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James McGraw (Editor)
Olivet Nazarene University

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THE
**preacher's
magazine**

NOVEMBER '76

50
YEARS

**PREACHING
CHRISTIAN
HOLINESS**

inside...

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The Editor

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MISSION-ORIENTED CHURCH**
John P. Ragsdale

**PREDESTINATION, SINLESSNESS,
AND IMPUTATION**
George E. Failing



THE
**preacher's
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JAMES McGRAW

Editor

GEORGE E. FAILING

DONALD SHAFER

Associate Editors

Contributing Editors

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Charles H. Strickland

V. H. Lewis

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NOVEMBER, 1976

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The Use and Abuse of Language



WORDS ARE TOOLS of the preacher's trade. He should use them well. But it is becoming increasingly difficult for him to resist the temptation to abuse, rather than use, these precious vehicles of communication.

Is there a subtle warning for us in a recent cartoon? It pictures Paul saying to King Agrippa, "Since my Damascus Road experience, I have been searching for an enabling vehicle that can serve as a basis for design of a plan for mission."

The better we are educated, and the more highly trained we become, the greater seems the temptation to distort our good news in meaningless jargon. We tell the story of the prodigal in words like these:

"And when he was able to establish his own identity consistent with an authentic self-image, he said, 'How many individuals comprising the total work force involved in my father's organization of domestic job activities have adequate supplies of food products at their disposal, while here I face the probability of chronic malnutrition and the debilitating effects of starvation?'" (see Luke 15:17).

We are doing no one a favor when the clarity of our message drowns in the gibberish of our language.

We should read newsman Edwin Newman's best seller, *Strictly Speaking*, in which the author raises the question, "Will America be the death of English?" Mr. Newman laments the growing tendency among us to confuse and manipulate people with vague and ambiguous words. A former president's attorney, for example, said he "needed an extension on a subpoena so he could evaluate and make a judgement in terms of a response." In other words, he needed time to think about it.

The classic case of the plumber and the scientist needs to be told and retold to preachers. It seems the plumber found that hydrochloric acid opened plugged pipes quickly and easily. He wrote to the National Bureau of Standards to ask whether the acid was a good thing for a plumber to use. An employee in the Bureau, who was a scientist, wrote:

“The uncertain reactive processes of hydrochloric acid place a pipe in jeopardy when alkalinity is involved. The efficiency of the solution is indisputable, but the corrosive residue is incompatible with metallic permanence.”

The scientist was rather disturbed to receive a reply from the plumber thanking the Bureau for telling him that his use of hydrochloric acid was alright. He showed the correspondence to one of his superiors, who wrote to the plumber:

“Hydrochloric acid generates a toxic and noxious residue which will produce submuriate invalidating reactions. Consequently, some alternative procedure is preferable.”

In his reply to this gem of information, the plumber wrote that he agreed with the Bureau that hydrochloric acid works just fine. Quite upset by this time, the two scientists took their problem to their boss. The next day the plumber received a telegram which contained this clear and urgent message: “Don’t use hydrochloric acid. It eats holes in the pipes.”

A question for the good men in the Bureau: “If this is what you meant all along, why didn’t you say so the first time?” And that is a good question for preachers to keep in mind as they prepare their sermons.

The use of words to conceal rather than to reveal the truth is a very sinister and dangerous habit. This is more likely to be done unintentionally than by design, although there are some who do it intentionally. The leader of a terrorist organization defended his tactics with the explanation: “We do not want to destroy people. It is precisely because we want peaceful coexistence that we have shed so much blood.”

Deliberate use of “doublespeak” to confuse the listener may be the result of several possible motives of a speaker. It may be a wish to misrepresent the truth (as was obviously the case with the terrorist), to confuse and thereby overcome objections of a listener, to impress with scholarly vocabulary (one-upmanship), to avoid taking a clear stand on either side of an issue, or perhaps because it is easier than admitting ignorance.

A preacher of the gospel must not be guilty of any of these motives when he speaks for Christ!

Unintentional concealment of truth through language is another problem, no less important than the intentional. It suggests weakness, rather than wickedness, but its consequences are no less tragic. It erodes the preacher’s credibility, tarnishes the high office of preaching, and leaves the people in the pew empty and weak.

Simply stated, then, the proper use of words is to tell the truth, and in so doing to be understood. This is vital in no other profession quite so much as it is in our ministry. For the preacher of the Word, clarity is more than an asset. It is a necessity.

Wesley’s advice to his preachers was sound when he said, “Though you think with the learned, you must speak with the common people.” Is it too much to ask of the preacher that he use words carefully, accurately, and skillfully?

Taking terms out of limbo and bringing them into life—that is the real test of our preaching.

Skepticism has been conceded a degree of intelligence which it does not possess

The Bankruptcy of Unbelief

By Pascal P. Belew*

THIS WRITER recently “took a fresh dip” into the psychology of unbelief and “came up” with even stronger faith in, and greater appreciation for, the teaching of the Scriptures. My observations necessitate the conclusion that for anyone interested in a satisfactory philosophy of life, unbelief is bankrupt intellectually, morally, and emotionally.

My first impression is that skepticism is conceded a degree of intelligence which it does not possess. Throughout history it has been demonstrated that “the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Ps. 14:1); and that “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. 1:22). Confronted on every hand by reality which demands explanation, unbelief seeks to “explain it away.” And in this attempt it evinces a credulity seldom manifested by the most naive professor of religion.

The world is all too familiar with the wide acceptance accorded the absurd theory of evolution over the scriptural and sensible account of creation. But it should be more thoroughly familiarized with the following statement taken from Darwin’s autobiography. Said he, “The utter impossibility of believing that the

wondrous universe, including our own conscious selves, arose from nothing, is to me the greatest evidence for the existence of God.”

The following ridiculous citations, taken from recognized textbooks in sociology and psychology, will serve to further illustrate the credulity of unbelief and the straits to which it is put in its efforts to explain human behavior.

Man’s fear of God (says unbelief) arose from primitive man’s observing the forces of nature which he could not explain, and is furthered by the inhibitions to which we are subjected in childhood; conscience is a hangover caused by the exercise of parental authority and should be replaced by intelligence; Moses, Isaiah, and Jesus resorted to the desert, because they believed that it was the home of Diety; suicide by drowning symbolizes a longing to return to the peace and quiet of the womb, while suicide by hugging a hot stove denotes a unrequited desire for love; biting the fingernails relates back to the practice of the beasts who fought with tooth and claw, and trimming the nails is the civilized method for curbing such tendency; and the joy and peace which the martyrs experienced in their suffering was a form of masochism—a passion which derives pleasure from pain.

Such, in brief, is the brilliant array of atheistic bunk that masquerades in the name of superintelligence.

*Evangelist, Church of the Nazarene.

My second impression concerns the moral implications of unbelief. I would like to turn psychoanalyst myself long enough to say that unbelief is an escape complex. It may contain intellectual difficulties, but more often it is the result of a perverse disposition. It is an attempt to avoid the obligations imposed by true religion, namely, repentance and consecration. Hence the warning, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12).

Many centuries ago it was said of those who "did not like to retain God in their knowledge" that "God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness," and "for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections" (Rom. 1:28-29, 26). And the impact of unbelief on the morals of individuals and groups in all generations since has echoed the truth of Paul's words. Reminiscent of this are these words of a modern psychologist: "Moral, religious, and superstitious factors have combined to place heavy restrictions upon satisfactory sexual expression."

My third impression concerns the emotional destitution of unbelief. The statements of skeptics themselves furnish ample proof of this proposition. Luther Burbank said: "Once obsolete, an automobile is thrown to the scrap heap. Once here and gone, the human life has likewise served its purpose. If it has been a good life, it is sufficient. There is no need of another."

Robert G. Ingersoll said: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and

barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry . . . A wreck at last must mark the end of each and all."

Bertrand Russell said: "We see, surrounding our narrow raft illumined by the flickering light of human relationships, the dark ocean on whose rolling waves we toss for a brief hour. From the great night without, a chill blast breaks in upon our refuge. All the loneliness of humanity, caught amid the hostile forces, is concentrated on the individual soul, which must struggle alone, with what courage it can command against the whole weight of the universe that cares nothing for its hopes or fears."

In contrast to these barren, desolate concepts of life, consider the words of Jesus: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). Ponder the assurance of Paul: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1). And listen to the testimony of Victor Hugo: "I feel in myself the future life. I am rising I know toward the sky . . . the nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the world which invite me . . . The tomb is not a blind alley. It is a thoroughfare. It closes with the twilight to open with the dawn."

Evil has become a way of life
in a society where the criminal
has become a liberated hero

Watching the Wicked Succeed

By William Goodman*

O LORD, HOW LONG must I call for help before You will listen? I shout to You in vain; there is no answer. 'Help! Murder!' I cry, but no one comes to save. Must I forever see this sin and sadness all around me? Wherever I look, there is oppression and bribery and men who love to argue and to fight. The law is not enforced, and there is no justice given in the courts, for the wicked far outnumber the righteous, and bribes and trickery prevail." In substance, these were the words of Habakkuk around 630 B.C. (The rather loose translation is my own.)

Read the words from your local newspaper: A gasoline station was robbed and the two attendants were tied in the station. About 100 motorists pumped gas for themselves and pocketed cigarettes and left the two attendants tied. They shouted, "Help! Help! We've been robbed!" The people just looked and kept pumping. Several people entered the station. One customer looked at the tied attendant. The attendant pleaded, "Man, untie me, get the police." He put his money back in his pocket, grabbed a handful of cigarettes, and said, "Help is on the way." He filled his car with gas and drove away. The robbers took \$5,000 in cash. The public helped themselves to 400 gallons

of gasoline and \$300 worth of cigarettes. In 1964, Edmund Kemper, 15 years old confessed to killing his grandfather and grandmother. The California Youth Authority paroled him to his mother seven years later. April 24, 1973, he confessed to killing his mother, her friend, and six coeds, after which he dismembered and decapitated them.

Myron Lance and Walter Kelbach appeared on a NBC special, "Thou Shalt Not Kill," August, 1972. These men were in Utah State Penitentiary for murdering six people around Salt Lake City in 1966. Laughing and joking, the killers described their crimes in graphic detail, telling how they repeatedly stabbed a gas station attendant while the man pleaded for his life. One of the men remarked, "Did you see the way he squirmed? Wasn't that funny?" Neither killer expressed the slightest concern for their victims. Two self-confessed, arrogant killers butchered six human beings begging for mercy, while they were assured of the dignity to a fair trial and the right to live.

On August 21, 1971, eight members of the Zinken family were on the road on a weekend vacation. They pulled off the Edens Expressway outside Chicago. Pamela, age 17, and her father were looking at a road map when suddenly the car exploded into

*Police officer, Kansas City Police Department.

a shapeless mass of smoke. Five of the Zinken children were killed outright. Mr. Zinken lived a year as a vegetable before dying. They were hit by a tractor trailer driver by the name of Leonard Anderson. After hitting the car, hurling it for 130 feet, the truck continued a quarter of a mile before stopping. Anderson, not hurt, and smelling of alcohol, stumbled glassyeyed back to the scene and asked, "Did I do that?" Anderson had not slept for 36 hours and had been drinking. It took four years for the case to come to trial. The state attorney worked 500 hours on the case. While waiting trial, Anderson had been convicted of speeding and property damage in another case. Anderson was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to five years probation, not to spend any time in confinement.

In 1974, a total of 20,600 people were murdered; 452,720 were assaulted with weapons; 55,210 women were raped; 5 million were arrested for shoplifting (1 of every 60 shoppers steal). Stores lose \$4 billion yearly to shoplifters. Employees cost stores \$5.2 billion. 250,000 Americans attempted suicide—25,000 succeeded. Ten million Americans are alcoholics, directly affecting 36 million relatives. Over 1 million youth (12-17 years) have serious alcohol problems. Some 50,000 die each year in traffic accidents—28,000 are alcohol-related. There are 1,000 Americans who die daily, directly or indirectly, from venereal disease (2.5 million have gonorrhea; one-half million have syphilis). We have 30 million marijuana users and 3,000,000 heroin addicts who cost the U.S. \$15 billion in stolen goods. Fraud and embezzlement cost the U.S. over \$1.5 billion yearly. Bank embezzlement totals 10 times greater loss than bank robberies.

Tax evaders justify their crime by

blaming government for misuse. Hotel guests steal towels, silverware, and Gideon Bibles. Insurance claims are padded. Whether we talk about outright murder, the drunk driver who kills, the robber with the gun, or the housewife who shoplifts, we are talking about a permissive society—a society that is insensitive to evil that daily operates contemptuously and arrogantly in the open. Evil has become a way of life in this society of ours where the criminal has become the liberated hero.

F.B.I. Director Clarence Kelley states that greater cooperation from individual citizens is needed to turn the tide against crime. Americans must stop tolerating crime merely because to resist involves personal sacrifice, time, and effort.

Ten-year-old Carmen Colon got away from her kidnapper at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 16, 1971, and appeared along interstate 490 out of Rochester, N.Y., nearly naked, waving to stop the passing cars. No one would stop. Two days later, she was found in a ditch miles away, raped and strangled. Dr. Victor Harris, a psychologist, researched why no one stopped to help. One motorist stated, "I felt someone behind me was in a better position to help." Another, "I thought about stopping but changed my mind." It is as though we pass by scenes of evil, watching ourselves attacked, tortured, diseased, decaying; and we die, crying that somebody ought to do something about it.

When Habakkuk asked God, "How long will You let this go on? Why don't You put an end to this violence?" God gave an answer. Too often we are willing to hand back to God the responsibility that He gives us in this world. God told Habakkuk that before long the wicked would receive what they deserved. God stated that punishment would be violent

and swift as famished eagles attacking. Habakkuk was satisfied and told God that he would climb up in the vineyard tower, sit back, and watch. "Not so!" said God. "Before you sit back and watch, you have the responsibility to warn of the coming destruction and to encourage the righteous to live by faith." God pointed out that the wicked would not be interested in the message and would laugh, but that while laughing, they would be destroyed at the appointed time.

