



THE **PREACHER'S MAGAZINE**

—proclaiming Christian Holiness—

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THE

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Why Stoop to Be a King?



THOSE WHO WERE FORTUNATE enough to have known the late Dr. Henry Clay Morrison heard him say on many occasions, "If God calls you to preach, don't stoop to be a king!"

He was absolutely correct when he made such a claim, for there is no higher calling than to be a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this day of extreme pressures and deep frustrations, that claim is still true and it needs to be repeated. If God has called you to preach, don't stoop to be anything other than His anointed messenger.

"Why I Quit the Ministry" has been the theme of scores of books and articles published in recent years. We have read the complaints of those who have yielded to the emotional and physical stresses, the sometimes less-than-adequate salaries, the unreasonable demands and expectations under which they have lived, and the confusion they have experienced in understanding their indentities. They have been unable to cope with a sense of steady erosion of respect for the high office of preaching.

It is time for someone to come forward with the other side of the story, the side which tells with greater accuracy what our ministry really is. There is no denying that being a preacher presents its problems, but is there any other profession where there are no problems? The clergyman does not need the pity of people who want to think of him as a martyr. He is well aware of the pressures he faces. But he knows that the rewards of his labors more than compensate for all the pain he endures. He would not stoop to be a king.

There is no better way a human being can spend his life than to pour it out in loving service for the Christ who has called him.

When the preacher remembers that he is working for God, he is less likely to be overwhelmed by pressures from the people. It is God's work we are doing. It is He who called us, and it is He who helps us. It is He to whom we owe our allegiance, and it is He whom we will ultimately face and to whom we must give an account of our fidelity. And it is He who will reward us with wages that will exceed our fondest dreams. Workers together with God! Can any king match such fulfillment?

The preacher is not only working for the Lord God Almighty, but he is also helping other people more than he realizes. He is an instrument of God for the saving of souls from death. He is the one through whom the good news comes to those who are dying without it. Sunday in his pulpit, and day after day in his continuing ministry, he is a message in the shape of a man. That message is the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God to everyone who believes it. Even though he may feel at times that he is not seeing very many saved, the Master reminds him that one soul is worth more than all the world.

He helps people not only to experience forgiveness for their sins and cleansing from inbred sin, but he breaks the bread of life for them as they are nurtured and strengthened under his preaching. He helps them grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he leads them in becoming involved in the service of the Lord.

He helps people as they face life with its multiplicity of problems. He is with them as they work their way through the pitfalls which would destroy a marriage, disrupt a home, and break the hearts of the members of a family.

He points the way toward life which is free from the harmful habits and addictions which have come to curse our generation. It is not the born-again, Spirit-filled Christians today who are the slaves of drugs and alcohol!

He shows people a way that is far superior to the way of anxiety and despair in a meaningless existence. True, he cannot help all he might wish to help. But he is helping people even more than he knows, and when someone tells him, "You touched my life during a time when I needed a touch of love, and you will never know how I thank God for your ministry to me," he would not trade places with any king on this earth.

Added to all this, he is helping himself more than he realizes. Psychologists suggest that three things are necessary for a fulfilling life: someone to love, something to do, and something to which to look forward. The man of God has them all. He has a love for Christ that few people can comprehend. The Apostle Paul expressed it in the perspective of his beatings and imprisonments, his perils and misunderstandings, his personal disappointments and physical infirmities, and declared, "The love of Christ constraineth us."

That which neither gold could have paid him to do, nor power and glory could have persuaded him to do, he did for the love of Christ.

There is no way anyone can find deeper satisfaction in the way he spends his life than by doing the work of the Lord who has called him, giving him complete love and devotion to the Christ who has redeemed him, and looking forward to a future that is as bright as the promises of God.

It may mean being deprived of some of life's luxuries, and it may mean taking some hard knocks somewhere along the way. For St. Paul it meant all this, and a headsman's axe to end his life. But he could read his title clear to a mansion in the sky, and so can you. Your reward may seem slow in coming, but you will receive it when you can keep it longer and enjoy it more.

If God has called you to preach, don't stoop to be a king!

You do not need any unusual skills to commit portions of scripture to memory. Do it, and improve your preaching.

Knowing It by Heart

RECENTLY I ASKED MYSELF: Of all the many preachers I have heard, which seem the most effective as pulpiteers? I quickly listed seven.

Of those chosen, all speak with freedom, using notes, not manuscript. Five, including some world-famous evangelists, have remarkable gifts and graces. But the other two are quite ordinary—except for one thing. They have committed considerable portions of the Bible to memory, and their ready, accurate quoting of the Word adds immeasurably to their messages.

Never shall I forget a series of sermons preached by one of the two, who has made memorization a part of his private devotions. Every point was backed up by scripture, which he presented with ease and conviction, while looking his congregation full in the face.

The method preserves close contact with one's hearers, convinces them that the man of God knows intimately the Word he is preaching,

and provides a springboard for encouraging the laity to memorize key scripture passages. It also speeds sermon preparation, and is an asset in personal work. Besides this, it aids one's own spiritual growth.

Yes, you are probably thinking sadly, that may all be true—but I don't have one of those photographic memories.

The answer to that is simple enough. The men I have mentioned don't have such memories either. Yet they have used a very limited amount of time for the task. The secret is strong motivation and persistent effort.

My own experience gives added proof. Although long possessed of a desire to know scripture by heart, I've had to learn it the hard way. I am a plodder. When I was a boy, my mother had to make a special trip to the schoolhouse to convince the teachers that I should be promoted along with my twin sister. I was studious enough, but they were skeptical of my ability.

Fortunately, after reaching adulthood, I adopted the simple plan of listing scripture passages I wished to memorize and working on them systematically. I began repeating memorized portions at bedtime until I fell asleep, and at odd moments of the day which might otherwise have been wasted. The procedure, far from being irksome, is quite delightful. The



by
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total time I have spent on it through the years would average only a few minutes a day. Yet I can now repeat 37 complete chapters, considerable portions of 7 more, and hundreds of shorter passages.

This I consider a very modest achievement. Frankly, there have been periods in my life when my interest lagged; otherwise, I would now have at the tip of my tongue two or three times that amount of scripture.

My lifework has been in the school-room, in Sunday school, and at the writing desk far more than in the pulpit. Even so, I have found my acquisition precious and eminently useful.

One hears the complaint, "I just can't memorize scripture." Yet practically all evangelical churchgoers can repeat such passages as John 3: 16, the Lord's Prayer, and the twenty-third psalm. Actually, anyone who can memorize a dozen verses can learn twice that many, or 75—indeed, hundreds of them—if he settles down to the task.

"But," someone objects, "the three passages you mention are those we say in church over and over again."

That is just the point. It is simply a matter of drill. The pessimists are under an illusion. One of them whom I know well used to participate in amateur drama; yet he is sure he can't learn scripture.

Then there is the oft-heard sigh of the elderly, "As you get older, it is harder to learn."

As applied to motor skills such as swimming or bicycle riding or playing an instrument, that statement is true. But when applied to memorizing, it contradicts the findings of psychologists. It is a proven fact that the adult (before senility, of course) can memorize as readily as ever—if he believes he can and is willing to undergo the necessary drill. Indeed, he can often do it better because he has greater powers of concentration.

Much of the scripture I know by heart has been learned since I became gray-headed. True, it takes as many as 40 repetitions, plus periodic review. But it did when I was young too. There is no good reason why any adult of ordinary intelligence can't continue to memorize as long as his health holds up.

Review of memorized scripture—a necessity if one is to retain it—is by no means onerous. Meditation on it is a source of blessing. Take courage!

There are a few practical suggestions, gleaned from the experience of Bible lovers, and the findings of psychologists:

1. Select portions that are especially meaningful to you, beginning with the shorter ones. You'll find the more familiar ones partly memorized before you begin, so often have you read and heard them.

2. Memorize the reference along with the text. This isn't difficult.

3. Go through the entire passage each time. Learning by sections is sure to produce memory gaps when you come to put the pieces together.

4. Continue to read carefully (aloud if possible) until sure of every word. Otherwise errors will appear which you'll have to unlearn—a discouraging process. Quote from memory in public only after you have repeated the passage successfully several times in private.

5. Make your study periods brief. Three 5-minute periods interspersed with other activities are better than one 15-minute stretch.

6. Review systematically.

7. Keep at it. You are dealing with God's own Word, and He is pleased. The benefits for all concerned will multiply as time passes. Keep hiding the Word in your head as well as in your heart. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

Are ministers today too busy looking for a "fast buck" to go out looking for a lost sheep?

The Minister— *His Temptations in an Affluent Society*

"I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel" (Acts 20:33).

Paper delivered at Chicago Central Preachers' Meeting

These are the words of a man who more than once had been clobbered by covetousness, wasted by his wants, slain by selfishness, murdered by materialism, put in the grave by greed.

They are the words of one who had discovered that covetousness was *the sin* of sins, the father of them all. They are the words of the Apostle Paul, who wrote to the Roman Christians: "I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet.' . . . For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me" (Rom. 7:7-11, RSV).*

But these also are the words of one who had been delivered from death by the life-giving touch of Jesus Christ and called to preach the gospel. His testimony is positive and clear:

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I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20). For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phil. 1:21). Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ (Phil. 3:8). Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24).

These are the words of a successful, tried and tested, battered and scarred, very-much-alive veteran preacher of the gospel and servant of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They are the words of an enthusiastic, progressive pastor-evangelist-missionary-educator-administrator who had been *practicing* what he preaches to those to whom he is now entrusting the future of the churches and the work he has established during his ministry among them.

I listen to these words because they speak to my troubled ministerial heart today in the midst of materialism beyond description, surrounded by challenging changes occurring so rapidly that the latest book written



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to explain them is too late! Some of our heart trouble may result from high blood pressure, but for most of us it is high *world* pressure threatening to squeeze the spiritual life out of us.

This is the day of "the fast buck . . . the goof-off . . . the unfixed price . . . the half-done job . . . the proximate solution . . . the interim ethic . . . the smooth cliché . . . the accommodated moral standard." It is a day which has a limited vision of poverty and an unlimited poverty of vision.

We minister daily to people who "know the price of everything and the value of nothing." Our world is better acquainted with name brands than with gospel firebrands. Our people know more about calories than Christ. Like ancient Israel, it can be said of us: "The word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision" (1 Sam. 3:1, RSV). Tragically, it is a day in which *integrity* is a forgotten word in every walk of life—from garbage collecting to the highest office in the land.

Coupled with this is the sad fact that in the eyes of many "the image of the ministry is obscured, diffused, undramatic, purposeless. In the eyes of the coming generation the task of the minister is ill defined. Collegians . . . tend to view the minister as competitive, institutionalized, grabbing at whatever attention he can get in his community, concerned with budgetary needs, presenting a false front to the world and to other churches, ministering to the most traditional and defensive and uncreative element in the community." (So says Martin Marty).

