

ENRICHMENT

SPRING 1997

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A JOURNAL FOR PENTECOSTAL MINISTRY

M^{inistry Matters}

BY WAYDE I. GOODALL

Since the inception of the Church, God has used both men and women to carry on the work of His kingdom. We cannot say enough about the vital role of women as supporters of their husbands' ministry or as leaders in their own unique calling. Often, it is the courageous involvement of women in ministry that motivates a church, a mission station, or an evangelistic outreach to move up to the next level of growth. Mary Elizabeth Braddon said: "How are our churches beautified, our sick tended, our poor fed, our children taught and cared for and civilized?... Women are the church's strong rock. As they were the last at the foot of the cross, so they have become the first at the altar." Even though the majority of ministries are led by men, much of the behind-the-scenes efforts, and many times lead roles, are carried out by women who are having a tremendous impact in the church. Several of these women are mentioned by various authors in the pages that follow.

In this issue of *Enrichment* we have attempted to give recognition to the critical role of the minister's wife. This is perhaps one of the most difficult jobs a woman can have, but it will give tremendous dividends throughout eternity. We also want to point out that many women feel a unique call to ministry. In our Fellowship they serve as ministers' wives, pastors, church planters, associate ministers, evangelists, chaplains, missionaries, and teachers. Their work is critical, and we are grateful to them for the outstanding job they do.

For the minister's wife, it is often a balancing act to bring consistent support to her husband, nurture to their children, care for the home, and still be

as involved as possible in the ministry. Even Susanna Wesley, mother of 19 children, somehow found a way to obtain the balance needed to be supportive to her oftentimes absent husband and to raise their children. Although her marriage to Samuel Wesley, who some called, a "spendthrift husband who nurtured his dreams more than his family,"¹ was often turbulent, Susanna was faithful to her husband and to the task of teaching her children to honor God and obey His Word. Two of her sons, John and Charles, had unusually successful ministries and made a powerful impact for God's kingdom in this world.

This balancing role that the minister's wife faces is a challenge to say the least. James Dobson cautions us that: "Husbands and wives should constantly guard against overcommitment. Even worthwhile and enjoyable activities become damaging when they consume the last ounce of energy or the remaining free moments of the day."² I think this is especially true for the minister and his wife.

Lois Evans, wife of Tony Evans, gives timely advice to the busy wife and mother. She said, "How is a woman supposed to find time and energy to support her husband, fulfill her own duties, and still maintain her first love for the Lord?" Lois advises the following keys for balance:

1. *Let God set your priorities.* When I am doing what God wants me to do, I can get it all done with an inner sense of joy and energy. It is up to me to drop the things from my life that are not part of what He wants me to do.

2. *Everything has a season.* When our children were young, my priority was to

focus on our kids. As our children grew older and started school, God opened doors and gave me opportunities. Seasons change.

3. *Make home your primary focus.* The Proverbs 31 woman was a pillar of support to her husband. She served and loved him and her family while serving and loving the Lord, yet she fully developed the gifts and abilities God had given her. A woman like this can say to even the most rigorous feminist, "I have what you're looking for. I have a family, fulfilling work, satisfaction, and peace of heart. I have a husband whom I love and who loves me. My children are well cared for. I have confidence in the present, and I know where I am going in the future."³

Thank you ladies for all that you do. **E**

ENDNOTES:

¹Sandy Dengler, Susanna Wesley, Servant of God, (Chicago: Moody, 1987).

²Ibid., 416.

³Lois Evans, adapted excerpt from Promises, Promises, (Gresham, Oreg.: Vision House, 1996).



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INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS E. TRASK

Ask the Superintendent



PHOTOS BY MEL SINGER

From the earliest days of the 20th-century Pentecostal movement, spiritually gifted women have served the church with remarkable influence and distinction. In his quarterly interview Thomas E. Trask, Assemblies of God general superintendent, addresses the subject of women in ministry.

MINISTERS' WIVES AND WOMEN WITH MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS HAVE ALWAYS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD AROUND THE WORLD. WOULD YOU SPEAK TO THEM?

First, let me express appreciation to those who are serving this Fellowship in either of these

capacities or in many other capacities.

God has ordained that women would be in the ministry. Adequate Scripture references support that. One of my desires is that we might see more women who have received a definite call to evangelism. I had the joy of meeting one such lady in Modesto, California, recently. Neva Lema has a powerful ministry to our churches, and pastors are complimentary of her and her ministry. Women have unique gifts that the church should have, must have, and we need to help facilitate that.

AND WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY TO THE MALE PASTORS AND MINISTERS OF OUR FELLOWSHIP REGARDING WOMEN IN MINISTRY?

I would encourage them to open their hearts and pulpits to women whom God has gifted in preaching, teaching, exhortation, and other abilities so that two factors will happen: First, the women themselves will have the joy of fulfilling the call God has placed upon their lives. Second, the church will have the joy of being the benefactor from those gifts.

Some of the most powerful people I had in my pulpit as a pastor were women, such as Gladys Pearson and Hattie Hammond. They made a mark in the kingdom of God and in this Fellowship. Their gifts made room for them, but the church made it possible for their gifts to be utilized for the body of Christ. Hattie is with the Lord, and Gladys has limited ministry now because of her physical frailties. Others must arise and take their places.

SO YOU SEE A NEED FOR MORE WOMEN CREDENTIAL HOLDERS IN THE FELLOWSHIP?

Yes. If you look at our history, women have made some of the most outstanding contributions to the Assemblies of God in foreign missions, home missions, pastoral positions, evangelism, and as teachers. The Fellowship

would not be where it is today if it were not for the ministry women have given to this church.

WOMEN FREQUENTLY CALL MY OFFICE AND ASK WHAT POSTS ARE OPEN FOR THEM IN MINISTRY—EVEN WORLDWIDE—IF THEY FOLLOW GOD'S CALL. WHAT MINISTRY POSITIONS DO YOU SEE OPENING?

A person's gifts open doors. It is not something one can make happen. John wrote, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Revelation 3:8). Men and women offer themselves to God and prepare for ministry, but the bottom line is: The Lord has to open the door and make ministry possible.

Women who did that testify that God made ministry possible for them in our Fellowship. They have more invitations and opportunities to preach, teach, and minister than they can handle. However, the gift isn't because you are a woman or a man—it's the gift God has given that makes it possible.

ARE OUR BIBLE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES PREPARED TO TRAIN WOMEN AS WELL AS MEN?

Absolutely. In fact, if you go to any one of our Bible colleges or institutions of higher learning, you will find the ratio of men and women students is almost 50-50—the men have only an average of 5 percent lead over women who are preparing for ministry in our 17 institutions of higher learning. The schools are well-prepared to train them.

ARE WOMEN NECESSARILY CALLED TO BE PASTORS' WIVES?

This is an important subject. First, I don't know if a woman always receives a call to be a pastor's wife. It's possible, but I don't believe she has to receive such a call. However, when she marries her husband, who has a call, God

will equip her and make it possible for her to fulfill that role. She will often feel inadequate, as all of us do. We are never adequate in ourselves, but our adequacy comes from God's enabling in our lives.

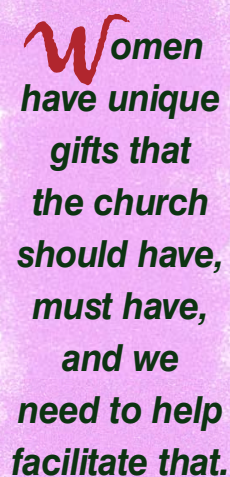
A man cannot fulfill his call completely if his wife is not supportive. I've known many men—tremendous, gifted men—in the ministry who were not able to fulfill God's call because they never had their wives' support. That's a tragedy. It's better to find that out before marriage, for it can create severe problems later.

HOW CAN MINISTERS HELP THEIR WIVES EXPERIENCE FULFILLMENT IN THE MINISTRY?

The man must not put a burden on his wife greater than she can handle. Some women are gifted and love to be in the forefront and involved in high-profile ministry. Some men are comfortable with their wives taking that role. That's fine as long as it's agreed upon and she understands her role as a support to her husband.

Some women, however, do not have those gifts. Then it's wrong for a man to push his wife into a leadership role—whether it is leading Women's Ministries or some other responsibility—within the local church which puts her under pressure and makes the burden greater than she can bear. Her first responsibility is to the Lord; her second responsibility is to her husband; and her third responsibility is to her children. Some of the greatest missionaries in our Movement today are wives who have raised godly children who are now blessing the kingdom of God. So a wife's effectiveness isn't always measured by her abilities in ministry. Some of the most powerful ministry, I'm convinced, comes out of the parsonages.

Some pastors put their wives under pressure to be the wife, mother, and leader in roles in the church. This is more than she can handle,



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and she breaks under it. God never intended this. Let me use my wife as an example.

Shirley was always content to be in the background. She never wanted to be in the forefront of ministry—on the platform or in a leadership role. She taught a Sunday school class in the churches we pastored and responded when asked to do something, but I never push her into a role with which she was not comfortable. She felt her role was to be a wife to me and a mother to our children. She has done this superbly.

Every wife—every woman—has a different personality, a different need, and a different makeup. She must fit where she is comfortable; thus it is impossible to make a pattern that will fit all. The key is to be sensitive to those matters.

HOW CAN THE PASTOR'S WIFE HELP HER HUSBAND MOST?

She can help most through her prayer support and letting her life be an example to all. In the local church she is known as the first lady. Her character, demeanor, and deportment should exemplify that office so that the women of the congregation will respect her. When they need counsel, they feel they can go to her and receive godly, wise counsel. Serving as a role model for the women in the church is one of the greatest helps possible.

YOU'VE MENTIONED A FEW WOMEN WHO HAVE INFLUENCED OUR FELLOWSHIP. PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MENTION OTHERS.

I'm almost hesitant to name names, but missionaries who come to mind are Lillian Trasher, who opened an orphanage in Assiout, Egypt; Florence Steidel, who was a missionary nurse to Liberia and founded a leper colony; Huldah Buntain, wife of Mark Buntain, who continues to oversee the Mission of Mercy they started in Calcutta, India.

Others have been remarkable ministers here in America, such



Zelma Argue, who served as an evangelist and a pastor. Alice Reynolds Flower worked alongside her husband, J. Roswell Flower, in the formation of the Assemblies of God and raised a family who have all been in ministry. Marie Brown copastored Glad Tidings Tabernacle in New York City with her husband and then carried on the responsibilities as pastor when he died.

Ruth Homer worked alongside her husband Cy, who was one of the first Assemblies of God military chaplains and served during World War II and the Korean conflict; he was a pastor and president of two of our Bible colleges. Since his death, Ruth has continued to travel in ministry to nearly every district and many preaching points abroad. Their daughter Judy is married to T. Ray Rachels, superintendent of the Southern California District. At age 80, Ruth continues in ministry as a Bible teacher for camp meetings, retreats, and churches. She also oversees the district's ministry to widows.

Marilyn Hickey, Denver, is both a pastor's wife and a Bible teacher with her own television ministry.

Deborah Menken Gill is on staff at North Central Bible College and is making a tremendous contribution to young people's lives.

The list of women who have or have had valid ministry in the Fellowship is endless. I want to say thank you to them. We need you, thank God for you, and pray that God will continue to use you and add to your numbers greatly. **E**

Men and Women in Assemblies of God Institutions of Higher Education

The average ratio of men and women in our institutions of higher learning is 52.5 percent men to 47.5 percent women. The breakdown follows:

	Men	Women
American Indian College	43%	57%
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary	78%	22%
Berean University	64%	36%
Bethany College	38%	62%
Central Bible College	58%	42%
Central Indian Bible College	44%	56%
Evangel College	46%	54%
Latin American Bible Institute, California	70%	30%
Latin American Bible Institute, Texas	58%	42%
North Central Bible College	48%	52%
Northwest College	46.5%	53.5%
Southeastern College	51%	49%
Southern California College	44%	56%
Southwestern University	51%	49%
Trinity Bible College	48%	52%
Valley Forge Christian College	52%	48%
Western Bible Institute	53%	47%

A photograph of two women sitting at a wooden table, engaged in a study session. The woman on the left, with short reddish-brown hair and wearing a white blouse, holds a white mug with a green floral pattern. The woman on the right, with long dark hair and wearing a pink button-down shirt, has her hand resting on an open book. A large, weathered hand is superimposed over the scene, gesturing towards the women. The background shows a window with sheer curtains and a plant with purple flowers.

***It is in the
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and satisfying.***



How To Be Friends with Jesus' Friends

BY JILL BRISCOE

I NEVER HAD A REAL FRIENDSHIP with another woman until I came to Christ. I was far too selfish. The essence of love, the most basic component of friendship, is self-giving. Since I was heavily into self-getting, most of *my* attempts to be friendly were usually polluted by a desire to get my needs met, to do what *I* wanted to do by always setting the agenda and expecting my friend to go along.

Who needs a friend like that? Apparently not too many people, for I found myself friendless, lonely, and angry that the sort of people I was keeping company with showed little regard for me, had no loyalty whatsoever, and seemed to end up being more competitors than companions.

Then I met Jesus and Jesus' friends, and life began.

I was converted at college in Cambridge, England, and discovered a whole new world of safe relationships I had not dreamed possible. My new friends took me to my first women's conference, and I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. However, I began to notice something: It was so much easier to be friends with Jesus' friends than friends with Jesus. Yet it is in the nurturing of our Jesus friendship that we find other relationships deepening and satisfying. After all, most of us—even women in ministry—can fall into the trap of expecting another human being to satisfy our needs when no husband's love is deep enough; no child's arms are wide enough to reach around our heart hunger; and no friend, however

wonderful, is able to fill the place of God in our lives. It is unfair to expect them to and can cause huge problems if we do. In other words, when I am close to the Lord, reveling in Him, He fills my life to overflowing, and out of that overflow my friendships flourish.

That is not to say friendship is one-sided—I must always be giving and my friend always receiving. Both must give so both receive.

Where can we find a model or an example to show us the way to do this, and why is it so important? After all, women who are in ministry have such full schedules there's little time for the luxury of friendship. It is vital, though, because out of the top 10 needs of ministry wives, loneliness heads the list. On every survey the women tell us, "I need a friend."

How can we be the safe friends we need to be with other women in leadership or fellowship within our congregations?

Examples abound in the Scriptures. For instance, God and Moses were friends. God spent time talking with Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend (Exodus 33:11). No secrets here—only openness, honesty, and delight. So what were the elements that made this friendship work?

There was determination—they both determined to spend time nurturing their relationship. Despite their busy schedules, they made their friendship happen (Exodus 33:7–12).

In the middle of the muddle we, too, must determine time for friendship—friendship

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with the Lord first. God made time with Moses, and Moses disciplined himself to make time with God, snatching the moment and being flexible.

When we served a youth mission in the sixties, my husband was an evangelist. He was gone for months on end, and I was incredibly busy. God and I became fast friends as He showed me His unfailing love. He also provided a human friend. But how to find the time to develop any sort of relationship with God or with Angela when it was so hectic being mom and dad to three young children, youth leader and missionary, and heading up a preschool and drug outreach? I learned to make friends with the people serving with me as Moses did with the young aide, Joshua (Exodus 33:11). God had given me the potential of friendship right under my nose.

When you're in leadership, a close friendship can cause jealousy. But when I think of Moses and Joshua, Joshua and Caleb, David and Jonathan, and Jesus and His 12 good

friends—3 close ones and one best one, John—I know it's safe to go ahead.

Angela and I grew close and served the Lord together—a great seedbed for growing deep friendship. We captured the moment, determining to make it happen in the middle of the muddle and allow any jealousies arising to be other people's problems, not ours. In company we tried always to make sure our friendship was inclusive, not exclusive. That friendship proved to be a lifesaver for me.

What else can we learn about growing our human friendships from the way God grew His?

God not only gave us models of friendship in the Old Testament but continued to model friendship in the New Testament when He came in Christ to reconcile us to himself. Gathering 12 men around Him to share His mission, He told them: "Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command" (John 15:12–14*). Jesus had come to give His lifeblood for His friends—His part to save them, their part to please Him and to lay down their lives in response. Agape love is primarily concerned with the other's well-being, regardless of the cost to itself. Christ loved His friends like this. I must love mine like this too.

a Dialogue

"Yes, Lord, I am forever tired in my efforts to...love. It is a full-time job. Sometimes my hands do not move heartily in the service of Your love. In fact, today my hands hang limp. I do not feel like doing anything. I am spent, depleted, washed up on shore like an empty shell.

"But my list is long. The Sunday school class needs teaching. The bathrooms need cleaning. The clothing needs ironing. An article is past deadline. My neighbor is smarting from divorce—so much to do, so many to serve, so much harvest not yet in...."

"My child, come close. Put aside your list. I have built the fire. Come sit by Me. Nothing brings Me more delight than to love you. But sometimes, child, you seem to have a hard time letting Me love you. Love puts you in charge; receiving love means I am the giver and you are the taker. Doing love is high profile; receiving love is what happens between you and Me in private.

"I am not surprised that you are wearied by the doing of love. When you think you can do all the loving, you will get weary. When you cannot receive, you will soon have nothing to give.

"If you love Me, yes, feed My lambs. But if you love Me, first be My lamb."

—From Sometimes I Feel Like Running Away from Home by Elizabeth Cody Newenhuyse (© Bethany House, 1993), 78. Used by permission.

I never experienced the power to be a true friend until I became a Christian.

But how? He was God, and I am me. Yet for this I have Jesus. I can't, but He never said I could without Him. By His Spirit I can. He can make me like Christ in my part of friendship. That is why I began this article saying I never experienced the power to be a true friend until I became a Christian. My self-getting was transformed to a self-giving lifestyle that elicited response and made real friendship possible. I learned to evaluate my friendships honestly, realizing I was only responsible for my attitudes and actions, not the other person's.

Jesus modeled many practical things that can enhance friendship such as openness and

honesty. He said, “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything I learned from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15). Thus Jesus told us an essential component of friendship is sharing everything we learn from our Heavenly Father. My closest friends are women who have served and learned God with me.

*When I am close to
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God has gifted me with many women friends these last 25 years in pastoral ministry with my husband. Together we have grown a vital women’s ministry; had a grand adventure with creative evangelism; traveled to troubled Croatia in my work with World Relief; and have, in fact, shared not only His mission but His heart. Mixing our mutual knowledge of Jesus, we have enriched each other’s lives immeasurably. Fellowship, service, and sharing everything we have learned from our Father is what real friendship is all about. And I have discovered that I am responsible to initiate this.

So it is the presence of Jesus by His Spirit that gives me discernment in building my friendships—friendships that will last. Proverbs 17:17 tells us that “a friend loves at all times.” Jesus was not a fair-weather friend nor in it for what He could get out of it. He always remains faithful, no matter how we treat Him. When Jesus’ friends misunderstood His intentions, forsook Him and fled, denied and betrayed Him, He loved on and kept His side of the bargain to love at all times. He washed the feet of the disciples who would soon run from Him, including Judas Iscariot (John 13:5). In fact, when Judas arrived in the Garden of Gethsemane to betray Jesus, the first word Jesus said to him was,

“Friend” (Matthew 26:50).

Only in Christ and by His Spirit can we find the will to forgive, the determination to reconcile, and the initiative to make the first move to heal. Only in Christ can we find the heart to practice overcoming love as Jesus demonstrated.

Have you been hurt by a friend? deserted? betrayed? denied? Like Jesus, keep on loving by His power, and you may yet restore the relationship. Jesus’ disciples were to find in their post-Resurrection, post-Pentecost experiences a brotherhood that surpassed anything they had known before. Two by two they lived and worked in community. Two by two they took the gospel to the far corners of the world. Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Silas, and within the Twelve, brothers like James and John became more than blood brothers—they became brothers in Christ. They discovered that in mission and in martyrdom “a friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” (Proverbs 17:17).

In my darkest hours my daughter has become more than my daughter—a precious sister in Christ. My boys have become more than sons—my brothers in Christ. My prayer partners have closed ranks, allowing my pain to become theirs—feeling it, bearing it, carrying it as true friends do. When it is their turn, I know He will enable me to return such love—only in Christ.

God is for our friendships—with Him and with each other. He modeled such, talked about it, and willed it. The only one who hates the whole idea is Satan, who doesn’t have a friend in the world and desires that we all become like him.

Yes, there are peculiar stresses and strains on the relationships of women in ministry, but there are privileges of such leadership too, and one of the greatest is friendship. **E**

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



Jill Briscoe is executive editor of Just Between Us magazine, Brookfield, Wisconsin.

*Most of us—
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God Who Calls Is Faithful

(1 Thessalonians 5:24)

BY MELINDA BOOZE

The challenges and blessings are sometimes different for women in ministry than for men. Not wrong. Different.

Janie Boulware-Wead, Patricia Cote, Cynthia Smith, and Angie Thomson are in varied and far-reaching ministries. But their single-minded goal is the same—to be personally obedient to God.

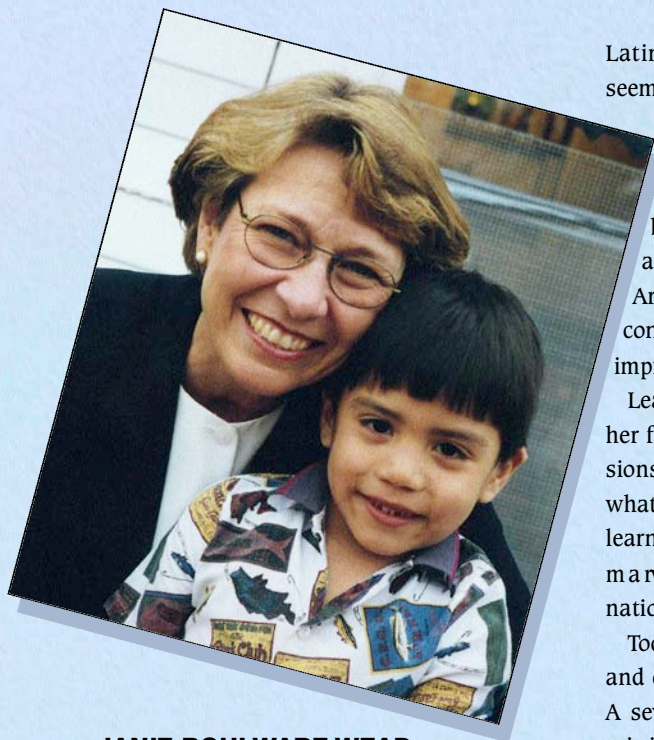
These four ministers talked about achieving balance and effectiveness in their responsibilities to ministry, home, and relationships. As one voice, they said personal devotional time with God—in prayer, fasting, and reading the Word—is their most important commitment.

In addition, they are staunch believers in education for women in ministry. Janie has a master's degree in Spanish. Patricia is completing her D.Min. from Fuller Theological Seminary. Cynthia holds a master of science in education. And Angie plans to continue her education in child psychology. "We need education with the accent on the spiritual emphasis," Pat said.

Each woman spoke of mentors who encourage, stretch, and correct. Cynthia talked about her mother's example of living in peace. Janie said she wouldn't have known where to start in her home missions work without many "wonderful years in foreign missions and the beautiful examples" of other missionaries. Pat still calls on a former professor who "always has the right words at the right time." Angie recalls Mark Buntain's powerful impact on her life.

These are just four women—lifestyles of personal devotion—whom God has gifted to build His church. Pastor Cynthia Smith said it, but it is the testimony of each of these four ministers: "My little has become much in God's hands."

"Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass."



JANIE BOULWARE-WEAD, HOME MISSIONARY

From the time she was a little girl, listening in on Sunday night preacher talk at her parents' kitchen table, Janie Boulware-Wead knew she would be a missionary. Janie observed a "quality of missionaries' lives that deeply impacted me. That was the directive for my life."

Confidence in God's call has sustained Janie through sorrows and buoyed her in joyous times. God recently used her in the ministry she describes as the "most affirming of my life"—Hispanic Project 2000.

In 1991, after 16 years in foreign missions, Janie and her three children (she's a single mom) left Mexico for Siloam Springs, Arkansas. Northwest Arkansas is a poultry production center which draws hundreds of blue-collar workers, many of them Hispanic.

Janie's first introduction to Hispanic America was as a missions convention speaker for First Assembly of God in Siloam Springs. She spoke in Spanish for the benefit of the

Latinos who attended a banquet. "They seemed so in need of a place to belong," Janie said. "You could see it on their faces."

The need for Hispanic churches was evident. First Assembly of God felt the burden, but no one came forward to plant a Spanish-speaking church in northwest Arkansas. After returning to the missions convention a second year, Janie said, "I felt impressed that I should be the one."

Leaving foreign missions was a big step for her family; however, "without the foreign missions experience, I would not have known what to do in Arkansas," Janie said. "What I learned in the foreign missions context was a marvelous preparatory journey." She is now a nationally appointed home missionary.

Today there are six Hispanic congregations, and every one has a Spanish-speaking pastor. A seventh Hispanic couple coordinates youth ministry. "Once we establish a church and have a nucleus of working believers, our task is to disciple them to the place they can multiply themselves through new preaching points, home groups, and cell groups," Janie said.

As she reflects on God's blessing upon Hispanic Project 2000, Janie's joy is evident. But the pioneer ministry came during trying times. Joseph (23), Jason (18), and Annie (16) are the trio without whom, Janie said, "my life would be very bleak. But these years have been a tremendous challenge—my children all going through teen years. I burn a lot of midnight oil. I determined that my children would

***"I burn a lot of midnight oil.
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—Janie Wead

***"Men will be
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—Janie Wead

always come ahead of ministry demands. That balance has been a tremendous struggle of physical strength and endurance."

When tragedy disrupted the Wead family, the Assemblies of God foreign missions board opened a door to Janie and her children to continue in missions. "No one would have thought that I could ever continue in our structure. I want to say thank-you to the Assemblies of God for giving this woman an opportunity to serve."

Some have tried to deter Janie because she is a single mother in ministry. "I just smile and go on," she said. "Any woman in ministry is going to tell you that it is a tremendous challenge. Whatever I experience in gender rejection does not change my course. I absolutely disallow any bitterness. At the same time, I'm not going to stop simply because man deems God's call invalid—there are no prejudices of gender when it comes to our Lord."

"Men," Janie said, "will be the vanguard of change in the church's acceptance of women in ministry—men who open their hearts and realize that God is sovereignly calling women to ministry as part of the answer for the tremendously needy world in which we live. Take away all the women who feel the call of God, and you greatly reduce that work force for the Kingdom."

Again at God's directive, Janie moved last summer to the Division of Home Missions in Springfield, Missouri, where she is coordinating Hispanic Project 2000 at the national level. She left seven ministry couples to continue the work in Arkansas.

In her personal life, God's directive has come full circle. Now Annie has heard God's call to ministry. What does Janie tell her? "Trust in God and serve Him. No matter what happens, there'll be a way made for you by the Waymaker." No one is more qualified to advise Annie than her single-missionary mom whose life and ministry are self-described testimonies to God's "extra doses of mercy."



***"The very verses
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equality to women."***

—Patricia Cote

PATRICIA COTE, MILITARY CHAPLAIN

Patricia Cote's day begins at 3 a.m. alone with God. This sacred time prepares her for ministry to over 1,000 men in infantry training at Fort Benning, Georgia. She meets her congregation for physical training at 5 a.m. and then accompanies them to the rifle ranges, on road marches, and into field training.

"My Sunday services are not the majority of my time," Captain Cote noted. "Six days a week I basically do everything with the soldiers. Ministry of presence takes on a whole different meaning here. I know that term can be overused, but I have never before seen how important it is." Her presence is especially significant since she is the only chaplain serving Fort Benning.

After a dramatic conversion in 1982, Pat attended Southeastern College of the Assemblies of God in Lakeland, Florida, to prepare for evangelistic ministry. Her first experience with the military was student ministry in a Veterans'

Administration hospital. During seminary she worked with a chaplain in Boston's V.A. system. "I noticed an aspect of patients' lives that I really couldn't identify with," she said. "They were dealing with military experiences that I had no way of understanding." Pat was commissioned in the Army in 1988 and entered the chaplaincy in 1990.

Pat also found an open door to fulfill her call to evangelism. Soldiers cycle in and out of Fort Benning every 13 to 15 weeks. "They're all in a crisis setting," she said. "Many times it's the first time they've been away from home. They're hurting, they're afraid, they're searching. It's such fertile ground."

During the relatively short time she has to minister to each group, Pat concentrates on discipleship and Bible study. Surprisingly, because of the little personal time the soldiers have, cell groups form among the soldiers. They actively disciple each other.

***"[Women] can get
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—Patricia Cote

"Some soldiers from 3 years ago still correspond with me and let me know what they're doing," Pat said. "They still have a deep love for Christ. You see that you're out there making an impact. The words Christ spoke in Matthew that we are the salt and light of the world really come true here. Either what I'm doing or not doing makes a statement. I *am* salt and light. The question is, 'Am I *effective* salt and light?'"

God miraculously cleared many obstacles to place Pat in the military and

especially at Fort Benning. A legal loophole was found—her battalion is a training infantry, and troops are not deployed—and Pat is the first woman assigned to an infantry unit. This is an example of the affirmation and support the military has shown Pat—a positive ministry field for her,” she said.

Because she represents a different role for women than some religious traditions and church stereotypes incorporate, Pat has been marginalized in some nonmilitary settings. “I don’t always feel accepted as an ordained minister,” she said. “When I felt the call to ministry I needed to know that I was not out of line with God. I’m very solid on what the Bible says.”

Pat promised God she would walk through doors He opened, but she would not fight any battles to make a statement about women in ministry. “We can get discouraged with the obstacles, but there’s not a ministry out there that does not have obstacles. Men have obstacles, too. They’re just different from mine.”

Pat has been compelled to address disparaging comments directed toward her family. Her husband Bill, an electrical engineer, homeschools their two daughters, Hannah (8) and Kristen (6). “Bill recognizes that this is an opportunity most fathers never have,” Pat said. “He enjoys what he’s doing. He has a quiet strength about him and trusts that God has his family in control. Our gifts dovetail. It may not be traditional, but it is the meshing of two gifts to God’s glory.”

Shouldn’t the church also benefit from both men and women’s gifts? Pat asked. “I grieve for the church sometimes. So many untapped gifts are lying dormant and frustrated. We need to see female leadership as well as male. They complement one another. The very verses that justify our Pentecostalism are the same ones that give equality to women.”

Pat’s unique ministry as a female pastor in a military setting guarantees challenges and rewards. “I’ve jumped out of airplanes and done things I had never

thought of,” she reflected. “I feel God’s strength, and I feel His pleasure when I use it. That’s reassuring to me, because I know it’s coming from God. I couldn’t do this if it weren’t from Him.”



“We need to know that we can do all things through Christ who transcends us. Negative things only sharpen us. We are seasoned by the experiences of life.”

—Cynthia Smith

**CYNTHIA SMITH, PASTOR,
RADIANT LIFE MINISTRIES,
PITTSBURG, CALIFORNIA**

Cynthia Smith is a minister, but she had no plans to be a pastor. When she obeyed God’s directive to establish a healing station in Pittsburg, California, she often reminded people at Radiant Life Ministries who called her “pastor” that RLM was not a church, and she was not their pastor. She always encouraged people to find a good church and join.

In 1990, 4 years after RLM began responding to the community’s needs, its myriad of ministries and the regular Sunday afternoon service was

incorporated into a church. Cynthia became pastor of this “rescuing church.”

“We feel a strong call that our church needs to look like our community,” Cynthia said. “We are willing and excited to take hurting people. Hurting people tend to hurt others and come with fewer resources. A rescuing church is involved in their total life—not just their spiritual life. Our ministry goes beyond preaching what God says about wholeness and love to applying that and walking with people as they go through the process.”

The community is needy. People are transient, homeless, hungry, and hopeless. An RLM home for AIDS victims is the only such facility in East Contra Costa County. The church runs daily feeding programs, provides counseling and referrals, has opened a transitional men’s home and a short-term overnight shelter, a clothing outreach, extensive children’s ministries, and plans for educational programs and a free clinic.

God’s directive to Cynthia to establish the “healing station along the side of the road” has grown to include two television outreach programs that she hosts. By faith RLM meets the \$11,000 monthly mortgage payment to purchase and renovate the old shopping center they moved to in 1987. The community of Pittsburg has recognized Cynthia in previous years by naming her Outstanding Woman of the Year and Humanitarian of the Year for East Contra Costa County.

“We want to do well in whatever we do,” Cynthia said. “We never started out

“You don’t need to walk hard. You don’t need to be a man—you don’t need to compete—you just need to settle who you are in the Lord and walk in that.”

—Cynthia Smith

to do it big. I believe in excellence in ministry. If you do it well, it grows."

Cynthia's parents were her early role models for pursuing excellence. When she was in the eighth grade, a counselor told her it was unrealistic for her, a black female, to schedule college prep courses. "I told her, 'I didn't know that. My father told me I could do anything I wanted to do,'" Cynthia said. "We need to know we can do all things through Christ who transcends us. Negative things only sharpen us. We are seasoned by the experiences of life."

A teacher by profession, Cynthia said she was hesitant to become Pastor Smith. "I would say to any young woman who feels the call of God in her life that God will confirm that call to everyone around her without her ever speaking a word. As women, when we rest in the Lord and in the call of God, we can do well what God calls us to do."

Claude, Cynthia's husband, was the voice of confirmation she needed to hear. "He is so totally the man God called him to be, it frees me to be the person God called me to be," Cynthia said. "If you're married, God is not going to call you to do something your family is not in agreement with. My family is the center of my life and always has been. God has honored that." Sons Thomas (24) and Scott (23) are two proud supporters.

First and foremost, Cynthia nurtures her relationship with God. "Number one, I give time to it," she said. "I give place to it. I can't live without it. I'm a simple person with a simple faith. All I have learned only leads me to know that I need to know Him more. A fool believes he has become so valuable to the world and the kingdom of God that he no longer has time for the Lord."

"You don't need to walk hard," she said. "You don't need to be a man—you don't need to compete—you just need to settle who you are in the Lord and walk in that. The desire of my heart is to be found faithful to the Lord—not faithful to people or faithful to ministry but faithful to the Lord."



"We were standing over a sewer hole, and 12 children crawled out. All of them were sniffing glue. They were all barefoot in subzero weather. They begged us for a place to live."

—Angie Thomson

ANGIE THOMSON, MISSIONARY ASSOCIATE UNDER MISSIONS ABROAD PLACEMENT SERVICE APPOINTMENT

Although he's dead, and his regime fallen, the legacy of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu haunts Romania still. His government hoarded the country's resources, leaving nothing for the care of its citizens. He taxed couples who had fewer than five children, presuming to build a strong nation. Today those children reflect the consequences of Communism's evil. Addicted to glue, exposed to frigid winters, relegated to the sewers, and helpless to fend off abusers, thousands of Romanian children cannot comprehend hope. The 150,000 street children in Bucharest alone have not heard about the hope that transcends all evil.

Angie Thomson is showing them, one child at a time. Angie's vision and God's miracles have transformed a dilapidated Bucharest building into the City of Hope—a home for Romania's neglected children.

In 1992 Angie left her management

position at Digital Equipment Corporation in California and sought God's direction. She was asked to lead a relief team to a Romanian orphanage. What she saw devastated her. "It was the middle of winter and icy cold," she remembers. "It was a government-run orphanage housing hundreds of small children. They had no winter clothes. Many of them didn't have shoes. Some had hepatitis. I cried for weeks."

Angie soon learned the plight of children who didn't even have an orphanage to call home. She teamed up with Cristian Soimaru and visited Bucharest. "We were standing over a sewer hole, and 12 children crawled out. All of them were sniffing glue. They were all barefoot in subzero weather. They begged us for a place to live—for anything we could give them. I felt like God had spoken to me to do something."

Where could she start? The miracles began. A Romanian parliamentarian, who is a Christian, arranged for a building. The city donated it with the stipulation that it be renovated and function as

a home for street children within 6 months.

The funds to renovate the building were donated. Miracle by miracle, City of Hope rose out of dilapidation. August 30, 1994, within 2 weeks of the 6-month deadline, Angie and Cristian (now City of Hope director) brought the first boys home. Most needed three or four showers; they were covered with body lice and sores; their meager clothes were filthy.

Angie grew up a missionary kid in Latin America. "I saw poverty in Latin America," she said. "I saw poor children, but they ran home to their moms and dads. I believe orphans are special to God. Isaiah 58 addresses taking care of the fatherless and meeting the needs of the dying. The Lord says that true religion, true spirituality, is caring for widows and orphans."

When she was 12, Angie said, the Lord gave her a specific call to missions unrelated to her missionary background. At Bethany College of the Assemblies of God in Scotts Valley, California, the Lord confirmed her call. After graduation, Angie took a management job to pay her school bill, knowing that the corporate world would not be her ultimate destination. God used that experience to prepare her for ministry in Romania. As a young woman with international responsibilities, she gained skills managing people and cultures.

"I was respected for the position I held and the job I did versus whether I was single, married, female, male, 30, or 50," she said. "I didn't have any experiences with people looking at me through the shades of my being female or younger. I have approached what I do in Romania the same way."

Responses to her as a single female missionary have not been drastically different from a corporate manager, Angie said, although she has sometimes sensed people's reluctance to hear her bigger vision for Romania's children. Angie, 33, is quick to say, "no one has been negative." Because of the need of the children, people see that something

larger has to be done," she said. "There is no time to do secondary things. We need to be about God's business quickly. With a God-given confidence, we can affect destiny in a powerful way."

Angie's larger vision is a minicity on 10 acres in Bucharest where as many as 200 children will have their total needs met by individual homes, a school, a chapel, a vocational training center, a recreational facility, and a Christian business. "We are planning ahead for what the children need to become godly

individuals who make changes within their own country," Angie said. "I want this to be a place where there can be ongoing hope." **E**



Melinda Booze is editor in the Christian Higher Education Department and managing editor of On Course, a magazine for teens, Springfield, Missouri.

Seven Habits

of Highly Effective Ministers' WIVES

BY GAIL JOHNSON

How do you tell someone you are a wife, mother, and minister all in one? How do you explain that you are called by God and yet fight loneliness, fatigue, insecurity, depression, sickness, and heartache? You are human. You are gifted. Yet you are unique and want God to use you effectively for His glory.

