providers of and symbols of security.

This pastoral crisis intervention occurs within the proximity of the traumatic event, as close to the impact of the event or experience in time as possible. It is expected that victims will return to normal life activities with appro-

appropriate adaptation. This ministry is a brief, pastorally supportive and educative encounter focused on normalizing the event-specific feelings, thinking, and behavioral responses of the traumatically stressed victims. It enables reestablishment of a sense of control and connectedness with the victim's cohort support group of family, friends, and church. In this ministry the pastor will become involved in the experience of the victim.

There are five basic elements of this acute care of the victims: (1) The spiritual caregiver makes contact with the victim using effective counseling skills with high emphasis on attentive, empathic listening. (2) The spiritual authority figure provides a sense of security by means of psychological presence with the victim. Ministry of presence provides a counterweight to the negative anxious effects of abandonment experienced during the intensity of the traumatic event. (3) The pastor is supportive. Only the immediate support is important at this time; thus a here-and-now focus of attention dominates the intervention in the acute care environment. The victim is helped to talk about the experience. The victim describes the event and naturally will add information about feelings. (4) Trauma pastoral care includes networking of identified resources. It effectively links the victim with these resources. The aim is to overcome the fragmentation of the victim's supportive networks caused by the trauma. (5) Closure to this brief pastoral contact occurs as the pastor enables the victim to see the immediate response to the event as a normal reaction to an out-of-the-ordinary, catastrophic event. In extended events, ministry may consist of daily visits to victims. Presence, active empathic listening, and spiritual ministrations meet symbolic and concrete needs to reestablish a sense of security—the prime goal.

The presence of the pastor as a caring

authority figure provides a transitional function during the catastrophic event and as the victim initially adapts. The pastoral blessing, prayer, and Scripture may be used. Sometimes Communion may be celebrated. These acts of spiritual care represent the presence of God with people in the midst of chaos. However, avoid using spiritual ministrations which are not familiar to the victim. The victim will identify the resources needed. Complex adaptive behaviors tend to be impaired by the trauma. Keep the pastoral response simple.

Trauma pastoral care seeks to respond to the total person who is processing event-specific traumatic stress. These experiences are sensation dominated. They involve an ongoing cognitive struggle with memories and reexperiencing. Trauma pastoral care facilitates spiritual adaptive adjustment. (t

**Trauma pastoral
care supports
the person in
growth from
victim to survivor.**

Robert D. Parlotz, D.Min., Ed. D., NCE, is coordinator of the department of behavioral science and associate professor of psychology at Northwest College of the Assemblies of God, Kirkland, Washington.

ENDNOTES:

1 Robert D. Parlotz, *Trauma Pastoral Care Training for Military Chaplains* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms International, 1990).

2 Robert D. Parlotz, "Trauma Pastoral Care: A USAF Chaplain Intervention Model for Responding to Trauma Environments," in A. David Mangelsdorff (ed.), *Proceedings Seventh Users' Stress Workshop: Training for Psychiatric Trauma* [of the U.S. Army Health Care Studies and Clinical Investigation Activity of the U.S. Army Health Services Command, Fort Sam Houston, Tex., December 10-15, 1989], *Consultation Report #91-001* (Alexandria, Va.: Defense Technical Information Center, 1990), 48-55.

3 Basic reading should include: Beverley Raphael, *When Disaster Strikes: How Individuals and Communities Cope with Catastrophe* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); Richard D. Allen (ed.).

**Survivors
work to
accept
emotional
and physical
scars of the
trauma...
[and] adapt to
the continuing
effects of the
incident as
present
reminders
of the past.**

Handbook of Post Disaster Interventions (Corte Madera, Calif: Select Press, 1993); Charles R. Figley (ed.), Trauma and Its Wake (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1985); Charles R. Figley (ed.), Trauma and Its Wake; vol. 2: Traumatic Stress Theory, Research, and Intervention (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1986); Hamilton I. McCubbin and Charles R. Figley (eds.), Stress and the Family; Vol. 1: Coping with Normal Transitions (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1983); Charles R. Figley and Hamilton I. McCubbin (eds.), Stress and the Family; Vol. 2: Coping with Catastrophe (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1983); JWrey T. Mitchell, "When Disaster Strikes... The Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Process," Journal of Emergency Medical Services, 13 (Jan., 1983), 47-52; Besse! A. van der Kolk (ed.), Psychological Trauma (Washington, D.c.: American Psychiatric Press, 1986); and Tom Williams (ed.), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders: a Handbook for Clinicians (Cincinnati, Ohio: Disabled American Veterans, 1987); John P. Wilson, Trauma, Transformation, and Healing: An Integrative Approach to Theory, Research, and Post-Traumatic Therapy (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1989).

4Robert D. Parlotz, "Spin'tual Aspects if Traumatic Stress Syndromes: Issues Q/ Hardiness and Resilience, " in A. David Mange!sdorf (ed.), Proceedings Eighth Users' Stress Workshop [Q/ the U.S. Amry Health Care Studies and Clinical Investigation Activiry if the U.S. Army Health Services Command, Fort Sam Houston, Tex., September 24-27, 1991), Consultation Report #92-003 (Alexandria, Va.: Difense Technical Ilformation Center, 1992), 34-48; and Robert D. Parlotz and Charles R. Frisse!l, Trauma Pastoral Care, directed by Bob Brown (2 vol. VHS videocassette; Maxwe!l AFB, Ala.: Detachment 3, 1361, Aerospace Audiovisual Services. USAF Air University, 1988), unclassified training videosJor USAF Chaplain Service.

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"WE'VE JUST WON TWO FREE TICKETS TO HAWAII! I'LL CANCEL THE PAPER, CONTACT YOUR BOARD, AND START PACKING. YOU START PRAYING TO SEE IF WE SHOULD GO."

The Minister's Marriage: His* Passport to the Pulpit

BY RICHARD D. DOBBINS

PART 2

In Part 1 we considered that husbands and wives must be able to imagine how the world looks from each other's viewpoint before they can meet the spouse's needs for love and affection. We also looked at what most women expect from their husbands and what most men expect from their wives. In those ways parsonage couples are like almost all other couples.

Parsonage couples are also like some other couples and like no other couples.

THE MINISTER AND HIS WIFE ARE LIKE SOME OTHER COUPLES.

Parsonage couples face problems similar to those in any marriage where one partner has a very demanding profession. Ministers are not alone in their 10- to 12-hour workdays.

Before couples part each morning add a measure of security to your relationship by sincerely invoking Jacob's prayer at Mizpah: "The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another" (Genesis 31:49).

As a minister, who is also the head of a Christian family, model healthy family priorities for other ambition-driven people in your congregation: God first, mate second, children and family third, and ministry to the body of Christ and the institutional church fourth. Of course, the Lord's work may require you to work from 50 to 60 hours a week at times, but you cannot consistently go beyond this without taking great risks with your spiritual, marital, emotional, and physical health.

Because the day is long and demanding, the way you leave each other's world in the morning and reenter it in the evening is important.

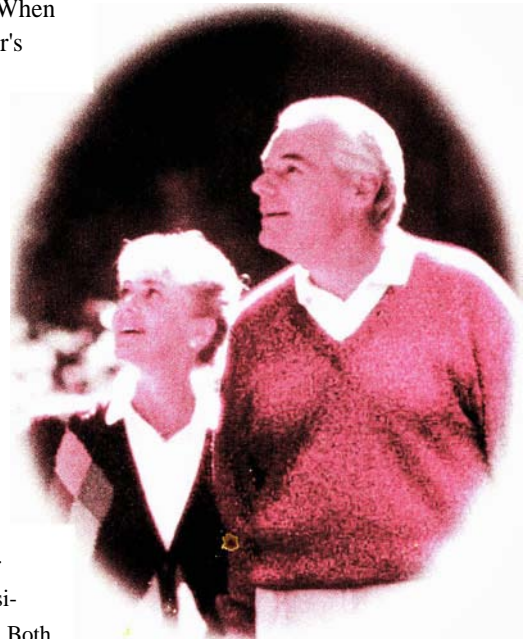
Exchange expressions of affection before you leave. When you reenter each other's world every day, establish a routine that allows for a tender hug, a kiss, and a few minutes of pleasant conversation before you share what went wrong during the day.

This doesn't mean you are alienating yourself from the stressful aspects of family life or dumping all the responsibility on your partner. Both will simply be better prepared for dealing with whatever else you have

to manage if you have a few minutes of enjoyment first. It is a way to create the most positive climate possible for problem solving.

The quality of time you give each other is also important. Many men are never home even when they are home—they lose themselves in the television, behind a newspaper, in a book, or mulling over the day's events. Working wives are subject to the same temptation. Learn to leave your work behind when you head for home. Your mate and family deserve more than a worn-out body and a tired mind night after night.

If as a parsonage wife you have a part-time or full-time job outside the home, you are obviously dealing with more than the usual number of parsonage stresses. As in any marriage where the wife helps bring in the family income, your husband needs to make some time to help you with household tasks and child care. Come up with a workable division



Many men are never home even when they are home—they lose themselves in the television, behind a newspaper, in a book, or mulling over the day's events.

of tasks that each will be responsible for around the house and with the children-and determine to do them. It will give you a new appreciation for each other and teach your children teamwork to meet shared family goals.

If both become involved in highly demanding professional careers and one of you is in the ministry, your marriage will be subject to incredible stresses. You may want to reconsider attempting such a lifestyle: both your marriage and your children will pay an enormous price for your freedom as each of you pursues a demanding career.

THE MINISTER AND SPOUSE ARE LIKE NO OTHER COUPLES.

The scrutiny with which people observe parsonage couples is greater than that directed toward any other couple, since the minister's character is central to the position he holds. This is the first way in which parsonage couples are like no other couples. Because job security is so tightly tied to the minister's character, there are few people with whom you or your spouse can safely discuss family or marriage problems.

Fewer gifted people in the past would have lost their ministries-and fewer parsonage marriages would have experienced such humiliation-if the emotional climate in the ministry had allowed those couples to feel safe in reaching out for help at the first sign of need. I'm thankful God has now provided a way for us as a denomination to offer competent and confidential help for ministers and their families' emotional needs. Your denominational leaders want your ministry and your marriage to thrive-and so do I.

Second, the minister is often required

to live close to his work. You may live on or adjacent to church property. If so, you will have to work discreetly-but constantly-to guard your family's privacy. Tactfully explain that your home is just

that: your home. It is not a public restroom, a gathering place, or a source of free coffee and dessert before or after church. It is your private refuge.

Third, few (if any) other professions expect the spouse to work alongside the

other without pay. If your church board wants two full-time ministers for one salary and you are comfortable with it, that's OK. However, where dependent children are involved, it is healthy-and scriptural-for the wife to determine that she will be (1) a faithful child of God, (2) the loving and supportive wife of her husband, (3) a good mother to the children, and (4) involved in church work-in that order. The children's legitimate needs must come first, or you run the risk of sacrificing your children to your public ministry.

The extent to which any pastor's wife

is active in the church should be determined by her gifts, her needs, and the ages of the children still living at home.

Fourth, unlike most other public servants, the minister and his wife must live with the knowledge that 10 to 15 percent of their congregation will always wish they had a different pastor. If you can't live comfortably with that, you will be miserable in the ministry. Focus instead on the love and loyalty of the majority of your congregation, and you will sleep well at night.

When the yoke of the ministry galls you and your burdens are anything but light, check to see what else is motivating you, because His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Stay close to God, each other, and the people in your church who love you. This will secure your passport to the pulpit and help guarantee the joy of your ministerial journey through life together! (†)

**Once again, although this article refers to the minister in the male gender, the principles are valid for the marriages of female ministers as well.*

Richard D. Dobbins, Ph.D., is the founder/director of Emerge Ministries, Inc., Akron, Ohio, and the assistant superintendent of the Ohio District.

The scrutiny with which people observe parsonage couples is greater than that directed toward any other couple.



FO WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Beyond Beijing

INTERVIEW WITH WINNIE BARTEL
In September 1995, 30,000 delegates from 185 nations attended the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, China. While the stated purpose was to support basic human rights and opportunities for all women, other issues surfaced that overshadowed this elementary purpose and caused great concern in the Christian community.

