

PREACHER'S *magazine*

NOVEMBER 1963

THE PRICE OF REVIVALS

Hugh C. Benner

THE POWER OF NEGATIVE THINKING

Editorial

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—proclaiming the Wesleyan message

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The Price of Revivals

By Hugh C. Benner

THE WORD OF GOD clearly defines two categories of dispensation of spiritual power: special and general. The first represents "the manifestation of the Spirit" in what are usually denoted as "gifts" of the Spirit to individuals. These, according to 1 Corinthians 12:11, are received by the "Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

On the other hand, the general dispensations of the Spirit are available to all, as, for example, the Holy Spirit can be poured out "upon all flesh,"; for, as Peter declared, "the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

Our interest here is in the general dispensations of spiritual power. In this area God manifests himself according to laws or conditions. To enjoy such manifestations we need not understand the character of the power, but only the laws which govern its dispensation.

The basic principle is that in this general application God pours out spiritual power only as the result of some human being meeting conditions. Therefore revivals never "just happen"; revivals never come by the sovereign will of God. Revivals always are the result of obedience to God's spiritual laws, the meeting of spiritual conditions.

Obviously, this fact places the responsibility for spiritual dearth squarely upon humanity. God does not willfully withhold His blessing during a certain period and then suddenly, and for no apparent reason, lavish it upon His people. The scriptural picture is that of God loving, willing, sacrificing, yearning, knocking, and waiting eagerly for the opportunity to manifest himself.

Furthermore, "God is no respecter of persons." He will not bless disobedience in anyone, any time, anywhere. On the other hand, He will not withhold His blessing from obedient, devoted hearts any time, anywhere. We have just as much right to expect God's best today as any other group of any era, anywhere, provided we are willing to go to the same depths of humility and match the same measure of obedience, consecration, and faith.

Thus the price of revivals is always the same. There are no "bargain days" in the spiritual realm. This accounts for the amazing uniformity in the revival pattern as found in varying ages and conditions.

Ezra, in his day, faced a serious spiritual problem. Although the house of God had been rebuilt and the people had returned from captivity, there was still much of disobedience to God's laws. A revival was needed. So Ezra led the way, as recorded in Ezra 9 and 10. He first

became burdened for his people, an experience which he termed "heaviness" or "affliction," identifying himself with the failure of others (Ezra 9:6-7). As a result of this burden, he (1) confessed, (2) prayed, and (3) fasted. After this, when he gave God's message (10:10), the people returned to God and spiritual revival came to Israel.

The experience of Nehemiah duplicated that of Ezra. He became concerned and burdened and like Ezra he "wept, and mourned . . . and fasted, and prayed" (Neh. 1:4). He too identified himself with the deep needs of his people, saying in his prayer, "We have sinned" (Neh. 1:6). The revival came. "So the wall was finished" (Neh. 6:15), and as the result of a renewal of their covenant with God, great spiritual blessing came to the people.

The prophet Daniel came to a period of concern for the spiritual condition of his people. In chapter 9, verse 3, of his writings he records his experience: "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes . . . and made my confession." Daniel also identified himself with his people, saying in his prayer, "We have sinned." Thus the pattern was repeated: burden, confession, prayer, fasting.

During the days preceding the Day of Pentecost it is recorded of the disciples, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14). While few details are

given concerning those days of tarrying, it is safe to assume that such spiritual hunger and such complete obedience would doubtless impel burden, confession, and some periods of fasting.

Cornelius, experiencing a great hunger for the fullness of the Spirit and burdened for his household, prayed and fasted (Acts 10:30), and Peter was sent miraculously to minister, and the revival was on—"The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44).

This pattern has continued through the centuries. The price of revivals is still the same. If God is to manifest himself in reviving the church and, as a result of revival, in the salvation of the lost, there must be someone who cares deeply enough to be burdened, to identify himself with the needs of his people. There must be confession of need, earnest prevailing prayer, and scriptural fasting.

The application of this pattern to the ministry is clear. Pastors must lead the way. Evangelists must involve themselves in this revival pattern. No amount of excellent organization, no amount of good preaching, can compensate for a lack in the basic spiritual pattern.

As in all elements of God's highest will, none need be excluded from the revival pattern. The basic elements are such as can be experienced by all—preachers and laymen alike. The issue is clear; the challenge is before us. The price can be paid, and revival can come.

Will we pay the price?

The Power of Negative Thinking

THIS is a day when "Think Positively" is not only a national slogan; it is nearly a religion. Sales managers repeat it at every pep rally. Writers of religious best-sellers put it in such terms as *The Power of Positive Thinking*. The values of positive thinking are so self-evident that your editor is in no mood to argue the point. I merely want to remind us all that with this, as in most cases, there are two sides to the issue.

There Is Also Power in Negative Thinking

This was impressed on my mind the other day. I received a call to visit a young soldier in the Walter Reed Army Hospital, in Washington, D.C. He was recuperating from serious surgery. In his early twenties, Bradley had not attended church since he was a boy of six or seven. His home had not been a religious home. He had grown up with that casual attitude toward church and religious things which is characteristic of so many boys whose parents give no religious leadership. But now he was deeply concerned about spiritual things, for he had come all too close to the margin of life and death. So he called our church and I was listening to him talk.

But Let Bradley Tell His Own Story

"Reverend, I am interested in your church. I don't know what you

preach, or how you preach it. I have never read your beliefs, nor met your people. But still the Church of the Nazarene is my choice and I want to attend."

At this juncture my curiosity was at the boiling point and I could not resist asking him why he felt that way about our church. But pardon me for the interruption. Let Bradley proceed.

"I'll tell you why I like your church. *You stand against something.* I am told that you take a stand against smoking, drinking, dancing, movies, profanity, and things like that; don't you?"

I didn't hesitate a moment. I was at that moment (as I have always been) proud of our negatives. "You are exactly right, Bradley," I said. "We have often been accused of narrowness. But we can never be accused of fuzziness relative to our moral convictions. We ask our people to refrain from such things." And then Bradley continued.

"All these years I have had no time for church. But here in the army I have watched church fellows from many denominations. Too many of them live just like the run-of-mill sinner.

"In the army we learn to respect the signs which read, 'Out of Bounds.' They give us a wholesome respect for army leadership and army discretion. So when I looked around for a church I wanted one that had put up some

'Out of Bounds' signs for its people. And from what I have learned about the Church of the Nazarene, it has placed smoking, drinking, and such things 'Out of Bounds.' Frankly, Reverend, that is why I am interested in your church."

I Was Proud of Our Denominational Negatives

As I walked away from that visit I knew afresh that there is power in negative thinking. I was proud, too, of the sane and sound negatives of our church. We never do our cause any favor by muting our negatives and shouting our positives. I become somewhat suspicious of people who insist that it is time we play down our negatives and play up our positives. Be reminded, Nazarenes, that our negatives are yet some of the most potent weapons with which we can fight. It is my personal appraisal that our negatives perhaps give us as much distinctive strength as do our positives. Let's quit apologizing for the prohibitions of our General Rules in the *Manual*. They indeed are our glory.

I was thinking this as I walked away from Walter Reed Army Hospital after visiting with Bradley. And as I drove away in my car another thought came winging its way into my mind.

Isn't it passing strange that when God Almighty gave Moses the Ten Commandments eight of them were negative and only two of them were positive? "Thou shalt not" is the divine wording—and 80 per cent of the Decalogue is negative. Was God

unaware of the power of positive thinking? Did He not realize that to be so negative was dangerous and obsolete? Of this I am assured: the Lord was thoroughly aware of the values of positive thinking. *But He also knew the indubitable, vast, and potent power of negative thinking.*

Well, there it is. I have known from boyhood days that the negatives of God's "Thou shalt not's" have been world-shaking in their meaning. Then my visit with Bradley in Walter Reed Army Hospital reminded me anew how meaningful they are for our church.

Don't apologize for our negatives. It is to our credit and part of our strength that there are some "Out of Bounds" places for Nazarenes. And only the spiritually incalcitrant ignore them. It is short-circuiting our effectiveness to play down our negatives in the false hope that this will strengthen our positives. In a day when smoking is being declared a menace both nationally and internationally, let's be proud that all along we said to our people, "Don't smoke." In our day when the theater ads in daily papers fairly reek with unbridled lust, let's be proud that all along we have been negative toward the movies.

This is November—Thanksgiving Month. No, I had not forgotten it. I wanted to finish this editorial by saying in tones both joyous and firm, **I AM THANKFUL FOR THE NEGATIVES OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE.**

There is power in negative thinking.

I thank God for the questing and heart-searching that we are doing . . . In quiet, little groups of preachers you will often catch the significant sentences that point to a sincerity and a hunger—

After All, Why Are We Evangelistic?

By Wilson R. Lanpher*

WHEN THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE projects a quadrennium of focused attention on evangelism, it is far more than the effort of an aggressive holiness church to combine intelligent techniques with a revered and changeless commission. It is far more than the effort of a comparatively small religious body to shoulder its share in keeping pace with the population explosion, and at the same time cut into the huge mass of modern pagans and indifferent churchgoers. The truth is, the Christian Church is fighting for its survival, and while this is not a new experience for the Church, the struggle has become global and more intense during our lifetime. As pointed out by one writer, "Not since the seventh century, when the Moors swept across North Africa, and up through Spain and France, has there been such organized, fanatical opposition to the Christian faith as may be witnessed today in China and Russia, where churches are confiscated, congregations proscribed, and clergy persecuted, and even martyred. Where there is no positive opposition in so-called Christian lands, there is an aloofness from the Church, and indifference towards it, a materialism which does not respond to its message, and a

secularism which spurns its piety and ideals. Even within the church, there is lethargy, a lukewarmness, a compromising attitude that betrays the Gospel, and repudiates the morality and ethics the Church is supposed to uphold." And above all hangs the ominous shadow of a mushroom cloud, the cloud that drives some to futile fatalism, or a self-destroying Hedonism.

Personally, I thank God for the questing and soul-searching that we are doing as a church. In quiet, little groups of pastors you will often catch the significant sentences that point to a sincerity and a hunger—men who are wise enough to reach for new techniques and plans; men who are self-disciplined and zealous enough to lead the way; and men who are searching back in their own hearts for a motive that can stand the gaze of a suffering Saviour. Weary of the nominal and ordinary, they are moving into a new dimension of faith and obedience. Unhappy with mediocrity, they are devoting everything—soul-strength, time, nerve-strength, temptations, dry seasons, victories—all for the terribly compelling privilege of bringing Christ to the sins and the hungers of human beings.

The ministry is much more than a slow-moving stream for undedicated opportunists who fondly hope that,

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once placed in this stream, it will waft them without too much effort to places of privilege and power.

It is a place where, if your eyes are open, you can see the corroding acids of cynicism of your middle-aged people, searching your words, your acts, your very soul, to see if you are real. It is a place where your ears can hear the unformed and wordless questions of your teen-agers, who stand undecided, almost on tiptoe, entering the time when some decisions will be irrevocable, and some attitudes will bless or curse for life and for eternity. It is a place where your spiritual radar will pick up invisible danger warnings; places where your presence, your prayers, your spirit are desperately needed. And into these situations you must take a transparency of conduct, a faith tested in your personal furnace, and a set of your soul that communicates without words.

Now need I labor the point that we must go back, and go back often, to remind ourselves that being God's man inevitably involves suffering, but that if we suffer, we must not suffer as wrongdoers, but as unto the Lord, and unto Christ? We are sharing in His affliction, for the gospel's sake. And if we succeed, it is not really a credit to any personal cleverness, wisdom, or energy, given to us by special dispensation. The truth is that other men planted, and others watered; that we are entered into their labors; and above all that it is God who has given the increase. Humility is a fragile flower that doesn't survive too much light, especially if our fumbling fingers are adjusting the reflectors.

It is not only the special emphasis on evangelism that makes us go back and take a new look at old promises; it applies to every part of our calling. Or, if you please, there is a sense in

which every bit of our work is evangelism. Sometimes we resemble a man who is making copies of an original, but across the years other little lines and shadows have crept in, and they will continue until he goes away back and keeps just one copy away from the original. As long as we copy copies, it's bound to happen. We need closer exposure to the original. How can a religion whose Founder was born in a borrowed manger, killed on an ugly cross, amid jeering, disappointment, and desertion, and buried in a borrowed tomb, get too far away from the fact of suffering? How can we who not only profess His name, but have taken the solemn vows of being leaders and under-shepherds of the flock, settle for being anything less than copies of Him who said, "He that findeth his life shall lose it," and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"?

When our denomination was young, many of her effective ministers were comparatively untrained, many of her buildings were poor and inadequate, her position in the community was often one of reproach, and even accounting for the purchasing power of the dollar, her finances were pitiful. But she seemed to be rich in one commodity. She seemed to be rich in dedicated men; men whose depth of consecration had included losing everything anyway, so that anything on the plus side was an unlooked-for blessing; men whose actions said, "The difficult we can do right now; the impossible takes a little longer"; men who were serious about the message and ethics of the holiness message; men who were happier doing the will of God as they understood it than plotting a clever course to insure the best impression. They were men of courage, and if I am able to catch the thrust of their lives,

it came from an ungoverned, reckless, even mad, love and devotion to Jesus Christ.

