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THE
**preacher's
magazine**

APRIL '77

**PREACHING
CHRISTIAN
HOLINESS**

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PRODUCTIVITY AND THE PULPIT

Gerald L. Duff



THE
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APRIL, 1977

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The New Day Dawned



IT WAS THE DARKEST NIGHT of human history after that first Good Friday. The stunned disciples were confused and disappointed. Their Lord had been crucified. His body lay in the garden tomb, sealed with a heavy stone, under a Roman guard. There was a portrait of tragedy and defeat.

But the night ended, and the new day dawned.

The God of heaven sent an earthquake to shake things loose. Angels from His eternal throne rolled the heavy stone from that grave like it was a scrap of paper, and let light into the dark tomb. God's mighty power mesmerized the Roman soldiers into sleeping zombies, and raised to life Jesus, the only begotten Son of God.

The darkest of all nights brought the dawn, and it became the brightest of all mornings!

So it has always been, in the providence of a God who does all things well. His majestic nature is seldom beheld in such sharp focus as it appears when He comes to turn our night to day.

God demonstrated His ability to do this when He was with Israel as they stood on the shores of the Red Sea and listened to the sounds of the approaching army, bent on their destruction. But the day dawned. The waters parted, they crossed on dry land, and the enemy was destroyed attempting to follow them.

Joseph knew the terrors of the long, dark night. He sat alone in a waterless pit, and he was sold as a slave to the Egyptian camel drivers. His night was further darkened by the false accusations of Potiphar's wife and years of imprisonment in a foreign country. But a new day dawned, and his freedom was restored. His power and influence flourished, and he managed to turn a famine into a feast. As a "bonus," his own brothers and his father Jacob were the chief beneficiaries through it all.

Daniel went through his night when he defied the repressive edict of a king and dared to continue his prayers to Jehovah. It must have been the darkest night of his life when he was thrust into a den of lions and left to die. But his God "shut the mouths" of the lions. (Don't ask how. God has a thousand ways to get things done!) His night ended, and his new day dawned. "He was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God" (Dan. 6:23b).

The Hebrew children also went through their night. Pressures

mounted as Nebuchadnezzar demanded that they must give up their allegiance to God and worship a golden idol. But they stood steadfastly against opposition in high places. They went through the fire—literally! The fire did not kill them, and it did not hurt them. The dawn dawned, and the king declared, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him” (Dan. 3:28a).

Elijah went through his dark night when he fled from the wrath of a wicked queen “and sat down under a juniper tree” (1 Kings 19:4). He had known the exhilaration of spiritual victories, and he had humiliated the enemies of God. But now it was dark. His joy was replaced with despair, and he wished that he might die. But God did not leave him there alone. The angel fed him, comforted him, and helped him. His tired body and troubled spirit awakened to the dawn of his new day, and he “did eat and drink, and went on the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God” (1 Kings 19:8).

You see, the “morning” typified by that first Easter morning has dawned for millions whose faith is rooted in the risen Saviour. It has been happening in human history, and it is still happening every day.

It happened just recently to a couple who were in their night of domestic tension and marital turmoil. The rift between them had become a chasm of bitterness and frustration. But they brought their burden to Jesus and cried out to Him for help. They allowed Him to take His rightful place in their lives and in their home. He healed the hurt with His forgiveness and restored the love in their hearts. Theirs is now a happy Christian home, and their small children seem to sense the difference Christ makes!

Because He lives, millions have seen their new day dawn and their new life begin.

Ah yes, it was indeed dark on that first Good Friday. But very early on the first Easter morning all that was changed. Christ arose, and He is alive today!

What better way can we in the ministry spend our lives and devote our energies than in the spreading of this Good News wherever men are found? The nights do come, but the new day dawns. That is assured by the Resurrection.

So take courage, however dark your night may be. Christ arose. He lives, and He is coming again. The night of Satan’s power will be followed by the dawn of Christ’s peace. The darkness of death will be followed by the light of eternal life. The dark night of the grave will be replaced by the bright morning of the resurrection day. The hatred of sinful men will be replaced by the love of men made perfect by the blood of Christ. There is strife now, and there is bloodshed; but the day will dawn when swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks, and men shall learn war no more. The Lord Jesus Christ lives, and He is coming again.

“Very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun” (Mark 16:2)—and they found it empty!