Based on interviews with many ministers' wives of all ages and walks of life, the following guidelines may help implement habits that will enable you to "live a life worthy of the Lord and ... please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:10*).

1. MAINTAIN YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL LIFE.

You are, first, a child of God and, second, a minister's wife. You need intimate time with the Father. Your relationship to God precedes your service to Him. Misunderstandings come when ministers' wives feel they must maintain a spiritual level to function better in their role. Bible study becomes what they can get from it to communicate to others instead of how it can transform them and be an influence through them. They cultivate spiritual gifts to perform better, not out of obedience and a desire to walk in fullness with Him.

Effective ministry results as an outflow of a heart in pursuit of God.

If you do not constantly pursue and maintain fellowship with the Holy Spirit, you may easily fall prey to the barrenness of business—saying and doing the right thing—but on the inside you are empty and lifeless. Motives become blurred as you seek to please people, not God. You lose perspective and come to depend on your own strength instead of God's adequacy.

On the other hand, as you commune daily with the Father, you gain the inner strength needed to meet each task when circumstances dictate the day's activities. You are better equipped to ward off darts of criticism, extend forgiveness when your feelings say otherwise, and respond with patience instead of anger. Effective ministry results as an outflow of a heart in pursuit of God.

2. CULTIVATE A LIFE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH.

After several years of ministry, I came to realize my entire ministry and social life lay within the four walls of the church. What little circle of influence I had outside the church was the occasional chat with a grocery clerk or a waitress. I hungered to be where my life was lived out as a Christian, not as a pastor's wife, and even somewhat challenged. Then I decided to train and serve as a counselor at the local Crisis Pregnancy Center. Also, my neighbors and Little League parents became my mission field.

If you are not careful, your ministry *in* the church can become all-consuming and distorted by compartmentalizing it to the church. Thus you can become isolated and lose touch with non-Christians' needs. Join the PTA. Start a book-discussion club in your neighborhood.

I recently joined a ladies tennis league. I did not know anyone, and they didn't know me; yet the contacts have been refreshing and rewarding. Every week I am building relationships with those who have yet to hear, and I am earning the right to be heard.

3. GUARD YOUR WORDS.

As a minister's wife, sometimes you bring problems on yourself by careless words. Your husband has to put out fires you ignite, for your words carry a lot of influence. Therefore, you have a wonderful opportunity to encourage, counsel, and console in ways that will

impact lives for good. How many times has someone told you that something you said caused her to change a course of action or determine a decision? You may not even remember it. Conversely, criticism, no matter how justified, can have lasting and devastating consequences. A lack of confidentiality can kill trust.

Several years ago my husband told me he often used me as a sounding board for ideas. He shared how he often abandoned an idea because of my negative or not-so-enthusiastic response. Unknown to me, my reaction carried considerable weight. Thus with my words I can squelch a dream. "Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Proverbs 12:18).

4. BE YOURSELF.

Every minister's wife struggles with the expectations, reasonable or unreasonable, placed on her. Everybody has an idea of what a pastor's wife should be and do and usually tells you. Many have to be all things to all people, only to fail miserably. When you try to be someone you are not and conform to a perceived image, you become frustrated and self-condemned. Be yourself. People will love *you*.

Some have pressure from minister husbands to function according to his standards. Others experience inner pressure as they juggle home, work, family, ministry, and perceived expectations.

Coming from a broken, alcoholic home, I was not on the top 10 "most likely to be a pastor's wife" list. Saved at 16, I attended Bible college as a baby Christian. I felt called to ministry but couldn't see how God could use me. I couldn't play the piano or sing two notes together in the same key—I still can't. Yet He has used me in ways I could never imagine. I have learned to minister where I am gifted, not where I am expected.

Freedom comes from feeling secure in what you are doing. God has uniquely gifted you to meet the needs of *your* church. God knows what is needed and how you fit in. He wants to accomplish His purposes in and through you—the real you.

5. DON'T COMPARE.

Comparing your situation with another is an easy trap. Verbally or nonverbally, you look at

If you do not constantly pursue and maintain fellowship with the Holy Spirit, you may easily fall prey to the barrenness of business—saying and doing the right thing—but on the inside you are empty and lifeless.

others and wish you could have what they have or be where they are. Such comparing can lead to two kinds of sin, envy and pride—envy when you compare yourself with those who have more; pride when you compare yourself with those who have less.

If left unchecked, these can become the root to discontentment. By focusing on others, you lose sight of what God wants to do through you where you are. Wishing you were somewhere else consumes your energy.

As a young mother I struggled with

the demands my two small children made on my time. Until their births, I had worked full time with my husband on a large staff, “reaching the world for Jesus.” I resented cleaning up spilled milk while the opportunity for greatness passed me by. When I considered the seemingly insignificant state of my life and thought about other pastors’ wives pursuing their ministries, waves of jealousy and despair washed over me.

I am a little wiser today, though my circumstances have not changed. I now have four children and am still wiping up spilled milk. My perspective has changed. I will not always have small children at my feet. For now, I say “No” to some things. If serving the Lord means raising four children to love and serve Him, I will be faithful to that call.

Seasons change. Don’t compare yourself to those around you. God has called them to a different work and place. To God, greatness is having a heart to serve Him right where you are.

A Bill of Rights for a Pastor’s Wife

1. *Try being yourself—your best self—but be yourself. Resist the pressure to live a fictionalized role you put on like an article of clothing to please someone else.*

2. *Use your best gift more often. The biggest mistake is trying to be all things to all people, so you end up being harried and exhausted.*

3. *Make your priorities obvious—people need to know.*

4. *Don’t attempt to control the church. Be a happy, affirming helper rather than the one who has all the answers and influences all the decisions.*

5. *Listen more and talk less—hurting people need redemptive, active listeners.*

6. *Nurture change agents. Seek out people within the congregation who have potential to impact the church, the community, and the world.*

7. *Show visible love to your husband. Hold his hand in view of the congregation; walk with him across the church grounds and parking lot. In your conversations let people know that your husband is both special and human.*

8. *Talk about your advantages to your kids. Help them see the benefits of being a pastor’s son or daughter and how they have a positive part in your family’s shared ministry.*

9. *Find a prayer partner as a soul mate. Seek to be part of, or even establish, a pastors’ wives group who hold each other accountable.*

10. *Take a worship break. Every few months go where you don’t have to critique anything, there are no expectations, and you don’t have to play any kind of role. Just drink in the inspiration and worship.*

11. *Don’t spiritualize everything. You do not need to feel less of a pastor’s wife if you can’t answer with chapter and verse or even out of your own experience.*

12. *Schedule vacation days and date nights. Make sure your husband puts important family dates on his calendar.*

13. *Be a keen and accurate observer of the church. Alert your husband to the red flags you observe in the congregation. Try to see things as laypeople view them.*

14. *Encourage your husband to find an accountability partner, a covenant partner, other than his wife, with whom he can talk pastoral things.*

15. *Laugh a lot. Learn to laugh at yourself and your situations.*

16. *Stay attentive to your husband’s needs. Don’t back away. Sometimes your husband, under the weight of the struggle, will become sullen, aloof, and depressed. It may not be a pretty sight, but that is not a good time to withdraw or punish him emotionally.*

17. *Commit to self-care. Are you eating right? getting enough exercise? being emotionally stimulated by the right things?*

18. *Keep your perspective. Pray, “Lord, help me see how things look to You.” A well-balanced, godly woman is her pastor/husband’s greatest asset.*

—Adapted from *Married to a Pastor’s Wife* by H.B. London and Neil B. Wiseman (Victor Books, 1995, Cook Communications Ministries, Colorado Springs, Colo.), 251. Used by permission.

6. TAKE TIME FOR YOU.

We have a medical doctor in our church who constantly reminds me that “as my physical well-being goes, so goes my spiritual well-being.” For example, how well I handle stress or loneliness depends, in a large measure, on such things as maintaining a balanced diet and getting enough sleep and exercise.

I have learned to take naps. Someone said, “Sometimes taking a nap can be the most spiritual thing you can do.” I know a pastor’s wife who takes piano lessons, not so she can play in church but simply for the pleasure of it. Read books you enjoy. Take a college class. Pursue your interests. Take time for yourself. Don’t feel guilty.

7. KEEP FAMILY PRIORITY OVER MINISTRY.

Striking a balance in this age-old struggle can be difficult. One minister’s wife had a powerful insight: “Ministry and family are a partnership. You do not have to choose between one or the other.” It is not true that you must lose

your family to have a successful ministry. However, as a rule of thumb, when it comes to a nose-to-nose choice between ministry and family, choose your family. When your children are sick, stay home. A basketball game may mean a missed baby shower. Your family's needs must take priority, and this usually translates into the time you invest in them.

"Emphasize to your children the advantages instead of the disadvantages of the pastorate," said a pastor's wife with teenagers. "We communicate to them what they have or don't have." If your attitude toward ministry is negative, chances are theirs will be too.

As a minister's wife, you juggle many roles. Yet you have no greater ministry than being an encourager to your husband. He is human and has times of weakness, doubt, and discouragement. His job is not easy.

"I always waited up for my husband on board meeting nights, no matter how late it was," one woman shared. "I knew when he got home he would need support or just someone to talk to."

"Take care of your husband," another pastor's wife said. "If you don't, someone else will."

What a privilege ministers' wives have to labor alongside their husbands in shared vision and common passion—encouraging and instructing them to walk with God. Ministers' wives are privileged to be chosen to the high calling of God.

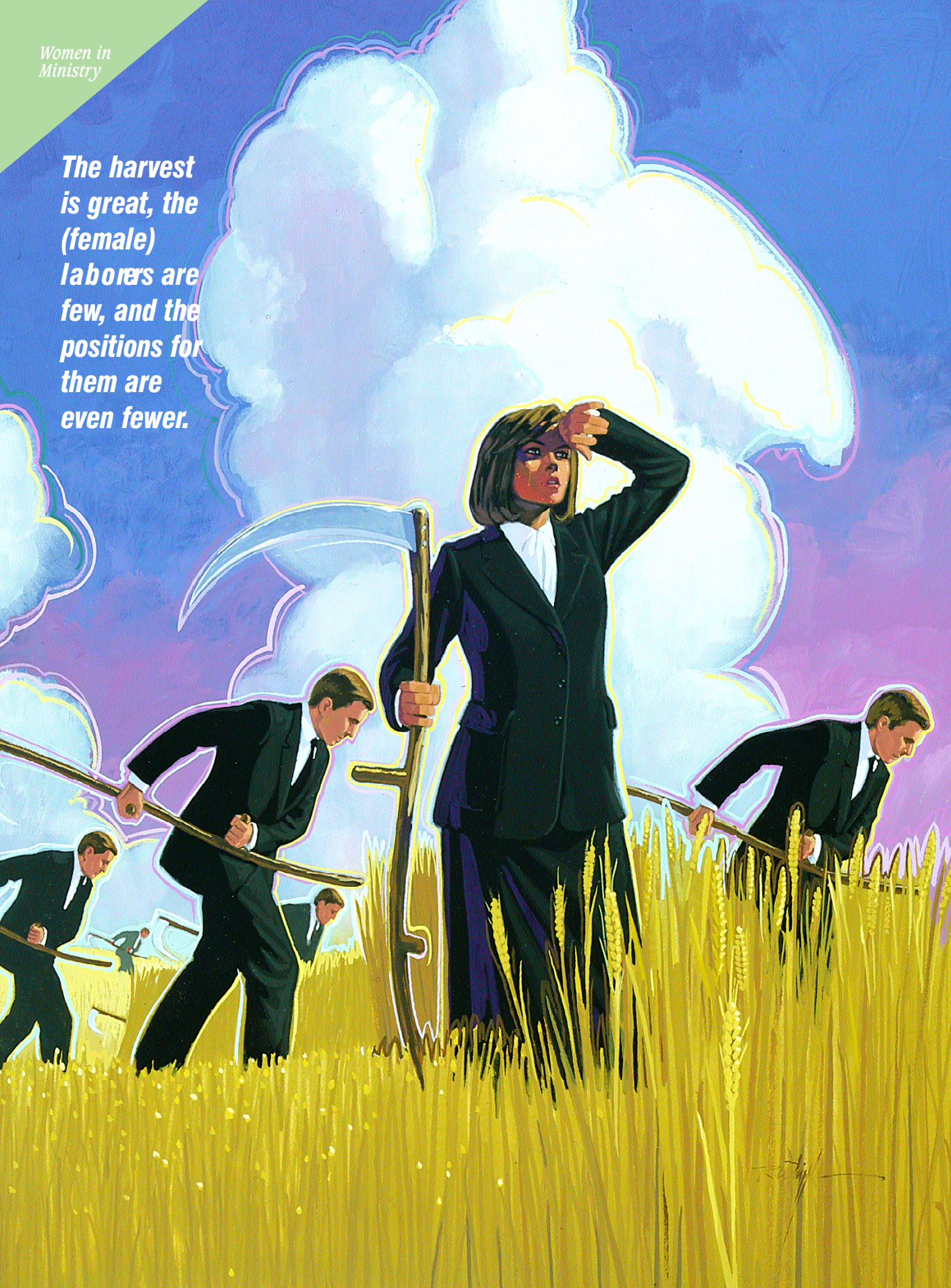
We are in this together. And when you get a minute, why not stop by my house for tea? **E**

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



Gail Johnsen is married to Darrel M. Johnsen, pastor of First Assembly of God, Coeur D'Alene, Idaho.

***The harvest
is great, the
(female)
laborers are
few, and the
positions for
them are
even fewer.***



Called by God—

What's a Woman To Do, and What Can We Do To Help Her?

BY DEBORAH MENKEN GILL

She grew up with little godly influence; accepted Christ in a church that limited women's leadership; was filled with the Holy Spirit and called into ministry at a Pentecostal altar; but sometimes she feels gutless and even guilty to conclude that *she* could be called. She remembers a liberal feminist teacher in high school but has seen few righteous female role models in leadership.

What is such a woman's place? Pastor counsels her that the Assemblies of God ordains women, but she struggles with a couple of confusing Scripture references. She has seen two women preachers on television but has never met one in person. Is it possible that she should engage in such a pursuit? What's a woman to do? The same thing any person who is called should do—obey God.

Everyone called into the work of the Lord faces challenges in pursuit of God's will, and the clergywoman has her share. She expects to fight the devil but is disheartened when resistance to her call comes from brothers and sisters in the faith. Destined by God but denied by others. Enabled by the Holy Spirit but disabled by human spirits. Burdened in her heart but blockaded in her path. What's a woman to do? What any believer should do: Study the Word, counsel with godly people, pray it through, and then—obey God.

From early Pentecostals as prominent as Maria Woodworth-Etter and the charismatic healing evangelist of recent history Kathryn Kuhlman, to many of our contemporary sisters in full-gospel work today, women's struggle with the call has been documented. God only knows what loss to the Kingdom were those who were called but foiled by frustrations. Yet history bears record of

those who were faithful in carrying out their convictions at great cost. These are the women who evangelized thousands, braved dangerous mission fields, pioneered a great portion of our churches, and left a legacy of lives in God's kingdom today because of their commitment to the call.

What's a woman to do? Obey God. It's just as simple as that; there is no other choice. If she is a disciple, disobedience is not an option.

What can *we* do to help her? Plenty.

Let me challenge you with seven proactive steps you can take to facilitate a woman's quest to confirm her calling.¹

ESTABLISH THE LEGITIMACY OF HER CALLING FROM THE WORD.

Understanding the biblical basis of women in ministry empowers her to answer the call.²

The Bible records that both men and women are created equally in the image of God, both are equally fallen, and both

These are the women who evangelized thousands, braved dangerous mission fields, pioneered a great portion of our churches, and left a legacy of lives in God's kingdom today because of their commitment to the call.

Questions for a Woman of Influence

The question of a woman's role in leadership will probably never be settled to everyone's satisfaction. Gretchen Gaebelin Hull, in Equal To Serve, raises many thought-provoking questions that a woman of influence should seek to answer from the Bible so that she can be true to God and herself:

- What advice does the Bible have for us on our quest for approval?
- Is our tradition scriptural?
- Will you give up your rights to yourself and any entitlement to a certain position and obey His call?
- Will you accept God's authority?
- In the end, whose approval really matters most to you?

God's approval matters. That's why the woman of influence will not circumvent the Bible in order to lead. She will embrace God's Word to find her unique place of leadership.

Questions that have helped me find my unique place of leadership have included:

- What is the context of this question or this passage of Scripture? What was the culture then? and is this a specific command for a specific day and time? or is this a command that crosses cultures and time periods?
- What is the whole counsel of God on this issue? The Bible is the best commentary on the Bible. I want to know from cover to cover what the Bible says rather than looking for one verse just to prove my point.
- Can I gain more insight from a study of this issue by commentators and Bible scholars? historians? the original language?

—From A Woman of Influence by Pam Farrel (InterVarsity Press, 1996), 42-43. Used by permission.

Christ's treatment of women was revolutionary and resulted in the Early Church's use of women in leadership in remarkable ways.

can be equally redeemed. Contrary to the divine design, the fall into sin has imposed false hierarchical distinctions between the sexes. Jesus' teaching and example confirm that He came to reverse the effects of the Fall, bringing forgiveness of failure and freedom from

oppressing others. Christ's treatment of women was revolutionary and resulted in the Early Church's use of women in leadership in remarkable ways. The apostle Paul was a great supporter of ministering women. The only two biblical passages that appear to limit their roles in leadership are not universal prohibitions but address specific local problems that needed correction. In these last days—from Pentecost to the Second Coming—the Holy Spirit is poured out freely on all categories of people, and God intends to use those whom the

Spirit equips.

Excellent exegetical resources are available on the women's question.³ If a person is prejudiced against women's leadership, no amount of evidence will change his or her made-up mind; but if one is open to consider the facts, there is mounting biblical research to confirm that God does call and use women in ministry.

AFFIRM THE AUTHORIZATION OF HER CALLING FROM DENOMINATIONAL STATEMENTS.

Remind yourself, your congregation, and especially your young people that the Assemblies of God sanctions women in ministry. Many are the historical records of endorsement, but the two easiest to access today are the official position paper adopted by the General Council, August 1990: (1) "The Role of Women in Ministry as Described in Holy Scripture"⁴ and (2) our Bylaws, Article VII., Section 2.-k: Eligibility of women (for ministry).

If one is open to consider the facts, there is mounting biblical research to confirm that God does call and use women in ministry.

INSPIRE THE PURSUIT OF HER CALLING WITH MODELS FROM THE PAST.

The previous generations in our Fellowship's history were blessed with numerous female ministers as role models. Their influence on the subsequent generations was enormous. You can locate stories of these valiant women in denominational publications, especially *Mountain Movers* and *Assemblies of God Heritage*.

FACILITATE THE FULFILLMENT OF HER CALLING WITH MEN-TORS FROM THE PRESENT.

Though female models today may be fewer than in the early years of the

**Assemblies of God
Ministers Report, 1995
Credentials and Ministry Status by Gender**

Credentials Status	Female	Male	Total #	% ²
Certified ¹	900	2,678	3,578	11.3
Licensed	1,903	6,716	8,619	27.1
Ordained	1,569	17,110	18,679	58.8
Specialized licensed	489	387	876	2.8
Total	4,861	26,891	31,752	
Net change from 1994	88	364	452	
Percent of total ministers	15.3	84.7		

Ministry Status ³	Female	Male	Total #	% ²
Church staff members	888	4,497	5,385	17.0
Disabled	29	145	174	.5
District officials	1	243	244	.8
Evangelists (full-time)	25	339	364	1.1
(part-time)	51	435	486	1.5
(inactive)	152	822	974	3.1
(Total)	228	1,596	1,824	5.7
Foreign missionaries ⁴	284	789	1,073	3.4
Home missionaries ⁴	135	285	420	1.3
Pastors (senior) ⁵	349	11,083	11,432	36.0
Sectional presbyters	1	563	564	1.8
Seniors (65 and older)	1,911	4,989	6,900	21.7
Senior active	414	1,556	1,970	6.2
Senior semiretired	113	516	629	2.0
Senior retired	1,384	2,917	4,301	13.5
Teachers (A/G colleges)	39	239	278	.9

Office of the Statistician/Revised August 5, 1996

¹Previously known as Christian Workers.

²Percentages may not total 100.0 due to rounding.

³Individuals may be listed in more than one ministry category.

⁴These are credentialed missionaries only, not total missionaries, which includes uncredentialed spouses.

⁵This number is slightly inflated due to misreporting. Includes A/G ministers who pastor non-A/G churches and an additional 478 non-Council pastors who are senior pastors of A/G churches.

modern Pentecostal movement, we can at least begin to influence coming generations positively by exposing them to exemplary women alive today.^{5,6,7} Ask your leaders to use female ministers in positions of visibility without distinction of gender; to appoint them to leadership positions on all levels;⁸ to invite them to minister in local churches, in college chapels, and at district and national functions.⁹

ARTICULATE YOUR PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT OF HER CALLING BY ENCOURAGEMENT AND EXAMPLE.

Nothing is quite as affirming as a true friend who believes in you. A kind word spoken, a timely call made, a caring message sent—whether by E-mail or snail mail—can be priceless to one in need. Be an example of inclusion in your conversation, teaching, and preaching. Clean up sexist language; be sure to use illustrations of women in a positive light, not just as the brunt of a preacher's humor.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE REALIZATION OF HER CALLING WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE.

One of the greatest affirmations of one's call is an invitation to minister. Regularly schedule women into your ministry calendar, not only for the sake of those ministering but for those who are blessed by their ministry and example. Use them in the same roles in which you use men: in all levels of Christian education, youth ministry, music, evangelism, teaching, and preaching.

If existing positions are closed to a woman called to ministry, why not support her efforts as a pioneer—she has great precedents there. Investing your resources in God's work through her could be a great blessing.

PRAY THAT THE LORD WILL RAISE UP WORKERS, AND BE CAREFUL NOT TO SEND AWAY ANYONE GOD CALLS.

The harvest is great, the (female)

laborers are few, and the positions for them are even fewer. This generation has the lowest percentage of female ministers of any in the history of our Fellowship. Why not be a change agent to reverse that trend? Be an armor-bearer for women who are faithful to the call. **E**



Deborah Menken Gill, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Pastoral Ministries, North Central Bible College, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

ENDNOTES:

¹I am personally committed to be an advocate for women in ministry. Along with these suggested steps, I will footnote several examples of how I am walking in that direction.

²I am frequently asked to lecture on this issue and have prepared an audiocassette series on the topic. The following paragraph is a summary of The Biblical Liberated Woman: The Biblical Basis of Women in Ministry and Leadership.

³I have been involved in the founding and growth of Christians for Biblical Equality, an organization that serves as a clearinghouse for excellent resources on this

issue. Contact CBE (P.O. Box 7155, St. Paul, Minn. 55107-0155; telephone 612-224-2416) for a list of books, article reprints, audio- and videocassettes, membership and conference information, and journal subscription.

⁴I served as a resource person to the Commission on Doctrinal Purity for the preparation of that position paper.

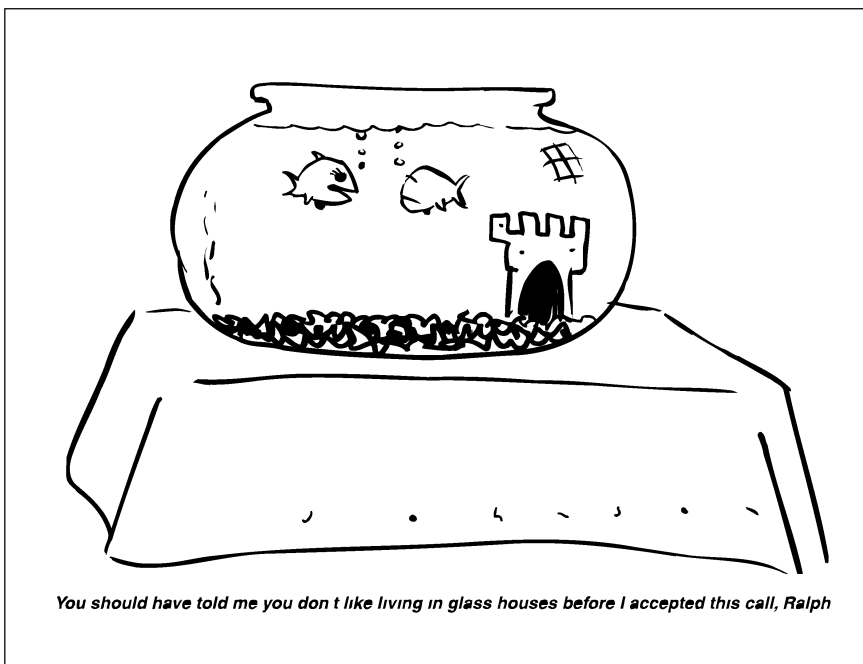
⁵Women of the Cloth is a network I cofounded in the Minnesota District, which is beginning to spread across the nation. Bringing clergywomen together is one way of facilitating peer mentoring. Perhaps you would like to propose a chapter in your district.

⁶Last year at North Central Bible College I assembled a committee to investigate the possibility of offering an academic women's specialization. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every one of our educational institutions had curricular support for women called to ministry?

⁷Many women are not located near a female minister mentor, but they could read about them. I am writing a series of profiles called Models in Ministry: Assemblies of God Women in Christian Leadership Today.

⁸I serve (not as the single female token) on the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary Board of Directors.

⁹I appreciate the district superintendents of Nebraska and Minnesota inviting me to minister as morning Bible teacher at their family camps.



You should have told me you don't like living in glass houses before I accepted this call, Ralph

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Priorities for Pastors'

BY PEGGY MUSGROVE

The pastor's ministry in a megachurch may be vastly different from the one in a small community. Pastors who have been in the ministry for many years may approach it differently than those with only 5 years' experience. Pastors' wives, though, whether mature or inexperienced—in both rural and metro churches—have one thing in common: All know the struggle of balancing the demands of home and church.

To bring this struggle into focus, five pastors' wives across the nation shared their views. Some had many years' experience; some only a few. Some were from large metro congregations; others were located in smaller communities. Their consensus: Family must have first priority, not the church. Admittedly, setting priorities is a challenge, but these women shared ways they have tried to accomplish their goals.

"I have learned there are seasons of life. Some things are not for this season. I keep reminding myself that my children will never again be the age they are now. Thus I have to focus on priorities of the present."

—Becky Williams

Kathy and Wayne Benson, pastors of First Assembly of God, Grand Rapids, Michigan, have been in ministry since their marriage almost 30 years ago. Their two adult children are in the ministry today. Pastoring a megachurch with nearly 3,500 members can

be very demanding. Kathy said, "My responsibilities have changed through the years, but my first priority, after my relationship with the Lord, is still my husband."

"Balancing the demands of home and church means something different at each stage of life," she continued. "A minister's wife may feel disconnected if she has to stay home in the early years. It helps if she can keep in focus that husband and children are her ministry, not just a duty."

Sherri Weston has been in the ministry just 5 years with her husband Todd. They pastor a congregation of 350 in the university town of Manhattan, Kansas. Sherri spoke candidly about the adjustments in the first pastorate. "I didn't cope very well at first. There was so much to do because I was home schooling our two boys, teaching piano, as well as keeping up with the church schedule. A health problem complicated my situation. I was bailing out until I learned to trust the Lord as my sufficiency."

Both Kathy and Sherri talked about the demands on young pastors' wives with small children. "The physical demands are incredible, along with the emotional demands of knowing you are responsible for your children's lives," Sherri said. To women in this phase of life Kathy said, "Young women need to know it is OK to spend their time taking care of their families."

How do a pastor and his wife make time for family activities? Eleanor Grossglass, mother of two adult children, shared her family's plan. She and her husband Mearle have served the same church in Webster, New York, the past 20 years, a congregation which numbers over 200. "When our children were small, we always made time for them. On Mondays and Tuesdays during the summer we would go camping. Bicycles were loaded onto the

Wives

Family must have first priority, not the church.

camper, and off we would go. Our son, who is now in the ministry, does the same with his children. Family has to come first; it is an investment that pays returns."

The Bensons reserved Tuesday night as family night. "I prayed with the children before school, but Tuesday night after dinner was family devotion time. Wayne always prepared for this—everything from Bible stories to singing or role playing David and Goliath. We talked about what the kids were going through, such as dating and standing alone. Everyone would pray at the end, and then came the family hug."

Dinnertime with the children is important for Dave and Becky Williams, pastors of the suburban First Assembly of God in St. Charles, Missouri, a congregation of over 500. The parents of two teenagers, the Williamses have been in the ministry some 15 years. "Getting together for dinner is a challenge, but we still manage it," Becky said. "You have to make special times for family bonding."

***"Family has to come first;
it is an investment that
pays returns."***

—Eleanor Grossglass

Each of the women emphasized not only is it important for the family to have top priority but also for the children to *know* the family has priority. "I speak from experience," Becky Williams said. "Growing up as a preacher's kid, I knew my parents loved me and placed a

high priority on our family life. They did not want us to have the feeling we were not as important as the church." When asked how to let kids know they come first, Becky replied, "One thing Dave does is to instruct his secretary that phone calls from family members are always put straight through." Kathy Benson said something similar: "Our kids knew they could call anytime. Once we even interrupted a board meeting when our son's special pitch won the Little League ball game. We did not abuse this privilege, but when we needed to be in touch with Dad, we knew we could."

What happens when church and family schedules conflict? "Attending church was never optional," Kathy Benson said. "When our son signed up for sports, it was understood he would not be playing on Wednesday nights. Our kids respected that and so did others. The church is watching to see what the pastor's kids do."

Eleanor Grossglass recalled, "We gave our kids choices on some things, but usually they would choose the church event. A case in point, when our oldest son was in football and could have played in an important final game, he chose to come to church."

"We encourage our kids to be involved in activities outside the church," said Mary Dotson, mother of four children, ages 8 through 14. For the past 10 years her husband Michael has been the pastor of the Assembly of God in Baraboo, Wisconsin, a congregation of about 120 in a community of 15,000. "We believe strongly that ministry does not happen only within the church. We want our kids involved in the school and the community."

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Mary Dotson



“Our kids knew they could call anytime. Once we even interrupted a board meeting when our son’s special pitch won the Little League ball game. We did not abuse this privilege, but when we needed to be in touch with Dad, we knew we could.”

—Kathy Benson

Because of the many demands, both my husband and I cannot be there for every event the children are involved in, but they know at least one parent will be there.”

Communicating family priorities to the church can be a problem for some. Pastors’ wives may have to deal with real or perceived demands from a congregation. A minister’s wife may feel she is competing with the image of the

previous pastor’s wife. According to those interviewed, a husband often is the key to helping his wife through some of these problems.

“We have been blessed with a group of people who do not make demands,” said Mary Dotson. “I am who I am, and my husband is very supportive of this.” Both Kathy and Becky said their husbands will occasionally make statements such as, “Our kids are just like

other kids,” or “My wife is just who she is.” Mary said, “These kinds of statements help the church to know what to expect from me.” Becky said, “I know I am going to serve better if I don’t try to meet everybody’s demands.”

Busy schedules can have an effect on any marriage, but pastors may particularly feel the pressure as their workdays can get long. These can be crucial times for the family. Kathy Benson said, “Attitude is the key here—the attitude about the church and the ministry. Our church watches us, and so do our kids. What are we saying when Dad comes home late and dinner is waiting? My husband and I have always had the attitude: ‘We are just here to serve you.’” Even in a smaller community the church schedule can bring pressures to a marriage. “But God does not want that,” Mary Dotson said. “If the husband-and-wife relationship falls apart, that hurts the ministry.” Becky Williams echoed this statement, “People who love the church want to see a good example. If the pastor’s family is intact, usually the church is intact.”

How much should a pastor’s wife be involved in church ministry? This question plagues the pastor’s wife who does not understand her personal gifting. “I have done about everything over the years,” Kathy Benson admitted. “Because I grew up in church, I had an idea of what a senior pastor’s wife should be, and I did not think I was that. The Lord spoke to my heart to ‘be what I have made you to be. All the things I have taught you through the years, that is what I want you to be.’”

Sherri Weston teaches a Sunday school class and helps with the nursery and the Sunday morning worship team. She also serves as adviser to Women’s Ministries. When asked if she was more involved than the most active woman in her church, she said, “No, not more, but as much as.” Involvement for a pastor’s wife will vary according to her personal calling, Becky Williams believes: “I probably do more than some because I feel personally called to ministry.” Mary

Social Changes

Affect Clergy Couples

Women’s roles have changed dramatically over the past 30 years. And, like all social ferment, those changes have not always been orderly, predictable, or even rational. No one knows when this metamorphosis will slow down—maybe never. And no one knows who to praise or blame. These change concepts have reshaped ideas about ministers’ wives’ roles in church, culture, and community. Questions about increased individuality of women sometimes perplex pastors, church members, and even ministers’ wives themselves. As a result, many women are rethinking their aspirations for themselves, their hopes for their families, their expectations for their husbands, and their relationships with the congregations their husbands serve. They feel like Ziggy in Tom Wilson’s cartoon who remarked, “It’s not easy being me... sometimes even I have trouble doing it!”

Change always meets resistance. But our challenge, instead of resisting or ignoring this in-progress revolution, is to use it as a window of opportunity to develop new understandings and enrich life.

No matter how much they try, couples in ministry cannot shelter themselves from these changes. No congregation... can think about a pastor’s wife as it always has. No family of churches or denomination can continue business as usual in relationship to the minister’s mate and family. It’s time to listen wholeheartedly to what these issues say and then do something about them. Following are some suggestions that can help:

- Commit to mutual support.
- Commit to a team effort.
- Cherish your mate’s uniqueness.
- Provide emotional stability.
- Communicate thanks.
- Pursue spiritual adulthood.
- See the big picture.
- Don’t destroy a dream.
- Emphasize possibilities.
- Commit to spiritual self-care.

‘Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph, July 18, 1994, B-10.

—Adapted from Married to a Pastor’s Wife by H.B. London and Neil B. Wiseman (Victor Books, 1995, Cook Communications Ministries, Colorado Springs, Colo.), 212. Used by permission.

Dotson gave pastors' wives a word of caution, "We have to be careful not to rob others of ministry when we do what someone else can do."

Just as the experiences of these pastors' wives in vastly different ministerial settings were similar, so were their suggestions to young ministers' wives entering the ministry:

"Seek Jesus," said Sherri Weston. "His workings are so individual. There is no formula for success in the ministry. Do not take a position unless you feel it is from the Lord."

"Search for what God wants you to be," added Mary Dotson. "Communicate with your husband about your dreams for ministry."

"Growing up as a preacher's kid, I knew my parents loved me and placed a high priority on our family life. They did not want us to have the feeling we were not as important as the church."

—Becky Williams

Kathy Benson agreed, "Your heart will tell you how to be there for people. Be there with a smile, a hug, a listening ear. You don't need to be a superwoman."

"Tell them to stop long enough to write down what is really important," Becky Williams suggested. "Have the courage to drop those things that don't really matter. Ask yourself, *What if I don't do this?* I know in smaller churches many things don't happen unless the pastor and wife do them. But just because you see the need does not mean you are the one to fill it. Have patience until things get done."

"Things change with time," Kathy Benson said. "My time is more available to my husband now. Sometimes I go

with him in counseling sessions. I am more free to travel with him."

Eleanor Grossglass responded similarly: "When our family was at home, we balanced our time between home and church. Now that the children are gone we are both immersed in the ministry."

"I have learned there are seasons of life," Becky Williams concluded. "Some things are not for this season. I keep reminding myself that my children will

never again be the age they are now. Thus I have to focus on priorities of the present." **E**



Peggy Musgrove is secretary of the Women's Ministries Department, Springfield, Missouri.

*Incredible
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released
to function
in the
spiritual
gifts God
has given
to them.*



W

How Denied the Church?

BY SAM MAYO

Devastating. Humiliating. Insensitive. Harsh.

How many more words are needed to describe the words and attitudes of “sit down and be quiet” that have pierced the hearts of women who have attempted to use God-given spiritual gifts in the local church? This is more tragic than the greatest of bank robberies. Somebody has denied the Church of some of its God-given assets.

What kind of human organization would God build? Jesus tried to show us by giving an incredible model called the Church. The Church has been limited of its full strength and power from what God originally designed and intended it to be.

Intimidating and effective was the scheme the enemy of the Church devised in disqualifying women from using God-given spiritual gifts in the organization that God was building as a model for us.

Half God’s army is disqualified when women are silenced from ministry. The Church and a lost and needy world are being robbed of the ministry of multiplied thousands of women who are called and gifted by God for ministry.

SOME HEAVY QUESTIONS

Doesn’t the God who created the sexes know if the persons to whom He gives gifts are male or female? Why would God give spiritual gifts to a woman unless He meant for the gifts to be used?

Consider for a moment our inconsistencies within the church. We often preach, teach, and quote Scripture that says women should be silent in church (1 Corinthians 14:34) and not be allowed to teach (1 Timothy 2:12). Yet, we affirm a woman’s right to teach Bible studies, Sunday school, children’s classes, and speak at major retreats, seminars, and conventions. If we hold to the teaching that women should not speak or teach in the church, and if we

believe the church is “where two or three are gathered together in [His] name,” (Matthew 18:20), then are we not being self-serving to let women teach at all?

We must rethink *church*. The paradigm shift of including women into full ministry in the church is not because the Scripture has

Half God’s army is disqualified when women are silenced from ministry.

Breaking the Stained-Glass Ceiling

For centuries the debate has raged over women’s roles in leadership. Below are some theological thoughts from a few modern women leaders.

Anne Graham Lotz, daughter of renowned evangelist Billy Graham, explained her calling to teach the Word of God around the world by comparing her life to that of Mary Magdalene. Mary followed Jesus, sat under His teaching, followed Him through His ordeal on the cross when all His disciples except John fled, followed Him as He was taken from the cross, and helped prepare Him for burial. Early one morning she brought costly spices to His tomb. There Jesus revealed himself to her and told her to go and tell His disciples.

Just as Mary was commissioned, so Anne feels commissioned: “The authority is not in a position that I hold [but] . . . in the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit that clothes it.” The key is a servant’s heart and an obedient attitude.