Winnie Bartel, representative of the National Association of Evangelicals, attended the conference with a delegation of eight women known as the Ecumenical Coalition on Women and Society. The group was coalesced by the Institute on Religion and Democracy in Washington, D.C.

On behalf of Enrichment, Peggy Musgrove, Women's Ministries Department secretary, interviewed Winnie Bartel to discuss the conference and the Christian community's response.

THIS CONFERENCE WAS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL WOMEN. WAS THIS PURPOSE ACCOMPLISHED?

What I feared most about going to China was that three or four issues at the forefront of the agenda for many groups would so far overshadow the main purpose that the human rights issue of women would never be covered. To a great degree that happened.

For example, the location of the conference was an issue. Many questioned the purpose of scheduling this conference in a country not known for political freedom. While we were there our actions were monitored closely. We were prohibited from seeing certain sights or going on certain streets such as to Tiananmen Square.

Any organization of a pro-life or religious nature was especially monitored. We know of cases where rooms were searched and materials

taken. But this was not only the religious groups; media representatives also were monitored closely.

IT SEEMS STRANGE THAT AT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE POLITICAL PRIORITIES WERE NOT EXTENDED TO DELEGATES, WHICH MAKES US QUESTION WHY THE CONFERENCE WAS IN CHINA.

We did question it greatly. From what we could put together, the location was chosen specifically because the Chinese government is the most repressive government on women. Feminists and anti-abortionists felt they could win their ground because of China's strict abortion policy. This one issue overshadowed the stated issue of human rights and opportunities for women, but in spite of this some good things came out of the conference.

LET'S DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF RELIGIOUS RIGHTS FOR WOMEN, WHICH PARTICULARLY INTERESTS US. YOU FELT POSITIVE ABOUT THE RELIGIOUS RIGHTS PORTION OF THE DOCUMENT PASSED AT THE CONFERENCE.

Before going to Beijing, I wrote the brochure for our coalition, basing our position on Scripture. The final wording on the religious freedom portion of the U.N. document inserted a paragraph which used almost verbatim the wording we had used.

AMAZING, PARTICULARLY AS I UNDERSTAND THE STRONG ANTI-CHRISTIAN SENTIMENT AT THE CONFERENCE.

This stemmed largely from the incredibly strong anti-Pope, anti-Rome sentiment which we noticed from the first day. At the same time we observed a great spiritual hunger among these women. We soon became aware this forum was, for many women, a place for seeking something spiritual.

At our booth we distributed our brochure

We observed a great spiritual hunger among these women.

We soon became aware this forum was, for many women, a place for seeking something spiritual.

Women brought objects which represented to them some form of this goddess. Thousands of items were placed around a 10-foot altar.

and stated our purpose in coming—shyly at first. As time went on we openly shared our commitment to Jesus Christ. Throughout the stay I met several secret believers in spite of close monitoring by Chinese officials.

At other booths and workshops religious overtones were ominous. Tents were labeled with titles that had spiritual meanings such as Spiritual Tent, Healing Tent, Quiet, Peace, and Prayer. Some of the workshops blatantly attacked the Christian religion.

I UNDERSTAND GODDESS WORSHIP WAS ALSO PROMINENT.

In the Peace Tent a huge feminine goddess was built. Women brought objects which represented to them some form of this goddess. Thousands of items were placed around a 10-foot altar. Later these were to be glued together, symbolizing the coming together as one goddess. Plans are to take this goddess on tour of the world.

Women conducting candle vigils constantly filled this tent. While we relegate this type of worship to the idolatry of the Old Testament, three of the women in our coalition said goddess worship is now in the seminaries of their denominations. Their mainline churches have embraced goddess worship as part of their theology.

WHAT OTHER ISSUES WERE DEALT WITH WHICH SHOULD BE OF CONCERN TO THE CHURCH?

The gender and abortion issues remained undecided at the close of the conference. You were probably aware this conference attempted to extend the definition of gender beyond male and female. Strong opposition for this issue came from representatives of the Pope in Rome and the Muslim bloc. Support for this issue came from the United States,

Canada, and Europe.

The family issue won with the platform distinctly stating, "The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened." We need to be aware that the word *family* can be defined differently by different people.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ISSUE? I UNDERSTAND THERE IS SOME CONCERN ABOUT THIS.

Traditional parental rights were challenged on the last day's negotiations. The document sharply limits traditional parental rights by invoking an expansive definition of the "rights of the child." These are to include access to information, privacy, confidentiality, respect, and informed consent.

BUT THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT HAVE THE BINDING EFFECT OF LAW.

No. U.N. documents are only recommendations which are not legally binding. However, they are a strong tool to coerce governments into action, which is already happening in the United States. Donna Shalala, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services secretary, told us the Clinton administration is committed to implementing the Beijing platform regardless of its technical legal status. A White House Office of Women's Outreach and Initiatives has been set up to coordinate a yearlong process involving every federal agency in carrying out the platform.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO THIS CONFERENCE?

The church must become aware of what is happening around us and learn afresh what it means to be salt and light—catalysts who affect our society. I wept at the conference as I listened to well-known feminist theologians declare the church had not listened to them, so they stepped

out and became accepted by the world.

This conference is a call to prayer for the church—prayers of repentance if we have been negligent of people's needs. We have been accused of becoming a holy huddle inside our beautiful buildings. If these charges are true, we must ask the Lord to show us where we can change. Our prayer must also be for these women who, behind all their seeming hardness, have a deep spiritual hunger for reality which can only be found in Jesus Christ.

Then we need to ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do about the needs of this generation?" We have several wonderful examples from His life. The Samaritan woman, the woman taken in adultery, and Matthew (the tax collector) all fit into this category. Jesus dialogued with them without condemnation. We must seek ways to build bridges to today's women, try to understand them, and address issues which concern them.

This is most effective on an individual basis, which is what Jesus did.

WHICH MEANS WE AS THE CHURCH MAY NEED TO CHANGE SOME OF OUR METHODS FOR REACHING PEOPLE. WE MUST GO TO THE PEOPLE INSTEAD OF EXPECTING THEM TO COME TO US.

Right, because many of them are not coming to us. Romans 12:1,2 says, "Be a new and different person with a fresh newness in all you do and think" (*The Living Bible*). We must look at fresh, new ways of being salt and light—fla-

voring, preserving, tolerating, and being tolerable. As light we are to be on a movable light stand, not a permanent fixture. As salt, we must penetrate substances as light penetrates darkness.

In Eugene Peterson's *The Message*, Matthew 5:15,16 reads, "Now I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand-shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God." We have to open our lives and lay them bare.

AND GET OUT OF OUR LITTLE HOLY HUDDLES.

The *Washington Times* Magazine said we (the Christians) would be a David going against Goliath in China. But what the *Washington Times* didn't say was that David won, too. God gave me the promise that the victory would be His.

If a few people, such as the small number of Christians going to China, could make such a difference, can you imagine what the whole church could do if we would be salt and light? Let us

pray that will happen. II



Winnie Bartel



ocus on America



BY CHARLES E. HACKETT

- V The majority of the 15 million post-1965 immigrants are from Third World countries, not Europeans who represented the largest immigrant share before 1965 and who have far more in common with American values.
- V Spanish speakers in the United States have increased by 50 percent since 1985.
- V KTLA FM, a Spanish-language station located in Los Angeles, California, is the most listened-to radio station in the United States.
- V Mission America Placement Service (MAPS) RV Volunteers has a threefold purpose: (1) to help meet the need for construction and renovation of churches, Assemblies of God colleges, and other facilities; (2) to strengthen the home missions pastor's arm of evangelism; and (3) to offer a ministry of helps to volunteers-especially retirees.
- V Invasion 39, a program to influence the 39 cities of 1 million or more people with the gospel of Jesus Christ, is birthing aggressive church-planting strategies. Since 1993, the Michigan District has planted five new churches in the Detroit area. Each new church is designed to plant satellite churches to increase the gospel's influence on the city.
- V Chi Alpha Campus Ministries is committed to training university ministry leaders. Campus ministers reach and equip students who will be future leaders of our world. Chi Alpha's primary training ministry is the Campus Missionary-in-Training (CMIT) internship program. Chi Alpha has 20 CMIT programs at major universities across the country. Each program is a 9-month, 50-hour-per-week intensive training program that focuses on three areas of equipping: (1) character maturation, (2) intellectual growth, and (3) campus ministry skills attainment. The number of CMIT interns has doubled in the past 2 years, and interest is at an all-time high.
- V Assemblies of God church membership grew by 13,937 in 1993-94. At the same time, America's prison population exploded by 83,252-1,601 new beds built each week. For each new Assemblies of God church member, six men and women became members of America's prisons. Today over a million prisoners wait behind prison walls for hope. Some 61 Assemblies of God prison chaplains are valiantly infiltrating those walls to carry the message of hope in Jesus Christ.
- V "Individuals who make it from age 10 to 20 without using illegal drugs, alcohol, or smoking are virtually certain never to do so," said John A. Califano, Jr., president of the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, New York.
- V According to the National Council of Churches, 41 percent of the residents of an average county are unclaimed by a recognized Judeo-Christian church.
- V The 1994 Gallup Poll reports 96 percent of Americans believe in God or a universal spirit, 60 percent say that religion is very important in their lives, and 42 percent attend church weekly or almost weekly.
- V The Intercultural Ministries Department in the Division of Home Missions is sharpening skills to train leaders for cross-cultural evangelism, expanding their horizon to include our ethnic neighbors, and communicating their vision to reach the nations within our borders. Some 49 ethnic groups are currently being reached by some 400 nationally appointed home missionaries. (t

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

Want To Change the World? Think Missions!



BY H.H. "SPUD" DEMENT

A literal mandate has been given: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Connected to this Great Commission is the responsibility to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19).

God's missionary message to evangelize and disciple all people is a theme from Genesis to Revelation. Scripture demands our commitment to that unfinished task. Pastors can experience nothing more thrilling and no greater privilege than being involved in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

A theme so widespread in God's Word clearly indicates God's plan, plot, and purpose for all age groups and all cultural contexts. Teaching and preaching missions must be a vital part of church life. Even classroom sessions for children and youth should generously include the missions mandate, so it will become part of the fiber of their young lives.

There are several ways to promote missions in the church. Some of the suggestions given below can easily be implemented to stimulate greater missions enthusiasm and education in the local church.

PREACH MISSIONS MESSAGES REGULARLY.

Preach and teach missions so the congregation can share the burden for the lost. Annual missions conventions are ideal avenues to stress missions. Pastors often begin missions conventions with a pastoral exhortation. One became so impassioned about winning the world he preached on the current missions theme for four consecutive Sunday mornings before his church's missions convention.

SCHEDULE VETERAN AND CANDIDATE MISSIONARIES FOR ALL AGE GROUPS.

At the beginning of the Decade of Harvest the annual statistics from the Division of Foreign Missions revealed that 35 percent of u.s. Assemblies of God churches had no missionary speakers that year. Yet our Fellowship will have a renewed dimension of strength and scope only as missionaries are allowed to impart their burden and vision to local congregations.

In making plans for missionary services, include youth and children. Because of the variety of programs in some churches, youth and children seldom get to meet missionaries or hear of the call of God upon their lives.

Many missionaries say they received God's call during their childhood years. Giving children opportunities to hear missions messages allows the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of the next generation of potential missionaries.

SELECT MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION TO SHARE MISSIONS TESTIMONIES IN SERVICES.

People are often motivated to become involved in faith promises after they hear a testimony of miraculous provision from a peer. Church members who have participated in a HealthCare Ministries trip, a Missions Abroad Placement Service (MAPS) building project, or other short-term missions involvement are often used by God as key motivators to spark the flame of missions in a congregation.

INVITE PEOPLE FROM OTHER NATIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP.

Churches near a major university will have easy access to international students. Plan a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 99



The Finishers and the Starters

BY GEORGE O. WOOD

HEBREWS 11 gives us the roll call of God's heroes who have finished. They all have something to say to us today who are in the marathon of life.