Easter gives us a glimpse of the dawn of eternal morning through our living Lord.

Observation asks, "What do I see here?"
Interpretation asks, "What does it mean?"
Application asks, "What does it mean to ME?"

On the Inductive Method of Bible Study

THIS TYPE OF Bible study insists upon a firsthand reading for one's self of the biblical books and passages with the purpose of seeing with one's own eyes and mind exactly what the biblical writer is saying and proclaiming. Believing that the Bible was not written in heaven, but upon earth, and under the special inspiration of God's Holy Spirit upon some human mind, we therefore insist that in the study of biblical writings we deal with composition. And composition in writing is the product of the mind. Therefore, respect for the laws of mind in verbal expression must be exercised in the process of grasping the thoughts of the biblical writer. Logical, grammatical, rhetorical, and associational paths must be loyally followed in Bible study.

Now since in all written expression the *paragraph* is the unit of thought, the *paragraph* comes in for

special attention in the study of any literature.* It is composed of a group of sentences, all of which belong to the essential single thought of the paragraph.

So the secret of success in the study of a paragraph is to *discover the sentence in it which contains the essential thought*. We call it the topical sentence. Then we must observe the relation in thought of the other sentences to this one. One needs to ask himself what the paragraph is about. What is its subject or topic? Then he should note how each part contributes to the interest of the subject as presented. Consider how the paragraph in hand came to follow the one preceding it; also note why it is followed by the one next after it. Pretty much as you note the reason for succession of letters in a single word, or words in a sentence, or sentences in a paragraph, so also note the reason for the succession of a series of paragraphs in a segment or chapter. Just as a paragraph has its topical sentence and its transitional sentence, so the segments of a writing have their main paragraphs and their transitional paragraphs.

*Because of the importance of the paragraph as a unit of thought, one needs a study Bible that is published in paragraph form in preference to the old-style publication that presents Scripture in the piecemeal fashion of verse and chapter divisions only.



by
Ross E. Price

Superintendent
Rocky Mountain District
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Whether it be the paragraph or a segment of paragraphs, the theme must be discovered and discerned by the reader. One should seek to decide upon a subject or title for each paragraph of the portion he is studying. Let each title *grow naturally* out of its paragraph. Then one should join these in his mind and by means of them *think through* the paragraph in order, and finally through the segments, in order.

Ask yourself these questions: What is in this portion of writing? Where is it in this portion of writing? Why did the writer include it in the portion? And *why is it where it is* in the portion? This will help you develop the art of seeing what you read, and along with it the ability to discern what you read.

Here are four good steps in the inductive approach to the study of any book or segment of the Bible: (1) Construct a table of contents of the book as a whole, based upon a recognized grouping of its parts. (2) Reconstruct the historical situation out of which the writing has come. (3) Study its parts in their chronological order. (4) Concentrate on the author's various facets of interest.

By means of reading the entire writing through at one sitting, one should get an initial view of the book or writing as a whole. Then he can analyze it into its various sections of thought and development. The use of good maps to determine the geographical location and background of the writer's thoughts is very important.

Honest Bible study seeks not to *impose the reader's viewpoint* upon the writing, but rather to *discover the writer's point of view*. So the discerning reader will seek to find out how and why the writer has arranged or elaborated his treatment of his subject. One must watch for the cues given by the writer as he takes his

reader into confidence and discloses his viewpoint. Note how he does this by various emphases upon a given person, a place, a time (or time lapse), an event, or an idea.

The reader must learn to put his mind in gear with that of the writer. He should seek to see, feel, and experience as does the writer. Only then is one prepared to act as that writer's interpreter. Only then may he judge intelligently what an author has written. This requires spiritual as well as mental awariness, and a discriminating receptivity. Three things must be distinguished: *content*, *form*, and *meaning*. Content is the substance of what is presented to the reader's attention. Form is the pattern in which it is presented. And meaning is concerned with the question, So what?

There are two major laws which pertain to the inductive method of Bible study: *the Law of Relationships*, and *the Law of Proportion*. They have been stated as follows:

1. Everything written or spoken sustains some specific relation to something else. It may be in contrast, or comparison, or repetition, or cause and effect, or means to an end, or the expression of some other such relation. *Signs of contrast* are found in the use of such words as *but*, *however*, or *instead*. Or contrast may be expressed in the presentation of opposites, in figures of speech, statement of qualities of character, or the use of contrasting terms.