“I am a woman under compulsion,” Anne said. “I am locked in by the evidence to giving a verbal expression of what I know, what I’ve seen, what I’ve heard, what I’ve experienced by faith, what He [God] has said to me by His Word.”¹

Jill Briscoe said, “The Holy Spirit decides what gifts you have. You do not decide.”² Our job as women of influence is discovering those gifts. Ruth Tucker said the best evidence for using women in leadership roles is that we all, women as well as men, are required to live out in obedience the commands in the Bible such as “Go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:19) and “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage” (2 Timothy 4:2).³ God expects people of both genders to be obedient to His commands.

¹Anne Graham Lotz, *Women in Ministry*, audiocassette available from AnGeL Ministry, P.O. Box 31167, Raleigh, N.C. 27622-1167.

²Jill Briscoe, *Woman Power: The Woman’s Place in the Church*, audiocassette 0988-8, available from Truth Ministries, P.O. Box 11, Brookfield, Wis. 53008.

³Ruth Tucker, in a personal conversation, *Women’s Ministry Symposium*, Mar. 24, 1995.

—From *A Woman of Influence* by Pam Farrel (InterVarsity Press, 1996), 42-43. Used by permission.

**The Church has been
limited of its full strength
and power from what God
originally designed and
intended it to be.**

Four Principles for the Successful Husband-Wife Team

1. Two cannot walk together unless they agree.

Husband-wife ministry teams must be in agreement that both men and women can be used of God in almost every type of ministry. The root issue in most anti-women-in-ministry debates is more an issue of personality and style than theology. For effective ministry, both husband and wife must be in agreement that God can use both sexes as He chooses.

The ministry couple must agree on their biblical priorities and be committed to govern their daily lives by these priorities. Failure to live by this principle will shut many ministry doors and eventually destroy the home. Their relationship with the Lord must come first; then their relationship to each other and their family; their ministry to the church and others comes third. Day-to-day priorities and choices must be pragmatic and consistent.

The ministry couple must agree that spiritual gifts are given by God, and when properly used, those gifts will benefit everyone. The Book of Proverbs clearly says, "A man's gift makes room for him" (18:16, NKJV). That's also true of a woman's gifts. The ministry couple rejoice together in the great things God can do when a person will simply use what He has given for His glory.

2. Define and respect agreed-upon boundaries.

The husband-wife unit must set boundaries in the same way all other staff know what their job descriptions are in the ministry team. Through the years I have learned to release my wife to do what she's anointed to accomplish. She's not my possession—she belongs to God. Although I provide direction and accountability to all ministries of the church, I release all my staff, including my wife, to do what they are anointed to do.

3. Any woman who desires to minister with her husband must set priorities.

By setting priorities, a wife must remain a lady and lead without usurping authority. As I commented earlier, many ministry couples have conflicts due to personality more than theology.

By respecting boundaries, a woman's ministry will be respected, and her husband will not feel threatened. My wife counsels women in the ministry against being what she calls spiritual women's libbers—women in ministry who seem to wear an invisible chip on their shoulders and whose aggression and pushiness instinctively cause men to be resentful.

4. Time-outs and halftimes are necessary.

Times for recharging batteries and making game plan changes are a must. Times away from ministry are equally as important as the public ministry.

changed but because God's Spirit is awakening a fresh understanding of the Scripture on what has been denied the church.

Many arguments could be given concerning the scriptural place of women's ministry in the church. Let me share a few thoughts on appropriate and biblical treatment of women ministers in the local church.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Incredible strength is added to the church's ministry team when anointed women are released to function in the spiritual gifts God has given to them. Through the years spiritual gifts operating in women have most often been challenged by two groups: insecure men and jealous women.

Whether a woman is on staff, a layperson in the congregation, or an extended colleague in ministry, the Golden Rule still applies to how male counterparts should treat women in ministry. To speak to or treat a woman in ministry in a condescending or patronizing way is a violation of Scripture.

The Golden Rule is more than a childhood cliché. It applies to how any man of God treats a woman of the Lord—or anyone else. Staff or nonstaff—evangelist, pastor, or teacher—the man of God, above all others, should model for the world how a woman (and certainly God's anointed) should be treated.

Superior attitudes are not acceptable under the biblical Golden Rule admonition, regardless of whether it's at your church or mine.

**Doesn't the God who
created the sexes know
if the persons to whom
He gives gifts are
male or female?**

Treating a female staff person as though she doesn't know as much or her input is not as valuable as a male staff person is totally wrong. It is in direct defiance of the scriptural Golden Rule and should not be part of any clergy mind-set. Respect; trust; value; meaningful, fulfilling assignments and responsibility; and corresponding authority belong to female staff as well as male staff.

God wants to give to the body of Christ some of the most gifted, sensitive, and anointed treasures the Church has ever known. One of the great tragedies of the Church Age is men who have been spiritually blinded to God's gift of women in ministry—they are one of the Church's greatest strengths.

My leadership is not threatened or usurped when I freely allow another anointed servant of the Lord (male or female) to stand alongside me or on my behalf to use his or her spiritual gift for His glory. I willingly delegate responsibility and ministry to others. I rejoice that I can share with others (both male and female) the wonderful privileges of ministry; the honor, respect, and trust of others; and the joy of being collaborating servants with God.

**Why would God
give spiritual gifts
to a woman unless
He meant for the
gifts to be used?**

There can only be one head under Christ. But, according to the Body and spiritual gifts chapters in Ephesians, Romans, and 1 Corinthians, it is clear the Lord doesn't expect the head to do everything. The head is to let other parts of the Body function. And since "there is neither male nor female" distinctions in the ministry function of spiritual gifts, we have the incredible opportunity to release into ministry—with respect and thanksgiving—those who are able to add their part to the ministry God has entrusted to us.

HUSBAND-WIFE TEAMS

Some husband-wife teams have also been especially blessed with ministry together. Although this ideal situation may not fit everyone, the principles are certainly relevant to everyone in ministry. See the sidebar that addresses four principles of strategic importance in successful husband-and-wife team ministry.

The days of telling a woman to "sit down and be quiet" are behind us. Women are serving in key ministry roles. Those who would

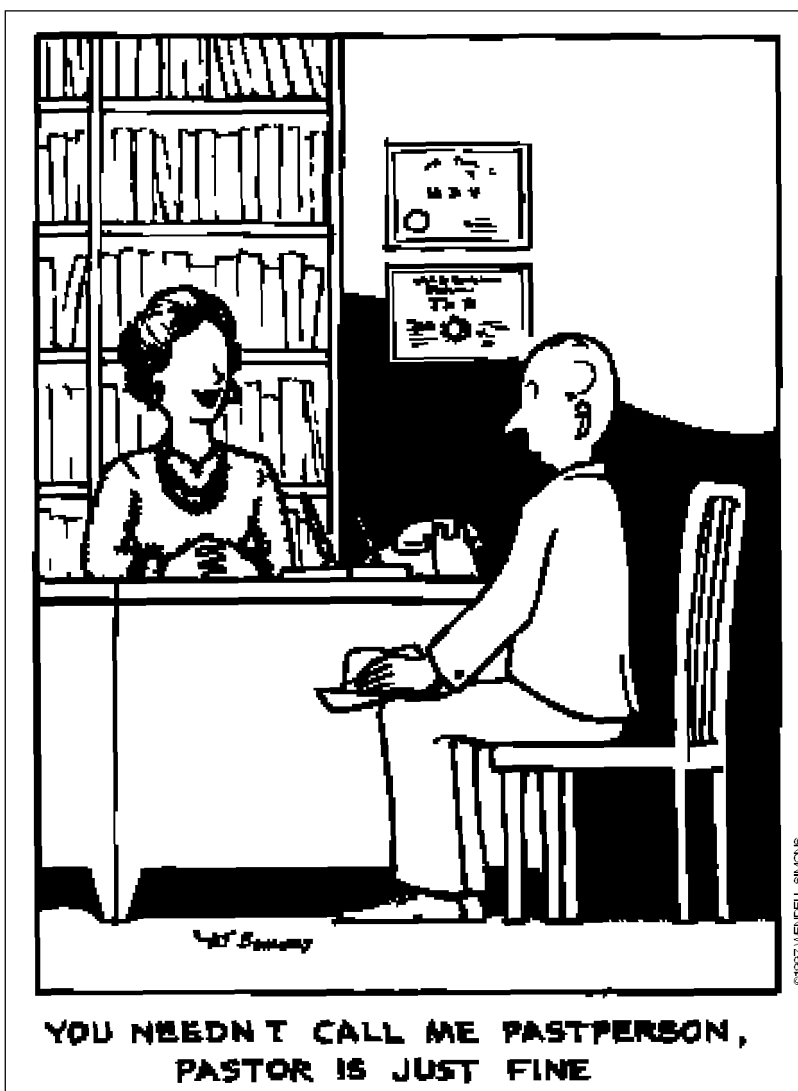
disallow the local church of spiritually-gifted women are fading into the shadows. The Spirit of God is giving a fresh anointing to *all* flesh—"your sons *and* your daughters." God is using men and women. Women in ministry are one of the greatest gifts to the body of Christ. Let us take care of them, build them up, strengthen them, and use them. Not to use God's gifts in this generation would be one of the greatest mistakes any church could make.

The best days of the Church are just ahead. **E**



Sam Mayo is senior pastor of First Assembly of God, Rockford, Illinois.

**One of the
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ministry.**



**“And Your Daughters
Shall Prophecy”—
The Revival Legacy of**



PHOTO: GENERAL
COUNCIL ARCHIVES

Aimee Semple McPherson

yesterday, and today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). Like other Pentecostals, she believed that only unbelief separated believers from seeing New Testament signs and wonders. The startling attention given to the miraculous drew the interest of the ministerial alliance whose members soon took their seats on the platform behind her. So impressed by the manifestations of supernatural power that he observed, the pastor of the prestigious First Methodist Church invited her to preach on a Sunday. Charles S. Price received a similar invitation from First Congregational Church. At the close of the campaign, over 3,000 conversions were recorded.

Aimee’s methods of evangelism, especially the priority she placed on prayer for the sick, contrasted sharply with those of Evangelist Billy Sunday who had been there 9 years earlier. His campaigns resembled patriotic victory rallies more than rescue operations to save perishing sinners. While Sunday’s view of evangelism fit comfortably with the cultural values of middle-class America, Aimee’s barnstorming techniques—a reflection of her early experience in the Salvation Army—and expectancy of signs and wonders demonstrated the distinctive Pentecostal approach to evangelism.

HANDMAIDEN OF THE LORD

Throughout her ministry Aimee retold the dramatic story of her life under the announced title, “From Milkpail to Pulpit.” Thousands listened eagerly as she told of her Methodist

***She believed
that only
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New Testament
signs and
wonders.***

BY GARY B. MCGEE

The headlines declared: “Cripples Are Cured When Woman Evangelist Prays,” and “Sick of Soul and Body Are Relieved.” Canton, Ohio, had never seen anything like an Aimee Semple McPherson campaign before, and neither had my grandmother who was baptized in the Holy Spirit and brought her family into Pentecost. “Sister,” as Aimee came to be known, arrived with scarcely any advance planning in the fall of 1921. So little in fact that her recent convert and associate Charles S. Price—soon to become a well-known evangelist himself—had to play the piano during the services. Testimonies of salvation and remarkable healings circulated in the city. For 2 1/2 weeks people packed the civic auditorium. Two daily newspapers printed the name and address of each person healed. Who could ask for better publicity?

Refusing to preach Jesus Christ as the great “I was,” she proclaimed Him as “the same

Lord



“Lord Send A Revival” (see Psalm 85:6) is the Assemblies of God theme for 1997. Beginning with this issue of Enrichment and in the next three issues, we will publish articles emphasizing this theme. You will read inspiring accounts of the lives of four great revivalists: Aimee Semple McPherson, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and Smith Wigglesworth. We begin the series with this article on Aimee Semple McPherson.

father and Salvation Army mother and life in the 1890s on their small farm near Ingersoll, Ontario, Canada. Audiences were charmed by her courtship and marriage to Robert Semple, a Scotch-Irish evangelist, and their journey to Hong Kong as missionaries. Listeners mourned with her as she told of his untimely death from malaria in 1910 and of the lonely return to America with their first child, Roberta Star, born 6 weeks after Robert's passing.

They felt Aimee's struggle over whether to obey God's call until lying on her deathbed she heard a voice say, "Now will you go?" She related her eagerness as a simple handmaiden to work for Jesus in any way possible. She showed her commitment by driving tent stakes into the ground to set up tents for revival meetings, spending hours around the altars praying with seekers, feeding and clothing the hungry in Los Angeles, debating atheists, lending a hand in disaster-relief efforts, and selling war bonds during World War II. Her listeners empathized with the stings of persecution and criticism that came her way. With the threads of her story woven together, she then invited the unsaved to surrender their lives to Christ and challenged believers to commit themselves to His service.

Aimee's barnstorming techniques...and expectancy of signs and wonders demonstrated the distinctive Pentecostal approach to evangelism.

CREATIVE COMMUNICATOR

In the Roaring Twenties, when mainstream Christians despised Pentecostals, Aimee Semple McPherson became North America's best-known evangelist. Denominational clergy and laity flocked to her services. On January 1, 1923, she opened Angelus Temple in Los Angeles, California, one of the first megachurches in the United States with many satellite congregations. Embellished with eight large stained glass windows, 5,300 seats and two balconies, and sporting the largest unsupported dome in North America at the time, she dedicated it debt free, paid for by

thousands of gifts from Protestants of almost every stripe.

In the same year, she founded the Lighthouse of International Foursquare Evangelism, now known as LIFE Bible College, to prepare Spirit-filled pastors, evangelists, and missionaries. In the years when Pentecostal Bible institutes struggled for survival, LIFE started in a new building constructed next to the Temple. Frank C. Thompson, then retired from Methodist ministry and editor of the popular *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, taught Bible subjects and served as honorary dean. Although not a Pentecostal, Thompson shared Aimee's enthusiasm for divine healing. Aimee cherished unity and cooperation with other Christians.

What made her ministry so effective? First, Aimee promoted interdenominational evangelism, a priority inscribed on the cornerstone of Angelus Temple. Despite gaining ordination as a Baptist minister, licensing as a Methodist exhorter, and credentials for a short time with the Assemblies of God as an evangelist, she refused to limit her ministry to narrowly defined constituencies. Aimee boldly carried her "Foursquare Gospel" (Jesus as Savior, Healer, Baptizer, and Coming King) wherever she went.

Second, Aimee's understanding of the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit enriched her creative talents. She understood American culture and saw it as a bridge to take the gospel to humanity. Aimee took advantage of visual and audio means of communication. She became famous for her illustrated sermons, her written and produced sacred operas, and for founding KFSG, one of the oldest religious radio stations in the country. The result? Thousands visited Angelus Temple or heard her on the radio and came to Christ.

PROPHETIC WITNESS

Aimee used cultural modes for Christian witness but not uncritically. On one occasion when hundreds of Ku Klux Klan members entered the Temple and expected her blessing, she denounced their racism as contrary to the gospel. Even though the productions of her illustrated sermons had a Hollywood flavor (Charlie Chaplin reportedly gave advice on stage arrangements), Aimee was quick to denounce the vices of society: alcoholism,

She related her eagerness as a simple handmaiden to work for Jesus in any way possible.

Aimee's understanding of the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit enriched her creative talents.

white slavery (prostitution), drug addiction, and anything else that kept people in the chains of sin. She also attacked police corruption—publicly denouncing corrupt officers by name—having recognized that evil in human structures crushes innocent and law-abiding citizens. Not surprisingly, the Los Angeles criminal underworld hated her. In Winnipeg and other cities, she courageously visited houses of prostitution, distributing New Testaments and tenderly hugging and praying with the women.

Aimee also rejected the cultural norms that placed limits on women, particularly on those called to ministry. Although on the Day of Pentecost the Spirit was

poured out on men and women, some Pentecostals sought to restrict ministry activities of women, particularly from pulpit ministry. Aimee would have none of that. Undoubtedly, she had been influenced by other prominent women including Evangeline Booth, Salvation Army commander for Canada, and Maria B. Woodworth-Etter, the well-known evangelist whose ministry spanned the decades from the 1880s to the 1920s. In turn, Aimee became a model for other women ministers to follow, including Kathryn Kuhlman. With equal rights given to women in 1919, Aimee's ministry reflected the seemingly boundless opportunities that women could have in serving God.

A LEGACY OF NEW CHURCHES

While many have remembered "Sister McPherson" for her successful evangelism, for the well-known account of her kidnapping in 1926, and as founder of the International Church of the

Foursquare Gospel, her contribution to the planting of new churches still remains largely unheralded. In the wake of her campaigns across the nation, hundreds and probably thousands of Pentecostal congregations took root with some remaining independent and others joining the Foursquare Church, the Assemblies of God, and other new networks of churches. Whether preaching and praying for the sick in Denver, Wichita, Philadelphia, or Toronto, revival followed. The impact of her campaigns also jump-started growth for many small, struggling Pentecostal churches.

Aimee rejected the cultural norms that placed limits on women, particularly on those called to ministry.



PHOTO: GENERAL COUNCIL ARCHIVES

Aimee's influence spread abroad through overseas crusades and the fruitful ministries of dedicated Foursquare missionaries. Today, few are aware that a letter from the United States to Gheorghe Bradin describing Aimee's ministry and telling of the baptism in the Holy Spirit initially sparked the great Pentecostal revival in Romania.

THE REST OF THE STORY

Aimee's journey "From Milkpail to Pulpit"—with its drama and pathos, its triumphs and failures, its laughter and tears—held her listeners at the edge of their seats. In a sense it resembled their stories too or at least one they wished for themselves. But while she inspired their imaginations, she couldn't share the rest of the story perhaps because Christians prefer porcelain heroes who seem to lack the imperfections of their admirers. Adoration turns to disdain, however, when a chip is found. "Throw it away," they say; "it's worthless."

At times, Aimee's public persona masked painful loneliness. In 1911, a year after returning from China, she married divorcé Harold McPherson who appeared to offer her the security she needed. Two years later she gave birth to their son, Rolf. Domestic constraints

The impact of her campaigns also jump-started growth for many small, struggling Pentecostal churches.

soon frustrated her intense burden for evangelism. When Harold agreed to travel with her in evangelistic ministry, she thought she had the best of both worlds. However, Aimee was far more gifted. In the end, he couldn't live under the shadow of her growing fame and filed for divorce just as she reached the pinnacle of her ministry.

In the aftermath of her kidnapping in

1926, Aimee's energies were consumed by her grueling schedule (sometimes preaching and teaching 21 times a week). The subsequent court case, negative publicity, and mounting financial troubles contributed to her suffering a nervous breakdown in 1930. Family relationships also turned sour when she became estranged from those closest to her, namely her mother and daughter. She also foolishly entered into a marriage with musician David Hutton that she hoped would bring happiness. It proved to be doomed from the start. Finally, her healing ministry declined in the late twenties, an acute humiliation for any healing evangelist to face. To make matters worse, newspapers eagerly gave front-page coverage to every mistake she made and every tidbit of gossip they could find. Aimee had more than her fair share of sorrows but discovered the sufficiency of God's grace (2 Corinthians 12:9)—God's love is the greatest sign and wonder of all.

The anointed ministry of Aimee Semple McPherson did not exempt her from temptations and human failings. Like preachers past and present, there were occasions when she proclaimed more radical things about Christian discipleship from the pulpit than she modeled. Spirit-filled clergy have no less immunity to problems than anyone else. In addition, comfort within the culture can easily distort one's perceptions of themselves and their ministry. As with Aimee, every Christian has blind spots and weaknesses that add a certain level of jeopardy to their best intentions of serving God.

For Aimee, successes in ministry as well as difficulties in personal relationships presented the greatest challenges to her integrity. Since her death in 1944, other Pentecostal ministers have wrestled with the same issues of success, pride, and relationships—some have failed. Few have risen from defeat as well as Aimee Semple McPherson to continue making contributions to the kingdom of God.

With a twinkle in her eye, my grand-

Every Christian has blind spots and weaknesses that add a certain level of jeopardy to their best intentions of serving God.

mother often reminisced about the glory and power of God in "Sister's" ministry. For her and many others, Aimee bequeathed a revival legacy that points to what God can do through His servants who remain faithful to their calling and allow the Spirit to enrich their creative gifts. When remembering the grace of God in his own life, Paul wisely reminded his critical Corinthian friends that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:7). **E**

Recommended Reading and Listening:

By Aimee Semple McPherson:

This Is That (Los Angeles: Foursquare Publications, 1923; reprinted in 1996).

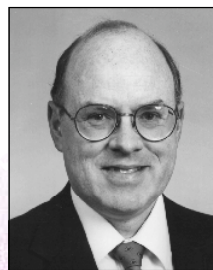
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Daniel Mark Epstein, Sister Aimee: The Life of Aimee Semple McPherson (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993).

Audio cassette recordings of her sermons may be purchased from Foursquare Publications, P.O. Box 26902, 1910 W. Sunset Blvd. #200, Los Angeles, Calif. 90026-0176.



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- Today's Christian Woman*. P.O. Box 8014, Wheaton, Ill. 60189-9814. Subscription Services, P.O. Box 11621, Des Moines, Iowa 50347-1621.

- Virtue*. Published by Good Family Magazines, 4050 Lee Vance View, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80918-7102 (800-238-2221).
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- Women Alive*. Box 4683, Overland Park, Kans. 66204.

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- Christian Women's National Concerns*. James Robinson Evangelistic Association, Box 18480, Fort Worth, Tex. 76118.
- Class Speakers Ministry. 1814 Commerce Center West, San Bernadino, Calif. 92404 (714-888-8665).
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Please send resource information to the Gainsbrugh Resource Network at the address above. A theme bibliography will appear in each issue of Enrichment.

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES DOBSON, RALPH EARLE, AND H.B. LONDON

Pastors and Sexual Addiction

Solid character and moral strength have always been nonnegotiable qualifications for ministry. But what happens when men and women called to lead the church become caught in the noose of sexual addiction?

The headlines regarding sexual scandal in the church are all too familiar. Hear the heart-wrenching words of one pastor's struggle with sexual addiction:

"Living that life of duplicity and violating my own conscience and the guilt—I would literally wake up in the middle of the night screaming. That's what led me to the point I had to tell somebody and come clean with this and get some help. Otherwise, I sensed in my heart that I would die."

These words could be echoed by untold hundreds in public ministry. In a 1988 Leadership survey of clergy from several mainline Protestant denominations, almost one in four pastors (23 percent) confessed to some form of sexual impropriety since being in local church ministry. Nearly one in eight pastors admitted to having sexual intercourse with someone other than his wife. Small and large churches across America continue to be led by pastors who suffer immeasurable guilt over their sexual addictions.

In this candid interview three qualified and gifted men address the highly sensitive subject of clergy and sexual addiction. They offer practical and wise counsel that can bring wholeness to the church and healing to the undershepherd.



James Dobson, Ph.D., is founder and president of Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, Colorado. For 14 years he was an associate clinical professor of Pediatrics at the University of Southern California School of Medicine and served 17 years on the attending staff of Children's Hospital of Los Angeles in the division of Child Development and Medical Genetics. He has written numerous best-sellers, such as *Dare To Discipline*, *Hide or Seek*, and *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*.

DOBSON: Addictive behavior is becoming more pronounced in Western nations because the restraints and the governors that used to hold destructive behavior in check, to some degree, have now been removed. We've become so sensual in our value system that the highest objective is to feel good, to experience, to have fun, to enjoy—as though

that were the highest ideal. When that isn't kept in some kind of balance and under reasonable restraint, increasing numbers of people slide into a variety of addictive behaviors.

Our focus is on a problem that is gripping humanity, especially in Western nations: the problem of sexual addiction, which is rampant in our society.

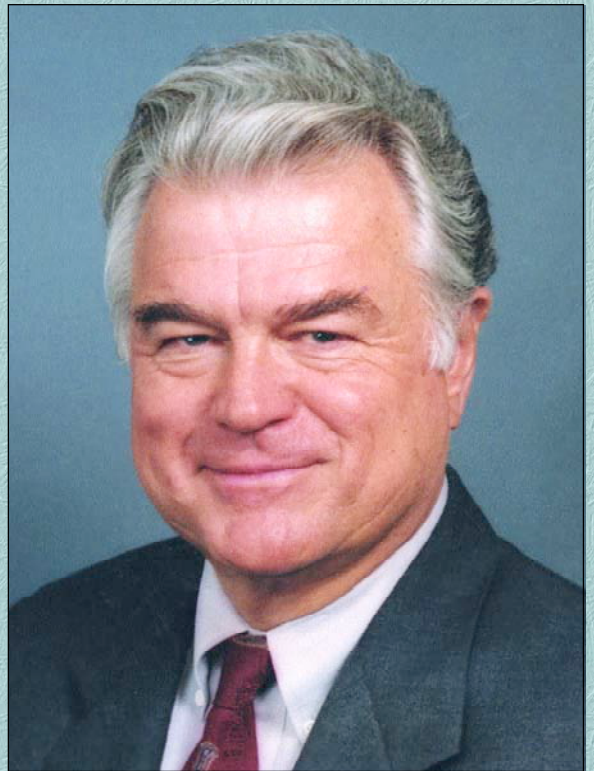
It's not something ministers like to talk about, and it's not something you often hear on Christian radio; nevertheless we must address the sources of erosion that undermine the family and tear it apart.

Sexual addiction has many different forms. Pornography is one of the most addictive forces in human experience—every bit as much as cocaine, heroin, or

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—Dobson

*Ralph Earle, Ph.D.,
is president of Psy -
chological Counseling
Services, Scottsdale,
Arizona, where for
25 years he has pro -
vided sex therapy,
counseling, and psy -
chological services to
people with addictions,
which includes over
200 pastors. He has
authored two books,
Lonely All the Time
and Sex Addiction:
Case Studies in
Management.*



*H.B. London, Jr.,
is vice president of
MinistryOutreach/
Pastoral Ministries
for Focus on the
Family in Colorado
Springs. After serving
31 years in pastoral
ministry, he accepted
the invitation to serve
as liaison to pastors
and churches—a kind
of pastor to pastors.
With Neil B. Wiseman,
London has coauthored
such books as Pastors
at Risk, Married to a
Pastor's Wife, and
Your Pastor Is an
Endangered Species.*

In many ways a church sets up this kind of a challenge. A permission system was in effect in the sixties and seventies as if certain kinds of pornography were OK, wouldn't hurt, and probably would help. This brought pornography into Christian homes, including pastors', and kids would pick it up. Addiction, including sex addiction, is progressive. And if it's an addiction, it's always an intimacy disorder—never about caring, never about anything biblical in terms of honesty and accountability. It's always about hurting somebody else and self.

DOBSON: I appreciate your emphasizing that. Ever since I served on the Pornography Commission I've said that it is addictive and progressive—one doesn't stay at one place. What is exciting one moment will not be exciting tomorrow—the person has to have a little more, it must be stranger, racier. It begins to move an individual down a path toward perverse behaviors; then it rocks a family from within.

other drugs. We will discuss it, however, as it pertains to pastors, because it is a serious problem there.

EARLE: Without doubt, sexual addiction is epidemic. Concerning addictions in general, a permission system said certain things were OK, which are absolutely not OK. I look at the Jekyll

and Hyde lifestyle many Christians have led in one addicted way or another. It is important to put it in a framework because of the polyaddicted—sex addiction along with eating disorder, alcohol, cocaine, or other addictions. Many pastors are work addicted and may act out their addiction in other ways. It is very crucial.

EARLE: Addictions are all family diseases. Sex addiction is no exception. In family therapy we hear repeatedly, "Well, that's no longer exciting. I'm onto something new." We treat a lot of sex offenders who tell us they never thought in the beginning they would cross the line and be criminal. They just ran out of excitement. It's the adrenaline rush—like a drug—and when that drug becomes old hat, a new boundary is out there—always something new in the sexual area.

It's a very big problem. We talk to other Christian therapists around the country, and the consensus is that the whole area of addictions—and in the sexual area for sure—is at least as much of a problem within clergy families as in nonclergy families. It sets up an incredible dynamic between, as Paul put it, the good that I would do, that I don't do, and what I hate, I do. We hear this over and over.

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it's always an intimacy
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somebody else and self.*
—Earle

DOBSON: H.B., you heard it. He said it's just as common among clergy—people dedicated to the Lord and His service. Most have gone to seminary, know the Scriptures, and love their families. Yet they have the Jekyll and Hyde life—the hidden side. You hear from them, don't you?

LONDON: Seldom does a day or week go by that we don't get phone calls or letters from pastors who are hooked on some areas of obsessive behavior—

*Seldom does a day
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either pornography or
sexual misconduct.*
*They're saying,
"We want help."*
—London

either pornography or sexual misconduct. They're saying, "We want help."

One day recently one of the secretaries told me, "We've had five telephone calls this morning from pastors who want information about pornography." I replied, "We have a fact sheet. All they have to do is call us, and we'll send the sheet on the pornography issue." She said, "No, no. These are five pastors who are hooked on pornography and are looking for help, crying out for help from somebody."

DOBSON: I can't think of a worse situation than leading a church with people looking to you: They love you and have you on a pedestal; you're their pastor; they love you and send you gifts at Christmastime and throughout the year; they express appreciation to you. Yet you have a private life—something going on inside that you can't control, and it's rotting you from within. You feel condemned before God, and you can't conquer it. My heart goes out to them. We're not here to condemn them.

*"I feel so dirty and far removed from God when I
step off the platform after preaching a sermon—
like I've done something hideous."*
—a pastor

LONDON: In their letters they tell me, "I feel so dirty and far removed from God when I step off the platform after preaching a sermon—like I've done something hideous."

DOBSON: Ralph, how many do you have right now coming to your clinic?

EARLE: Almost 40 clergy are currently seeing us for the predominant challenge that they've crossed inappropriate sexual boundaries.

DOBSON: How do they describe the agony?

EARLE: They describe the pain and horror of having a double life in this area. Some say it must be easier for an alcohol or other substance problem; that's not as horrendous as the sexual problem.

For example, when he was a kid a pastor, who has deep faith and a family, found pornography that his father or an uncle had. He never told anybody, and in his quest for sex education, he kept using that pornography.

Many pastors tell of the horror of going to a place like an X-rated bookstore in the community where they pastor. A couple have run into members of their congregations in the bookstores, and that's how they were found out.

The nature of sexual addiction is a double life, and when it comes out it is a complete shock to the spouse—incredible pain in people's lives.

LONDON: Let me read an excerpt from a letter I received recently that underlines this:

"Dear H.B., I started when I was a child and found my dad's pornographic magazines in our garage. After

Q&A uestions nswers: *Pastors and Addiction*

Q What do we do when we see people who are studying to be pastors or are considered to be godly men in the church, and they don't think twice about going to see an R-rated movie or checking out a woman who walks by?

LONDON: Pastors who go lone ranger are the most susceptible to these kinds of things. You lovingly confront. If you see areas of his life that are inconsistent with who he is and what he represents, then a congregation's responsibility is to speak the truth in love.

EARLE: It's always appropriate, whether it's one individual or several people, to say to a pastor, "We're concerned about those behaviors."

DOBSON: Everybody needs a boss. Focus on the Family has a board of directors that leads this organization. I am accountable to them. If church board members are concerned about some behavior in their pastor—little clues or red flags—they should insist on the pastor's reporting to an accountability group of his choosing.

Q How does a man deal with the natural hormonal tendencies to admire the opposite sex and to think about how pretty she looks? How do you not allow that to progress to something inappropriate?

DOBSON: You can't help what you feel. God designed the system. But what we do with it is our responsibility with His help. According to James 1:15 (NASB), "When lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."

EARLE: To find a woman attractive is not garbage, but it is if I change that to a continuation of lust. Rules and regulations must be a part of a person's daily life, or he can be in deep trouble.

DOBSON: What about the number of youth ministers you are dealing with who are vulnerable to teenage girls? He may be 25 to 29 years old, and teenage girls tend to admire power and leadership in an older man. She gets a crush on him, looks really good to him, and bam! You've seen it happen.

LONDON: Most youth pastors lose themselves with their teens, so they're never around people their own age. They desire affirmation so much, and they get affirmation from teenage girls. Another significant factor is that youth pastors work too many

hours and are away too many nights. They find themselves in compromising situations and often can't defend themselves.

Q I've been a youth worker for the past 2 years. Youth tell me they've been introduced to pornography. I have not known what to do except hold it in confidence and pray with them and for them. Is there something else I could do?

DOBSON: One researcher's findings show teenage boys as the number-one users, viewers, purchasers of obscenity. It's a big problem among adolescents.

EARLE: The church needs to address this more, and parents need to know. We've found that it's frequently most successful when the whole family deals with it. It has to do with boundaries. Because the problem is serious and progressive, it needs to be dealt with up front and fast.

DOBSON: The tragedy is that the church usually does not warn kids about the danger of this stuff. Uncomfortable or not, the church is going to have to wade into some uncomfortable stuff in a culture going to hell. Standards are crumbling, and the church is going to have to make some people uncomfortable.

LONDON: It would be interesting to know how many pastors in America have actually preached a Sunday morning sermon on the evils of pornography.

Q How or what can a wife do to keep her husband from viewing pornography before it affects the family? We don't have children yet, but I want to have children, and I don't want them to be affected by my husband's problem. It's affected my walk with God already.

EARLE: One of the books we frequently recommend to deal with this area with Christians is *Love Must Be Tough*. Being tough in love and setting boundaries is very important. Behavior like that doesn't change magically or automatically or with good intentions. It is essential for you to set some boundaries that certain things have to change or there are consequences. Without that, it's unlikely that change will occur. If your husband doesn't respond to that and change, I would strongly encourage you to see someone professionally. Ideally both of you should see somebody who specializes in this area—soon.

I'm sure a lot of other wives are going through the same thing.

discovering them, I continually sneaked into the garage to look at them. Throughout my childhood and adolescent years, I continued to find and look at my dad's and my friends' pornographic magazines.

"I take full responsibility for my sin problem. I chose to expose myself to pornography and have reaped the results of my unwise decision. Even though God is still using me in His ministry, I can clearly sense that my relationship with Christ and my wife and my effectiveness in God's ministry are suffering as a result. I'm tired of this sin in my life, and I'm willing to do whatever is necessary to rid myself of it. This is why I write you. Has God given you anything that you can pass on to me that will help my walk by the Spirit, so I won't carry out the desires of my flesh?"

*The consensus is that
the whole area of
addictions—and in the
sexual area for sure—
is at least as much of
a problem within
clergy families as in
nonclergy families.
—Earle*

DOBSON: We have received hundreds, perhaps thousands, of letters just like that here at Focus on the Family, and it breaks my heart to read them. You can be sure others are suffering that same agony. Their sex lives have been affected, and their marriages have been weakened by this.

We have a short recorded message of someone who allowed us to record his comments that illustrate what we are hearing:

"Living that life of duplicity and violating my own conscience and the guilt—I would literally wake up in the middle of the night screaming. That's

what led me to the point I had to tell somebody and come clean with this and get some help. Otherwise, I sensed in my heart that I would die."

LONDON: There is no way that the pornography issue or problem will ever be solved on an isolated basis. The man who wrote me will never get well by himself. It's impossible.

EARLE: What happens in terms of the isolation thing? The clergy are isolated,

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so most have prayed about it, tried to deal directly with God but not with other people about it, and asked for deliverance. They have no accountability on earth. By the time they come to see us they have literally spent hours in prayer confessing their sins, and it keeps happening over again because, for one thing, they haven't shared it. How are they going to share it—with their wives? some fellow pastors? a therapist? with people like H.B. here at Focus on the Family? Hence it's kept as

a secret. Secret is the fertile place for an addiction.

DOBSON: It flowers when it is not shared. There has to be an accountability to start with somewhere.

EARLE: It is tough to talk about a sexual addiction because it may be a physical or an emotional problem, and they're asking for help.

DOBSON: We're not just talking about

pornography. Sexual addiction can involve child abuse, strange behavior with one's spouse—something she does not want—and all kinds of destructive behavior.

EARLE: It crosses many lines. It's about affairs. For pastors it may be affairs with members in the congregation or pedophilia (sex with kids).

DOBSON: Because of your personal commitment to the Lord, you emphasize repentance and the request for forgiveness....

EARLE: Yes. Most of these people have tried isolating the problem between them and God, but this keeps the problem going. Recovery is possible through intensive therapy with others in conjunction with their spiritual lives. Self is the number-one level of accountability.

The second level is the spouse. The third level is minor children. We see the husband and wife; then we will have a day or two with the children. Sometimes they are adult children, and we do family therapy. Sometimes for the first time the dad's story is told to the rest of the family, but it's important the story gets told so the sins of one generation are not passed along to the next.

LONDON: We don't have the luxury of spending time with pastors in person. Everyone must be honest and admit he has a problem; then be accountable to another person who will pray. Next, get rid of all the material. Cut that out of your life and purge yourself of those things. Be patient because there will be ups and downs. It took a long time to get the addiction out in the open, and it'll take a long time to get over it.

DOBSON: You also have to be careful to whom you tell this. An independent therapist, who by law must keep confidentiality, is a good idea if that person is qualified.

EARLE: Some may not respond

positively to this because when we say pray about it, people say OK, you pray about it, God answers, it's over. I've known pastor after pastor who has bled in prayer over this issue and the very next day fallen prey to pornography.

DOBSON: People who have cancer pray about it and then go to a physician. Nobody feels that it is a faithless act to go to the doctor after praying about physical disorders. This is no different.

*Everyone must be
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has a problem; then be
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person who will pray.*
—London

EARLE: Several clergy have become suicidal over this issue because they saw it as hopeless. They had not really reached out for help.

DOBSON: Ralph, it's really important for you to reassure people about what happens when they come to a clinic like yours.

EARLE: It's really confession—a type of being honest before self and God, allowing some other Christians (in this case, therapists) to be a part of that. The uncomfortable part is becoming honest, but without honesty in the family unit, there's no hope for change.

DOBSON: You have some group therapy where men, usually men, will encourage each other and reinforce each other.

EARLE: Absolutely. We have an all-clergy group and a group for clergy spouses. We have five groups that meet every week where the main issue is compulsively, inappropriately crossing sexual boundaries. It's amazing how people bond—like the more Christian

type—because of the caring and loving that occur.

DOBSON: H.B., address the guy who has this in his life—he's a Jekyll and Hyde, feels terrible about it, hasn't known what to do about it, is scared to death, is guilty before God, and wants to get rid of the problem; but he's never known what to do. Encourage him to seek help.