We are too prone to sit back and let somebody else do the dirty work of fighting evil. Habakkuk, so very humanly, wanted God to punish the wicked while he sat in the tower and watched. Do Christians retreat to their churches, unattached from the marketplace, to sit, watch, and wait for evil to be destroyed?

The police officer in the fight against pornography, prostitution, gambling, homosexuals, public drunkenness, child abuse, runaway children, does not hear of the fight that the church puts up. Social evils and sins have been turned over to the Health, Education, and Welfare Department. Where is the church's voice of warning to the righteous to live by faith, of the destruction that the evil causes, and of the coming apocalyptic destruction?

The church is challenged to warn the evildoer and the lawless of their coming doom. The church is challenged to stop "sitting in the tower" and go to the marketplace and support the forces of righteousness—your police department. Become vocal and let the government leaders know that you want evildoers punished. Write to political leaders, talk to them, let them know that you refuse to accept crime as a way of life. As God condemns evil, so should those that live by His law. There can be no coexistence with evil. There

can be no *detente* with evil. It is time that we fight evil just as real as evil has fought and locked us in the safety of our own homes.

You are challenged to support your police officers by letting them know you appreciate them. Help them to get better working conditions and better pay. To make police officers work at a low pay scale at a high-risk job that no one else wants is immoral. To make them work for an unacceptable salary while publicly and privately challenging and censoring them at every turn is as morally wrong as for police to strike.

God's promise to Habakkuk is His promise to us. God is going to punish evildoers. But wait! God will also punish those that insist on sitting in the tower and waiting. You are Habakkuk, and God tells you to go to the marketplace and warn the wicked and remind them that the righteous (policeman) shall live by faith.

These are days of gross, unchallenged wickedness. The problems of evil contemptuously defy human solution and directly threaten all of us. All of our dilemmas are prepared and delivered by our own sinful, greedy human race. It is our responsibility, and we are in no position to hand it back to God. We are to live by faith and go out committing our time, energy, and intellect to fight against evil.

In Habakkuk's day when destruction came, Habakkuk plugged his ears to shut out the screams of the punished, and tried to keep from inhaling the stench and smoke that rose to the tower. Habakkuk recalled how he requested that God do something about the wicked, and it was done. When God comes, it will be done. It is our time for doing until 'tis done. It will be terrible to be included with the wicked because we failed at righteous living by faith.

The construction of a sermon can make or break the impact upon the listeners

Telegrams, Wedding Cakes, and Squares

IN DAYS WHEN RAILWAYS were a chief form of travel, and boys coveted to be train engineers, when Casey Jones was a pin-up idol, and the Cannonball Express the fastest prairie horse, conductors were obliged to report fully upon every incident or accident affecting schedules.

A conductor of Irish descent was rebuked several times by his supervisor for lengthy, "Blarney Stone" reports. The next incident revealed how much reproof had been taken to heart. He reported his train derailment and subsequent repairs with a terse

Telegram:

"Off again, on again, gone again. Flanagan."

A memorable summary and meaningful "outline" of Cannonball catastrophe.

We look in vain for a natural construction, progressive outline, and arresting divisions in many modern

sermons. The vogue for idea or topic preaching presents a theme, argues, illustrates, and finally *supports* with Bible text or passage. This has tended to supplant strong skeletons, vital vertebrae, and effective engineering in preaching technique. "Boneless wonders" abound, posing as sermons, lacking an attractive, intelligent introductory face; well-developed shoulders and hips; sturdy legs; and shapely feet of forceful application.

Forgetting that every form of life has its own essential construction, the lesson of Ezekiel's vision is overlooked. Bone to his bone before sinews and flesh, skin and breath make a sermon to live and stand upon its own feet.

The omission of adequate, attractive outlines is a disservice to the sermon, a loss to the preacher himself, and can be detrimental to the impact and abiding worth of the sermon. Thinking, memory, delivery, and appreciation are helped by well-phrased and balanced outlines. Despite ministerial jokes about

Wedding Cake Preaching

three tiers—firstly, secondly, and thirdly—with a climactic "cupid" crowning the "layers"; a sermon with divisions, heads, and main sections, photographs well and recalls easily. "Samson's Sin, Shock, and Sorrow"



by
Albert J. Lown

Nazarene evangelist
London, England

may be trite and amateurish, but it sticks. Alliteration is neither intrinsic nor endemic to every text or passage, but *construction*—an ordered progress to an appropriate climax—alliterative or otherwise, is neglected, avoided, or shoddily undertaken at peril to the best preaching image.

The natural outlines of scriptural texts and stories belong to every preacher. Who could really improve upon the construction of the parable of the sower—the stony, shallow, stifled, and sincere hearts? Or the progression of Romans 6:22:

Freedom from sin, now
Fruit unto holiness, increasingly
A final destiny, eternal life.

Or the exquisite simplicity of Luke 22:31-32:

The wisest prays for the most foolish.

The strongest can become the weakest.

The weakest can become the strongest.

And again the ever familiar story of Naaman, the Sunday school teacher's standby with a happy ending:

A husband with a liability
A home with a burden
A young believer with a testimony
A king with a problem
A prophet with a message
Servants with courage, and
A seeker with faith.

Complete originality is beyond attainment by the most eminent preaching genius, for there is nothing new under the sun. We are all an

amalgam of heritage, environment, assimilation, education, association, inspiration, and down-to-earth, solid, hard work. Every preacher's treatment of a text is his own. It may not be brilliant, scintillating, revolutionary, or mouth-opening to the people in the pew. But it should bear the imprint of an individual gift from God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, and a due construction for the type of sermon preached. We invite the appellation

“Squares”

by appealing for “meaty” sermons, pulpit meals with appetizer, main course, and dessert; but much prefer this to the comment “My soul loatheth this light bread.” Square or no square, able construction stands the test.

Does the introduction contain the main sermon idea in statement or inference as a human face indicates the whole of personality?

If the rest of the sermon were lost or blotted out, does the application capture and apply to the hearer the full thrust of truth preached?

Ponder these gems: “A certain man had two sons.” “Go thou and do likewise.”

And between the opening of the battle for the mind, and the closing contest for the capture of the will, the sermon largely stands or falls by

Construction!

Big business in the national economy. God's business in the preacher's exposition.

We may test our growth in grace by our expertness in detecting the voice of our Lord. It needs a good ear to catch the voice of the Lord in our sorrows. I think it requires a better ear to discern the voice amid our joys. . . . Discernment is succeeded by obedience. That is the one condition of becoming a saint—to follow the immediate call of the Lord. And it is the one condition of becoming an expert listener. Every time I hear the voice and follow, I sharpen my sense of hearing, and the next time the voice will sound more clear.

—John Henry Jowett

Making Hospital Calls Count

By C. D. Hansen*

AS I LISTENED to the hospital chaplain speak at the ministers' seminar on hospital calling, I was shocked to learn of the abuse by the clergy in the hospital. In chagrin I asked, "Do ministers really do these things?"

To which he replied, "Not only these, but worse."

I learned that there is a code of ethics for ministers to follow. He was kind enough to share it with me. I offer it here for the benefit of every pastor.

These are some things to avoid when visiting a hospital:

1. Do not stay too long. Short, frequent visits are the best.

2. Allow no alarm, horror, or sorrow to appear in your face or in your voice.

3. Do not give sympathy in a way that will harm the patient. The sufferer should be made to realize that you share his pain; but if you dwell on his feelings, you can unman him.

4. Do not go to the sick room with body odor; a loud voice; nervous, jerky movements; or a disheveled appearance.

5. Do not jar the bed in any way. Do not lean on it or sit on it, even if the patient asks you to.

6. Do not stand or sit in a position which requires the patient to strain himself to see you.

7. Make no apologies—for your deficiencies, the fewness of your visits, or anything else.

8. Be careful of the handshake.

*Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Lowell, Ind.

Rough treatment can unnerve a person who has just had surgery.

9. Do not choose topics that require close or prolonged attention, or that are out of the range of interest of the patient.

10. Do not talk of depressing or alarming subjects.

11. Do not take part in the treatment or practice of any special psychotherapeutic technique.

12. Do not let yourself be drawn into any discussion with the patient or his family about the value of the doctor's treatment.

13. Do not tell any lies to or about the sick person.

14. Do not whisper or speak in a low tone to a nurse, to a member of the family, or to anyone else in the room or near it if there is the slightest chance that the patient will see you or hear you.

15. Do not walk on tiptoe unless patient is dozing or asleep, or unless you know on reliable authority that the patient prefers you do so. Many patients are irritated or alarmed by it.

16. Do not allow yourself to become insulted or more than momentarily irritated by the patient.

17. Do not play favorites. In a parish or in a hospital, a minister's influence is dwarfed if he seems to concentrate his interest on a few.

18. Do not argue; listen!

19. Do not carry parish gossip. People try to draw it out of us by shrewd questions.

20. Do not preach about the sick or repeat stories about them.

As Christ came into the world and served, even so should we go into the world and serve

The Pastoral Leader in a Mission-oriented Church

By John P. Ragsdale*

ACCORDING TO THE Great Commission, we should seriously question whether a church can be less than mission-oriented, yet an examination of local congregations reveals this sad reality. The pastor is generally a key person in the establishing of the overall character of the congregation. Our very position provides the avenue through which to influence the establishing of local church policy and the setting of priorities. The cumulative impact of our messages will reveal our own spiritual orientation and the existence of overriding issues in the local church. Overly concerned with internal problems, we may create an introspective atmosphere which can deter effective mission outreach. When our people are thinking about their own problems and are directing their energies to solving these problems, they may have little impetus left to attain a wider outreach. This is not to argue that local problems should be neglected, but rather that a healthy balance must be maintained.

Incessant evangelistic preaching needed by the unregenerate lacks the deepening emphasis which spiritual growth requires. Spiritual growth will

in itself provide a thrust for effective outreach. Generally, churches which emphasize the importance of extended outreach through mission organizations will also have vital local programs for church growth. For this reason, I believe, we should preach specifically and with some regularity on the commission of Christ to believers. We should also give direct attention at least once each quarter to the mission organizations of the local church—including the youth. There should be active involvement by the mission organization in the public worship experience.

Too often the mission organization is relegated to an inferior position in the church's program. Its vigor often depends on a single moving spirit in the church, and it may suffer from a lack of freshness in leadership and ideas since its leaders often repeat year after year in the same position. This practice may not be detrimental, but it may stifle growth and innovation. While many organizations are content with a monthly weeknight meeting including a devotional and some practical work, I believe the emphasis of the mission organization work meeting should be

*Academic dean, United Wesleyan College.

to *work*. A really effective involvement results from well-planned work meetings. Hastily conceived projects or voluminous but quickly done work will not prove very useful to the extension of the work. For the most part, field outreach is very appreciative of the continued quality support of local organizations, and the results of their labor are scattered the world over and are acclaimed by church leaders of every land.

A significant aspect of the mission organization is its involvement in a monthly prayer meeting where the mission emphasis receives its proper place in the devotional life of the church. This prayer meeting should be the most interesting, varied, and spiritually stimulating time in the monthly calendar. A key axiom for such a meeting is "Keep it moving." Thorough consultation with guest speakers to determine how their presentation and the usual church program could best be meshed is of critical importance. If possible, we should visit one of their services in another location before they come to our church. Let us remember the guest is the stranger; let us make him welcome.

A truly inspiring time in the church can be experienced during a

well-planned and -executed missions convention. The involvement of all mission-oriented organizations in this special time greatly enhances its effect on our church. A plan to develop regional conventions with the pastors, mission organizations, and special speakers involved in a round robin arrangement utilizes the efforts of all to the best advantage. In this way, four or more churches can have the benefits of a guest missionary speaker, and regional rallies for mission organizations and youth groups provide an exciting time for the church. Participation in subscription campaigns, fund raising, reading programs, work projects, gifts, and public services can make the mission organization a vital force in the church.

Out of this program we develop an awareness of the church's mission. Young people are motivated to devote their lives to the Lord's service both locally and around the world. Committed church members become more effective in serving the church and in reaching their community. The spirit of the entire church is enlivened by a consciousness of others' needs. As Christ came into the world and served, *even so* should we go into the world and serve.

Ever slip from your bed in the wee hours of morn
And steal off to the hills or a mountain,
Just to spend time communing with nature and God,
And take strength from the life-giving Fountain?

Jesus did it, you know, rising long before day,
Praying thus 'til the multitudes found Him—
Then He'd teach them, and feed them, and send them away,
And no foe had the strength to confound Him!

—Roy McCaleb

Statistics never tell the whole story—
but let us never permit ourselves to
hide behind this axiom as a cop-out

True and False Liberation From the “Numbers Game”

IN HIS ATTITUDE toward statistics, a minister should avoid two extremes. One is to assume a grand and lofty liberation from numbers. This pastor will pose as so ultraspiritual that he would never think of grovelling in abject terror before the Sunday school attendance board. In fact, he can enjoy the days with his favorite sports and cronies and sleep like a baby at night, right in the midst of very measurable disintegration. He is so determined to see only the tangibles and is so intent on believing that spiritual growth is taking place behind and beneath the visible, that he refuses to take seriously the spreading emptiness of church pews.

Let's not be ashamed of applying just a little Yankee business sense to the work of the Lord. If we do, we will not despise or scorn the quantitative yardsticks overmuch. After all, statistics do mean people. That

number on the Sunday school attendance board doesn't tell how many flies have gotten in, but how many people are there. Declining figures simply mean disappearing people—boys and girls and fathers and mothers; real, live, God-created, God hungry, Christ-redeemed, eternity-bound people.

There is a correlation in the long run between success and statistics. By what imaginable criteria could a man's ministry be called successful if he doesn't reach people and if his work with them isn't constructive? If he does reach people, and if his ministry is constructive, surely that kind of success will be reflected in quantitative terms over the long haul. Not all of his converts will join the Baptists or backslide or move away or go to heaven too soon in a car accident. If this superspiritual, lofty-minded reverend, who scorns anything that smacks of institutionalism, who saves his finest sarcasm for the ecclesiastical machinery, who resents the “busywork” of having to send reports every month—if this ultraholy Joe leaves every pastorate smaller than he finds it, and every treasury emptier, he can talk about a spiritual concept of success ever so piously, but nobody is going to be impressed.