Preachers are cynically said to be "too busy looking for the lost coin to be out looking for the lost sheep."

Most of us are fully aware of these things. Too many of us have lost our Christ-centered compasses and are aimlessly adrift on the surging waves

of our material wants, or drowning in our damning desire, or being lapped up by the luxuries in whose laps we thought we sat. Yes, we are fully aware of the spiritual implications of Paul's words. How will we "hack it"? How can we survive?

The survival is packed in the words of the Master:

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matt. 6:33). Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again (Luke 6:38). But whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Mark 10:43-45).

And Paul summed it up, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice . . . unto God" (Rom. 12:1). In short, for us as ministers—for all Christians—the priority has to be a spiritual one: *Keep God first!*

We are—or should be—professionals, but not guilty of professionalism—that is, being motivated by anything other than love for God and souls.

Recently a friend said to one of our most successful evangelists, "Bill, I wouldn't do what you're doing for \$30,000 a year!" The evangelist replied, "Neither would I." I am sure we understand what he was saying. We ministers serve in a field characterized by its lack of "security," in the world's sense of the word.

But *money does matter*. Anyone who has ever had the experience of being without it knows that. Wanting money is not sinful. Having it is not carnal. Saving it is not worldly. Most of us need it, not to "keep up with the Joneses," but to keep up

the payments on the junkers we are driving.

Paul, of course, is referring to his *attitude* toward money. The question for us always must be, Do I possess my possessions, or am I possessed by them? Is money my master whom I serve, or my friend to use to enrich life—for myself and others?

Someone has wisely observed that “there are two ways to be rich—one is in the *abundance* of our possessions, and the other is in the *fewness* of our wants.” Paul, as did his Master, Jesus Christ, paid his own way when there was no other way. Even though he declared that “they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple,” and “they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:13-14), he was always prepared to work with his hands to provide for himself and others rather than depend on a “handout.”

Paul had proven with his life the words “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” I, too, after more than 21 years of full-time ministry, can testify to that truth. I have received much—and that is always a blessed experience. But the greatest blessing comes in knowing that only what I have *given* is eternal—it abides. And I have never been able to outgive the Lord. Tithing and giving offerings have been a way of life. Adding it up, it has often amounted to a double or triple tithe. We have kept God first—in our tithes, talents, and time. He has helped us to educate two of our children in holiness colleges, and now a third is enrolled. God has supplied every need. He has given opportunity for extra work and extra pay, but we have had to DO the work, TAKE the time, and GIVE of ourselves. Today I can say with Paul that I covet no man’s cash, clothes—or church. If I want something, I decide what I will *do without* to get it—and work for it.

Let me share some practical hints which may help us make it financially in the ministry.

1. Don’t let these “little devils” rob you—“I’ll luck out” (win the lottery, strike it rich, get a bigger church); “Nickels and dimes don’t count” (they do!); “I can’t save anything” (put aside *something*, a set amount regularly); “We’ll pay for that later” (procrastination is not only the thief of time); “I don’t care what it costs; just tell me what the monthly payments are” (famous last words of former ministers).

2. Things we already know, lightly touched—(1) Don’t buy everything you think you need. (2) Buy *quality* merchandise *on sale*. (3) Watch out for the words *discount* and *whole-sale*. They, too, are often famous last words. (4) Avoid like the plague *impulse buying*. (5) Be cautious in financing—interest rates will eat you alive, or dead. (6) Consider the possibility of used goods—watch the want ads. (7) Keep what you have in good repair (it will be back in style soon). (8) Go easy on luxuries—they don’t last long and usually wind up in the garage sale. (9) Don’t worry about the Joneses and keeping up with them (or some of our singing or sermonizing “showboats” in their Hong Kong knits). (10) Strive to work *out* a budget and stay *inside* it. (11) Don’t presume on the goodness of people. (12) Avoid borrowing to meet current expenses.

This is a time when “backpacking”—a phase of camping—is in vogue. If a man can carry on his back all that’s necessary for a week’s healthy existence—shelter, food, fuel, and sleeping gear—scrambling madly to acquire so many extras doesn’t make much sense, does it?

Men may be “reaching for the moon,” but they still need us to show them the way to the *Son*. Let us “so labour” and stay blessed.

Wesleyana



Wesley and Biblical Interpretation

By R. Larry Shelton*

THE PRIMARY BASIS for all of Wesley's theology and preaching was, of course, the Bible. He devoured it in great gulps. He breathed it in his sermons. He searched its depths with an unquenchable desire to fathom its contents. Scripture was for him the authoritative norm for preaching, thinking, and acting. He expressed his desire for its message in this well-known passage:

"I want to know one thing—the way to Heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way: For this very end He came from Heaven. He hath written it down in a book. Oh, give me that book! At any price give me the book of God! I have it: Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri* (a man of one book). Here then I am, far away from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: Only God is here. In His presence I open, I read His book, for this end, to find the way to Heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning to the thing I read? Does anything appear dark or intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights: 'Lord, is not Thy word, if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God? Thou givest liberally and upbraidest not. Thou hast said, if any be willing to do Thy will, he shall know. I am willing to do, let me know Thy

will.' I then search after and compare parallel passages of Scripture, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God: and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach."

Wesley's method of interpreting the Bible, then, was inductive in its approach. He allowed scripture to speak for itself, compared it with itself, and drew his theology directly from it. Philip Watson summarizes Wesley's approach to interpretation in *The Message of the Wesleys*:

"If you desire to read the Scriptures in such a manner as may most effectually answer this end, would it not be advisable (1) to set apart a little time, if you can, each morning and evening for that purpose? (2) At each time, if you have leisure, to read a chapter out of the Old, and one out of the New Testament; if you cannot do this, to take a single chapter, or a part of one? (3) To read this with a single eye to know the whole will of God, and a fixed resolution to do it? In order to know His will, you should (4) have a constant eye to the analogy of faith, the connection and harmony there is between those grand, fundamental doctrines, original sin, justification by faith, the new

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birth, inward and outward holiness. (5) Serious and earnest prayer should be constantly used before we consult the oracles of God, seeing 'Scripture can only be understood through the same Spirit whereby it was given.' Our reading should likewise be closed with prayer, that what we read may be written in our hearts. (6) It might also be of use, if while we read we were frequently to pause and examine ourselves by what we read, both with relation to our hearts and lives" (p. 162).

In principle number four, Wesley emphasizes the need to be aware of the "analogy of faith" and the connectional or contextual relationships. The "analogy of faith" is one of the very oldest interpretive principles, and it means simply that an interpretation should be compared with the interpretation that has historically been given a passage by orthodox Christianity. It does not mean, however, that we are to compare our interpretive conclusions only with what has been the customary interpretation in the Wesleyan movement alone. All of Christianity is to be consulted.

Furthermore, interpreting a passage within its nearer and more distant contexts removes the tendency to lift passages out, isolate them, and then proof-text. Proof-texting distorts the true meaning of scripture because it allows the interpreter to use a passage to prove his own conclusions rather than forcing him to bring his theories into line with the natural and contextual senses. Wesleyans should be extremely cautious at this point, for in attempting to substantiate what we think to be cardinal points of doctrine, we often allow our zeal to prove our points with scripture to exceed our integrity in letting scripture say what it will. In so doing, we press passages into service which were never intended to bear the sense we sometimes give them.

In principle number five, Wesley emphasizes the need to seek the assistance of the Holy Spirit in correctly interpreting and understanding scripture. We should here be well aware that Protestantism has historically held that the Word cannot be separated from the Spirit. The Spirit does not enable the interpreter to intuit meanings which are not inherent in the Word itself. The interpreting Spirit only illuminates what the inspiring Spirit has revealed. For example, the drawing of allegorical meanings out of passages which were meant to be interpreted historically and literally opens a wide and dangerous gate for doctrinal subjectivism. It is extremely easy, as we have seen repeatedly in the history of the Church, for sincere men to substitute their own pious thoughts and convictions for the Word of God.

Finally, when Wesley says he wants to be "a man of one book," he does not mean that he isolates himself from all other human thought and scholarship. He notes that he "consults those who are experienced in the things of God." Wesley, we must remember, was an Oxford scholar. He was a well-read man, as his library shows. He was concerned that his people feed their minds on the best that men wrote, as well as on what God had inspired. To this end he led his people on an extensive reading program. He read many books, but he understood all books in the light of Him who is the Truth, as the Spirit brought Him to light through the Word.

Let us, then, as inheritors of Wesley's vision, strive to be as scrupulous as he in bringing every thought into captivity to the Word of God. And let us never trust an "inner voice" as a guide to doctrine and behavior unless it is substantiated by scripture and confirmed by the Spirit.



CALL TO SERVANTHOOD

C. S. COWLES, Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Covina, Calif.

THE PASTOR DEALS WITH CONFLICT

*Fighting without and fear within (2 Cor. 7:5, RSV).**

"Negroes are moving in!" That announcement shocked a comfortable and prestigious white holiness church, setting in motion forces which ignited a conflagration of the first magnitude. Conflict raged, feelings grew volatile, issues became intense, battle lines were drawn. The pastor, a peaceable person deeply imbued with holiness idealism, was caught totally by surprise. He never even imagined that the "family of God" could be so caught up in internecine struggle. I know the man well, and am deeply indebted to him for the insights which I now share.

Conflict is inevitable in today's world and has always attended the developing life of the Church. Conflict is such an integral dimension of ministry that it must be incorporated into any theological understanding of the nature and task of the Church. Furthermore, conflict offers the pastor an unparalleled opportunity to study his church in its most authentic aspects. Conflict has a way of revealing critical issues and fundamental commitments. It exposes

inherent weaknesses and lays bare basic concerns. For people seldom do battle with one another except over matters about which they care deeply.

More pointedly, ministry—where it is courageous—excites conflict. It creates issues, asks questions, challenges assumptions, calls for action, parries reaction, and incites change. "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" asks Ahab of Elijah (1 Kings 18:17, RSV). Less heroically and more frequently, conflict thrusts itself upon the congregation quite apart from the intention and will of the minister. A pastor's instinctive reaction is to view it as a carnal aberration, or even as a demonic invader to be cast out by prayer and fasting and hard preaching. This may well be the case; and a concerted spiritual counter-attack, the appropriate response. And it may well not be the case also.

I am intrigued by the way Paul deals with factious conflict in Corinth. He does declare that they are acting "as men of the flesh, as babes in Christ" (1 Cor. 3:1, RSV). But he does not speedily hurry them to the altar. Rather, he patiently tries to discover and understand the roots of

*Quotations from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946 and 1952, are used by permission.

their conflict—i.e., their natural attachment to certain spiritual leaders—and then leads them on to a broader view and loftier perspective of what the Church is all about. His method of dealing with conflict is theological; he tries by the use of analogy, illustration, and logic to increase their spiritual field of vision (1 Cor. 3:5-23). In this spirit, perhaps we are justified in refusing to take the easy way out by sweeping church conflict under the rug of bland spiritual generalities, and rather addressing ourselves to the more difficult task of understanding and resolving conflict.