LONDON: I feel so strongly about this. Someway, somehow—like the Bible says—you must resist evil and flee from it. You can't play around the edges. You can't *almost* get rid of pornography. Moms and dads are going to be catalysts for their kids being hooked on this addiction to pornography if they're not careful.

DOBSON: Kids will find it. The most horrible things happen when X-rated videos are brought home and kids find them while the parents are out. They are never the same again.

EARLE: That's a good point, but addiction has to do with insane thinking. It's the pastor who says, "I've worked so hard I deserve to do something *special*." The special becomes doing something sexual. Sometimes the wife finds out and will say, "I don't like it, but you really are working hard, and I know you

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—London

really are serving the Lord in most of your life," and will go along with it.

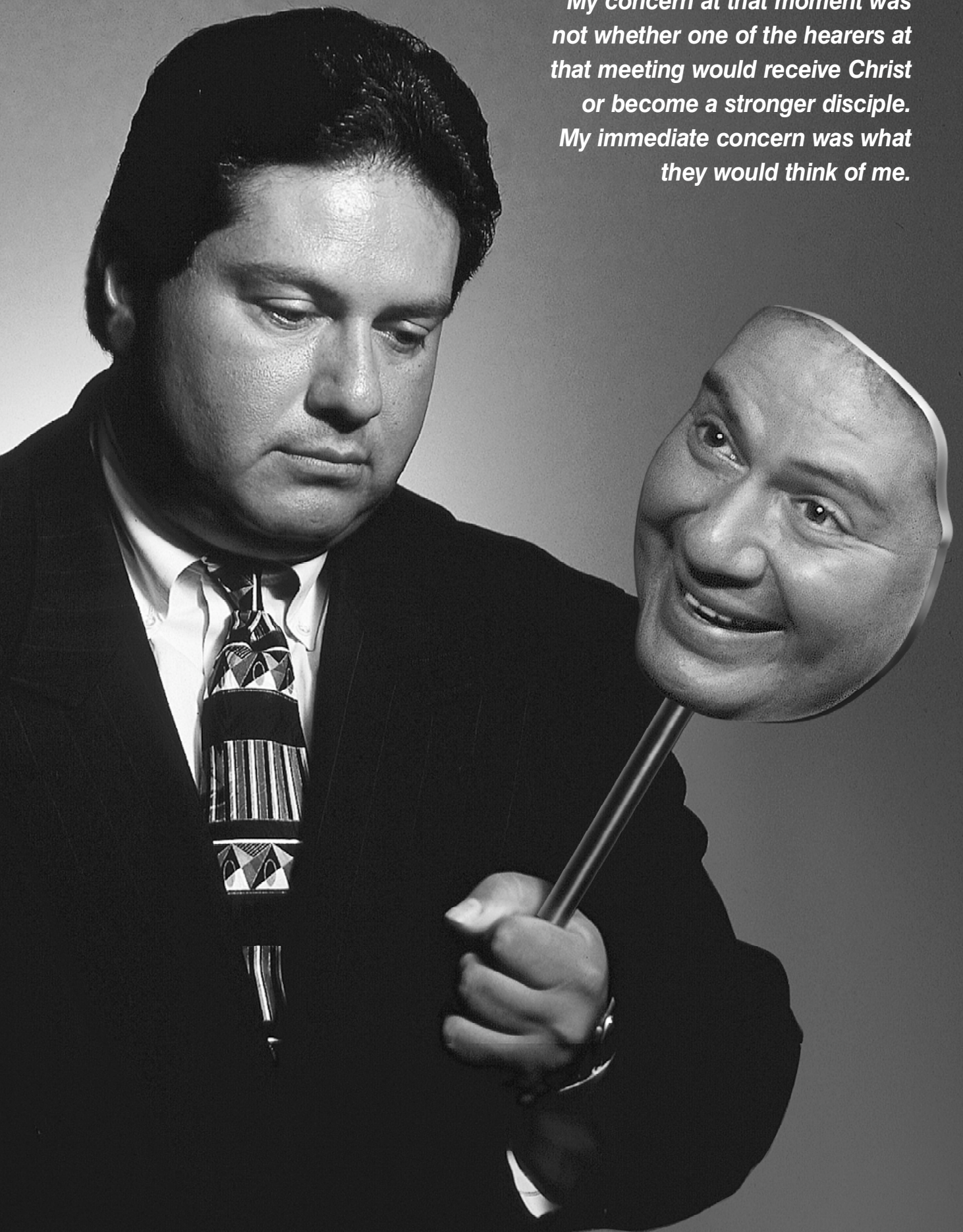
DOBSON: Ralph, you wrote a book called *Lonely All the Time*. Loneliness is often a key to this thing.

EARLE: Laypeople as well as pastors frequently have a spiritual vacuum in their lives and will get into treatment. Many of the pastors say, "Now that I'm getting into recovery my relationship with God is filling this hole that never got filled in seminary nor in the church where I was talking about it." Pastors who actually get into recovery can be some of our best pastors because they have gone through what for them was a hellish experience.

LONDON: If it were possible, I'd take these guys by the hand and say, "We're here for you. We're desperate on your behalf. We'll do anything possible to help you overcome this addiction." If they call us, we'll put them in touch with the right people. If they don't do something, not only will it destroy their ministry and invalidate their effectiveness, but it's going to destroy their families as well. **E**

—This article and Q&A sidebar are abridged from a Focus on the Family broadcast and are used by permission. Focus on the Family is a nonprofit organization that produces nationally syndicated radio programs that are heard on over 2,900 radio facilities in North America and in five languages in approximately 1,300 facilities in over 60 countries.

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not whether one of the hearers at
that meeting would receive Christ
or become a stronger disciple.
My immediate concern was what
they would think of me.*



The Motive of the Messenger—

BY CRAIG BRIAN LARSON

SOME TIME AGO I received an invitation to speak for a small group of people, most of whom knew me but had never heard me preach. After I hung up the phone with the pastor who had made the call, I immediately felt a pang of anxiety. This pang is nothing I'm proud of, for my concern at that moment was not whether one of the hearers at that meeting would receive Christ or become a stronger disciple. My immediate concern was what they would think of me.

Jesus said strong things about the motives of those who speak for God: "He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him" (John 7:16–18*).

Thus a messenger's motive—whose honor he's seeking—is an issue of truth. That's no small issue. Indeed, the first commandment for a speaker is "be true and bring truth." No matter what else a speaker does well, to the degree that he is false, he is unworthy of an audience. Falseness is failure. Jesus said He could be trusted as a truth-bearer because His motivation was not to bring honor to himself but to the Father who sent Him.

It is possible to speak truth falsely; that is, the message is true, but the motivations of the speaker are duplicitous. We speak truth falsely if we stand in the role of a messenger for God, supposedly speaking for Him and for the welfare of the hearers, but in reality we are trying to impress our hearers, gain prominence or money, or neon our names.

Perhaps some speakers are expected to speak for their own honor—entertainers, comedians, or the like—but a preacher is not one of them. A preacher brings God's message,

What Truth Has To Do With It

not his own; speaks for the good of the hearers, not his own; and, in fact, must work under the assumption that his message may cost him dearly, for truth hurts. Preachers, God's messengers, by definition must speak truth truly.

One of the greatest, most subtle temptations for preachers, therefore, is to speak for their own honor. When that temptation strikes, consider the fourfold cost of succumbing.

THE MESSAGE MAY VEER OFF COURSE

If you've ever had a toy gyroscope, you know how the centrifugal force of the spinning rotor enables the gyroscope to balance on a string. Holding the toy in your hand, if you try to change its direction, you feel strong resistance. It's that dynamic that scientists exploited when they designed the guidance-control system of rockets. A free-floating gyroscope inside the system remains true to its direction and signals the computer when the rocket has changed direction, triggering a course correction.

When one person talks to another, a similar guidance control system directs the conversation. Listen to an egoist talk—let's say over dinner—and you soon notice that some mysterious internal control system is slanting everything he says to make him look good.

No matter what else a speaker does well, to the degree that he is false, he is unworthy of an audience.

Seasoned saints aren't challenged by grandstanding preachers.

Every word, story, name, and topic he selects is intended to aggrandize his image. If an unflattering tidbit comes out, you can almost hear the gyroscope whirring, and he quickly makes a midcourse correction to put a good face on things.

The same can happen with preachers in the pulpit. If the gyroscope in our directional system is pointed on personal honor from people rather than honor for the Lord, we will often unconsciously (and that's the scary part) change and adapt God's message to make ourselves shine.

That doesn't always mean we'll preach feel-good messages. If a speaker thinks the audience only respects prophetic preachers, he'll

preach a hard message even when God wants a message of comfort and assurance.

To the degree that his motivations are impure, a messenger for God cannot be trusted by God nor people.

The gyroscope within can serve an equally strong role for the good, however. When we are pointed on God's honor, any variance toward pleasing others or flattering ourselves alerts guidance control, and we can quickly pull back and want God's honor and purpose fulfilled, not our own.

WE SUFFER A CHARACTER FLAW

Wrong motives, however, don't always or necessarily veer a message off course. God can use anyone or anything to get His message across, even at times speaking prophecies through someone as unworthy as Caiaphas (John 11:49–52). Paul spoke about evangelists who preach Christ “out of envy and rivalry...out of selfish ambition, not sincerely” (Philippians 1:15,17). Even so, he saw some benefit. “What does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice” (Philippians 1:18).

Does this nullify the importance of speaking truth truly? Not if we have any concern for integrity. Concerning the messenger with pure motives, Jesus said, “There is nothing false about him” (John 7:18), implying there is something crooked about the messenger with impure motives. Tainted motives rot the core of a preacher's being. The duplicity between the preacher's role and heart involves a fundamental character flaw, falseness, hypocrisy. Integrity demands oneness of purpose and role.

WE LOSE AUTHORITY

How effective can a messenger be who speaks truth falsely? How much authority does he have?

Aristotle wrote in his *Rhetoric* that effectiveness in speaking depends on three factors: ethos (the speaker's character), pathos (stirring listener's emotions), and logos (reasoning and argumentation). Explaining Aristotle's thinking, philosopher Mortimer Adler said, “Of the three factors in persuasion—ethos, pathos, and logos—ethos always should come first.”

How Pure is Pure?

A preacher's motives are rarely monolithic, either gold or lead. We climb into the pulpit with mixed motives—97 percent for Jesus, 3 percent for ourselves; 80 percent for Jesus, 20 percent for ourselves. The sinful nature within us still wages war against the leading of the Spirit. Our sanctification is progressive as we walk in the Spirit. This is most evident in our motivation.

Our righteous ambition must be to drive that percentage of impurity lower and lower, recognizing that we will always be in a fight. We may at times sink into concerns over what people think. Then we go to our knees and rededicate ourselves to preach for Christ's sake, enter the pulpit, and proclaim with boldness the whole counsel of God. Seeing a positive response to the Word of the Lord, we go home with fleeting thoughts about our reputation as a preacher of the Word and the need to purify our hearts once again. The battle of motives is never won or lost for good.

The preacher most in danger is the one who doesn't recognize the subtle mixture of motives in his heart. He is convinced thoughts of personal ambition in preaching never enter his mind. Paul's warning applies: “If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!” (1 Corinthians 10:12). Or, to put it in the therapeutic vernacular of our day, “You may be in denial.”

After sharing my heart on this subject with several ministers, one responded, “I recognize there will always be some mixture of motives in my heart, no matter how much I examine and purify my intentions. What God asks of me is that I recognize that, confess my sinfulness, and ask His help in keeping my heart pure when I walk into the pulpit.”

We must be aware of what is happening within and preach in constant dependency upon the Lord for purity of heart.

In pursuit of purity of heart, however, we must not fall into another error: the pit of self-condemnation and labyrinthine introspection. Excessive attention to motives can lead to a lack of confidence and boldness and a harmful focus on ourselves rather than on Christ and His Word. I've heard individuals speak who were so aware of their sinful nature that I couldn't see past them to Christ. A self-conscious preacher is a distraction. The time comes when we must forget ourselves and concentrate on Christ, the Word, and the needs of those before us.

Even philosophers recognize that a speaker's character either stamps his message as genuine or undermines it. 'A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies' (Proverbs 12:17). Hearers attribute the greatest authority and respect to the message of one they regard as a sound messenger. Certainly, for a while the simple and naive can be wowed by a hypocrite, but eventually the falseness leaks out, the authority evaporates, and the show ends. Over the long haul, authority springs from the fountainhead of integrity.

The older people are, the more sensitive they become to the motives of someone trying to persuade them in some way, whether the persuader is a salesman, politician, writer, or preacher. A preacher's motives profoundly affect the receptivity of the hearers. Seasoned saints aren't challenged by grandstanding preachers.

Henry Blackabee, author of *Experiencing God* and a man God is powerfully using to encourage revival across all quarters of the American church, recently spoke at our ministers' sectional fellowship. I don't know how he speaks in a church setting, but at this meeting he was low-key, soft-spoken, simple. I don't think he even used an outline, but his message was powerful because of his sincerity about God's will. He spoke the truth truly. His quiet message came with thundering authority.

To the degree that his motivations are impure, a messenger for God cannot be trusted by God nor people.

WE MAY CAST DOUBTS ON THE MESSAGE

What is at stake in a preacher's motives? If the speaker proves to be false, who's to know his message isn't false? The great tragedy of the messenger who speaks truth falsely is the truth can suffer doubt by association. The tainted messenger can weave in the mind of the listener a smothering blanket of skepticism, perhaps even causing him or her to revise all that was once believed.

Paul knew that his credibility was crucial to the credibility of the gospel. "The appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives," he said, "nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.... We were not looking for praise from men" (1 Thessalonians 2:3-6).

Far too much is at stake to concern ourselves with the trifling and temporary thrill of impressing people. For the sake of truth and souls, seek the honor of Christ in your preaching. **E**

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



Craig Brian Larson is pastor of Lake Shore Assembly of God, Chicago, Illinois, and lives in Arlington Heights.

The great tragedy of the messenger who speaks truth falsely is the truth can suffer doubt by association.



The Historical Validity of the Resurrection

of Jesus Christ From the Dead

BY GEORGE O. WOOD

A cynic reportedly quipped to his colleagues: “Gentlemen, it would be easy to start a new religion to compete with Christianity. All the founder would have to do is die and then be raised from the dead.”

Did Jesus in fact rise from the dead? Is belief in the resurrection of Jesus an illogical leap in the dark or a credible claim which rests in the sufficiency and reliability of the evidences?

DOES ANYONE HAVE TRUTH?

Suppose you don't know the answer but are willing to inquire. You show up at a seminar on world religions. The first speaker is a young woman who relates a dramatic change in her life from drug addiction to wellness. She attributes it all to Jesus: “I asked Him to come into my life, to bring me deliverance, and He did. I am so happy.”

Representatives of various faiths—Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu—declare that their religious faith has had a positive impact on them, bringing an inner feeling of congruence and God-connectedness.

They are followed by a young man who says: “I grew up in a dysfunctional family and in recent years lived alone with deep depression. While cooking breakfast one morning, I accidentally flipped an egg too high and it landed on my head. Instantly, I experienced the sensation of warmth over my whole being. I have not been the same since that moment. My whole life has changed. A warm egg on the head will do the same thing for you as it did for me.”

Who do you believe? They all testify from their own subjective experience.

The final person, a confident college coed, addresses the seminar with a smart smirk: “I'm glad religion has worked for all these other people, but I don't need any crutches of faith to get through life. I don't believe in anything outside myself, and I am so happy to be free of all superstition. If you need a transcendental belief system or a warm egg, have at it, but not me. I'm strong enough to stand on my own without beads in my hands, prayers on my lips, a cross around my neck, or a god in my heart.”

Which testimony is the true one? Does truth even exist? Experience is not always right.

Imagine the individual who says: “I don't believe in gravity. In fact, I can fly.” He then goes to the top of a ten-story building and jumps. As he plummets down, he may be singing at the top of his voice: “Look at me, I'm flying. I feel good. Gravity doesn't exist.” But within milliseconds his subjective experience will meet objective reality head-on.

How do you know whether what you feel and what's real are the same thing?

HOW IS TRUTH ESTABLISHED?

If the reality being tested involves repeatable phenomena, then the scientific method is your answer. For example, you can drop a ball from The Leaning Tower of Pisa every minute for the rest of your life, and you will always get the same result. It falls to the ground. Therefore, you conclude gravity exists.

But what about a phenomenon that is unique, nonrepeatable? You use the historical method for validation. For example, the existence of Abraham Lincoln is not provable by the scientific method. Why? Because individuals are unique. They appear once and are gone. How then do we establish the existence of a person? By eyewitnesses. What happens when the eyewitnesses die? We rely upon documents (writings, drawings, photographs, etc.) left by the eyewitnesses.

We ask, “Are these witnesses credible?” In Abraham Lincoln's case, no one is alive today who was an eyewitness of him. So we must assess his existence on the basis of documents—including the ones he left. If a revisionist comes along and says: “No, Lincoln never was president—that's all a fabrication. I know in my heart he was never president,” we would regard such a person as foolish. We'd have the same opinion of one who says: “Well, I don't know if Lincoln existed or not. I haven't made up my mind yet, but I support people on both sides of the question so long as they are sincere.”

Nonsense! you would say. For a person to remain undecided about what is so clearly decided is the height of folly. That's not broad-minded but empty-minded.

How do we examine the claims of Jesus? Through application of the historical method. The scientific method only tells us that people are born, live, and die. That's predictable. What do you do with a claim that one person in

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thing?*



human history lived, died, and lived again? You apply the same kind of analysis you would to any other claimed event in human history—you look at the testimony of the eyewitnesses and the totality of the circumstances surrounding the purported event. You sift through the evidence, and if the witnesses are no longer alive, you evaluate the documents they left behind.

NONDEBATABLE FACTS ABOUT JESUS

What can be known regarding Jesus of Nazareth? Look first at the historical factors commonly accepted by most people who have thought on the subject—regardless of their own religious faith or lack thereof.

1. *Jesus lived.* He was born a Jew in the first century of the Christian Era. No serious historian casts doubt today on the historicity of Jesus. Argument rages as to whether or not He performed miracles, whether the words He spoke were His own or the invention of His followers, and whether He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. But no debate exists on the fact He is a historical figure—a real man who lived in real time.

This separates Him from legendary figures such as Paul Bunyan, the Easter Bunny, and Santa Claus.

A recent assault on the historical validity of the resurrection of Jesus Christ was written by Hugh Schonfield in *The Passover Plot*. But even he presumes the existence of Jesus as a person.

Why? The existence of Jesus is attested by the literature of the New Testament, the activity of the apostles, the sudden emergence of the Church, Jewish and Roman literature, and the overwhelming verdict of civilization.

Further, there is no way to explain the emergence of the Christian faith without Him, even as one could not account for Islam without Mohammed or Mormonism without Joseph Smith.

2. *He was crucified in Jerusalem.* No credible reasons exist for disputing the written eyewitness accounts of Jesus' contemporaries, as recorded in the New Testament, that Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem at the instigation of the religious leadership and with approval of the Roman governor, Pilate.

To deny the Crucifixion would require a plausible alternative explanation for Jesus' demise. No such idea was ever launched even by the opponents of Christian faith in the first centuries of the Church's existence.

3. *He was considered dead.* Disagreement exists as to whether or not Jesus died from the crucifixion—a most horrible means of execution. His followers said, "yes"; others centuries later said, "no." No dispute exists that His sufferings on the cross rendered Him as one who appeared dead.

4. *He was buried in an accessible tomb.* The earliest Christian documents record Jesus was taken down from the

cross, prepared for burial by His followers, and laid in a new and borrowed tomb that was sealed and watched by a guard from the religious leadership who feared His followers would steal the body within 3 days (see Matthew 27:57–66). Schonfield holds the tomb was neither sealed nor guarded, but even he does not challenge the fact that both Jesus' opponents and partisans knew where He lay.

5. *His followers preached Him as raised from the dead.* The spine-tingling news echoes across the centuries: He is risen! That's the claim made by Jesus' followers, but is it true? Absolutely no one disputes that Jesus' disciples proclaimed Him as resurrected from the dead. They did so right from the beginning in the very city where the Crucifixion occurred—Jerusalem.

6. *His religious opponents were anxious to discredit the preaching of the Resurrection.* The New Testament tells us Jesus' enemies were so desperate to disprove the preaching of His resurrection that they bribed the grave guards into saying His disciples had stolen the body (Matthew 28:11–15). Many have difficulty accepting the idea that religious leaders would act so nefariously, but the fact remains that a debunking of the Resurrection would have silenced the earliest Christians. How can anyone have preached a raised Christ if a dead Jesus could be produced? The authority structure of the religious leadership and their continued livelihood and role as leaders were at stake. If Jesus had risen, then they were wrong and discredited. They had ample motive to disprove the Resurrection, but were they able to so do?

7. *Horrible persecution occurred to those preaching the resurrection of Jesus.* The opponents of the first generation Christians did not relegate their opposition to civil debates in lecture halls. The preachers of the Resurrection were threatened, severely beaten, thrown into prison, and even killed by their opponents. Why such animosity? If

Jesus' corpse was available, why bother to persecute anyone who preached its resurrection? Just put the dead body on display in front of the preacher, and then have a good laugh all around.

No serious historian doubts the lightning spread of Christianity across the Graeco-Roman world of the first century. Without automobile, airplane, telephone, fax, or modem the good news went far and wide. Because of lacking today's modern communications, Jesus' followers could not continue to collaborate on their story once they had dispersed to the nations. Yet, they remained consistent and insistent—each in their separate, scattered locations—that they had seen Jesus of Nazareth after He had risen from the dead. None recanted their story, and many were put to death or endured unspeakable suffering for insisting the story was true.

**No serious
historian casts
doubt today on
the historicity
of Jesus.**

8. *His body was missing.* Jesus' body disappeared from the tomb. Why was it never found or produced by anyone? From the first century to this day, no one has ever stepped forward with a show and tell: "Here is the dead body of Jesus of Nazareth."

WHAT HAPPENED?

All theories can be boiled down to seven possibilities as to why Jesus' body disappeared from human history.

1. *The followers of Jesus stole the body.* This is the very first theory advanced to counter the claim that Jesus rose from the dead (see Matthew 28:13). To hold this position you must discount the New Testament assertion that the gravesite was guarded by soldiers, placed there with Roman permission by religious leaders fearful that His disciples would steal the body in order to perpetrate a hoax (see Matthew 27:62–66). An armed guard would have been sufficient deterrent to a dispirited ragtag group of loyalists to Jesus.

What about motive? Why would the disciples even want to steal Jesus' body? He had been given an honorable burial, and the disciples do not appear to be macabre individuals who would disturb the gravesite of a revered friend. Only hours before His death they had all forsaken Him and fled. What would account for their sudden bravery and duplicity in stealing His body? The plain fact is they were in no shape psychologically to engineer a hoax. The Crucifixion left them devastated and afraid for their own lives.

2. *Jesus did not really die on the cross.* This view has been called the swoon theory. Mohammed held to this position, as stated in *The Koran*: "Surely we have killed the Messiah, son of Mary, the Apostle of Allah, and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him."

If Mohammed is right, why was Jesus' body never produced to refute the preaching of the Resurrection?

In *The Passover Plot*, the modern non-Christian scholar, Hugh J. Schonfield, alleged the following scenario: "It is the moment before sundown in Jerusalem. On the hill of Golgotha three bodies are suspended on crosses. Two, the thieves, are dead. The third appears so. This is the drugged body of Jesus of Nazareth, the man who planned his own crucifixion, who contrived to be given a soporific potion to put him into a deathlike trance."

What's interesting about Schonfield is that as a Dead-Sea-Scrolls-first-century-Judaism scholar, he knows a more credible theory is needed than those used in the twenty centuries before him to rebut the Resurrection. Schonfield gives us a Machiavellian Jesus who psychologically manipulates events to fit Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22, stampeding Jewish authorities and the Roman military into crucifying Him.

Jesus' plan of being drugged into unconsciousness on the cross goes awry when a soldier thrusts a spear into His side. His "smart" disciples, such as Joseph of Arimathea, were supposed to have gotten Him down unconscious from the cross, sprung Him out of the tomb and into exile far away while His "dumb" disciples (Peter and company) swallowed the Resurrection hoax. But Jesus never made it to retirement. Schonfield says Jesus died in the tomb from the spear wound, living just long enough to give a deathbed wish to the "smart" disciples: "Go tell my [dumb] disciples I have risen" (see Matthew 28:7).

A legion of logical problems faces Schonfield including the fact he is the first person in twenty centuries to advance such a view. It's like waiting another 1,900 years for someone to say: "Lincoln was not really shot at Ford's Theater in 1865. He faked his assassination in order to retire in southern France." It's a rather quixotic idea, but no one thought it a possibility at the time.

Granted, it will be charged that the New Testament witnesses were biased. But simply because my wife sees another driver cross a double yellow line and hit our car head-on does not invalidate her as a witness. Here is the witness of the first Christian documents: Jesus said He would die. The religious leadership continually sought His destruction. The soldiers at the cross said He was dead (John 19:34). Witnesses watching Him die said He breathed His last (Luke 23:46). The preaching recorded in the Book of Acts emphasizes His violent death by terms such as slay (2:33), kill (3:15), and murderers (7:52). The entirety of the New Testament rests upon the asserted fact that Jesus died on the cross.

Those like Schonfield who advocate a revisionist dressed-up-in-modern-clothes swoon theory also do not account for the fact that had Jesus survived crucifixion, it would have left Him emaciated. But Jesus' disciples preached Him as dynamically alive.

Further, if Jesus pulled off such a hoax, there should be no respect for Him in the common culture. How can anyone even say He is a good teacher if at the core He is a liar or a lunatic?

Finally, if He did not die on the cross, when did He die? Where was He buried? Why was His corpse never produced? How can the emergence of His large contemporary following be explained—men and women willing to stake their lives not for His teaching per se (there have been many who would die for someone who taught them ethical or moral lessons) but for what He did—rising from the dead?

3. *The Romans or religious leadership took the body.*

Both these assertions, made centuries ago, can be laid to rest easily. If either the Romans or the religious leadership

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of the
Christian faith
without Him.**

took the body, they would have immediately produced it the moment the apostles began preaching Jesus as raised from the dead. Nothing like a corpse to end a passionate sermon on the Resurrection!

4. *The women went to the wrong tomb.* This view was advanced because of the accounts in the Gospels of women arriving at the tomb early on Easter morning. Rather than meeting an angel, as claimed, they actually met a gardener whom they mistook for a heavenly being. When he tried to point out they were at the wrong tomb, “He is not here,” they falsely assumed Jesus had risen and ran to tell His disciples the news. Of course, the rebuttal to this theory is that if the women went to the wrong tomb, then all someone had to do in follow-up was go to the right tomb—which the opponents of Jesus would certainly have done under this scenario.

5. *The body of Jesus evaporated.* The few who advocated this view suggested that in the cool recesses of a first-century Jewish tomb a most remarkable chemical reaction took place within the corpse of Jesus. Poof! He vaporized. While this would explain the Gospel evidence of grave clothes not in disarray (John 20:6,7) as well as explain why the corpse was never found, it doesn’t explain how the followers of Jesus underwent such fundamental changes in their personalities—from being fearful to bold. This view is even harder to believe in than the Resurrection for it suggests not a divine intervention but a naturalistic phenomenon that has never been known to occur on any other corpse. It holds nature intervened, but God didn’t. The view cannot account for the New Testament witness that the stone over the doorway of the tomb was rolled away. Nor can this view explain why the early followers of Jesus insisted He had personally appeared to them after His entombment—eating and talking with them as well as being touched by them.

6. *The disciples were victims of hallucination.* This view suggested that the purported postresurrection appearances of Jesus to His followers took place in their minds and not in real time and space. However, hallucinations occur to individuals and not to groups en masse. And if the preaching of the Resurrection resulted from hallucinations, then a trip to the grave to produce Jesus’ body would have quickly brought everyone back to reality. Finally, what would account for the hallucinations abruptly ending after 40 days?

7. *The followers of Jesus told the truth—He had risen.* Why should anyone believe their account?

CREDIBLE EVIDENCE

By temperament and training Jesus’ disciples were not people of a disposition to create a religion. They represent a cross section of ordinary people living in Israel at the

time of Jesus. Unlike Marx or Lenin, they were not engaged in an intellectual quest to locate some key to reform society.

What happened? Luke’s Gospel tells the story of two followers of Jesus, Cleopas and an unnamed disciple, returning the 7 miles from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus the very morning of the Resurrection. They are pictured as sad—scattered because they were shattered. Hope is in the past tense: “We had hoped,” they said, “that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel” (Luke 24:21*). They were disappointed and disillusioned with Jesus.

And they were not easily duped or gullible. They had already heard a report that some of the women from their company had gone to the tomb at daybreak and returned saying Christ was risen. “But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense” (Luke 24:11). They did not even bother to go to the tomb and check out the story.

Two others did go to the tomb: Peter and John (John 20:1–9). Three Greek words for the verb *to see* are employed to describe their visit to Jesus’ grave. First, there is a cursory look: “[John] reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in [*blepo*] at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in” (verses 4,5). A quick look at evidence does not prompt any conclusion. Peter arriving second, “went into the tomb. He saw [*theoreo*] the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus’ head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen” (verses 6,7). This was not a casual look but one of taking things in, observing more closely, seeing critically and carefully. It also does not result in any conclusion about what the evidence means. “Finally the other disciple [John] who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw [*horaō*] and believed” (verse 8). This third look was one of comprehension.

John sized up the evidence and drew inferences from it. What could explain the grave clothes appearing in such a neat and folded manner? If Jesus’ enemies had stolen His body, they would not have taken time to unfold and refold the clothes. Why would they have carried away the corpse naked into the night? If they would so desecrate a tomb, why would they not also desecrate the clothes? And if Jesus’ friends had stolen His body, why? He was given a decent burial. What friend of Jesus would desecrate His grave? Who would have had courage in the midst of such grief to try to rob a guarded and sealed tomb?

John knew only one logical explanation fit. He deduced from the facts that Jesus had risen even though he had not yet seen the risen Christ nor had he understood from the Scripture the necessity of Christ’s resurrection (verse 9).

But these eyewitnesses of Jesus had even better evidence

**[His followers]
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and theirs.**

than that found at the gravesite—the risen Lord appeared to them: “After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days” (Acts 1:3).

The lives of these followers were radically changed. If the Resurrection did not happen, how can you account for that change? What makes each of them face persecution without a single denial? How do you account for the fact that they never defended themselves with violence or advanced their cause by violence? How do you explain their insistence on moral purity if, at the core, they are liars?

The earliest history of the Church, the Book of Acts, records that two members were struck dead by God’s Spirit for misrepresenting how much they had given in the offering (Acts 5). If so heavy a punishment existed for what most regard as a small lie, how much more so would God punish those who told a really big lie if the Resurrection story was fake?

Our culture separates private character from public conduct—not so for the early followers of Jesus. They staked their message and lives on His credibility and theirs.

Additionally, the Resurrection was preached in Jerusalem where it occurred, not out in the boonies where gullible people could be duped. Jerusalem was filled with people who had been eyewitnesses of the Crucifixion, heard the rumors of the Resurrection and appearances by Jesus, and knew His corpse had disappeared. At great danger to themselves, in the very city where He was executed for holding himself out to be the Son of God and Messiah, Jesus’ followers boldly declared: “This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead” (Acts 2:23,24).

What accounts for their courage and conviction? They knew the real story. Jesus had risen from the dead on the third day as He said. And they knew who the real liars were. It was not only Jesus’ followers who knew He had risen, but also His enemies knew. In fact, Jesus’ opponents were among the first to empirically know of the Resurrection for they heard the firsthand report of the tomb guards they had hired.

What did these opponents do with the information reported to them by their own soldiers? They launched a cover-up far worse than Watergate: “When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, ‘You are to say, “His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.” If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.’ So the soldiers took the money and did as they were

instructed” (Matthew 28:12–15). Like Jesus’ enemies, your conduct can fly in the face of reason if you are disposed to evil. The first persons to disbelieve the Resurrection did so not because their head was unconvinced but because their heart was darkened and rebellious.

YOUR RESPONSE

Why is it important what you believe?

Remember Christianity is the only faith that bases truth upon what its founder did, not just on what He said. Christians openly admit: “And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:14,15).

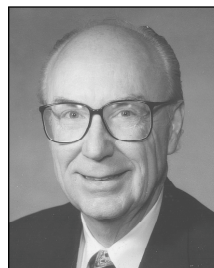
Some say Jesus did not rise from the dead, but He was a great moral teacher. Not so. If His followers lied about Him, then He was a poor teacher of truth; and if He lied about himself, He should be disgraced and undeserving of a following.

Jesus taught: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). How do we know He’s telling the truth—that He is the only way to God? By His resurrection from the dead. If Jesus did not rise, His words have no more authority than those of any other human being.

From a rational view, when all the evidences are weighed, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the only satisfactory conclusion that may be reached. From an experiential point of view, the ongoing presence of Jesus Christ living in your life by the power of the Holy Spirit brings you into true, loving, and joyful relationship with God. In the last analysis, faith is not a leap in the dark. It’s resting in the sufficiency of the evidences.

The late William Sangster, an English Methodist minister of this century, became seriously ill with progressive muscular atrophy 2 years before his death. For those final years he endured suffering but with good courage. On Easter, in the grips of the disease, unable to walk or speak, he wrote to his daughter: “It is terrible to wake up on Easter morning and have no voice with which to shout, ‘He is risen!’ But it would be still more terrible to have a voice and not want to shout!”

Oh, I want to shout. I hope you do too. Jesus is risen from the dead! **E**



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

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

INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS E. TRASK

"Retooling for the Harvest" and Beyond

Since the Decade of Harvest began in 1990 the Assemblies of God has seen both tangible and intangible results. The DOH has helped the church focus on its mission of evangelization, church planting, prayer, and recruiting men and women for the ministry. Here Thomas E. Trask, general superintendent, talks about the reemphasis of the Decade of Harvest and its implications for moving into the next millennium.



WE'RE 8 YEARS INTO THE DECADE OF HARVEST. PLEASE GIVE AN UPDATE ON THE EXCITING RESULTS HERE IN THE STATES AND WORLDWIDE.

I'm grateful for those who carried the burden and vision of the Decade of Harvest in the beginning. The seeds that were planted in those early years, the emphasis, the thrust, and the burden are paying dividends today.

Let me address what's happening overseas first. Many of the nations established some ambitious goals in the founding of new churches for the decade. But as a result of revival, such as in Cuba, they reached their decade goals in the first 3 years. Some African nations have exceeded their decade goals in the first 5 or 6 years. It has been a marvelous work of the Holy Spirit.

This is one of the factors that has led me to move away from the numerical goals and to call our Fellowship to the priorities of what must happen for the church to reach the goals: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Let's go back and look at Cuba again. They were able to accomplish the 10-year goal in 3 years because of a sovereign move of the Holy Spirit, not because of the programming. My conviction is: If the American church will pray and fast and do what God has called us to do, we can and will experience a sovereign move of the Holy Spirit that will reach the goals effortlessly. Then the program isn't being driven by the machinery of man—the headquarters or a department—but is carried on the wind of the Spirit.

That doesn't take away our responsibility nor give us reason to become slack, careless, and lazy. Instead of asking God to bless what I'm doing, I want to do what He's doing. Then it will work. That's why we call it "Retooling for the Harvest." This is not to depreciate the original goals, but we have just retooled to

RELIGION REPORT

According to an article in the National and International Religion Report (April 15, 1996) based on statistics from 1994 published in the 1996 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, several religions and mainline Protestant denominations continue to decline annually in inclusive membership, while others are growing:

Churches	Growth %	Numerical Growth	Decline %	Numerical Decline
Assemblies of God	2.3	52,897		
Mormon Church	2.1	93,000		
Jehovah's Witnesses	2.1	19,376		
Seventh-Day Adventist	1.8	13,646		
Southern Baptist	1.4	215,418		
Catholic Church	0.56	332,563		
Presbyterian, USA			2.6	98,630
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)			2.13	20,373
United Church of Christ			1.89	28,868

place our emphasis upon the matters that can make it happen—the work of the Spirit through prayer.

We have more people, more prayer groups, more prayer meetings, and more emphasis on prayer in the Assemblies of God today than we've had in many years. When the Early Church prayed, the place was shaken. When this church prays, God will move and work. I'm encouraged because I see the elements are being put in place that will be moved along by the work of the Spirit instead of by man's ingenuity.

HOW MANY COUNTRIES ARE INVOLVED IN THE DECADE OF HARVEST?

We have missions outreaches in 147 countries, and most are involved in the Decade of Harvest. Some may call it by a different name, but most of them have been a part of the Decade of Harvest.

WHERE ARE WE SEEING THE GREATEST RESULTS WITH THE RETOOLING FOR THE HARVEST IN THE UNITED STATES?

The latest statistics are from the Annual Church Ministries Report, which are incomplete because some churches do not report. Otherwise, the figures would be even greater. Nevertheless, in the conversions alone we gained nearly 65,000 in 1995 over 1994. This is the second highest annual gain on record for the Assemblies of God. We rejoice in these who have found Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. I believe we will continue to see the momentum of the Decade of Harvest build as we move toward the end of this decade.

Other stats are also encouraging, such as a net gain of 250,000 adherents from 1989 to 1995. Most adherents are as faithful as the membership, though they just haven't taken out membership.

Sunday morning worship attendance shows

My conviction is: If the American church will pray and fast and do what God has called us to do, we can and will experience a sovereign move of the Holy Spirit that will reach the goals effortlessly.

a 26,000-plus gain over 1994. We have opened 1,855 new churches from 1990 to 1995. Water baptisms totaled over 100,000 this past year, and baptisms in the Holy Spirit showed a significant increase with over 79,000. I have been very concerned about the latter two stats—it's one thing to get people saved, but they need to be brought into the Body and into the church itself so they become victorious saints.