The danger of this extreme is what we need to nail down first. There is a



by
Richard S. Taylor

Department of Education
and the Ministry
Church of the Nazarene

truth in saying that statistics never tell the whole story, in either direction. But, while at times we need to take comfort in that fact, let us never permit ourselves to hide behind it as a cop-out. There were times when Jesus didn't sleep either.

But having made up our minds to go after people and work constructively with them, we may now safely turn around and think about avoiding the other extreme. This is the nervous insecurity which panics and goes into a tailspin because of temporary setbacks and mysterious stalemates. And lo—the district assembly approacheth around the corner, and we relish it not, and there seemeth to be no decent way of breaking a leg so we won't have to go.

And that assembly will be 10 times more frightening if it is one's first, and if one was introduced at the district camp meeting as the new pastor of Fourth Church, fresh from the seminary or whatever, and everyone turned to see this highly trained, "raring to go" genius, and during the next 10 months all one manages to do is rattle a few "skeletons in the closet," and be called "our little preacher" by the doting grandmothers.

About that time, the young minister will hanker for the ivory towers and cloistered halls. No!—*about that time he will discover how deeply*

grounded is his commitment to the ministry in the first place.

Whether or not a man is completely deflated and even defeated by periods of apparent failure will be determined by the certainty of his call, his faith in God, his crucifixion of self, his love for Jesus Christ, and his steadfast loyalty to the will of God. If these qualities are shaky, he will be.

The remedy is not turning tail but digging down until he knows without a shadow of doubt that God is on the throne, that God will give him full tides as well as ebb tides, that God can and will teach him which keys to turn and which handles to get hold of, and that he really does want God's presence and approval more than the praise of men. Then he will learn to be more concerned about his people than his own image. He will neither despise statistics nor be covered by them.

It makes a big difference whether the depression of declining statistics is the embarrassment of our own vanity and our wounded ego, or whether it is a spiritual burden, the kind we can pray clear through until we become bigger and better men, with at least a revival of one. Then perhaps God can begin thinking about trusting us with wider blessings.

The Minister—A Bugler

The minister of Jesus Christ is many people—among them, a bugler. He calls his peers to battle by the use of simple instruments like words.

He intensifies in all his hearers their awareness of the side they are on—impacting them with morale, without which no army is worth the price of its insignia.

The minister reminds his hearers of the martyred witness of earlier faith-filled comrades, as the bugler does with taps.

He summons people to alertness the way the bugler does with reveille.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

Social Security: Cause for Concern, Not Alarm

By Dean Wessels*

THE NEWS MEDIA spotlighted 1975. It was the first year the Social Security System reported a deficit. Social Security authorities predicted benefits would exceed receipts by \$3 billion during 1975.

A number of respected publications have carried articles on the subject. Network television has documented it. Frightening possibilities were discussed. Some commentators forecast doom and bankruptcy.

Church board members ask what these forecasts really mean. Are pastors' and parishioners' benefits jeopardized? Talk of better prospects in commercial retirement funds is more common. One ministerial journal carries a paid advertisement regularly from a clergyman in the West who for \$10.00 promises to tell you how to get out of the program and collect your funds.

This desire to get out of Social Security is more than passing thought for new ministers. Clergy are a unique occupational group. For proper cause (during the first two years of ministry) a minister may option out of Social Security. *The only cause that is acceptable to the federal government is conscientious objection or religious principle*—not for personal, political, or economic reasons. *Once out, there is no way back into the program.*

Social Security trust funds were at \$46 billion in January, 1975. Fed-

eral officials agree that this reserve will sustain the system into the early 1980s. You need not have any worry during the rest of this decade.

Corrective action is, of course, necessary. Without legislation the present reserves will be depleted in a few years.

Legislators have a strong desire to correct the problems. You might wonder how such an assumption can be made in the face of congressional indecision in other areas. There are three reasons for toning down sensational predictions.

Social Security is the most favored government program. It is appreciated in every political sphere. The problems are an issue which most congressmen and senators will earmark for attention. In fact, the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee have already begun studies.

Second, the liquidation of Social Security would be a dangerous omen on the world scene. Legislating Social Security out of existence could do serious damage to the dollar abroad. Such a move would be a public declaration against the value of the American system.

Third, the alarmists speak of a possible death of Social Security. They do not seem to realize the paradox Congress is in. This is not a strong partisan issue. Almost everyone wants the problem solved. To ignore the Social Security problem

*Executive secretary, Department of Pensions, Church of the Nazarene.

would be political suicide for the legislators' careers. The nation *will* elect those who *will* work on the problem.

Looking from another angle, it is ridiculous to worry about loss of benefits due to bankruptcy. Such a point of view would be accurate only if Social Security was a private plan. A bankruptcy of Social Security is a bankruptcy of the federal government. Social Security is no small expenditure. Such a bankruptcy would topple the dollar. Money would be worthless, and also private investments.

Only God can know the future. Anything is possible. Yet, it is prob-

able that the Congress will act for the general good of the nation in an issue such as this.

Believers are in a special position. Their hope is not in Social Security benefits. They are concerned, not alarmed. Through these problems it is the Christian's task to show a supernatural perspective. Pray for your legislators and leaders. But your "hope is . . . on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

Of all people alive, the saints may have the greatest confidence in the future. Everything is looking up! In fact, the Church is looking up too—for His return!

Practical Points *that make a difference*

Teamwork Makes the Difference in Staff Relations

Dear Son:

Staffing a church will keep a pastor on his toes. Our pastor has the experience, skill, and compassion to make his staff a team effort. It is so easy to go one's way and forget that there are others working with you.

Our former pastor gave his staff *fits*. In the first place, he looked upon them as employees rather than partners. When the board added a minister of education, the pastor left him alone without a job profile, staff meetings, and personal encounters. The new staff member was like a boat without a rudder, wondering what his task really was. When he finally began to step out on his own, our pastor immediately resented his leadership.

As a result, our minister of education stayed only six months, following the path of the one who had left six months before. We were grieved, the pastor's image was damaged in the eyes of his church leadership, and the young man who left was confused concerning his mission.

However, Pastor Johnson knows how to integrate his team into a working complex for good. The staff loves him, feels with him, and shares both responsibility and the fruits of victory. Our pastor will not allow anything to come to him without comparable gifts to his team. He supports them from the pulpit and lets everyone know that in a measure his success is dependent upon his staff. If there are any tensions (and I expect there are at times), we never know it.

By the way, Son, did you take a course in multiple staffing in college or seminary? If not, do your homework before you hire your first. It will pay off in great dividends for the Kingdom.

Love,
Dad

NOVEMBER

NAZARENE FOCUS

FOR
PASTORS
and LOCAL
CHURCH
LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission

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

● **General Superintendent Lewis**



The Minister

WHEN WE WERE ORDAINED (the same applies when licensed), we were given the confidence of the church. Such confidence has to be earned and merited. The Church of the Nazarene depends to a great degree on its God-called, sanctified ministry. Wrapped up in denominational confidence are some expectations. By this I mean the right of the church to receive from you as a minister the orthodoxy, the deportment, the service inherent in the doctrine, faith, and structure of the church.

Implicit in the act of your acceptance of ordination is your determination to "measure up" to these expectations of the church. The church expects you "to be in all things a pattern to the flock." The church demands that its ministers be "sanctified wholly by the baptism of the Holy Spirit." The church requires the ministers to have a strong "appreciation of both salvation and Christian ethics."

The church must have ministers who will always be students, especially of the Word of God. The church has faithfully provided for adequate education, and urges continuing study for all of its preachers. The church also requires that our ministers be examples in their marriage relationships in harmony with the Scriptures.

The *Manual* is, for the minister, an essential tool. It is the framework in which he works to build the kingdom of God. The strength of the church lies in its basic beliefs, its faith in its ability to govern itself. The church needs no ministers of dissension, but men and women who are able to preach the doctrines and lead their people "into the reality of redemption."

So in this hour of uncertainty may our "product" as ministers of the Church of the Nazarene be strong in the knowledge of God's Word, in faith, in personal experience of full salvation, and in love with the wonderful church which we serve and to which we belong.



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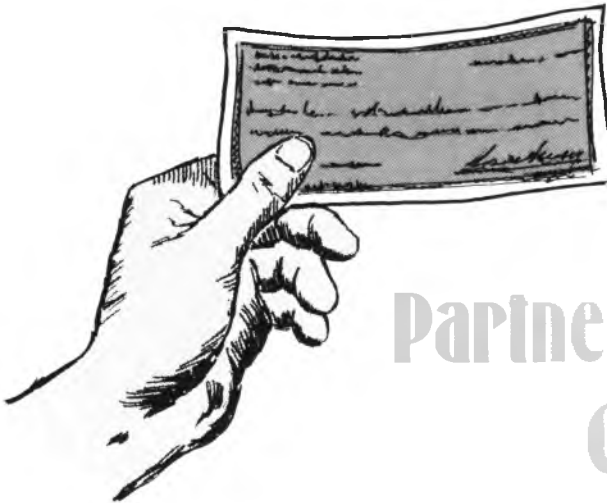
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Church of the Nazarene

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The program adopted last January by the Department of Home Missions in session in Kansas City fits in well with the quadrennial theme "Lifting Up Christ" announced at the General Assembly in June.

1976—The Year of the New Church is part of the four-year quadrennial emphasis proclaimed by Dr. Eugene Stowe for the Board of General Superintendents Sunday evening, June 20, in Dallas.

Lifting Up Christ through new churches is a fitting and necessary introduction to a quadrennium when the church hopes to number 1 million members by 1980.

1977—Lifting Up Christ by Helping Weak Churches grow is the equally significant sequel.

1978—The starting and nurturing of new churches are combined in a Study on Church Growth.

1979—The emphasis is Lifting Up Christ through Better Buildings for Growth, certainly a key factor for a denomination that aspires to be one of the major Christian voices in the nation by 1980.

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World Environmentism

*From the Quadrennial Address of the
Board of General Superintendents*

“To provide fresh spiritual motivation and intellectual stimulation for every pastor in Europe, Britain, Canada, and the United States, the Board of General Superintendents will sponsor a series of Pastors’ Leadership Conferences on the campuses of our colleges in 1976-77. This is the major opening thrust of a program of continuing education which will involve every Nazarene minister. Under God, may it launch our church into the most productive period of her history.”

What is such a bright idea?

Why, that your church should consider participating in the annual Christmas Love Offering for our retired ministers and their wives. This offering can be received anytime in December, and will be applied toward your Pensions and Benevolence Budget. Give your church the privilege of sharing their love. Clip, complete, and mail the coupon below.



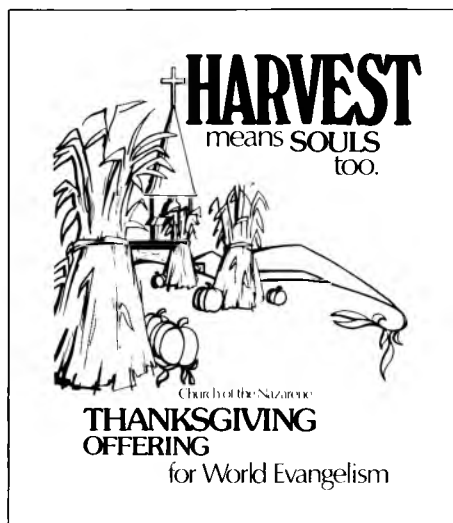
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Goal:
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THANKSGIVING

Here in North America we are abundantly blessed with everything we need: housing, food, clothing, jobs, and the freedom to worship in the church of our choice. Especially, at this time of year when we gather with family and friends to give thanks to our Creator for the blessings of the past year, we will all have the opportunity to attend services at our respective churches and then enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. We do praise God for His wonderful spiritual and material blessings!

At this harvesttime, may we also think of the many people in other lands who do not have as much as we do, or who do not know, as yet, our loving Lord. Because of the gifts of our people in the Church of the Nazarene, missionaries have been able to go to distant fields to tell others of the love of Jesus Christ and how He can make their lives into "something beautiful" when they let Him have control.

Let us not hesitate to GIVE this THANKSGIVING 1976, so that others may hear the Good News of salvation, accept Christ, and know that "He will shew them the path of life; in His presence is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11, adapted).