And while it is a fruitless and impossible thing to separate a church from its times, yet one cannot but be a bit wistful in wondering if it is absolutely necessary to give up that beautiful, attractive, and compelling courage that forms the strong foundation on which we stand today. Yes, we have read history, and we know that almost every church starts out as we did. Heroism, sacrifice, and miracles were common; but we were to be the church that would not become the prisoner of our blessings and strengths. And so we built good and adequate churches, hoping they would not be too nice for tears and "Amens"; and so we built colleges, primarily to train ministers and missionaries, hoping that the ravages of secular, liberal education would not blight our youth; and so we improved our techniques. We saw the wisdom of system and of records. And as we were doing all of these things, the world around us was always changing. It was moving faster and faster. The history of our church includes two major world wars, with the accompanying decay. It includes a tremendous impact of political philosophy with emphasis on security. It includes a revival of interest in religion that somehow has failed to bring our nation to the moral resurgence and leadership the world desperately needs.

And in the midst of all or part of these forces we have been calling and training and influencing our ministers. And right about now we usually hear it said that they are a pretty good bunch. Well, of course we are; you can't knock your own family too much. But I can't help but wonder how we would "stack up" without our rose-colored glasses.

How would we rate in terms of choosing to be called "men of prayer and piety," rather than to be known as good organizers and propaganda men?

Do we nourish such a deep longing for security that it dictates our service to Christ? How would we rate in terms of raw courage that went into a town to hold a campaign just because we felt it was God's will?

Some have long ago settled for the mediocre and the average, and it is not a menace peculiar to any age. Young preachers, old preachers—it's a fight for all. Some have spent their energy in a search for gimmicks and gadgets, as if the work of holy men could be done with some trick. Some have paid homage to figures and numbers, either to show by numbers that they were progressing or to excuse because of them, that they were more rugged and tougher than their brethren—but both of them bowing to numbers. And some have just sort of adjusted to "getting along." Not enough courage or plan or passion to be much good, but at the same time trying not to make anyone too mad. Within our own Zion we must keep evaluating and re-evaluating, or else we will find ourselves more conditioned to the voice of what image we are creating in terms of superficial criteria than we are to the sob of a sin-crazed world.

We can create an image of busyness and breathless activity, or we can adopt an insipid aloofness and retreat from reality on the grounds that "I just can't work with people who won't go the old-fashioned way."

What do we mean, we can't work with them? Who else has a needier heart? Who else is our special assignment? Who else may be waiting for the sincerity of our motives to shine through accumulated layers of occupational professionalism? The burning question that you and I must face

in the secret recesses of our own spirits, and before the outstretched arms of a crucified Saviour, is, "Lovest thou me more than these?"

As a denomination we have left the store fronts, the tent meetings, leaky tents at camp meeting; the impulsive, romantic missionary giving in "Hallelujah Marches." Our ministry is better trained; our singers and musicians are equipped to move from Lillenas to Bach. Our seminary men can step into good teaching jobs. Our financial standing is one to be envied. **BUT MUST IT BE AN INEVITABLE PROCEDURE** that, as God blesses us, we must be conformed and pushed into a worldly standard of success? We can go on talking about fire when our hearts are cold. We can go on talking about peace when we are just lazy and don't want to fight. We can measure ourselves with some church that doesn't believe in an all-out surrender to Christ and the infilling of the Holy Spirit and we look pretty good, but I wonder which church fits us best in Revelation—Ephesus or Laodicea? "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil! and thou hast tried them that say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Or would Laodicea fit us better? "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire,

that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed. and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

What are our motives for evangelism? What else can they be than a pure and consuming, kindling love for Jesus Christ? A love that holds the gazer's eyes above the insincere, the chiseler, and the opportunist. A love that scorns defeat and excuses. A love that is both quick and patient; a love that feeds our own souls as it feeds the hungry to whom we minister. We are fond of saying that this love helped Paul to burn his way through a pagan world. Well, ours is a pagan world for all of its profession. We are apt to say that it carried Peter beyond his cowardice. Well, the opportunities for courage are not limited to the first century. And we like to think that our beloved church was started by holy men, whose hearts burned with the message of God's truth. Well, ours is just such a needy day, and God's truth is just the same, and we can be the holy men of love, if we want to be more than anything else.

In the final accounting it will be the quality of our love for Christ that tells the story. Our works of hay and stubble, done with inferior and unworthy motive, will perish. Let us be those vessels of gold and silver, instead of wood and earth. Let our motives stand the searching light of a Lord whose truth echoes in our souls, and whose work is still done by men who care and love enough.

Unless you have a tracking station—

Don't Put Your Sermons in Orbit

By Frank Howie*

ST. AUGUSTINE once declared that he preferred the criticism of grammarians rather than to have his people unable to understand him. "What is the value to me," he asks, "of a key of gold if it does not open the door I wish to enter, or what is the harm of a wooden one if it does?" So, according to the great bishop of Hippo, even the rules of grammar, be they as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, must meekly submit to revision if they dare to hinder the communication of the message of God!

A preacher will seldom, if ever, be faced with such a choice. But the point is clear enough; it stresses the importance of preaching sermons which can be understood by the average congregation. It hardly needs to be said that the preacher will often call upon his people to follow his best thought; but he must not preach over their heads, either by the profundity of his thought or the subtlety of his rhetoric. His thought may demonstrate his learning, but will not clarify his message; his rhetoric may ornament his message, but will not illuminate his thinking. There is no virtue in having one's congregation gaze with stupefied wonder at the orbital flight of their pastor's sermon—especially when most tracking stations have lost com-

munication with it! "By all means," says one scathing critic, "state your points strikingly; but who in all the world are they likely to strike if they go whizzing over people's heads?"

Who indeed?

Nor are we to suppose that this indictment refers to so-called "intellectual" sermons. The same is true of the address that is not spoken in modern thought forms. It is essential that a preacher and his audience be on the same wave length. It is the failure of the speaker to recognize this important point that results in poor reception of the message by the congregation. "Reception," says Ilion T. Jones, "is a two-way responsibility. A preacher cannot escape his responsibility by laying all the blame on the hearers. The purpose of the sermon is not merely to ANNOUNCE the gospel as a herald would publicly read a king's proclamation, but to COMMUNICATE it. Can it be said that a sermon has been fully PREACHED until it has been put in language which hearers can understand? Has the preacher's function been fulfilled until that is done? The act of preaching is completed only when the gospel has been proclaimed IN SUCH MANNER that the man who listens attentively understands its meaning in terms of his own thinking."¹

James S. Stewart writes in a similar strain: "In your business of bring-

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¹*Principles and Practice of Preaching.*

ing the Christian religion decisively to bear upon the needs and problems of a twentieth century congregation, the language of Nicaea, or even of the Westminster Divines, may be a hindrance rather than a help. It is sheer slackness to fling at your people great slabs of religious phraseology derived from a bygone age, and leave them the task of retranslation into terms of their own experience; that is your task, not theirs.”²

Of all that has been said so far, one conclusion is inescapable: preaching must not lose touch with life. If it is to be effective, preaching must be a contemporary message spoken to a contemporary human situation. It must never lose sight of the man in the pew. To realize this ideal, the preacher must prepare his sermon with the congregation in his mind; he must “go down to the world of men” and feel the undertone of tragedy that throbs with the heartbeat of untold multitudes; he must enter into the inmost soul of humanity and wrestle with the eternal mysteries of sin and sorrow, pain and death. He must abhor to be identified with the preacher who, through the swirling mists of abstract thinking and Biblical learning, builds his pulpit among the stars, and, like the Greek gods on Olympus, looks down philosophically

on the real world below where men toil and women weep. His message, far from being remote and detached, must be related to life.

In this connection you will no doubt be reminded of that famous personage, the parish-priest of austerity:

*A parish-priest of austerity
Climbed up in a high church-
steeple
To be nearer God, that he might
hand
His Word down to the people.*

*And in sermon-script he daily
wrote
What he THOUGHT was sent
from heaven,
And dropped it down on the peo-
ple's heads
Two times one day in seven!*

*In his age, God said, “Come down
and die,”
And he cried out from his stee-
ple,
“Where art Thou, Lord?” and the
Lord replied,
“Down here among My people”!*

Come, my brethren, let us forsake our pedestal and go down to the world of men: let us stoop to conquer!

Heralds of God.

GEO. WASHINGTON never told a lie, but he never had a Form 1040 to fill in.—CHARLEY GRANT.

THE CHARACTER of a man is clearly shown in what he is against.
—HAROLD K. SHEETS, “God’s Answer for Today,” *Wesleyan Methodist*.

The Doctrine of Christ

By Stephen S. White

II.

THE SECOND DIVISION of my discussion has to do with theology as defined in the first section of this paper—the divine phase of redemption—Christology, or the doctrine of the deity of Christ and the Incarnation; objective soteriology, or the atonement as it centers in the death of Jesus Christ; and theology in the narrower sense of the use of this term, or the doctrine of God with its emphasis upon the Trinity. Here I follow Curtis rather than Wiley. Curtis does not discuss the human effects of redemption as fully and clearly as Wiley. In fact the former, while he follows Arminius and Wesley to a large extent in his anthropology, or as to the human results of the gospel, is not particularly interested in the Arminian-Wesleyan debate with Calvinism. Curtis is especially concerned with the redeeming God, the God who made possible the wonderful salvation which Wiley so well describes. The former stands amazed in the presence of the Incarnation, the death of Jesus Christ, and the whole Triune God, who is so completely involved in this undertaking. No one else from whom I have read has given the Christian religion such a picture of the redeeming God.

Following this brief introduction to Curtis' view, let's consider his teaching as to the deity of Jesus Christ. A Congregational minister who had

read Curtis' *The Christian Faith* said to Dr. Curtis: "I never read a book in my life where Jesus Christ is as big as in your book." The reviewer of *The Christian Faith in Zion's Herald*, a famous New England Methodist paper, declared: "We know of no better setting forth anywhere of the Deity of our Lord, with all its complications, and ramifications, and implications." In class Curtis said: "I would not give a thing for the universe without Jesus Christ as I believe in Him." In this connection he also declared: "If I go into eternity and find that Christ isn't present, I will back out and leave it to those there." These and other statements which he made in his lectures in the classroom harmonize with the closing words of his discussion of the deity of Jesus Christ. After decrying the agnosticism of Ritschlian theology he writes:

You cannot transform our Saviour into an interrogative and not do violence to the whole extent of the redemptional consciousness, from that of the man who has found forgiveness and peace in Christ to-day, back through the Christian centuries, back through the apostles, to our Lord's own conception of his mission and his person. This, though, is not all. This agnosticism tends to empty the atonement for sin of its profoundest ethical and sacrificial meaning. This meaning is deeper than any of our theories, and more important than all of our theories—it is the root-peculiarity of the Christian faith—and it is this: God, in his awful holiness, so loved

man that he gave, out of his own being, his eternal uncreated Son to save them from sin unto everlasting life. Therefore, our salvation has come only by the most costly self-sacrifice on the part of God the Father. And in this expensive self-sacrifice in the name of moral regard and love lies the ethical quality as well as the evidence of infinite love. But once hold that Jesus Christ was a creature, and you have thrown all this holy costliness away. And this agnosticism says that it cannot tell whether Christ was a creature or not. *We must have a Christology that can tell, or violate, and then vitiate, the Christian experience in redemption.* It is not systematic theology, but the vitality of the Christian life, which is at stake (Curtis, p. 232).

This means that the unquestioned deity of Jesus Christ is just as essential to the proper understanding of the atonement, or objective soteriology, as it is to an adequate conception of the person of Jesus Christ.

Next we consider Curtis' teaching as to the Incarnation. First, there are certain facts which we must keep in mind. Jesus Christ was very God, for Curtis, as we have already indicated. Along with this emphasis, Curtis has made a very definite place for the humanity of Jesus Christ. He was very man as well as very God. This leads to the chief problem of the Incarnation. How were the divine and human natures united in Christ? Or how does Curtis explain what happened when the eternal Word became flesh? The eternal Son of God gave up His preincarnate glory, but not the deity of His pre-existence in the Godhead. The divine and human natures were in the one Person—Jesus Christ—from the very beginning of the Incarnation, but both were never in the foreground of His self-consciousness at the same moment. Most of the time He held His deity in abeyance; that is, He chose to restrain it from activity in self-consciousness. However, it should never be forgotten that He as

a Person decided which of the two natures would be active in His self-consciousness. By this means He lived much of the time on the human level, or under the limitations which men always have. Please also bear in mind that even Jesus' human nature was free from sin. This means that He never suffered any of the limitations which go with a *sinful* human nature. Otherwise, however, He was circumscribed in many ways by His finite, human nature. Herein lies the nature of the kenosis, the self-emptying, which resulted from the Incarnation. But it must be remembered that, although Curtis emphasized the kenosis more than some have, he did not believe the kenosis meant that the essential deity of the Son of God was given up when He became man.

A few quotations substantiate the above description of the Incarnation:

The divine life as a personal experience—as “glory over glory streaming”—our Lord could and did give up; but he did not, and he could not, give up the original structural law, the basal plan of his being, that intrinsic fundament by which alone he had the possibility of the ineffable experience of God. Our Saviour did not achieve manhood by a reduction of his deity. Truly he became man, but after he became man he had every divine capacity, every divine power, every divine attribute (Curtis, p. 243).