People react when they feel threatened. Such feelings are rooted in fear, which in turn has its origins in fundamental life-instincts. When threatened, people react by "flight" or "fight." When they stay and fight, conflict is likely to proceed. For every action has a way of provoking an equal and opposite reaction.

It is my observation that the question of survival is at the heart of most church conflict. Somebody feels that his position or project or person is threatened. The threat may be real or only imagined. It makes no difference in its capacity to put people's entire system on "emergency alert." They act to secure their position and defend themselves. They repel that person or those forces they perceive as being the threat. Further, they project their anxiety upon the whole church. They are quick to protest that they don't care about what happens to them—it is the church they are concerned about. Hence, private fears and personal anxieties have a way of becoming contagious, affecting the whole church.

The illogical element in church conflict is that the very people who are overreacting out of love and loyalty to the church are perpetuating that very spirit of divisiveness which

heightens the potential for a disintegrative rupture. The church against itself is a contradiction. Internal conflicts and group survival seem mutually to exclude each other. And yet it is the rare church which in fact does split over issues involving internal conflict. To the contrary, many pastors report that their churches seem to prosper when the battle rages most fiercely. It is almost as if nobody wants to miss out on the action. Furthermore, when the conflict is resolved and the crisis is past, the church appears to be stronger as a result—at least in some cases of which I personally know.

We must then assume that conflict is not necessarily incompatible with the will to survive. To the contrary, conflict may well serve an indispensable role in the struggle of a social group for survival. There are at least three authorities who suggest such a possibility.

Eric Berne, in his book, *The Structure and Dynamics of Organizations and Groups*, maintains that the most important cohesive factor in any group is its will to survive. This is demonstrated by observing that: (1) attack from the outside will be resisted, unifying even the conflicting elements within; (2) absent members—or even the threat of members leaving the group—depress the rest; (3) new members create tension until tested; (4) unbalanced behavior leads to resistance among the rest of the group; and (5) internal conflict will be precipitated rather than facing a decision which threatens the life of the group. Apathy is the deadly enemy of all social groups, not conflict. When people cease to care, there is peace—and there is death. Conflict, for whatever reason or in whatever guise, declares that somebody at least is deeply concerned about the group, its ongoing existence, and his position within it.

Karl Menninger proposes a theory of human behavior which views illnesses, aberrant behavior, antisocial disorder, aggressive reaction, and the inciting of conflict as emergency measures instituted by the human or social organism toward the recovery of its vital balance. Such special and unusual maneuvers, automatically initiated, may appear to be entirely destructive in their effect—and indeed in some cases actually are. But recovering and maintaining a self-integrative homeostasis is so important to the survival of an individual or group that any sacrifice will be made and any risk taken. What appears on first impression to be a threat to survival—fever, psychosis, conflict—may well signify extreme measures instituted toward the restoration of balance and the recovery of equilibrium in the organism.

It is Konrad Lorenz' thesis, based upon wide-ranging, sociobiological research, that "aggression, far from being the diabolical, destructive principle that classical psychoanalysis makes it out to be, is really an essential part of the life-preserving organization of instincts." He further asserts, "Conflict between independent sources of impulse is able to produce, within the organism, tensions which lend firmness to the whole system, much as the stays of a mast give it stability by pulling in opposite directions." Though aggression may express itself in the wrong way and have destructive consequences, this is not its inherent function. The purpose of aggressive activity is not to exterminate the opponent. Rather it is to gain control of

a certain territory or situation in such a way as to insure the survival of the organism. Conflict among members of the same group serves to discharge aggressive energies which cannot be directed toward an outside threat.

Conflict declares in unmistakable terms that something is wrong. Somebody, or some group, or perhaps the whole church, feels threatened. The cause for concern may or may not be well founded, but it must be discovered, dealt with, and resolved with all dispatch. Otherwise the pastor as leader of the congregation may quickly lose the capacity to act; he himself may become the issue.

In his book, *The Plague*, Albert Camus describes what happened to the townsfolk when they began to realize that the gates had been shut and that they were virtual prisoners in the city of death: "Their first reaction, for instance, was to abuse the authorities." When this happens, then the question of survival is thrust upon the pastor also.

Conflict then may arise from natural social and interpersonal causes which, in the first instance, do not necessarily represent spiritually malicious motives. To recognize that helps us as pastors to address ourselves toward the resolution of the fundamental causes. This is not to say that natural conditions cannot affect people's spiritual attitudes. But, in the main, we render a greater service to people and the church when we explore the possibility that it might well be a nail in the boot that causes the defective walk, rather than an apostate spiritual condition.

The commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," applies to ministers as well as laymen. It includes "sheep stealing."

The Minister and His Fellow Ministers

By George W. Privett, Jr.*

THE PRACTICE OF the golden rule should be a basic foundation stone in the pastor's dealings with his fellow ministers. Theoretically, we accept this premise with ease, but the demonstration of it can be quite difficult. For example, have you ever had a fine young couple from a neighboring church of your denomination come to you with a complaint about their church and desire to make a change? What do you do? What would you want another pastor to do were he in your shoes?

It is encouraging that we have a number of fine churches in urban areas. This is as it should be if we would evangelize the teeming masses in our ever expanding cities. It is comforting to know that, should irreconcilable differences arise (as with Paul and Barnabas), and we must lose members, they may be transferred to sister churches instead of being lost to the church.

The pastor would do well to "play it cool" when members of other congregations visit his regular services or approach him with desire to join. The reasons are many. The disgruntled ones frequently do not bring blessing to the new church. If, in fact, they are running from problems instead of resolving them in a Christ-like way, they are not likely to be

loyal in a new situation. To some folk, the grass always looks greener elsewhere.

Since the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," applies as forcibly to minister as well as layman, the man of God should practice care in these relationships. "Sheep stealing" is reprehensible before God. It brings His judgment—not His blessing.

If a pastor is so strongly pressured for statistical and financial gain as to frequently resort to this practice, it is time for him to re-examine the source of his call to the ministry. "God hath not called us unto uncleanness [which could include double-dealing], but unto holiness." Unless a pastor repents and changes, he may find it better to peddle pickles in Paducah than to pastor a people whose purpose is paradise.

When families come from other churches, the pastor should allow some time. The newcomers may find out after several Sundays that their church wasn't so bad after all. Also, the Lord may talk to them about how to implement a reconciliation for the good of all concerned. Never be hasty in advising them to make a change. It may seem to be the best for you, but it may be the worst course of action for them from a spiritual standpoint. The flight from responsibility usually results in disability.

If attendance persists and over-

*Pastor, Plaza Church of the Nazarene, Charlotte, N.C.

tures continue to be made, the pastor is morally obligated to prayerfully investigate the situation. This will probably involve talking with his brother pastor or the district superintendent—or both. In this process, he is never to alienate the affection of persons from their former church or pastor. Frequently the pastor of the family in question will give valuable insight to the inquiring minister. The change may be for the best in the light of events which have transpired. Both pastors should keep two considerations always before them: (1) Will this change benefit or hurt the churches involved? (2) Will it deepen the spiritual life of the family involved?

I heard a pastor of a church in a large city tell a practics class in one of our colleges that, when he wasn't winning new people, he was busy trying to attract members from other churches. This pastor—a guest lecturer—later learned better, but his statement explained why a “dog-eat-dog” attitude prevailed among professed brethren at that time in the city where he labored. If our primary interest is in building God's kingdom—and not our own—we will do nothing to divide brother from brother or church from church.

If we will listen to the voice of God and take counsel from the wise, we can be Christlike in all of our dealings with our fine brother ministers.

Discovering Aged America

By Stanley Sutter*

Discovering aged America may have saved me in my ministry. Some frustration was eased, for sure, as the Lord opened up new areas of service.

What a thrill we felt as we first saw the beautiful stone church, large parsonage, and solid Christians in our first pastorate! The only severe tension that began to build over the years was more a vague feeling than a definite problem. Visiting over a wide rural area in homes and hospitals, along with “learning the ropes” in a practical nature in church administration, kept us busy. Yet anxiety began to grow. Uneasiness prevailed as we began to feel that growth was slow and that the pastor and people were not ministering enough outside the church.

Two church-related citizens of rest

homes began to provide direction. Conversations revealed that many of the patients were not only alert, but fine Christians eager for Bible study. Because of the nondenominational structure of the rest home, the administrators could not offer this, but welcomed clergy to come in and do so.

How rewarding that first Bible study when 25 senior adults enrolled! From 10 to 15 “faithful” came each week in that small rest home, and a whole new experience opened as these people invaded my heart.

Did it help the aged? Indications were that it did. Did it help the pastor? Did it help the pastor! In illustrations, in guiding our people to new vision, in opening my heart to new depths of loving. My whole ministry was warmed.

Discovering aged America changed this pastor's life.

*Pastor, Grace Church of the Nazarene, Wichita, Kans.

Here are aspects of the sacrifice of Jesus which we seldom notice.

The Sacrifice of Jesus

THE OLD TESTAMENT predicted it. A marvelous mosaic of references from divers books, authors, and centuries, becoming, by the Spirit's inspiration, a perfect portrait of a long awaited, suffering Saviour! Heaven's identi-kit pieced together by history's fulfillment of prophecy!

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Christian worship exalts it. By architecture and altar, in creed and sacrament, through Stainer and Bach, Watts and Wesley, and modern folksy lyric. Proclaiming:

*Beneath the cross of Jesus
I fain would take my stand.*

Does the forgoing of marriage and a God-appointed helpmate deepen our appreciation of that sacrifice? How did Jesus sustain His lifework without the closest human love?

My own life and ministry would have fared poorly without a life partner in the parsonage. Loving beyond deserving and serving beyond desiring. Partner in ministry's magnificent episodes, and patient listener in moods of murmuring. Repository of secrets, center of large areas of church life, and constructive critic of preaching and programs. Standing by in the loneliness of decision, but never permitting the loneliness of desolation that Jesus knew.

Creator of home and conqueror of poverty when a mockery of a stipend had to maintain life, children's education, and ceaseless hospitality. Maintaining pastoral and parental roles in my absence, coping with the unexpected, soothing upset nerves and members.

Secretary, telephonist, nurse, chauffeur, curate, hotelkeeper, adviser, memory, and conscience—shielding in mistakes and omissions, and inspiring to achievements undreamed of in early fearful days:

"the woman whom thou gavest to be with me."

But for Him—

"No crib, no home, no wife!"

Was love sublimated? To John, the beloved friend? to Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, a caring family? to the



by
Albert J. Lown

Nazarene evangelist
London, England

Church to be, a bride chosen before the foundation of the world?