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 BRAUN, GENE. (C) 4326 N. Rt. 560, Urbana, Ohio 43078
 ♦BROOKS, RICHARD. (C) 780 Armour Rd., Bourbonnais, Ill. 60914
 BROOKS, STANLEY E., JR. (C) R. 1, Box 245, Westmoreland, N.H. 03467
 BROWN, CURTIS R. (C) 140 Robinson St., Reading, Pa. 19601
 BROWN, ELBERT. (C) R. 2, Hillsboro, Tenn. 37342
 BROWN, J. RUSSELL. (C) 1306 E. Jefferson, Boise, Ida. 83702
 ♦BROWN, LINDA K. (C) 201 Dellwood Dr., Fairborn, Ohio 45324
 ♦BROWN, ROGER N. (C) Box 724, Mankakee, Ill. 60901
 ♦BUCKLES-BURKE EVANGELISTIC TEAM. (R) 6104 S. Gotham Dr., South Bend, Ind. 46614
 BUONGIORNO, D. J. (R) 4119 Goldenrod Dr., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80907 (full-time)
 BURTON, CLAUD L. (C) 9571 Castlefield, Dallas, Tex. 75227
 BUTCHER, TONY H. (C) 4057 S. Delaware, Springfield, Mo. 65804
 CANEN, DAVID. (C) c/o NPH*
 CANIFF, JAMES B. (C) Box 304, Shirley, Ind. 47384
 ♦CAUDILL, STEVE & SUE. (C) 2339 Peale Dr., Saginaw, Mich. 48602
 CAYTON, JOHN. (C) Box 675, Middleboro, Mass. 02346
 ♦CHAMBERLAIN, DOROTHY & EDWARD. (C) R.D. 1, Carmichaels, Pa. 15320
 CLARK, GENE. (C) 104 Waddell St., Findlay, Ohio 45840
 CLARK, HAROLD L. (C) c/o Gen. Del., Grover Hill, Ohio 45849
 CLIFT, NORVIE O. (C) 4929 Gardena Ave., San Diego, Calif. 92110
 ♦CLIFTON, DICK & BEVERLY. (R) R. 4, 341 Second St., Cadiz, Ky. 42211 (full-time)
 ♦CLINE, JERRY & MADY. (C) 1229 W. Mead Ave., Bowling Green, Ky. 42101
 COBB, BILL & TERRI. (C) P.O. Box 75512, Okalahoma City, Okla. 73107
 COCHRAN, EUGENE W. (C) 6728 McCorkcike Ave., St. Albans, W.Va. 25177
 ♦CONE, ANDREW F. (C) 1032 Danby Rd., Ithaca, N.Y. 14850
 CONWAY, L. W. (Retired) 750 Michigan Ave., K-9, Washington, Pa. 15301
 ♦COOK, LEON G. & MARIE. (C) c/o NPH*
 COOK, RALPH. (Retired) 6355 N. Oak, Temple City, Calif. 91780
 COX, CURTIS B. (C) 2123 Memorial Dr., Alexandria, La. 71301
 CRABTREE, J. C. (C) 3436 Cambridge, Springfield, Ohio 45503
 CRANDALL, V. E. & MRS. (C) Indian Lake Nazarene Camp, R. 2, Box 7, Vicksburg, Mich. 49097
 ♦CRANE, BILLY D. (C) R. 2, Box 186, Walker, W.Va. 26180
 CREWS, H. F. & MRS. (Retired) Box 18302, Dallas, Tex. 75218
 CRUTCHER, ESTELLE. (Retired) 1466 E. Mountain, Pasadena, Calif. 91104
 CULBERTSON, BERNIE. (C) 100 N.E. 8th Pl., Hermiston, Ore. 97838
 DARNELL, H. E. (C) P.O. Box 929, Vivian, La. 71082
 ♦DAVIDSON, CHARLES. (C) 541 Gibson, Fremont, Ohio 43420
 DAVIS, HAROLD. (C) P.O. Box 1066, Grafton, Va. 23692
 DAVIS, LEO C. (Retired) 403 N St., Bedford, Ind. 47421
 DAWS, LEONARD. (R) 403 Waterveliet Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45420
 DEAL, JAMES O. (C) 1304 Jewell Ave., Lakeland, Fla. 33801
 ♦DeFRANK, JOSEPH. (C) Box 342, Barberton, Ohio 44203
 ♦DELL, JIMMY. (R) 4026 E. Flower St., Phoenix, Ariz. 85018 (full-time)
 DeLONG, R. V. (Retired) 5932 48th Ave. N., St. Petersburg, Fla. 33709
 ♦DENNIS, DARRELL & BETTY. (R) c/o NPH (full-time)
 ♦DEWARE, STANLEY. (R) 4300 Crossen Dr., Orlando, Fla. 32807 (full-time)
 DISHON, MELVIN. (C) R. 15, Bowling Green, Ky. 42101
 DITTMER, JOHN A. (C) 1144 N. Stephens, Springfield, Ill. 62702
 ♦DIXON, GEORGE & CHARLOTTE. (C) Evangelists and Singers, c/o NPH*
 DUNCAN, PAT. (C) 543 Stockton Hts. Dr., Bourbonnais, Ill. 60914
 ♦DUNMIRE, RALPH & JOANN. (C) 202 Garwood Dr., Nashville, Tenn. 37211
 DUNN, DON. (C) 1874 Penthey Ave., Akron, Ohio 44312
 DURHAM, L. P. (JACK) (C) 305 Parkview Dr., Arlington, Tex. 76010
 ♦DUTTON, BARRY & TAVIA. (R) 1925 Willow Dr., Olathe, Kans. 66061 (full-time)
 EASTMAN, H. T. (Retired) 5102 Gailey Rd., Sp. 317A, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80915
 ♦EDWARDS, LOU. (C) 3429 Misty Creek, Erlanger, Ky. 41018
 EDWARDS, TERRY W. (R) Box 9352, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80932 (full-time)
 ELLINGSON, R. LEE. (C) Box 33067, Indianapolis, Ind. 46203
 ELLIS, HARLON. (C) 212 Buchanan, Mineola, Tex. 75773
 ELLWANGER, C. WILLIAM. (C) 2020 W. 81st, Leawood, Kans. 66206
 EMSLEY, ROBERT. (C) Bible Expositor, c/o NPH*
 ERICKSON, A. WILLIAM. (C) 110 Kitty Hawk Dr., Danville, Va. 24541

- ESTEP, OPAL CRUM. (R) 2811 Grosse Point, Columbus, Ohio 34227 (full-time)
- EVERLETH, LEE. (R) 103 Ellsworth Dr., Marietta, Ohio 45750 (full-time)
- EVERMAN, WAYNE. (R) Box 66-C, Stanton, Ky. 40380 (full-time)
- FELTER, JASON H. (C) c/o NPH*
- ◆FILES, GLORIA; & ADAMS, DOROTHY. (C) 2031 Freeman Ave., Bellmore, N.Y. 11710
- FINE, LARRY. (R) 1428 Sheridan, Olathe, Kans. 66061 (full-time)
- ◆FISHER, WILLIAM. (C) c/o NPH*
- FLORENCE, ERNEST E. (C) 1021 Elm St., Ripley, Ohio 45167
- FLORES, LEO O. (R) P.O. Box 5964, Lubbock, Tex. 79417 (full-time)
- FLOWERS, MARQUIS J. (C) 505 N. Walnut, Newkirk, Okla. 74647
- FORD, NORMAN K. (C) R. 2, Clymer, Pa. 15728
- ◆FORD, JAMES & RUTH. (C) Children's Workers, 1605 Laura St., Clearwater, Fla. 33515
- FORTNER, ROBERT E. (C) Box 322, Carmi, Ill. 62821
- FREEMAN, MARY ANN. (C) Box 44, Ellisville, Ill. 61431
- FRODGE, HAROLD C. (C) R. 1, Geff, Ill. 62842
- ◆GAGNON, W. DAVID. (R) 209 Greystone Ln., Rochester, N.Y. 14618 (full-time)
- GARDNER, GEORGE. (C) Box 9, Olathe, Kans. 66061
- GAUT, ROBERT. (C) 1325 S. Cedar, Ottawa, Kans. 66067
- GAUTHORP, WAYLAND & JOAN. (C) Box 115, Mt. Erie, Ill. 62446
- GILMORE, PAUL S. (Retired) 738 Buffalo St., Jamestown, N.Y. 14701
- ◆GILLESPIE, SHERMAN & ELSIE. (R) 203 E. Highland, Muncie, Ind. 47303 (full-time)
- ◆GLAZE, HAROLD & MARILYN. (R) P.O. Box A, Calamine, Ark. 72418
- ◆GLENDEENING, PAUL A. & ROBERTA. (C) 700 E. Broadway, Fairfield, Ia. 52556
- GOLAY, GEORGE H. (C) 4920 N. 85th, Milwaukee, Wis. 53225
- GOODEN, BILL. (R) 1511 S. 11th, Lamar, Colo. 81052 (full-time)
- GOODMAN, WILLIAM. (C) R. 3, Box 269, Bemidji, Minn. 56601
- ◆GORMANS, THE SINGING (CHARLES & ANN). (C) 11505 Preston Hwy., Lot 67, Louisville, Ky. 40229
- GRAHAM, JIM D. (C) Box 411, Forestburg, Tex. 76239
- GRAVAT, HAROLD F. (C) 812 N. 9th, Lot 26, Mattoon, Ill. 61938
- GRAY, JOSEPH & RUTH. (Retired) 2015 62nd St., Lubbock, Tex. 79412
- ◆GREEN, JAMES & ROSEMARY. (C) Box 385, Canton, Ill. 61520
- GRIMES, BILLY. (R) Rte. 2, Jacksonville, Tex. 75766 (full-time)
- GRIMM, GEORGE J. (C) 820 Welis St., Sistersville, W.Va. 26175
- GRINDLEY, R. E. (C) 4754 McFadden Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43229
- ◆GRINDLEYS, THE SINGING (GERALD & JANICE). (C) 539 E. Mason St., Owosso, Mich. 48867
- GUY, MARION O. (C) 444 Fairfax, Muskogee, Okla. 74401
- ◆HAINES, GARY. (R) 246 Tanna Ct., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80916 (full-time)
- HALL, BILL & SHARON. (C) 300 E. Jackson St., Orlando, Fla. 32801
- HALL, CARL N. (C) c/o NPH
- HAMILTON, JAMES A. (Retired) 907 Cowan Ave., Conroe, Tex. 77301
- HAMILTON, MARK. (C) 1305 St. Clair, Vincennes, Ind. 47591
- HANCE, RAY. (C) 7432 N.W. 28th St., Bethany, Okla. 73008
- HANCOCK, BOYD. (C) c/o NPH
- ◆HAPPINESS SINGERS. (C) c/o NPH*
- HARLEY, C. H. (C) Burbank, Ohio 44214
- HARRISON, ROBERT V. (C) 3202 Benbrook Dr., Austin, Tex. 78758
- HARROLD, JOHN W. (C) 409 14th St., Rochelle, Ill. 61068
- HATHAWAY, KENNETH. (C) c/o NPH*
- HAYES, CECIL G. (C) R.D. 2, Howard, Ohio 43028
- ◆HEASLEY, J. E. & FERN (C) 6611 N.W. 29th St., Bethany, Okla. 73008
- HECKER FAMILY. (R) Family Evangelists, Box J, Allentown, Pa. 18105
- HEGSTROM, H. E. (C) c/o NPH*
- HENDERSON, DONALD. (C) 825 S. Wymore, Apt. 46-C, Altamonte Springs, Fla. 32701
- HICKS, JOHN D. (C) Canadian Nazarene College, 1301 Lee Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2P7
- HOECKLE, WESLEY W. (C) 642 Vaky St., Corpus Christi, Tex. 78404
- HOLLEY, C. D. (C) R. 2, Indian Lake Rd., Vicksburg, Mich. 49097
- HOLLOWAY, WARREN O. (C) 445 W. Lincoln Way, Lisbon, Ohio 44432
- HOOTS, BOB. (C) 309 Adair St., Columbia, Ky. 42728
- ◆HOPKINS, BOB & LINDA. (C) R. 2, Box 719, Indianapolis, Ind. 46231
- HOWARD, MICHAEL ANTHONY. (C) P.O. Box 816, Durant, Okla. 74701
- HUBARTT, LEONARD. (C) 1155 Henry St., Huntington, Ind. 46750
- HUNDLEY, EDWARD J. (R) 732 Drummond Ct., Columbus, Ohio 43214 (full-time)
- ICE, CHARLES & BETTY. (C) Box 1851, Ada, Okla. 74820
- IDE, CHARLES D. (Retired) 1796 52nd St. S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49508
- INGLAND, WILMA JEAN. (C) 322 Meadow Ave., Charleroi, Pa. 15022
- ◆IRWIN, ED. (C) 7459 Davis Mill Cr., Harrison, Tenn. 37341
- ISENBERG, DONALD. (C) Chalk Artist & Evangelist, Golden Age Trailer City, 106 E. Spreading Oak, Friendswood, Tex. 77546
- JACKSON, PAUL & TRISH. (R) Box 739, Meade, Kans. 67864 (full-time)
- ◆JACKSON SINGERS, CHUCK. (C) Box 17177, Nashville, Tenn. 37217
- JAGGER, KENNETH. (C) 1025 Delaware, No. 4, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80909
- JAMES, R. ODIS. (C) 353 Winter Dr., St. James, Mo. 65559
- ◆JANTZ, CALVIN & MARJORIE. (C) c/o NPH*
- JAYMES, RICHARD W. (C) 321 E. High Ave., Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311
- JETER, H. L. (C) 2345 Johnstown, Florissant, Mo. 63033
- ◆JEWETT, LARRY & PATRICIA. (C) R. 4, Box 265, West Monroe, La. 71291
- JOHNSON, EDWARD J. (R) Rte. 1, Clearwater, Minn. 55320 (full-time)
- ◆JOHNSON, RON. (R) 3208 Eighth St. E., Lewiston, Ida. 83501
- JONES, CLAUDE W. (C) R. 4, Box 42, Bel Air, Md. 21014
- JONES, FRED D. (R) 804 Elissa Dr., Nashville, Tenn. 37217 (full-time)
- KEALIHER, DAVID. (C) 316 Dufur, Nampa, Ida. 83651
- KEMPER, MARION W. & MRS. (Retired) 2910 Harris St., Eugene, Ore. 97405
- KENNEDY, GORDON L. (C) P. O. Box 52, Gibsonburg, Ohio 43431
- KESLER, JAMES. (R) Box 191, West Lebanon, Ind. 47991 (full-time)
- KLEVEN, ORVILLE H. (Retired) 1241 Knollwood Rd., 46K, Seal Beach, Calif. 90740
- KOHR, CHARLES A. (C) R.D. 2, Box 298, Brookville, Pa. 15825
- KRATZ, ELDON & KAY (R) 814 Grant Terr., Olathe, Kans. 66061 (full-time)
- LAMAR, CLINTON. (C) Rte. 1, Maquoketa, Ia. 52060
- LANIER, JOHN H. (C) West Poplar St., Junction City, Ohio 43748
- LASSELL, RAY. (C) R. 2, Box 55, Brownsburg, Ind. 46112
- ◆LAW, DICK & LUCILLE. (C) Box 481, Bethany, Okla. 73008
- LAWLOR, EDWARD. (Retired) 1150 Anchorage Ln., San Diego, Calif. 92106
- ◆LAXSON, WALLY & GINGER. (C) R. 3, Athens, Ala. 35611
- ◆LECKRONE, LARRY D. (C) 1308 Highgrove, Grandview, Mo. 64030
- ◆LEICHTY SINGERS. (C) 753 S. Wildwood, Kankakee, Ill. 60901
- LEMASTER, BEN. (R) Hume Lake Christian Camp, P.O. Box 1868, Fresno, Calif. 93718 (full-time)
- LEONARD, JAMES C. & FLORICE. (C) 150 Valley View Dr., Johnstown, Ohio 43031
- LESTER, FRED R. (C) c/o NPH*
- LIDDELL, P. L. (C) 3530 W. Allen Rd., Howell, Mich. 48843
- LIGHTNER, JOE. (C) 4335 Raven Pl., Springfield, Mo. 65804
- ◆LINDER, LLOYD P. (C) 1018 Cedar St., Elkhart, Ind. 46514
- LINEMAN, HAZEL FRALEY. (C) 10 S. Third St., Bradford, Pa. 16701
- ◆LOMAN, LANE & JANET. (R) c/o NPH (full-time)
- LONG, WILMER A. (R) R.D. #2, New Florence, Pa. 15944 (full-time)
- LOWN, A. J. (C) c/o NPH*
- ◆LUSH, ROY & MYRTLEBEL. (C) c/o NPH*
- LYNCH, DON. (R) 5020 E. Southport Terr., Indianapolis, Ind. 46227 (full-time)
- LYONS, JAMES H. (C) 1011 W. Shaw Ct., No. 1, Whitewater, Wis. 53190
- MacALLEN, LAWRENCE J. & MARY. (C) Artist & Evangelist, 41808 W. Rambler Ave., Elyria, Ohio 44035
- MADISON, G. H. (Retired) 508 Shelby Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37206