Let's unite with this quotation two other shorter quotations:

The miracle of the Incarnation, as I lay hold of it, is the conjoining of two structural plans of being so that the incarnate Son of God has now two inherent capacities, one for divine experience and the other for human experience (Curtis, p. 245).

After the Incarnation our Lord was one person, living under two abiding structural laws of being, and thus having two kinds of capacity, one kind divine, the other kind human. His impoverishment, therefore, was not as to nature but as to personal experience. And the degree of this impoverishment was due to his redemptional aim to live

a typical human life "down to its bitter dregs of death" (Curtis, p. 246).

For instance, Jesus Christ was omniscient during His earthly life, "But this does not mean that the attribute of omniscience was aplunge in self-consciousness all through that period of humiliation" (Curtis, p. 244).

Before leaving the subject of the Incarnation, one other item in Curtis' view must be mentioned. The Incarnation "was an abnormal event entirely due to man's sin, and in definite preparation for the atonement by the death of Christ" (Curtis, p. 318). This harmonizes with the teaching of the Bible, but it is contrary to the thought of many theologians of the recent past and the present. They have held that the Cross is a part of the normal development of man and the world. Thus there would have been a Calvary even if there had been no sin.

This brings us to the consideration of Curtis' doctrine of the atonement, or objective soteriology. It is the center of his theology. At this point, let's permit Curtis to speak again for himself:

First of all, the systematic theologian must have, as a basis, a genuine biblical theology. And I mean here something far beyond the fragmentary works which are often published in the name of biblical theology. The whole Bible must be philosophically grasped as a Christian unity which is manifested in variety. The moment this is done there will be a center to the Bible; and without doubt that center is the death of our Lord (Curtis, p. 185).

He also says that the central note of systematic theology is "the redemption of man as a racial brotherhood of individual moral persons" (Curtis, p. 188). Already we have been introduced to this center in our study of the deity of Jesus Christ. If the latter had not been the Son of God in deed and in truth, as well as the Son of Man, His death on the Cross

would not have had any significance.

But now let's consider Curtis' actual theory of the atonement, which may be stated in four points: (1) God's purpose in redemption is to obtain a race of holy persons. (2) Jesus Christ through His incarnation and death becomes the dynamic center of the new race, "the everlasting moral influence" (Curtis, p. 319). (3) The atonement for man's sin was absolutely necessary. Curtis writes:

More definitely, my view of the necessity of atonement is just as rigid as that held in the satisfaction theory. The pure satisfactionist holds that the satisfaction of justice, by the full expression of it, is absolutely necessary in the very constitution of the Divine Being. I hold that the satisfaction of holiness, by the full expression of it, is absolutely necessary in the very constitution of the Divine Being personalized. The further question whether the self-sacrifice of the Son of God was so absolutely necessary that nothing else could have taken its place is to be answered without hesitation in the affirmative. For it is inconceivable that a method so costly would have been chosen could God have entirely expressed his holiness in any other way (Curtis, p. 320).

Later, on the same page, Curtis states this all-important part of his view of the atonement thus:

The pivotal point can now be given. It is this: *In establishing a new race, in a situation still abnormal with sin, the holiness of God must be as fully expressed in moral concern as it was expressed by the destruction of the old race.* There must be complete ethical continuity between the two racial events. Not one step can be taken toward the final expression of moral love until there is as much hatred of sin manifested as was manifested before. This is only saying that in all situations God must be true to the law of holiness (Curtis, pp. 320-21).

(4) Two quotations from Curtis must be given here:

Jesus Christ was not *personally* a sinner, and was not *personally* punished; that is certain. But, on the other hand,

his suffering was not ordinary individual suffering—it was official, representative suffering. He suffered, as the Race-Man, for the whole race. He carried the race in his consciousness (Curtis, p. 321).

The deepest depths of the suffering of Jesus Christ were reached when He was abandoned by the Eternal Father. Then the God-Man cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "The Eternal Father abandoned his own Son and allowed him to pass through death all alone" (Curtis, p. 322). Two other quotations in this connection will help us to better understand Curtis' emphasis at this point:

I am, after long, shrinking hesitation, unable to escape the conclusion that the Son of God, as the racial Mediator, met in the beginning of the isolation of his death the whole shock of the wrath of God against sin, that he was treated precisely as any sinner is treated. His death was more than the tearing apart of body and soul; his death had in its experience the extreme ethical content of personal isolation (Curtis, p. 323).

I am convinced that Jesus Christ in his death actually suffered infinite anguish. Toward this conviction I was started by Calvin, but not alone by him. For a long time before reading Calvin I had been growing dissatisfied with all the little things which modern theologians are saying about the death of Christ. It is the death of the Son of God. It must be lifted totally out of the world of humanitarian mitigation. It must be made a boundless agony in the experience of God himself. It must be made such a finality in awful self-sacrifice that no Christian man, and no saint in all eternity, can ever think of it without suffering (Curtis, p. 324).

I'm not surprised that Curtis used to say, "In the Incarnation, God made himself forever different," or that the late Edwin Lewis affirmed the same truth thus: "This side of Calvary God is structurally different, having subjected himself not only to creaturehood, but to tragedy for man's sake."

This section on Curtis' theory of the atonement can best be concluded with the first paragraph on this topic—*The Complete Expression of the Holiness of God*:

When we remember who our Lord is, the only-begotten Son of God the Father; when we realize that the Father "spared not" his own Son, but delivered him up to this awful experience in death, surely we can begin to feel the *ethical intensity* of the entire redemptional deed. By this sacrifice of his Son God's relentless hatred of sin is expressed as it could not be expressed by the total annihilation of a universe of sinners. The death of Christ does not, could not, express justice of any kind, or in any degree whatsoever. Never can you understand the death of Christ if you cling to that vitiating idea of justice. But the death of our Lord does express moral concern, does show that *God cares tremendously about sin*. It is not a single item, but the combination—the absolute deity of our Saviour; his *personal* pre-existence in the eternal glory of the Godhead; his *personal* obedience in giving up that divine estate; his continued obedience even while shrinking back from the rending and isolation and divine abandonment and infinite anguish of death; the Father's exhaustless love for his only Son; the Father's profound *need* of his Son for full personal fellowship; and yet the Father's unremitting insistence that redemption shall be accomplished only by this measureless humiliation of his Son and sacrifice of himself—it is this combination which steeps the whole deed with intense ethical quality. One drop of humanitarianism; one drop of unitarianism, any form of unitarianism; one drop of agnostic Ritschlianism; one drop of even vagueness as to full self-consciousness in the persons of the Trinity, and the ethical quality is almost sure to vanish instantly. In one sentence, we may say that it is the *divine tenacity in holding fast to the total penal event of death at such infinite cost in self-conscious self-sacrifice*—it is this tenacity of God so expensive personally which reveals his moral concern (Curtis, p. 326).

(Concluded next issue)

Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle

Eph. 4:3-11

“ENDEAVOURING” OR “EAGER”?

THE VERB is *spoudazo*, which literally means “to make haste,” and so “to be zealous or eager, to give diligence.”¹ In the King James Version it is translated “endeavour” in two other places, but be “diligent,” do or give “diligence” five times, and once each “was forward,” “labour,” and “study” (II Tim. 2:15). It is obvious that “eager” (R.S.V.) expresses the idea of the Greek more accurately and adequately than “endeavouring” (K.J.V.). It is also an improvement on “giving diligence” (A.R.V.).

UNION OR UNITY?

The Greek word is *henotes*, which occurs only here and in verse 13. It comes from *hen*, “one,” and so very literally means “oneness.”

True ecumenicity is not a union of denominations, but “the unity of the Spirit.” In other words, the thing the New Testament teaches and that Christ desires is not organizational union but spiritual unity.

“ONE BODY . . . ONE SPIRIT”

This “unity of the Spirit” (v. 3) is spelled out more specifically in verses 4-6. The true Church of Jesus Christ

is “one body,” not organizationally, but spiritually. For it is “one body” maintained as such by “one Spirit.” Here is the ecumenical emphasis of the New Testament. It is still God’s design and desire. When we are working for this we are “workers together with him.” The Middle Ages had a far greater organizational unity of the Church than obtains today. But does that mean that this one, monolithic Church was more spiritual and doing a greater evangelistic work than the many evangelical denominations today? To ask the question is to answer it.

The fifth verse is of interest to those who know Greek. For it contains all three genders of the word “one”—*heis*, *mia*, *hen*—the only place like it in the New Testament. The word “one” occurs seven times in verses 4-6.

The fourth verse stresses the spiritual unity of the Church; the fifth verse, its oneness in loyalty, doctrine, and fellowship. The sixth verse points to the ultimate source of all authority in the Church—God the Father, who is “above all” (transcendent), “through all” (pervasive), and “in all” (immanent).

“CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE”

The rendering of the King James Version (v. 8) is a literal translation.

¹Abbott-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

The only trouble is that it does not make much sense in English. Abbott-Smith says that the abstract noun translated "captivity" is used for the concrete, "captives."² Thayer agrees,³ as do Arndt and Gingrich, who render it, "prisoners of war."⁴ *The Berkeley Version* conveys this thought with its translation: "He led the captured away in captivity." The simplest and clearest rendering is: "He led a host of captives" (Good-speed, R.S.V.). Weymouth and Moffatt have much the same.

"LOWER PARTS OF THE EARTH"

This strange expression has provoked an endless amount of discussion, especially in the older commentaries. There are two main interpretations. The first would refer it to a descent into Hades (cf. the so-called Apostles' Creed). The second would apply it to the Incarnation. Some of the Early Church fathers, such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Jerome, together with Erasmus, Bengel, Meyer, Alford, and others, took the former view. On the other hand, Calvin proposed the latter, and many modern commentators have followed him.

Writing in the *Expositor's Greek Testament*, S. D. F. Salmond says: "Neither grammar nor textual criticism gives a decisive answer."⁵ If "of the earth" is taken as a genitive of apposition, it means "the lower parts which are the earth." The possessive genitive would be "the lower parts belonging to the earth"; that is, Hades. The comparative genitive would mean "the parts lower than the earth." Salmond comments: "The *katotera* may mean the parts lower than the earth itself, i. e., Hades; but

it may also mean the parts lower than heaven, i.e., the earth."⁶ A comparison with the great kenosis passage in Phil. 2:5-10 suggests that the latter interpretation is preferable. Salmond adopts this conclusion.⁷

Eadie thinks the same. He says: "We agree with the majority of expositors who understand the words as simply denoting the earth."⁸ He further points out the fact that the comparative—"lower parts of the earth"—could very well describe Christ's lowly birth in a manger, His lowly occupation as a Carpenter, His humiliating death, and His "extemporized and hasty" funeral.⁹ All this fits in with Paul's emphasis in the kenosis passage. Christ not only became a Man but a Servant, and humbled himself to death, "even the death of the cross." It does not seem necessary to look further for the meaning of this obscure phrase in Ephesians.

"APOSTLES"

The noun *apostolos* comes from the verb *apostello*, which properly means "to send away, to dispatch on service; 1. to send with a commission, or on service."¹⁰ Jesus was the first "apostle," and He chose twelve disciples to be His apostles to the world. In John 17:18 He prays: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (cf. John 20:21).

Barnabas and Paul are also called apostles (Acts 14:14). Vincent writes: "The distinguishing features of an apostle were, a commission directly from Christ: being a witness of the resurrection: special inspiration: supreme authority: accrediting

²*Op. cit.*, p. 15.

³*Lexicon*, p. 18.

⁴*Lexicon*, p. 26.

⁵EGT, V, 326.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ephesians* p. 283.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 294-95.

¹⁰Abbott-Smith, p. 54.

by miracles: unlimited commission to preach and to found churches."¹¹

"PROPHETS"

The word is taken directly from the Greek *prophetes*. This comes from the verb *prophemi*, which literally means "say before," but which can also mean "speak forth" or "speak for." Liddell and Scott note that the noun was used in classical Greek for "one who speaks for a god and interprets his will."¹² In the New Testament it means "inspired preacher and teacher, organ of special revelations from God."¹³ Arndt and Gingrich note that it is used "also in other senses, without excluding the actual prophets, of men who proclaim the divine message with special preparation and with a special mission."¹⁴ In the New Testament it seems to mean "preacher."

"EVANGELISTS"

The word, which is a transliteration of the Greek *evangelistes*, is found only two other places in the New Testament. In Acts 21:8, Philip is

referred to as "the evangelist." In II Tim. 4:5 the young Timothy is admonished to "do the work of an evangelist."

The term comes from the verb *evangelizo* ("evangelize"), which means "proclaim glad tidings." An evangelist, then, is one who preaches the "gospel" (Greek *evangelos*), the good news that Christ has died to save men. The evangelists in the Early Church were probably itinerant preachers.¹⁵

"PASTORS AND TEACHERS"

"Pastor" is the Latin term for "shepherd." The Greek word *poimen* also means "shepherd." It is used of Christ (John 10:11, 14, 16; Heb. 13:20; I Pet. 2:25). Here it is used of Christian pastors. Homer, in his *Iliad*, refers to "pastors of the people" (*poimena laon*). The pastor is to be the shepherd of his flock.