Comparison is expressed through the associating of similar ideas or thoughts. It is expressed by such terms as *even as*, or *even so*, or the simple coordinating conjunction *and*. One should watch for illustrations and imagery used to set forth and amplify a similarity of relations. The *repeated emphasis* upon some term, name, place, or expression is an author's method of calling attention

to the particular focal point of his patterned arrangement of ideas.

The earmarks of *cause and effect* are such terms as *therefore, thus, consequently, or hence*. Any such term of conclusion is an invitation on the part of the writer for his reader to look back in the passage to discover the steps by which the writer has come to such a conclusion or declared effect. The *means to an end* expressions come to us in what we call purpose or result clauses. Key terms in such expressions are *in order that, so that, for, lest, so as to, etc.*

2. An author reveals his point of view by his comparative emphasis on, or omission of, certain factors which always accompany development of thought: for example, person, or place, or time, or idea; and especially by the amount of space he gives to any one of these. (Note that each Gospel writer devotes about one-third of his Gospel to Christ's passion week.)

The reader now should view the passage from such other reading clues as Where? When? What? How? Why? and Who? A sympathetic,

teachable, understanding attitude is what always characterizes the true learner—it is the attitude of *receptivity*. It evidences a hunger for the truth.

Firsthand enjoyment of the Bible is an art worth cultivating. It involves some concentration and directed effort. One should not expect too much of himself at the start, but let him not miss the priceless values that come through this kind of approach to Bible study. Let us beware of mere piecemeal reading of the Bible, and let us beware of a mere secondhand grasp of biblical truth. Let us see its message through our own eyes and mind with insights brought vividly home to us by the Holy Spirit (He inspired the Book). Then, and only then, should we look at the Bible through the eyes and comments of the various masters of scriptural interpretation.

Three things to remember: (1) *Observation* asks: What do I see here? (2) *Interpretation* asks: What does it mean? (3) *Application* asks: What does it mean to ME? These are elements in a scientific approach to any subject, the Bible included.

Respond or React?

Whether we respond or react to various situations which arise in our ministry is often determined by our position at the time—spiritually, financially, emotionally, physically, or psychologically. This is a truth we dare not forget, and one we owe it to ourselves to consider carefully. After all, the same phenomenon is called both a “sunrise” and a “sunset.” It depends upon the position of the sun, and where we are in this world.

John H. Shank

A clearer insight into the cause of backsliding may help us develop a strategy for helping the one who has stumbled

Helping the Backslider

By Lyle Pointer*

OUR COMMUNITIES, churches, and families invariably include persons who once had a vital relationship with Christ. But something happened—suddenly or gradually. They no longer live in harmony with God.

We know the importance of bringing the spiritual delinquent back to God. If he is not restored, his soul will die. Just as serious is the continual grief he pours upon God by sinning. Also, we long to have intimate fellowship with him—the kind that only Christians have.

We pray. We ask others to join with us. Many times the results are seen immediately—sometimes it takes longer. Even when no visible encouragement comes, we are confident God is ministering.

Our praying is not sufficient. James 5:19-20 places the privilege of ministering on us: "My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner away from his error will save him from death and cover many sins" (NIV).**

Since God has entrusted us with

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leading unbelievers to saving faith, there must be a way to help God restore the backslider.

First, it is advantageous to know why people backslide. Our analysis would be that they stopped trusting and obeying God. This is true, but few backsliders give that as a cause. Most will give reasons coming out of life rather than theology. Following are four causes usually given:

1. He neglected his spiritual growth and gradually lost out.
2. A crisis in the person's life overwhelmed him.
3. He may have been disappointed by a pastor, a church, or another Christian.
4. The standard of the Christian life was preached beyond divine intention and human attainment, causing frustration and confusion.

Second, let us consider how each of these causes may be used to bring about his salvation.