- MANLEY, STEPHEN. (C) 1778 S. 350 E., Marion, Ind. 40952
- MANNING, C. M. (C) Box N, Maysville, Ky 41056
- MARTIN, PAUL. (C) c/o NPH*
- MARTIN, VERN W. (C) Route 1, Caldwell, Ida 83605
- MAYO, CLIFFORD. (C) Box 103, Afton, Tex. 79220
- MCABEE, JAMES. (R) 410 Freeman Ave., Seymour, Ind. 47274
- McCLURE, DARL. (C) R. 3, Box 500, Kenwood Plaza, Bryan, Ohio 43506
- McDONALD, CHARLIE. (C) R. 1, Box 308, Dale, Tex. 78616
- McDONALD, G. RAY. (R) 321 Curran, Brookhaven, Miss. 39601 (full-time)
- McKINNEY, ROY T. (C) 2319 Wakulla Way, Orlando, Fla. 32809
- McNUTT, PAUL. (C) 215 W. 68th Terr., Kansas City, Mo. 64113
- McWHIRTER, G. STUART. (C) c/o NPH*
- MEEK, WESLEY, SR. (C) 5713 S. Shartel, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73109
- MELVIN, DOLORES. (C) R. 1, Greenup, Ky 41144
- MEREDITH, DWIGHT & NORMA JEAN. (C) c/o NPH*
- MERRELL, RICHARD L. (R) Box 20286, Minneapolis, Minn. 55431 (full time)
- MERRITT, HERBERT & MRS. (C) 7401 Belinder, Prairie Village, Kans. 66208
- MICKEY, BOB, IDA MAE, & MARCELLA. (C) Box 1435, Lamar, Colo. 81052
- MILLER, MEL. (C) Bible Expositor, 226 W. Northrup St., Lansing, Mich. 48910
- MILLER, RUTH E. (C) 111 W. 45th St., Reading, Pa. 19606
- MILLHUFF, CHUCK. (C) c/o NPH*
- MONTGOMERY, CLYDE. (C) 2517 N. 12th St., Terre Haute, Ind. 47804
- MORRIS, CLYDE H. (C) 101 Bryant Lake Rd., Nitro, W.Va. 25143
- MOULTON, M. KIMBER. (Retired) 19562 Winward Ln., Huntington Beach, Calif. 92646
- MULLEN, DeVERNE. (C) 67 Wilstead, Newmarket, Ont., Canada
- MYERS, HAROLD & MRS. (C) 575 Ferris, N.W. Grand Rapids, Mich. 49504
- NEFF, LARRY & PATRICIA. (C) 625 N. Water St., Owosso, Mich. 48867
- NELSON, CHARLES ED (C) Box 241, Rogers, Ark. 72756
- NEUSCHWANGER, ALBERT. (C) c/o NPH*
- NICHOLAS, CLAUDE. (C) 3394 Hammerburg Rd., Flint, Mich. 48507 (full-time)
- NORTON, JOE. (Retired) Box 143, Hamlin, Tex. 79520
- OVERTON, WM. D. (C) Family Evangelist & Chalk Artist, 798 Lake Ave., Woodbury Heights, N.J. 08097
- PALMER, JAMES. (C) 639 S. Home Ave., Martinsville, Ind. 46151
- PARR, PAUL G., & THE SONGMASTERS. (C) Rte. 1, Box 167A Whitetown, Ind. 46075
- PASSMORE EVANGELISTIC PARTY, THE A. A. (C) c/o NPH*
- PECK, JOHN. (R) Box 695, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80901 (full-time)
- PECK, W. A. (C) R. 2, Box 65A, Malden, Mo. 63863
- PEMBLE, AL, FAMILY TEAM. (R) Box 94, Mercer, Wis. 54547 (full-time)
- PERDUE, NELSON. (C) 3732 E. Rte. 245, Cable, Ohio 43009
- PFEIFER, DON. (C) 102 E. 7th St., Waverly, Ohio 45690
- PHILLIPS, GENE E. (C) 800 E. Quincy Rd., Rte. 2, Griggsville, Ill. 62340
- PICKERINGS, R. E. (R) P.O. Box 20572, Orlando, Fla. 32814 (full-time)
- PITTENGER, TWYLA. (C) 413 N. Bowman St., Mansfield, Ohio 44903
- PITTS, PAUL. (C) 2213 Knoll Dr., Dayton, Ohio 45431
- PIERCE, BOYCE & CATHERINE. (C) R. 4, Danville, Ill. 61832
- PORTER, JOHN & PATSY. (C) c/o NPH*
- POTTER, LYLE & LOIS. (Retired) 14362 Bushard St., Sp. No. 133, Westminster, Calif. 92683
- POWELL, CURTICE L. (C) 2010 London Dr., Mansfield, Ohio 44905
- POWELL, EARL. (R) 1613 Hickory St., Flatwood, Ky. 41139 (full-time)
- POWELL, FRANK. (C) P.O. Box 222, Oskaloosa, Ia. 52577
- QUALLS, PAUL M. (C) 5441 Lake Jessamine Dr., Orlando, Fla. 32809
- RAKER, W. C. & MARY. (C) Box 106, Lewistown, Ill. 61542
- RAYCROFT, R. N. (C) c/o NPH*
- REED, DOROTHY. (C) P.O. Box 32, Danville, Ill. 61832
- REEDY, J. C. (C) 449 Breesee Ave., Bourbonnais, Ill. 60914
- RHAME, JOHN D. (R) 1712 Good Hope, Cape Girardeau, Mo. 63701 (full-time)
- RICHARDS, LARRY & PHYLLIS (COULTER). (R) 2479 Madison Ave., Indianapolis, Ind. 46203
- RIDEN, K. R. (C) c/o NPH
- ROBERTSON, JAMES H. (C) 2014 Green Apple Ln., Arlington, Tex. 76014
- ◆ROBISON, ROBERT & WIFE. (C) Heaters, W.Va. 26627
- RODGERS, CLYDE B. (R) 505 Lester Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37210 (full-time)
- ROTHWELL, MEL-THOMAS. (R) 2108 Alexander Ln., Bethany, Okla. 73008
- RUSHING, KEN & EDNA. (R) 3621 N.W. 97th St., Miami, Fla. 33147 (full-time)
- RUTHERFORD, BOB. (C) R. 1, Lynchburg, Tenn. 37352
- RUTHERFORD, STEPHEN. (R) Box 204, La Vergne, Tenn. 37086 (full-time)
- SANDERS, RUFUS J. (C) 311 N. Third Ave., Saginaw, Mich. 48607
- SAY FAMILY. (C) 1515 Pinelake Dr., Orlando, Fla. 32808
- SCARLETT, DON. (C) 1806 Auburn, Speedway, Ind. 46224
- SCHLANG, NEIL. (C) 701 Neighborhood Rd., Chattanooga, Tenn. 37421
- SCHMELZENBACH, ELMER. (C) 1416 Mary, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73127
- SCHOONOVER, MODIE. (C) 1508 Glenview, Adrian, Mich. 49221
- SCHRIBER, GEORGE. (C) 8642 Cherry Ln., Alta Loma, Calif. 91701
- ◆SERROTT, CLYDE. (C) Evangelist & Children's Worker, 558 W. Melrose Cir., Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. 33312
- SEXTON, ARNOLD (DOC) & GARNETT. (C) 1116 Highland Ave., Ashland, Ky. 41101
- ◆SEYMORE, PAUL W. (C) Box 94, Pittsburg, Ill. 62974
- ◆SHARP, CHARLES & FAMILY. (C) R. 2, Box 216-D, Vicksburg, Mich. 49097
- SHARPLES, J. J. & MRS. (R) 41 James Ave., Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Canada (full-time)
- SHEA, ALBERT J. (C) 288 Shaborn Ln., St. Marys, Ohio 45885
- ◆SHOMO, PHIL & MIRIAM. (C) 517 Pershing Dr., Anderson, Ind. 46011
- SHUMAKE, C. E. (C) P.O. Box 1083, Hendersonville, Tenn. 37075
- SISK, IVAN. (C) 4327 Moraga Ave., San Diego, Calif. 92117
- SLACK, DOUGLAS. (C) 424 Lincoln St., Rising Sun, Ind. 47040
- ◆SLATER, GLENN & VERA. (C) 320 S. 22nd St., Independence, Kans. 67301
- SMITH, CHARLES HASTINGS. (C) Box 937, Bethany, Okla. 73008
- ◆SMITH, DUANE. (C) c/o NPH*
- SMITH, FLOYD P. (C) 256 Oakhurst Ln., Arcadia, Calif. 91006
- SMITH, HAROLD L. (C) 3711 Germania Rd., Snover, Mich. 48472
- ◆SMITH, OTTIS E., JR., & MARGUERITE. (C) 60 Grant St., Tidioute, Pa. 16351
- SMITH, R. A. (C) Box 42, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281
- ◆SMITHS, SINGING. (C) 612 4th Ave. N., Myrtle Beach, S.C. 29577
- SNELL, DALE E. (R) 814 Paradise Ln., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80904 (full-time)
- SNOW, DONALD E. (C) 53 Baylis, S.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49507
- ◆SPARKS, ASA & MRS. (C) 91 Lester Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37210
- ◆SPROWLS, EARL L. (C) c/o NPH*
- STAFFORD, DANIEL. (C) Box 11, Bethany, Okla. 73008
- STARNES, SAM L. (C) 448 S. Prairie, Bradley, Ill. 60915
- STEELE, J. J. (Retired) 1020 W. Stanford, Springfield, Mo. 65807
- STEPHENS, KEN. (R) P.O. Box 24537, Dallas, Tex. 75224 (full-time)
- STEWART, PAUL J. (C) Box 90 Jasper, Ala. 35501
- ◆STOCKER, W. G. (C) 1421 14th Ave., N.W., Rochester, Minn. 55901
- STONE GOSPEL SINGING FAMILY. (R) 5150 Airport Rd., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80916
- STREET, DAVID. (C) Rte. 1, Ramsey, Ind. 47166
- STRICKLAND, RICHARD L. (C) 4723 Cullen Ave., Springfield, Ohio 45503
- STUBBS, LLOYD A. (C) Rte. 3, Waverly, Ohio 45690
- SWANSON, ROBERT L. (C) 1102 Greenwood Dr., Yukon, Okla. 73099
- SWEENEY, ROGER & EULETA. (C) Rte. 2, Box 106, Sharon Grove, Ky. 42280

TALBERT, GEORGE H. (Retired) 409 N.E. 13th St., Abilene, Kans. 67410
 TAYLOR, CLIFF. (R) Family Evangelist, 2469 Sacramento Dr., Redding, Calif. 96001
 TAYLOR, JOHN D. (C) 205 N. Limit, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80905
 TAYLOR, ROBERT W. (C) 4501 Croftshire Dr., Dayton, Ohio 45440
 ♦TEASDALE, ELLIS & RUTH. (Retired) 58333 Ironwood Dr., Elkhart, Ind. 46514
 THOMAS, J. MELTON. (C) c/o NPH*
 THOMPSON, GENEVIEVE. (C) Prophecy, Craig, Mo. 64437
 ♦THOMPSON, L. DEAN. (C) 314 S. Summit, Girard, Kans. 66743
 ♦THORNTON, RON L. (R) Rte. 3, Box 301, Colona, Ill. 61241 (full-time)
 TOEPFER, PAUL. (C) Box 146, Petersburg, Tex. 79250
 TOSTI, TONY. (Retired) Box 1643, Prescott, Ariz. 86301
 TRIPP, HOWARD. (C) c/o NPH*
 ♦TUCKER, BILL & JEANETTE. (C) P.O. Box 3204, La Vale, Md. 21502
 TUCKER, RALPH. (C) c/o NPH*
 ♦TURNOCK, JIM & D. J. (R) c/o NPH* (full-time)
 VANDERPOOL, WILFORD. (C) 11424 N. 37th St., Phoenix, Ariz. 85028
 VARIAN, W. E. (C) 5423 Hicks Corner, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49002
 WADE, E. BRUCE. (C) 3029 Sharpview Ln., Dallas, Tex. 75228
 ♦WALKER, LAWRENCE C. AND LAVONA. (C) c/o NPH*
 ♦WARD, LLOYD & GERTRUDE. (C) Preacher & Chalk Artist, 1001 Avery St., Fort Myers, Fla. 33901

♦WELCH, JONATHAN & ILONA. (C) 601 Commercial, Danville, Ill. 61832
 ♦WELCH, RICHARD & CLAUDIA. (C) c/o NPH*
 WELCH, W. B. (C) 5328 Edith St., Charleston Heights, S.C. 29405
 WELLS, KENNETH & LILY. (Retired) Box 1043, Whitefish, Mont. 59937
 WEST, EDNA. (C) Carlisle St., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80907
 WEST, C. EDWIN. (C) c/o NPH*
 WHITED, CURTIS. (C) 307 N. Blake, Olathe, Kans. 66061
 WILKINS, CHESTER. (C) 5118 Ranch Rd., Bartlesville, Okla. 74003
 ♦WILKINSON TRIO. (R) 2840 18th St., Columbus, Ind. 47201 (full-time)
 WILLIAMS, G. W. (C) 2200 Elva Dr., Kokomo, Ind. 46901
 ♦WILLIAMS, LAWRENCE. (C) 6715 N.W. 30th Terr., Bethany, Okla. 73008
 WILSON, ROBERT J. (C) Rte. 2, Box 139, Lexington, Ala. 35648
 WISE, DAVE. (R) 6501 Woodland, Kansas City, Mo. 64131 (full-time)
 ♦WISEHART, LENNY & JOY. (C) c/o NPH*
 WOLPE, JOSEPH P. (C) 3976 4th St., Riverside, Calif. 92501
 WRIGHT, E. G. (C) Rte. 2, Box 363, Old Lincoln Way, Orrville, Ohio 44667
 WYLLIE, CHARLES. (C) Box 162, Winfield, Kans. 67156
 WYRICK, DENNIS. (C) 603 Reed Dr., Frankfort, Ky. 40601
 ♦YATES, BEN J. (R) 5709 Willow Terr. Dr., Bethel Park, Pa. 15102 (full-time)

STEWARDSHIP

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THE PREACHER'S WIFE

A Parade of Preachers' Wives

IT'S PARADE TIME. Homecoming football parades decorate city and town. Thanksgiving Day parades will march through the cities of Toronto, Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles, and many others. Let's sit back and enjoy a different kind of parade—a parade of preacher's wives.