Apparently the pastors and teachers were the same. Vincent comments: "The omission of the article from *teachers* seems to indicate that pastors and teachers are included under one class."¹⁶

¹¹*Word Studies*, III, 389.

¹²*Lexicon*, p. 1540.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 731.

¹⁵Vincent, *op. cit.*, III, 389.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 390.

The uplifting power of the inner grace of holiness gives a new interpretation to life, old age, and death.

—J. B. CHAPMAN

Jesus gives us an easy yoke for pulling the loads of life.

—J. RUFUS MOSELEY

Men of faith see the hidden good in all experiences.—J. R. M.

Someday we shall see that we have gotten our best things from heaven, not in the days of our earthly joy and gladness, but in the times of trial and affliction.—J. R. MILLER.

Life, to be spiritual and aglow with the life of God, must be forever responsive to the fresh movements of the Spirit.

—J. RUFUS MOSELEY

Shall it be said that a church which can take good care of all other responsibilities is a poor caretaker of its evangelism? (Editor.)

Evangelism First; Evangelists Last!

By John G. Hall*

BY NOW the theme of "Evangelism First" is deeply embedded into the minds of pastor and laymen alike. Our great quadrennial theme has made us all aware of our reason for existence, evangelism.

But to inject a sincere question, has it made us any more aware of the part the evangelist has in this over-all matter? I sincerely believe that God calls some men (and women) to full-time evangelism, and that we as pastors and laymen have a responsibility to keep them in the place that God calls them to serve.

I would point out three things in regard to the matter of evangelism.

I. The Support of the Evangelist

A workman is worthy of his hire. However, I have heard it uttered from evangelists that, if things didn't pick up, they would have to go back into the pastorate. And to come to the defense of the evangelist, I don't think that this was uttered from a bitter spirit. It does seem rather odd though that we can finance our general and district budgets, run the Sunday school, N.Y.P.S., N.F.M.S.,

and building programs, but then in some cases we go to the evangelist after a revival with the crumbs from the table and say, "It isn't much but our hearts are in it."

These words are not written by a disgruntled evangelist but by a concerned pastor.

Another aspect to consider is that the evangelist usually has a family back home that must be cared for. This means simply that his cost of living is higher than the man in the pastorate. Then don't forget the first of the year when we must all stand before the judgment seat of Uncle Sam. The evangelist must also pay social security. In most churches a part or all of the pastor's social security is paid, but in many instances that same church does not feel led to help the evangelist in this matter. The people rationalize that they gave him such a big offering that he can afford to pay his own. It is strange in human nature how people never get enthused to render aid for past services.

The evangelist sacrifices much by being in the field, not the least of which is his home life. Let us therefore take care of him.

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II. The Evangelist's Obligation to the Church

A church can be made or broken by the type of man the evangelist happens to be. There are some people whom the pastor can never reach but the evangelist can. This is only one reason that we must have revivals. But on the other hand an evangelist might do more harm than can ever be undone. Brethren, we are all enlightened enough to know that there are some things done in the name of holiness evangelism that ought not to be, but we must also realize that as long as we have the real thing there will be those who will bring a reproach to God's plan of evangelism. However, every man I have worked with has been wholly dedicated in the task of winning souls. There might be a yardstick that an evangelist could follow. He should preach in such a manner and live in such a way that he would not be ashamed to pastor the church in which he is holding the revival, when the revival is terminated.

III. The Responsibility of the Church in General Toward Evangelism

We are prone to think of evangelism only in terms of revival meetings, but this is only one phase of it. Evangelism is a heart motivation to go and tell others about the greatness of God and what He has done for the individual. We are sadly missing the import of the Great Commission when we have evangelism in four dainty packages: fall, winter, spring, and Youth Week revivals. We must be evangelistic in every department of the church. How desperately we need to find for ourselves the meaning of evangelism and then live it, preach it, and sing it everywhere we go, or else some future generation will turn through the pages of a church history book and will read the epitaph of the church once known as the Church of the Nazarene!

Brethren, evangelism is first; but as we utter this noble statement, let us not forget that evangelists are not last.

How well I recall Dr. Augustus Strong telling us about a memory he held of his father! One cold Sunday morning, the household awakened to find that the snow had piled so high during the night that it seemed, to the sturdy sons of the home, that there would be every justification for not thinking of going to the country church which was their religious custom to attend each Lord's day. "Oh, yes," said the father, "all the more reason why we should go today!" After a substantial breakfast, he had the sons plow out to the barn and hitch up the team. As they passed down the country road, other families came to the windows to see them pass. When they arrived, he set one of them to building fires in the stoves, the others to clearing the walks to the church door, while he placed the books in order. . . . The community round about chuckled, at first, then they got the point. Old Daddy Strong was telling them something that was to be a lesson that the sturdy sons and lovely daughters of that community thereabouts were never to forget. They, too, in turn, sent their sons to the barns to harness their horses to surreys and heavy sledges. And they, also, plowed their way to the church.—DR. F. B. McALLISTER, "When Home Is Right," *Watchman-Examiner*.

Called by one pastor "the most important men in my church," are they effective in your church? (Editor.)

Ushers . . . Hosts in God's House

By Otis Keener*

CHURCHES with no ushers should have ushers! Churches with poor ushers should have better ushers!

Within every congregation are Christian men who are capable of fulfilling this important task. Any pastor may have these helpful assistants if he is willing to select and train them to serve.

First we must understand the purpose of an usher. The word *usher* is from the French word *ostiarus*. It means a "doorkeeper" or "one who cares for the door of a chamber." This definition may suffice for the usher of a public building or stadium, but ushering in church goes far beyond keeping the door. The pastor must be the first to see the potential of efficient ushering. Then as the position is elevated in his own thinking, he will be willing to give the time to train these who would serve in the house of God.

A Church Usher Is a Host in the House of God

When we magnify this post of duty, men will desire a place on the committee of ushers. Like the musicians, teachers, church officers, and choir members, ushers must see the valuable contribution they make to the church.

*Formerly pastor of Capitol Hill Tabernacle in Oklahoma City; has recently been active in overseas evangelism. *Pulpit*, April, 1963. Used by permission.

Ushering is more than halfhearted guarding the door and receiving the offering. Trained men can effectively assist pastor and people in worship.

Their first important privilege is welcoming the stranger. What is the first impression guests receive at your church? Does that "first timer" feel alone and out of place standing just inside the door? Having no host at the house of the Lord says to the stranger, "We were not expecting you." This leaves any guest in an awkward position, wondering if he is really welcome. Capable ushers can change all this. With a friendly smile they speak for God saying, "Welcome." With warm handclasp they speak for the church, saying, "Wanted." What a privilege to be appointed as a host in God's house!

Here also is an opportunity for men to obey the Scriptures. John wrote, "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to *strangers*" (III John 5). The Apostle Paul instructed us, "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain *strangers*" (Heb. 13:1-2). Is there a better place for hospitality to begin than in the church? I think not. In fact to neglect this commandment here is to fail in fulfilling it at all.

Ushers are welcoming worshipers to God's house. This must not be done by people who reluctantly

accept the position as just another assignment which no one wants. Neither must this post be filled by unspiritual well-wishers who do not really love the lost. It must be a precious ministry, not a mechanical procedure. We must dignify the office until men with holy desires will see the opportunity to serve God and man.

A Church Usher Helps Prepare the People for Worship

His competent ministry assists in providing an atmosphere of reverence. Reverence and revelation go together. "Be still, and know that I am God." God reveals himself unto those who respect His presence. Boisterous confusion is disturbing to the worshipers and disappointing to God. The sanctuary should remain a place of prayer. Christ exalted the purpose of His Father's house. Dedicated, disciplined ushers can control the spiritual temperature of the service. Their attitudes will be contagious to the congregation. They can solve many problems while the people worship. Therefore these men must be properly prepared. They must know what God and the pastor expect of them. Then they will know how to act in given situations.

Let me illustrate. At times every church meets the problem of irreverent youth. All pastors have faced the decision of whether to hurt the spirit of the service by calling young people down or by allowing them to disturb the service. Even fine Christian youth can be forgetful on occasion. Certain conditions in hearts or homes can lead to times of trouble. How can we teach reverence and yet not injure them by open correction?

This became the topic of discussion at one of our meetings of pastor and ushers. The following conclusions

were drawn. The offenders must be dealt with for their sake as well as the sake of the service. We observed that the young often sat in a large group near the back of the auditorium. (This is due to unwise parents.) It seemed to all of us unfair to ruin a sermon by inserting words of warning which would distract every person present. Often it would embarrass innocent youth in the area. Out of our evening of discussion a definite course of action was agreed upon.

The usher would spot quickly the ringleader of any episode. He would leave his assigned post and quietly find a seat in the midst of the young people. If possible, without undue confusion, he would sit right beside the transgressor.

This move brought immediate results. Without exception it solved the disturbance and restored a sense of sobriety and attention. We also witnessed long-range results that proved beneficial. The innocent young people began to scatter in small groups to other parts of the building. Some even moved toward the front. The "trouble area" was under constant surveillance by the ushers. This produced a deterrent to those who would cause confusion. The offenders thought twice before risking the action which would bring an usher to their side for the remainder of the service. Dedicated men were assisting their pastor in maintaining a spirit of reverence.

What a joy it was to see these men act with initiative! They knew what the pastor wanted them to do. This was the secret. They could act with freedom only if they felt sure I was behind them.

Many other problems were solved during our times of training. Hours

(Continued on page 23)

The Glory of Divine Forgiveness

By Donald V. Peal*

FORGIVENESS is one of the greatest gifts on earth. It took four thousand years for any but a vestige of mankind to comprehend the divine value of forgiveness. For the Old Testament is replete with man's adamant unforgiveness—the composite parts of which are malice, vindictiveness, hatred, dishonesty, and even murder. This has been manifested by the gruesome and cruel butchery of ancient warfare where opiates and anesthetics were unknown. Thus eyes were punched out, legs and arms cut off with blunt weapons, and the innumerable victims of it all were abandoned to a helpless and hopeless, slow death as they wallowed in their own blood and suffered. During these thousands of years legions of demons inhabited the minds of men. Why didn't God stop it?

A godly dignity was built innately into mankind at the beginning when God blew His breath of life into the nostrils of Adam, making him a free moral agent. Thus God consistently refuses to interfere with man's volunteer choice. He is at liberty to choose either the Saviour or Satan, either Christlikeness or cruelty. Otherwise he would be only an automation, as godless as a robot. So therefore he can choose forgiveness or unforgiveness.

The dark centuries of the Old

Testament contained candles lit for guidance at each entrance of righteousness, held in the hands of patriarch and prophets. These candles burned brightly because their flames were fed by forgiveness. Our example was the action of Moses when he came down off the mountain and found the Hebrews worshiping a gold calf. God wanted Moses to step aside and let Him destroy those stiff-necked people in a moment. But Moses said to God: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." This is one of the most salient demonstrations of forgiveness ever shown.

Such lights in the dark have now under grace given way to the light of Jesus Christ. But many are still living in the dark age where God no longer tolerates "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." They blow out their candles by unforgiveness. An example of this is two men who held a grudge of unforgiveness for each other for years. Finally they met on the street, at which time they locked hands and killed each other with jackknives. Millions would contemplate such with horror, yet they themselves harbor uncommitted acts of unforgiveness containing murderous hatred, which God deems equally hideous.

A one-word definition for grace is *forgiveness*.

*Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Pineville, Louisiana.

I say with emphasis that nothing on earth is more valuable to mankind than forgiveness, through which souls have the opportunity to escape the eternal torment of living in a satanic hell. For had forgiveness for sinful man never been entertained by God, He never would have sent His own Son to redeem repentant souls. And were forgiveness not included in the Holy Scriptures, the Bible would be a meaningless book. Hence Christians not grasping comprehensively the illimitable power of forgiveness and making it an important part of their personalities cannot possibly get more than fringe benefits here on earth from the Lord. Christ brought forgiveness from heaven. If forgiveness is from heaven, then, conversely true, unforgiveness is a potent poison which Satan dredges up from unholy hell and injects into the minds of men.

By results which speak louder than words, one is at liberty to behold either forgiveness or unforgiveness at work, for a plenitude of both ever exist. He is spiritually, morally, and mentally right who shuns unforgiveness by being aware of the pernicious effect it has had on others and at the same time by making forgiveness a continuous part of his life.

The Lord, who spoke seven sentences as He hung on the Cross, said as the first one, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Also Stephen, the first martyr, said as he was being stoned to death, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Jesus Christ and Stephen both knew that being crucified or stoned to death is not nearly so severe as the punishment for unrepentant unforgiveness.

Ushers . . . Hosts in God's House

(Continued from page 21)

of prayer and preparation preceded this positive ministry in the church.

The task is too important to turn over to untrained, unconcerned men. Effective church ushering is a result of training and work. It will not just happen. The responsibility rests upon you as pastor.