1. If the erring brother gradually lost out, in all probability it will take some time before he is ready to receive Christ again. A relationship with God is a loving one. Affection is not instantaneous. Commitment is immediate, but usually after a period of cultivated interest and involvement. Here is a suggested strategy:

a. We will allow time for the preventive grace of God to pull on the heart of the prodigal.

b. We can be of assistance to God by living and loving God's principles.

c. We can testify to God's goodness and kindness, for God leads men to repentance by kindness (Rom. 2:4) as well as by conviction.

d. We can keep the doors of conversation open to spiritual things. It may be possible to reminisce about the "good ol' days" when the wayward one was a genuine disciple. Again and again, he will say those were the best days of his life. We need not shy away from talking about God unless he shows signs of irritation.

e. We should invite him to church services but not be disappointed if he says no. He may not need that atmosphere to bring him to a decision.

f. If he reads the Bible, God can deal with him easily. The key to his conversion is a renewal of spiritual thirst and desire.

g. Occasionally we can ask him to make a positive commitment to Christ.

2. The person who was overwhelmed by a crisis usually comes back to God quickly. He was struck down by unexpected grief for a loved one, or was thrown into an irreversible circumstance. When the turmoil ended, he was away from God. No one was more surprised than he. He has longed for someone to help and encourage. He will respond to the same strategy used with the person who gradually drifted away.

3. The difficult case is the one who has been disappointed or embittered. He will rehearse with fervor the incident and persons that injured him. It is well to listen and understand his feelings. It is not important to decide whether he was right or wrong. We are not in a position to blame anyone. At times, it may be necessary to apologize for the person who offended him.

Then it is possible to move the disappointed or hurt brother to the present. Our approach is: Aren't you

glad all of that is in the past? You are not about to allow that to deprive you of all God's blessings. Wouldn't you feel good about being in love with God again?

It may be necessary to repeatedly pull him back to his relationship with God. His persistence in dwelling on the unfortunate past is his way of escaping responsibility for his own salvation. He may use the "hypocrites in the church" as a smoke screen. This objection can be confronted with Rom. 14:12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

We must speak candidly to him, but the law of God or the penalty of sin dare not be our message. He will listen to us as we speak of our understanding and forgiving God. Our attitude must portray concern. As we speak the truth in love, God tenderizes his heart and heals his wound.

4. Some well-intentioned Christians have been guilty of preaching the standard of holiness beyond God's expectations. Because of that, sensitive people have honestly faced the fact that they cannot live on that plane. For example, it is preached that God removes all anger from the sanctified Christian. When righteous anger arises, the Christian is convinced he was never sanctified. He may have every right to come to that conclusion from what he has heard. The Christian worker will have to do some reeducating.

Another element is a stress upon incidentals. The convictions of people are proclaimed as if they were the commandments of God. Sincere persons become confused and/or disgusted and give up, forsaking the church and God.

Again, it may take several sessions to bring this backslider to a moment of conversion. The Christian worker will have to do some homework to successfully "reprogram" the mis-

informed backslider. He would do well to learn the real meaning of "entire sanctification" and study some acceptable texts that provide an understanding of the Bible teaching on holiness. The backslider must be retaught.

Here are some suggestions that may bring enlightenment to the confused:

a. God can provide us with perfect intentions but not perfect performance.

b. Holiness churches define "sins" as those transgressions for which we are to blame. We categorize other offenses as infirmities, mistakes, or failures.

c. God asks us to live by His commandments, not the convictions and opinions of people.

d. God doesn't remove natural human drives such as temper, sex, pride, and ambition. He does take the selfishness out of them.

e. Even after entire sanctification every person has to supervise and discipline himself.

f. Sin and temptation are not the same.

A clearer insight into the cause of backsliding provides a better understanding of the person who has stumbled. To know why there is spiritual failure encourages specific steps to be taken to shore up against it. Knowing the stumbling blocks gives impetus to building a strategy toward conversion also.

Insight doesn't guarantee success. It does offer hope and courage. When nothing seems to penetrate the steel wall of the backslider, we need that hope and courage.

While the barriers of resistance are stacked against the personal evangelist, the truth is, the backslider finds few who help him. Any attempt we make, God will honor and the backslider will appreciate.

We will make mistakes but we must try. Meanwhile, God will be ministering. Prodigal sons and daughters will begin to return home.

REFLECTIONS

"How about attending a history class with me in the morning?"

This was the query of my host, a young urban pastor who was taking advantage of a state university close at hand. I agreed, and the early morning found us in a classroom with a number of students awaiting the beginning of the lecture. A bell rang and into the room strode the professor. Without a word of introduction and no visible notes, he lectured rapid-fire for 50 minutes. He spoke with authority; he knew his field well. At the close he left the room as abruptly as he had entered.