Here they come—ministers' wives of all the ages—from the wife of the first Old Testament priest to that trembling, uncertain pastor's wife of 1976. See them, in your mind's eye, as they march back and forth through the parsonage doorways—out into a world that needs the story of salvation, back into the parsonage to help those who live there, and finally, on into the eternal city of God.

Let's take a closer look at some of these ladies as they pass by. Perhaps we can ask them a few questions. Here's one whose name tag reads: Katharine Luther, Germany.



by
Frances Simpson

Pastor's wife
Linwood Church
of the Nazarene
Wichita, Kans.

“Katharine, what preparation did you have for being a minister's wife?”

“A minister's wife? I really did not prepare for that role. I became a nun in a monastery where I helped till the fields and learned the meaning of prayer. These became assets in my later life as a minister's wife.”

“Did you do much entertaining?”

“I tried to help all those who came our way. In addition to our own children, I cared for 10 other children of relatives. Students from Wittenberg also boarded in our home. Sometimes I would set up extra cots so that we could take in more of the homeless who came to our door.”

“You must have had a tremendous food bill.”

“With hard work and God's providence we were able to manage. I looked after the orchard which supplied our family with fruit and nuts. I also had a fish pond and a barnyard with hens, ducks, pigs, and cows.”

“So your advice, Mrs. Luther, would be to work hard and put one's whole self into this job of being a minister's wife. Thank you so much for sharing with us.”

Here comes a slim and graceful lady, dressed in the fashions of seventeenth-century London. Her name tag says: Susanna Wesley.

“Susanna, how did you get along with children in the parsonage?”

"It was a busy but rewarding task. We had a large family and a small income, but I was determined that my children should have a good education. I set up my 'household school' and began to train my children by a rather strict method as soon as they were born."

"Mrs. Wesley, did giving birth to 19 children, caring for their education, and tending to all the other responsibilities, leave you any time for private devotions?"

"I spent no more time in recreation in one day than I spent in private religious duties. I set aside two hours of each day for private devotions."

"So your admonition would be to pray much and give time to the children. Thank you, Mrs. Wesley."

Here comes a beautiful lady with dark hair, queenly, and dignified. Emma Moody is the name.

"Emma, as a minister's wife did you find it difficult to do the things you wanted to do?"

"The thing I wanted most to do was to be a helpmate to my preacher husband. I made a home away from home for him, shielding him from interruptions, doing all in my power to free him for the work he was doing—a work in which I took great pride and interest. He leaned very heavily on me. I never let anyone know how much."

"So you feel that a minister's wife

should be a special helpmate to her husband. Thank you, Mrs. Moody."

Let's interview one more. Her name is Lula Schmelzenbach. Let's ask her a touchy question.

"Lula, did you have nice parsonages?"

"For the first two years of our marriage, our parsonage was a covered wagon. Later we were able to purchase land for our first mission station in Africa and build our home."

On and on they go—preachers' wives from cities and towns, villages and country, jungles and bushveld. Here's one I know well. What a help she's been to me. There's another I recognize. Her husband still pastors a small church, but how her influence reaches out in the lives of her children.

Ministers' wives all over the world are working with their husbands to proclaim the good news of Christ and to build His Church. One may roast corn on an open fire. Another will prepare a five-course dinner. One may sweep out a single, one-room hut. Another will vacuum yards of carpet in a large parsonage. The rewards and blessings are the same. Each can personally claim God's promises, and experience the leadership and power of the Holy Spirit.

Hey, wait a minute! Let me in line.

Altitude in Attitude

As a sponge soaks up fluid, so our children soak up the attitudes involved in whatever we say or do in their presence. If we speak ill of our neighbors, our children will think as we do about them. If we condemn the preacher, the church, the school, or our children's teachers, our children will lose faith in them.

How vitally important that we, as parents, follow the course that will give them altitude in attitudes. Our children will reflect in their mature years what we reflected immaturely while they were growing up in our homes. Loyalty, faith, and moral practices are observed better than said. What you would that your children would be, do ye in conversation and practice in the home.

—Selected

Wesleyana



John Wesley Answers Questions About

Predestination, Sinlessness, and Imputation

By George E. Failing*

I HAVE RESPECT for the person who opens himself to weighty questions, and even greater respect for the person who is willing to expose his own heart by forthrightly answering those questions.

John Wesley was, first of all, a man of one Book. The Bible was final authority. Second, Wesley was a man of wide reading and careful research, so his convictions and opinions had the advantage of some "sources" behind them. Third, Wesley was a pragmatic man, a man who observed himself (and sometimes changed his judgments!) and others and charted those observations. Fourth, Wesley was devoted to evangelism and growth (both individual Christian growth and growth of his societies—churches). Wesley was not interested in mere organization or doctrinal debates. Finally, Wesley sought to help people on every level of life—physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Probably Wesley's *Letters* reveal all these characteristics better than either the *Journal* or his *Sermons*,

should these latter two be taken separately. For these reasons, I share the letter below, written to the Reverend Mr. Plenderlieth, May 23, 1768. Three topics of continuing interest are discussed in a real situation. Written exactly 30 years after his Aldersgate experience, the views expressed are seasoned and therefore merit our careful consideration. These three issues are currently important and often demand some careful statements. I think you will read this letter with profit. Neither Wesley nor I would insist on concurrence with every statement. The letter follows:

May 23, 1768

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Some years ago, it was reported that I recommended the use of a crucifix to a man under the sentence of death. I traced this up to its author, Dr. Stennett, an Anabaptist Teacher. He was charged with it. He answered, "Why, I saw a crucifix in his cell;" (a picture of Christ on the cross) "and I knew Mr. Wesley used to visit him; so I supposed he had brought it." This is the whole of the

*Editor, *The Wesleyan Advocate*.

matter. Dr. Stennett himself I never yet saw; nor did I ever see such a picture in the cell; and I believe the whole tale is pure invention.

I had for some time given up the thought of an interview with Mr. Erskine, when I fell into the company of Dr. Oswald. He said, "Sir, you do not know Mr. Erskine. I know him perfectly well. Send and desire an hour's conversation with him, and I am sure he will understand you better." I am glad I did send. I have done my part, and am now entirely satisfied.

I am likewise glad that Mr. E. has spoken his mind. I will answer with all simplicity, in full confidence of satisfying you, and all impartial men.

He objects, first, that I attack predestination, as subversive of all religion, and yet suffer my followers in Scotland to remain in that opinion. Much of this is true. I did attack predestination eight-and-twenty years ago; and I do not believe now any predestination which implies ir-respective reprobation. But I do not believe it is necessarily subversive of all religion. I think hot disputes are much more so; therefore, I never willingly dispute with any one about it. And I advise all my friends, not in Scotland only, but all over England and Ireland, to avoid all contention on the head, and let every man remain in his own opinion. Can any man of candour blame me for this? Is there anything unfair or disingenuous in it?

He objects, secondly, that I "assert the attainment of sinless perfection by all born of God." I am sorry Mr. E. should affirm this again. I need give no other answer than I gave before, in the seventh page of the little tract I sent him two years ago.

I do not maintain this. I do not believe it. I believe Christian perfection is not attained by any of the

children of God till they are what the Apostle John terms fathers. And this I expressly declare in that sermon which Mr. E. so largely quotes.

He objects, thirdly, that I "deny the imputation of Christ's active obedience." Since I believed justification by faith, which I have done upwards of thirty years, I have constantly maintained that we are pardoned and accepted wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for us.

Two or three years ago, Mr. Madan's sister showed him what she had written down of a sermon which I had preached on this subject. He entreated me to write down the whole, and print it; saying, it would satisfy all my opponents. I was not so sanguine as to expect this: I understood mankind too well. However, I complied with his request. A few were satisfied; the rest continued just as they were before.

As long as Mr. E. continues of the mind expressed in his "Theological Essays," there is no danger that he and I should agree, any more than light and darkness. I love and reverence him, and not his doctrine. I dread every approach to Antinomianism. I have seen the fruit of it over the three kingdoms. I never said that Mr. E. and I were agreed. I will make our disagreement as public as ever he pleases; only I must, withal, specify the particulars. If he will fight with me, it must be on this ground; and then let him do what he will, and what he can.

Retaining a due sense of your friendly offices, and praying for a blessing on all your labours,

*I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother
and servant,*

JOHN WESLEY

(Works, 12:245-47)

Discovering Solutions

Compiled by

Raymond C. Kratzer*



Church Leadership Misfits

This problem often inhibits the growth of a church, and persons involved many times are among the most loyal and dedicated of the congregation. But insight is lacking, and often feelings are apt to be hurt unless great caution is exercised. When a pastor figuratively points a finger at a seeming misfit among his church leaders, he must observe three fingers pointing back at himself as possibly being remiss in his leadership at times. He must remember that often it takes time to adjust to an office in the church. Mistakes can be made, but learning can take place. Patience and guidance should be invoked to assist persons in newly assigned positions, rather than criticism for failures.

Temporary appointments for a short

time is a good preventative as you seek a ministry that will fit certain persons. Misfits waste energy—theirs and others. Consequently we need to study how we may harness potential to fit ability. This is not always clear, and one needs to pray and solicit God's guidance while exercising patience.

When glaring misfits appear, prayer is a vital ingredient for their reassignment, lest feelings be hurt and the total church program injured. Be alert daily for an opportunity to change the situation. Strive to find a place where they might fit by going through the proper channels such as the church school board, NYPS, and NWMS councils. Be sure that no assignment is for more than one year. This can be implemented by an annual installation service.

A change of assignment is always better than removal from office with no task to do. A sagacious pastor can find a way to place every member of his church in some job: teacher, officer, committee, visitor, usher, secretarial assistant, choir, prayer warrior. Some could be a part of a "minuteman brigade" to pray for special needs upon notification by phone.

*Superintendent, Northwest District, Church of the Nazarene.

Publicize Contacts

"Nothing succeeds like success!" "Enthusiasm is contagious." Trite, but true phrases when applied to visitation. Encourage your people who are calling and making contacts each week. You may want to inspire those who are simply not doing anything in the area of visitation by trying these ideas:

1. Place a permanent board in the foyer that lists the names of those involved in the visitation program. Post the number of contacts made each week by each person.

2. In the church newsletter list the number of contacts made by each person.

3. In a public service occasionally recognize the teachers and others who are doing exceptionally well in outreach.

4. Send letters of appreciation to those who are involved consistently in the visitation program. Send letters of congratulations to teachers whose class attendance and enrollment have increased as a result of their consistent contact work.

5. Place an 8½ x 11 poster on the door of each Sunday school classroom and department listing the teacher's name, and the enrollment of the class. Dates for an entire month are written in. Space is provided to post each week's attendance, and the number of contacts made by the class teacher and members each week. At the bottom of the poster are these words, "Watch our progress because of our work!"

BETTY B. ROBERTSON

THE STARTING POINT

Realized Forgiveness

Maxie Dunnam points out this interesting thought in his book *Barefoot Days of the Soul*, in commenting on Nathan's words to David, "You shall not die." "That word," says Dunnam, "now has the flesh of God wrapped around it," as he quotes John 3:16.

The Promise of Spring

There is another thought in the book mentioned above that may be a good "starting point" for you: "Our days are wintry, frigid, and forlorn, no promise of the life and warmth of spring, until we become personally aware of God's forgiveness" (Abingdon Press, 1975, p. 42).

Resurrection, Here and Now

Here's something that Alec Gilmore says in his book *Tomorrow's Pulpit* that is stimulating: "An appreciation of the preaching of the Early Church is crucial, not in the sense that we must tell the story they told, but rather in the sense that as they pointed to the activity of the risen Lord in their generation, so we must be prepared to point to the activity of the risen Lord in ours" (Alec Gilmore, *Tomorrow's Pulpit*, Judson, 1975, p. 19).

Two Questions from Paul

Perhaps you have discovered them, but if not, they are worth considering. When

Paul was encountered on the road to Damascus and came to an awareness of his spiritual lostness, the first question he asked was "Who are You, Lord?" And when he received the answer that it was Jesus, his second question was "What shall I do, Lord?"

Alec Gilmore comments about these two questions by saying: "It is the natural reaction of a lost man. He wants a reassurance that the power that has brought him this far can take him further, and so he must learn to recognize that power and to be able to identify with it" (p. 37).