This chapter is not given simply to provide an historical perspective of God's people in the past. It provides insight into how we might run this race the Lord has assigned us to. I have noted five things from this passage.

1. ONLY A FEW ARE NOTICED BY THE MANY.

The writer uses 31 verses to recount the stories of a few of God's heroes. Compared with the panorama of redemptive history found in the Old Testament, most of God's heroes in the Old Testament are not mentioned at all. They're not summarized. Their stories are not told. Their names lie unmentioned.

The Hebrews writer's problem was not having enough time to communicate the entire message he wanted to share. He was saying: In each generation we must not get stuck thinking that faith died in the last generation. It didn't.

In a similar way, only a few of us will ever have our stories told. Can you bear the anonymity of being a laborer for the Lord? The list of names is telling us that our story may never be run in someone else's headlines.

2. GOD HAS NO PERFECT PEOPLE TO WORK WITH.

In the midst of their great faith, many of those mentioned also had glaring weaknesses. The Assemblies of God does not have perfect missionaries. In the kingdom of God He only uses people.

ANNUAL SCHOOL OF MISSIONS, COMMISSIONING SERVICE, HIGHLIGHTS FOR DIVISION OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

Among the multiple activities the Division of Foreign Missions conducts each summer during the annual School of Missions for candidate and veteran missionaries, the commissioning service is a high point—new missionaries are set apart for foreign service.

The 1996 School of Missions will be in session July 9-19 on the campus of Central Bible College (CBC) in Springfield, Missouri, with the commissioning service scheduled for the morning of the closing day. Approximately 100 candidates are preparing to be commissioned in that service.

For the commissioning, candidates stand at the altar in CBC's chapel and are joined by men and women whom they have chosen to

lay hands on them and pray.

While some mainline organizations and missions agencies have experienced a drop in personnel seeking to minister abroad, the stream of candidates in the Assemblies of God continues to rise.

Candidates spend an additional 2 weeks in Pre-Field Orientation. Then 300 veteran missionaries join them for the school's 10 days of learning, worship, and fellowship.

Assemblies of God ministries now reach into 164 nations. Several hundred ministers and workers from other nations join the 2,000-plus long- and short-term missionaries from the United States.

John Calvin provided tremendous insight on this passage: "There were none of them whose faith did not falter. In every saint there is always to be found something reprehensible. Nevertheless, although faith may be imperfect and incomplete, it does not cease to be approved by God. There is no reason why the fault from which we labor should break us or discourage us, provided we go on by faith in our calling."

Every one of these persons who made it into the hall of fame had to know the grace of God to overcome their deficiencies.

3. YOU WILL ALWAYS FACE SITUATIONS BIGGER THAN YOU.

Persons of faith are that way. We wouldn't be persons of faith if we only lifted

weights that were comparable to our present strength.

All these persons of faith encountered things beyond their resources, beyond their natural ability and power. What unites this list is that they all faced incredible odds. That's how they got into God's hall of fame. They were willing to take terrifying risks for the Lord. Faith is never dependent upon favorable circumstances. The greatest works of faith are done in the least favorable times.

4. SOMETIMES YOU WILL OUTWARDLY PREVAIL IN THE SITUATION YOU FACE.

Ten phrases in Hebrews 11 describe the outward triumphs—conquering, administering justice, gaining promised provi-



sions, shutting lions' mouths, quenching the fury of flames, escaping the edge of the sword, turning weakness to strength, becoming powerful in battle, routing foreign armies, giving women their dead raised to life again. It's these outward triumphs that you tell about. More difficult are the times when the battle was against you.

Never forget we are in ministry by God's assignment. It is not *"V"* work and *my* church. It is *His* work and *His* church. He must do that which we cannot do or our efforts are in vain. Miracles did not end with the Apostolic Era, nor did they end in 1914 or last year. God's work of miracles is still going on in this world, and He has promised to confirm His Word with signs following.

Although this passage of Scripture tells us that we will sometimes outwardly prevail, it also reminds us that sometimes our prevailing will be inward. These heroes were not *delivered* because of their faith but *suffered*

because of their faith.

They were tortured, jeered, flogged, chained, imprisoned, stoned, sawed in two, put to death by the sword, persecuted, and mistreated. The world drove them out because they thought they were unworthy to live, while the truth was that the world was unworthy to have them live in it.

This Movement did not grow from 300 to 30 million without persons of faith who prevailed when their circumstances didn't change. It's both. God has given growth because He has confirmed His Word with signs and wonders which change circumstances, but He also has confirmed His power in people when their circumstances seemed not to yield.

5. THE OUTWARD AND THE INWARD PREVAILERS WERE ALL COMMENDED FOR THEIR FAITH.

The writer of Hebrews was saying that these Old Testament saints were incomplete without us. The community God

called them to create would not exist unless we filled their places, and there are people who are or will be incomplete without us.

Hebrews 12 points us to a heavenly amphitheater or coliseum that is filling up with those who are now a heavenly cloud of witnesses. It is not yet time to say the stadium is full, because empty seats are all around the upper rows of the coliseum. God is sending you into the world so that those seats will be full. They will not be filled unless you obey the call. We celebrate the record of redemptive history God will write with you. And we celebrate all those whose names will be written in the Lamb's Book of Life and will fill the seats in the coliseum because you said "Yes" to His call. (†)

—Abridged from message at the 1995 School of Missions Commissioning Service.

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

WORLD LINK
THINK MISSIONS!
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 97

get-acquainted time and have the invited guests tell about the cultural differences they have observed since coming to the United States. Discuss family values and predominant religions in their homelands.

The major way to win non-Christian internationals to Jesus is by developing genuine friendships with them. Demonstrating the love of Jesus can be a powerful testimony.

ASK TEACHERS FROM YOUR CHURCH TO OFFER ELECTIVES IN LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES OR CROSS.CULTURAL COMMUNICATION.

After a class in language learning, plan a missions outreach to a country whose people speak the language studied. The outreach may be a designated time of fasting and prayer for the people of that language group or an actual MAPS trip to the country to assist the missionaries and ministries there.

Gary Gibson, who works with the

DFM Task Force Ministries, said, "A church will seldom become a missions church unless the missions vision begins in the pulpit. It will seldom remain a missions church unless the vision for missions is established in the pew."

Communicate missions at every opportunity. As a church is set on fire for missions, it can literally impact the world. (†)

H.H. "Spud" DeMent is Division of Foreign Missions secretary of foreign missions relations in the United States.

The Ayes Have It The Church Business Meeting

BY T. RAY RACHELS

Church business meetings will bring out the highs and lows of congregational life. In some churches, whether at the annual meeting or anyone in between, it's an opportunity for joy and celebration. Then there are others, when the roll call is taken and the membership confirmed, dark clouds of suspicion reek with what's been going on? who's to blame? and "What are we going to do about it?"-which usually brings pastoral shivers and a run on Roloids@.

A meeting was held in Southern California last year that fell somewhere between those extremes. A troubled congregation was trying to decide whether to change their status from General Council to district affiliation. During the weeks leading up to the meeting they had argued and bandied about a wide-ranging spectrum of issues. Matters finally queued down to the decision to call a special business meeting for a discussion, followed by a ballot, and moderated by a district official.

Here are the minutes of that meeting, exactly recorded; the only changes are those showing the church's name, date of the meeting, and names of persons involved.

SECOND ASSEMBLY OF GOD OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA Business Meeting January 1, 1995

The Sunday morning service was truncated so that the membership could vote on the following issue recommended by

the board: whether the Second Assembly should seek district affiliation during this time of crisis. A district official of the Assemblies of God moderated at the meeting; 20 members signed the voting roster out of the 32 listed, forming a quorum.

The following discussion preceded the vote:

Carl Smith jumped to his feet and excitedly demanded to know whether he was a member. He was assured he was a member but not on the active list at this time. Since he received a letter, he thought he could automatically come back. The moderator queried him about his absence. Carl reported that he had been on an extended vacation for over 3 months. The moderator asked Carl when he had returned. Carl replied, "Five weeks ago." The moderator questioned where he had attended church since his return. Carl said he has floated. The moderator asked if he had supported the church financially while he was gone. Carl indicated that he gave where he attended. The moderator pointed out to Carl that it was his responsibility as a member to support his church while he was away. Carl's angry yelling accompanied his huffy departure as he stormed out of the building with Diane, his dutiful wife, following behind.

Joyce Brown protested that the board was not the official board since it only consisted of three members. The moderator directed her to page 19 of the Bylaws, Section 4, "Special Business Meetings," that "if the official board consists of three members, all members must concur in this action."

Sharon Archer was called on and said

Joyce had preempted her question. Carolyn Jones defended the board's action.

Joyce Brown attacked Harold as not being an official board member, claiming he had missed too many consecutive board meetings. The moderator defended Harold's status, stating that it was not the issue of this meeting. If Joyce questioned Harold's status as a board member, she must do so in writing to the board.

Barbara Goins challenged the moderator as to whether all members had been notified of the meeting. The moderator referred to page 19 of the Bylaws that the meeting "shall be published by announcement on the two consecutive Sundays prior to such meeting," which was done as notice was given in last Sunday's bulletin, this Sunday being the second Sunday.

Jim Green wanted to know if we still operate with a board during the takeover. The moderator told Jim this was not a district takeover, that the district preferred churches to be able to be sovereign, and did not solicit district-affiliated churches. He also told Jim this was a temporary measure and that this church could vote to become sovereign again when the crisis is over. The church would still operate with an advisory board and the help of the district.

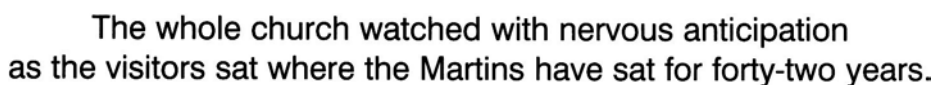
Jim Green also wanted to know why board members, pillars of the church, who had built the church, had been taken off the board. This is an untrue statement as the board has official resignations-given of their own volition by the 4 resigned board members.

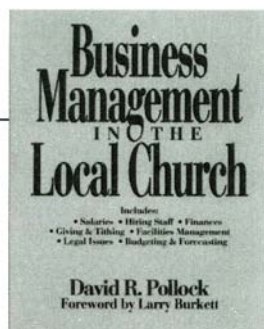
The meeting was shocked and

Renee Atkinson made an emotional

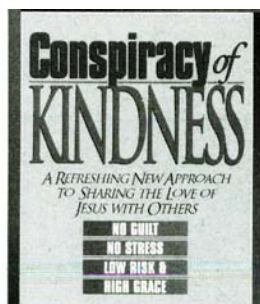
After the vote was over, Barry and

T. Ray Rachels is superintendent of the Southern California District, Irvine.





David R. Pollock (Moody, 164 pp., paperback [workbook], \$11.99)



STEVE SJOGREN

Steve Sjogren (Vine Books [Servant], 238 pp., paperback, \$8.99)

Business Management in the Local Church

David R. Pollock (Moody, 164 pp., paperback [workbook], \$11.99)

David R. Pollock, director of Resource Ministries, Inc., Canoga Park, California, has provided a manual packed with practical and profoundly useful guidelines for the management of church finance. In the opening chapters he gives an introduction to long-range planning, church and law, and church financial budgeting. Other topics include facility management, aid to the poor, and compensation packages for the pastor.

Pastors, church administrators, church treasurers, and students preparing for the ministry will find much helpful information in the manual. The 12 chapters contain many simple-to-use forms which illustrate the issues addressed as well as numerous IRS forms for reference.

Although this handbook gives an introduction to many of the important areas of management in a local church, it is no substitute for good legal and financial counselors. Legal, tax, and personnel matters are complicated and ever-changing. However, this manual helps familiarize readers with

many subjects they may encounter throughout the ministry.

An example of the helpful guidelines found in the book is the chapter on "How To Turn Around a Financially Troubled Church." Pollock addresses the stressful time in the church's life and gives practical steps for the pastor and board to follow.

This book is a good resource for the busy church leader who needs to grasp complicated management issues quickly and action steps.

-Reviewed by Michael D. Messner, Spiritual Life-Evangelism coordinator and administrative assistant to the general superintendent, Springfield, Missouri.