No sublimation can wholly compensate, at all times, for the nonfulfillment of God-given desires. If "the Word was made flesh" and He was "in all things . . . made like unto his brethren," the Second Adam must have known every human longing of the first Adam. To a depth I have never known.

Practical Points

that make a difference

Political or Political

Dear Son:

I learned something the other day at a laymen's workshop that I have needed to know for 20 years. Your dad has always run shy of anything "political," thinking it was a bad word used for bad ends. However, I found that it need not mean shrewd, sly, cunning, contriving, clever, evasive, deceptive, designing, tricky, treacherous, Machiavellian, unscrupulous, or crafty.

It can mean in keeping with policy, prudent, wise, sagacious, safe, knowing, reasonable, rational, provident, astute, sharp, perspicacious, clear-headed, enlightened, level-headed, on guard, vigilant, reflecting, and diplomatic.

In fact, its etymology relates to good citizenship (Greek, *politikos*), and *political* can relate to the conduct of government. A man who is politically sensitive is the man who deals, with integrity, in good interpersonal relationships to achieve worthy ends.

I wish it were always that way—and it could be. I think I'm trying to say to you that goodness and discretion can be partners. In fact, they must be partners if a pastor is to fulfill his calling.

God, then, can use the "political" to His ends if we allow Him to. I pray that you will never abort the term *political* to your own ends. It is not worth it in the long run—and that is the run that we are all on.

Love,
Dad

FAILURE

We plan our work
and work our plan
until our brains are dizzy.

We rush about;
our hearts are stout;
we are so very busy.

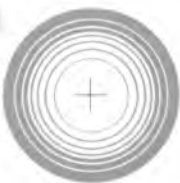
We pass the plate;
we're never late;
our lives are in a tizzy.

But, alas,

When all is done,
the goals are won,
we've worked our exciting plan.

But one thing wrong—
in our heart no song,
for we haven't saved one man.

PHIL CORY



Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission

EARL C. WOLF, Executive Director
DON WILDE, Office Editor

● **General Superintendent Lawlor**



What Our Laymen Expect

OUR CHURCH makes many demands upon our lay people—their service, loyal support, time, and money—involving a large measure of devotion and sacrifice. In return it seems to me our laity have the right to expect and enjoy certain privileges and advantages as members of our Zion.

How often do we as ministers give serious consideration to what our people have a right to expect from the church and from their pastor? The church of my youth used to say, "Put your trust in the church and she will save your soul." But we know and have proved how personal is the responsibility for entrance into the Kingdom, and the stern discipline needed for spiritual growth thereafter.

Thus, one of the primary expectations of our laity is the right to careful instruction and guidance in all spiritual matters. Their spiritual care is entrusted to us as "shepherds of the flock." Ezekiel said long ago, "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" (23:2). Surely we agree that our people deserve and require all the Christlike love, care, and admonition we can give them.

Our people have a right to expect that through our lives and our preaching, sinners will know and yield to the regenerating power of God and "earnestly seek to perfect holiness of heart and life in the fear of the Lord." But our duty is also to teach them His ways, that they walk in the light, growing in grace toward Christian maturity.

Our members have the right to be taught sound biblical doctrine. They must be shown how to overcome tempta-



tion; how to cultivate the graces of the holy life; the power and blessings of prayer; and the great adventure of living in the Spirit. We fail if we do not instruct our people in the fundamental doctrine of our church—holiness of heart and life.

Our people have the right to expect that we will love their families. We dedicate their children at our altars, and we must provide for their spiritual nurture and moral training. This involves seeing that our buildings, complete with necessary equipment, are kept open to accomodate our youth for all worthwhile endeavors in Christian character building. It means that we will make sure that the leaders of our children and youth are of the highest spiritual and moral character. It also means that we will show concern for our children and youth.

Our people have the right to feel that we care for them regardless of their station in life—poor or rich, young or old. They have a right to expect that we will show appreciation for their labors; that we stand by them in adversity, in success, in joy, and in sorrow. They have a right to complete pastoral care.

Every member of the Church of the Nazarene has the right to fair and impartial treatment in regard to any misunderstanding that may arise in the church. The *Manual* of our church gives specific instructions regarding what must be done in order that justice be served without fear or favor. Our people have a right to expect that the church will dispense honorable justice to each member wherever needed. This would apply to anything affecting the character of our people or the moral reputation of our people.

It is not an easy matter in today's world to build love and loyalty into the church. But it is possible—prayer still changes things! We who are ministers should continue to pray for all of our people. Let us remind ourselves that they have a right to certain privileges—that we not only must ask for *their* loyalty and *their* Christian duty, but we must recognize and acknowledge *our* God-given duty as ministers of the flock.

CONCEPTS AND CONTRASTS IN MISSIONS



Quotable reactions from Dr. J. B. Chapman's first missionary journey of eight months' duration to Latin America, the Caribbean, and South Africa; January to September, 1931.

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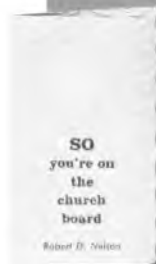
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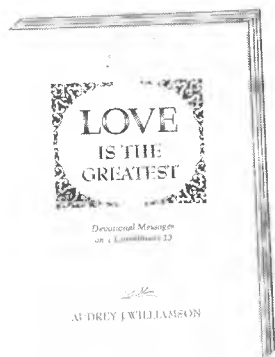
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FREQUENTLY WE receive letters from Nazarenes asking how to prepare for the ministry. We discover also that many Nazarene young people now in college do not know the simplest ABC's in getting properly started.

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Please do not tell interested persons to write Headquarters, the Publishing House, or CST for information. You give it to them! Tell them to—

1. Obtain a copy of the *Manual* and study carefully the sections on the ministry, Pars. 229-232.8; 400-404.5; 410-417.4; 420-424.
2. Secure a *local preacher's license*.
3. Enroll with the District Board of Ministerial Studies. You as pastor can help in establishing this contact.
4. Obtain from the Publishing House, for \$2.50 a copy of the Revised Edition, 1975, *Questions on the Home Courses of Study*—and ask for a free price brochure.
5. Become familiar with the procedures followed by the District Board of Ministerial Studies, as outlined in the current *District Journal*.

PUT ALL PRESSURE possible on these budding preachers to prepare for the ministry by attending one of our Nazarene schools. If this is definitely impossible, encourage them to begin their home study program at once, under the guidance of the District Board of Ministerial Studies.

IF THESE PERSONS are already college students, write to them frequently. Encourage them to fashion their course in harmony with *Manual*, 420.1. Also, suggest that they apply now for a *local preacher's license*, and register with the Board of Ministerial Studies.

IN GRANTING a local preacher's license, make a big thing of it—which it is. If possible, present the license certificate in a meaningful public ceremony.

And incidentally, the local preacher's license can be obtained from the Publishing House for 5c each, 6 for 25c, or 12 for 40c. The item number is R-190.



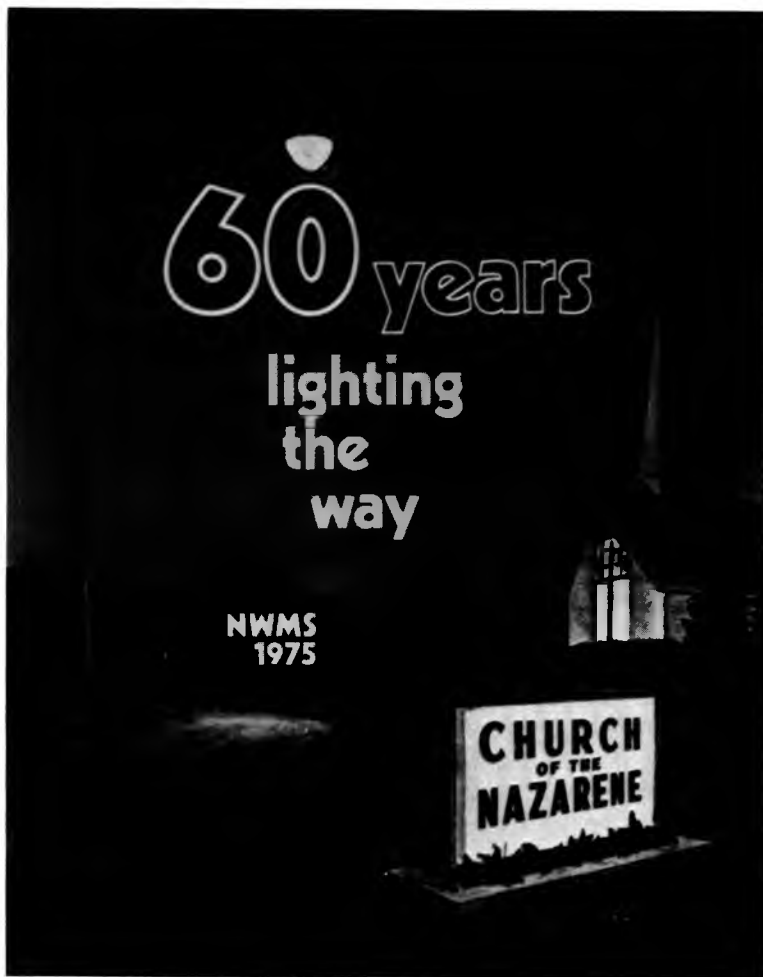
CAN YOU THINK OF ANY GREATER SATISFACTION THAN TO KNOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN GUIDING A GOD-CALLED YOUTH INTO THE MINISTRY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST?