The Four Gardens

Here's a thought, either for a sermon or for a series—the four gardens of the Bible.

The first, of course, is the Garden of Eden where the key word would be *disobedience*.

The second garden is the Garden of Gethsemane, where the key word would be *obedience*, pictured so beautifully by Christ's words, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

The third is the Garden of Resurrection. Perhaps the key word is *victory*.

The final garden is the Garden of Paradise pictured in the Book of Revelation. The key thought surrounding this garden is *peace*.

What the Pew Expects from the Pulpit

T. R. Glover gave us these words to ponder: "I don't give tuppence for the man who goes in the pulpit to tell me where my duty lies; but I'll give all I have to the man who tells me whence my help comes."

Colossians and the Cross

The Book of Colossians gives us a good interpretation of Calvary, and God's love expressed through Christ.

Colossians 1:6, in *The Living Bible*, is a good summary of Calvary. It simply interprets it as "... God's great kindness to sinners." This is a refreshing way of seeing the Cross, for Calvary is a response of love, more than a rule of logic.

This "kindness to sinners" is spelled



By C. Neil Strait

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

out in verses 13 and 14 (TLB)* in these three expressions:

1. There is rescue in the midst of rebellion—"For he has rescued us out of the darkness and gloom of Satan's kingdom" (v. 13).

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2. There is freedom in the midst of our bondage—"who bought our freedom with his blood" (v. 14).

3. There is forgiveness in the midst of our transgression—"and forgave us all our sins" (v. 14).

All of these expressions show us "God's great kindness to sinners."

IN THE STUDY

Seeds for Sermons

November 7

SEEKING LIFE'S HIGHEST GOAL

TEXT: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

We live in a goal-oriented society. Salesmen in industrial organizations are given quotas to reach. Churches are given goals to realize in attendance drives. Workmen are given bonuses if certain levels of production are achieved. However, the highest goal that we can realize is related to giving top priority to seeking God's kingdom and discovering our place in His kingdom program. This challenging statement of Jesus involves four basic principles, as follows:

I. WE ARE TO SEEK HIS KINGDOM IN PERSON—"Seek ye."

The Lord deals with us in a personalized, individualized, and customized manner. He does not work with us in wholesale amounts or carload lots, but in person-to-person, one-to-one relationship. He is on a first-name basis with each of us, even though there has been no formal introduction. He invites us to come to Him just like we are, and wants us to be ourselves as we pursue His will for our lives.

II. WE ARE TO SEEK HIS KINGDOM WITH PRIMACY—"Seek ye first . . ."

Our number one concern is to set our attention and affection on things that are above. We can be assured that we are putting first things first when we get hooked on one supreme interest—seeking His kingdom first. All other considerations are given a secondary or incidental place in comparison with this one controlling desire. We can be sure that we are majoring in majors and minoring in minors when we give Him absolute sway in our lives.

III. WE ARE TO SEEK THE KINGDOM WITH PURPOSE—"The kingdom of God, and His righteousness."



by
Mendell Taylor

Professor of History of
Christianity, Nazarene
Theological Seminary,
Kansas City

The word *righteousness* can be classified in several ways. We can think of it as "right-use-ness" or "right-related-ness" or "right-mindedness." In each reference the main thrust is to be so much like the Lord that those who see us can also see Him. We want the qualities which characterize His life to be incorporated into our nature. We want His image and likeness to be reflected in and through us. Our motto is: "My desire, to be like Jesus; My desire, to be like Him."

IV. WE ARE TO SEEK HIS KINGDOM TO GAIN THE RICHEST PROFIT—"and all these things shall be added unto you."

We do not need to take thought of tomorrow, because all of life's necessities will be brought to us by His system of addition. The motive of personal gain should never enter our mind as we seek first His kingdom. However, many amazing returns will come as a by-product of our putting Him first. Out of His heart of love and hand of plenty, we will receive bountiful benefits because He holds first place in all of our planning.

CONCLUSION: If we make His kingdom an end in itself, then we will gain many times more than we deserve. However, if we make these gains an end in themselves, we will end up poverty-stricken in the spiritual realm.

November 14

THE SPLENDID WAYS OF DEALING WITH TRUTH

TEXT: "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15).

This particular verse is treated in various ways by those who make translations of the same. All of these approaches blend together in a beautiful harmony as truth is presented in its best attire. Truth is to be tempered by love; truth is to be saturated with love; truth is to be leavened by love. Love is to be a Siamese twin with truth. Love is to be interlocked with truth so that the two are inseparable. Love is to be married with truth so that the two become one. The three

translations which apply to this verse are as follows:

I. THE REGULAR TRANSLATION DECLARES THAT WE ARE TO SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE.

Under the guise of being realistic, a person may speak out in a way that is referred to as being brutally frank. These words are always sharp and cutting. They leave wounds and hurts. Nevertheless, the person inflicting these lacerations will justify his damaging words by saying that he was speaking the truth in an objective and honest manner. This procedure can produce irreparable damage. On the other hand, we can be sincere and honest and still baptize our truth-conveying words with love. This means that the words are spoken, not to be destructive, but to be constructive; not damaging but edifying; not critical but helpful. When we put the bridle of love on our tongues, our conversation will be properly controlled, corrective, and uplifting.

II. A MARGINAL NOTE SAYS THE WORD "SPEAKING" IN THIS TEXT SHOULD BE TRANSLATED AS "HOLDING."

If we hold the truth without love, we can be cold, critical, intolerant, and judgmental. In this type of situation, misunderstandings and animosities poison one's attitude towards those who do not agree with his position. One can consider himself so dead right that he is death on all who do not agree with him. We are to hold certain truths as final and fundamental, but that does not justify us in condemning everyone else as heretics and rebels. When we hold the truth in love, we will be thoughtful and respectful of the other person and be magnanimous in our spirits and our regard for those with differing opinions.

III. THE GREEK WORD (*aletheuontes*) USED HERE IS LITERALLY TRANSLATED "BEING" THE TRUTH OF LOVE.

This means that we are to be the embodiment of truth and of love. When these two are ingrained in us, we will believe truths that we will stand by regardless of the circumstances, but we will be approachable enough that we can be friendly with those of a different persuasion. When we take a stand against

something we deeply deplore, we must do so in a spirit of kindness and concern for those who make up the opposition. Those truths that are a part of our lives we affirm in a fearless manner, but we transmit them to others with the tears of loving-kindness.

CONCLUSION: There will be differences regarding what the truth is; but if we maintain the spirit of love in the midst of those differences, we will always display a biblical stance.

November 21

THE BEST WAY TO SAY "THANK YOU, JESUS"

(Thanksgiving Sunday)

TEXT: "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

We are all tenants on the Lord's great plantation, the earth. From His fountains we drink and from His granaries we eat. Our survival physically and spiritually depends on the benefits He bestows upon us. He has a three-fold claim to our lives, because we are His by creation, by preservation, and by redemption. This brings us to the first consideration:

I. THE BLESSINGS WE HAVE FREELY RECEIVED FROM THE LORD THAT WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR

The Psalmist gave us this admonition: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (Ps. 103:2). If we tried to make a list of these blessings, we would run out of time, and there would not be enough space to contain a complete rundown of the same. So we conclude whatever list we make with these words: "And other items too numerous to mention." A brief inventory of what we have freely received to be thankful for is as follows:

1. He has set us up in this business of living with plenty of assets to make a go of life.

2. He has supplied our world with sunshine and rain, soil, and mineral resources to make it possible for us to have food for survival.

3. He has entrusted to us a fantastic thinking center called the brain that enables us to be creative, interpretative, and evaluative so we can be resourceful, inventive, and productive.

4. He has surrounded us with a huge oxygen tent so the right amount of oxygen is available for making fire power to cook food, run machinery, and operate space missiles. At the same time the right amount of oxygen is in the mixture of the atmosphere to bring into our bodies, by the breathing process, what is required to maintain normal living. (If oxygen were cut off from the brain for five minutes, the victim would be nothing but a vegetable.)

5. He has given us the capability of feeling as much at home in the realm of the invisible, the eternal, the supersensory, as we do in the world of sight, touch, and taste.

6. He has endowed us with spiritual facilities which enable us to appropriate the measure of grace which He provided by the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

7. All of this, plus other items, too numerous to mention, and then heaven too.

II. THE BEST WAY TO SAY, "THANK YOU, JESUS," IS FOR US TO GIVE OURSELVES AS FREELY TO HIM AS HE HAS GIVEN HIMSELF TO US.

In the light of His bountiful bestowments to us, the only way for us to show our gratitude to Him is to give to Him everything we have, everything we are, everything we hope to be. Let Him know that we are His without reservation and without any strings attached. That we belong to Him at the level of an all-out surrender to Him. That we are His in total commitment. That our time, our talent, our treasure belongs to Him, and He can claim any or all of these assets with no questions asked.

CONCLUSION: Freedom at the highest level of operation becomes ours when we recognize that freely we have received all things from Him, and in return we give all things to Him and take our hands off completely. In an age when so much of life is geared to be disposal, it is wonderful to be at the disposal of the Lord.

PERSONALIZED RELIGION

TEXT: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory . . . among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory . . . Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:27, 29).

The Lord deals with us in such a personal way that we can refer to our encounters with Him as a person-to-person relationship. He often customizes a service with us in mind so we can receive a maximum of benefit from the same. He so tailors His answers to our prayers that He monograms the answer with our initials to let us know it would not fit anyone else. He personalizes His approach to us to the degree that we can use personal pronouns in describing our relationship with Him. In applying this procedure to the above passage, we come out with the following propositions:

I. CHRIST FOR ME—"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory . . . among the Gentiles." This lets me know that doing things in my behalf caused Him to give His life for me on the Cross. He is for me to the extent that He becomes my Substitute and Sacrifice. His atonement for me means that I am Christ purchased. In order for this provision to be effective in my life, I must take Him by faith as my Saviour. This lets me know that Christ for me is my only acceptable standing before God.

II. CHRIST IN ME—"Christ in you, the hope of glory."

After dying for me, Christ in me is Christ living again, and He lives in my heart. He moves from the realm of being my Sacrifice to the area of being my Sufficiency; from the area of my being Christ-purchased to the area of my being Christ possessed. I am now in a position to prove that He is a risen Saviour by the fact that he indwells in my life.

III. CHRIST THROUGH ME—"worketh in me mightily."

This means that He is not only living in me, but He is speaking by my life. At this point, He becomes my Supply for service. He becomes my only real Power

for spiritual fruitfulness. I am not only Christ-possessed but Christ-permeated. I am now in a position to transmit Him. He is not only present with me, but He is preeminent in all my thoughts, words, and actions.

CONCLUSION: As we make our pilgrimage with the Lord, it is a wonderful discovery to find that He is for us, but it is more wonderful to realize that He is anxious to be in us, and most wonderful to know that He is ready to live His life through us. This progression takes us from the place where we are *purchased* by Him, to the point that we are *possessed* by Him, and then to the level that the influences which radiate from our lives are *permeated* by Him.

By
Ralph Earle

Professor of New Testament
Nazarene Theological
Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.



Gleanings
from the Greek

1 Corinthians 15:35-58

"Fool" or "Foolish"? (15:36)

Four different Greek words in the NT are translated "fool" in the KJV. *Anoetos* (6 times) and *asophos* (only in Eph. 5:15) are mild terms. The first means "thoughtless," the second "unwise." A third word, *moros* (accusative, *moron*) sometimes has moral connotations. It occurs 13 times in the NT.

But the word here is *aphron* (11 times). It literally means "mindless" or "senseless." Arndt and Gingrich define it as "foolish, ignorant" (p. 127). Bertram writes: "In 1 Cor. 15:36, Paul is not pronouncing a definitive judgment with his *aphron*. It is a rhetorical appeal for true

understanding. To cling to the negative view is to adopt the position of the *aphron* which is close to that of ungodliness" (TDNT, 9:231).

In view of all this, "Thou fool" (KJV) or "You fool!" (NASB)* seems a bit too harsh. A better rendering would seem to be "you foolish man!" (RSV)** or "How foolish!" (NIV).***

"Quickened" or "Come to Life"?

(15:36)

The verb is *soopoieo*, from *poieo*, "make," and *zoos*, "alive." So it means "come to life" (RSV, NASB, NIV). Of the 12 times this verb occurs in the NT, it is translated "quicken" nine times (see v. 45). But that is obsolete terminology.

"Corruption" or "Perishable"?

(15:42, 50)

The Greek word *phthora* does mean "corruption" or "destruction." But Arndt and Gingrich note that in the world of nature (including the human body, as here), it signifies "perishable." Here it means the "state of being perishable," and in verse 50 "that which is perishable" (p. 865). today the word "perishable" (RSV, NASB, NIV) conveys the sense better than "corruption."

"Natural" (15:44)

This verse is the crucial one in answering the second question of verse 35: "With what kind of body will they come?" (NIV). Here Paul says: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

What is meant by "natural"? The Greek word is *psychicos*, "psychical." But what does that mean?

Abbott-Smith says that *psychicos* means "of the psyche (as the lower part of the immaterial in man), EV, *natural*" (p. 489). Arndt and Gingrich present it this way: "*pertaining to the soul or life*, in our literature always denoting the life of the natural world and whatever be-

longs to it, in contrast to the supernatural world, which is characterized by *pneuma*" (p. 902). They translate here "a physical body" (cf. RSV). They also suggest "physical" in verse 46.

Schweizer writes: "The psychical is neither sinful as such nor does it incline to the *pneuma*. But it is corruptible and finds no access into God's kingdom, v. 50" (TDNT, 9:662).