Conspiracy of Kindness

Steve Sjogren (Vine Books [Servant], 238 pp., paperback, \$8.99)

The philosophy of Steve Sjogren's book, *Conspiracy of Kindness*, is wrapped up in calling people to "servant evangelism," something that can be done, he says, by 100 percent of the body of Christ. He illustrates the principle so thoroughly in every chapter the reader is awed by its simplicity and power. For example, teams of people give away coffee in the downtown area, others wash windshields, still others feed parking meters. No donations are accepted for any acts of kindness.

This book does not just lightly touch and briefly explore these things but is a full-throated exegesis of what happens in the lives of people when the church gives away, with no expectation of return, acts of kindness. It is so well illustrated that it is easy to conclude the author and his congregation have adopted this "servant evangelism" as their primary method of expressing God's love.

Sjogren says that by itself, servant evangelism is incomplete as an approach to sharing the gospel. Traditional approaches alone are also incomplete. By focusing on the earlier phases of planting and watering,

Spirituality in an Age of Change: Rediscovering the Spirit of the Reformers

Allister E. McGrath (Zondervan, 206 pp., paperback, \$16.99)

This book is based upon the premise that the Reformation provides the contemporary believer with a priceless, well-documented strategy for the kind of spiritual reform and renewal so desperately needed today.

McGrath does a superb job articulating the spiritual conflicts now confronting the Church and drawing clear parallels between the world of the Reformers and the world at the end of the 20th century.

While staying true to the thesis, McGrath includes some interesting asides about the Reformers and historical tidbits which bring the Reformation period to life.

The Reformers did not hide but confronted the spiritual ills of their day in a sophisticated, cosmopolitan context; and the Reformation flourished. We would do well to learn from them.

-Reviewed by Charles T. Crabtree, Assemblies of God assistant general superintendent, Springfield, Missouri.

deeds of kindness tenderize hearts, so they can later receive the message of God's love.

Sjogren says there are three long-term results of doing servant evangelism: (1) The church will become oriented toward action. (2) The church will be redefined to the surrounding community. (3) The community will be saturated with the presence of these deeds of kindness.

For those who want a close and generously explained look at how Christ's love is being expressed in the marketplace in non-confrontational ways by an energized and renewed congregation, I know of few more refreshing and thrilling books than the well-titled, *Conspiracy if Kindness*.

-Reviewed by T.Ray Rachels, superintendent
if the Southern California District, Irvine.

The American City and the Evangelical Church—An Historical Overview

Harvie M. Conn (Baker, 256 pp., paperback, \$15.99)

This book gives excellent historical background on the development of America's cities and churches and new insights for a student of history. It also reminds there have always been spiritual problems in the cities. Granted, these problems are worse now, but the cities have never been havens of peace and rest.

Conn gives a well-written account of the Great Awakening and Second Great Awakening. He shows how the first Great Awakening under Jonathan Edwards made a difference in society and how Christian support for the poor and downtrodden was reawakened.

Chapters 3-6 give background information that helps the reader understand how the evangelical church got where it is today. The well-organized and easy-to-read material is an excellent source to research historical facts and data that would assist in great sermon material.

The heart of the book deals with the time frame from 1970 to 1990. Conn identifies many of the issues that challenge society today such as geography, migration, racial conflicts, changes in industry, poverty, homelessness, drugs, immigration, and suburbia. This is a must-read for anyone who desires to minister in America's large cities, regardless of one's ethnic background.

The chapter on minority churches reminds the white community all was not lost when the Anglo churches left the inner city. Black and Hispanic churches have made and continue to make a powerful impact on America's cities.

Conn does an excellent job addressing the future. His insights on megachurches, ministry challenges, and church planting are on target.

This book contains few answers, but it addresses the American city and evangelical church problems in a clear and distinct fashion. The information is invaluable to those who have a calling to America's cities.

-Reviewed by Charles E. Hackett,
Division if Home Missions executive director.
Springfield, Missouri.

One Flesh: God's Gift of Passion—Love, Sex, and Romance in Marriage

Bob Yandian (Creation House, 221 pp., paperback, \$14.95)

Yandian draws heavily from the Proverbs to expand on what the Genesis record has to say about the relationship of the original couple. He cites the Hebrew meanings of significant words in the text and quotes freely from Scripture.

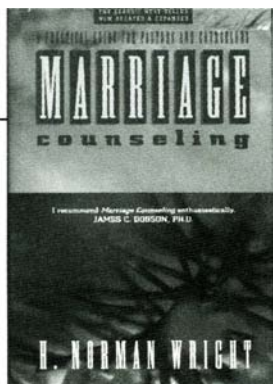
Yandian is unique in his explanations of the "strange woman" in Proverbs. This material will preach when ministering to young people about avoiding sexual sins. He emphasizes the quality of David and Solomon's father-son discussions on sexuality—advice which is still pertinent today.

This book's approach to marriage is different from many on the bookstore shelf, but it is worthy of consideration by those who would like to enrich their own marriages or minister to others.

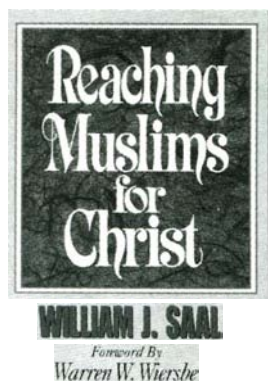
—Reviewed by Raymond T. Brock, Ed.D., an Assemblies of God
minister and licensed counselor, Tulsa, Oklahoma.



Harvie M. Conn (Baker, 256 pp., paperback, \$15.99)



H. Norman Wright (Regal, 336 pp., hardback, \$19.99)



William J. Saal (Moody, 224 pp., paperback, \$10.99)

Marriage Counseling: A Practical Guide for Pastors and Counselors

H. Nonnan Wright (Regal, 336 pp., hardback, \$19.99)

Norm Wright has done it again. In *Marriage Counseling: A Practical Guide for Pastors and Counselors*, this prolific writer of marriage and family books has put together a classic manual every pastor and counselor should keep at fingertip. The book incorporates the best of marriage and family therapy strategies along with solid psychological concepts, and it applies them to the work of couple counseling in a Christian setting—the best treatment of both marital and premarital counseling on the market.

Attention is given to the role of the counselor in working with couples. Appendix II at the end gives a seven-point outline as a model for pastors and counselors to follow. Excellent suggestions are given for conducting the initial interview and building on this foundation. Wright treats behavioral as well as cognitive approaches to counseling with couples in a very practical way.

Helping couples work through conflict to resolution and rebuilding a loving relationship are examined thoroughly. Special emphasis is given to examining faulty communication patterns in the marriage and developing better ways of handling old problems.

Wright's discussion of how affairs develop and how healing can come in the marriage is outstanding. His analysis of the pitfalls in counseling is essential reading by every Christian who counsels. Jesus' counseling style is carefully examined and presented as the ultimate model for Christian counselors to emulate. The counselor's library is incomplete without this volume.

*-Reviewed by Raymond T. Brock, Ed.D.,
an Assemblies of God minister and
licensed counselor. Tulsa, Oklahoma.*

Reaching Muslims for Christ

William J. Saal (Moody, 224 pp., paperback, \$10.99)

Leading Muslims to Christ is a bit like brain surgery—you want to learn it from an expert. And nobody does it better or has been at it longer than William Saal, U.S. Director for Arab World Ministries (formerly North Africa Mission). He draws on that deep pool of hard-won Middle East/North Africa experience to create a highly readable blueprint for understanding Muslims better and helping them see Christ and His claims on their lives.

The strength of Saal's book is helping readers to focus on the Muslims they know with all their doubts and fears, cultural traditions, and personal biases, not the idealized Muslim of the mosques and the television movie. Even faithful, practicing Muslims often have little confidence they are really pleasing God.

Reaching Muslims for Christ is thorough without being overly technical. All the traditional boogymen of Muslim-Christian

A New Way of Life

Robert L. Brandt (GPH [Radiant Life], Discovery Series leader's guide, 96 pp., paperback, \$9.95)

The book is designed to meet the growing need for a discipleship course for new Christians. The series contains nine studies, which cover such issues as faith, the importance of prayer and Bible study, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and giving.

Along with the leader's guide there is a student's manual, which leads the students to discover for themselves the truths and concepts presented in each lesson. Students are directed to supporting Scripture verses, and space is provided for their answers. The questions allow students to think through the material and make personal applications.

This course is well suited for a Sunday school class, small groups, home study groups, individual study, and could also be used as a refresher course for the entire church body.

*-Reviewed by Larry Thomas, training network coordinator/administration consultant in the
Sunday School Promotion and Training Department, Springfield, Missouri.*

BOOK REVIEWS

dialogue—the deity of Christ, the Crusades, the prophetic claims of Muhammed, the offense of the Cross—are dealt with seriously. The book demands us to bring the whole mind, not just the passion, to the task of understanding the worldview of a billion lost men and women.

Saal doesn't get bogged down in the details of Islamic theology or history. His writing pulls the reader along. Always he focuses on what's going through the mind of the Muslim as you present Christ to him. That's a perspective that can only come from a lifetime of doing it oneself.

After ministering to Muslims in the Middle East 20 years, I'm still trying to learn how to do it better and more sensitively. Saal's book is one I intend to reread.

It's one of the best on the subject.

*-Reviewed by Doug Clark, Division of Foreign Missions area director
Jor Middle East and North Africa.*

As Iron Sharpens Iron

Howard and William Hendricks (Moody, 272 pp., hardback, \$17.99)

As Iron Sharpens Iron is a team effort by father and son, Howard and William Hendricks. It is the most practical of all the mentoring books published to date. The book is inspirational, instructive, and is for those who have a heart for the Timothys God brings into their lives.

It is divided into two parts: Part 1 is for those who want to be mentored. Part 2 is for those who are willing to serve as mentors. Each section covers a broad range of issues essential to the mentoring relationship. Hendricks deals with the marks of a mentor, how to find a mentor, why one should be a mentor, what a mentor does, how to spot a protege, how to initiate a mentoring relationship, how to know if you are qualified to be mentored, places to look for a mentor, and the benefits of mentoring.

Howard Hendricks shares many moving

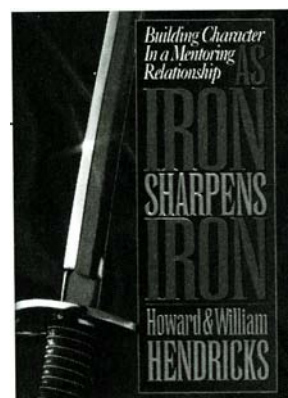
illustrations from his personal life and ministry and gives a close-up, intimate look at his strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 17 (the problems of pitfalls to avoid in mentoring) is especially helpful and practical. Hendricks deals with the problems of time, jealousy, developing close relationships between men, motivating those who are not interested in mentoring, the mentoring life-cycle, and bringing a mentoring relationship to positive closure.

A section at the end of the book, "Mentoring Action Plan," written by one of the Moody Press editors, alone is worth the purchase price of the book. It guides step by step through each chapter, points out the key thought from each chapter, and gives follow-up steps to implement the principles.

It is refreshing to see a father and son write a book together. That in itself is a testimony to dynamic mentoring relationship.

-Reviewed by Floyd McClung, Youth with a Mission, Trinidad, Colorado.



Howard and William Hendricks (Moody, 272 pp., hardback, \$17.99)

A SERVICE

Enrichment 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.

I'm More Than the Pastor's Wife

Lorna Dobson (Zondervan, 1995, \$9.99)

Lorna Dobson's book is a truthful, practical look at the struggles pastors' wives face in accepting and living "the role." The issues discussed—priority, balance, loneliness, and boundaries—were chosen from the conclusions of a private survey of pastors' wives. She targets where we live and knows of what she speaks.

In chapter three, "What's the Price of Excess Baggage," she warns us of the toll exacted by ignoring emotional problems. This encouraging book reveals how to form a healthy ministry lifestyle while retaining your sanity.

—Reprinted from The Pastor's Wife, an interdenominational newsletter for women married to ministers, Janice Hildreth, editor, Boise, Idaho.