Richard S. Taylor, Associate
Department of Education and
the Ministry



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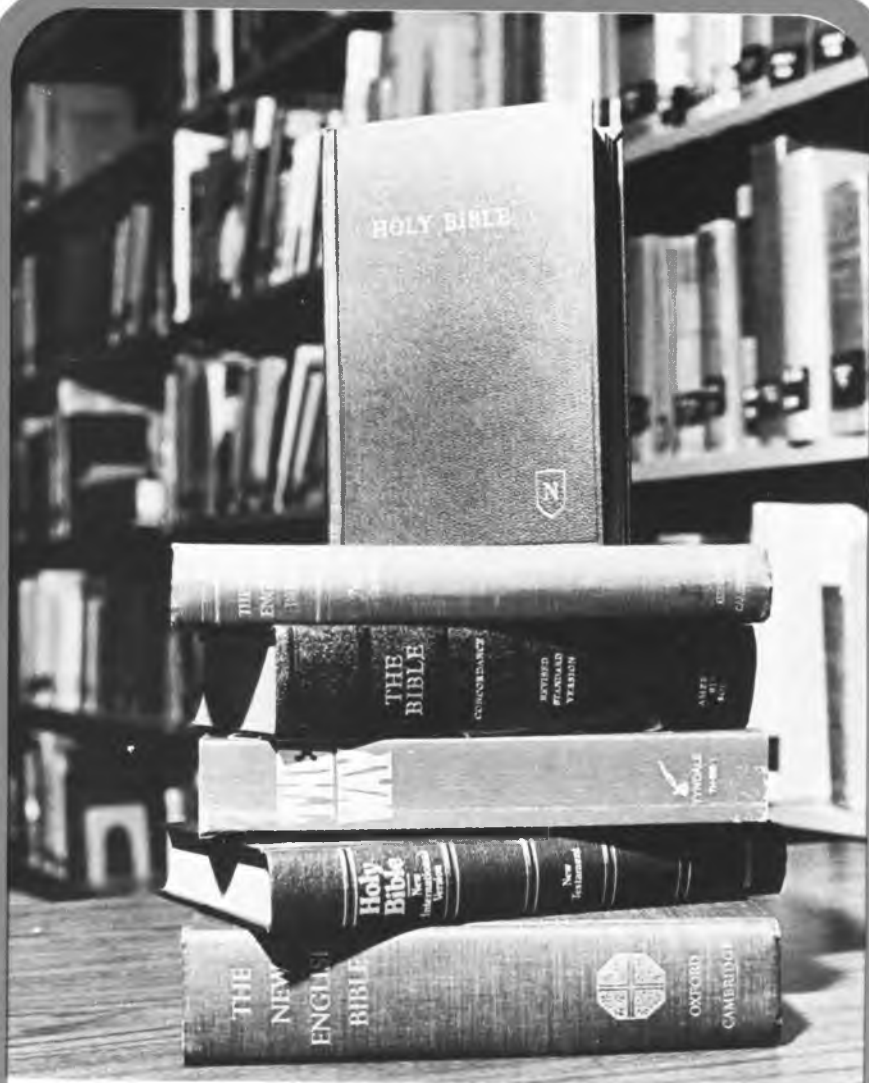
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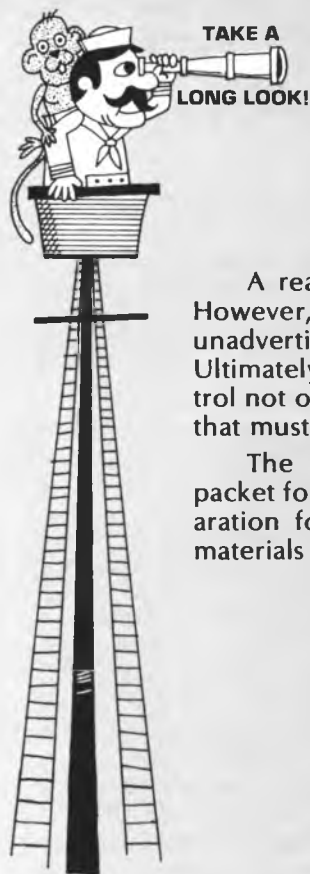
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Talk with Your Wife

By Ross W. Hayslip*

When Dr. Donald Coggan was recently appointed to assume the chair of the archbishop of Canterbury, this great man, who was at that time the archbishop of York, delayed for five days his final acceptance of the office. The report was that Prime Minister Harold Wilson was mildly annoyed by the delay in reply.

Dr. Coggan explained the delay at a news conference by saying, "I needed time to say my prayers and talk with my wife." Both of these, to my mind, were very good reasons for delay. I need not dwell upon the first reason, but the second is also important.

It is well for us clergymen to consult our wives frequently about the important decisions of our lives. It was Sir Philip Sidney who referred to his wife as his better half. A wife may see things that we overlook. Her position, unless she has been called to the ministry, is rather peculiar. She is an inhabitant of the parsonage and yet a layman. Her insight is often very different from ours, and her suggestions can always be well worth hearing.

There is a danger that the minister may assume an air of superiority because of his erudition. It is doubtful if the average minister's wife has had training in the fields of Hebrew, Greek, and theology. Because of her lack of training in these areas, it is easy to discount any of her observations that might reflect on our mastery of these disciplines.

There is a philosophy now prevalent in many evangelical circles that accentuates man's superior place in the marriage and home relationship, and would not only emphasize his leadership, but also his rulership. As far as I am concerned, when I see man as the climax of God's creative activity in His universe, I see "mankind," which imperatively includes woman. Furthermore, if God's creation was progressive throughout, woman, being created after man, would necessarily have to be classed as the ultimate climax, and man would have to take a lower rank.

When a minister and his wife have lived, loved, and laughed together for several years, it is a great source of help for him to turn toward her for comfort, counsel, and confidence. She will answer him with candor, but will keep his confidence strictly.

John Newton, the ex-slave trader, has been criticized by some of his pious biographers for being overly fond of his wife. W. E. Sangster, the peerless British Methodist, said that he himself relied utterly upon his wife. He often said that his marriage was made in heaven.

Happy is the minister who can join the ranks of Newton and Sangster and realize that God has given him a great gift in the lifelong companionship of a wife who loves him even though she knows him better than anyone else.

*Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Tucson, Ariz.

The Preacher's Wife—God—and Herself

SO YOU'RE A PREACHER'S WIFE? Me too! When I began this adventure, I didn't run out and buy all the "ideal preacher's wife" books. First, because I never thought of it; and second, I couldn't have afforded it.

I loved my husband, I loved God, and I wanted my husband to be a success—that was motivation enough. The Lord blessed our conservative efforts, and we were both about as out-out as all-out can be.

It wasn't until our second pastorate that all our zeal, enthusiasm, and traditional training was tested to the hilt.

My husband was doing his own dying. Watching him die was enough, but he had lots of company. The Lord dealt with every preconceived idea of mine. I had a certain security as long as I "fit" into the camp meeting crowd two weeks out of the year. There was a comfortable feeling when the Sunday school chalked up 10 more than the preceding year. I had weathered the votes at the end of each year, and there had never been

many negative votes. But all that was changing. It seemed like so much role playing.

God got us down to the nitty-gritty of the stuff the Bible people were made of. My life became God-conscious. With this new God-awareness, my self-image changed. I felt accepted; I felt loved; I felt destined. Added to the purity of the Holy Spirit within me were spontaneity, naturalness, and power. I didn't have to "look this way and that way" for approval of the brethren. I was free.

Becoming free myself, I became less judgmental of others. I freed them too.

Many pastors' wives live a self-imposed "pity complex" which they radiate. They attract to them the fear they themselves reciprocate.

We need a crash program on preachers' wives' self-image. Every year some God-called servants have to leave their post of duty because the preachers' wives' nerves are breaking. I offer a few possibilities:

1. They feel forced into role playing.
2. They are afraid to be natural.
3. They are under bondage to their people.

Our writer for the coming quarter will be Mrs. Don Polston, pastor's wife of the Falls Avenue Wesleyan Church, Waterloo, Ia.

4. They feel inadequate.
5. Their children are not fulfilling the desires the parents have for them.

Much is said about the part the pastor's wife must play to her husband, but she will not be able unless her own self-image is in good repair.

Here are a few self-image suggestions:

1. Believe you're a God-indwelt person, and no one indwelt by God is second-rate.

2. Keep fairly contemporary in your appearance. You are ministering to this generation. God is now. The past is deadening. Stay in the mainstream of His goings. The Spirit's tide is onward.

3. Keep a creative atmosphere in your home. Change the furniture around and change the pictures on the wall.

4. Start a small fellowship coffee where newcomers can come and talk easily and naturally about their walk with Christ.

5. Keep an enthusiastic, vivacious spirit. Talk about happy, wholesome things. Never, never criticize anyone or anything. Be *for* more than you're *against*.

6. Make everyone feel special in your congregation, and have no specific friends. Be friends to all.

Five basic problems of the preachers' wives are: (1) self-pity, (2) self-consciousness, (3) self-protectiveness, (4) inferiority complex, (5) discouragement.

All of these may be overcome by a corrective self-image, which to me is the God-conscious personality.

1. *Self-pity* is the result of no goals. Write personal goals. Never give up your self-worth. Get involved.

2. *Self-consciousness*. You can reprogram your awakened feeling by a positive vocabulary. I can! I will! I am able! I am positive!

3. *Self-protectiveness*. Some

preachers' wives have become professionals in how to get out of work. The people who have "causes" are happy people. Jesus said, "Lose your life." It's not overwork which hurts us. It's under-being.

4. *Inferiority complex*. Be glad you are you. Stop comparing yourself with those who play the piano and sing. Start approving of yourself as you are. God always needs "lovers." People would rather be loved than sung to. Tell yourself that no one will or can outdo you in loving; then love your people with all your heart. They'll vote your husband back to keep you around.

5. *Discouragement*. This is the most difficult to live with, but it can be overcome. Don't let your husband prop you up. You prop him up. Don't take yourself too seriously. If you fail, consider it only an incident. Always tell yourself, "The best is yet to come." Keep little breaks in your schedule—a luncheon with a friend, a drive, or a date with your husband. Keep a sense of humor. Laugh at yourself and see the funny side of situations. Don't be companions of gloomy, pessimistic people.

Following is a daily therapy to blast you loose from self-depreciation. Say it until you believe it.

1. At long last, I accept myself as vital to my husband, my children, my church, and my world.

2. I stop trying to obliterate myself, to get myself out of the way. I accept myself as one way God projects His personality into the world.

3. I am old enough and young enough right now to release all negative images of myself that have limited me.

4. I reject all inferior pictures from my imagination chamber.

5. I joyously accept myself and my authority (Luke 10:19).

6. I authorize only images that

free me and my fellowman to stay in my mind.

7. I am no longer elated or deflated by the opinions and actions of others. I am learning to be true to the integrity and authority God has put in me.

8. I accept and like the awakening Spirit within me.

9. I accept my own self-identity

confidently enough that I no longer doubt my neighbor's.

10. I am grateful for the transformation at work in me from the inside out.

Take the limitations off your mind. You are unique and special. You are chosen! Write yourself an appreciation letter. (Then burn it.) Claim, live, project the God-conscious mind.

Living with Inflation

INFLATION, that wolf that howls at every door, has not excluded the ministry. The fact that it is now joined by recession makes it a bone-chilling duet. Living with inflation is not a happy theme, but alternatives do not exist if we plan to go on living. So the question arises, How can a pastor or evangelist (or whatever your particular ministry happens to be) live on an income somewhat lower than those in other professions?

Following are some important principles for the Christian minister:

Practice the self-discipline of making your standard of living conform to your income.

We preach that self-discipline is a vital part of discipleship. Here is an opportunity to demonstrate to our people in a very practical way what we expect of them in the total spectrum of Christian living. The fact is, we can live on less if we are willing to do with less.

This raises the question of our philosophy of the pastor's salary. Just why do people pay me to preach? In the Bible we find these words from Paul: "They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). The context is equally reinforcing. But the question is not how we shall live, but how *well* shall we live? Perhaps a better attitude toward one's salary would be the recognition that we give our services freely to all who will receive them. The remuneration received from the church is not payment for expended labor at all. The church has made us financially independent, so that we can give full time to the work of the ministry. Every minister should diligently use that freedom to make of himself "a vessel unto hon-



by
R. E. Maner

Pastor, First Church
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our, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

Save some of your income.