First, you must *dignify the position* in your own mind. Your attitude will draw the interest of men with qualifications to serve well. Next,

direct the program yourself. The men must know what you want done. Only then can they work with freedom in assisting the worshipers. Then *define the privileges* of obeying God's Word. Greeting worshipers at the door, seating the strangers in a pew, receiving the offering, assisting the pastor with a problem, and inviting people back again—these duties add up to an *important ministry*. Every church will be improved where the pastor is willing to train needed hosts in God's house,



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How Do You Do?

(Continued from last month)

By Audrey J. Williamson

THE WORD must have gotten around at the preachers' wives' retreat that we were having an unscheduled session. The next afternoon instead of only Marie and Irma, a half dozen more were waiting for me on the patio. They were for the most part curious, but cautious; ready to listen, but not ready to talk. All but Irma—she couldn't wait.

"You said as we went into dinner last night that it was good to talk to someone. That's another one of my gripes. Whom shall we talk to? You said in your book not to talk to the parishioners. I wouldn't confide in mine anyway. I don't know our district superintendent's wife well enough to talk to her, and except for just a few, no one on this district has been very friendly to me. They are all so efficient and capable and don't have any problems."

"Now wait a minute! I don't believe that is really true. Everyone has problems and everyone wants to be helpful. Sometimes we just don't know how to be. No one wants to appear aloof and distant. And remember, 'A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly.' If the atmosphere seems icy, we can melt it with the warmth of our own spirits."

An older woman in the group spoke up timidly. "May I say that

works, too, with the parishioners? When I was a young pastor's wife I resented them. I thought when they came to the parsonage they were making an excuse to spy on me as a housekeeper. If everything didn't happen to be in apple-pie order, I would go off and cry when they were gone. Our children were just normal, red-blooded youngsters and I felt the parishioners were critical of them and I resented it. My husband could just laugh it off, but I am a different temperament and it hurt me. I felt myself drawing into a hard shell and it bothered me.

"Do you know what brought me out of it? I took the mumps (imagine, at my age!) and had to go to bed and stay there. The kindness of those people to me and my family during that illness won my heart. I know there are a few who might be troublemakers, but the most of our people are goodhearted and want to be helpful. Part of my difficulty was my own fear and stiffness. Why, I began having some of the different committees meet at the parsonage occasionally instead of always at the church! When they saw my house oftener, they didn't seem nearly as curious about it! I began taking them into my confidence, too, about things that really didn't matter much anyway,

and our whole relationship improved."

I drew a deep breath. "What is on your mind, my dear?" I asked a little wisp of a girl, who looked almost like a teen-ager.

"O Mrs. Williamson," she cried, "it sounds so childish, but I sometimes feel if I don't take a break from being a preacher's wife I'll just burst! It is work, work, work! I know I have to be a good helpmeet to my husband, and I try! But it's *Other Sheep* campaign, and then it's vacation Bible school, and then it's evangelism emphasis, or Sunday school visitation, or *Conquest* subscription, or something! If I stop and look at a magazine or water my plants, I feel guilty."

"Now, whoa there! Wait a second! Neither God nor the church expects you to get in a bind. We do have a program to promote, but it is only a means to an end. Don't become so absorbed with the mechanics of the thing that you lose the purpose of it all.

"And you do need diversion, a hobby, a time of relaxation, a break! I have found reading to be a wonderful therapy. In the pages of a paper, a magazine, or a book, I can lose my worries and get a new perspective. And do you and your husband take time off each week? No? Well,

you must! Sunday is the day of rest for laymen. It is your heaviest day, so you must schedule your time of rest some other day."

Then we heard a new voice. "My husband won't take any time off. He is too busy! Why, we don't even have family prayers at our house any more."

A hush fell upon the group. It was Irma who broke the stillness.

"We don't either, Mrs. Williamson. But it's wrong! And I'm going home and tell Russ we're going to pray together and with our children, no matter what! I believe that one thing alone could make the difference with me. What shall it profit the minister and his wife if we gain in every department of the church and lose our own glow? That's not exactly scripture, but it pretty near is!"

The sun was setting and a soft radiance illumined the faces about me—that and a new light from within their souls. Only one seemed in shadow.

"Evelyn, dear," I urged, "tell us what is on your mind. Is there something yet to be said?"

"Not tonight," she replied softly. "Maybe tomorrow, if we meet again!"

"We will," I assured them. "It'll be our last day. Let any who wish to, come."

A layman brings a simple but sincere request to all preachers. I dare you to read it! (Editor.)

Please Read the Bible Better!

By Asa H. Sparks*

ON A RECENT SUNDAY MORNING I sat and listened as one of the leading pulpiteers of the Church of the Nazarene visited in our services. The delivery of his message was masterly, a model of speaking eloquence. The minister of the hour was very expressive and it was apparent that he was speaking from his heart and loved his people. He was an effective public speaker, but as he read the scripture lesson before the sermon, he merely droned words. His scripture reading was just a necessary part of service, without meaning for the minister or the people.

If we of the Church of the Nazarene are to follow the Bible in all of its richness and glory, the reading before the sermon can, and should, be one of the most meaningful parts of the service. One of the many virtues that come from hearing the Bible read with expression and understanding is the blessing and inspiration that it can give. By not properly interpreting the Bible, the speaker detracts from its meaning. The responsibility of presenting the Bible forcefully and effectively rests upon the shoulders of the pastor and evangelist. If he shirks his obligation, how can he expect his people to derive the fullest blessing from the Scriptures in their private devotions?

Fortunately, it is not necessary for the minister to read poorly. He can improve, if he will. The following suggestions, not intended as the final authority on interpretation, are to point out some of the problems that face the minister as he prepares to read. For further study of this subject, the book, *Helping the Bible Speak*, by Johnnye Akin, and others (Y.M.C.A. Association Press, \$2.50) is recommended.

Perceive the Text

Understanding of the text is the first and probably most important aspect of interpretation. Too often we tend to skim over passages in private study, particularly those familiar ones. We cannot possibly convey the meaning of a selection unless we fully understand it ourselves. In striving for the full meaning of a text, we must study and restudy these terms which seem vague or have changed in meaning since the time of King James.

Produce a Good Tone

The tone of the reader's voice presents another critical problem. How can we secure understanding if a monotonous voice sounds like the passage is being read for the first time? It is necessary to vary the tone and volume to indicate the different moods, and this is done in con-

*Principal, Highland Christian School, Chicago, Illinois.

version. Without doubt, many of the psalms lead to a joyful tone, while the dramatic moods of Revelation warrant quite different expressions.

Pivot on Key Words

The amount of change introduced into the voice is a third important question in Biblical interpretation. Hebraic writers used much repetition for emphasis. Many readers repeat similar passages in exactly the same manner as they read the preceding ones. Yet the meaning is often easily clarified by merely emphasizing different words in the second and continued readings. For instance, in reading the Beatitudes, one method would be to emphasize the first "Blessed" and sublimate the rest of the "Blessed's," with the succeeding emphasis being placed on such words as "meek," and "peacemakers." In producing vocal variety, it is necessary to remember to emphasize the *key words* in the text.

Phrase Conversationally

Many ministers fail as readers because of poor phrasing. We are told that the Bible was divided into verses for convenience in reading and reference, but this does not necessarily imply that the end of a verse signifies the end of a sentence thought. One writer has stated that a value of some modern translations lies in the removal of the versification so that the Word reads easily and understandably. When interpreting, phrase the language as you would normally during a conversation. (Phrasing means the reading of words as groups, pausing at the end of a thought, pausing to emphasize an important word, or to clarify meaning. It does not imply changing the wording of the Bible in any way.) The reader who achieves success through practice of

this technique will soon learn that even the punctuation marks are not infallible guides for phrasing.

Penetrate with Pathos

Finally, for his reading to be effective, the minister must feel and express the emotions implied in a passage. He *must* believe what he is reading! The audience must be able to perceive the emotion. The reader should not be an actor, but rather he should suggest the emotion and have it under control. Wild outbursts of emotional display often will destroy the meaning of the *entire* reading. There are times, however, when the Spirit will move on a man in such a way during the reading of the Scripture that emotional responses become apparent. This is good! May our pastors love the Word so well that we will have more of it.

Pursue Improvement

How can a man best achieve skill in the reading of the Bible? There are many excellent ways easily available to the minister. Perhaps one of the best is reading aloud in the study. A tape recorder is helpful, but not essential. Practice to the empty sanctuary helps develop techniques of voice placements and amplification. Another source of helps and ideas comes through listening to those readers who are most effective at our assemblies and conventions. Finally, many colleges and universities offer basic courses in oral interpretation.

It is the duty of the pastor or evangelist to present the Word of God in the best manner that he possibly can. If by conscious effort he improves his oral reading of the Scriptures, then he will change the Bible from a mere collection of words which we laymen respect, but do not

(Continued on page 34)

Qualities That Make a Good Preacher

By Don Owens*

HE WAS BORN during a time when his country was dominated by a foreign government, educated through middle school without being permitted to use his own native tongue, endured the privations and horror of two wars, and is now engaged in making Christ known to twenty-five million of his people.

He pastors in a city of nearly three million people, like the capital, Seoul, or in a small village of a few hundred homes. He has five children, supports his parents, but cannot educate his children beyond middle school on his thirty-five dollars a month salary. This describes the average Nazarene pastor in Korea.

At great personal sacrifice for himself and his family, he has graduated from the Bible Training School, where he studied for four years under missionaries who taught through translators. Now, in the pastorate, the quality of the man himself is being revealed. If we compared two pastors, we might see a strange contrast. One preaches to a growing congregation, the other to a dwindling church. One talks joyfully of the Lord's blessing and the virtues of his people, while the other complains of his hard pastorate and how difficult his people are.

Is there a reason for the difference? Both have the same background, the

same education, ordained together, and have had two or more pastorates. This one "seems to have it" and the other "just doesn't have it." In an effort to establish some of those qualities that put the *it* in a preacher, we make a few observations.

First of all, *he must have a clear-cut and victorious experience with God.* The richness of one's experience colors every phase of his ministry: in the pulpit, in the home, and in the crisis. One often hears this type of testimony in Korea, "I was a Christian from my mother's stomach," meaning of course, "My mother was a Christian before I was born, so I have always been a believer." While we thank the Lord for a goodly heritage, this kind of "hand-me-down religion" just does not do the job!

For a positive ministry, there cannot be a note of uncertainty regarding the questions, "Have you been born again?" and, "Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?"

The old grandfather with the horse-hair hat and bamboo pipe, deeply intrenched in his ancestral-ethico system, and the postwar businessman, flushed with the power of his money and lust for the good things of life, are not impressed with a new religious or ethical system of teachings. They are too pleased with their own. The preacher cannot rely on syllogisms, but must fall back on

*Superintendent, Korea Mission, Church of the Nazarene.

the Pauline example of giving his own personal witness of the power of the gospel.

Secondly, *the preacher should have divine appointment to his task.* Next to vital experience, this element seems to loom the largest in the ministry. The chilling blasts of mockery and rejection quickly bring one to grips with this issue if it is not already a settled one.

In our more refined circles we are reluctant to suggest such things, but the frank and outspoken Korean quite often differentiates between a "shepherd" and a "hireling." He rightly feels that a preacher should be more interested in souls than in *ssal* (rice). Two men may say, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" but they are thinking about two different woes. One preaches out of necessity and the other for necessities.

Motive produces motivation! God has to be in it or the heart will not be.

A *zest for prayer* characterizes a good preacher. In some lives this has become a lost art. Before the village cocks begin to crow, the Korean preacher is already engaged in prayer. This is a habit that he will follow daily for the rest of his life. Even sub-zero weather will find him kneeling on a blanket in an unheated church. Those who know the history of the Korean church attribute the frequent mighty movements of the Spirit to these *sai-bbyuk* (day-break) prayer meetings.

Our pastors constantly refer to unusual blessings or times of refreshing while in prayer. A favorite place of prayer for them is the mountains. Every problem or crisis precipitates a climb up to a solitary place where the battle is fought and won on their knees. This zest for the holy place consumes hours each day. A mere genuflection before sermon prepara-

tion does not seem to satisfy the Korean pastor.

"*Evangelistic initiative*" rather describes that quality of the good preacher that makes and seizes upon every opportunity for soul winning. Again, this alertness seems to be intrinsically related to one's experience with Christ. However, the intensity may be increased or retarded by use or lack of it.

Regardless of providential assignments, the preacher is an evangelist at heart. This spirit characterizes the Korean pastor. The ever-present tract, the pointed inquiry, "Have you believed on Jesus?" and the unabashed boldness in street evangelism are as much a hallmark for him as his inevitable brief case.

"Evangelistic initiative" refuses to put soul winning on a seasonal basis, but rather regards every given contact as a possible opportunity for an altar service.

A quality that most good preachers have is *imagination*. This naturally does not apply when filling out statistical reports, but does refer to that faculty that enables one to draw from his experiences, promotional ideas, and goals and put them to work in his ministry.

The language barrier prohibits the national worker in Korea from tapping the tremendous resources of inspiration and ideas that flow from our English publications. Yet, with all of his limitations with regard to preparation and continued study, he is possibly the best educated man in his community. One of his great problems is to relate his knowledge in a workable way in a community that is poor, largely illiterate, and appalling in non-Christian thinking. This takes imagination!