INVITATION CARDS

Being sensitive to the Holy Spirit is important and challenging for a consistent Christian witness.

To help the people at our church, we designed an invitation card. It has proved to be a wonderful tool to bring in new people.

What is it? It is a card the size of a regular business card and is given to members of the congregation to give to their friends, coworkers, neighbors, etc., as an official invitation to attend one of the worship services.

On the front of the card is a sharp four-color display of pictures of the church outside and in. On the back is a detailed map giving directions to the church as well as service times. At the bottom of the card is a place for the church member's name so that the one being invited can remember who first told about the church. It also adds a personal touch for the one doing the asking. It could be designed in a variety of ways to fit the feel of your church, but it's the concept of putting a tool in people's hands that makes it so successful.

How does it work? Make the card available to anyone who is interested in knowing more about our worship—much as you would use any business card to promote and remind people of your services—nothing profound or fancy but very effective. We stress one thing: If you are going to give it to a waitress or waiter, your life must reflect the love of Jesus in the way you give it. It's not very effective if you just leave it at the table without personally asking

the person to come, and if you can't leave a tip that really counts, then don't leave the card.

A simple concept, but it works.

—Kevin Weaver, Spn'ngfield, Missouri.

A NEW DIMENSION FOR BABY DEDICATIONS

Here is a way for a 13-year-old to reach back and vicariously participate in the joy and challenge of his/her own dedication.

For years it has been my practice to present the parents with two letters at each baby dedication service: one to request that they safeguard their child's

letter until his/her 13th birthday and the other to the child to help him/her relive the dedication act and accept the challenge to live out the imperatives of that covenantal blessing.

This is a simple way to enhance the impact of baby dedications. You will be glad you did, especially when a parent excitedly walks up and says, "Pastor, Joe had his 13th birthday this past week. We gave him your letter. It was a very special moment. Thank you so much."

—Richard L. Dresselhaus

San Diego, California

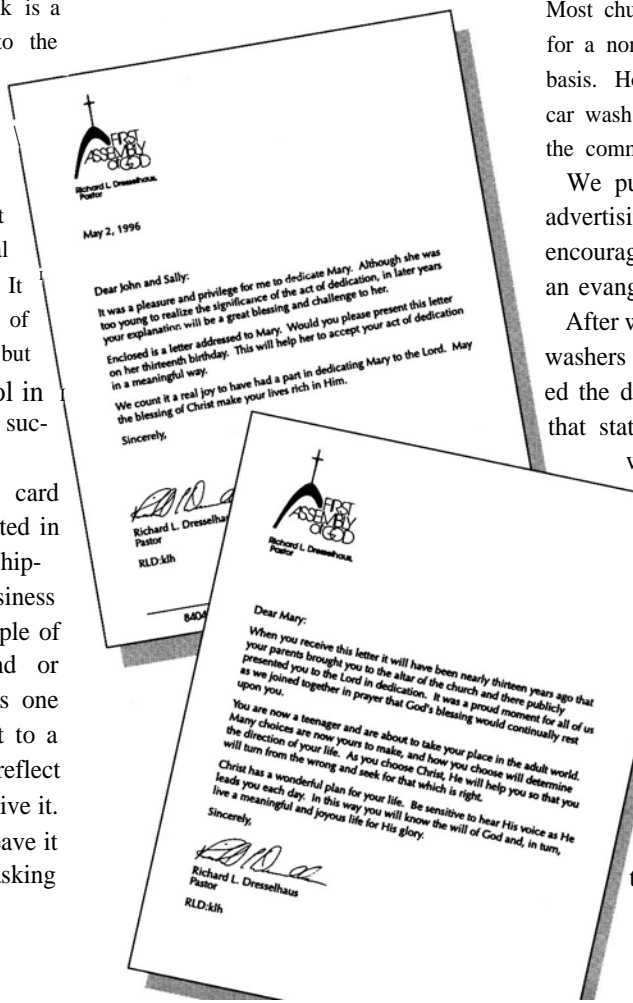
THE FREE CAR WASH

Most church car washes are either done for a nominal charge or on a donation basis. However, we recently held a free car wash as an evangelism outreach in the community.

We put signs up by the highway advertising such. (Church people were encouraged not to stop since this was an evangelism effort.)

After we washed a car, one of the car washers went to the window and handed the driver a specially prepared tract that stated souls, like cars, need to be washed. A free soul wash is available through God's grace.

Most drivers tried to pay something for having their cars washed. Such offers were graciously refused, and we stressed this was our gift to them. Their faces showed surprise when we said all we wanted was this opportunity to tell them that God loves them.



Just before the car wash closed for the day a lady pulled in to get hers done. When we spoke to her she confessed that she had driven by earlier in the day because she thought *theft* car wash was a gimmick. She was surprised that we asked for and accepted nothing.

A local news reporter also stopped by and interviewed some and took pictures of us washing the cars. The story was not printed, but through our efforts perhaps heaven printed some new names in the Lamb's Book of Life.

-DE Rabineau, *Bridgewater*. New Jersey

THE HIM BEHIND THE HYMN

The apostle Paul suggests that Christians sing psalms, spiritual songs, as well as hymns, which represent a genre of music that cannot be improved. The contemporary chorus can never match the solid theology and lyrical beauty of the time-tested entries in the hymnal. Yet in many evangelical fellowships ignorance of the great hymns of the church is at an all-time high.

In an attempt to educate our congregation to the wealth of historic religious poetry and melodies, we sing at least one traditional hymn each Sunday in addition to our worship medleys. But we do more than just sing it. The worship committee or leader carefully selects an appropriate hymn that supports the theme of my sermon. They research the hymn's origin to discover the context out of which the lyrics were written, the composer's life, and the impact the hymn has had on the church. This information is written for a 3-minute introduction by the worship leader or a member of the worship committee just before



the hymn is sung. In our order of service this is entitled "The Him (or Her) Behind the Hymn."

On occasions such as Advent we have scripted the background material into a first-person soliloquy which is then acted out by a layperson. The actor, dressed in an appropriate costume, shares how he/she came to compose the lyrics or the melody and then invites the congregation to sing along.

Results of this experiment have been gratifying. Individuals who criticized hymns for their dull, archaic language or their dirge-like tempo are humbled once they hear the history of each hymn. The way the composer's life and lyrics serve to illustrate a scriptural truth gives a hymn a second chance.

"~mazing Grace" is no longer shrugged off as a funky favorite once the backdrop of John Newton's slave

trader-turned-preacher testimony is presented. "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go" can't be categorized as a tired old tune once the would-be singer realizes the broken heart of George Matheson, whose diagnosed blindness prompted his fiancée to call off the wedding.

We have discovered the sweet, mystical union with bygone hymn-singing saints. When we with understanding sing the great hymns bequeathed us by the church mothers and fathers, we experience a depth to our worship that is characterized by good theology, historical reverence, and musical diversity.

-Greg Asimakoupoulos

Naperville, Illinois

ICE-COLD LEMONADE

One hot day in July we set up a lemonade stand on the front lawn of the church. On

a picnic table we placed two giant coolers of lemonade and a variety of cookies. Signs encouraged drivers to stop for a free glass of ice-cold lemonade.

On the computer we had made a specially designed tract that told how God can make something sweet out of bitter life experiences. The lemonade stand gave opportunity to tell people God loves them and offers a free gift of salvation.

We used adults to man the lemonade stand, but in the future we will use children. People may be more inclined to stop by a children's lemonade stand, especially if it looks like a nostalgic kind of stand with words spelled wrong or letters backward.

This could be a great outreach for the Royal Rangers and Missionettes-with adult supervision.

*—D.E. Rabineau
Bridgewater, New Jersey*

JAM GROUPS

While attending a large church I noticed many young people were in the gap age, 19 to 25-too old for the youth group and too young for other groups. We started a group called JAM (Jesus and Me), since that age group sometimes felt alone.

We met on Wednesday nights for JAM sessions. Our group's contribution to the church was being Sunday morning prayer warriors. We gathered early in the sanctuary for prayer. We walked between the pews, the choir, and over the platform and invited the Holy Spirit to be our special guest during the service.

Following prayer throughout the sanctuary, we came together around the pul-

pit, anointed it, and prayed for our pastor and his sermon.

Before Sunday school we enjoyed coffee and doughnuts.

Months later the pastor told me the tremendous impact the singles' prayers had made on his ministry and the church services.

Young singles can make a difference—just provide the place and the leadership. Prayer changes things.

—Ron Canada
Springfield, Missouri

DEACON SELECTION

Each year our church had difficulty finding enough men who were willing to allow their names to be nominated as deacons. Their objection stemmed from the political overtones of running for office and then losing the election.

We needed a new process and proposed changes to the deacon board. They received the plan unanimously and the congregation had only one objection—a miracle in view of proposing change to a 65-year-old church with 700 members.

The new process works this way:

A ballot and a complete list of the eligible men to serve as deacons are sent to the voting members of the congregation. They are asked to complete the ballot by nominating 10 men in preference order (1 to 10). Ballots are collected, the names are counted, and point value given (10 points for the number-one name and 1 point for the number-ten name).

The deacon board screens this process to assure it is done properly and that no one lacking qualification is selected.

The pastor interviews the man whose name received the highest vote and asks him if he will serve. If he is willing and able to serve, he is presented to the congregation at the business meeting for ratification (a simple yes/no vote). This is done until a sufficient number of men are selected for that year, usually two or three.

The same men who were not willing to allow their names to be presented in nomination previously are now willing to serve through the new process.

This plan did not require any changes in our bylaws, for they state there is to be a nomination and an election at the business meeting. In the new process the whole membership serves as the nominating committee.

God has helped us to present a good process for selecting the best men to serve as our deacons, thereby also eliminating the political stigma of the former process.

—Ron Traub
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

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.

Enrichment 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
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1445 Boonville Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802-1894



I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH

Matthew 16:18

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus Christ will fulfill a powerful vision He has for the Church. His statement of vision and promise will come to pass.

1. The power of the vision ("I") is based in the person (Isaiah 9:6; 11:1; 28:16; 53:3; 59:20; Jeremiah 23:5; Daniel 7:9; John 1:29; 6:35; 10:9; 14:6; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 15:45-47; Colossians 1:27; Hebrews 3:1; 5:9; 12:2; 1 Peter 2:6; 2 Peter 1:19; 1 John 2:1; Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:16).
2. The promise of the vision ("will")-the verb is in the future tense; it will happen (Numbers 23:19; Psalm 145:13; 2 Corinthians 1:20; 2 Peter 1:4).
3. The process of the vision ("build")-Jesus will build up His body by using its members (1 Corinthians 12:12-18; Ephesians 2:20-22; 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10).
4. The priority of the vision ("my")-priority based in the possessor (Luke 14:25-27; Ephesians 1:4,7; 2:14-22; 4:7,11; 5:25-27; Colossians 1:18-20).
5. The product of the vision ("church")-the final result of Christ's work is the Church.
 - a. The Church was supernaturally conceived in the age of guilt (Genesis 3:15; Ephesians 1:4).
 - b. The Church is being supernaturally constructed in the age of grace.
 - c. The Church will be supernaturally completed in the age of glory

(Zechariah 4:6; Colossians 1:27; 3:4; Revelation 21:9-14).

CONCLUSION:

Jesus said, "I will build my church," and we can count on Him to do exactly what He said. Let's continue seeking Him and allowing Him to build His church today through each one of us.

*-James T. Meadows
Kansas City, Missouri*

FATHER'S DAY- A PERFECT FATHER

Exodus 34:5-7

I. Attributes of a perfect father

- a. Compassionate
- b. Gracious (giving)
 - (1) The professor of the family (Deuteronomy 4:9)
 - (2) The provider of the family
 - (3) The pastor of the family (Ephesians 6:4)

2. Attitudes of a perfect father

- a. Merciful
- b. Maintaining love

3. Actions of a perfect father

- a. Forgiving
 - (1) W i c k e d n e s s - a w e n (Hebrew)-to twist, distort, and pervert. Acted-out sin that is its own punishment (e.g., drug abuse)
 - (2) *Rebellion-pesha'* (Hebrew)-breach of relationship, casting off allegiance, disowning
 - (3) Sin-everyday disobedience
- b. Punishes the guilty (Proverbs 13:24)
 - (1) Accept the child, never the sin
 - (2) Mercy and justice must coexist

CONCLUSION:

With God as our example, fathers have a very difficult job. It is appropriate to honor them.