Even if you save only \$1.00 a week, you are exercising self-discipline that will make you a better Christian. No matter how small the salary, my wife and I have always practiced saving some of our income. Consequently, we have never been financially embarrassed. This principle of saving is more important than the amount saved. Always spend slightly less than your income, and never draw your last dollar out of the bank. This will work a miracle in your finances.

Make what you have last.

Take care of the things you buy. Don't allow the children (your own or others') to destroy the furniture. Some pastors' families can destroy a houseful of furniture in two or three years. This is a tragic waste of money. Good furniture can be made to last a lifetime. Even a moving pastor can extend the lifetime of his household belongings by care and repair.

Make your clothing last—at least until it goes out of style. After the Sunday morning service, the pastor should take off his good suit and put on something casual to lounge in—if he has time to lounge. I have seen pastors keep on the suit they wore Sunday morning throughout the day. By Sunday night it looked as though they had slept in it. They not only looked sloppy for the evening service, but they had a cleaning bill before next Sunday.

Care can make the automobile last longer. It is nice to trade every year, but it is even nicer to have car payments you can live with. If you have a carport or garage, it is worth the effort to put the car inside each night. Routine maintenance is money well spent.

Always be watchful for bargains in the essentials of life.

While it is foolish to buy something just because it is on sale, it is wise indeed to buy things while they are on sale. At our house, we make it a practice to see what is on sale every time we go to a clothing store. I rarely buy a suit at its original price. With us it is a form of recreation to see who can come up with the greatest bargain. This principle can be applied to all of the necessities of life. Learn to shop for value; learn what things are selling for; learn to detect quality material. This will increase your income by at least 30 percent.

Don't be pressured into buying.

Don't let a fast-talking salesperson make you buy something you can't afford or don't really want. Again, we have a rule of thumb that really helps. We never buy anything on the spot. We usually go to some other department and discuss it. Is it a good price? Do we really need this? Can we do better elsewhere? Fifteen minutes to consider the purchase is time well invested.

Don't be pressured by your peers into buying. Just because Brother So-and-so in the next town has one does not mean that you need one. After all, you may have things that he doesn't have. Learn to be content with what you have. Yours is probably paid for, while he is still struggling with those monthly payments. Before you buy, ask yourself these questions: Do I really need this? Do I really want this? Can I afford this now?

Most important, be generous with God.

It is so easy for the man who preaches to his people to honor God—not only in tithing, but with all that is theirs—to justify his own lack of generosity by a small income or the dubious claim that everything he has

is glorifying God. God knows the attitude of the heart of the preacher in the matter of his material possessions as well as the hearts of his laymen.

God will not only bless the little that we have, but if we seek His guidance in our business dealings, He will help us to be good stewards of all that we have. He will honor us if we honor Him by being faithful and sacrificial.

And above all else, He will bless the church we serve, and it will grow in financial strength. One of the smartest things I ever did in dealing with financial problems in the church was to cut the pastor's salary. When

I arrived as pastor, the church was in serious financial jeopardy. At the first board meeting I suggested that we cut the pastor's salary \$10.00 a week. It shocked the board (and the whole church) so much that within 30 days we were well on the way to recovery. In a short time they restored the salary cut, and that church has not been bothered with a financial problem since. But more, a revival broke out in the church and many were saved. When I left that church, they had a good surplus in their bank account.

It pays to put God first—even with inflation.



BY ASA H. SPARKS
Pastor, Church of the Nazarene
Vandalia, Ohio



Preaching and Pastoral Care

1. The average pastor buys at least one book a month. If you don't believe it, compare your shelves with your term of service. Don't fail to count those you have given away—and the borrowed. When there is a death in the church, you may place your next book purchase in your personal or church library in memory of the deceased, and advise the family of your action.

2. For your next planned visitation of church families, publish in advance a list of 10 to 20 questions which you will be asking during your call. Since some of them will be dealing with negative aspects of church life, it may help you to reach those who are estranged from the church.

3. To give a permanence to your next wedding celebration, type out the marriage ceremony in advance, with the

couple's names in it, and present it to the groom at the reception.

4. If you pastor a church where things are sometimes said and later regretted, have cards printed with this little thought on it and place on your study and classroom doors: "Only gentleness spoken here."

5. We do not get new members because we do not plan to get them. Make one Sunday per month membership Sunday. Invite new members to join that day. If no one is eligible, then speak for a few minutes on the value of church membership, the need, or some related subject.

6. You can be of service to families who are moving into a new home by providing a dedication ceremony for their home. To really do it fancy, you could print a picture of the new home on the cover, and the dedication information on the inside.

7. Christmas season is a wonderful time to make a true pastoral call. You can take a small gift for the home. If you prefer, give out appointment cards, so that people can specify special times to come.

8. Check with your local Holiday Inn to see if you might be of service as a chaplain-on-call. This service provided by Holiday Inns is one in which you may

be able to minister to someone in time of crisis.

9. Baptism is a brand-new experience for those being baptized. Help them by preparing a sheet in advance of the baptismal service which you mail to them with a letter of congratulations on their decision to be baptized. Include information on the purpose of water baptism, a description of the service, suggestions as to what to bring, and instructions on the immersion process. (Winston Hatcliff, Shelby, N.C.)

10. The American family has an increasingly difficult time getting together, especially when the children reach the teen years. Encourage family life by setting Monday night as family night. Plan no church activities on that night. Encourage the families to stay at home together, and to have family altar together.

11. To encourage your families to have family altars, schedule a time when the pastor will come in and share in family altar with each family.

12. For a different midweek service, try a Quaker service. Hand the attendants a sheet of instructions as they come in. For this service tell them to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. After 20 to 30 minutes, you will close the Quaker service and continue with the regular prayer meeting pattern.

13. Make the Lord's Supper meaningful through change in procedure. For instance, instead of serving in the sanctuary, serve around the table. Instead of a sip of juice, provide a couple of ounces. Have the pastor pour the element into the glasses from a single pitcher as they are served. Close the service by repeating the Lord's Prayer together.

14. To help conserve the new converts till next revival, prepare an instruction sheet for Christians to use in following up these new converts. Include items such as general items you want them to observe, instructions to pray for the new convert, make arrangements to meet with them at least one hour a week for eight weeks, using Chic Shaver's plan for developing new converts. Ask the older Christians to give you a weekly report as to the progress of the new converts.

THREADBARE EXCUSES

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:25).

The writer of Psalm 116 found great pleasure in praising the Lord and joining with others in worship. How different is the attitude of many professing Christians today! Paul Rees writes, "Our churches are not being weakened and thinned out by the people who would like to be present and can't, but by the folk who could be present and aren't." He then proceeds to consider four excuses that are often used:

The "weather excuse." This doesn't keep people from their work, or attending a banquet, or enjoying a football game in freezing temperatures.

The "minister excuse." This is the practice of criticizing the preacher for talking too loudly or too softly, too rapidly or too slowly, or of being careless in his grammar or too precise and academic. Those who use this subterfuge forget that the minister is God's servant; and that his message, even though poorly delivered, when combined with the prayers and hymns, will make the service worthwhile.

The "people excuse." This effort to avoid guilt for not attending church services is centered upon the problem of church members who are unfriendly and hypocritical, but it ignores the fact that the warm and sincere people could use some help.

The "mood excuse." This finds expression in such statements as "I'm too nervous today" or "I'm just not in the right frame of mind." Folk who use this pretext don't realize that public worship may be just the tonic they need.

Failure to attend church is not only a sin, but also a barometer of spirituality. Attending church services doesn't depend on how far one lives from church, but how close he lives to God!

Help me to recognize my need

*Of fellowship with others,
And therefore wend my way each
week*

To worship with my brothers.

Submitted by BILLY W. JOHNSON



By C. NEIL STRAIT

Pastor, Taylor Avenue Church of the Nazarene, Racine, Wis.

Some Thoughts on Worship

Isaiah's great worship experience in Isaiah 6 is a treasured piece of holy literature. Following are some thoughts about worship from Isaiah:

1. *The motivation to worship* (v. 3), "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." The presence of God provides deep motivation for the spiritually sensitive person.

2. *The momentum of worship* (v. 5), "Woe is me!" True worship has an impact on the person—his being, his life.

3. *The miracle of worship* (v. 7), "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged."

Worship, where it has been searching and sincere, brings results and decision. Man never leaves as he came. He leaves with the touch of God upon his life.

Some Thoughts About Service

In 1 Thess. 1:1-9, we find a list of Paul's praise for a church and their service to God's kingdom. Consider these thoughts:

1. *The BASIS for service is love*. "Labour of love" (v. 3). Love is the foundation stone, the wellspring of true service.

2. *The BRIDGE for service is loyalty*. "Work of faith" (v. 3). Or it could be stated as "faithful work." Only that service builds a bridge which is faithful, consistent, and loyal to the true tenets of the gospel.

3. *The BLESSING of service is life—meaningful life*. "Patience [steadfastness] of hope." Through service to others, in Christ's name, we find hope and life for ourselves—meaningful and full.

The Great Physician

A lady in my congregation passed this item on to me. I share it, for it has untold possibilities.

The Great Physician is Jesus Christ. His office hours? All hours (Matt. 28:20); "a very present help" (Ps. 46:1).

His clientele? The rich (John 4:46-47); the poor (Ps. 34:6); the masses (Mark 1:32-34).

He is a Specialist in: spiritual leprosy (Matt. 8:2-3); spiritual blindness (John 9:11); spiritual heart trouble (Ps. 147:5); spiritual nervousness (Mark 4:9).

His terms? Our praise (Ps. 103:2-3); and our service (Luke 4:38-39).

When Life Is Depleted

Bob Thomas wrote to Walter Winchell and asked him to read the biography he was soon releasing, and to share any reflections on it that he might have. This is the letter Thomas received:

"... I have stopped seeing everyone, Bob. The tragedies at my house and various other heartaches have depleted me. There is nothing I want to discuss about my career. I leave it to you historians to deal with it..." (Bob Thomas, *Walter Winchell*, p. 273).

You and I share the Good News every Sunday with people who are depleted. The joy of life is gone. Tomorrow, for too many, is cloudy. May our sharing be the bit of hope that puts purpose and hope back into life.

A Plan for the Future

I came across some thoughts from the mind of Earl Lee, pastor of Pasadena

First Church of the Nazarene, from 1 John, which concern a man's future.

1. *It begins with a PERSON—Jesus Christ.* John talks about Jesus, who "was alive when the world began, yet I myself have seen him with my own eyes and listened to him speak. I have touched him with my own hands. He is God's message of Life" (1 John 1:1, TLB).*

2. *God has designed a PURPOSE for our future—joy and fellowship.* "Again I say, we are telling you about what we ourselves have actually seen and heard,

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so that you may share the fellowship and the joys we have with the Father and with Jesus Christ his Son" (1 John 1:3, TLB). Also v. 7.