We had been seeing a decline in those areas, and now we are seeing an escalating turnaround on the plus side. Again, I don't want to be driven by numbers, and yet I know numbers are important and reflect what God is doing. The Spirit of God is making it happen, and I want to be careful to give Him the credit and all the glory. **E**

1995 ASSEMBLIES OF GOD STATISTICS (as reported on the Annual Church Ministries Report): 1994-95

Change		1995	1994	% Gain
Number of Churches	11,823	11,764	59	.5
Conversions	384,057	319,351	64,706	20.3
Membership	1,377,320	1,354,337	22,983	1.7
Adherents	2,387,982	2,324,615	63,367	2.7
Sunday a.m. Attendance	1,531,003	1,504,417	26,586	1.8
Water Baptisms	100,955	99,027	1,928	1.9
Baptisms in Holy Spirit	78,687	77,009	1,678	2.2
Sunday School Attendance	1,006,542	1,001,796	4,746	.5



Jesus: Superior to the Priesthood

PART 4**TEXT: Hebrews 4:14–5:10, NIV**

BY RICHARD L.
DRESSELHAUS

He is greater
than the angels,
the priesthood,
Moses, the
tabernacle,
Melchizedek,
and the Law—
an evidential
display that
leaves the heart
convinced and
afire with
affection.

Superior in His Person*We have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens.**We have one who has been tempted in every way...yet was without sin.***Challenge:** *Let us hold firmly to the faith.**Let us... approach the throne of grace with confidence.***Result:** *That we may receive mercy and find grace...in our time of need.***Superior in His Appointment***High Priest: Selected from among men The Great High Priest: You are my Son.**Appointed to represent them You are a priest forever.***Superior in His Service***High Priest: To offer gifts and sacrifices The Great High Priest: To offer prayers...petitions**To deal gently with... To [become] the source of salvation**ignorant...stray Designated...high priest***SIGNIFICANT WORDS**

hold firmly	from krateo "take into one's possession or custody"
sympathize	from sumpatheo "show sympathy with"
tempted	from peirazo "put to the test"
approach	from proserchomai "come, go to, approach"
cries	krauge "shout(ing), clamor"
perfect	from teleioo "complete, bring to an end, finish"
salvation	soteria "deliverance, preservation"
designated	from prosagoreuo "call, name"

In a moment of meditation I thought about the "distance of grace"—how far God traveled to effect my salvation.

Think of it: From the majestic heights of glory to the manger of Bethlehem; from the lofty pinnacles of heaven's grandeur to the washing of the disciples' feet; and from the highest places of exaltation to the humiliation of Calvary—this begins to measure the distance that God traveled to become my Savior.

How far? Far enough. Always far enough to include a "whosoever will." No sin is too grievous nor act so shameful but that the expanse of God's grace will stretch far enough to cover it.

This is what Hebrews is all about. It keeps laying one comparative analogy upon another until the superiority of Jesus becomes overwhelmingly apparent. I simply want to stand in awe. He is greater than the angels, the priesthood, Moses, the tabernacle, Melchizedek, and the Law—an evidential display that leaves the heart convinced and aflame with affection.

As you construct the overlay of this passage, you will find the task demanding but rewarding—demanding because the passage is filled with Old Testament imagery but rewarding because its truths are wonderfully profound. Read the passage several times and

then consider the outline along with the verbal analysis. The diagram of the text is neither all-inclusive nor absolute in its chronological arrangement. An attempt, however, has been made to bring to the surface the significant flow of thought contained in the passage.

As you anticipate the altar call, you may wish to pick up on the superiority of Jesus as it relates both to His temptation and to ours. Not only was He sinless in His temptation, but He has also promised grace and mercy to help us in time of need. You can be sure a significant number of your listeners will be dealing with the assault of temptation. Consider this invitational statement: “Will you come to this altar and meet the One who has himself conquered temptation and promised to give grace and mercy to help you in your time of need?” The altar will be well filled.

SUPERIOR IN HIS PERSON

Essential theological discourse usually focuses on Jesus Christ, His nature and person, who He really is. This text is wonderfully descriptive. Two things are stated: Jesus has “gone through the heavens,” and He has “been tempted in every way.”

***Have we become so fixed
in our ways that we are no
longer able to accommodate
the new thing that God
may want to do?***

What does “gone through the heavens” mean? It could mean that Jesus has passed through all heavens that may exist in God’s great order of created things, or it could mean that Jesus is so great that even the heavens are not large enough to contain His presence and

His glory. The latter is more consistent with the intent of the author. Jesus Christ is so filled with majestic glory that even the enormous expanse of the heavens is inadequate to contain Him.

***Think of it: We have been invited to
ascend to the very throne
of grace—the majestic
presence of the Almighty—
and do so with confidence.***

The second statement deals with temptation—His and ours. What does it mean that Jesus was tempted? It means that He was tested to the fullest measure of Satan’s power. Satan held nothing back. He leveled the full weight of temptation upon Jesus. Yet in it all Christ did not sin.

Some have asked: “Could Jesus have sinned? If not, how could the temptation bear the mark of authenticity?” Only this is clear beyond question: (1) Jesus was tempted as we are, but (2) He did not sin. What more might be said moves quickly toward speculation. Authentically tempted? Yes. Completely sinless through it all? Yes. The Scripture makes this abundantly clear.

These verses also contain a powerful challenge—a strong invitation and call: (1) We are to “hold firmly to the faith,” and (2) we are to “approach the throne of grace with confidence.” The two are inseparable. Faith builds confidence, and confidence is the spirit by which we are to approach the throne of grace. Think of it: We have been invited to ascend to the very throne of grace—the majestic presence of the Almighty—and do so with confidence.

Next we come to the glorious result of the ascent—that we may “receive mercy and find

grace...in our time of need.” Mercy and grace—in simple definition the former speaks of not receiving what we deserve and the latter receiving what we do not deserve. Both are essential. I must be spared the consequences of my sin, but I also must receive the gift of God’s favor. They are the two critical parts of the gospel message .

His appointment is not based on selection, for He stands alone in His sonship. It is not based on qualifications, for His credentials are without equal.

SUPERIOR IN HIS APPOINTMENT

The contrast here is striking. High priests are chosen from within the ranks of men and selected in a way that will facilitate fair and equitable representation. But not so with the great high priest, Jesus Christ. His appointment is based on Sonship and has been initiated in pattern after Melchizedek to assure a ministry that is eternal. As such, Christ is a priest forever.

Jesus’ superiority is well established at this point. His appointment is not based on selection, for He stands alone in His sonship. It is not based on qualifications, for His credentials are without equal. It is not based on selective representation, for He is himself the head of a new race. In every way His appointment stands unique and uncontested and is assured by virtue of His person. “You are my Son.”

Use this opportunity to emphasize the full deity of Jesus Christ. Jesus was not merely selected from among men, but His appointment has been uniquely assured by His sonship. He comes to men by way of the miracle of the Incarnation.

Sound Christian doctrine is measured precisely by the position we assign to Christ. He must be held up as fully God and fully man—wholly without sin but in every other way like His brethren. To depreciate in any way either His deity or His humanity is to do violence both to His person and His work. Historically, heresy has found its focus here. Is Jesus God? Is Jesus man? Or in what way might He be both? The testimony of Scripture is clear: Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He is

wonderfully and miraculously the personification and embodiment of both.

SUPERIOR IN HIS SERVICE

We come finally to Jesus’ superiority in His life of ministry and service. Once again the contrast is dramatic. High priests are commissioned to offer gifts and sacrifices to God and to deal redemptively with the ignorant and those who have gone astray. The great high priest, in sharp distinction, is not only commissioned to offer prayers and petitions, but He is himself the very source of salvation.

High priests offer up sacrifices. Jesus is himself the sacrifice. High priests deal gently with those who are uninformed and wayward. Jesus takes upon himself the very pain and blindness of the weak. High priests point to another who has the authority to dismiss sin. Jesus is himself the source of pardon and salvation.

Imagine the shock waves created by this epistle. Jewish believers, still struggling to understand and accept their new place in Christ, are told to look beyond the venerated priesthood to the One who had fulfilled all the priesthood had represented—both in appointment and in work. It would have stretched the limits of their understanding to the breaking point.

I wonder in what ways the Holy Spirit wants to stretch the limits of our understanding to do something new and unique in our midst. Have we become so fixed in our ways that we are no longer able to accommodate the new thing that God may want to do? Only the Holy Spirit can lead us to a place of balance between the old ways of familiarity and the new ways of God’s special dealings.

You are now ready to focus on an earlier theme and call the people to commitment. While many themes would clearly serve this purpose, I suggest that you remind the people again that Jesus not only was tempted in all ways as we are, but He is also able now to help us when we are tempted. Some of your listeners will be in a bitter battle with temptation. It will be your privilege to point them to Christ. He is the One who has broken the tempter’s power and will now set them free.

Believe largely for a great response. **E**

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Power

WORD STUDY: (DÚNAMIS)

BY DOUGLAS A. OSS

At no time in our history as a movement has it been more important to walk in Christ's presence and power than today.

The Pentecostal movement has always depended upon God's power operating in and through the church for both its own spiritual vitality and the effectiveness of its witness to Christ. Moreover, at no time in our history as a movement has it been more important to walk in Christ's presence and power than today.

This word study will provide some insight into the nature of Christ's manifest power in the life of the believer. Primarily associated with power in the New Testament,

dúnamis,

is a term that is often used in our own theological vernacular and thus is well known to most.¹ We will survey its uses to grasp the diversity of uses in the New Testament.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

In the discussion of power in the New Testament, by far the single most important principle is that all power comes by Christ Jesus and has as its ultimate purpose the exaltation and glorification of the Lord in and through the Church (e.g., Revelation 5:12). Indeed, this is central to our own heritage as Pentecostals. Our entire understanding of spiritual power is predicated on the promise of Acts 1:6–8 (cf., verse 8 and the use of *dúnamis*) and its fulfillment beginning in Acts 2, whereby we ourselves are empowered to bear witness to the risen and exalted Lord, Jesus the Christ. And it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself, in His capacity as the seed of David, who pours out the Spirit and power on His people (Acts 2:22; cf., 1 Samuel 16:13).

Moreover, the power Christ gives to the believer is the same power of the Spirit upon which He himself depended during the Incarnation (cf., the use of *dúnamis* in Luke 4:14; Acts 10:38; and the equivalent expression, "full of the Holy Spirit," in Luke 4:1). So

closely, in fact, is God's *dúnamis* associated with Christ that His *person* defines the "power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24; cf., 2:5; 4:19,20; Romans 1:16 [the power of the gospel is Christ]; Luke 22:69). It is this same power of Christ that works in us (2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 3:20,21). But Christ's *dúnamis* is manifested only in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9,10). This is the requirement put on us in order to have the power of the Lord working in us and through us: that we lay down the things of the world and self.

MIRACLES AND MIRACULOUS DEEDS

Dúnamis is often used as the word for "miracle" or for the power associated with miracles in the New Testament (e.g., Matthew 7:22; 11:20; 13:54,58; Mark 5:30; 6:5; Luke 6:19; 8:46; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). Healings and other miracles are considered to be the outworking of God's own power. In fact, one of the gifts listed in the catalog of 1 Corinthians 12:4–11 is *energēmata dūnamēōn* ("workings of powers" or "workings of miracles"). Associated in this context with the gift of faith (verse 9), "workings of miracles" here is distinguished from healings and probably constitutes a larger category of miraculous deeds that includes casting out demons.

Furthermore, the use of *dúnamis* in the Book of Acts sheds light on this particular dimension of the word's range. For example, of Stephen it is said that he was "full of grace and power" (*p lērēs charitos kai dūnamēōs*) and so did great wonders and signs among the

In the New Testament, by far the single most important principle is that all power comes by Christ Jesus.

people (Acts 6:8). This same kind of power is associated with Philip at Samaria (Acts 8:13, translated “miracle”) and Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:11, also translated “miracle”). So then, the term is used of specific miraculous manifestations of God’s power, especially healing and casting out demons. And the crowning achievement of God’s power is the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4; 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:43).

BOLD PROCLAMATION

Another significant association of *dúnamis* is with powerful teaching and witness. This particular perspective on power begins in the New Testament with Jesus’ own teaching and continues through the witness of the Early Church. Especially emphasizing the power of proclamation and witness under the unction of the Holy Spirit, Luke-Acts is a primary source for understanding this usage. For example, in the early ministry of Jesus His teaching and miracles amazed His hearers because He functioned under the power (*dúnamis*) of the Spirit with an authority (*exousia*) that they had not seen before in the teaching of their own scribes and Pharisees (see Luke 4:1–44). This powerful proclamation and witness continues in the Book of Acts beginning with Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost (cf., Acts 2:1–39) and continuing throughout the book (e.g., Acts 4:31–33; 6:8; 8:4; 19:8; cf., Romans 15:18,19; Philippians 3:10). Preaching boldly under the unction of the Spirit with signs following was definitive of the witness of the Early Church (cf., 1 Thessalonians 1:5).

POWERS OF DARKNESS

Dúnamis is also used of the powers associated with evil. Mentioned as a general category of evil spirit in several passages (e.g., Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:15; possibly Romans

While we ought not to behave arrogantly in spiritual warfare (Jude 8), we ought to have confidence in the power of the blood of Jesus that defeated all His enemies.

8:38), evil powers are epitomized in the work of Satan through the Antichrist. Even miracles, signs, and wonders will be counterfeited by the power of the evil one (2 Thessalonians 2:1–11). Indeed, the work of the unholy trinity described in Revelation 13:1–18 will deceive most of the inhabitants of the earth by the power (13:2) of Satan.

However, the Cross defeated the powers of darkness for God’s people. Satan is not the Lord’s opposite and equal counterpart. He opposes the Lord but is no match for God’s power; one small breath shall destroy him (2 Thessalonians 2:8; cf., Revelation 20:7). While we ought not to behave arrogantly in spiritual warfare (Jude 8), we ought to have confidence in the power of the blood of Jesus that defeated all His enemies.

In summary, during these last days God has ordained that His people walk in the presence and power of the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit. If we will abandon ourselves to Him, He will anoint us with the same power that we see on the pages of Scripture. **E**

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¹Dúnamis is more commonly associated with miraculous and mighty words or deeds, in contrast to exousia which more commonly carries the sense of authority. The focus in this essay is on the miraculous works of God. Thus the use of dúnamis to refer to human ability or an ability within the sphere of mundane activity (e.g., 2 Corinthians 8:3) will not be covered here.



Dealing With Questions on the Role of Women in Ministry

BY ZENAS J. BICKET

Could it be that the way we struggle with this difficult matter is more important to God than the question of what is right or wrong?

Why didn't Jesus make any direct statements about the role of women in spiritual leadership? Why did He leave us only a possible example without a single word of instruction on this topic of extreme importance to every generation since His time? Why did He leave to Paul the task of dealing with this issue? Could it be that the way we struggle with this difficult matter is more important to God than the question of what is right or wrong?

Is the Pentecostal definition of the role of women in ministry different from a non-Pentecostal definition? Should it be? Does Joel's prophecy that God would pour out His Spirit "upon all flesh; and...your daughters shall prophesy...and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit" (Joel 2:28,29) have any specific application for Pentecostals? If administration and spiritual leadership are gifts of the Spirit (cf. Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:28), are some of those gifts given only to men and not to women?¹ Is it proper to limit the operations of any of the gifts of the Spirit to men only when God's promise in Joel 2:28 was to pour out His Spirit "on all flesh"?

Attitudes toward the role of women in ministry change little in comparison with the oceans of ink spilled on both sides of the issue. Reputable scholars search the Scriptures with honesty trying to find God's truth on the subject, only to arrive at opposite conclusions or at intermediate positions between exclusion from ministry and an open door for women in ministry. It is unfortunate when accusations of deliberately misinterpreting Scripture are leveled at believers who want to please God in every detail.

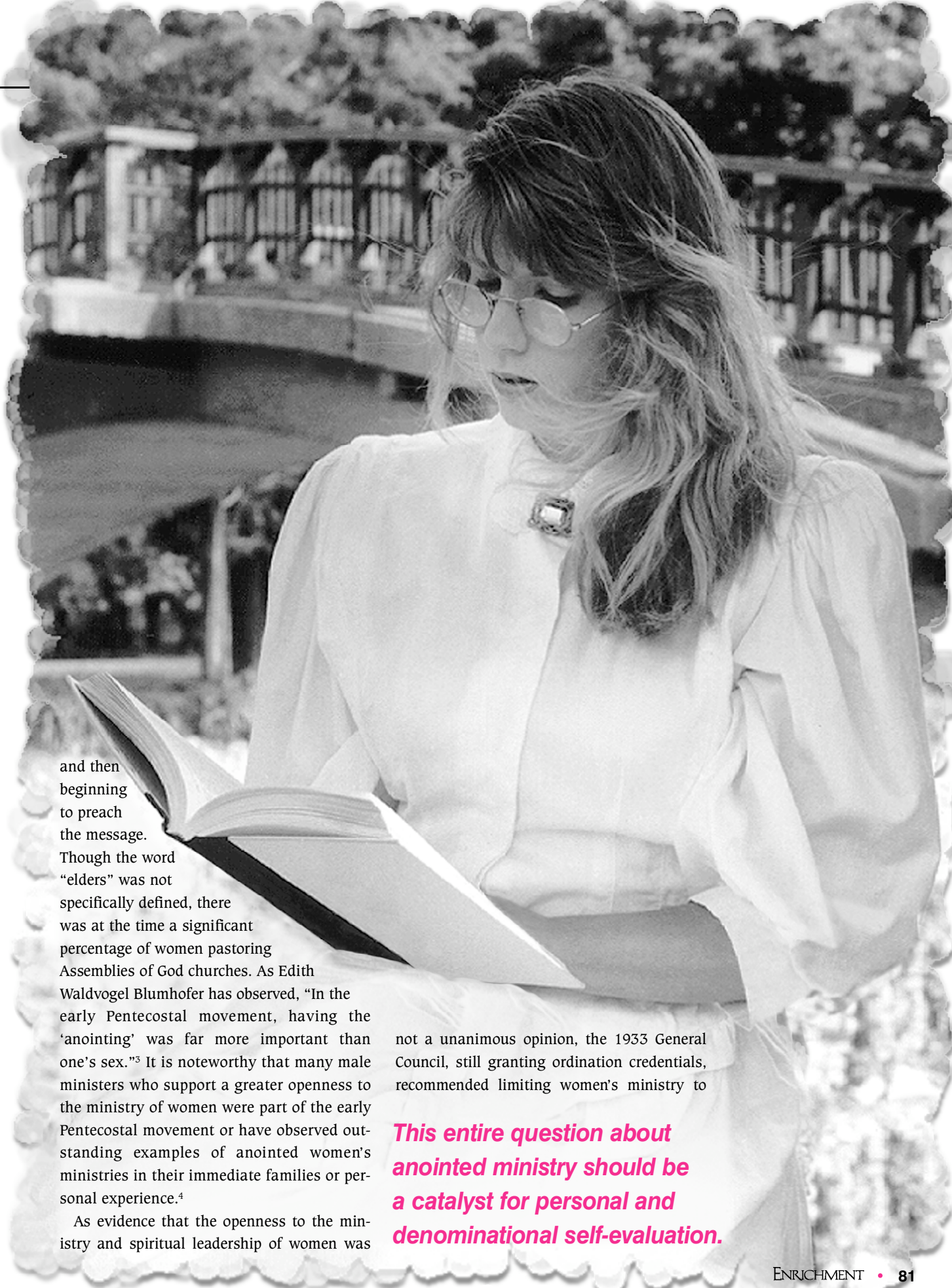
This introduction is not a foundation for proving a single position and recommending a crusade for that position throughout the church. The apostle Paul spoke to a church and

a culture that needed specific guidance and correction, just as we today need to hear from God a word for our generation—a word which resonates harmoniously with all of the inspired Word. One could wish we had direct teaching from Jesus on the subject, or that Paul could articulate for our generation as he articulated and applied eternal principles for his generation. Our task would be so much easier. But since we have neither of those guides to direct us, we must assume that God, in His great wisdom, desires us to work at applying those eternal principles to our generation, and to do it in a spirit of love, understanding, and patience with each other.

Many male ministers who support a greater openness to the ministry of women were part of the early Pentecostal movement.

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT IN THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

The first General Council (1914) recognized the role of women in ministry more generously than most established evangelical denominations did at the time. The official minutes read: "Therefore be it resolved, that this Council recommend to the ministry and Assemblies of God, that we recognize their God-given rights to be ordained, not as elders, but as Evangelists and Missionaries...." Some historians place emphasis on "not as elders," thus finding ambivalence in this early position.² But the infant group was making a bold statement in relation to the groups from which many of them had come, having experienced Pentecost



and then beginning to preach the message. Though the word “elders” was not specifically defined, there was at the time a significant percentage of women pastoring Assemblies of God churches. As Edith Waldvogel Blumhofer has observed, “In the early Pentecostal movement, having the ‘anointing’ was far more important than one’s sex.”³ It is noteworthy that many male ministers who support a greater openness to the ministry of women were part of the early Pentecostal movement or have observed outstanding examples of anointed women’s ministries in their immediate families or personal experience.⁴

As evidence that the openness to the ministry and spiritual leadership of women was

not a unanimous opinion, the 1933 General Council, still granting ordination credentials, recommended limiting women’s ministry to

This entire question about anointed ministry should be a catalyst for personal and denominational self-evaluation.

Settling controversial issues never supersedes the mission of the church, and a unified purpose and mission may call for patience in accomplishing lesser goals.

that of the evangelist. But the earlier receptivity to and recognition of women's ministry was restored and strengthened at the next General Council in 1935, which specifically stated that women could serve as pastors as well as evangelists. Though there have been editorial modifications in subsequent General Councils, all have maintained the same stance, with the current (1995) Bylaws statement reading as follows:

ELIGIBILITY OF WOMEN. The Scriptures plainly teach that divinely called and qualified women may also serve the church in the ministry of the Word (Joel 2:29; Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5). Women who have developed in the ministry of the Word so that their ministry is acceptable generally, and who have proved their qualifications in actual service, and who have met all the requirements of the credentials committees of the district councils, are entitled to whatever grade of credentials their qualifications warrant and the right to administer the ordinances of the church when such acts are necessary.⁵

The statistical trends on women in ministry in the Assemblies of God have shown a significant decrease in the percentage of credentialed women to credentialed men, even though the raw numbers have remained fairly constant or have increased slightly.⁶ Scholars studying the development of young church groups into mature church groups attribute the decline to the institutionalization of the group—moving from a charismatic, Spirit-prompted ministry to an organized, structured hierarchy that substitutes a professional or priestly clergy for a clergy identified

by a divine anointing. Some would say that the change is not due to a loss of the anointing, but rather a more studied and careful adherence to Scripture than was followed in the earlier days. This entire question about anointed ministry should be a catalyst for personal and denominational self-evaluation.

THE GIST OF A POSITION PAPER

The question of the role of women in ministry continued to be a major controversy, leading the Executive Presbytery to assign to the Doctrinal Purity Commission the task of preparing a position paper based on the best scholarship and explication of controversial scriptural passages. Following 2 years of work by a 12-member all-male commission and drawing on the contributions of two women resource persons (one an ordained minister/Bible college professor and the other the wife of an ordained minister), the Commission submitted the result of its study. The paper was adopted by the General Presbytery in August 1990.

Little has changed as a result of the adopted statement, just as little changed after each earlier General Council action on the role of women in ministry. That should not be a surprise nor a concern. Position papers rank third in importance behind the direct statement of Scripture and the Statement of Fundamental Truths contained in the Constitution of The General Council of the Assemblies of God. On position paper subjects where Scripture is unmistakably clear, conformity should be immediate. On matters where the interpretation of Scripture varies (as in the case of the role of women in ministry), the position paper should be a goal toward which practice

moves gradually, taking into consideration local circumstances, cultural traditions and biases, as well as the overall mission of the church—worship toward God, edification toward other believers, and outreach to the lost. Settling controversial issues never supersedes the mission of the church, and a unified purpose and mission may call for patience in accomplishing lesser goals. The apostle Paul seems to have ministered from that perspective (cf. Philippians 3:7–17).

The position paper reaffirms the historical and constitutional position of the Assemblies of God on the role of women in ministry. It places the women's ministry issue in global perspective, showing the inconsistencies of cultural practices.

Twentieth-century practice among Pentecostals around the world reveals evidence of a genuine struggle to apply biblical truth in various cultural contexts. In some settings, female spiritual leadership is readily accepted; in others, though women may have limited ministry, leadership posts are withheld from them. At times there is inconsistency between the leadership a female missionary has at home and that which she has on the field, or between her opportunities and those of a national female. Indeed, culture has influenced the extent of leadership a woman has been allowed to share. The Church must always be sensitive to cultural concerns, but it must look to Scripture for the truth that applies to all times and cultures.⁷

The paper surveys biblical examples of women in ministry. In the Old Testament, Miriam was a prophet⁸ as well as a leader (Exodus 15:20). Deborah, a prophet and judge, led an army to battle victory (Judges 4 and 5). Huldah, another prophet, contributed much to the religious reform under Josiah (2 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 34).

In the New Testament, Philip's four

virgin daughters prophesied (Acts 21:8,9). Euodia and Syntyche, in spite of their personal disagreements, were identified by Paul as his coworkers (Philippians 4:2,3). Paul called Priscilla and her husband Aquila “fellow workers in Christ Jesus” (Romans 16:3, NKJV). In his concluding remarks to the Roman Christians, Paul greeted a large number of ministering persons, including many women (Romans 16). Phoebe, a leader in the church at Cenchrea, was commended by Paul to the Christians in Rome (Romans 16:1,2), obviously contradicting the interpretation that Paul, in 1 Timothy 2:11–15, excludes women from teaching and leadership roles in the church.⁹ As a *diakonos* of the church at Cenchrea, Phoebe was more than a servant or helper. Paul often used the term for a minister or leader of a congregation and applied it to his own ministry as well as to Jesus Christ and to Timothy. A number of scholars observe that translators with preconceived assumptions on the role of women in ministry render *diakonos* as “minister” when used for men, but “servant” when used for Phoebe.¹⁰ Paul called Junia an apostle (Romans 16:7). But many translators since the 13th century have changed the name to the masculine *Junias*, thus avoiding an exception to the assumption that only men could be apostles. Paul was a strong advocate of women’s ministry. God called women to spiritual leadership in the Early Church, and there is no biblical evidence He has changed His mind on the subject. Some claim that God uses women only when He cannot find willing men, and when He does find a willing man, women are no longer needed in leadership roles. But God could have raised up a man for each of the above leadership positions, just as He called a belligerent Paul to become one of His greatest spiritual leaders. “God does indeed call women to spiritual leadership,” the position paper states.

The major portion of the 1990 position paper deals with biblical passages relating to the appropriate role of women in ministry. The passages

include Genesis 2:18–25; 1 Corinthians 11:3–12; 14:34–36; Galatians 3:28; 1 Timothy 2:11–15; 3:1–13. A summary of the four main passages follows.

As introduction to the Pauline passages, the position paper notes that ministry in the New Testament is charismatic in nature. It is energized by the gifts (*charismata*) sovereignly distributed by the Holy Spirit. Restrictions against women in ministry must be closely examined.

1 Corinthians 11:3–12. The statement that “the man is the head of the woman” has been used to support male superiority and to exclude women from spiritual leadership. Evangelical scholars take one of two positions on the meaning of the word *kephale* (“head”): (1) “authority over” or (2) “source” or “origin.” Both meanings are found in the literature of Paul’s time. The position paper concludes: “Without attempting to resolve this debate, we do not find sufficient evidence in *kephale* to deny leadership roles to women (in light of biblical examples of women in positions of spiritual authority, and in light of the whole counsel of Scripture).”

1 Corinthians 14:34–36. When Paul said, “Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak,” he must have meant something besides an absolute prohibition because he earlier gave instructions to women who prayed and prophesied in public services (1 Corinthians 11:5). Possible explanations of what he was prohibiting include: (1) chatter in public services, (2) ecstatic disruptions, (3) certain authoritative ministries, such as judging prophecies, (4) and asking questions during the service. Then the conclusion: “Although we may not solve all the difficulties of this chapter, we do conclude that this passage does not prohibit female leadership, but like the rest of the chapter, it admonishes that ‘all things be done decently and in order’ (1 Corinthians 14:40).”

1 Timothy 2:11–15. “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man” (verse 12, NKJV) has

puzzled interpreters and resulted in various explanations. Was the prohibition a universal truth, or was Paul reporting his application of divine truth for the Christian community to which he and Timothy ministered? There were obvious problems concerning women in Ephesus: immodest apparel and adornment (2:9), younger widows who were busybodies (5:13), and possibly some manipulative women (2 Timothy 3:6).

Beginning with verse 9, the chapter suggests that Paul was giving Timothy advice about dealing with heretical teachings and practices involving women in the church of Ephesus. Paul’s choice of “I do not permit” is an echo of his words to the church at Corinth: “But to the rest speak I, not the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:12). The heresy may have been so serious that Paul had to say, “I am not allowing [Ephesian] women to teach or have authority over a man.”

God called women to spiritual leadership in the Early Church, and there is no biblical evidence He has changed His mind on the subject.

1 Timothy 3:1–13. This passage deals primarily with male leadership, probably because first-century culture produced a primarily male church leadership. Use of the word *gunaikas* in verse 11 allows translators to choose either “wives” or “women” based on the translator’s assumptions about the context. The first choice applies the qualifications to deacons’ wives, the second to female spiritual leaders. Biblical passages that identify most leaders as male should not be made to say that women cannot be leaders. The Church must work with cultural traditions if it is to fulfill the Great Commission effectively.

After examining these passages, the position paper observes:

[W]e conclude that we cannot

find convincing evidence that the ministry of women is restricted according to some sacred or immutable principle.

We are aware that the ministry and leadership of women are not accepted by some individuals, both within and outside the Christian community. . . . The existence in the secular world of bigotry against women cannot be denied. . . . We acknowledge that attitudes of secular society, based on long-standing practice and tradition, have influenced the application of biblical principles to local circumstances. We desire wisely to respect yet help redeem cultures which are at variance with Kingdom principles. Like Paul, we affirm that the Great Commission takes

priority over every other consideration. . . . A believer's gifts and anointing should still today make a way for his or her ministry. The Pentecostal ministry is not a profession to which men or women merely aspire; it must always be a divine calling, confirmed by the Spirit with a special gifting.

REACHING FOR A GOAL WITH WISDOM AND PATIENCE

Once a goal has been examined and established, some are impatient with any delay in its accomplishment. Delay is seen as weakness and cowardice, an unwillingness to take a stand. But Paul's urgency was never to correct the ills of society. His urgency was bringing men, women, and children to a saving

knowledge of Jesus Christ, then discipling them to reach and disciple others. Paul raised the position of women in the Early Church far above what contemporary society practiced. But he never went so far that his message was smothered by a social crusade. Preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified was Paul's crusade.

But how does this work out in a local congregation where there are divided attitudes? One Assemblies of God church took a wise approach to the issue. When opinions for and against women serving on the deacon board began to surface, the pastor appointed a committee which included the major voices on both sides of the question. The pastor was also a member of the committee. Results of the study were to be reported back to the official board. Attitudes were more important than haste in reaching a conclusion. A list of questions formed the structure for the study:

1. Is it biblical for women to be spiritual leaders?
2. Is there further New Testament teaching on women in ministry?
3. Were there female deacons [or elders] in the Early Church? Is there any precedent for female deacons in the Assemblies of God?
4. What understandings of our local situation should condition our conclusions and recommendations regarding female deacons? Where do we go from here?

The Church must work with cultural traditions if it is to fulfill the Great Commission effectively.

The result of the 10-page study report was a careful worded change in the church bylaws to allow women to serve on the board. The opportunity for future involvement is now in place, and it was accomplished without diversion from the primary mission of the church.

Women should not be placed in leadership roles just to accommodate calls

***Women should not be placed in leadership roles
just to accommodate calls for representation.***

for representation. We must always seek the will of the Lord when we vote on leadership. The best qualified and spiritually sensitive persons of either gender can be considered without fearing that we are violating some eternal, immutable principle excluding women. If there are no women qualified for spiritual leadership, maybe the church has failed in its task of equipping all "God's people for works of service" (Ephesians 4:12, NIV).

A position paper is not a signal to force issues, but neither should it be ignored when opportunities present themselves for achieving a biblically healthy body that respects all Spirit-gifted members, both male and female. A humble and sensitive nudge, as Paul gave to the Early Church, is still the best way to achieve the ministry richness that God desires His Church to enjoy. **E**

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ENDNOTES:

¹Some non-Pentecostal scholars have noted that only the gift of prophecy is associated in Scripture with women; therefore, they conclude, the other gifts are given only to men. But Pentecostals have seen a far wider demonstration of the gifts of the Spirit through women.

²Margaret M. Poloma, *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 106, 107.

³Edith Waldvogel Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: a Popular History* (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1985), 137.

⁴Poloma, 108. Margaret Poloma concluded from a survey of 184 Assemblies of God ministers: "While 64 percent of the 48 ministers over 50 years of age were strongly supportive of women in ministry, only 27 percent of their cohorts under age 30 indicated a similarly strong support. . . . [P]astors over the age of 50 (who may have been more likely to be exposed to women pastors in earlier years) are more likely than young or middle-aged pastors to score low on the

WOMEN'S index (thus indicating stronger support for women in pastoral roles)"—Poloma, 116.

⁵General Council of the Assemblies of God Bylaws, Article VII, Section 2, Paragraph k.

⁶Because of variations in tabulation prior to 1988 (when Christian worker or the later certified minister credentials were included), a number comparison of the years from 1914 to the present is meaningless. However, the following table shows the current and recent situation concerning credentialed women in the Assemblies of God (from General Secretary reports). The 4,592 and 4,861 credentialed women represent 15% and 15.3% of all credentialed ministers.

Category	1988	1995
Total Number Women Credentialed	4,592	4,861
Senior Pastors	309	349
Evangelists	276	228
Foreign Missionaries	248	284
Home Missionaries	109	135
Age 65 and Over	1,799	1,911

⁷The position paper, "The Role of Women in Ministry," is available in two forms: as a pamphlet (#34-4191) and as one piece in a paperback collection of all the officially adopted position papers (Where We Stand [Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1994], 243 pages).

⁸The term prophet is deliberately applied to each of these women, even though the English language has a feminine form, prophetess. The emphasis is on the office, not the gender of the individual. Some writers have erroneously described the feminine form of the word as indicating a lesser position than a prophet.

⁹For a detailed treatment of Phoebe's spiritual leadership role, see Craig S. Keener, Paul, Women & Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 237-240.

¹⁰See for example, B. H. Streeter and Edith Picton-Turbervill, *Woman and the Church* (London: F. Fisher Unwin, 1917), 63, and Keener, op. cit., 238, 239.





Candidating— Asking the Right Questions

The sad news of a colleague's being asked to leave the church he pastors sends a chill of fear up our backs. It is not uncommon for a minister to wonder, *Could this happen to me?*

In the March/April 1996 issue of *Your Church*, John LaRue writes that 34 percent of all pastors serve congregations who either

fired or forced the previous pastor to resign.

In *The Pastor's Weekly Briefing* (March 15, 1996), H.B. London states that 27 percent of all current pastors have been forced out at some time along the way, and 10 percent of those who were terminated (according to *Your Church*) never return to pastoral ministry—probably because of disillusionment or emotional pain.

These disturbing facts can tempt a pastor to become angry, bitter, and even avoid the church for which the Lord Jesus died. The pastor's style is as servant/shepherd (see Mark 10:35–45), and those who commit to long-term pastorates seem to find ways to press on.

One possible reason some leave churches prematurely could be because they did not ask the right questions before accepting the pastoral call. Most pastors have had the experience of meeting with a pulpit committee and have run through the mine field of numerous questions about a variety of topics. Going through this experience is necessary, and a minister should be well prepared for this occasion; however, time with the pulpit committee before making a commitment can be used as a time for ministers to ask questions, too. It is important to know many things before accepting a pastorate.

Here are some questions—revised from a ministry handout written by Bob Moorhead, pastor of Overlake Christian Church, Kirkland, Washington—pastoral candidates can ask pulpit committees during interviews:

1. What characteristic are you looking for in the person asked to lead this congregation?

2. Is it clear you are considering me, not my wife for this position?

3. Are there any restrictions on biblical preaching? Is the pastor free to preach on subjects such as stewardship, spiritual gifts, holiness, etc.?

4. What is the doctrinal position of this church on water baptism, the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, tongues, end times, inerrancy of the Bible?

5. Is this church open to developing home Bible studies?

6. Who has the authority to hire and dismiss pastoral staff?

7. What are employment arrangements; that is, salary, expenses, sick leave, insurance, time away for speaking, conferences, etc.? Is there a policy manual?

8. Is this church committed to the equipping ministry? That is, does this church see the pastor's role as one of enabling and equipping as opposed to his doing the work of evangelism, discipleship, education, etc.?

9. Is there a good spirit of harmony?

10. How are leadership decisions reached—by majority rules, unanimity, or consensus?

11. What is the average length in years of your former pastors' ministry? Why did your last pastor leave? Where may I reach him?

12. What is the basic, primary, fundamental objective or purpose of the church?

13. What has this church done or is doing to carry that objective out?

14. What do deacons do in this church?

15. What is the pastor's relation to the board or eldership?

16. How do people become board members or elders in this church?

17. How are deacons secured and made deacons in this church?

18. Is the pastor the chairman of the nominating committee for board members?

19. Do the deacons or elders help in

One possible reason some leave churches prematurely could be because they did not ask the right questions up front.

shepherding this church? What is their job description?

20. Are all the board members/elders tithers?

21. Is this church committed to growth? Does it see itself having an attendance of 500, 1,000, 2,000 someday? More? Is the leadership committed 100 percent to this?

22. How committed is this church to prayer? Are any prayer groups functioning now?

23. What does this church teach about church discipline? Are immoral people forthrightly dealt with in love but in firmness?

24. Where do women fit in the ministry of this church? Does this church affirm women in ministry?

25. What percent of membership is involved in outreach—evangelistic calling, reaching other people for Christ?

26. Does the church have a missions convention?

27. How much of the budget goes to missions?

28. What size budget do you have currently? May I see a copy?

29. What is the ratio of giving in this church? Does it average \$9, \$10, \$11 per person on Sundays?

30. Are there special offerings in this church? For what, when, etc.?

31. What is the church's program of stewardship?

32. What is the church's indebtedness now?

33. Who determines salaries in this church? How are they determined?

34. Who comprises the governing body, and what is that body's role?

35. Is there a job description for paid and unpaid staff in this church?

36. What has been the growth pattern of this church for the past 5 years? 10 years?

37. Would the church be open to relocation if the need arose?

38. Has there been any man-to-man, woman-to-woman discipleship?

39. What is done with people who no longer attend or give?

40. Has any previous pastor experienced moral failure? If so, was it with someone in the church?

Knowing the answers to these questions might not determine whether you go to this location, but you will know more about the church you could potentially pastor. Remember that your humble, servant-like attitude is the way servant/leaders operate. You can ask the pulpit committee these questions in a gracious spirit. Dialoguing with the pulpit committee about these issues also helps open the lines of communication with the potential leaders you could work with for years to come. **E**

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

Thirty-four percent of all pastors serve congregations who either fired or forced the previous pastor to resign.