Commenting on verses 42-44, Robertson and Plummer (ICC) say:

"Hitherto the answer to the second question [of v. 35] has been indirect: it now becomes direct. The risen body is incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual. It is quite obvious that the corpse which is 'sown' is none of these things. It is in corruption before it reaches the grave . . . it is absolutely powerless, unable to move a limb. The last epithet, *psychicon*, is less appropriate to a corpse, but it comes in naturally enough to distinguish the body which is being dissolved from the body which will be raised. The former was by nature subject to the laws and conditions of physical life (*psyche*), the latter will be controlled only by the spirit (*pneuma*), and this spirit will be in harmony with the Spirit of God. In the material body the spirit has been limited and hampered in its action; in the future body it will have perfect freedom of action and consequently complete control, and man will at last be what God created him to be, a being in which the higher self is supreme" (p. 372).

F. Godet, in his two-volume *Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, has the best discussion of verse 44 that we have found. He translates the first half of the verse, "It is sown a psychical body, it is raised a spiritual body," and then comments: "The terms *animated* or *animal* body are the only ones in our language by which we can render the term reproduced in our translation by the Anglicized Greek term. The meaning of the epithet is clear; it denotes a body, not of the same substance as the soul itself—otherwise it would not be a body—but formed by and for a soul destined to serve as an organ to that breath of life called *psyche*, which presided over its development. Neither,

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consequently, is the *spiritual* body a body of spiritual nature—it would still less be a body in that case—but a body formed by and for a principle of life, which is a spirit, and fully appropriated to its service” (2:413).

Then comes a very beautiful description of the change that will take place in the resurrection:

“The law of the beings belonging to nature is to revolve uniformly in the same circle; the privilege of spiritual being is to surmount this iron circle and to rise from the natural phase, which for it is only the means, to a higher sphere which is its end. This contrast arises from the wholly different mode of being possessed by the soul and the spirit. The soul is only a breath of life endowed with a certain measure of power, capable of taking hold of a material substance, subjecting it to itself, converting it into its agent, and using this organ for a fixed time up to the moment when it will no longer lend itself to such use. The characteristic of the spirit is that it possesses a life which is constantly being renewed. . . . In a new order of things, after extracting from the body an organ adapted to its nature, it will perpetually renew its strength and glory. Such a body will never be to the principle of its life what the earthly body so often is to the inhabiting soul, a burden and a hindrance; it will be the docile instrument of the spirit, fulfilling its wishes and thoughts with inexhaustible power of action, as we even now see the artist using his hand or his voice with marvelous freedom, and thus foreshadowing the perfect spiritualization of the body. If any one should deny the capacity of matter thus to yield to the action of the spirit, I should ask him to tell me what matter is; then, by way of showing what spiritualized matter may be, I should invite him to consider the human eye, that living mirror in which all the emotions of the soul are expressed in a way so living and powerful. These are simple foreshadowings of the glory of a resurrection body” (2:413-14).

“Immortality” (15:53-54)

The Greek word is *athanasia* only here and in 1 Tim. 6:16, where it is applied to God. It comes from alpha, negative,

and *thanotos*, “death.” So it literally means “deathlessness.” Bultmann writes: “The OT has no equivalent for *athanasia*,” and adds: “In 1 Cor. 15:53f the incorruptible mode of existence of the resurrected is called *athanasia* as in Hellenistic Judaism, the thought being not merely that of eternal duration but of a mode of existence different from that of *sarx* [flesh] and *haima* [blood]” (TDNT, 3:24).



Thanksgiving Outlines

Giving Thanks to God

SCRIPTURE: Ps. 92:1-15

- I. Thank God for His love (v. 2).
- II. Thank God for His faithfulness (v. 3).
- III. Thank God for His working in our lives (v. 4).
- IV. Thank God for His strength (v. 9).
- V. Thank God for His Holy Spirit (v.10).
- VI. Thank God for His righteous people (vv. 12-14).
- VII. Thank God for His Rock of Salvation (v. 15).

Thanksgiving Proclamation

SCRIPTURE: Ps. 26:1-12

Thanksgiving proclaimed in—

- I. Trusting God (v. 1)
- II. Examination of the heart (v.2a)
- III. Trials of life (v. 2b)
- IV. God’s love (v. 3a)
- V. Truth (v. 3 b)
- VI. Righteous living (vv. 4-7)
- VII. Integrity (v. 11a)
- VIII. Redemption (v. 11b)

Thank God

SCRIPTURE: 2 Cor. 2:12-17

Thank God—

- I. Who still leads us (v. 14 a)
- II. Who gives us triumphant victory (v. 14b)
- III. Who gives us His sweet presence (v. 14c)
- IV. Who gives us salvation (v. 15)
- V. Who gives us real life (v. 16)
- VI. Who gives us opportunity to speak for Him (v. 17).

Thanks Be to Our God

- I. Who gives us victory in Christ (1 Cor. 15:57)
- II. Who gives us direction in Christ (2 Cor. 2:14)
- III. Who gives us earnestness to serve Christ (2 Cor. 8:16)
- IV. Who gives us His indescribable Gift—Christ (2 Cor. 9:15).

—DERL G. KEEFER

Come Before Winter

TEXT: "Do thy diligence to come before winter" (2 Tim. 4:21).

INTRODUCTION: Daniel Webster defines a friend as "one attached to another by esteem, respect, and affection."

It was out of that sense of friendship that Paul wrote these words to Timothy. "Do thy diligence to come before winter." Why is this true?

Because on at least two other occasions in this book, Paul urges Timothy to come to Rome: In 1:4 he says he has been "greatly desiring to see thee." In 4:9 he says, "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me." And then in the closing verses he writes, "Do thy diligence to come before winter."

I. PAUL'S REQUEST: "COME BEFORE WINTER"

Because of their close friendship, Paul made a request of Timothy that he wouldn't have made of one who was not

a close friend. I see urgency in his request.

A. An urgent request

Not only did he long to see Timothy, but he needed some help. He didn't just ask Timothy to come, but to bring some things with him.

1. Bring the books (v. 13); perhaps a small traveling library.

2. Bring the parchments (v. 13); probably his legal papers—perhaps to prove he was a Roman citizen.

3. Bring the cloke (v. 13). The little dwelling where he lived let the air through the cracks in the walls, and he was cold. Winter was approaching and he wanted his coat. "Come before winter."

4. Bring John Mark (v. 11). What a change in heart. It was John Mark who had so sorely disappointed Paul at an earlier date and eventually caused the separation of Paul and Barnabas. Now Paul *wants* Mark.

This is an urgent request because Paul knew that before long the winter storms would make travel hazardous. So he urges Timothy to make the trip soon.

B. A revealing request

In verse 10 Paul tells Timothy that Demas, Crescens, and Titus have left. The only one remaining was old Dr. Luke. Paul's request reveals a great hunger for real fellowship. Paul is a prisoner without human hope, and he's hungry for someone to talk to, so he pleads with Timothy, "Come before winter."

He was hungry for his books, for his coat, for fellowship. Have you ever been hungry? Really hungry?

II. OUR PRAYER: "COME BEFORE WINTER"

There is another type of hunger that consumes the human spirit like a cancer, and leaves spiritual barren places on God's green earth. That's a hunger for God.

A. A prayer of hunger

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst" (1 Cor. 4:11).

I don't know about you today, but I'm hungry for God. When we really get hungry, our prayer becomes the plea "O God, come before winter. Don't let us labor

through the icy months ahead without a new touch from You.”

B. A prayer of friendship

Of all the friends we ever hope to have, none can be so true as Jesus. I join Paul in his request of a friend when I say, “Jesus, come before winter.” And like Paul, I want something. I’m so hungry for fellowship with Friend Jesus that I can pray in the words of Paul, “Come before winter! O Lord, let us sense Your presence. Let us know revival.”

III. GOD’S INVITATION: “COME BEFORE WINTER”

There is a third vantage point from which we can view these words: the viewpoint of God. For shrouded in these words can be seen God’s invitation to you.

You who are lost. You who have wanted to accept Christ for years. You who have put it off time and time again. You who have heard so often the words of Jesus, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

Now apply the words of Paul to that verse and hear the urgency in that request, “Come before winter.”

CONCLUSION: The trees are almost bare. December is nudging November into history, and winter will soon be upon us. Jesus stands before you today with the invitation of a friend, “Come before winter.”

TIM STEARMAN

BULLETIN



BARREL

In too many instances, the politician’s bumper stickers last longer than his promises.



One great difference between the people of God and those of the world is in their attitudes toward material things: God’s people use them; the world worships them.

How Much Shall I Give This Year for Missions?

(A little argument with myself)

1. If I refuse to give anything to missions this year, I practically cast a ballot in favor of the recall of every missionary, both in the home and foreign fields.

2. If I give less than heretofore, I favor a reduction of the missionary forces proportionate to my reduced contribution.

3. If I give the same as formerly, I favor holding the ground already won, but I disregard any forward movement. My song is “Hold the Fort!” forgetting that the Lord never intended that His army should take refuge in a fort. All of His soldiers are under marching orders and commanded to “Go.”

4. If I advance my offering beyond former years, then I favor an advance movement in the conquest of new territory for Christ.

Resolved: I do believe in greatly increasing the present missionary program; therefore I will increase my offerings to missionary work.

—Selected



**He dropped a quarter in the plate,
Then meekly raised his eyes,
Glad that his weekly rent was paid
To mansions in the skies.**

“But must I keep giving and giving again?” “Ah, no,” said the angel whose eyes pierced me through.

“Just give till the Master quits giving to you!”

**He who thanks but with the lips
Thanks but in part;
The full, the true thanksgiving
Comes from the heart.**

Thanksgiving—

He enjoys much who is thankful for a little.

Thanksgiving is possible only for those who can take time to remember.

Our despondent moods are, for the most part, moods of ingratitude.



HERE AND THERE

AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
your Publishing House

A Thirst for Meaning

By Calvin Miller (Zondervan, 1976. 128 pp., paper, \$1.75.)

Is God dead in Georgia? In your state? He may as well be if you as a Christian do not proclaim your faith in Him. This book was written for the Christian who has been somewhat reluctant to defend his faith because of an intellectual inferiority complex. Other Christians have retreated when skeptics met them head-on with their painful sarcastic sneers. The author states that too often we not only are reluctant to defend our position, "most of the time we have refused even to acknowledge it."

This is a feast day for the skeptic, since "his greatest triumph is in the siege of weaker intellects." Those who act as if their faith is nothing or meaningless, provide the exact target for which the skeptic searches.

Christians need not be "naked in the day of grace." This book clearly shows the real importance of knowing the *Who* of one's faith, the *why* of faith, and *how* to defend it. Would you allow someone to challenge your wife without supporting her? Not as long as love is present. Does not faith in God imply a present love? This book comes to your defense.

THOMAS G. TINKER

The New Compact Bible Dictionary

Edited by T. Alton Bryant (Zondervan, © 1967; 17th printing, 1976. 620 pp., paper, \$2.25.)

Convenient paperback gives a concise and adequate explanation and definition of words, persons, places, objects, and events in the Bible. Up-to-date treatment of recent finds in the Holy Land such as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Extensive photo coverage of Bible places and objects. Over 250 photos and illustrations, as well as maps. Handy for the lay reader, pastor, teacher, and student.

REPRINT—

Revivalism and Social Reform

By Timothy L. Smith (Peter Smith Publishers, 1976. Clothback, \$5.50.)

Pastors will be pleased to know that this book is back in print after a couple of years out of print.

* * *

We sense a new set of Beatitudes which has been adopted by the neo-Christians of our day, which begins, "Blessed are they that tolerate everything, for they shall not be made accountable for anything."

Preachers' Exchange



Wesley's words—

"Let us agree to differ."

WANTED: *Thine is the Kingdom*, by James Stewart. Terry Read, Box 1323, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, W.I.

WANTED TO BUY: Copy of Wiley's *Hebrews*, and wanted to trade: a 1944 *Manual of The Church of the Nazarene* for a 1948 *Manual*. Edgar S. Campbell III, 2521 Wisconsin S.W., Huron, S.D. 57350.

WANTED: Part or complete set of magazine, *Pastoral Psychology*, from Feb., 1950, to Oct., 1972. State price. Rev. Roger Moore, Chaplain's office, Nova Scotia Hospital, Dartmouth, N.S., Canada.

WANTED: New Testament set of *The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary*, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company. Bruce H. Cheney, P.O. Box 97, Seal Cove, Grand Manan, New Brunswick, Canada EOG 3B0

This statement points to the outcome of the doctrinal differences between Arminian John Wesley and Calvinist George Whitefield. Both had been in the Holy Club at Oxford University, and both were ordained Anglican clergymen. Their friendship was such that within months of his Aldersgate Street conversion, Mr. Wesley joined Mr. Whitefield in Bristol, and the two preached in the fields and streets of this city.

Yet their friendship was eventually threatened because of their opposing theological beliefs. Later they went their separate ways. Mr. Whitefield traveled extensively in America, while Mr. Wesley remained in the British Isles. Eventually they were reconciled, and it was to Mr. Whitefield that the words "Let us agree to differ" were said.

Brothers in Christ need not always have the same theology.

—Submitted by Robert Emsley



COMING next month

● Back to Bethlehem

Somewhere along the way, Santa Claus, Scrooge, Rudolf, and the "Grinch" have intruded into the true meaning of Christmas.

● The Holiness Pastor in Crisis Ministry

Some of our most effective ministry comes in times of crisis and emergency. How do we measure up?

● Some Pitfalls of the Youth Ministry

Employing a youth minister may not solve all the problems of a church. Sometimes it creates a few.

● Small Church—Big Plans—Multiple Staff

An expert in this field discusses some questions relating to the multiple staff ministry.



AMONG OURSELVES

A “rediscovery” can be as exciting as a fresh, new experience. Lately, John Henry Jowett’s keen insights have been attracting attention. Last week this writer was a guest in a home where the morning devotional period centered in Jowett’s one-page commentary on faith, from a “new” paperback edition of an old publication brought back to life by First Church of the Nazarene in Pasadena. Several weeks before this month’s edition went to press we had found a gem too precious to be kept a secret—and you have read it on page 9. It is indeed amazing how fresh and relevant ideas can be, even long after they have been expressed. And the best example of all is God’s Word. There is not a “new” problem it ignores nor a “new” issue to which it does not speak. Our aim is that this month’s magazine find the ideal balance between the new and the old, between theory and practice, and between the tough mind and the tender spirit.

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