-Jdfrey Jibben, Elysian, Minnesota

FATHER'S DAY-PRIEST IN HIS OWN HOME

INTRODUCTION:

Although the New Testament states all believers belong to a "royal priesthood" (cf., 1 Peter 2:5,9), the Bible indicates that the head of a family has a particular role of leadership in the religious life of the family unit.

1. Examples of godly leadership

- a. Enoch (Genesis 5:21-24; Hebrews 11:5; Jude 14,15)
- b. Noah (Genesis 8:20)
- c. Abraham (Genesis 17:7; 18:17-19)
- d. Job (Job 1:5)
- e. Jacob (Genesis 35:2,3; 49:1-28)
- f. Joshua (Joshua 24:15)
- g. Cornelius (Acts 10:24,44)
- h. Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30-32)

2. Importance of godly leadership

- a. It was emphasized in the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 4:9,10; 6:7; 11:19; 32:46).
- b. It was required of New Testament church officers (1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 12; Titus 1:6).
- c. Men who failed to assume such leadership have been rebuked by the Lord (cf., 1 Samuel 2:27-36).

3. Scriptural concepts of the godly father

- a. He will recognize the importance of his calling (Joshua 24:15; Job 1:5).

- b. He will be a man of faith and prayer (James 1:6,7).
- c. He will study to become a man of the Word (Psalm 78:1-8; Titus 1:9).
- d. He will desire to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-21) and to walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:25).
- e. He will carefully set an example of genuine Christian character for his family (1 Timothy 3:2,3; 6:11,12).
- f. He will endeavor wisely and lovingly to train and discipline his family (proverbs 4:1-10; 22:6; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21; 1 Timothy 3:4,5,12; James 1:5).
- g. He will seek to lead and minister to his household "as unto the Lord" (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:23).

CONCLUSION:

Since the essence of true fatherhood finds its origin in the loving heart of the Heavenly Father (2 Corinthians 6:18; cf., Romans 8:16,17), God challenges men who would live for Him to fulfill their sacred role of "priest of their house"!

-F. HelenJarvis

THE GAME IS FIXED

Romans 8:25-39

INTRODUCTION:

The theme of the latter part of Romans 8 is, "The destiny of the believer in view of current trials." In verses 25 to 39 Paul identified God's workings which give the believer assurance of victory and are a result of the doctrine of justification.

Believers can rejoice in the insider knowledge that they have an over-

whelming victory that is certain. This victory is due to:

1. The assistance of the Holy Spirit in prayer

Verses 25-27: Although we are ignorant of what is best for us, the Holy Spirit knows the mind of God and prays on our behalf. God searches our heart and understands these prayers of the Spirit.

2. The activity of God in events

Verses 28-30: God works on behalf of those who have surrendered to His purpose to turn every event around for good. The work of God

(foreknew, predestined, called, justified, glorified), which is for our salvation, also implies His sovereign control over events.

3. The alliance of the believer with Christ.

Verses 31-39: Since God is on our side, Paul enthusiastically concluded that believers have an overwhelming victory over present trials.

It doesn't matter what life deploys, God marshals a victory.

—Jay Herndon
Burlingame, California



THE PATHWAY, PARTING, AND PLACE-A MESSAGE TO THE GRIEVING

1. Pathway called life

The deceased was a success:

a. As a son and brother*

- (1) Characteristics of obedience, kindness, honesty, etc.
- (2) Observed values important to family

b. As a husband

- (1) Loved his companion
- (2) Kept wedding vows
- (3) Grew in the Lord together

c. As a minister

(1) Becoming a minister

(a) God's call sets apart

(b) All Christians are called to

"serve"

(c) Not something we take to ourselves

(d) God places people in ministry (e.g., Moses, Abraham, David, and John)

(2) Scriptural guidelines for ministerial success

(a) Moral integrity (e.g., "a good report," "keep thyself pure")

(b) Fiscal responsibility (i.e., honesty, paying bills, handling money properly)

(c) Doctrinal purity (I.e., salvation, the Baptism, divine healing, the Second Coming)

(3) Put another way, success is being in God's will in God's time and place and doing God's work in God's way

2. Parting we call death

a. Hebrews 9:27

(1) Easier to handle the homego-

ing of a person who has lived out life than one cut off in youth

(2) Why now?

(3) Not clear now but bow to God's will

b. Job 1:21

c. Romans 8:28

d. Psalm 90:12

e. God has a plan for each life

(1) Life is *sure-we* didn't choose it but must live it

(2) Life is *short-no* matter how long one lives

(3) Life is *serious-preparing* for eternity

3. This place called heaven

a. A prepared place (John 14:1-3)

b. A pure place (Revelation 21:27)

c. A permanent place (Hebrews 11:10)-our blessed hope

CONCLUSION

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psalm 23:6).

*May also be adapted for the feminine gender.

-Derald Musgrove, Springfield, Missouri'

MADE TO BE BROKEN?

INTRODUCTION:

Resolution means developing a fixed or firm purpose. Making resolutions can be a part of our spiritual progress. They are not made just to be broken but to produce change. How can we make resolutions work?

1. Purpose of resolution
 - a. Resolution can lead to solutions (Daniel 1:8 -resolved)
 - b. Resolution will give strength (Daniel 3: 16-18-Hebrew children)Strength to...
 - (1) Hold steady (Daniel 6:10-lions' den)
 - (2) Sacrifice (Esther 4: 16-1 per-ish)
 - (3) Resist (Genesis 39:9-Joseph: How can I sin?)
- c. Resolution will give sight (Hebrews 11:10-Abraham looked for a city)
2. Process of resolution
 - a. Set an appropriate standard (Ten Commandments-God's standard; Philippians 2:5 -Let this mind be in you)
 - b. Seek change in yourself
 - (1) New heart (Ezekiel 36:26)
 - (2) New mind (Romans 12:2)
 - (3) New life (2 Corinthians 5: 17)
 - c. Learn from the resolutions you break (1 Corinthians 2:1-4)
 - d. Be willing to start over (John 18:17,25,27-peter denied Christ and repented)
3. Prosecution of resolution
 - a. It must come from your heart (Galatians 6: 15)
 - b. You will need outside help

(Jeremiah 29: 13)

- c. Cultivate a spiritual mind (Romans 7,8)

-Robert Schmidgall, Naperville, Illinois

A PRAYING CHURCH

Acts 2:40-47

INTRODUCTION:

Questions (encourage congregation to respond to each question):

Are we a praying church?

Are we a praying church compared to most other churches?

Are we a praying church as compared to the Early Church?

1.A praying church will be Pentecostal

a. Pentecostal in its origin (Acts 2:1-4)

b. Pentecostal in its doctrine (Acts 2:16-21)

c. Pentecostal in its deeds (Acts 2:42-45)

2.A praying church will be powerful

a. Powerful in witnessing (Acts 4:33; 5:42)

b. Powerful in confronting sin (Acts 2:36-39; 5:1-11)

c. Powerful in breaking Satan's hold (Acts 8:5; 16:16; 19:11)

3.A praying church will be productive

a. Productive according to the promise of Acts 1:8

b. Productive according to the pattern of Acts 2:47; 5:14; 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:10,20)

c. Productive according to priorities set by our leaders (Acts 2:42; 6:1-6)

4.A praying church will experience

problems

a. Problems with hypocrisy (Acts 5)

b. Problems with neglect (Acts 6)

c. Problems with traditions (Acts 10-15)

5.A praying church will be persecuted

a. Persecuted for speaking the truth (Peter and John; Stephen; Paul)

b. Persecuted for healing the sick (Acts 3, etc.)

c. Persecuted for delivering the oppressed (Acts 16: 16)

6.A praying church will persevere

a. Persevere in enduring persecution (Acts 4:23; 8:1-4; 12:5,12 and context)

b. Persevere in fulfilling the Great Commission (all of Acts based on 1:8)

c. Persevere in waiting for Christ's return (Acts and throughout history)

CONCLUSION:

As demonstrated by the Early Church, prayer serves as the basis for a strong and fruitful church. May we as individuals and congregations be motivated to pray.

-Dean L. Grabill, Springfield, Missouri



THE HOLY CITY

Someone has computed the New Jerusalem and come up with interesting figures. Look at them and comprehend if you can.

First, look at John's *description* (Revelation 21). The city is a cube-the length, breadth, and height being equal. It rests on 12 foundations and has 12 gates. Each gate is carved from a pearl, and each foundation is of a precious stone. The walls are jasper and the streets pure gold that shines like transparent glass. The sun, moon, and stars do not light it, but the Lamb-the glory of God-furnishes the light.

Measurements: The city is 12,000 furlongs (1,500 miles) in length, breadth, height. This means the ground level would about cover the area from Wichita, Kansas, to the Pacific and from Canada to Mexico.

The walls are 260 feet across-as thick as a city block. They would contain 401,850 cubic miles of pure jasper.

If the city were laid out into blocks 500 feet square and if the streets were 100 feet wide, there would be 15,840 blocks and streets to each side of the city. This would add up to 250,905,600 ground-level blocks in the city.

If each residence were 100 by 200 feet (or 20,000 square feet), there would be 12 residences in each block. This would total 3,010,867,200 residences on the ground level alone. (That's over 3 billion.)

Allowing 20 feet for each story, the city would be 396,000 stories high. (The Empire State Building is only 103 stories high.) The top story would reach up 1,500 miles which is as high as our

astronauts ever go in orbiting the earth. Multiply the number of residences on the ground floor by the total number of stories in height which gives a total of 1,192,303,411,200,000 residences-over a quadrillion!

Suppose there were 10 inhabitants to each residence, we would have as neighbors in the Holy City only 11,923,034,112,000,000 people!

If you don't believe it, let me remind you of two Scripture verses:

Uibeheled, and, 10, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues, stood before the throne"

(Revelation 7:9).

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

-Author unknown. Submitted by Derald Musgrove, Springfield, Missouri.

WHO PUSHED ME?

When I preach on the need for commitment, I usually end with this story:

Once there was a great kingdom, and the king had a beautiful daughter whom every man wanted to marry. The king didn't think any of the suitors were good

enough, so he devised a test to prove who was the bravest.

He called all of the young men in the kingdom together and told them about the test. "You see in front of you a large pool filled with hungry alligators. Whoever can go through the alligators and come out on the other side alive wins the hand of my daughter and half my kingdom!" Suddenly there was a loud splash, and one young man was swimming desperately toward the other side. An alligator came at him and snapped at his hand. Another one came and swiped at his head. While the young man swam erratically, another one tried to bite his leg and again missed. Finally the young man got to the other side and was helped out of the pool. The king rushed over to him and said, "Such a brave man! To you goes the hand of my daughter and half my kingdom!" To which the young man replied, "That's fine and good, but first I have a question: Who pushed me?"

Sometimes commitment needs a little push!

-Dennis Pedrin, Ho/yoke, Massachusetts

BUILD ME A SON

Former General Douglas MacArthur wrote this wonderful prayer: "Build me a son, Oh Lord, who will be strong enough to know when he is weak and brave enough to face himself when he is afraid; one who will be proud and unbending in honest defeat and humble and gentle in victory.

"Build me a son whose wishes will not take the place of deeds; a son who will know Thee...and that to know himself is the foundation stone of knowledge.



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RSC #18



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price except for foreign orders, add sales tax if applicable: CA., 7.25%, MO., 5.975%). When ordering please specify platform (MAC, IBM/compatible), disk size, graphic format (PCX, TIFF, PICT), and disk density.



"Lead him, I pray, not in the path of ease and comfort but under the stress and spur of difficulties and challenge. Here let him learn to stand up to the storm; here let him learn compassion for those who fail.

"Build me a son whose heart will be clear, whose goal will be high, a son who will master himself before he seeks to master other men, one who will reach into the future, yet never forget the past.