Master Planning New Church Facilities

BY STEPHEN J.
CAVUOTO

With careful planning, moving into new church facilities can be a dream come true, an exciting time, and a rewarding experience.

PART 1

With careful planning moving into new church facilities can be a dream come true, an exciting time, and a rewarding experience. This is the first of a two-part article that gives a general overview and guidance in the implementation of planning new church facilities. The focus is on new site properties and new sanctuary facilities for all church sizes. Many of the principles presented, however, can be applicable to churches that are interested in (1) expansion, (2) renovation of the existing sanctuary, (3) ancillary facilities, and (4) starting from the beginning at site selection.

A good starting point is to assume that the new church-site property is already purchased. The legal, environmental, survey, and geotechnical aspects are also assumed to be completed, and the site is legally cleared for design and construction. The planning process should lend itself to being flexible so that decisions already made do not become barriers. Skillful planning can accommodate varied church sizes and budgets for a given property.

The church must have a formal vision, mission program, and statement which feed the entire expansion process. Have these written and made public. The congregation, board, and pastor must be committed to them.

SETTING UP—ROLE OF CHURCH FACILITIES TEAM

Getting started requires the formation of a facilities team within the church. This can be structured several ways, depending on church size: an independent committee reporting to the board; a subcommittee or adjunct to the board; or actually integral with the board.

1. *Organize.* Here the church administration faces its first real test and opportunity to demonstrate clearly its understanding of implementing the planning and design process. This creates a structure for steering,

monitoring, and driving the effort. Assemble the team. If it is apart from the board, limit size to about six. The pastor should be an ex officio member. A board member, associate pastor, or pastoral staff member should be invited. Include other available team members within the church who have backgrounds in financial planning, design, construction, marketing, and real estate. Appoint a chairperson or facilitator—a strong leader is essential. Establish a priority schedule for meetings on a regular basis and develop an action plan with given assignments to each team member.

2. *Assess.* In light of the vision and mission of the church, the team should assess the current problems and needs and have a clear understanding of the issues, goals, and why the church needs to plan for a new facility. An outside financial planner, who has unbiased opinions and is experienced in church construction financing, should be considered to help guide and coach the team.

3. *Plan.* This is twofold: (1) To prepare request for proposals to hire a design professional who will help the team define the scope of work and plan the administrative work required and (2) to start the actual planning process with the design professional. Problem-solving techniques using training and management tools can be helpful to identify action items according to the church's mission statement. To achieve the ultimate goal of occupancy of the new facility, develop a road map or plan for each step of the process.

SELECTING THE DESIGN PROFESSIONAL TEAM

The planning and design effort will require services of licensed design professionals. This is required by law, and the license to practice is to be in the state where the project is located. The design professional is also called the *prime consultant*. He has principal contact

with the church and is held responsible for the performance of the design and planning stages of the project, including what is to be performed by others. For purposes of this article and type facility, an architect is better suited and is assumed to be the prime consultant.

A typical makeup of the design team for planning and design is the architect and subconsultants for civil, structural, mechanical, and electrical—each licensed in a particular discipline. Depending on the complexity of the church design, other subconsultants—such as sound/acoustical specialists, interior designer, and landscape architects—would be hired but through the prime consultant. The church facilities team will ultimately be charged with coordination of the work of these professionals.

To achieve the ultimate goal of occupancy of the new facility, develop a road map or plan for each step of the process.

Solicit technical qualifications and proposals from two or three prospective prime consultants—to be judged on experience in church design, professional credentials, integrity, record of performance, and technical competence. Based on a comparative analysis and subject to negotiation of a fair price, evaluate each proposal as to the best qualified. Once you select the design firm, have a written contract agreement. Highly credible contracts, which often work best, are the national American Institute of Architects (AIA) or Engineers Joint Contract Document Committee (EJCDC) agreements. These define and document the general services to be performed and should be reviewed by the church's attorney.

On the contract list every service connected

with the project. A detailed contract agreement will avoid misunderstandings with the architect and explain how the church's money will be spent.

Specify that the architect should provide a minimum of professional liability insurance, which is effective on the work's starting date. Your church insurance carrier can advise on the limit; for example, on multimillion-dollar projects, the norm is a minimum of \$2 million; for construction costing less than \$2 million, limits should be equivalent to about the total construction cost value. The professional liability insurance costs should be included as part of the basic services fees. Your carrier should also be able to advise on the general liability insurance that a typical owner must provide for the construction.

PLANNING AND DESIGN SERVICES

These are two distinct categories of basic services typically provided by the architect and subconsultant.

1. *Planning* includes studies and master plans which display concepts graphically and report data in a logical way, broken down in distinct construction phases. Its goals are to provide guidelines for immediate and future development, which can satisfy short- and long-range needs in a feasible way. Typically, activities include facilities programming requirements, design studies, data collection, inventories, schedules, budget cost programming, design alternatives, energy studies, drawings, and reports, which include site and facility layout plans. Financial planning is an important element here. Architectural renderings and/or scale models are usually additional services and costs.

2. *Design* includes the basic services normally performed for development of the actual design documents for construction of the new

The church must have a formal vision, mission program, and statement, which are the overall road map that will feed the entire expansion process.

The planning and design effort will require services of licensed design professionals.

facility. The services are usually conducted in two distinct and sequential phases: (1) Preliminary phase involves the activities required for defining the project requirements, finance, schedules, agencies, and parties on matters affecting the project's aesthetic considerations, layouts, and probable construction cost. (2) Final design phase involves the activities required to undertake the project's design, which includes meetings, analysis and design, final legal drawings, specifications, and more

detailed opinions of probable construction cost.

PLANNING TRUTHS

The trend in new designs is simple and efficient: smaller, smarter, cozier surroundings; extremely open to the public; and totally accessible to all walks of life—right from the street and with capacities more fitting with the church attendance but with provisions for future expansion. The new high-tech amenities are a mainstay with total handicap accessibility. The image the new church facility portrays to the community is all-important and must continue to create excitement in wanting people to come back for more—to be an enhancement, not a detriment to the membership and the community. Hence the planning and design should attack

these issues and develop cost-effective solutions. Specific elements that are critical, regardless of size of church, include:

1. *Affordability.* How does the church know what it can or cannot afford? Careful planning looks at this issue by dealing with statistics, financial planning, and forecasts in addition to dealing with the physical space planning

A detailed contract agreement will avoid misunderstandings with the architect and explain how the church's money will be spent.



“YEAH, WE **DID** USE THE LOW BIDDER FOR OUR NEW STEEPLE. WHY DO YOU ASK ? ”


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and the given physical needs. It is aimed at solving typical problems, with emphasis on certain elements that depend on the specific church. One of the architect's primary responsibilities is to work with the church in planning a facility to fit within budget limits. Once this is agreed, the church should submit this in writing as part of the contract for design.

2. *Existing precedent.* Talk to other churches in similar situations, ask about their operations, costs, the good and bad experiences, and lessons learned working with the architect and contractor.

3. *Demand and forecasts.* How large to design the facility to accommodate future growth is a key item. Size is related directly to affordability. It is one of the most difficult items to define. Growth should be defined in short-range, intermediate-range, and long-range time frames. Certainly, update these on a continual basis. While 20-year periods are targeted for the long range, a 10-year intermediate period is a reasonable target and a 5-year forecast for short term.

4. *Seismic events.* By law the national building codes require that new church facilities (public facilities) be designed for earthquakes if the new facility site is located in an active region. Cost for this compliance depends upon the magnitude of the seismic requirements for a given region. Generally, this adds from 5 to 15 percent to the construction cost and design fees. This requirement should be confirmed up front in the planning.

In Part 2 of this article we will examine further planning details regarding various costs and revenue issues associated with the design and construction, bidding/negotiating actual construction, and general guidelines in the construction process—being able to turn dreams into reality. 

Stephen J. Cavuoto is a lifelong member of the Assemblies of God, Williamsville, New York, and is a licensed design professional.

Counseling, Resistance to Change, and Prevention

Anyone who has engaged in counseling for any length of time will likely experience a period of frustration and self-doubt after having failed to help a member of the congregation. This article begins to examine the effectiveness of counseling and provides realistic expectations for pastoral counselors.

Ministers who have not obtained graduate degrees might think that the Ph.D. tacked on the end of a name brings with it a drastically higher success rate. Education can enhance the outcome but does not guarantee it.

BY WILLIAM H. SNOW

Evaluating a 1994 survey by *Consumer Reports*,¹ Martin Seligman, in the *American Psychologist*,² concluded that counseling and psychotherapy appear to be effective from the recipient's perspective. In the *Consumer Reports* study the concept of effectiveness did not establish that problem behaviors and attitudes were changed—only that 80 to 90 percent of recipients of treatment felt better about their situations and were satisfied with the results. It was clear that 10 to 20 percent did not feel helped. True behavioral and attitudinal change is more elusive and difficult to document.

Counselors generally are frustrated when individuals resist change. In the context of the counseling session this resistance to change is viewed negatively. But is this resistance a flaw in the human condition? The self-protective theory of resistance by Michael Mahoney³ suggests that our resistance to change is a healthy feature and provides consistency to our character. The central features of our personality—those which make us unique—are especially difficult to modify.

This resistance to change should be comforting to parents who spend 18 years rearing a child to adulthood. The results of this effort are not easily thwarted by short-term encounters with deviant influences. Parents can send their offspring into the world with the

assurance that the values, beliefs, and behaviors they exhibited for the last 18 years will continue to prevail in their lives.

This resistance to change is not particularly comforting to the parent who brings in a high school student for counseling and finds that drug use and delinquency cannot be absolutely and permanently cured in ten to twelve 50-minute sessions.

Unless God performs a miraculous intervention and divinely abbreviates the change process, time and patience will become key ingredients in permanent change.

Thus we face a component to our personality that at times is both a blessing and a curse. Resistance to change is both a foundation of personal stability and a vexation as attempts to break sinful habits and develop a more Christlike set of attitudes and behaviors are undertaken.

A useful rule is that the longer the onset of the problem, the more time it will take to address the problem. Christians know this as the law of sowing and reaping. In our society people sow wild oats and hope and pray for crop failure as they look up and fear the impending harvest to come. Unless God performs a miraculous intervention and divinely abbreviates the change process, time and patience will become key ingredients in permanent change.

Behavioral patterns and attitudes exhibited as a young child are the seeds of adult

Pastors who have not obtained graduate degrees might think that the Ph.D. tacked on the end of a name brings with it a drastically higher success rate. Education can enhance the outcome but does not guarantee it.

behavioral patterns. At the time the pastoral counselor is asked to intervene in an adolescent or adult situation, the seeds of the problem have generally been germinating for a long time. The problem presented by the individual is often only a symptomatic crisis resulting from a historical problem.

Indulgent behavior exhibited over a long period of time prevents the development of inner control and self-discipline and will contribute to a pattern of instant gratification. Instant gratification will prevent the individual from achieving long-term goals and may lead to more serious problems. Any pastoral counselor confronted with this common scenario soon understands that the development of the necessary inner disciplinary controls for success in life comes only with committed attention over an extended period.

An example of discipline development:

	Child	Adult
2 years:	I want more cookies.	You will have to wait till after dinner.
6 years:	I want that toy.	It's not Christmas nor your birthday.
14 years:	I want to stay out till midnight.	You need to study for a test.
18 years:	I really want that watch.	If you do some work for me, you could earn the money in a day.
22 years:	I really want some new clothes,	but I will wait for my next paycheck. I do not like having credit-card debts.

The outcome of the more positive scenario above would not occur as a result of only a few episodes. In the years from birth to age 18, it is estimated that over 6,000 opportunities will occur to teach self-discipline—assuming only one occurrence per day. The cumulative impact of these influences during the formative period is certainly powerful.

How can a pastoral counselor hope to compete with these powerful formational processes occurring over 18 years or longer? The scenario is not entirely bleak. God can and does intervene in countless situations. Counseling conducted by ministers and Christian professionals is a needed and effective tool, and in many cases the problems of adults can be prevented.

Prevention is the best solution. Counseling as it is currently practiced is a casualty-repair

Prevention is a long-term approach with limited short-term benefits but enormous long-term payoffs.



mechanism. Traditional psychological, psychiatric, and counseling practices are generally oriented toward helping those persons already in distress. Client loads are often bulging rosters of individuals who are trying to undo much of their past. Pastors interested in counseling tend to fall into a similar orientation, focusing enormous energy on a few individuals with long-term, difficult-to-resolve problems. A ministry focus on those hurt and in need is valid and worthwhile but time-consuming. Prevention of these issues is more beneficial to both the individual, the church, and society.

A prevention focus should be a high priority of those involved in pastoral ministry. Prevention is a long-term approach with limited short-term benefits but enormous long-term payoffs. A logical consequence of prevention is to begin addressing potential problems well in advance of their occurrence. An understanding of human development clearly identifies the pivotal points. Here are a few which most people will confront:

1. Transition to junior high school with increased peer pressure to engage in negative behavior such as drinking, smoking, and drugs.

We need more Christian prevention professionals to reduce the need for Christian casualty-repair counselors.

2. The onset of the dating years and the need for developing positive Christian relationships.

3. Graduation from high school and the need for guidance in developing life goals based on solid Christian principles.

4. Selection of a marital partner—probably the most significant event any Christian faces.

5. Marriage and the development of

the Christ-centered family life.

6. The birth of children and the need for parenting skills.

7. Retirement and the need for Christian stewardship and financial planning.

Most people will confront these issues. Each presents a new and unique

challenge and is an opportunity for the pastor, counselor, and church staff to help members of the congregation and community prepare for the nearly certain inevitability.

Clearly, the church has been in the business of prevention from the beginning. Society probably does not

understand how much human suffering has been prevented as the church has gone about the work of not only preaching the good news of salvation but Christian principles for living. Christ, the church, and Christian principles can do what no other government-sanctioned program can do.

However, teaching Royal Rangers, Missionettes, and the beginner Sunday school class is not often seen as prestigious or glamorous, and we often struggle to fill these classes with adequate

staff. This is the opportune time to begin instilling Christian values, behaviors, and beliefs in our children. We need more Christian prevention professionals to reduce the need for Christian casualty-repair counselors.

In summary, it is becoming more and more apparent that people are resistant to change, and the implications are both positive and negative. Counselors, though needed and effective, are not a replacement for prevention programs. Problem development occurs over an

extended time period, but so does the development of Christian values, attitudes, and behaviors. Pastoral counselors must balance the needs of both those already in emotional pain with those who will likely experience emotional pain in the future. There is opportunity for both, but given the societal overemphasis on casualty repair, I would advocate casualty prevention. The earlier we can touch people, bring them to Christ, and instill in them the attributes necessary for an effective Christian life, the more chance we will have of preventing a life of undue struggle with paralyzing negative habits. **E**

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ENDNOTES:

¹Consumer Reports, "Mental Health: Does Therapy Help?" (November 1995): 734-739.

²Martin E.P. Seligman, *American Psychologist* 50, no. 12 (1996): 965-974.

³Michael J. Mahoney, *Human Change Processes: The Scientific Foundations of Psychotherapy* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

When Spending Is Out of Control

BY DAVID J. MOORE

Spending is one kind of addiction that receives less comment, yet it can be as destructive to a family and to a church as addiction to drugs, alcohol, or pornography. It is different in that it is not illegal or blatantly immoral. Hence ministers or their spouses (rarely is it a cooperative venture) are particularly susceptible to falling into its clutches.

The allurement of deferred payments and easy access to instant credit through the use of charge cards makes virtually unrestrained indulgence in spending addiction possible. Spending addiction's significance is much greater than most would imagine. It is not uncommon for ministers with modest incomes to carry long-term credit card debt from multiple cards in excess of \$10,000.

Some do not view this as a problem. However, it is a clear indication that one's spending habits are nearly, if not already, out of control. When installment debt reaches a level that it becomes impossible to pay anything except the minimum due each month, it is a serious problem and will lead to serious consequences.

Unlike those engaging in other forms of addiction, the spending abusers are not faced with an immediate values contradiction. Everyone uses credit cards, but not everyone has control over their potential abuse—any more than people who drink have control to refrain from intoxication.

Total credit card abstinence is not suggested for everyone. Many find it convenient to charge purchases and pay the

balance in full each month. Others, though, are not capable of budgeting this way. Thus it is important to understand some things about spending-addiction victims.

When debt abuse reaches uncontrollable levels, friends or family members usually are contacted for financial help with some emergency. Soliciting personal loans from casual acquaintances is another indicator of unmanageable debt. As requests for money become more frequent, the real problem eventually surfaces.

The allurement of deferred payments and easy access to instant credit through the use of charge cards makes virtually unrestrained indulgence in spending addiction possible.

At this point the spending abuser will make such comments as, "You have plenty of money." "I can't believe you can be so uncaring." "If my family does not have food to eat, it will be your fault." Thus he or she tries to make others feel guilty if they are unwilling to help. Someone once told me, "If you don't help us and my children die, their blood will be on your hands."

As difficult as it is to let pleas like this go unheeded, it is a mistake to surrender to the demands of such irrational statements. Giving the abuser a fix shields him or her from the

consequences and virtually guarantees repeated abuse.

Eventually, and usually at the initiative of a friend or relative, counsel will be sought for the spending addict. Unfortunately, the treatment is often unproductive, because the type of counsel offered is almost always financial. Rational explanations of budgeting, the pitfalls of high-interest credit card debt (usually 18 to 22 percent), and calculations clearly demonstrating that income cannot meet expenses mean nothing to a spending addict.

Addictive behavior is not rational behavior. It is somewhat like believing an alcoholic can gain deliverance by convincing him that excessive drinking dims the senses. A professional credit counselor told me he has never seen a credit card abuser respond positively to financial counseling alone.

What can be done to help an individual gain freedom from the bondage of this addiction? First, it is essential to know something about the profile of a typical spending addict. When confronted, the progression of denial, minimization, and blame is similar for those involved in any kind of addictive behavior.

The first line of defense is to say, "I do not have a problem." When pressed, the response is, "It's not that bad. I have it under control." Still unable to accept responsibility when pressed further, the abuser will say something like, "It's not my fault. They don't pay me enough." Nevertheless, at least three uniquely identifiable features of spending addicts are as follows:

1. *They are usually individuals who have low self-esteem and were sheltered*

from responsibility during their upbringing. Childhood home life was either very rigid, where parents made all the decisions for the child, or very loose, where parents tolerated almost any behavior and shielded the child from consequences.

2. *They have a need to feel they are in control.* Spending addicts are often individuals who feel others have controlled much of their lives—an extremely domineering spouse or parents who continue to exert strong influence over the adult lives of their offspring. Spending is freedom. Uncontrolled spending is absolute freedom. Spending addicts are in desperate search for independence.

The process of buying (negotiating with sales persons and comparing manufacturing models and clothing styles) creates an emotional high for spending addicts. They experience momentary surges of enthusiasm. The salespersons are friendly and make the buyer feel important.

3. *Spending addicts feel their actions are justified.* They do not view unbridled reliance on the credit card as an addiction. After all, everyone uses them. If they are making the minimum payments, they feel they have done nothing wrong.

Overcoming spending addiction is a difficult process. Addicts have never

acquired a mature concept of individual responsibility. Their behavior is labeled as irresponsible, but being lectured only drives abusers to greater excess. Unlike other addicts, the spending addict has difficulty admitting wrongdoing. Even acknowledging that it is a problem may be only lip service.

Prayer and patience are critical in helping people overcome spending addiction. Here are some suggestions on gaining deliverance over this paralyzing addiction:

1. *Recognize the consequences.* Proverbs tells us, “If you lack the means to pay, your very bed will be snatched from under you” (22:27*). When debt

***Calculations clearly demonstrating that
income cannot meet expenses mean
nothing to a spending addict.***

payments replace savings, dreams soon fade. While others are increasing their living standards because they had the discipline to save, debtors decrease theirs because discretionary income must be applied to past spending abuse.

Mark it down: Credit card dependency is a ticket to unfulfilled dreams in later years. Remind yourself of that every time you reach for the plastic.

2. *Replace spending activities with more worthwhile pursuits.* Spending

addicts are not necessarily selfish people—they often buy to give to others and enjoy the experience. It makes them feel good and adds to their self-esteem when others notice their generosity.

Recovering spending addicts should be encouraged to direct their energies toward helping others in ways that will provide the affirmation they need without adding to their debt. Any number of church projects, depending on one's skills, provide such fulfillment.

3. *Rebuild relationships.* The most severe consequence of spending addicts is strained relationships with those who are closest to them. Sympathetic at first, family and friends soon tire of their propensity to repeat irresponsible spending behavior.

For the recovering spending addict, it is critical to restore others' confidence. This requires the offender's sincere repentance and genuine remorse for the pain he or she has inflicted on loved ones. It also

requires complete forgiveness and unconditional love from those who have experienced the greatest hurt—a spouse, parents, other relatives, or friends who have been vulnerable to the spending abuser's pleas for financial help.

There is hope for both spending addicts and the victims of their behavior. Satan delights in destroying God's children through worldly entrapments to which they are vulnerable. God, however, who is rich in mercy, is able to

forgive and to restore to full spiritual health. Our attitude should be that of the apostle Paul: "One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on..." (Philippians 3:13). **E**

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

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The Challenge of the Harvest



*BY LOREN
TRIPLETT*

RECENTLY I traveled to Africa with Field Director Don Corbin. Our first stop was in Ethiopia. An enormous and exciting challenge lies before the church in that land.

After nearly two decades of oppressive regimes, Ethiopia is coming out of a long nightmare of famine and civil unrest. When communism crumbled, a new government without communistic dominance came to power. The exciting discovery is that the widespread revival we had heard about during the years Ethiopia was closed is absolutely true. The number of evangelical Christians is estimated at 5 to 6 million, and many sources reflect the belief that some 75 percent are Pentecostal in experience.

The Association of Evangelicals of Ethiopia invited the Assemblies of God to come into the land to direct a Bible college for ministerial training. The college, located in Addis Ababa, is in its second year with 66 students, representing 13 Pentecostal denominations. It's exciting to be a part of what God is doing in this ancient land.

The centerpiece of my trip was the dedication of the Bible college in Malawi where explosive church growth is taking place. During the first half of the Decade of Harvest, the number of churches has grown from 150 to over 1,200.

God's tools to reach Malawi have included a hardworking missionary team, dedicated national pastors and evangelists, and an Assemblies of God congregation here in America. After a personal challenge from God, Pastor Dan Sheaffer infused the congregation of Crossroads Cathedral in Oklahoma City with a vision of the great harvest in Malawi. During the past 15 years that church has repeatedly sent Pastor Sheaffer and an evangelistic team to Malawi. God has used them in conducting crusades and assisting congregations with buildings. Their long-term sacrifice

and persistent carry-through in following the directions of Almighty God have blessed the church in Malawi.

A 3-day celebration marked the dedication of a spacious, functional campus for the Bible school. These beautiful brick buildings include classrooms, student dormitories, faculty housing, and an auditorium, all funded by Crossroads Cathedral. The President of Malawi and some of his cabinet attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The greatest Guest of all, however, was the blessed Holy Spirit. As Pastor Sheaffer gave a strong gospel message, many in the congregation wept as they were touched by the Spirit.

The Malawi Assemblies of God has caught a significant missionary spirit. Churches are opening everywhere. Led by Lazarus Chakwera, general superintendent, the Malawi Assemblies of God has set a goal to plant a church within walking distance of every person in Malawi. Chakwera emphasizes that while the Malawi Assemblies of God has been the recipient of great assistance from America, believers must recognize that "to whom much is given, much is required." The Malawi church has a vision of reaching beyond the borders of their land, especially to the Islamic nations nearby.

Rejoice that God is blessing in these two African nations, but continue to pray for areas of our world that remain spiritual deserts. Until the harvest is over, we will work the ground and plant the seed. Jesus, the greatest of all prophets, said, "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world" (Matthew 24:14, NIV). That prophecy is the measure of our task. **E**

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

What in the World Is God Doing?

BY LINDELL WARREN

IN EACH REGION of the world, the Assemblies of God is experiencing growth. The following reports highlight just a small part of what God is doing around the world.

BRAZIL

The Assemblies of God in Brazil is experiencing the kind of growth described in Acts 2:47. As the Lord adds daily to the church, the saved come from the wealthy suburbs where churches are being planted; they come from the slums where medical outreaches and children's ministries meet their desperate needs; they come from crusade services, radio programs, and television ministries; most of them come because someone personally shared the gospel with them.

Since the church's humble beginnings in 1910, a sovereign move of God has caused the Fellowship to grow phenomenally. Since 1957, when membership in the church numbered some 250,000, the Assemblies of God has grown to an estimated 15 million adults, adding some 500,000 baptized believers each year.

Theological training programs provided by Assemblies of God Bible schools have furnished more than 20,000 former and current students with ministry skills. Over 88,000 pastors and workers minister to the congregations. Since the Assemblies of God of Brazil adds many new churches each week, the demand for pastors is great.

In the northern half of Brazil, the Amazon River and its tributaries allow access to hundreds of towns and villages clustered on riverbanks. Many of these communities can only be reached by boat. Twenty-two boats are now being used to take the gospel to these isolated areas. Many churches have been planted through this effort.

The ministry of the church in Brazil is not, however, confined within the nation's borders. The Assemblies of God in Brazil now sponsors some 400 missionaries to countries around the world.

PHILIPPINES

The number of Assemblies of God congregations scattered throughout the Philippines has more than doubled in the last decade. Church leaders set a goal of starting 200 new churches each year during the Decade of Harvest. By the end of 1995, the number of fellowships reached 2,200, and the rate of growth shows no signs of slowing.

Children's ministries have reached thousands of needy children across the nation. Some 450,000 children have joined the Super

• *An unprecedented move of the Holy Spirit has taken place in Ireland. During 1995, over 200 people gave their lives to Christ in the first Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames production in Ireland. The Irish church is approving missionaries to other nations, processing new applications for ministry credentials, and receiving other churches into their network.*

• *Radio Linden, a joint project between the Division of Foreign Missions and the Pentecostal Church of Iceland, is a Christian radio station broadcasting gospel programming 18 hours a day, 7 days a week. By the station's first anniversary, staff members had prayed for over 5,000 requests from listeners.*

• *Weekly attendance at Family Worship Center in Asunción, Paraguay, has surpassed 6,000. In addition, the church sponsors some 60 home groups, has mothered 7 churches, and gave over \$100,000 to missions in 1995.*

• *HealthCare Ministries reports that between 1986 and 1995, 779 medical professionals visited 43 nations. Some 155,958 patients received medical care, and 43,831 prayed to receive Christ.*

• *In 1992, Assemblies of God workers in Congo targeted the city of Ouessou for one of the Challenge '92...Congo crusades. Since that time, the Assemblies of God in the Ouessou area has grown to 32 local assemblies with 1,730 members. Within these groups are some 400 Pygmies, a people group frequently listed as unreached.*



It needs to be said that we in the Assemblies of God have the most efficient, accountable missions program in the world. Our administrative costs remain the lowest of any sending agency. At present the national administrative cost in Division of Foreign Missions is a little over 7 percent. No one else can come close to this.

We go farther, stay longer, produce better, and conserve more on less than any other missions enterprise.

—Lindell Warren

Kids program, and many of them have written to express their belief in Jesus. Other children's ministries provide food, housing, clothing, medical care, and a clear gospel presentation to needy children.

Agape campus ministries reach out to students on the campuses of 50 institutions of higher education. This program brings a

Pentecostal witness and discipleship training to the university setting. Full-time campus pastors, university faculty, and lay workers effectively reach out to students.

Explosive growth has marked the Philippine church during the 1990s. Believers are asking God to raise up more intercessory prayer warriors, pastors, and teachers to uphold the church and provide discipleship as they approach the next century.

FORMER SOVIET UNION

During 70 years of oppression and persecution by the Communist government, the U.S. Assemblies of God maintained ties with Pentecostals in the Soviet Union. Although no missionaries were allowed to live inside the U.S.S.R., workers traveled in the Soviet Union, offering assistance and encouragement to Pentecostal fellowships.

Seven years ago, the political climate changed and missionaries were free to enter. Working with Russian Pentecostal leaders, Missionary Bob Mackish laid the groundwork to open Moscow Theological Institute to train pastors. Since that time, the U.S. Assemblies of God has assisted in the opening of five additional Bible schools in the key cities of Kiev, Ukraine; Jalgave, Latvia; Vilnius, Lithuania; Minsk, Belarus; and Irkutsk in the region of Siberia.

Church planting is another area of ministry in which Pentecostals in these nations and the U.S. Assemblies of God are cooperating. Hundreds of crusades have been held and many churches opened.

Ministry needs in this land are great, but in the words of one Bible school student, "If the Lord tarries, we will keep preaching the gospel, no matter what. We are not going to stop." **E**

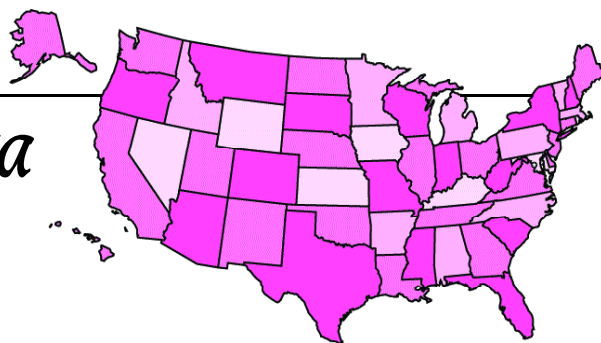
—Lindell Warren is the missions director for the Oklahoma District.



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ocus on America



BY CHARLES E. HACKETT

✓ In their book, *For Christ and the University*, Keith and Gladys Hunt said, "Universities are centers for ideas and actions. That is why tyrants want them closed down. The climate of the university provides a unique environment for inquiry and, at its best, inspires an idealism that changes the world."

✓ Tom Phillips, president of International Students Inc., in an interview with Dennis Gaylor, Chi Alpha Campus Ministries Department secretary, said that "80 percent of all teenagers today want a monogamous marriage that lasts all their lives. The reason: These young people have had to live with divorce situations."

✓ David Turner, director of Teen Challenge of Columbus, Ohio, reported: "A recent study of 50,000 students in 400 high schools across America found that both cigarette and marijuana smoking have shot up dramatically among eighth graders, sophomores, and seniors over the last 5 years. Use of harder drugs is also on the rise."

✓ According to Lance Hastings, a candidate home missionary to people with AIDS, over 270,000 Americans have already died of AIDS. An estimated 80,000 young Americans have been orphaned by AIDS. It is believed that one in every 100 college students is HIV-positive. "We must not be paralyzed with fear nor be indifferent to a situation that demands drastic action," Hastings said.

✓ According to John Bowersock, nationally appointed home missionary to the Native Americans, suicide among Native American youth on reservations

is five times the national average.

✓ The U.S. Department of Education reported the high school dropout rate is 29 percent in the United States.

✓ An English language proficiency survey found that 37 percent of adults classified as illiterate do not speak English at home. Up to 86 percent who are illiterate in English are also illiterate in their native languages; 60 percent of prison inmates are illiterate; and 86 percent of all juvenile offenders have reading problems. —*Facts on Literacy in America*, 1994, Literacy Volunteers of America.

✓ Gary L. Bauer, Family Research Council president, in a written testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, reported that current trends indicate by the year 2015—some studies project as early as 2000—one of every two American babies will be born to a single mother, and illegitimacy will surpass divorce as the main cause of fatherlessness.

✓ The Population Reference Bureau recently reported that the U.S. still has the world's highest divorce rate and that single-parent families are increasing 3 percent annually.

✓ A new study released by the White House said that 25 percent of Americans infected with AIDS each year are under age 20.

✓ John Knoles, a nationally appointed home missionary to Native Americans, said 94 percent of American Indian College graduates (Phoenix, Arizona) are gainfully employed, and 87 percent of the school's ministerial graduates are in active ministry today.

✓ According to David and Terry Dohm,

nationally appointed home missionaries, every night in America 25 million Hispanic Americans go to sleep without the knowledge of Christ. Hundreds of thousands of their children have never been to Sunday school, vacation Bible school, or children's church. It's not because they don't want to but because no one has reached them with the gospel.

✓ John and Betty Swank, nationally appointed home missionaries in Phoenix, Arizona, reported that Phoenix has the second highest crime rate in the United States. "Much of this is a result of drug use and drug traffic. Our jails and prisons in the state are overloaded with those who are incarcerated because of drug-related charges," Swank said.

✓ According to a 1990 Gallup poll, 74 percent of Americans have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. A similar poll reported 89 percent of Americans consider themselves Christians. **E**

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



FAILURE IS A TIME FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

MESSAGE:

1. The value of tried faith (James 1:2–4).

a. Failure is one of the greatest tests of our faith.

b. Failure can make us doubt ourselves, the opinions of others, and God's ability to love us.

2. Peter's failure foretold (Luke

22:31,32).

a. Christ did not pray that Peter would not fail but that his faith would not fail.

b. Peter's steps to overcome failure.

(1) He accepted his failure (Luke

22:62).

(2) Christ was praying for him—He also prays for us (1 John 2:1,2).

(3) Christ believed in him—He believes in us (Romans 5:8).

(4) Peter was anxious to see Christ (Luke 24:12).

(5) Peter once believed in himself (Luke 22:33). Peter would learn to trust the Holy Spirit (John 21:18).

3. Judas' failure (Matthew 27:3–5).

Judas repented, but he sought to undo his past in his own way. You cannot undo

your failure.

CONCLUSION:

God will not undo your past, but if you repent and ask, He will forgive you.

If your faith is to grow, you must admit your failures, learn from them, seek God's forgiveness, and move on in the strength of His grace. If God doesn't dwell on the past, why should you?

—David C. Hammerle
Fallentimber, Pennsylvania

THE SUFFERING SAVIOR ON A CRIMSON CROSS

Mark 15:22–25

INTRODUCTION:

On May 10, 1869, the transcontinental railroad, which connected the east and west coasts of America, was completed. To celebrate the great accomplishment, a gold spike was driven into the last tie at Promontory, Utah, marking the junction of the Central and Union Pacific Railroads. As the final hammer blows sounded, the huge crowd of spectators cheered.

That was a great day in American history. But an infinitely greater day in history occurred when spikes were hammered into Jesus' hands and feet. These were not gold but rusty iron spikes.

The believer in Jesus Christ ought to think often about the cross. Five words summarize Jesus' death on the cross.

MESSAGE:

1. Jesus' death was *violent*. His body

was badly beaten (Isaiah 52:14).

a. He suffered physically.

b. He suffered spiritually.

2. Jesus' death was *vital*.

a. There is no other way to be saved.

b. There is no other way to heaven.

3. Jesus' death was *vicarious*.

a. Vicarious means to take the place of, to pay for another.

b. The result—because Jesus died in your place, you do not have to die spiritually. The result of Jesus' death means that you should serve God (1 Corinthians 6:20).

4. Jesus' death was *voluntary*.

a. He came to earth voluntarily.

b. He died on the cross voluntarily.

5. Jesus' death was *victorious*.

a. He lives today.

"He is not here: for he is risen" is God's Word (Matthew 28:6).

b. He reigns today.

Colossians 2:15 proves that fact. That

Name reigns.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus' death was so victorious that it guarantees assurance for you even in the face of your own death. A 7-year-old boy was walking down the street one dark night and turned to enter a cemetery. A stranger asked, "Son, aren't you afraid to walk through this cemetery at night?"

"Oh, no," replied the boy, "my home is just on the other side."

The facts are in: Jesus suffered death so that by God's grace He might taste death for everyone and bring many sons to glory (Hebrews 2:9,10). What a victorious death! What a victorious Savior!

—Thomas H. Lindberg
Memphis, Tennessee

AN UNLIKELY MOTHER OF FAITH

1 Samuel 1:1–28

INTRODUCTION:

Hannah, a shining example of Christian motherhood, was a victim of marriage entanglement. Although she lived in an environment of polygamy, she was nevertheless successful in raising her children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Her example can be an encouragement to every godly mother who has a less-than-ideal home situation.

MESSAGE:

She made a difference through:

1. Prayer (1 Samuel 1:10–14)

a. Her problems drove her not to despair but to her knees.

b. She received a miraculous answer.

2. Giving (1 Samuel 1:11,24–28)

a. She gave in response to what she had received.

b. She gave willingly and cheerfully with no strings attached.

3. Serving (1 Samuel 2:19)

a. She demonstrated concern for the needs of others.

b. Her work was a labor of love.

CONCLUSION:

Hannah's faith was not swallowed up by her circumstances of life. Her faithfulness in prayer, giving, and serving made her an overcomer.

—Samuel J. Bush, Jasonville, Indiana



THREE BARRIERS TO PENTECOSTAL POWER

Acts 1:8

INTRODUCTION:

Three barriers keep believers from receiving adequate power for effective living.

MESSAGE:

1. The intellectual barrier

Like the disciples of Ephesus (Acts

19:2), believers must learn of the power of God.

2. The volitional barrier

Like the apostles (Acts 4:29–32; 5:32), believers must will to receive the power of God.

3. The emotional barrier

Like people at Jerusalem (Acts 2:37–42), believers must earnestly long for the

power of God.

CONCLUSION:

As believers break through the intellectual, volitional, and emotional barriers, the ideal of a New Testament Christian will be realized.

—P.A. Zimmerman

THE GREATEST EVENT IN HISTORY

Mark 16:1–7

INTRODUCTION:

Many people do not understand what Easter is all about. They equate it with bunny rabbits, spring, new clothes, colored eggs, and parades. But Easter is about new life. It is the greatest event in human history and is captured in seven words, “He has risen! He is not here” (Mark 16:6, NIV).

MESSAGE:

1. Remember the powerful resurrection of Christ.

a. Look back on the Resurrection.