In his preaching he must tear down towering walls in the minds and

hearts of the people, but upon their ruins he must construct a Kingdom. He must do this with a people who saw a Bible for the first time when they saw his.

To accomplish his mission will tax every quality of his entire being. These qualities must be present or his success is in doubt from the start.

There he goes, walking down the dusty road; he holds a leather brief case in his left hand, and has hold of

an Unchanging Hand with the other. That is our Korean Nazarene preacher! He has been given a large assignment, carving out a section for God's kingdom in an area where He is still unknown. What is that he just said? "The difficult we will do immediately; the impossible may take a little longer."

He wears a suit out of a relief box, wears a floppy hat, and carries a brand-new brief case, but he has the makings of a good preacher.

How to Develop a Healthy Pastor-Parishioner Relationship

By Paul D. Mangum*

I LIKE the word *pastor* in preference to *minister*, for it carries with it a tone of a closer relationship with the people. Early in my ministry I was influenced by a series of morning meetings for the ministers held during the class sessions at youth camp. Rev. L. E. Gratten, at the time pastor of our church in The Dalles, Oregon, and formerly the district superintendent of the North Dakota District, was used of God to speak to me. The theme of his talks to the preachers was "The Pastor as a Shepherd," and it so gripped me until my prayer became: "Give me a shepherd's heart."

About the same time I was reading the latest issue of the *Reader's Digest* and the very first article

challenged my thinking. The title was "Life Is Too Short to Be Little." I began to feel a closer relationship with my people. Such a relationship I have enjoyed for many years of pastoral ministry.

With a right philosophy of the ministry there must still be the actual working ministry or contact ministry. There doubtless are many attitudes that build this close pastor-parishioner relationship.

CONFIDENCE is a word which perhaps expresses the most essential quality to be found in this close relationship. A broken confidence never can be mended.

A pastor dare not become the source of quotations regarding others. The problems are many and varied. In my ministry I have faced problems in such areas as divorce, real

*Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Bakersfield, California.

estate misunderstandings, employee-employer relationships, mental quirks bordering on schizophrenia, homosexual trends in one thought to be a devout Christian. Dealing with these problems is not easy, for they are time-consuming, taxing on the nerves, and call for wisdom beyond the human. Discipline in the area of confidence is mandatory if you are to help people. It is rewarding as you are able to help them.

After counseling for several months on a knotty divorce case in which both parties had aired freely the problems to anyone who would listen, a son, not living in the immediate area, told me that his mother had accused me of not holding a confidence. I was happy to be able to tell the son that to my knowledge this was the first time in my entire ministry I had been thus criticized. I felt I needed not defend my position further, and the son seemed relieved and accepted the statement. He continues to have confidence in me as a minister.

COURAGE is a word that demands respect, especially when tempered with kindness. It should also be tempered with good judgment and control. It is sometimes easy for us to speak our minds when to have not said anything would have shown more courage. Paul said: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering." The wise pastor will never forget he is the "called of God" to lead His people. The very message we preach makes heavy demands upon our people in the field of personal relationships. It was said of those who tarried in the Upper Room: "And they were all with one accord in one place." Jesus prayed for such a oneness in John 17. It was a prerequisite to the immediate

coming of the Holy Spirit. It was also a trait of the Early Church after His coming.

One lady in one of my pastorates said in my presence, "Brother Mangum never lets us gossip." She meant that it was hit so hard from the pulpit that she was conscious of it when she felt the urge to say something unkind. She needed to be conscious of it.

Courage to ring out the "old truths" and to live by them will never cause a wedge between you and your people; rather it serves to build confidence and binds you closer to them. You are their spiritual leader. If you forget it, they will soon forget it also.

I was holding a revival for a young friend who was holding his second pastorate in as many years. After a few nights of preaching he asked me this question: "Do you preach like that to your own congregation?" Then he expressed a fear of not being accepted by his church. My answer was, "Yes." His ministry has been more fruitful since.

COMPASSION must permeate all areas of one's ministry. It automatically implies a deep devotional life on the part of the minister. One has said, "He who prays little studies in vain." There is no substitute for devoutness. Billy Graham was asked the question: "Our pastor is a poor preacher but a mighty man of God. He spends hours in prayer, and you can sense it in his spirit. However, some of the more nonspiritual people of the church want to get rid of him and get a flashy *modern* preacher. What do you think?" To this Billy answered: "William Penn once wrote of George Fox: 'But above all he excelled in prayer. The inwardness and weight of his spirit, the

reverence and solemnity of his address and behaviour, and the fewness and fullness of his words have often struck even strangers with admiration as they used to reach others with consolation. The most awful, living, reverent frame I ever felt or beheld I must say was his prayer, and truly it was a testimony. He knew and lived nearer to the Lord than other men, for they that know him most will see most reason to approach him with reverence and fear.' I think I would rather have a pastor like that than the most clever preacher in the world. Paul said, 'Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth light.'

"The true ministry is God-touched, God-enabled and God-made. The preaching that kills is nonspiritual preaching. The great need today is crucified preaching, and crucified preaching can come only from crucified men."

Sincere interest in others also comes from a compassion. A minister friend of mine said of our district superintendent: "When you are talking to him you have the assurance that he is keenly interested in you, your church, your family, and your problems. He never lets you feel he is anxious to get the conference over with." This, to me, is one of the highest tributes to be paid to the clergy.

Compassion places you in the position of another. You put his shoes

on, walk in his steps, face his problems realistically. Whether it be juniors, teen-agers, young adults, mid-adults, or senior citizens, you are interested in them. Experiences teach us that all of them have their problems and need understanding and love. A medical doctor accepts sickness as an opportunity to help and heal. Problems and needs of parishioners should be looked upon by us in the same manner.

Compassion endeavors to find a way to mend the breach of misunderstanding. I have had concrete instances in which prayer has brought more concern on my part and a closer relationship with my parishioners. Problem adults are much the same as problem children—they need our prayers and love.

Compassion brings a soul-winning ministry. A congregation is drawn closer to God, to one another, and to their pastor when people are moving to the altar and praying through to clear-cut experiences of regeneration and entire sanctification. Only a compassionate heart will bring this about.

I feel like the Apostle Paul: "I count not myself to have apprehended." I would also like to paraphrase the words of St. Peter and say: "Add to your ability to keep a confidence, courage; and to your courage, compassion; and to your compassion, a sense of humor; to your sense of humor, an availability; to your availability, a contagious optimism. If these be in you and abound, they shall give you a healthy pastor-parishioner relationship."

Please Read the Bible Better!

(Continued from page 29)

study, to a vital force in the life of every Nazarene. It can become so

necessary to the laity and to the ministry that we will realize that God speaks through the Bible to His people in this present day.

The Pastor's Prayer

*God, keep me aware!
Awake to every moment,
Great or small,
Which has its source in Thee!*

*O God,
Help me so to keep
A sensitive finger
On the pulse of life,
That I shall know the
 ills and hungers
Of all men;
And, knowing,
Find the Bread of LIFE
To break to them,
The water clear
With which to quench
Their parching thirst.*

*Help me to know
When hearts are breaking,
Backs are aching,
Lives are yearning, longing,
 waiting*

*For the light—
And, knowing,
May I have the strength to
 help,
The wit to guide,
The word to speak,
The heart to share,
The hand to give,
The grace to help my brother,
Even though that helping
Cause my own supply
Of earthly things
To be diminished.*

*In giving out to him,
And loving him,
And helping him to find
The better way,
Oh, could it be
That in it all
I too help Thee?*

W. DALE OLDHAM
Gospel Trumpet

Supplied by Nelson G. Mink

THOUGHTS ON THANKSGIVING

Plymouth Rock, on which legend tells us the Pilgrims first landed, was a sizable boulder that once cluttered up an otherwise rock-free beach. Pilgrim children may have played on and around it, but as an old native once said, "Why any seaman would pull alongside a thing like that when he had all this fine beach is more than I can figure."

The stone now visible is only a small part of the original, long since buried in the sand, after attempts to move it resulted only in breaking off fragments. Even this sacred bit, the part souvenir hunters have left us, is shattered. Its two sections are held together by a wide band of concrete.

Adapted from *Friendly Thought*

THE PILGRIMS had their lives; no man has more. They had freedom, too. They were where they wanted to be. They could go where they chose to go. All the days ahead were theirs to use as they pleased. They owned themselves; no man owns more.

—John Hancock Mutual Life Ins. Co.

SOMEONE has said: "The test of thankfulness is not what you have to be thankful for, but whether anyone else has reason to be thankful that you are here."—ANON.

THE BOY in the Junior Department was asked what he was thankful for. Other members of the group had named the usual things that children name: food, friends, health, etc. When the teacher asked Mike what he would add to the list he said, "Well, lots of things have been named—all the main things—I guess I'm thankful just to be thankful."

Mike found the real key to the deeper meaning of Thanksgiving.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH SMOKING ANYHOW?

There are over 70,000,000 smokers now at the habit in this country. It costs a smoker about \$100 each year to smoke. One million smokers are joining the ranks each year.

Fire losses annually amounts to approximately \$70,000,000, due to smoking.

The annual American tobacco bill equals the amount of 6 billion 376 million dollars. More than is spent on education from the elementary schools through college.

In 1960, 35,000 men died of lung cancer, the number one contributing factor being that of smoking.

It is estimated that by 1970 one out of every ten men living will die of lung cancer.

I Cor. 6:19-20 says: *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

(Above copied from "The Pastoral Call," from *Church of the Nazarene, Tulare, California*)

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

(Of the Lost)

Napoleon Bonaparte—"I die before my time, and my body will be given back to the earth. Such is the fate of him who has been called the great Napoleon. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ!"

Voltaire—"I am abandoned by God and man! I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months of life. Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me. O Christ! O Jesus Christ!"

Thomas Hobbes, the skeptic: "If I had the whole world, I would give it to live

one day. I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of the world. I am about to take a leap into the dark."

M. F. Rich, an atheist: "I would rather lie on a stove and broil for a million years than go into eternity with the eternal horrors that hang over my soul! I have given my immortality for gold, and its weight sinks me into an endless, hopeless, helpless hell."

Sir Thomas Scott, on his deathbed: "Until this moment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I *know* and *feel* that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty."

(Of the Saved)

Dwight L. Moody: "I see earth receding; heaven is opening. God is calling."

John Wesley; "Best of all, God is with us."

Catherine Booth, wife of the Salvation Army general: "The waters are rising, but so am I. I am not going under, but over. Do not be concerned about dying; go on living well. The dying will be right."

Ann Judson, wife of the missionary to Burma: "Oh, the happy day will soon come when we shall meet all our friends who are now scattered—meet to part no more in our Heavenly Father's house!"

Samuel Rutherford; "I am in the happiest pass to which man ever came. Christ is mine, and I am His; and there is nothing now between me and resurrection, except—paradise."

THINK A MOMENT!

The other day I saw underneath the glass top of a desk a card with this sentence: "Among the chief worries of today's business executives is the large number of unemployed still on the payroll."

I could not help but think of the many who are on the church roll who are nevertheless unemployed in the work of the Lord.

As long as the church merely is, there will be many unemployed on its rolls. As soon as it is realized that the church is FOR something, all will find plenty to do."—*The Sermon Builder*.

THE HIDDEN LIFE

David Brainerd did his greatest work by prayer. He was in the depths of the forests alone, unable to speak the language of the American Indians. But he spent whole days in prayer, that the power of the Holy Ghost might come upon him so unmistakably that these people should not be able to stand before him.

What was the answer? Once he preached through a drunken interpreter, a man so intoxicated that he could hardly stand up. That was the best he could do, yet scores were converted through that sermon.

We cannot account for it, only that it was the tremendous power of God behind him. After he was dead, William Carey read his life and went to India. Robert McCheyne read his diary and went to the Jews. Henry Martyn read his *Journal* and went to India.

The hidden life, in communion with God, reaches the source of power—the life that moves the world.—*Herald of His Coming*.

TO GO OR NOT TO GO

It was Sunday morning at the breakfast table, and my host asked his wife if she was going to church. I thought that was funny. Strange is better, or maybe tragic—or disgraceful.

Why should it be a matter of debate, because she was in good health, and they were both members of the church. Your children do not ask you at the breakfast table if they are going to school today. They know they are going if they are not sick, or cannot make you think they are.

I was just wondering why going to church is not taken for granted. How many fires would go out if only the chief got there and the volunteers came when they felt like it?—*Selected*.

BEYOND SPACE

Someday up there, perhaps a hundred years or more from now, when we are through with tears, when we are used to glory, and surprise after surprise has thrilled our souls, and grace has opened like a flower, and His face has grown

familiar and we rejoice in all the riches which are ours through Him—then, peering over heaven's golden rim, and looking down through space at this earth-ball, we'll find that scarcely can we then recall our tears, but only how it felt that day. When His dear hand wiped all our tears away.