'~nd after all these things are his, add,

I pray, enough of a sense of humor so that he may always be serious, yet never take himself too seriously. Give him humility so that he may always remember the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom, and the meekness of true strength.

"Then, J, his father, will dare to whisper, 'I have not lived in vain.'"

-Reprinted from the MacArthur Memorial Foundation, Norfolk, Virginia.



FISHING WITH DAD

Brooks Adams kept a diary from his boyhood. When he was 8 years old, he wrote in his diary one day: "Went fishing with my father-the most glorious day of my life."

Throughout the next 40 years of his life, he never forgot that day he went fishing with his dad and made repeated references to it in his diary, commenting on the influence of that day on his life.

Brooks Adams' father was an important man; he was Charles Francis Adams, the u.s. ambassador to Great Britain under the Lincoln administration. Interestingly, he also made a note in his diary about the fishing trip. He wrote simply: "Went fishing with my son-a day wasted."

Of course, the day was not wasted; its value may well have proved to make it one of the most well-spent days in his life. No one can measure a man's influence on his children, and that is all the more reason to take the job and its responsibilities seriously.

Sometimes there are ripple effects of our influence that we may never know.

-Church of God Evangel
June 1993

his first name "Douglas." Then he passed the pen to General Wainwright who signed "Mac." MacArthur then handed the pen to General Percival who signed "MacArthur."

This unusual act was MacArthur's way of honoring two of his colleagues who had suffered severe persecution in Japanese prison camps. They had persevered in battle, and now they shared in the glory of victory.

James anticipated the victory celebration for all believers who remain steadfast in spiritual battle. "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12, NIV). Maintaining allegiance to our Commander in Chief will result in an eternal reward.

(Another scriptural link is Romans

8:17 that describes our relationship with Jesus. Paul referred to us as joint-heirs [like the generals] with Christ, and when we share His sufferings in this life we will also share in His glory to come.)

-Greg Asimakoupoulos
Naperville, Illinois

THE POWER OF THE BLOOD

"There Is Power in the Blood" is one of our best-loved songs. Robert Cummings, missionary-educator, brought a powerful illustration of this truth many years ago. The antitoxin serum used in India for cobra snakebite, he said, vividly pictures how the blood of Jesus Christ can deliver even the vilest sinner from the venom of sin.

A cobra's bite is one of the most venomous known, but scientists developed a procedure to nullify the poison's

SHARING THE GLORY OF VICTORY

The documents of surrender officially ending World War II were signed by the Japanese and designated representatives of the Allied Nations. General Douglas MacArthur officiated the ceremony aboard the *USS Missouri*, and he was the last to sign in behalf of the United States. MacArthur simply signed

power. First, they milk the venom from the snake and then inject some of it into the bloodstream of one of the huge Belgian stallions kept for that purpose. The horse becomes deathly sick, but it survives because its blood is stronger than the cobra's poison.

The horse's blood becomes the basis for an antitoxin serum, which is injected into the bloodstream of cobra-bite victims. This blood which has conquered the power of the venom preserves the person's life.

At Calvary Jesus met "that old serpent, called the Devil" (Revelation 12:9) and defeated him. On the cross He received the full venom of sin which has cursed the human race, bringing sickness, suffering, sorrow, and death.

Satan thought he had won, for Jesus was dead. But not so! "The life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11), and Jesus' life was that of deity. Because He conquered the venom of sin, His blood is effective to defeat sin when anyone, by faith, receives the grand transfusion of the life-giving blood of the Son of God.

*-Ralph W.Hams
Springfield, Missouri*

JESUS NEVER SHOUTED

A church was having a revival service where people shouted, danced, ran, rolled on the floor, and were slain in the Spirit. Several were saved and renewed their fellowship with God.

After the service, however, an elderly lady said to the pastor, "I just want you to know that I didn't agree with anything that went on in this service. You won't show me in the Bible where Jesus

ever shouted, danced, rolled, or fell out. If He didn't, then I don't think we should either.,,

The pastor paused and replied, "You're right."

The lady said, "You mean I'm right?"

The pastor said, "Yes, but everybody He touched did."

—Author unknown.

*Submitted by Mike Dorsey
Elkton, Kentucky*

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

Are you looking for another place to use that great sermon illustration you used in last week's message? *Enrichment* 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, *Enrichment*, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894

MEN'S MINISTRIES SECRETARY NAMED

Effective February 15, 1996, Ronald C. Roberts of Rosemount, Minnesota, was appointed Men's Ministries Department secretary.

Roberts, a retired Air Force colonel, has served at the Pentagon and as a vice president of Northwest Airlines. At the time of his appointment he was an associate pastor at Bloomington Assemblies of God, Bloomington, Minnesota.

A member of the Minnesota District, Roberts "has a heart for ministering to men and will, I am sure, make an invaluable contribution to the Men's Ministries Department and its programs," said Thomas E. Trask, general superintendent. "We are thankful God has brought to the forefront a man of this caliber."

BENEVOLENCES DEPARTMENT SECRETARY NAMED

Robert D. Bornert was appointed secretary of the Benevolences Department effective December 1995. He succeeds Stanley V. Michael, who retired November 30.

NEW JUNIOR BIBLE QUIZ TOOLS AVAILABLE

Improve as a JBQ coach, coordinator, leader, or parent of a quizzier with new helps from the Sunday School Promotion and Training Department.

The JBQ Leaders/Coaches Manual offers suggestions for helping kids study God's Word (714-218, \$4.95). Quizzer Guides lead the students through the JBQ materials with three levels of workbooks. Level 1 is for a first-year or younger second-year quizzier (714-219, up to 4 copies, \$4.50 each; in packs of

10, \$3.95 each).

Level 2 is for second- and third-year quizzers (714-220, up to 4 copies, \$4.50 each; in packs of 10, \$3.95 each).

Level 3 is for advanced quizzers (714-221, up to 4 copies, \$4.50 each; in packs of 10, \$3.95 each).

Bible Burst is a fun way for quizzers and their families to learn JBQ questions. Patterned on Outburst, this game is taken from official JBQ questions (714-222, \$4.95).

WOMAN'S TOUCH AND MEMOS EXPAND

Woman's Touch and *Memos*, the two publications produced by the Women's Ministries Department, have added eight pages each, according to Aleda Swartzendruber, publications editor.

Woman's Touch became a 36-page magazine effective with the January-February 1996 issue. "*Woman's Touch* has always been an inspirational magazine for women, and we will continue with that emphasis," Swartzendruber said. "But now we can accommodate the needs of our readers even better. Part of our new format will share insights on current issues affecting Christian women."

New features for *Woman's Touch* include ~ Better You," a health and fitness column; ~ Lighter Touch," anecdotes from readers; and "In My Opinion," a forum for readers' views. The 1996 issues include a series of Bible studies, by *Woman's Touch* editor Peggy Musgrove, related to the 1996 Women's Ministries theme, "Vessels of Honor." Also featured are interviews with the wives of some of the Assemblies of God executive presbyters.

Memos, a quarterly magazine for Missionettes leaders, also includes new features such as a two-page activity called "Club Connection." Sponsors can duplicate the pages for visitors to Missionettes club meetings or for all the members of the clubs. Additional Bible studies and lessons on issues affecting girls are also included in the expanded publication, according to Kerry Clarensau, *Memos* editor and Missionettes coordinator. The *Memos* expansion was effective with the Winter 1995-96 edition.

To receive a sample copy of *Woman's Touch*, check rsc #20. For a sample copy of *Memos*, check rsc #21.

BEGINNING EXPLORERS FEATURES CHANGES

Beginning Explorers, the children's church program for preschoolers, will provide new features beginning with fall 1996 quarter.

The leader's guide will include an extra 32 pages, grouping for both standard or modular scheduling, lesson pages that are self-contained, reproducible student worksheets with each session, a quarter checklist of materials, time fillers, 1 year's themes and lesson titles at a glance, and wider margins.

In addition to the current resources being provided, *Beginning Explorers* Resource Packet will also feature: (1) posters to use in learning centers, for room decoration, for games, and other hands-on learning activities; (2) patterns for creating backdrops; (3) ideas from other leaders; (4) an audiocassette providing songs in split-track format, puppet skits, dramas, and listen-and-respond activities; (5) life application

flash cards which grant permission for duplication onto overhead transparencies.

More realistic and appealing full-bodied puppets, with movable arms and fluffy tails, have replaced the old Rusty and Raspberry puppets.

Preschool Bible Visuals will be referenced in the Bible story. Leaders can use the visuals from Preschool Sunday School or order an extra set for use in children's church. The Bible stories are also keyed for churches that own the Betty Lukens Bible visuals.

Beginning Explorers is an exciting, Bible-centered program for children ages 3-5 and 6-year-olds not in first grade. These preschool children's church materials can be ordered on the fall Radiant Life curriculum order form.

FALL 1996 RELEASES FROM THE SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY SERIES

Radiant Life announces the release of two new titles in the Spiritual Discovery Series for use beginning in the fall 1996 quarter.

Empowered by the Spirit by Emil Balliet, originally titled *Acts* in the Christian Faith Series, is an inductive study with interactive questions designed to guide the student toward an understanding of the historical and biblical context of the Book of Acts. *Empowered by the Spirit* is more than an Early Church history book. Those who engage in this study will be challenged to discover and apply eternal principles introduced by the Holy Spirit through the first-century church.

A Heart For the Lost by Robert L. Brandt, originally titled *Soul Winning* in

the Christian Faith Series, will motivate individuals to prepare for the task of evangelizing. Brandt leads students into an exploration of the basis of evangelism and then proposes a biblical standard for performing the task. He avoids cookie-cutter techniques for evangelism. Rather, he stresses a personal relationship with the Savior, love for humanity, and the need to offer people the greatest of all gifts, eternal life. Those who use *A*

Heart For the Lost will discover that evangelism is not an activity to be feared but a natural extension of one's Christian experience.

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.

Empowered by the Spirit and *A Heart for the Lost* join eight titles already released in the Spiritual Discovery Series.

CENTRAL INDIAN BIBLE COLLEGE NAMES NEW PRESIDENT

Robert Koscak was appointed president of Central Indian Bible College, Mobridge, S. Oak., effective January 1, 1996. Koscak succeeds George Kallappa.

Central Indian Bible College is one of 17 endorsed Assemblies of God postsecondary schools.

SCC DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM OFFERS MAJOR IN MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

Southern California College (scC), Costa Mesa, now offers a major in ministry and leadership as part of the new degree completion program. The program is available to those who have completed 40 to 60 units of previous college work and allows a student to complete a bachelor's degree in three semesters.

Students may receive credit for practical experience and upon completion of the program will be qualified to enter SCC's graduate program. The first class began last September.

SCC OPENS LEWIS WILSON INSTITUTE FOR PENTECOSTAL STUDIES

In recognition of Lewis Wilson's 28 years' service to Southern California College and 40 years in the Pentecostal movement, SCC has inaugurated the Lewis Wilson Institute for Pentecostal Studies. The Institute will serve as a

think tank and research center for scholars, students, and others interested in studying Pentecostal and charismatic movements.

The Institute will work toward several objectives, including (1) expanding holdings and cultivating archival materials in the library's Pentecostal collection; (2) developing an annual Pentecostal lectureship and/or conference with eminent Pentecostal and charismatic scholars; (3) promoting discussion forums on issues facing Pentecostal renewal; (4) advancing the multicultural, multiracial, and gender-inclusive character of the Pentecostal movement through cooperative networking; (5) establishing a web page on the Internet; and (6) publishing a monograph series on Pentecostal history. A director and advisory board will provide leadership for reaching these goals.

FREE MATERIALS AVAILABLE TO HIGHLIGHT ASSEMBLIES OF GOD HIGHER EDUCATION

Free materials are available from the Christian Higher Education Department. The 32-page, full-color *Assemblies of God College Guide*, Third Edition, provides a preview of each of the 17 endorsed Assemblies of God postsecondary schools. Request a free copy for your church library and quantities for your youth group. Check rsc #1 (746-054) and indicate quantity.