(1) Review of Holy Week

(2) Reenactment of the woman going

to the tomb.

(3) Response to the news of the Resurrection.

b. Resurrection's place in history.

(1) The error of leaving Jesus in the grave.

(2) The effect of seeing Jesus alive.

2. Realize the personal resurrection for you.

a. The Resurrection confirms your faith.

b. The Resurrection calms your fears.

c. The Resurrection changes your future.

CONCLUSION:

Historians tell us that the news of the great Battle of Waterloo came to England from a sailing ship sending a message to England by way of a signalman atop Winchester Cathedral. The first word that came was “Wellington.” The next word was “defeated.” But then fog set in. The word spread quickly through the land. Finally the fog lifted and the rest of the message was signaled: “Wellington defeated the enemy.” Sadness turned to joy.

On Friday faith was gone. On Sunday the fog lifted, and Jesus was alive. “He is risen! He is not here.”

—Bill Wilson, Portland, Oregon

THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is subsequent to salvation.

a. Disciples were saved before the Day of Pentecost.

b. Samaritans believed and were baptized in water before the Spirit fell on them at the laying on of hands (Acts 8:15–17).

c. Ephesians believed and were baptized in water before Paul laid hands on them, and the Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues (Acts 19:6).

2. It is the promise of the Father for His children (Luke 24:49).

3. It is an entrance into the sphere of the Spirit.

4. It is an entrance into the Spirit-filled life, not an end in itself.

MESSAGE:

1. It was prophesied in the Old Testament.

a. By Isaiah (Isaiah 44:3, RSV).

b. By Joel (Joel 2:28,29, RSV).

2. It was prophesied in the New Testament.

a. By John, “not a greater prophet” according to Christ (Luke 7:28).

(1) Matthew 3:11

(2) Mark 1:8

(3) Luke 3:16

(4) John 1:33,34

b. By Jesus Christ—the prophet

(1) Luke 24:49

(2) Acts 1:4,5,8

3. It was fulfilled in the New Testament.

a. Acts 2:4

b. Acts 8:15–17

c. Acts 10:44–47; 11:15–17

d. Acts 19:6

4. It is for today (Acts 2:38,39).

a. The promise of the Father. Compare with Luke 24:49 and Acts 2:33.

b. It is for “every one whom the Lord our God calls to Him” (Acts 2:39, RSV). If you have heard the call of salvation, you are eligible to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

5. How do we receive?

a. By asking the Father (Luke 11:13).

b. By faith (Galatians 3:14), which lays hold on the promise of the Spirit evidenced by tongues.

CONCLUSION:

1. God's Word is true, “faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). We have reviewed His Word, and He has implanted faith in our hearts.

2. God's Word is true. You can be baptized right now. It is for all His children.

—Gerard Flokstra
Springfield, Missouri



NEW POWER FOR A NEW DAY

Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus Christ had a passionate concern that His church would be a Pentecostal church. It is the power of Pentecost that enables the church to perform God's will.

MESSAGE:

Each new day demands new Pentecostal power for:

1. Discernment (Mark 13:5; 1 Timothy 4:1).
2. Relationships (Romans 12:18; Ephesians 4:29–32; 5:22,25; 6:1,4).
3. Miracles (Acts 2:1–4; 3:6–8; 5:12; 8:6,7; 19:11,12).
4. Sanctification (Galatians 5:16,22,25; Ephesians 5:18).
5. Evangelism (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:40,41,47; 9:31; 14:21).

CONCLUSION:

Each new day demands new Pentecostal power. Do you have God's Pentecostal power at work in your life and ministry? If not, you can be baptized in the Holy Spirit today. If you have already received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, perhaps God is calling you to receive a fresh anointing from Him. Why not receive that now?

—James T. Meadows, Kansas City, Missouri

HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 15:12–14,17–26;

Philippians 3:20,21

MESSAGE:

1. Resurrection: The finale of salvation.

- a. I was saved in my spirit.
- b. I am being saved in my soul.
- c. I shall be saved in my body.

(1) I must have a body through which I can express my spirit.

(2) I must have a body capable of restoring the image of God.

(3) I must have a body that cannot die.

2. Jesus: Firstfruits of our inheritance (1 Corinthians 15:20,23).

a. The Feast of Firstfruits occurred on the first day after the first Sabbath following Passover.

b. The principle of firstfruits is that the first stands for all.

c. The history of Jesus becomes our history.

3. Jesus in His glorified body is a silhouette of us in ours.

It was:

- a. A real body (John 20:17).
- b. A transcendent body (Luke 24:31).
- c. A body of glory (Philippians 3:21).
- d. A seed to be planted (1 Corinthians 15:35–44).

e. A fitted body (1 Corinthians 15:39,40).

f. An imperishable body (1 Corinthians 15:42).

g. A body incapable of sin (1 Corinthians 15:43).

h. A powerful body (1 Corinthians 15:43).

i. A spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:44).

j. A permanent residence (2 Corinthians 4:16–5:2).

—M. Wayne Benson
Grand Rapids, Michigan

WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION:

The Bible assigns special activities to each person of the Godhead. Since this is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, it is helpful to keep His work in focus.

MESSAGE:

1. He convicts the sinner (Psalm 51;

John 16:8–11; Acts 2:37,38).

2. He assures the convert (Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6; 1 John 3:24).

3. He teaches the believer (John 14:26; 16:12–15; 1 John 2:27).

4. He directs the servant (Acts 10:19,20; 13:1,2; 16:6–9).

CONCLUSION:

Whether a person is a believer or an unbeliever, there is a special ministry of the Spirit to him. It is important to be alert to His work.

—Hazen C. MacDonald

REACHING THE LOST THROUGH PENTECOST

Acts 2:42–47

INTRODUCTION:

Christians need a supernatural power to cope with the power of Satan (Ephesians 6:10–18). That power is Pentecost.

MESSAGE:

It results in:

1. Pentecostal praying

- a. Purpose of praying (Luke 24:49)
- b. Promise of praying (Acts 1:8)

c. Privacy of prayer (Matthew 6:6)

d. Power of praying (Acts 3:1–8; 4:31)

2. Pentecostal preaching

a. Plain preaching (2 Corinthians 3:12)

b. Powerful preaching (1 Corinthians 2:4)

c. Purifying preaching (Ephesians 5:26)

3. Pentecostal power

a. Convicting power (Acts 16:30,31)

b. Consecrating power (Acts 5:40,41; 15:26)

c. Curing power (Acts 3:1–8; 19:11,12)

4. Pentecostal passion

a. Concerned passion (Acts 5:42; 17:16)

b. Constrained passion (Acts 17:16; 1 Corinthians 9:16)

c. Complete passion (Matthew 9:36)

CONCLUSION:

Time is running out (John 9:4). To reach the lost more effectively, believers must be Pentecostal.

—Croft M. Pentz, Union, New Jersey



FUN, FOOD, AND CHURCH GROWTH

For 2 years my husband and I have pastored an older, established church in a growing community. Newcomers were trying out the church—two or three families at a time, and we were scrambling to keep as many as possible from slipping away through neglect.

Most newcomers are looking for the same closeness and intimacy they had with friends at their last church. New Christians are looking for godly friends to replace those of the world.

As the pastor's wife I do everything in my power to get visiting women acquainted with each other. I found it more effective to develop a core group of mostly new women to care for each other. Older, established church members find it difficult to stop the merry-go-round of their own lives to meet the new people's needs. They have jobs and family responsibilities.

I frequently invite new women to lunch or sight-seeing. For those women who

work, we plan lunches in a central location so they will not be excluded. Then weekly Bible studies and prayer meetings establish women spiritually.

It took about a year to see relationships between the new women established and has helped cement nearly a hundred people into the church in the last 2 years.

Who would ever classify running around town shopping, eating, and taking kids to the park as a ministry! But it is—it provides searching people with the closeness for true Christian fellowship. It's fun and it works.

—Heather A. Burgess, *Munford, Tennessee*

A SWEET REMINDER

We greet our visitors in our Sunday morning services and on Monday mail them a packet of information about our church. During the week we deliver a jar of Knott's Berry Farm jam to each home with a label stating, "A Sweet Reminder of Your Visit to Faith Temple." When they spread a little jam on their toast, they are reminded

of their visit with us.

—Dianna Coleman, *Corpus Christi, Texas*

ALMOST-FREE ADVERTISING

While pastoring in Wisconsin several years ago, our church tried an idea that worked.

After making a church-wide appeal for people with interest and experience in advertising and journalism, we formed a committee to research opportunities for chargeless advertising in our community.

Within a few months the committee produced a long list of potential locations to investigate further. Some of the more obvious suggestions included the local newspaper, radio and television, and regional magazines. However, other ideas included high school/college newspapers, posting handbills in public buildings, apartment bulletin boards, door-to-door leaflets, booths at fairs, group marches through neighborhoods, community picnics, etc.

We decided to concentrate on a selected



newspaper first. Our committee spent much time reading and analyzing the paper to see what the editors considered newsworthy. One member of the committee actually met with the various divisional editors of the paper to learn:

- The preferred format of submitted articles and news releases.
- What they looked for in an event that made it newsworthy.
- The deadlines for submitting material.

Once our committee person had made some friends on the newspaper staff, he took me, his pastor, to their offices for formal introductions. The personal touch made a good impact.

We discovered these keys to publication of church events:

1. Articles most likely to be printed focus on *one* specific event that is clearly and briefly described.
2. Written news material must contain the who, what, why, where, when, and how components.
3. Photos should be sharp and clear.
4. Photos should have *no more* than three or four people them.
5. People in the photos should be *doing* something, such as receiving an award.
6. People in photos should be clearly *named* and assignments identified.
7. Photos of *families* are especially desired; for example, mom, dad, and several children preparing for a special-emphasis Sunday or social function.
8. Articles delivered in person are noticed better than those sent in the mail.
9. Beware of *overusing* your privilege.

The newspaper printed much of our material once we discovered what they wanted. The people on our advertising committee enjoyed the challenge of producing material to be printed.

Why not give almost-free advertising a try in your church?

—David G. Rose
Houston, Texas

THE GREAT BIBLE GIVEAWAY

One of the most effective outreaches we have done as a congregation is our Bible giveaway program. Here's how it works:

Each Sunday we give members two Bibles each to take home. Their task is

simply to give both Bibles away before the following Sunday, at which time they receive two or more to be given away. We simply ask them to pray for God to lead them to those whom He has prepared to receive the Bibles.

Many church members expected to meet resistance, but no recipient reacted negatively to receiving a Bible. Most were delighted. Even our young children enjoyed the opportunity to give Bibles to their school friends on the bus ride to school.

We purchase the New Testaments from the International Bible Society in case lots of 50 at only 50 cents apiece. This makes an affordable outreach for a congregation of any size—\$1 per Sunday or \$4 per month per person. If necessary, the number of Bibles to be given away could be reduced to one per week or even one per month. On the other hand, some congregations may be able to challenge their people to give away even more than two Bibles per week. A special offering could be received to help underwrite the project.

Our prayer is that every Bible given away will be read by someone who will come to know Christ through reading the Scriptures.

—D.E. Rabineau, Bridgewater, New Jersey

SHARASHÜ

Worshippers arriving for Sunday school were greeted by multicolored footprints all over the lobby floor. Soon a pattern was discernible, "SHARASHÜ—Save the Date."

The reaction that Sunday morning was predictable: "Shara what?" But not one word of explanation would they get except the reminder to save the weekend in March.

After 2 weeks of teasing—complete with buttons, posters, paper footprints, and teaser announcements—we spilled the beans. Sharashü is an in-home missionaries convention.

Our missions committee is always searching for ways to get the message of missions into the hearts of our people. Sharashü gives the congregation a chance to know missionaries as people. Sharashü means "to share a shoe" or "to walk a mile in another's moccasins."

It works this way:

1. Calculate how many individual groups are needed to accommodate every person in the congregation—including children—in a face-to-face encounter with a missionary family. A group much larger than 12 adults becomes unmanageable. (Our congregation of 200 adults had a total of about 16 groups they could plug into. We had six groups each meet on Friday and Saturday nights and four on Sunday night.)

2. Contact missionaries who are able and willing to come. Because some families want their children involved, ask some missionaries to bring their families as well.

3. Line up hosts and homes. If you already have a small-group structure, plug into it, which will leave only a few groups to create.

4. Provide detailed instructions to the hosts and cohosts concerning questions to ask the missionaries to get the discussion started—things as simple as cultural and culinary differences. Include questions targeting the missionaries' ministry, calling, and burden.

5. Start the enrollment campaign as described in the first paragraph. Support it the second week by pulpit announcements, bulletin inserts, posters, buttons, etc. By far the most effective announcement comes as the hosting people ask others to join them for dinner. After the first week of sign-ups, identify those who have not been asked and target them for specific invitations. By the time it is all done, everyone in the church will be asked to come to dinner and to bring something wonderful to eat.

6. Provide the missionaries detailed maps, the same list of questions the hosts have, and a brief description of what you are trying to do in these small-group interactions. If some of the missionaries are staying over 2 or 3 nights, provide accommodations—either in a hotel or in a host's home, according to their wishes.

7. The night of the Sharashü, people gather in homes, share a meal together, and talk about missions with a real, live missionary. This allows opportunity to get to know each other, and the people are impacted by the task and the



missionaries' call. At the end of the evening, the hosts distribute comment cards for evaluation and commitment cards leading to monthly pledges to be completed and returned on the Sunday of the missions weekend.

Comments from both the missionaries and our own people were wonderful. We will do it again. I recommend Sharashū to anyone who wants to increase missions awareness and urgency.

—Bill Dogterom, Glendora, California

SPORTS—A POWERFUL TOOL TO REACH THE LOST

Sports is not a rival to church member involvement but a powerful tool to touch people with the gospel. In addition to

inviting non-Christian friends to play golf with us in our weekly round, I've encouraged our men's group to have an annual golf outing. These tournaments involve trophies, food, and novelty prizes. We encourage our guys to invite members of their extended family and unchurched friends.

We play a scramble format so that golfers of all abilities can play on their levels and have a good time. Several men have begun attending church and committed their lives to Christ.

If you are not a golfer, consider using your personal sports interest as a launching pad for interacting with the unchurched world. If you like racquetball, tennis, or bowling, why not view your

interest as an aspect of your ministry? Don't limit your chosen hobby to your day off. If you are willing to pursue it as a means to spend time with members of your church and individuals who don't attend church, you are doing more than redefining what it means to be a pastor. You are also setting the stage for a sports ministry in your congregation by modeling the connection between athletics and outreach.

—Greg Asimakoupoulos
Naperville, Illinois

AN EVENING TO HONOR GRADUATES

Each spring we hold *An Evening To Honor Graduates*.



"I'll say it again, Leonard: 'You need a HOBBY!'"

©1997 BILL FRAZAR



To include family and friends, we begin with a 1-hour baccalaureate service in the sanctuary followed by a reception in the fellowship hall. After the reception the youth pastor takes the graduates out for a nice dinner at a quality restaurant. Some years we have treated our graduates to a moonlight cruise or a party in the church gym.

We begin planning in the fall each year. The youth pastor meets with the parents of the graduates and discusses their involvement in the annual event. At a second meeting definite plans are made, dates are finalized, and committees are formed. During the next 2 months the various committees meet at least once.

Ideas for the baccalaureate service could include:

- Printed bulletins with a picture and brief biography of each graduate
- Platform decorated in a graduation theme
- Ushers from the youth department
- Corsage/boutonniere given to each graduate
- Slides of each graduate shown while a tribute is read
- Communion served by the pastor or youth leader
- Scriptural charge from the pastor
- Brief statement from each graduate about his or her future plans
- Photographer to take video and still pictures
- Honored guest speaker
- Prayer and anointing with oil by the pastor

At the reception graduates form a receiving line. After guests greet the graduates, they go to tables representing each graduate. On each table is a guest book of memories where friends can sign their names and write notes of appreciation or encouragement. Each graduate's table is decorated in the appropriate school colors with awards, pictures, and trophies displayed. After the reception, the graduates leave with the youth pastor for dinner at a nice restaurant.

The purpose of *An Evening To Honor Graduates* is to let the graduates know they are loved by the church and that their accomplishments are important. In addition, it sends a message to younger students that graduating is a greatly respected achievement.

—David G. Rose, Houston, Texas

MINISTRY IDEAS WANTED

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, *Enrichment*, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894.

E-mail: You may send your ministry ideas to Enrichment@ag.org



THE EMPTY EGG

The gospel is simple enough for even a child to understand, even a child like Jeremy Forrester who was born with a twisted body and mental impairment.

Jeremy, age 12, was in second grade at a Christian school. Miss Miller, his teacher, was exasperated with him as he squirmed, drooled, grunted, and seemed unable to learn. She explained to his parents that Jeremy was a hopeless distraction and needed to be in a special school. His parents pleaded with the teacher to keep Jeremy because there was no special school near them.

The teacher said to the Lord, "Here I am complaining. My problems are nothing compared to this poor family. Help me be more patient with Jeremy." God did help her. She tried to ignore Jeremy's noises and blank stares and determined to finish the school year.

During the spring Miss Miller told the children the resurrection story. She gave each child a large plastic egg to bring back the next day with something inside showing life.

Miss Miller wondered if Jeremy really understood the death and resurrection of Jesus. Did he understand the assignment?

The next morning the children placed their eggs in a wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. The first egg contained a flower.

She said, "A flower is a beautiful demonstration of new life. When plants peek through the ground, we know spring is here."

The next egg contained a real-looking plastic butterfly. "We all know that caterpillars change and grow into beautiful butterflies."

When Miss Miller opened the third egg, her heart sank within her. The egg was empty. She knew instantly it must be Jeremy's egg. He didn't understand the assignment. Rather than embarrass him, she simply closed it and set it aside with the others.

Jeremy spoke up, "Miss Miller, aren't you going to talk about my egg?"

She said, "But Jeremy, your egg is empty."

"Yes, Miss Miller, but Jesus' tomb was empty too!" Jeremy said.

The teacher's eyes filled with tears. "Do you know why the tomb was empty, Jeremy?"

"Oh, yes," he said. "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then His Father raised Him up."

Miss Miller was reminded of the Holy

Spirit's ability to communicate God's Word.

Three months later, Jeremy died. As friends and loved ones gathered to pay their love and respect, they knew immediately this little boy had made a dramatic impact on his classmates. On top of his



casket were 19 eggs, all of them *empty*.

—M. Wayne Benson, *Grand Rapids, Michigan, as told by James Dobson, Colorado Springs, Colorado*

IS THIS COMPASSION?

A 15-year-old boy came bounding into

the house and found his mom in bed. Truly concerned, he asked if she was sick. His mom replied that, as a matter of fact, she didn't feel well. The son replied, "Well, don't worry a bit about dinner. I'll be happy to carry you down to the stove."

—Selected

TAKE THE SMALLEST COOKIE

Someone gave me an article about a third-grade class that put together a book for their newly married teacher. Called *Advice for a Happy Marriage*, the book contained some words of wisdom from these youngsters:

"You should have two kids; four is too many."

"Mostly say 'Yes,' but if you are going to have hot dogs for dinner, and you really don't like hot dogs, it is OK to say so."

"Do not marry another person."

"Take breaks from each other once in awhile."

"If there are two cupcakes, and the man takes the one with not as much frosting, he loves you."

My favorite was, "Take the smallest cookie."

On this Mother's Day and the week leading up to it, I have been thinking about all the sacrifices my mom has made through the years for her children. She has been married 43 years, so I figured that if she cooked 325 meals a year (all numbers are conservative estimates), that would come to 13,975 meals; 12 dishes (pots and pans) per meal would come to 167,700 dishes washed; 40 pounds of laundry a week would come to 89,440 pounds. After doing all this plus multitudinous other tasks, she would still always take the smallest cookie and give the bigger ones to us.

Thanks, Mom.

—Randy Sabella
Green Brook, New Jersey

A CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE

A little boy was talking to the girl next door. "I wonder what my mother would like for Mother's Day." The girl answered, "Well, you could promise to keep your room clean, go to bed when you are told, brush your teeth after eating, and quit fighting with your brothers and sisters, especially at the dinner table." The boy looked at her and said, "No, I mean something practical."

—Selected

HUH?

Have you ever received instructions that were impossible to understand? Many



people will agree that our United States Government has refined the art of absurd directions. Check your IRS tax forms as an example.

A directive from the Department of Defense was sent to all Army units in the field. "It is necessary for technical reasons that these warheads must be stored upside down, that is, with the top at the bottom and the bottom at the top. To prevent anyone making a mistake, and in order that there will be no doubt as to which is the bottom and which is the top for storage purposes, it will be noted that the bottom of each warhead has been labeled with the word TOP. Does anyone have any questions?"

God's directives are not as complicated. He gives us clear-cut guidelines. "Give, and it shall be given unto you" (Luke 6:38). "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8). "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity" (Romans 12:8). We have no excuse not to be faithful in giving tithes and offerings. Just do it.

—David Rose, Houston, Texas

I'VE TAKEN YOUR STING

A little boy and his father were driving down a country road on a beautiful spring afternoon. Suddenly, out of nowhere a bumblebee flew in the car window. Since the boy was deathly allergic to bee stings, he became petrified. But the father quickly reached out, grabbed the bee, squeezed it in his hand, and then released it.

As soon as he let it go, the boy became frantic once again. Seeing his panic-stricken face, the father again reached out his hand, but this time he pointed to his hand. The bee's stinger was still stuck in his skin. "Do you see this?" he said. "You don't need to be afraid anymore. I've taken the sting for you."

This is the message of Easter. We no longer need to fear death. Christ faced death for us. By His victory we are saved from sin. Christ has taken the sting. "Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55, NIV). Christ has taken the sting for us. He has risen. Fear is gone. New life is ours.

—Selected

CREDIT

One of my favorite stories about Abraham Lincoln comes from his Illinois days as a young lawyer.

Once an angry man stormed into his office demanding that he bring suit against an impoverished debtor who owed him \$2.50. "Make him pay." The debtor couldn't pay the \$2.50, the creditor didn't need the \$2.50, and society shouldn't be run by such greed and insensitivity. So Lincoln declined the case.

Unfortunately, since Lincoln was the only lawyer available, he was forced to serve the suit. First, he charged the man \$10 for legal fees. Then he brought the defendant in, gave him \$5 for his time, and asked if the charges were accurate. The debtor agreed and from his \$5 from Lincoln paid the \$2.50 he owed. Everyone was satisfied, even the irate plaintiff who never realized he spent \$10 to collect \$2.50.

Turn the story around. A man with no credit, burdened by a debt he could never repay, meets an advocate he can't hire to resolve a matter he can't win. Suddenly, in a transaction he could never accomplish, the debt is gone, the creditor has disappeared, and he has money in his pocket. All he had to do was agree to the terms.

So it is with faith, says the Book of James. Don't try to figure faith out, and certainly don't claim credit for it. When faith is there you'll know it, and so will others.

—Wayne Brouwer
Holland, Michigan

FORGIVENESS AND RIB COUNTING

In the Garden, Eve accused Adam of seeing another woman. He denied the accusation, but Eve persisted.

"If you have been unfaithful to me, I might be willing to forgive you," she said. "But if you lie to me about it, I will never forgive you."

Adam replied, "There is nothing to forgive. Don't you know you're the only woman God created?"

Eve seemed convinced and regained her composure. Nevertheless, when Adam went to sleep that night, she quietly reached over and counted his ribs.

Nearly all of us have had an experience

similar to Adam's. We refuted the charge. We sought forgiveness. We believed we had been forgiven by the accuser, only to learn later that such was not the case.

—Good Tidings, July 1993

DON'T BE AFRAID

This is a true story that took place in one of the Nazi death camps during World War II.

The Rosenberg family had been imprisoned in a work camp where the gas ovens could be avoided as long as a person could work. Solomon Rosenberg and his wife, well into their eighties, barely survived the long hours, lack of decent food, and the miserable hygienic conditions. Their two sons were also in the camp. David, the younger, was handicapped. Solomon feared that he and his wife would be the first in the family to go to the ovens, followed shortly by David.



Each morning the family was separated for their work assignments. Each night they returned to huddle together in the barracks. Each day Solomon wondered if this would be the day one of them would be taken. As he entered the barracks at

night, his eyes quickly sought out his family.

One night what Solomon had feared happened. As he walked into the barracks he could see none of his family; he became frantic. His eyes searched again for their

precious faces. At last he saw his older son Jacob hunched over—weeping.

Solomon hurried to Jacob. “Son, tell me it isn’t so. Did they take David today?”

“Yes, Papa. Today they came to take David,” he said sadly. “They said he could no longer do his work.”

“But Mama—where is Mama? She is still strong. Surely they wouldn’t take Mama too?” he asked.

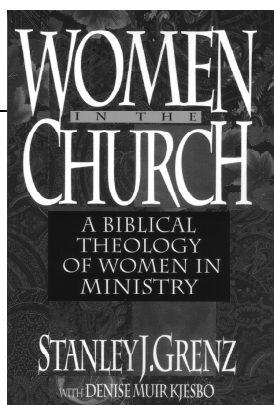
Jacob looked at his father through tear-filled eyes and said, “Papa, Papa. When they came to take David, he was afraid and cried. So Mama said, ‘Don’t cry, David. I will go with you and hold you close.’ Mama went to the ovens so David wouldn’t be afraid.”

—Take a Break, 1992 Gospel Publishing House. Used by permission.

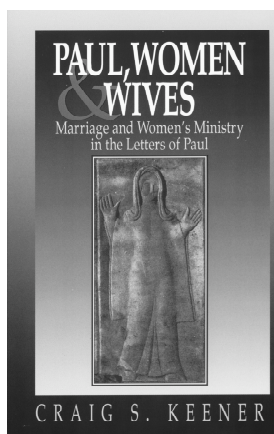
ILLUSTRATIONS WANTED

Enrichment will pay up to \$25 for each illustration we use. 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.

E-mail: You may send your ministry ideas to Enrichment@ag.org.



Stanley J. Grenz and Denise Kjesbo (*InterVarsity Press*, 284 pp., paperback, \$15.99)



Craig S. Keener (*Hendrickson*, 350 pp., paperback, \$14.95)

B O O K R E V I E W S

Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry

Stanley J. Grenz and Denise Kjesbo
(*InterVarsity Press*, 284 pp., paperback,
\$15.99)

Women in the Church is one of the most balanced and objective volumes on women in ministry. Authors Stanley Grenz and Denise Kjesbo bring insights from both the pastorate and the academic community and present them succinctly.

The book examines the role of women in the church today. Based on a thorough study of church history, biblical texts, and theology, the authors conclude that these considerations “converge not only to allow but indeed to insist that women serve as full partners with men in all dimensions of the church’s life and ministry” (page 16).

At the heart of questions raised is whether the Bible restricts women in public ministry or whether God calls gifted persons into public ministry regardless of gender. Both positions are fairly represented. The authors invite readers to move beyond exegetical debate to real-life situations.

At a time when the number of ordained and licensed women in the Assemblies of God has not grown significantly, pastors and church leaders can benefit from the authors’ discussion. They note the disparity

between the official stance of denominations and the actual declining acceptance of women as pastors, evangelists, and missionaries.

Detailed discussion is offered with a generous yet firm approach. Some readers, however, may find the discussion too detailed.

Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry is must reading for women who sense God’s call to ministry and men who would facilitate that calling.

—Reviewed by Barbara Cavaness,
missionary and visiting professor,
Assemblies of God Theological
Seminary, Springfield, Missouri.

Paul, Women, and Wives: Marriage and Women’s Ministry in the Letters of Paul.

Craig S. Keener (*Hendrickson*, 350 pp., paperback, \$14.95)

The genre for this book falls into the area where New Testament scholarship crosses into women’s issues—issues which are still very much alive today. The early chapters contain scholarly work intended to speak to fellow theologians and scholars. The introduction and conclusion deal with issues that are more commonly debated among nontheologians.

Keener is to be commended for his clear organization and statement of purpose. In the introduction he sets forth his agenda: The sole purpose of this book is to examine four passages in Pauline literature which have traditionally been used to argue for the subordination of women. He suggests that “the strength of this work is its documentation of primary sources from my own research” (v).

In regard to feminist issues, Keener states: “The issue is not just whether women should be respected and treated with dignity; the issue is also whether they

The Art of Forgiving: When You Need To Forgive and Don’t Know How

Lewis B. Smedes (*Moorings*, 178 pp., hardback, \$19.99)

According to Lewis Smedes, forgiveness is “the art of healing inner wounds inflicted by other people’s wrongs.” Using real-life situations, Smedes writes in a down-to-earth style offering practical advice on forgiveness.

The author examines what we do when we forgive, why we forgive, who we forgive, and the mechanics of forgiveness. *The Art of Forgiving*, together with Smedes’ earlier *Forgive and Forget*, will be useful to pastors and other church leaders who guide their congregations along the path of forgiveness and reconciliation. As Smedes writes: “When we forgive we walk in stride with the forgiving God.”

—Reviewed by George P. Wood, Newport-Mesa Christian Center staff,
Costa Mesa, California.

B O O K R E V I E W S

should fill the same roles as men. This then is the question with which this book will deal" (10).

Keener disputes some of the current modern rationale for placing women in secondary roles because he feels the Christian church has borrowed its attitudes toward women from the secular world. He asserts that treating women "as men's equals was far closer to the spirit of Paul than making them subordinate" (10). The importance of his approach is that he reverses the wellknown arguments for putting women down and argues that Paul did not intend this to happen.

The book is carefully organized into two major parts, "The Roles of Women in the Church" and "Women's Roles in the Family." Keener asserts that "women are men's equals spiritually and intellectually, [and] they are also capable of the same spiritual and intellectual roles."

Keener's methodology is impeccable. He uses copious examples from the Scripture to undergird his arguments and carefully builds a logical argument. Keener's clear thinking and excellent organization make his ideas easy to follow and hard to rebut. His contribution to this longstanding debate should be noted. I recommend *Paul, Women, and Wives* as must reading for anyone who has an opinion on the subject.

—Reviewed by Frances B. Bixler, Ph.D.,
Springfield, Missouri.

Renewal on the Run: Encouragement for Wives Who Are Partners in Ministry

Jill Briscoe (Harold Shaw Publishers, 148 pp., paperback, \$8.99)

Jill Briscoe's book is written with warmth and candor, backed by her tremendous wealth of experience. She offers specific, sage advice with many personal illustrations, as well as practical aspects of coping

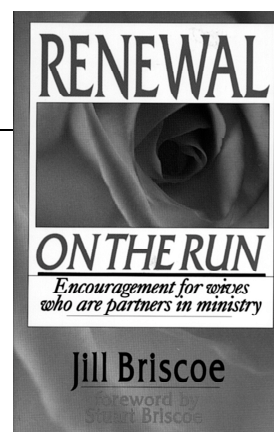
victoriously with the joys and demands of ministry

The author deals with several challenges ministrywives face: finding one's place in ministry; seeking quality friendships; having a healthy image of oneself; dealing with chauvinism in the church; finding balance and priority; being blessed by change; using one's gifts, even when married; opening one's home and heart to others; managing one's time and stress level; dealing with criticism; and maintaining a personal relationship with God.

It is encouraging when someone, who many of us see as a champion in ministry, struggles with the same mine fields. This small volume is a breath of fresh air for anyone who is open to helpful suggestions in growth as a ministry partner.

Renewal on the Run provides a wonderful opportunity to be mentored by this gifted leader who has shared her struggles and the victories they have produced.

—Reviewed by Rosalyn Goodall, wife
of Enrichment's executive editor,
Springfield, Missouri.



Jill Briscoe (Harold Shaw Publishers, 148 pp., paperback, \$8.99)

The Fine Art of Hospitality (2-volume set)—(1) Sharing Your Heart and Home with Others and (2) Handbook—Tips and Recipes

Sheila Jones, ed., vol. 1; Sheila Jones and Betty Dyson, eds., vol. 2 (Discipleship Publications International, (1) laminated hardback, 148 pp.; (2) spiral-bound softcover, 195 pp., \$24.99)

Hospitality—sharing one's heart and home with others—is biblical (Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:9). It reflects God's heart as He gave His best to meet mankind's needs. He measures our gratitude by the way we meet others' needs. Volume 1 contains a number of spiritual leaders' personal, practical, and biblical advice in preparing your house, home, and heart to draw others into your life and into God's family. It addresses various kinds of homes—those with small children, working parents, single parents, and those who are physically challenged.

Volume 2 contains instruction, practical tips, wisdom, and over 200 recipes to help both women and men practice hospitality. These books are good resources and point to the ultimate goal of hospitality: evangelism.

—Reviewed by Helen Braxton, former technical and research editor of Enrichment.

Women Ministers According to Scripture

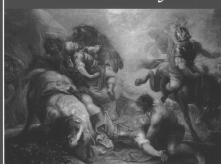


Judy L. Brown

Judy Brown, Ed.D. (Morris Publishing, 337 pp., paper - back, \$15.95)

PAUL

Follower of Jesus
or Founder of
Christianity?



DAVID WENHAM

David Wenham (Eerdmans, 452 pp., paperback, \$22)

B O O K R E V I E W S

Women Ministers According to Scripture

Judy Brown, Ed.D. (Morris Publishing, 337 pp., paperback, \$15.95)

Finally, a book on women in ministry from a Pentecostal perspective. Historically, our Fellowship has supported women in ministry. Dr. Brown challenges readers to release women into the ministries God has called and prepared them to do.

The author's treatment of the subject of women in ministry is both scholarly and pastorally sensitive. She knows the questions and deals with them in a fair and balanced way. Her work addresses all the controversial aspects of this issue with intellectual rigor and Christian charity.

I was particularly fond of her suggestion that the relationship between the members of the Trinity is a model for interpersonal human relationships. She also points out that the "battle of the sexes" is not the divine intention. It is, instead, the curse associated with human rebellion.

Dr. Brown's book points to God's vision of a new humanity in Christ where social and sexual relationships are defined by grace,

responsibility, and reciprocity, instead of behaviors associated with the unredeemed. I would highly recommend this fine book for any minister's library.

—Reviewed by Vernon Purdy,
Ph.D. candidate, assistant professor
of theology, Central Bible College,
Springfield, Missouri.

Dr. Judy Brown is professor of Christian education at Central Bible College.

Her book, *Women Ministers According to Scripture* is available through the CBC bookstore, 1-800-831-4222.

Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?

David Wenham (Eerdmans, 452 pp., paperback, \$22)

In recent years many scholars have argued that Paul's religion is more a reflection of Greek thought than of Jesus of Nazareth. Some laypersons find Paul's teaching on certain topics different from Jesus' teaching. Wenham addresses this problem: Is Paul faithful to the teaching of Christ, or is he the originator of a religion that differs in important ways from Him?

The book is laid out topically, and a comprehensive index to scriptural citations makes it a useful reference tool. Chapters survey the teachings of Jesus and Paul on a variety of issues, including the Church, ethical demands upon believers, and the future coming of the Lord. Wenham evaluates whether Jesus' own understanding of His life and death, as reflected in the Gospels, is at odds with Paul's teaching about Christ. Some have claimed Paul shows virtually no interest in the Jesus of history.

The author makes a strong case for the unity of the New Testament witness; as a follower of Jesus, Paul shows he's "impres- sively faithful to the spirit and intention of Jesus."

Being a Minister's Wife...and Being Yourself

Nancy Pannell (Broadman and Holman, paperback, \$8.99)

One of the most helpful chapters in this book is entitled "Starting Over," which discusses relocating your family and ministry and the stress you put on yourself trying to make everything perfect for the family.

Showing great wisdom, Pannell suggests seven guidelines for you and your family during the first year:

1. Give your children top priority.
2. Avoid comparing this church with your former church.
3. Take a breather before accepting responsibilities in the new church. Give yourself time to get acclimated—physically and spiritually.
4. Reach out to other staff wives.
5. Develop one interest or hobby outside the church just for yourself.
6. Find a true friend.
7. Set new immediate and long-range goals for yourself. Write them down.

—Reprinted from *The Pastor's Wife*, an interdenominational newsletter for women married to ministers; by Janice Hildreth, editor, Boise, Idaho.

B O O K R E V I E W S

The chapter on the kingdom of God is worth the price of the book. Wenham argues that the “righteousness of God” in Paul’s writings is rooted in such Old Testament texts as Isaiah 61. Although this involves an individual’s salvation, our framework must be broadened. What is “revealed” (Romans 3:21) is the dawn of God’s promised day of salvation. God is “intervening to bring righteousness, healing, and reconciliation to the world.” As we understand Paul’s theme, we detect a greater degree of continuity with Jesus’ own proclamation that the anticipated rule of God has now “come upon” us (Luke 11:22).

—Reviewed by Robert Berg, Ph.D., associate professor of biblical studies, Evangel College, Springfield, Missouri.

Help for the Small-Church Pastor

Steve R. Bierly (Zondervan, 144 pp., paperback, \$10.99)

Small churches (up to 150 in attendance) have their own culture. They do not think, operate, or function the same way as their larger church counterparts. Pastors are sure to be frustrated and confused if they use ideas that are alien to the smaller church environment.

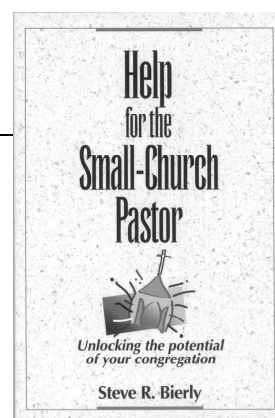
Help for the Small-Church Pastor is a commonsense handbook which provides illustrations of problems and then offers focused solutions. For successful ministry, small-church pastors require keen insight into their churches’ unique characteristics. Pastors who read Bierly’s book will quickly relate to the struggles of ministry and find encouragement and strength to fulfill their important assignments.

Bierly lists four characteristics of the small church: (1) It is determined to stay together; (2) it strives to preserve its traditions; (3) it is led by a few key figures; and (4) it is often suspicious, if not contemptuous, of outsiders. Thus the wise

pastor will spend time and energy gaining the church’s trust. Bierly writes, “The congregation needs the pastor to fit in and become one of the family before they will listen to him or her.” Right or wrong, small congregations will not follow someone who is perceived to be an outsider. They don’t want an expert to tell them how to live or how to solve their problems. Bierly correctly notes that “in the small church, everything rises and falls on relationship.”