(Written by Martha Snell Nicholson, twenty-seven years bedfast with arthritis)

THE PREACHER'S CORONARY CLUB

With more and more preachers becoming victims of heart attacks, the Coronary Club is extending membership to those who only a few years ago were considered much too young to be admitted. No doubt many preachers, young and old, are seeking membership but have lacked information on how to become members. The following rules, if followed, will assure speedy action, toward membership:

1. Never say, "No."
2. Insist on being liked by everyone and try to please everyone.
3. Never delegate responsibility. If you must appoint a committee, do all the work yourself.
4. Never plan a day off, but if you are forced to take one, visit a preacher friend and spend the day talking about church problems—yours and his.
5. Never plan a night at home, but if it happens that you have no meetings or calls, be sure to accept an outside speaking engagement.
6. Take all the revivals your church will tolerate, then book more for your vacations. (Place all honorariums in a separate account earmarked, "Heart Fund"; this will help pay medical expenses when your coronary comes.)
7. Never allow enough time to drive comfortably to an appointment. (This will do two things: It will show people how busy you are, and will protect the reputation preachers have as fast drivers.

8. When your doctor advises you to slow down, ignore him and brag about

the fact that you would rather wear out than rust out.

9. Take the burdens of your people to the Lord, but don't leave them there. Play God and feel that the Kingdom depends on you.

10. Watch the attendance records, especially the Sunday school. If it lags a bit, decide it's time to move and always wonder what caused the people to dislike you.

11. Be sure to beat the record of the former pastor, and try hard to beat your own each year.

12. Lead your church into a building program, whether they need it or not, and consider yourself better qualified than the architect and give it your personal supervision.

13. Consider it your civic duty to be a member of every club in town, and become president of as many as you can.

14. If, having done all these, you don't succeed, accept the largest church you can find and work very tirelessly and you should have a coronary within six months."

(By George W. Miller, chaplain, Western Baptist Hospital, Paducah, Kentucky)

THOUGHTS GATHERED BY THE WAY

Two congressional secretaries were discussing the alleged dangers of smoking. Said one, "I've read so much about giving up smoking I've decided to give up reading."

"People may get an education from reading the fine print, but what they get from not reading it is usually experience."

"Spare moments are the gold dust of time. Of all the portions of our life, the spare moments are the most fruitful for good or evil."

"If we possessed all that we desire at any age, life would become insipid and drab. Desire and the willingness to achieve that desire make life worth living."

"He who is truly great has one consuming desire—to remain small."

"You must 'let go' before you can 'lay hold.'"

Theme: The Shepherd and the Lost Sheep

SCRIPTURE: Luke 15:4-6

- I. He was not satisfied with 99 per cent attendance.
- II. He felt personally responsible for the one who was not there.
- III. He did not give up. He sought till He found it.
- IV. He was not satisfied until it was safe within the fold.
- V. He wanted others to share His interest and joy.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Theme: Seven Things Opened

Message to children or young people

- I. The Open Heart (Acts 16:14)
- II. The Opened Eyes (II Kings 6:17)
- III. The Open Ears (Ps. 40:6)
- IV. Open Windows of Prayer (Dan. 6:10)
- V. Open Lips for Testimony (Ps. 51:15)
- VI. Opened Hands for Service (Deut. 15:8)
- VII. Open Doors (II Cor. 2:12)

Theme: The Cry for a Pure Heart

TEXT: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me* (Ps. 51:10).

- I. Acknowledgement of a Great Need
- II. Description of a Real Heart Cry
- III. Great Personal Emphasis
- IV. A Good Theological Presentation
- V. Willingness to Pay the Price
- VI. Offerings That Were Acceptable

Theme: Receiving the Holy Spirit

TEXT: *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* (Luke 11:13)

These Steps of Faith Needed:

- I. A Historical Faith. An informed mind.

- II. The Faith of Apprehension. "The cleansing stream, I see, I see."
- III. The Faith of Expectation (Heb. 11:6).
- IV. The Faith of Appropriation. "I plunge..."
- V. The Faith of Acknowledgement. "And, oh, it cleanseth me!"

Theme: Three Great Wherefores

Wherefore is an adverb and means "for which cause," therefore, so, etc.

It is an appeal made after some proposition has been set forth.

- I. The Wherefore of a Complete and Full Salvation (Heb. 7:25)
- II. The Wherefore of Our Sanctification (Heb. 13:12)
- III. The Wherefore of Christ's Second Coming (II Pet. 3:14)

Theme: Be Diligent!

SCRIPTURE: II Pet. 3:14

Be Diligent Because:

- I. This book, written near the close of the New Testament, was for stirred minds.
- II. Scoffers are evident all about us.
- III. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise.
- IV. It is mighty important that we be found "in peace."
- V. The elements melting with fervent heat makes this imperative.

Theme: What of Our Sins

- I. According to Ps. 103:12 they are removed "as far as the east is from the west." No man has measured this distance yet.
- II. According to Isa. 44:22 they are blotted out like a cloud.
- III. According to Micah 7:19 they are cast into the depths of the sea.
- IV. According to Eph. 1:7 they are forgiven because of the riches of His grace.
- V. According to Rev. 1:5 they are washed away by the Blood.

Theme: The Signs of an Awakened Soul

TEXT: *And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day* (I Sam. 10:9).

- I. Three Kids for Sacrifice
One represents godly sorrow.
One stands for repentance.
The other stands for forgiveness.
- II. The Three Loaves of Bread
The first is an invitation to the weary (Matt. 11:28).
The second stands for our spiritual welcome (Rev. 3:20).
The third stands for spiritual satisfaction (Rom. 8:16).
- III. The Bottle of Wine
Joy for the heart.
Peace for the soul.
Comfort for the mind.
- IV. The Garrison of the Philistines—the Enemy
Satan says these three things:
 1. “Your life will be ruined.”
 2. “You will not be able to hold out.”
 3. “You have plenty of time yet.”
- V. The Spirit Shall “Come upon Thee”
 1. Real transformation.
 2. Power to become God’s son.
 3. Impartation of spiritual life.
- VI. Turned into Another Man
 1. The old life and habits are past.
 2. The new life is begun.
 3. The change is so wonderful!
Every seeming sacrifice compensated for.

CONCLUSION: “Do as occasion serve thee.”

Healed at the heart, he is free indeed.
Divinely oriented.

He is ready for society, for home, for church, and decent to live with.

Theme: God’s X Ray

TEXT: *Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart* (Ps. 44:21)

I. WE GO TO THE DOCTOR FOR X RAYS AND CHECKUP.

Living in a complex society this is needful. How much more for our spiritual condition!

II. SEARCH REGARDING SOME FALSE GOD (Deut. 13:13-15).

III. A SEARCH IN THE HOME. What is found there.

I Kings 20:6, “They shall search thine house.”

IV. SEARCHING THE HEART

Ps. 77:6 “and my spirit made diligent search.”

V. SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES (Acts 17:11).

VI. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A SEARCHER, and “searcheth all things” (I Cor. 2:10).

Theme: Life Is Like a Supermarket

TEXT: Isa. 55:1

1. We are all shoppers, buying and trading every day.
2. You choose the items that go into the market cart.
3. What you choose identifies you.
4. You could fill your cart with candy, soap, toothpicks.
5. There is much to choose from. You need to make your decisions.
6. There are many unwise shoppers today.
7. You ought to know your needs—shopping list—the Spirit is faithful to you.
8. Checking out! Sense of finality. Similar to judgment.

Theme: The Man with the Sword in His Hand (Josh. 3:13-14)

- I. God will not leave His people to fight alone.
- II. God knows the strength of opposing forces.
- III. God makes His power available for us.
- IV. God is interested in the individual, also the Church.
- V. God delights to give us the most complete victory.

The Lost in Hell

I Pet. 4:18, *Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?*

Luke 16:23, *And in hell he lift up his eyes.*

INTRODUCTION:

The doctrine of hell to man is most objectionable and disagreeable; the idea of hell has all but faded from the public's mind. Many refer to it in sarcasm and jokes. Jesus had more to say about hell than all of the apostles and prophets combined. Let us seriously consider these verses from the Bible and receive help.

I. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE LOST MAN IN HELL

- A. He is the true representative man of all the lost.
- B. No indication that he was a philanthropist.
 1. But he was well known and he was rich.
 2. He was a miser and selfish (beggar seeking crumbs). Read I John 3:17.
 2. One minister said: "Till a person believes in Christ and repents, God is not under obligation to keep him a moment from the eternal torments of hell."

II. THE DECEPTION OF THE LOST MAN IN HELL

- A. He may have been morally clean and scripturally sound.
- B. Bible implies he lived for self, and shut out God and the church and fellow man.
- C. In hell he knew he was deceived but it was too late.

III. THE DIRECTION OF THE LOST MAN IN HELL

- A. He left suddenly for hell.
- B. He left his brothers, who were unsaved and traveling in same direction as he.

C. He found himself in association with all who never repented.

1. Note the several versions of hell in the Bible.
 - a. Gehennah. The scavenger idea of hell.
 - b. Hades. The unseen underworld.
 - c. Tartarus. The deep and sunless abyss of the infernal regions.
 - d. Perdition. Junk heap where all the wrecked lives are gathered for burning.

IV. THE DESPAIR OF THE LOST

- A. Horrified by the fact there is no chance of escape or to warn others.
- B. Haunted by the fact that they are capable of retaining black past, and powerless to change it.

CONCLUSION:

May God help us all to profit by these horrible facts which have been brought to our attention in plain language.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

Subject: Passing the Tests of Faith

TEXT: *As Jannes and Jambres defied Moses, so these men defy the truth; they have lost the power to reason, and they cannot pass the tests of faith* (II Tim. 3:8, *New English Bible*).

1. The suffering test (II Tim. 1:8, N.E.B.).
2. The sound teaching test (II Tim. 1:13, N.E.B.).
3. The strength test (II Tim. 2:1, N.E.B.).
4. The soldier test (II Tim. 2:3, N.E.B.).
5. The straight-furrow test (II Tim. 2:15, N.E.B.).
6. The servant test (II Tim. 2:24).

Compare I John 2:3 and 2:6; "There is the test" (N.E.B.).

—LEONARD J. DEAKINS

Our Rich Heritage

(Thanksgiving)

PSALM 16

SCRIPTURE: *Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem!* (II Sam. 23:15)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. May seem like a strange text.
 - 1. Yet, like all scripture, it is profitable for us.
- B. Note the setting.
 - 1. David was warring with the Philistines and the course of war had brought him near to Bethlehem, his ancestral home.
 - 2. As he was thirsty he thought of the well with its good, clear, thirst-quenching water.
 - 3. Apparently he gave no command, but three brave men went after the water.
- C. When it was brought him he would not drink of it.
 - 1. It was what he wanted and was still good water.
 - 2. He poured out unto the Lord, for he saw in it more than just water.
 - 3. It had been obtained at the risk of life (v. 17).
- D. He recognized that that which he had had come to him at great cost.
 - 1. This the thought for us, for all we have has come to us at great cost.

I. OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE

- A. Glad that I am an American.
 - 1. Would not care to live anywhere else, though travel folders tell of the beauty of other places.
 - 2. It may be exciting to be in far-away places.
 - 3. We are in this service because we are Americans. No one forced us to come nor did anyone attempt to keep us away. We listen because we want to.
 - 4. Ours is a wonderful land. We have as much beauty as any

other place on earth. We have better living conditions and, best of all, we possess a freedom others do not know.

- B. But a price was paid to make this possible.
 - 1. Our very observance of this day is in memory of this fact (the first Thanksgiving).
 - 2. Many came to set up new home and have religious freedom.
 - 3. A tremendous price was paid for all this. They froze, were starved, and died fighting—all that we might have that which is ours today.
 - 4. This was true of not only the first settlers but those who fought in the conquest against wrong of every kind. Many of us here today have paid in blood and tears to keep that which we have.

II. OUR CHURCH HERITAGE

- A. True that we have come from several denominations—
 - 1. But back of us is a long line who fought for their convictions, stood staunch in the fight and preserved for us the heritage of our church.
- B. With each of us there have been those who sacrificed to give us our church buildings.
 - 1. Many toiled with their hands and gave of their means.
 - 2. They prayed and believed God when there was nothing else. God has a record of their names.
 - 3. We are here today because of the heritage they left us.
 - 4. We have also done our bit to keep the church going. It was not always easy and often we were called upon to sacrifice and toil with our hands. But we put our hearts into it that we might keep our heritage.

III. OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

- A. Back of the founding of our in-

dividual churches is our Christian heritage.

1. Suppose the Early Church had failed when persecution waxed hot.
 2. Or in the Dark Ages, where would we be today?
- B. They were fired by a zeal and passion nothing could stop as they faced difficult situations. They, like Paul, kept the faith, fought a good fight, and finished their course. We are reaping the fruit of their faith.
- C. That which put the "go" in them was more than human.
1. Men fail when they try in their own strength.
 2. Their strength came from without. They were inspired by a Person, the only begotten Son of God. There is no other answer.

IV. OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

- A. James 1:17 indicates that all of our blessings are from God.
1. This fair land—God was in its establishment
- B. But greater than this is the hope that is ours.
1. It has possessed Christians of all ages. "Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."
 2. This hope still lives in the hearts of His people today, for wherever He possesses the life, that hope is there.
- C. This spiritual hope too cost a tremendous price.
1. Cost heaven its best, for no angel could have paid the cost. Nor were the Old Testament sacrifices enough; they were but symbols.
 2. We are not bought with silver and gold, but "with the precious blood of Christ," the Lamb slain

from the foundation of the world.