A research paper entitled "The (Social) Pit and the pendulum: A Case for Christian Higher Education" by Dayton Kingsriter, department secretary, highlights the spiritual, academic, and moral climates on secular and Christian college campuses. To receive free copies, check rsc #22 (#746-075) and indicate quantity.

Theme poster, prayer card, and bulletin insert highlight Assemblies of God higher education and emphasize the importance of the Christ-centered education offered at our postsecondary schools. To receive the free theme poster, check rsc #23 (746-001) and indicate quantity. For free bulletin insert, check rsc #24 (746-051) and indicate quantity. Check rsc #25 (746-002) and indicate quantity to receive free prayer card.

THE FREEDOM BREAKFAST, AN EVANGELISM OUTREACH

The Saturday morning nearest Independence Day, July 4, the Men's Ministries Department promotes the Freedom Breakfast to introduce the unsaved, unchurched men of each community to freedom from sin to freedom in Jesus Christ.

Each man in your church should be encouraged to invite at least one unsaved man as his guest at the Freedom Breakfast sponsored by your church or the Assemblies of God churches in your community. A neutral, non-threatening facility should be chosen—a large restaurant or a civic hall where the meal can be catered.

The meal should be followed by an inspiring evangelistic speaker such as a notable sports figure, politician, or businessman who has a solid Christian testimony. Following the testimony give opportunity for men to accept Christ as their Savior.

Have some evangelism literature available for those interested in more information. Several suggested tracts are: "Introducing God's Love," "Just a Good Ole Boy," "Less-Traveled Road," and "Graphic Witnessing Guide" (with

"Graphic Witnessing Guide Instructions") available at \$4.95 per 100 through the Men's Ministries Department.

For further information about the Men's Ministries Freedom Breakfast, check rsc #26.

AUGUST 25 IS INTER-CULTURAL MINISTRIES DAY

Intercultural Ministries Day is August 25 to recognize our distant neighbors. No other nation is more ethnically and

racially diverse than America. An estimated 125 ethnic communities maintain their cultural cohesion in the U.S., where 26 languages are spoken by groups of 100,000 or more. Reaching them requires planting self-sustaining, indigenous ethnic churches.

The Intercultural Ministries Department was established to reach these groups of people, including specialized communication groups such as the deaf and the blind. Using language skills and

cultural awareness, some 400 nationally appointed home missionaries are planting churches among Iranians, Samoans, Tongans, Asians, Russians, Hispanics, and African Americans.

On this day pray for the people groups in our country that we may be sensitive to the spiritual needs of our diverse population, making the gospel meaningful to all in their native languages.

More information is available from the Division of Home Missions Intercultural

NEWS & RESOURCES

Ministries Department.

DHM PROVIDES LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

Twenty-five percent of Americans over age 40 have impaired vision. The Division of Home Missions Whitney Library for the Blind seeks to serve those who are visually impaired with tools to increase their spiritual maturity. A growing number of free audio and braille resources are available on a library-lending basis.

Some of the resources available on audiocassette include *God's Word For Today*, student and teacher Sunday school quarterlies, *Pentecostal Evangel*, and *Woman's Touch*. More information is available from the Whitney Library for the Blind, where Paul Weingartner serves as librarian.

The *Adult Student* quarterly and *Pentecostal Digest* are available in braille.

JUNE 23 IS MAPS DAY

The Mission America Placement Service Department (MAPS) places volunteers in strategic places of ministry all over the U.S., the Virgin Islands, Guam, and Puerto Rico through 1- to 2-year missionary associates, summer associates, church teams, and RV Volunteers. Volunteers with a variety of skills are assisting home missionaries and home missions works in places such as Indian reservations, Bible college campuses, orphanages, campgrounds, and Teen Challenge centers.

MAPS Day is a day to remember these individuals who give of their time and finance to make a difference. Please pray for them on their special day.

More information about these ministries and how you can become involved is available from the DHM MAPS Department.

MILITARY PERSONNEL DAY IS JULY 7

Some 2 million military personnel are serving our country's armed forces today. Many more have fought and died for this great land. July 7 has been designated Military Personnel Day to honor active-duty personnel and veterans and remember their courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty and country.

Military Personnel Ministries is offering local churches free materials in quantity (i.e., poster, brochure, worship ideas, bulletin cover, and offering envelope) to help make this a special day for military personnel.

More information on how you can observe Military Personnel Day is available from the OHM Chaplaincy Department or by filling out the enclosed clipcard. (See page 86.)

NEW BIBLE SCHOOLS EXPAND ASSEMBLIES OF GOD TRAINING EFFORTS

From Cambodia to Russia to Ethiopia to Argentina, the Assemblies of God is preparing men and women for ministry through newly established Bible schools.

In 1989 Cambodia was considered a closed country. Today believers are celebrating the opening of the Randy Dorsey Memorial Bible Institute. The school, named in honor of the late Missionary Randy Dorsey, was dedicated in December 1995. Dorsey, who died in 1994, and his wife Carolyn were the first appointed missionaries to Cambodia. The fall 1995

enrollment at the school was 27.

Bible schools continue to be established in the former Soviet Union. In 1994 the schools in Moscow, Russia, and Kiev, Ukraine, produced 78 graduates. Three more schools in Latvia, Lithuania, and Siberia are in operation. Plans to launch a Bible school in Belarus this year are taking shape.





Addis Bible College opened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1994. Since its beginning the school has operated at maximum capacity. Although the evangelical church in Ethiopia suffered during 17 years of political upheaval, it continued to grow. Today believers are scrambling to receive solid biblical teaching as they seek to minister in their nation and beyond.

Property has been purchased for Patagonian Bible School in Trelew, Argentina. The school is the only residential evangelical Bible school in the Patagonian region of southern Argentina, sometimes called "the end of the earth." Before gaining the property the school was required to change meeting places several times. The new location will allow greater stability and space for increased enrollment.

The Assemblies of God is leading in the establishment of Bible training schools worldwide, with some 984 Bible schools and extension programs operating with 58,474 students enrolled.

GOSPEL GAINS Foothold IN CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

Two years ago 350 people attended a Pentecostal church in a Central Asian nation. Today four services are held each Sunday to accommodate the 2,500 people who come. Sources say that 40 to 50



people accept Christ at the church each week. Church leaders have made a rule: Believers are allowed to attend only one Sunday service to allow sufficient room for visitors. A Bible training center is educating leaders for ministry.

Once part of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan and the five other Central Asian Republics—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan—were held in the grip of communism for 70 years. Now independent, the people of these new nations are returning to their traditional Islamic roots. However, an increasing number are searching for answers to life and are finding them in Jesus. Christian workers are helping to share the gospel in several ways.

In one republic, three Pentecostal churches have been established in a major city, and hundreds of small home churches are being established in the surrounding rural areas. New Testaments and children's story Bibles

are being produced in the language of the people. Three regional governors have asked that the children's Bibles be given to all students in their schools.

Thirteen Pentecostal churches have been established in a mountainous region. While outreach in this area is difficult, Pentecostal leaders have a great vision for sharing the gospel in the most remote areas.

Two years ago, one republic was described as a place with no church and not one known believer. However, God is

moving, and a Pentecostal church has been planted. People meet often for prayer and Bible reading. Pioneer efforts are also under way in two Central Asian Republics where the gospel is virtually unknown.

A Bible school has been established to assist the young Central Asian church. A building was purchased recently, and workers are now in the process of developing programs, securing books, finding teachers, and preparing classrooms.

NEWS & RESOURCES

NEW HIGHLANDS MATERNITY HOME PACKET AVAILABLE

An information packet on the ministry of Highlands Child Placement Services and Maternity Home is now available.

It covers such topics as, "where you will stay," "what you will bring," "counseling," "medical program," and "court hearings. "

This packet is designed for pastors to keep on file and use as a resource when counseling parents or a girl confronted with an unwanted pregnancy.

To receive your free Highlands Maternity Home information packet, check rsc #27.

HILLCREST CHILDREN'S HOME NEEDS LIST AVAILABLE

The 70-some boys and girls at Hillcrest Children's Home in Hot Springs, Ark., will soon be needing clothing and school supplies in preparation for returning to classes this fall.

A back-to-school needs list has been prepared for distribution in churches, Women's Ministries groups, Missionettes clubs, and Sunday school classes.

To receive free copies, check rsc #28 and indicate quantity.

OFFICIAL GENERAL COUNCIL TOUR TO ISRAEL SCHEDULED

December 27, 1996, to January 6, 1997, are the scheduled dates for the second General Council tour to Israel, which will be hosted by George O. Wood, Assemblies of God general secretary.

Plan now for this trip of a lifetime. For more information and a free brochure, call 1-800-424-2422.

WHO MINISTERS TO THE MINISTERS?

As Aaron and Hur ministered to Moses by holding up his arms in battle when he grew tired, so the Ministerial Enrichment Office is here to support you. Telephone counseling by Emerge counselors is now available *free* to Assemblies of God ministers and their families. Calls are *confidential and anonymous*. Referrals are made if necessary.

1-800-867-4011

Mon-Fri 10am-4pm CST

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In closing

BY RICK KNOTH

NEARING THE END of His earthly ministry, Jesus confronted the Eleven and said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16: 15). Clearly the disciples understood the urgency of the Master's request, for "they went forth, and preached every where" (verse 20).

Occasionally I muse about Jesus' entrusting the message of redemption to a group of halfhearted spiritual misfits. They certainly would not have been my choice of men to carry the most important message known to man. But, then, the way most people evaluate a situation or person is not the same way Jesus sees it.

What began as the disciples' work is now our mandate. One of the greatest privileges of being in the ministry is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Of all the pastor's important duties, preaching is at the top of the list. Pastors are called to be many things—able administrators, compassionate counselors, fantastic fund-raisers, and poised in public relations. But none of these compare with the importance of being a skilled practitioner of the Word of God.

Admittedly, facing a congregation week after week with a fresh word from God is no easy task. Those coming to our churches have specific and continuing problems. They come to receive bread; we mustn't let them walk away carrying a stone. Knowing that people will leave a church where the Word of God is mismanaged or misapplied makes preaching a heavy pastoral responsibility.

Writing closing words on this issue's theme, I feel a little like the marriage counselor who tries to tell a couple married 50 years something new about

marriage. In reality, though, the simple truths of life we hear repeatedly provide the greatest counsel. They are also the ones most often neglected. To recapture the apostolic spirit of preaching we must recommit ourselves to the disciplines of *prayer* and *preparation*.

My earliest recollection of preaching was in the old Methodist church on Broad Street in Adrian, Michigan. Those were the days before children's church, when kids sat in services with their parents. My cue for napping came when the minister got up to preach. One Sunday morning I lifted my head from my daddy's lap and with half-opened eyes whispered, "Why does he pray such long prayers?" Though I was too young to understand the difference between a prayer and a sermon, I have since learned one can pray without preaching, but one will never preach effectively without praying.

If we want to preach well, we must be willing to pray more. Nowhere is this clearer than in the account of the clergyman who observed a poor man breaking stones with a pickax and kneeling to get at his work better. The clergyman remarked, "Oh, John, I wish I could break the stony hearts of my hearers as easily as you are breaking those stones." To which the man replied, "Perhaps, master, you do not work on your knees."

If power is absent in the pulpit, could it be due to a lack of prayer in the closet? We cannot separate prayer from the preparation and proclamation of the Word of God.

If we want to preach with depth and clarity we must be willing to study more. Many sermons lose their impact between the pulpit and the pew when

the message lacks strong biblical content. Some of the fastest growing churches in America are those whose pastors are preaching expository sermons. Robert Stallman, in "The Ground and Goal of Biblical Preaching" (page 43), reminds us that "sermons born out of exegetical study and careful reflection of the text naturally tend to communicate the message of the Bible."

Ministry affords a freedom not found in many other professions. In most cases clergy set their own schedules. If we're not careful, the urgent tasks will distract us from the more important ones. While every aspect of the minister's calling requires careful attention, no other task, besides prayer, is as important as the time spent in study and sermon preparation.

Prayer and preparation will always be at the heart of great preaching. Augustine said, "When the Scriptures speak, God speaks." You are not alone in the pulpit; preaching is a partnership between you and God.



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