According to the author, the key to having a successful, fulfilling, and faithful ministry is for pastors to view the smaller congregation through God’s eyes. “God looks at the small church and sees much good there. He calls leaders to find ways to strengthen and increase it.”

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



Steve R. Bierly (Zondervan, 144 pp., paperback, \$10.99)

Seven Deadly Lawsuits—How Ministers Can Avoid Litigation and Regulation

Thomas F. Taylor (Abingdon, 162 pp., paperback, \$12.95)

Thomas Taylor, both a minister in the Presbyterian Church USA and an attorney, addresses seven specific legal areas ministers may confront during their ministry. Chapters deal with fraud, defamation, child abuse, sexual misconduct, clergy malpractice, invasion of privacy, and undue influence. Taylor wants ministers to “raise their level of awareness” concerning issues that can lead to lawsuits. Each chapter gives preventive measures a minister can take to minimize risk.

The final discussion deals with how to respond to lawsuits, why there is an increasing number of lawsuits against churches and ministers, and sound legal advice.

Seven Deadly Lawsuits is an easy-reading, practical guidebook for today’s litigious society. I highly recommend it.

—Reviewed by Bryan Sanders, J.D., senior consultant with Conflict Management Consultants Inc., and associate professor of government and legal studies, Evangel College, Springfield, Missouri.

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.

NEWS & RESOURCES

PERSONNEL

The Executive Presbytery appointed Michael H. Clarendau editor of the Assemblies of God Radiant Life curriculum, effective Sept. 1, 1996, to succeed Gary L. Leggett, who retired in August 1996. Clarendau formerly served as the youth consultant and district/college liaison for the Sunday School Promotion and Training Department.

47TH GENERAL COUNCIL SCHEDULED FOR 1997 ANNOUNCED

The 47th General Council will convene Aug. 5-10, 1997, in the RCA Dome in Indianapolis, Ind. "Lord, Send a Revival" is the Council theme as well as the Assemblies of God annual emphasis for the year.

The General Presbytery will convene Aug. 4 and 5 in the Westin Hotel before the General Council opens.

Housing and preregistration forms are enclosed with this issue of *Enrichment*. Complete and return them to the address indicated on the forms.

POSITION CREATED TO COORDINATE ETHNIC CHURCH PLANTING

Effective Aug. 1, 1996, Janie Boulware-Wead, nationally appointed home missionary, has been named coordinator of Hispanic Project 2000 in the Division of Home Missions. She initiated the program 5 years ago to establish indigenous churches for Hispanic families in north-west Arkansas.

"The principles she has developed will be expanded to a national level and include other ethnic groups," said David Moore, Intercultural Ministries Department secretary and New Church Evangelism Department interim secretary. "The ethnic minority segment of our Fellowship is showing the greatest growth," Moore said. "We want to do all we can to help by investing where we are achieving the highest return."

TUESDAY—ASSEMBLIES OF GOD PRAYER AND FASTING DAY

The Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery in its July 16, 17, 1996, meeting formally took action to declare every Tuesday a national day of prayer and

fasting. Since January 1994 the A/G headquarters has been setting aside Tuesdays for this purpose.

Every Assemblies of God minister, member, and adherent is encouraged to join together each Tuesday in united prayer and fasting for an outpouring of Pentecost on our nation.

BOYCOTT RESOLUTION ISSUED AGAINST DISNEY CORPORATION

The Assemblies of God has resolved to call its churches and constituents to boycott Disney Corporation. Individuals are encouraged to refrain from purchasing and supporting Disney products and attending their theme parks until Disney returns to its former stance of producing products of high family and moral values.

The 250-member General Presbytery, the second highest legislative body in the Assemblies of God, in its meeting Aug. 6, 1996, passed the resolution based on a number of concerns:

1. In the past individuals and families of the Assemblies of God have vested their trust and confidence in the Disney name and products, thinking their children and teens could benefit through lessons taught and values espoused by Disney.

2. The Assemblies of God has promoted visits to the Disney theme parks, participated in the Magic Kingdom Club, and provided membership cards to our employees.

3. The Assemblies of God is concerned about the deterioration of decency and morality in our nation.

4. The Disney Corporation has abandoned its commitment to strong moral values.

5. The publication of *Growing Up Gay*, a book for teens by Disney-owned Hyperion Press, encourages readers to explore the homosexual lifestyle.

6. Disney's production of the movie, *Priest*, is totally outside the reputation and image of the Disney Corporation.

7. The Assemblies of God is greatly disturbed that Disney World in Florida has been the site of a gay and lesbian day for the past several years, and at this past event families purchasing tickets for the park were not warned of the gay day.

By boycotting Disney the Assemblies

of God can send a strong message to the Disney Corporation to return to the values that strengthen and build this nation such as honesty, respect, integrity, decency, and trust.

CITY GATE PROJECT AWARDED \$225,000 GRANT

The City Gate Project, coordinated at North Central Bible College in Minneapolis, Minn., was one of three recipients in the United States to receive a \$225,000 grant that encourages effective urban ministries education. Paul Freitag, NCBC's director of college ministries, is the City Gate Project director.

The Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Enablement Program (CUTEEP) funded the grant to encourage partnerships among educational institutions that empower urban pastors and church leaders for more effective inner-city ministry. The grant will be used to create curriculum for urban ministry students.

The Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (Springfield, Mo.) is also a City Gate partner. The project received \$44,250 last year from CUTEEP for research, planning, and development.

A/G FOUNDATION OFFERS STEWARDSHIP CONSULTING SERVICES

The Assemblies of God Foundation announces the availability of stewardship consulting services including Church Stewardship, Marketing and Donor Development, and Development Management Services.

1. Church Stewardship Services (CSS) provides services in capital and annual stewardship campaigns for Assemblies of God churches.

2. Development Management Services (DMS) provides services related to the financial and development issues facing Assemblies of God institutions, which will strengthen their ability to carry out their mission and ministry.

3. Marketing and Donor Development Service (MDDS) strengthens a ministry's ability to carry out its mission by providing services related to marketing and development issues.

Larry Russell has been named executive director of CSS. A credentialed

COOPERATIVE FELLOWSHIP AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, U.S.A. has enjoyed a strong fraternal relationship for many years with the Ukrainian Pentecostal Union, Christians of Evangelical Faith; and

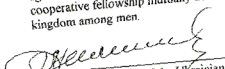
WHEREAS, the Pentecostal Union shares with the Assemblies of God the same unwavering recognition that the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God, sustained by, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16); and

WHEREAS, the demise of the Soviet Union afforded the Ukrainian Pentecostal Union and the Assemblies of God unprecedented evangelistic opportunities in pursuing our common goal of obedience to the mandate of our Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15); and

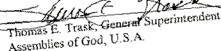
WHEREAS, since 1990 there has been extraordinary church growth resulting in more than one thousand churches in the Ukrainian Pentecostal Union making it possible to continue to plant churches in their own land and to send missionaries throughout the former Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, the mutual recognition that trained, mature, Spirit-filled ministers are essential to a strong New Testament church, our Fellowships have established the Kiev Bible Institute for that purpose. In this partnership, we seek to send forth men and women who will minister by the power of the Holy Spirit to reach this generation for the kingdom of our Lord

THEREFORE, having drawn strength and inspiration from these established relationships in the spirit of Christian brotherhood and scriptural unity, and recognizing the sovereign rights and responsibilities of each of our national Fellowships, the Ukrainian Pentecostal Union, Christians of Evangelical Faith and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, U.S.A., do agree this day to establish and publicly declare our loyalties to the fraternal bond of cooperative fellowship mutually desired for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom among men.


Nikolai Melnick, Bishop of the Ukrainian Union of Pentecostal Christians of Evangelical Faith


Victor Prokhor, Director of Education for the Pentecostal Union of Ukraine


Thomas E. Trask, General Superintendent Assemblies of God, U.S.A.


Loren O. Triplett, Executive Director Division of Foreign Missions

Signed in Springfield, Missouri, U.S.A., July 17, 1996

COOPERATIVE FELLOWSHIP AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, U.S.A. has enjoyed a strong fraternal relationship for many years with the Belarussian Pentecostal Union, Christians of Evangelical Faith; and


WHEREAS, the Pentecostal Union shares with the Assemblies of God the same unwavering recognition that the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God, sustained by, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16); and

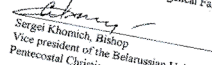
WHEREAS, the demise of the Soviet Union afforded the Belarussian Pentecostal Union and the Assemblies of God unprecedented evangelistic opportunities in pursuing our common goal of obedience to the mandate of our Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15); and

WHEREAS, since 1990 there has been extraordinary church growth with strong growing congregations found throughout Belarussia. More than 350 churches make up the Belarussian Union. The Belarussian Pentecostal Union has sent missionaries throughout the former Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, the mutual recognition that trained, mature, Spirit-filled ministers are essential to a strong New Testament church, our Fellowships will establish the Belarussian Theological Institute for that purpose. In this partnership, we seek to send forth men and women who will minister by the power of the Holy Spirit to reach this generation for the kingdom of our Lord.

THEREFORE, having drawn strength and inspiration from these established relationships in the spirit of Christian brotherhood and scriptural unity, and recognizing the sovereign rights and responsibilities of each of our national Fellowships, the Belarussian Pentecostal Union, Christians of Evangelical Faith and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, U.S.A., do agree this day to establish and publicly declare our loyalties to the fraternal bond of cooperative fellowship mutually desired for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom among men.


Fiodor Marchouk, Bishop President of the Belarussian Union of Pentecostal Christians of Evangelical Faith


Sergei Khomich, Bishop Vice president of the Belarussian Union of Pentecostal Christians of Evangelical Faith


Thomas E. Trask, General Superintendent Assemblies of God, U.S.A.


Loren O. Triplett, Executive Director Division of Foreign Missions

Signed in Springfield, Missouri, U.S.A., July 17, 1996

UKRAINE AND BELARUSSIAN PENTECOSTAL LEADERS SIGN AGREEMENT

Pentecostal leaders from Ukraine and Belans signed a Cooperative Fellowship Agreement between their churches and the U.S. Assemblies of God. The agreement established and publicly declared "our loyalties to the fraternal bond of cooperative fellowship mutually desired for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom among men."

Those signing the agreement include: Thomas E. Trask, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God; Loren O. Triplett, executive director of the Division of

Foreign Missions; Nikolai Melnick, bishop of the Ukrainian Union of Pentecostal Christians of Evangelical Faith; Victor Prokhor, director of education for the Pentecostal Union of Ukraine and director of Kiev Bible Institute; Fiodor Marchouk, president of the Belarussian Union of Pentecostal Christians of Evangelical Faith; and Sergei Khomich, vice president of the Belarussian Union of Pentecostal Christians of Evangelical Faith and director of the Belarussian Theological Institute.

Speaking about the agreement, Melnick stated, "The ministry of men and women from the U.S. Assemblies of God has been a good example for us. We want to grow closer to the Assemblies of God and work more closely with them. We trust the Assemblies of God."

Concerning the significance of the document, Marchouk added, "It is a document that underlines what has come together up to this point."

minister, Russell has developed strong communication and leadership abilities. He has led over 60 churches and institutions in successful capital campaigns.

Roger Lane, a minister with over 20 years of development and fund-raising experience, has been named executive director of DMS. He has distinguished himself as a leader in the area of institutional development. While serving as vice president for development at North Central Bible College, Lane designed and led the college in a multimillion-dollar capital campaign to raise funding for operations, endowment, debt retirement, land acquisition, and a two-story classroom addition.

Rob Hartley, an Assemblies of God layman for many years, has been named executive director of MDDS. Before joining the Foundation, Hartley served as vice president of marketing for a large privately held corporation and vice president of development for Christian Broadcasting Network for 6 years. He is the recipient of many national marketing and development awards, including Man of the Year for 1993.

"We are thrilled the Assemblies of God churches and institutions will have quality stewardship consulting services previously available only through major national consulting firms," said Thomas

Trask, general superintendent.

For further information, call the Assemblies of God Foundation Stewardship Services office at (417) 865-4880.

POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS ANNOUNCE SPRING 1997 COMMENCEMENT DATES

The following Assemblies of God post-secondary schools have announced spring 1997 commencement dates:

American Indian College, Phoenix, Ariz.—May 2.

Assemblies of God Theological Seminary Springfield, Mo.—June 6.

Berean College, Springfield, Mo.—

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June 12.

Bethany University, Scotts Valley, Calif.—May 10.

Central Bible College, Springfield, Mo.—May 1.

Central Indian Bible College, Mobridge, S. Dak.—May 9.

Evangel College, Springfield, Mo.—May 2.

Latin American Bible Institute, San Antonio, Tex.—Apr. 25.

Latin American Bible Institute of California, La Puente, Calif.—May 3.

North Central Bible College, Minneapolis, Minn.—May 2.

Northwest College, Kirkland, Wash.—May 10.

Southeastern College, Lakeland, Fla.—Apr. 25.

Southern California College, Costa Mesa, Calif.—May 3.

Southwestern University, Waxahachie, Tex.—May 9.

Trinity Bible College, Ellendale, N. Dak.—May 2.

Valley Forge Christian College, Phoenixville, Pa.—May 10.

Western Bible Institute, Phoenix, Ariz.—May 4.

1997 NATIONAL EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

The fifth biennial National Educators Conference will be held Aug. 4 and 5 prior to the 1997 General Council in Indianapolis, Ind. The conference theme is: "Staying on Course but Shifting Gears."

The conference, sponsored by the Commission on Christian Higher Education, Wayne Kraiss, commissioner, will be held in the Hyatt Hotel. For additional information or to make reservations, contact the Christian Higher Education Department.

FREE MATERIALS AVAILABLE TO HIGHLIGHT ASSEMBLIES OF GOD HIGHER EDUCATION

The new and updated *Assemblies of God College Guide*, Third Edition, is among the free materials available from the Christian Higher Education Department. The 32-page, full-color *Guide* provides a preview of each of the 17 endorsed Assemblies of God postsecondary schools.

Information on academic programs, financial aid, admissions requirements, ministry opportunities, housing, and much more is included. Request a free copy for your church library and quantities for your college-bound students.

Other materials include a theme poster, bulletin insert, prayer card, and a research paper ("The [Social] Pit and the Pendulum: A Case for Christian Higher Education" by Dayton Kingsriter) highlighting the spiritual, academic, and moral climates on secular and Christian college campuses.

To receive free copies of the *College Guide*, check rsc #9 and indicate quantity; the theme poster, check rsc #10 and indicate quantity; bulletin insert, check rsc #11 and indicate quantity; prayer card, check rsc #12 and indicate quantity; research paper, check rsc #13 and indicate quantity.

MARCH 16 IS CHILD CARE DAY

On Child Care Day, Mar. 16, 1997, the Benevolences Department asks churches to remember the ministries of Hillcrest Children's Home and Highlands Child Placement Services and Maternity Home.

Hillcrest is in the midst of building its new Ministries Center that will house a counseling center, offices, a library, and staff apartments. Some \$900,000 is needed.

Highlands is continuing to reach out to young women who are caught in the dilemma of unwanted pregnancies.

To receive a packet of information on these two homes, check rsc #4.

APRIL IS DISASTER RELIEF MONTH

April is designated Disaster Relief month in Assemblies of God churches.

For over 30 years the Benevolences Disaster Relief program has been assisting in repairing and rebuilding churches and parsonages damaged or destroyed by natural disasters.

Churches are asked to receive a Disaster Relief offering in April and to include this program in their World Ministries Giving budgets to ensure the resources will be there if and when disaster strikes.

For a brochure and more information

on the Disaster Relief program, check rsc #5.

GOOD NEWS CRUSADES IMPACT CITIES FOR CHRIST

Sunday, Apr. 6, 1997, is Good News Crusades Day in the Assemblies of God. Churches are encouraged to support missionaries involved in this evangelism and church-planting program of the Division of Foreign Missions through prayer and by receiving an offering.

Across the globe this year familiar yellow and white striped tents will be raised in soccer fields, village marketplaces, and vacant city lots. The crusades held in these tents provide opportunities for individuals to hear the message of salvation. Often a new church is planted as a result of the Good News Crusade.

During 1997 the Division of Foreign Missions has targeted the cities of Mbabane, Swaziland; Phnom Penh, Cambodia; New Delhi, India; and Kingston, Jamaica, for Good News Crusades. In these cities thousands of people will hear the gospel, some for the first time.

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD WORLD CONGRESS SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER

The second Assemblies of God World Congress will be held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Sept. 25–28, 1997. The Assemblies of God of Brazil has experienced tremendous growth in recent years and is now home for several of the largest Pentecostal churches in the world.

The world congress will provide an opportunity for leaders of Assemblies of God churches from around the world to meet together and report on Decade of Harvest progress.

Scheduled speakers for the meeting will represent a variety of nations. They include Jose Wellington of Brazil, David Yonggi Cho of South Korea, Andrew Evans of Australia, Ranwell M. Mwenisongole of Tanzania, and Thomas E. Trask of the United States.

John Bueno, Division of Foreign Missions field director for Latin America and the Caribbean, is serving as the international coordinator for the congress.

Madison International Travel (800-424-2422) is the official U.S. travel agency, which can provide travel package information. Options include trips to Rio de Janeiro and Iglesia Falls.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SCHEDULED FOR MAY 18

Churches are encouraged to make plans to join the worldwide prayer meeting May 18, 1997, which is sponsored by the World Assemblies of God Fellowship.

"This is an opportunity for Pentecostal believers around the world to unite in believing prayer," said Thomas Trask, general superintendent of the U.S. Assemblies of God.

Scheduled to coincide with Pentecost Sunday, the worldwide prayer meeting will give U.S. churches opportunity to join brothers and sisters around the world in intercession for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

MAY 25 IS AMA DAY

Sunday, May 25, is Aged Ministers Assistance Day.

Nearly 500 pioneer preachers and their spouses are currently receiving financial help from AMA. A number of them—former missionaries, pastors, and evangelists—were in the ministry over 40 or 50 years and sacrificially worked for the Lord with barely enough income to live. When

age or infirmity forced them into retirement, they had nowhere to turn but to us—the church they helped build.

Each church is asked to receive an offering for these needy, worthy pioneer ministers.

To receive the AMA Day Sunday bulletin insert, check rsc #3 and indicate quantity.

MAPS DAY IS JUNE 22

MAPS (Mission America Placement Service) Day is scheduled for June 22 to remember those who give of their time and finance to build the kingdom of God. Please pray for them on their special day.

The MAPS Department places volunteers in strategic places of ministry across the United States, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and Puerto Rico through 1- to 2-year missionary associates, summer associates, church teams, and RV Volunteers. With a variety of skills these volunteers assist home missionaries and home missions works in places such as Indian reservations, Bible college campuses, orphanages, campgrounds, and Teen Challenge centers.

More information on these ministries and how you can become involved is available from the MAPS Department in the Division of Home Missions.

1997 LIGHT-FOR-THE-LOST CONVENTION SCHEDULED

The annual Light-for-the-Lost convention will be held Apr. 24-26, 1997, in Indianapolis, Ind. During this convention LFTL councilmen will decide the future direction of this outreach ministry.

Paul Ai, Assemblies of God general superintendent of Vietnam, will address the convention body and share concerning the recent spiritual awakening in his country. Other speakers include James Bridges, U.S. Assemblies of God general treasurer; Benny Ferguson, LFTL coordinator; Doug Peterson, Central America area director; and Colen Lassiter, pastor of The Rock Assembly, Oklahoma City, Okla.

"The spirit of God has been heavy upon our past conventions, and this year's should be no exception," said Benny Ferguson. "We look forward to being challenged to give our all to the promotion of



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the gospel around the world. This convention is a special time I would not want to miss."

Also planned are business meetings, services, and nightly banquets, along with opportunities to enjoy the Indianapolis surroundings and special activities for women.

For more information, check rsc #18 or contact the LFTL office; telephone 417-862-2781.

DIVISION OF FOREIGN MISSIONS PRODUCES SPANISH-LANGUAGE MATERIALS

Spanish-language materials, offered to assist local churches in the implementation of missions conventions, are now developed and produced by the Division of Foreign Missions. They will be unveiled at the Missions Celebration/Fly-In, February 7, 8, 1997, in Dallas, Tex.

Items available from the Division of Foreign Missions for Spanish-speaking congregations include: *A Guide to Missionary Training*, *How To Prepare a Missions Convention*, *What Is a Faith Promise*, *A Guide to Becoming an Assemblies of God Missionary*, *The Blueprint*, *The Blueprint Instructor's Manual*, *Proven Missions Convention Ideas*, and the *Missions Convention Manual*.

A PATTERN FOR REVIVAL VIDEO AVAILABLE

In *A Pattern for Revival* video, Thomas E. Trask, Assemblies of God general superintendent, shares his desire for revival and points out to ministers the responsibility for revival in the church, home, and life.

This sermon on video is available for \$14.95 from the Michael Cardone Media Center, 1506 Boonville Ave., Springfield, Mo. 65803; telephone, 417-869-8829; fax 417-862-5974; E-mail media@ag.org.

MAPS CONSTRUCTION REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTED

Evan Paul, nationally appointed home missionary, was appointed MAPS construction representative, effective Aug. 1, 1996.

Paul is engaged in recruiting and

placing lay volunteers in strategic areas of work in the harvest field of America and "is no stranger to the impact of MAPS," said Patrick Donadio, MAPS Department secretary. "The main thrust of his ministry is to challenge our congregations to recognize the need for taking construction teams to the needy projects of the United States and its territories."

In the past 37 years, Paul has pastored churches in Indiana, served as state youth director, and was the national representative for Mobilization and Placement Service and the administrative assistant for Light-for-the-Lost.

HOME MISSIONARY CANDIDATE INTERVIEW AND ORIENTATION SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER

The Division of Home Missions will conduct a candidate missionary interview and orientation Sept. 8-12, 1997, in Springfield, Mo. Those interested in applying for appointment may acquire applications from the Division of Home Missions.

Two brochures entitled "What To Do When God Calls You to Home Missions" and "Advantages of National Home Missions Appointment" offer details on the candidate interview process and are available upon request.

National appointment gives missionaries visibility within the Assemblies of God and enhances their credibility. The Division of Home Missions has 673 missionaries spreading the gospel across the United States.

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES USE JESUS VIDEO TO REACH NEIGHBORS

Jesus, an 83-minute dramatization of the Gospel of Luke, is having a significant impact through Assemblies churches across the United States. Members are offering free *Jesus* videos to their neighbors and leading them to saving faith.

Thomas Trask, general superintendent, calls the *Jesus* video "one of the great tools of evangelism" and says it "has a clear salvation message."

Often the simple approach involves three elements: prayer, offering the video, and returning to ask viewers' opinions and share Christ. Results have been

impressive. For instance, a large-scale, multichurch outreach in Syracuse, N.Y., gave out 28,750 videos. Five months later, independent market research found that 96 percent of those who viewed the video appreciated the effort and thought the churches should "keep it up!"

The Jesus Video Project (JVP), a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, reports that since 1992 projects in 82 cities have involved 2,600 churches and 87,000 workers approaching 1.7 million homes; 700,000 videos are in homes as free gifts from participating churches. Over 700,000 people indicated decisions for Christ.

A special introductory packet for Assemblies of God pastors and interested members, including a short video endorsement by Trask and a sample Jesus video, is available for \$7.50, including shipping. To receive the packet or more information on the JVP, call 1-800-29-JESUS (295-3787).

MUSIC FOR THE ANOINTING CASSETTE RELEASED

The Michael Cardone Media Center has released *Music for the Anointing*, vol. 2, in the *Music for the Altar* series. A compilation of inspiring, uplifting, and timeless piano and organ music by Ramona Crabtree and Dixie Hackett, this audiocassette provides an atmosphere for worship at the altar, in the home, or in the auto.

Included are such favorites as "Because He Lives," "Holy Ground," and "Spirit of the Living God." Let this anointed music touch you and your family for years to come.

For more information or to place an order for *Music for the Anointing* cassette (\$7.95 each), write to the Michael Cardone Media Center, 1506 Boonville Ave., Springfield, Mo. 65803; telephone, 417-869-8829; fax 417-862-5974; E-mail media@ag.org.

GENERAL COUNCIL 1997 TO EMPHASIZE LAYPEOPLE

The Executive Presbytery has approved a plan to emphasize laity activities that will interest noncredentialed Assemblies of God membership during the Aug. 5-10, 1997, General Council in Indianapolis, Ind.

Wednesday, Aug. 6, will be highlighted as Laity Emphasis Day. Seminars are planned that will emphasize leadership topics and focus on helping develop church leaders for both men and women among the laity. Luncheons will feature well-known speakers.

Saturday morning, Aug. 9, a special breakfast will give men and women opportunity to meet the Executive Presbytery and have an open discussion.

The overall goal is to encourage larger numbers of laypeople in the Fellowship to attend and to participate in these meaningful developmental activities.

HonorBound: Men of Promise (the Assemblies of God ministry for men) and Women's Ministries are cosponsors of these events.

MANUAL AVAILABLE FOR SENIOR ADULT MINISTRIES

The *Senior Adult Ministries Manual*, produced by the Commission on Senior Adult Ministries, is now available. The manual offers guidance and suggestions on organizing, developing, and administering senior adult ministries at the district, sectional, and local church levels.

It contains ideas and programs adaptable to any size congregation and is a practical tool whether churches have full-time staff, lay committees, or volunteers. The manual presents informational and planning helps for special events, ministry ideas, elder care, volunteering, the process of aging, and preparation for active retirement.

The *Senior Adult Ministries Manual* (#740-001) is available at \$17.95 each from the Gospel Publishing House, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802; telephone: 1-800-641-4310.

UTH PRAISE TRAX AVAILABLE

The Youth Department has a new ministry resource, *Uth Praise Trax*, vol. 1. This compact disc is a must for every youth ministry that is serious about involving students in praise and worship.

A split-track feature permits the worship leader to eliminate voices as desired. Contemporary songs are combined into four sets that flow together or may be individually selected. Bonus resources are

two hymns and an aid for guitar tuning. Lead sheets are also available.

The cost of *Uth Praise Trax* is \$20 plus shipping and handling. Call 1-800-641-4310.

CLUB CONNECTION, NEW MAGAZINE FOR GIRLS AND MISSIONETTES LEADERS, BEGINS IN SPRING

Club Connection, a new quarterly magazine for girls and Missionettes leaders, begins publication with the Spring 1997 issue, according to Kerry Clarensau, Missionettes coordinator. The magazine appeals to girls of any age and includes crafts, games, skits, songs, and snack ideas for girls to do at home or in the Missionettes club meetings. Girls will also enjoy devotionals, fun facts and news, music, and other great features. A salvation message will be presented in each issue.

Club Connection also provides the same great tips, plans, and ideas found in *Memos* but in a newly energized format. Leaders can also refer to the special 8-page leader's section for resources, discipleship materials, write-in questions and answers from the national office, fund-raising ideas, crowning ideas, the latest information on important current issues, and missions lesson plans that correspond with the girls' pages. *Club Connection* is an effective discipleship and evangelistic tool for girls.

Club Connection subscription rates are \$6.50 for the Girls Edition; \$7.50 for the Leader Edition; bundle rates (5 or more to the same address) are \$6 for the Girls Edition and \$7 for the Leader Edition.

For more information on *Club Connection*, check rsc #24.

NATIONAL MISSIONETTES WEEK IS MAY 11-17

National Missionettes Week is May 11-17, 1997. The theme, "By Love They Will Know," based on John 15:12,13 (NIV), encourages girls to share Christ's love with family, friends, and neighbors.

During the week, activities and accomplishments of local Missionettes clubs will be featured in special events such as banquets, teas, luncheons, awards presenta-

tions, and Honor Star crowning ceremonies.

Club Connection, an exciting new quarterly magazine for girls and Missionettes leaders, will also feature creative ideas and helps for planning and organizing an unforgettable National Missionettes Week.

According to Missionettes coordinator Kerry Clarensau, over 180,000 girls will participate in National Missionettes Week in the United States. Nearly 172,000 girls are involved in 21,438 Missionettes clubs, according to 1995 Annual Church Ministries Report statistics. Ages range from 3 through high school.

For more information on National Missionettes Week, check rsc #25.

ROYAL RANGERS ANNOUNCES NEW CHALLENGERS PROGRAM

The Royal Rangers Office has initiated a new and exciting program called Challengers, which is designed to reach boys in grades 10 through 12, ages 15 through 17. Rangers who are in the Air, Sea, or Trail programs will now be called Challengers.

Challengers will include the traditional Trail Rangers opportunities in addition to special-interest groups that focus on topics such as evangelism and discipleship, law enforcement, air and sea—programs not related to the traditional camping program. Rangers who participate in any of the special-interest groups will wear a collegiate-looking Challengers outfit, while Trail Rangers will participate in the traditional camping program and wear the RR uniform.

Challengers offers five advancement levels: Quester, Adventurer, Voyager, Discoverer, and Navigator. For each level, Rangers must complete required and elective studies and one of the five steps of the Spirit Challenge, which offers Bible-based curriculum studies on current youth issues plus field activities related to subjects studied.

The new program is designed to meet the interests and needs of all boys while providing Christ-centered programs led by godly male role models.

For further information about the Challengers program, contact the RR office.

With Christ

*Dewey E. Barstad
Prineville, Oregon*

*James D. Bell
Dallas, Texas*

*Troy L. Blair
Joplin, Missouri*

*Albert E. Blaise
Stafford, Virginia*

*Claude C. Boze
Harrison, Arkansas*

*Paul A. Braco
Revere, Massachusetts*

*Edna E. Brown
Springfield, Missouri*

*Paul R. Buchwalter
New Port Richey, Florida*

*Walter A. Buck
Borrego Springs, California*

*Jasper H. Byrd
McDavid, Florida*

*Reynell Caldwell
Little Rock, Arkansas*

*Nelda Chaffin
Lovell, Wyoming*

*Alan M. Ciociola
North Haven, Connecticut*

*John W. Clark
Woxall, Pennsylvania*

*H. Daniel Cornelius
Falling Waters, West Virginia*

*Leola M. Dale
Springfield, Missouri*

*Laurene L. Drury
Encinitas, California*

*Haywood O. Etier
El Dorado, Arkansas*

*Jesse Eversole
Englewood, Colorado*

*Claude E. Fulbright
Batesville, Arkansas*

*Thomas H. Fuller
Fresno, California*

*Lionel P. Furman
Redmond, Oregon*

*Nina Gaddis
Muskogee, Oklahoma*

*Joshua G. Gott
Hamilton, Ohio*

*Jessie E. Hadley
Myrtle Creek, Oregon*

*Edmor C. Hafner
Rochester, Washington*

*Ralph N. Hager, Sr.
Bluefield, West Virginia*

*Doris A. Harden
McComb, Mississippi*

*Bernie W. Hite
Sherman, Texas*

*Vivian M. Jamison
Oviedo, Florida*

*Norman F. Jones
Las Cruces, New Mexico*

*Gustavo A. Jimenez
Plant City, Florida*

*Olen T. Killion
Houston, Texas*

*Everett Lee Lawson
Bakersfield, California*

*Lena M. Leach
Newtown, Pennsylvania*

*Gerald S. Lee
Alexandria, Minnesota*

*Essie H. Lett
Atascadero, California*

*Ada J. Long
Mount Morris, Pennsylvania*

*Abdon Lucero
San Bernardino, California*

*Vonnie A. McClure
Daytona Beach, Florida*

*Thomas M. Moore
Sheridan, Wyoming*

*Enoch C. Nicholson
Poulsbo, Washington*

*Dean G. Nygren
Wichita, Kansas*

*Maria Hian N. Ong
Brooklyn, New York*

*Troyce A. Pearson
Longview, Texas*

*William E. Perkins
Somerset, Kentucky*

*Frances L. Phillips
Morton, Illinois*

*George W. Putinsky
Charlotte, North Carolina*

*Thomas D. Rachels
New Brockton, Alabama*

*Sindey E. Razer
Clarkton, Missouri*

*William T. Reilley
Anchorage, Alaska*

*Lloyd D. Riley
Milton, Florida*

*Edward W. Roush
Richardson, Texas*

*Gertude V. Scott
Springfield, Missouri*

*A.F. Stubblefield
Oakridge, Oregon*

*Annie M. Symonds
England*

*Raymond Tackett
Russellville, Arkansas*

*Feterika S. Tuamasaga
Oakland, California*

*Raymond E. Walden
Lynnwood, Washington*

*C. Morse Ward
Stockton, California*

*Joseph W. Wooldridge
Durant, Florida*

*William W. Wooten
Odessa, Texas*



In Closing

BY JAMES K. BRIDGES

By the time the Assemblies of God came into existence in 1914, a host of Spirit-filled women evangelists and pastors were already ministering and making a strong spiritual impact across the United States. For example, Sister Maria Woodworth-Etter was packing out her 8,000-seat tent from coast to coast. My Bible college mentor, William Burton McCafferty, told his students that Sister Woodworth-Etter was one of the most anointed preachers he had ever heard.

Florence Crawford was a worker in the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles in 1906 and later moved to Portland, Oregon, where she founded and pastored the Apostolic Faith Mission. It became the largest Pentecostal work in the Northwest. She helped Ernest S. Williams, our former general superintendent, obtain Azusa Street ministerial credentials from W.J. Seymour. Williams ministered with her for some time in Portland. He later described her as an outstanding preacher and a strong administrator.

Capable women in ministry arose from every region of the country: Marie Brown in New York, Mother Barnes in Missouri, Mother Hayes in Texas, Alice Reynolds Flower in Indiana, Alice Luce in California, to name a few. Having such outstanding women already exercising their ministries, our Fellowship granted credentials to women even in its formative years. As Pentecostal people we knew the prophecy of Joel, quoted by Peter on the Day of Pentecost, included both men and women recipients of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and that women would be among those who would exercise the gift of prophecy (Acts 2:16–18).

Consequently, from early in its history the Assemblies of God has ordained women. God has mightily used the women of the Assemblies of God in ministries of all kinds such as pastoral, evangelistic, missionary, teaching, and administration.

Because my parents and my wife's parents were all credentialed with the Assemblies of God, I have long been accustomed to hearing women preachers. As a matter of fact, when my mother-in-law, Mattie Sterling, was in her prime I would just as soon hear her preach the gospel as any preacher I know.

As a pastor, some of my most successful revivals were held by women evangelists. One of my most memorable revivals was with Reba Mercer, North Texas District Women's Ministries (Women's Missionary Council) director for 25 years. What a great preacher she was!

While the ministry of women in the Assemblies of God has made its mark in the pulpit, it has equally impacted the church in other areas such as teaching, serving, and intercession. My earliest recollection of true Pentecostal intercession came from watching and listening to my maternal grandmother intercede in prayer for her family, the church, and a lost world. By observing Granny Clifton praying, I learned what genuine spiritual warfare was all about. I saw firsthand the effectiveness of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the power of praying in tongues when she had reached the end of her ability to intercede in English.

When speaking of women in ministry, we often overlook the role of the minister's wife. Yet, next to a divine call,

nothing is more crucial to a successful ministry than the minister's companion. She is in ministry and should be honored for her role. Without her, her husband would have little, if any, ministry.

When we look at women in ministry who have impacted our Fellowship, we observe certain characteristics of modesty, propriety, spirituality, anointing, giftedness, and commitment. They have not sought the favor of this world but have exercised their gifts with wisdom and integrity, seeking to please Him who called them. Examples of such remarkable women are Lillian Trasher, Hattie Hammond, Josephine Williams, and—still ministering among us—Huldah Buntain and Opal Reddin, to mention a few.

God is using the ministry of women in our Fellowship to help make the Assemblies of God what He intends us to become. May He continue to raise up self-effacing, scripturally sound, genuinely Pentecostal women for effective ministry.



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

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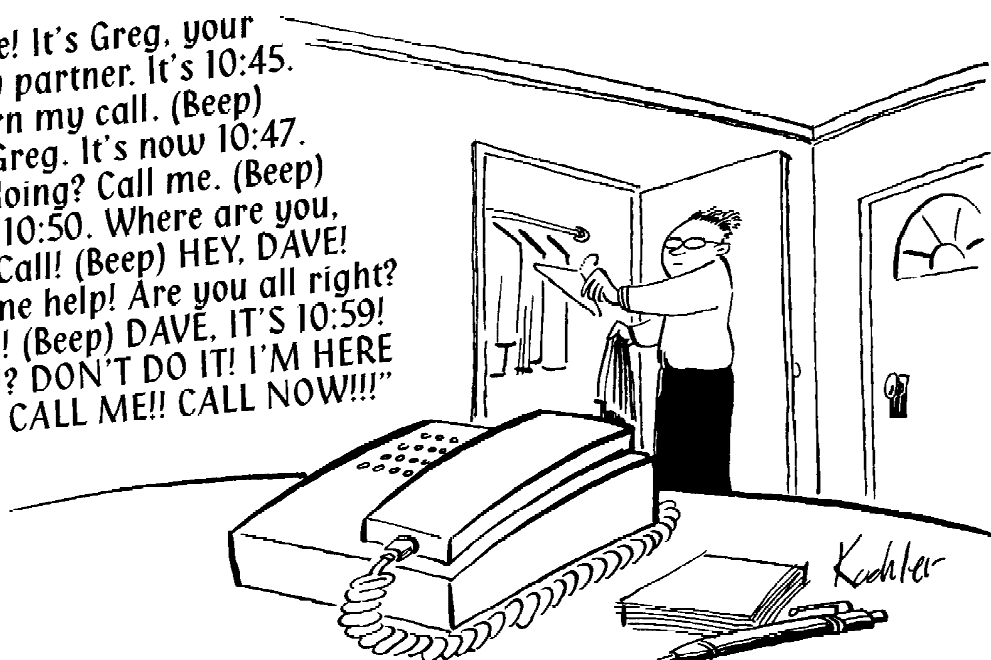
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Hi Dave! It's Greg. It's now 10:47. How are you doing? Call me. (Beep)
Dave, Greg-it's 10:50. Where are you, man? You OK? Call! (Beep) HEY, DAVE! Come on, guy-let me help! Are you all right? HOLD ON, MAN!! (Beep) DAVE, IT'S 10:59! WHERE ARE YOU? DON'T DO IT! I'M HERE FOR YOU MAN!! CALL ME!! CALL NOW!!!"



Dave seriously considers getting a new accountability partner.

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