3. *When you have the Person, and the purpose, there must be PROCLAMATION—light.* "This is the message God has given to us to pass on to you: that God is Light and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5, TLB).

4. *God's plan for us is a PROGRAM—cleansing.* "But if we are living in the light of God's presence, just as Christ does, then we have wonderful fellowship and joy with each other, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin" (1 John 1:7, TLB).

IN THE STUDY

Looking at Our Lord in Luke

October 5

THE TRIUMPH THAT ENDED IN A TRAGEDY OF TEARS (19:41)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 19:28-44

INTRODUCTION: Jesus was nearing the end of His last, fateful journey to Jerusalem. He came up the Jericho Road from the Jordan Valley and finally reached Bethany and Bethphage, two villages perched on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. There he mounted a colt to ride into the

Holy City, in fulfillment of the prophecy in Zech. 9:9. In doing so, Jesus was publicly presenting himself to the Jewish nation as its Messiah. But the rulers rejected Him and had Him crucified.

I. THE CRY OF THE CROWD (v. 38)

The excited people took off their outer cloaks and put them on the colt, then helped Jesus to mount. As the procession started, others spread their cloaks on the path—rolling out the red carpet, as it were.

As they started the descent of the Mount of Olives, "the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen" (v. 37, NIV).* These were the Galilean pilgrims to the Passover Feast, which was about to begin. They had seen Jesus feed 5,000 people with five little barley biscuits and two small fish. They

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By Ralph Earle

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had watched Him make the blind see, the lame walk, and the deaf hear. No wonder they accepted Him as the Messiah who at last had come!

That they did accept Him as such is evidenced by what they shouted: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." This is messianic language. The Galileans were convinced that this Prophet from Nazareth had given full evidence of His messiahship.

So they expected Him, as King, to ride in triumph into Jerusalem, drive out the hated regime of Rome, and set up His kingdom of peace. It was an exciting hour. This was the inaugural parade!

II. THE COMPLAINT OF THE CRITICS (v. 39)

In the vast crowd that day were some Pharisees who had charge of the religious life in the synagogues. They were much disturbed at this messianic display. Perhaps they feared reprisals from the Roman Government. So they said to Jesus, "Master"—literally, "Teacher"—"rebuke thy disciples." The answer of Christ was: "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (v. 40). All nature would break forth in praise.

There are still many Pharisees among us who are quick to criticize any display of emotionalism. Oh, it's all right at a ball game, but not in church! But the Early Church was enthusiastic, and where there is enthusiasm there will be emotion. There was plenty of emotional display on the Day of Pentecost, enough to attract an immense crowd. But the proof that it was all in divine order is the fact that 3,000 people were converted that day. Let's face it: There has never been any great revival in Christian history that was not marked by great emotional moving of human spirits by the Holy Spirit. Admittedly there have been some emotional excesses on the part of some types of persons. But better have a little of this with great spiritual revival than no emotion and nothing happening.

III. THE CRY OF THE CHRIST (vv. 41-44)

The triumphal procession that started out with such high hopes ended in a tragedy of tears. As Jesus viewed the city of Jerusalem from the slopes of the

Mount of Olives—an exciting experience for any Christian pilgrim today—He "wept over it." Why? Because He knew that it was rejecting Him and would have to pay the terrible price of destruction. Among the saddest words in all literature are these: "If thou hadst known." This is similar to what has sometimes been called the most pathetic statement a person can make: "It might have been"—but it wasn't.

The prediction of vv. 43-44 was fulfilled with horrible literalness in A.D. 70, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Josephus, the Jewish historian of that day, says that there was not left "one stone upon another."

October 12

RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION

SCRIPTURE: Luke 20:9-18

INTRODUCTION: When Jesus cleansed the Temple on Monday of Passion Week, the Sadducees reacted with violent hatred. What right did He have to do this? He had not only hurt the pocketbooks of the priests who operated the lucrative market in the Court of the Gentiles, but He had also challenged their authority (vv. 1-3). From this time on they headed up the opposition against Him, whereas before that, in His Galilean ministry, the Pharisees had been His main opponents. But now it was the Sadducees (priests) who would finally bring about His death (23:23; Mark 15:11).

So Jesus told the parable of the wicked husbandmen, as it is traditionally called. The lesson was obvious.

I. THE SERVANTS (vv. 9-12)

The figure of the vineyard was a familiar one to Jesus' hearers. They would know from Isa. 5:1-7 that it meant the Jewish nation. The "husbandmen" or tenants to whom he rented it would be the religious rulers of the nation—the Pharisaic "scribes" who taught the Mosaic law in the synagogues, and the Sadducean priests who had charge of the Temple.

"At the season"—the time of ripe

grapes in August or September—the owner sent a servant to collect his share of the harvest. But the wicked tenants beat the servant and sent him away empty-handed. The same thing, with added insult, happened to the second servant who came. The third servant that was sent was wounded and thrown out of the vineyard. The tenants were ruthless.

These servants represent the prophets of the Old Testament. Many of them were beaten and wounded, even killed, by the rebellious people to whom they preached.

II. THE SON (vv. 13-15)

In desperation, “the lord of the vineyard” said, “What shall I do?” Then he made a drastic decision: “I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him” (v. 13, NIV).

But when the tenants saw the owner’s son coming, they held a parley and decided to kill the son and seize his inheritance. So they threw him outside the vineyard and killed him.

The reasoning of the tenants, as described in v. 14, is absolutely absurd. How can one gain legal possession of a property by killing the heir? But in his commentary on Luke, Geldenhuys offers this helpful suggestion: “It is precisely Jesus’ intention to call attention to the folly of the Jewish leaders’ attitude toward Him by using as an example the foolish reasoning of the husbandmen.”

The “son,” of course, was Christ. He would soon be led outside Jerusalem and put to death.

III. THE SUBSTITUTION (v. 16)

The foolish tenants forfeited their good opportunity for peace and prosperity by killing the owner’s son. And that is what the Jewish leaders did when they had Jesus crucified. They were destroyed—many of them in A.D. 70—and the “vineyard” (the true people of God) was given to “others”—the leaders of the Christian Church. The parable is a solemn warning to those who reject Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

“The stone which the builders rejected” (vv. 17-18) is Christ. If we cast Him aside, we do it to our own destruction.

October 19

THE HIGH COST OF DISOBEDIENCE

(21:24)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 21:5-7, 20-24

INTRODUCTION: The so-called Olivet Discourse (give on the Mount of Olives) is found in Matthew 24; Mark 13; and Luke 21. In all three accounts we have basically the same background for it: The disciples eagerly show their Master the beautiful buildings of the Temple in Jerusalem; Jesus tells them it will be totally destroyed; and the disciples ask when this will happen, and what sign will precede it (vv. 5-7).

I. THE REWARDS OF OBEDIENCE (vv. 20-21)

In both Matthew (24:15) and Mark (13:14), Jesus told His followers that they were to flee from Jerusalem when they saw “the abomination of desolation” (predicted by Daniel) in the holy place. This evidently has a twofold application—to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and to the coming of the Antichrist at the end of this age.

In connection with A.D. 70, the reference might be to the standards of the Roman legions besieging the city. This was a crucial issue with the Jews. They felt that the Roman eagles were symbols of idolatry and should not be allowed near the Holy City.

In writing to Greeks, who would not be familiar with Daniel’s cryptic expression, Luke substitutes the simple words “Jerusalem being surrounded by armies” (literal Greek). When the believers saw this begin to happen, they would know that the “desolation” of Jerusalem was near. This is the same Greek word as in Matt. 24:15 and Mark 13:14, the only other places in the New Testament where it is found. This helps to tie these three passages together.

In his monumental *Ecclesiastical History* (A.D. 326), Eusebius tells what happened during the siege that resulted in the city’s destruction in A.D. 70. He says: “The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt in a certain town beyond the Jordan,

called Pella" (Book III, chapter 5). This town became the center of Jewish Christianity after A.D. 70. And so the Christian Church of Jerusalem survived because it escaped before the siege was tightened around the city.

Jesus not only told those in Jerusalem to flee; He also warned: "Let not them that are in the countries enter therewith" (v. 21). Today "countries" means nations, which obviously is not the correct meaning here. The proper translation is "country districts," "countryside," or simply "country" (NIV).

II. THE RESULTS OF DISOBEDIENCE (vv. 22-24)

Verse 22 says, "For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written" (NIV). The reference is to the many warnings in the Old Testament of the fate that would overtake the Israelites if they disobeyed their God. The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and the consequent scattering of the Jews throughout the world, was a fulfillment of these prophecies (Hos. 9:7; Deut. 28:15-68).

Jesus went on to say: "How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people" (v. 23, NIV). The first part of this verse is paralleled in Matthew (24:19) and Mark (13:17). But the second half is Luke's added explanation (from the lips of Jesus) as to why all this would happen. It would be divine retribution for disobedience.

Verse 24 (like v. 22) is found only in Luke's Gospel. It describes the horrible massacre and extensive captivity of the Jews in Jerusalem. Josephus says that "eleven hundred thousand" (1,100,000) perished during the siege and that 97,000 were carried into captivity. He also says that the regular population of the city was swelled by great crowds of pilgrims who had come for the Passover. This would add immensely to the misery.

It seems likely that the figures of Josephus are somewhat exaggerated, for Jerusalem within the walls would not hold that many people. But perhaps the siege enclosed hundreds of thousands of

pilgrims camped outside the walls.

Jerusalem has been "trodden down" by the Gentiles ever since A.D. 70 until very recently. But now, for the first time since 586 B.C., it is fully under the jurisdiction of the Jews.

October 26

SIGNS OF THE SECOND COMING (21:25)

SCRIPTURE: Luke 21:25-36

INTRODUCTION: It would seem that verses 5-24 of this chapter deal primarily with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. All the signs given in that section were fulfilled in the 40 years between A.D. 30, when Jesus gave them, and A.D. 70, when God visited His people in judgment. But the signs in the latter part of the chapter relate to the future Second Coming.

Many people scoff at the idea of Christ's return to earth. But just as surely as all the signs of His first coming were fulfilled, so will be fulfilled the signs of His second coming.

I. FEARFUL SIGNS (vv. 25-28)

What is meant by signs in the sun, moon, and stars? The answer is, We don't know. Apocalyptic language is highly symbolical and metaphorical. But in this nuclear space age we hesitate to say what may or may not happen in our physical universe.

Whatever the nature of the signs mentioned in v. 25, we are told in v. 26 what the effect will be: "Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken" (NIV). "Failing" (KJV) is not quite strong enough. The Greek verb (only here in the New Testament) means to stop breathing, to faint away.

Men will be gripped with terrible fear at the signs that will precede the Second Coming.

Then the long awaited event will take place: "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (v. 27).