3. When He said, "It is finished," God's plan was then complete, so that now "whosoever will" may have eternal life.

CONCLUSION:

- A. All we have has come to us at a cost to others.
1. This fact we must not forget. We are too prone to take things for granted.
 2. These are things for which we should be eternally grateful. We should express our thankfulness.
- B. What of the future, of others who will come after us?
- C. We too must carry on to preserve our heritage.
1. To preserve our national heritage we will need to continue to sacrifice, perhaps give of our blood, wet our cheeks with our tears.
 2. Christ has promised to build His Church. But it is in our hands to carry on the work.
 3. As we have received our Christian heritage, we must pass it on to others intact.
 4. What of our spiritual heritage? We can so live that the light will fall upon the paths of others. Jesus said: "Ye are the light of the world . . ."
- D. These will all cost us something, but there is an inescapable obligation.

—ARTHUR J. STOTT
Selah, Washington

A Sure Word of Prophecy

SCRIPTURE: II Pet. 1:19-21

INTRODUCTION:

1. Peter sees clearly that his "first-person experience" as an eye-witness of Christ's transfiguration and the prophetic announcements

of "God's holy men of old" complement and confirm each other. And in so doing they give us a "more sure word of prophecy" (v. 19).

- a) Any who might be tempted to discredit Peter's account must reckon with the united voice of prophecy.
 - b) And that united voice of prophecy has its confirmation in the miracle of the Transfiguration.
2. So the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration were not deceived, for they witnessed what prophecy had predicted; and the prophets were now vindicated by what the three disciples had experienced.

So we hold the prophetic word with a surer confidence than ever before. Both Peter and the prophets are to be trusted.

3. Peter now characterizes this sure prophecy as:

I. A SHINING LIGHT (v. 19)

A. *A lamp in a dark place*

1. The Greek indicates "a portable light" whose beams illuminate the darkness ahead as one advances with it. The darker the place, the more dazzling the light appears.
2. The Greek indicates a dusty, dirty, dry, squalid, and "murky" place. (Cf. Luke 11:24)
3. A man who has to travel in dark and dangerous places does well to take heed to his lamp.

B. *Until day dawns*

1. Dawn comes brilliantly in the Near East.
2. Christ's first advent was the dawning of a new day in prophecy.
3. Dawn-light before sunrise still is more illuminating than our brightest lamps.

C. *"And the day star arise in your hearts"*

1. Here some understand the ref-

erence to be to the brilliant "morning star"; others, to the sun itself. The Greek is *phosphoros*, "light bearer." Cf. Rev. 2:28 and 22:16.

2. Pentecost brought more brilliant understanding of truth than did the fleshly presence of the Saviour, just as Jesus had prophesied it would.
3. A light in the heart begets surer illumination than a lamp in the hand. Christ in the heart brings the fullness of spiritual day. Each of us needs the "indwelling Christ," the "Sun of righteousness."

*I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's Light.
Look unto Me; thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright."*

*I looked to Jesus and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun;
And in that Light of life I'll walk
Till trav'ling days are done!*

—BONAR

4. A brighter time than any that has yet occurred is yet to dawn on the race of the redeemed. We shall know as we are known, and then shall our hearts rejoice.

II. A PUBLIC REVELATION (v. 20)

A. *Made public in the sacred writings*

1. Prophecy of Scripture—written for all to read.
2. Hence not a private release of the individual's uninspired utterance.

B. *Not for private interpretation*

1. The word is the Holy Spirit's; hence it cannot be interpreted by its readers—any more than by its writers—by mere human powers, but only by the insight inspired by the Holy Spirit.
2. "He who is the author of Scripture is its Supreme Interpreter." —Gerhard.
3. We must study our Bible with

profound reverence, knowing that it has a higher than human origin.

- a) It discloses truth that the human mind cannot of itself originate.
 - b) It is not a prognostication made by man.
4. The Gnostics interpreted many of the prophecies after their own fancies, often violently distorting them to adapt them to their own systems.

III. A HOLY GHOST MESSAGE (v. 21).

A. "Not . . . by the will of man"

1. Men did not speak by their own suggestions.
2. The prophets were God's spokesman, not private orators or teachers.
3. Prophecy is always a divine-human message. The inspiration is divine. The messenger is human.

B. *By the movement of the Spirit*

1. Men were "borne along" (Greek) by the Holy Spirit as a sail vessel before nature's breath—the wind. Cf. The rushing, moving breath of Pentecost.
2. Being "borne along" by the Holy Spirit, these men spake from God.
3. That is how prophecy and revelation came.

C. *Through holy men of God*

1. Men called to a holy office.
2. Men used of God in a holy work.
3. Men holy in character and life.
4. Men who spoke by the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION:

1. He who would understand the Bible must understand this:
The Bible is both a divine and a human book.
Its message is self-validating.
2. This Lamp of revelation shines through the night of time to the daybreak of Christ's kingdom.

It is given to shed light on our way.
To its clear and sure prophecy we
do well to take heed.

ROSS E. PRICE

The Demand for an Exceeding Righteousness

SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:9-14

TEXT: Matt. 5:20

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus had a special message for His disciples; so, avoiding the multitude, He went up into the mountain (Matt. 5:1).

I. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE PHARISEE: (illustrated by scripture lesson).

A. They were different from other men (v. 11).

1. I am not an extortioner.
2. I am not unjust.
3. I am not an adulterer.
4. I am not like this publican.

B. They were faithful to the means of grace (v. 12).

1. They were at all services.
2. They prayed and fasted.
3. They tithed their incomes.

II. CHRIST POINTS OUT THE FOLLY OF THE PHARISEES.

A. They trusted in themselves (v. 19).

B. They didn't practice what they preached (Matt. 23:3).

III. OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST BE AN EXCEEDING RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A. We must exceed the Pharisees in our relationship with the world.

B. We must exceed the Pharisees in our attendance at the means of grace.

C. We must exceed the Pharisees in our giving.

CONCLUSION:

It has been said that "the failure of Pharisaism lay in that it looked upon religion as the observing of an external law, by which a reward was earned" (Walker). The righteousness which is of God by faith is an inward righteousness of the heart, wrought by the Spirit

of God, enabling the child of God to live a life of righteousness and true holiness, which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

—HUGH H. GORMAN
Troon, Scotland

The Sinking Heart

SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:18-30

TEXT: *He was very sorrowful*, or, "At these words his heart sank" (Luke 18:23).

INTRODUCTION:

The rich young ruler had everything—but Christ, and he turned his back upon Him.

- A. He heard the gospel.
- B. He received a personal invitation to follow Christ.
- C. He rejected the claims of the gospel.
- D. He turned his back upon Christ.
- E. He went away with a sinking heart.

I. FOUR CAUSES OF A SINKING HEART

- A. Rejecting the Word of God
- B. Regarding possessions to be more precious than Jesus
- C. Refusing to bear the cross
- D. Reigning sin

II. THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SINKING HEART

- A. Longing for God but not wanting to pay the price
- B. Lacking the real goodness in life
- C. Loving the wrong things

III. HOW TO AVOID A SINKING HEART

- A. By being obedient
- B. By being repentant

CONCLUSION:

- A. A sinking heart is noticeable and causes sadness.
- B. A lifted heart is noticeable and causes gladness.

HUGH H. GORMAN

of the Gentiles, until . . . (Luke 21:24).

INTRODUCTION:

The two questions in verse seven, greatly separated in time but closely associated in significance. The fall of Jerusalem ended an era in God's dealings with His people. The restoration starts another era. May 13, 1948, for the first time in nineteen hundred years, the Star of David flag unfurled. Today floats over Mount Zion, above tomb of the great king whose greater Son someday will rule the world. Arch of Titus in Rome has engraved picture of Jewish priests being led into captivity.

I. THE JEWS IN HISTORY.

- A. Selected by God for a specific destiny.
- B. Inheritance to be permanent (Gen. 13:15).
- C. Jesus rejected by the Jews (Matt. 23:37-38).
- D. Exile predicted (Luke 21:6, 20, 24a).
- E. Racial identity to be preserved (Luke 21:32).—Adam Clarke.
- F. Jesus' strong affirmation (Luke 21:33).
- G. Restoration promised (Jer. 32:37; Isa. 61:4, 6b).

II. THE RETURN OF THE JEWS AND THE RETURN OF JESUS

- A. The parable of the fig tree.
- B. Three types of Jews.
 1. Olive—covenant relationship (Rom. 11:17, 24-25, 27)
 2. Vine—spiritual relationship (Hos. 10:1)
 3. Fig—type of national peace and divine favor
- C. A growing national restoration (Matt. 24:32).
- D. Suffering and persecution predicted for the Jews (Rev. 12:13).

III. THE UNCERTAIN STATUS OF PRESENT ISRAEL HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT

- A. It indicates that the exact time is withheld (Matt. 24:36).
- B. The Temple area still in Arab control.
- C. The count-down has started but there may be "holds."

The Jews in History and Prophecy

SCRIPTURE: Luke 21:24-33

TEXT: *Jerusalem shall be trodden down*

D. The return of Jesus to be:

1. Sudden
2. Unexpected to many
3. Multitudes unprepared

CONCLUSION:

The urgent need of being prepared,
and of being found busy in soul winning.

FLETCHER GALLOWAY
Kalamazoo, Michigan

The Hand of God

TEXT: *Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save* (Isa. 59: 1a).

INTRODUCTION:

Look at your hand. Much of man's life is dependent upon the skills, abilities, and strength of his hands. How much greater is the hand of the One in whose image man was made!

I. A POWERFUL HAND

- A. Possesses the power of creation (Isa. 40: 12).
- B. Possesses power over the soul and breath of man (Job 12:10).
- C. Possesses the power to heal and restore life (Mark 5:41; Luke 5: 13).

II. A PROVIDING HAND

- A. Provides for the material needs of those who trust Him (Ps. 37:25).
- B. Provides spiritual blessing to those who love Him (I Cor. 2:9).
- C. Provides a heavenly home for those who follow Him (John 14: 2-3).

III. A PROTECTING HAND

- A. Shields the righteous in times of danger (Ps. 31:15).
- B. Shields the weary in times of adversity (Ps. 37:24).
- C. Shields the believer from spiritual enemies (John 10:27-28).

IV. A PIERCED HAND

- A. Proves that the prophecy of suffering is fulfilled (Zech. 13:6).

B. Proves that the price of redemption is paid (John 20:27-28; I Pet. 1:18-19).

C. Proves that He cannot forget His own (Isa. 49:16).

V. A PUNISHING HAND

- A. Holds the fan of discernment, dividing truth and error (Matt. 3:12).
- B. Halts sin's pleasures with the handwriting of judgment (Dan. 5: 5-6).
- C. Holds no mercy for those who reject salvation (Heb. 10:31).

CONCLUSION:

God's hand of mercy is still extended. Place your soul, your plans, and all you are in His hand, and salvation and spiritual safety are assured.

—ROBERTA LASHLEY
Mount Savage, Maryland

GEORGE MULLER: "It has pleased the Lord to teach me a truth, the benefit of which I have not lost for more than fourteen years. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, or how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might be nourished. For I might seek to set the truth before the unconverted, I might seek to benefit believers, I might seek to relieve the distressed, I might in other ways seek to behave myself as it becomes a child of God in this world; and yet, not being happy in the Lord, and not being nourished and strengthened in my inner man day by day, all this might not be attended to in a right spirit."

SALUTE TO A SUFFERER

Leslie D. Weatherhead (Abingdon, 96 pages, cloth, \$2.00)

It is not necessary to acquaint you with the author, for his writings are well known throughout the world. In an age when there is so much emphasis on health and prosperity as the expected by-products of Christian living, this book comes as a splendid antidote. Perhaps the basic premise of the book could be spelled out in these words (from the author)—“Many who have served the world best have suffered most.”

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THE MIRACLE OF AMERICA

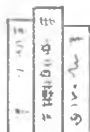
George L. Ford (Zondervan, paper, 64 pages, \$1.00)

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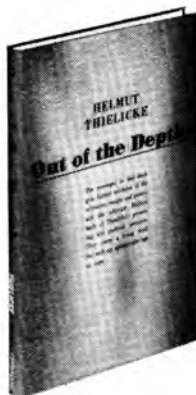
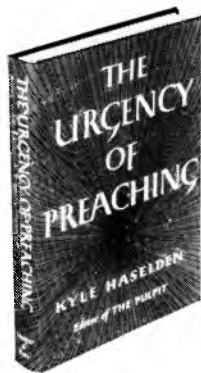
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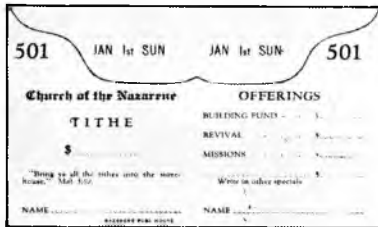
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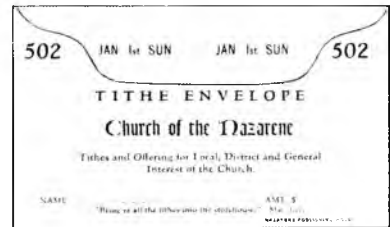


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