In the face of the weakness and ineptitude of modern governments, and the

pathetic performance of the United Nations organization, our only hope lies in the return of Christ to reign. Then, and not until then, shall we have righteousness and peace around the world.

II. FIG TREE LESSON (vv. 29-31)

When we see leaves appearing on the trees, we know that summer is coming soon. Just so, when the signs Christ gave begin to take place, we know that His return is not far off.

The fig tree is often taken as a type of the Jewish nation. The fact that we have a completely independent State of Israel for the first time in over 2,000 years—since Pompey took Jerusalem for the Romans in 63 B.C.—should certainly encourage us to “look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh” (v. 28). The Greek word for “redemption” means “deliverance.” Christ’s

return will bring a tremendous deliverance for the redeemed.

III. FAITHFUL WATCHING (v. 36)

The importance of the Olivet Discourse is shown by the fact that it is the only long discourse of Jesus found in all three of the Synoptic Gospels. And in each case the primary thrust is on watching and being prepared for the Second Coming. Luke’s Gospel is particularly the Gospel of prayer. And so here he quotes Jesus as saying, “Watch . . . and pray always.” That is the only way we can escape the terrible judgments that are coming on the earth and “stand before the Son of man.”

Just as a snare suddenly, without any warning, snaps shut and traps its victim, so Jesus said His coming would catch people unaware (vv. 34-35). To escape that snare we need to walk carefully and prayerfully each day down here.



The Gates to Life

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 7:13-14

INTRODUCTION: The parable of the strait gate and the narrow way made a vivid appeal to the Eastern mind of its day. Cities were walled citadels with gates that led into the city. Jerusalem had eight gates in which travelers could enter. The gate at the Eastern City is symbolic of the gate to life which everyone must enter to inherit eternal life. The gate seems too narrow to those whose feet have not entered in. The gate seems too strait to those who have not experienced the goodness of God’s commandments. In the grace of Christ is found a gracious liberty. In His service is perfect freedom. His statutes become our song.

There are four gates we all must enter. Each brings us to a new city.

I. THE GATE OF CONVERSION

- A. An experience without which no

man can be a Christian

- B. An hour of spiritual awakening for all men
- C. A turning of the feet into the narrow way

II. THE GATE OF SERVICE

- A. Man is saved to serve.
- B. Man without service unworthy to bear name of Christ
- C. Man will find in service a new joy and purpose in life.

III. THE GATE OF HOLINESS

- A. Holiness is the distinctive symbol of God’s children.
- B. Holiness allows God to show us the things of Christ through His Holy Spirit.
- C. Holiness must be accepted as the norm for Christian living.

IV. THE GATE OF DEATH

- A. Death which is physical
- B. Death which is spiritual
- C. Death which is a kindness of God

CONCLUSION: Jesus Christ is the Gateway to life eternal. Surrender your will. Accept the message of redemption. You will find the way, though narrow, is broad enough for truth and love.

MERRILL BRAYMER

Attitudes Toward Death

INTRODUCTION: The Bible has been referred to as the “Book of Life,” but even a casual acquaintance with its contents reminds us that it is also a “Book of Death.” This is not a contradiction, for above all else the Bible comes to grips with the basic realities of man’s existence, and as the Psalmist put it, “What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?” (89:48).

Thus, from the murder of Abel, the steady march of time has brought pilgrim after pilgrim up to the portals of death.

Sarah died, Abraham died, Rachel died, Isaac died, Saul died, Jacob died, Joseph died, Aaron died, Miriam died, Moses died, Samuel died, King Uzziah died, Dorcas died, and in due time Christ died.

Some die when very young, some in the prime of life, others in a ripe old age. Some go willingly, others reluctantly.

Moses put into words what all must wonder about when he spoke of the events that would transpire after his death (Deut. 31:29).

What does happen after a man dies as far as those who are left behind are concerned? What is the attitude of survivors toward the death of the departed? The Bible directs our thoughts. There are several possibilities:

I. REJOICING

A. When David put Goliath to death.

B. When some tyrant who has threatened the peace of the world is disposed of, we all breathe a sigh of relief—if not openly rejoice.

C. But one does not have to be evil to have men rejoice at his death.

1. Stephen

2. Jesus

D. There is a sense in which we should all rejoice when the trumpets sound on the other side to welcome a faithful pilgrim to his eternal home.

II. REMORSE

A. Herod, the king, felt the bite of torment and the gnawing pain of guilt each

time he thought of his part in John the Baptist’s death.

B. It’s natural to say, “If only I had called the doctor sooner! . . . If only I had not said some of the things I said! . . . If only I had known!”

C. Leave the past with God. Let Him forgive and free you from your guilt. Vow to live today and all your tomorrows differently.

III. REBELLION

A. Moses said, “Behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death?” (Deut. 31:27).

B. Trouble either causes us to turn from God, grow bitter and rebel, or it causes us to turn to God and find in Him a Source of strength sufficient to overcome our troubles.

IV. RELUCTANCE

A. David and Absalom

B. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

C. Fear plays a part in reluctance:

1. How can I face the future without them?

2. What happened to them may happen to me.

3. What Jesus did on a storm-tossed sea on the other side of the world in the long ago holds eternal significance for our souls. He can still calm the tempest caused by death.

V. RESIGNATION

A. Job—“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

B. Not the expression of one who does not care, but the testimony of one who has learned that God can bring triumph out of trouble and tragedy, as He did on the Cross.

VI. RESOLUTION

A. David—“I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me” (2 Sam. 12:23).

B. Steps in making that resolution:

1. Realize that all have sinned.

2. Sin must be forgiven or punished.

3. Only God can forgive, and He will forgive only when we ask Him.

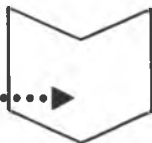
4. When He forgives, we must let Him live in our lives.

D. L. RUNYON



HERE AND THERE

AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
your Publishing House

Newness of Life

By *Richard E. Howard* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1975. 268 pp., \$5.95).

Here is a new book that should be on the desk of every Wesleyan pastor and teacher who is interested in grounding their preaching and teaching in the authority of the Word.

Fifteen or more years ago, Professor Howard of Bethany Nazarene College decided to study the Bible exegetically and inductively to see if the approach would render a biblical theology similar to our usual understandings. His conviction that the Scriptures must be the "final arbiter of doctrine" and that our own ideas must come under the judgment of the Word has resulted in an authoritative exegetical study of the message of holiness.

The reader will be blessed, startled, and challenged with the insights presented. Some of his definitions may be new, but in each case the question is not the wording of the definition, but whether it is scriptural. All of us, at times, need to be shaken from our "folk-theology" and square our communication with God's Word. It is a lifelong task.

In his basic distinction between the indicative of grace and the imperative of holiness the writer has clearly indicated the truths of secondness and cleansing—the twin poles of the fabric of the holiness tradition. His vocabulary will offer new and clearer ways to express this biblical truth.

The book is readable and easily under-

stood. It should represent a resource for guiding pastors, teachers, and laymen for many years to come. Above all, the work is Christ-centered, even as Paul's writings are Christ-centered. President Great-house wrote in the foreword, "We have nothing to fear but everything to gain from submitting our theology to the crucible of honest, rigorous Bible study such as we have in this volume."

OSCAR F. REED

The Psychology of Atheism

By *R. C. Sproul* (Bethany Fellowship, 1974. \$2.95.)

The central thesis of this book is that the attractive features of the Christian God are equalized by the threatening features of God—His holiness, omniscience, and sovereignty. He draws from such authors as Paul Van Buren, Ernest Cassier, Ludwig Feurbach, Bertrand Russell, Mircea Eliade as well as fundamental Christian texts to open up the debate. "The end result is a writing which establishes that the believer need not be on the defensive in the face of atheism, for it is the atheist who must do the proving, not the believer."

OSCAR F. REED

The Power of Prayer Today

By *George A. Buttrick* (Word Books, 1970. Paper, \$1.95.)

Dr. Buttrick's fine little book on prayer is now in paperback and accessible to all. With his penetrating style this Presbyterian minister speaks to the issues of

prayer in our time. He opens by discussing prayer in our time, discusses Jesus and prayer, tries to answer today's questioning, and closes with the "how" of prayer. The book is a "natural" for work among laymen in the church.

OSCAR F. REED

Proclaiming the Spirit

Compiled by Harold Bonner (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1975. Cloth, 149 pp., \$3.50.)

The compiler has asked several leading ministers to express their personal thoughts concerning preaching on the Holy Spirit and the Spirit-filled life. They have responded in this book by also sharing some of their methodology in preparing and preaching, and they have presented some sample outlines of their sermons on the subject. The contributors are Arnold Airhart, Ponder Gilliland, Jerald Johnson, Sydney Martin, William E. McCumber, Tom Nees, W. T. Purkiser, Millard Reed, Reuben Welch, and Gordon Wetmore. What more needs to be said to convince any preacher this one

is worth reading and keeping for future reference?

J.M.

Preachers' Exchange



WANTED: John Wesley's complete *Works*, *Journal*, and *Letters*; John Fletcher's complete works; William Law's complete works. Lindsay Armishaw, P.O. Box 215, Manurewa, New Zealand.

WANTED: Church of the Nazarene *Manuals*, 1948 and 1952. Duane Kaufman, 612 S.W. 7th Street, Aledo, Ill. 61231.

WANTED: Filco Classification Index, from Memory-O-Matic file system. Don McCarty, P.O. Box 50, Othello, Wash. 99344.

COMING
next month

● The Care and Feeding of Evangelists

An "endangered species" can be saved with proper care and feeding, but we must act now.

● Ministering to Moving Members

The upheaval in the lives of families who move is similar to that of families who experience a death among them.

● Cadillacs, Steaks, and Mansions

"Dad" writes some practical points to a preacher son, and perhaps all of us should read this one.

● John Wesley on Sin

Wesley left no volume of systematic theology but his thoughts on the doctrine of sin are clear.



AMONG OURSELVES

Sooner or later we think about money, and eventually we talk and write about it. Our attitude toward material possessions is of great importance. Jesus watched as the people gave their offerings to God's work, and commented pointedly about the widow's small gift being the most precious of all. Money itself is neither good nor bad, but the *love of it* is the root of all evil. Happy is that home where it does not reign supreme, making slaves of all who worship at its tyrannical altars. The minister knows this, practices it, and leads his flock beside these still waters; and he would not trade places with kings or presidents (p. 1). He can live with or without "things" and therefore can cope with problems of living with inflation (p. 20). He can also cope with the problems of an affluent society (p. 5), and he does not lose touch with those who are nearest to him (p. 17). Of course, the secret of it all is found in his choice to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow in the footsteps of Jesus (p. 15). We give up what we cannot keep, as Jim Elliot expressed it, to gain what we cannot lose. We possess something money cannot buy—and no one can take it from us. Hallelujah!

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