My host asked if I would like to meet the professor. We knocked on his door and were invited into his office. The man behind the desk was small of stature, and he was wreathed in a cloud of smoke coming from a crooked stemmed pipe which he worked furiously. As the pastor introduced me, the man stood and shook hands warmly, then he proceeded to give me a minute thumbnail sketch of the history of our denomination from Breese to the present.

In amazement I asked, "Man, how do you know so much of Nazarene history?"

With a smile he answered, "That's easy. My grandfather was a circuit rider with Bishop Asbury, and you have the same message of holiness evangelism that he had."

Then he made some startling statements. He gave us his full attention, and then this historian, out of years of observance, said, "Beware of the danger of respectability." There was a pause. He continued, "Let me tell you, sirs, America wants its patriotism and religion served hot. And don't you ever forget it!"

More than ever, I believe he was right.

C. T. CORBETT

Have Faith in a Failure

IT HAS BEEN SAID that anyone can support success, but it takes an exceptional person to have faith in a failure. Jesus showed this remarkable quality in His character time after time.

Peter had failed miserably when the testing time came. Boisterous bragging quickly was changed into cringing cowardice. The fearless fisherman became the fearful follower from afar. The Christ that he swore to die for became the Lord about whom he swore in profane denial.

Jesus did not give up on Peter. In the tender look that He gave Peter was the assurance of mercy, understanding, and faith. He saw in Peter, not the coward that he had proven to be, but the man of rock that he would become.

It is easy to dispense with the man who has failed at his assigned task. We have become so enamored with the glamor of success that we are willing to step on and over people in order to attain it in the areas of our ambitions.

James Hilton's classic story *Goodby, Mr. Chips* illustrates how gloriously a failure can come to success. As you read the book, you will find the story of an ordinary teacher in a boys' school who was never successful enough to be considered for the position of headmaster. The impact of World War II caused Mr. Chips to become indispensable in the eyes of his pupils. Hilton has drawn us a heart-warming character sketch of a grand old failure who wonderfully succeeded.

Be compassionate and patient with the failures with whom you come in contact. Muretus, a saint of past generations, fell desperately ill while in exile for his faith. He was carried into the paupers' ward of a hospital in Lombardy. There the surgeons, believing him to be as poor in mind as his shabby clothes proclaimed him to be in earthly goods, gave him an examination and began to discuss his condition within his hearing in scholarly Latin. Muretus understood every word when one of the physicians said, "Let us experiment with this worthless animal." When Muretus heard this, he answered in the same learned language that was being used in the conversation and asked, "Will you call one worthless for whom Christ did not refuse to die?"

Faith in our fellowman who has honestly tried and failed will give us all hope that our tomorrows will be better than our yesterdays and today's.



by
Ross W. Hayslip

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Wesleyana



Wesley's Views on Humility

By George E. Failing*

JOHN WESLEY was neither a passive nor retiring person. In fact, in the best sense of the word, he may be described as aggressive.

One reads in his diary of Wesley's missionary efforts in Georgia—dedicated and exhausting. One also reads of his early itinerant preaching in England after his Aldersgate experience. So hotly did the flame of assurance burn in his soul, and so surely did he feel that he was sent by God to evangelize, that his courage was dauntless. He claims to have been hit by stones between the eyes and upon the mouth—until he bled—without sensing harm or feeling discomfort! Those early crowds he preached to were as ravening wolves, and only by unyielding bravery—with God's grace—did he continue his work of preaching in homes, at the mines, and in the fields, for he was prevented from doing so in many churches.

Sure of God's Word and Christ's grace, sure of his own joyous experience and of his divine call, Wesley did take time to search his soul. He

would take spiritual inventory now and again, lest covetousness, pride, ill will, or jealousy draw him from Christ and so make him a castaway.

At an early period of his life he was concerned about pride and/or humility. His mother, Susanna, responding to his questions, gave her idea of humility.

Humility is the mean between pride, or an overvaluing ourselves on one side, and a base abject temper on the other. It consists in an habitual disposition to think meanly of ourselves; which disposition is wrought in us by a true knowledge of God; his supreme essential glory, his absolute immense perfection of being and a just sense of our dependence upon him, and past offences against him; together with a consciousness of our present infirmities and frailties.

In characteristically frank manner, John replied to his mother, admitting that he found it difficult if not impossible to "judge one's self the worst of all men."

You have much obliged me by your thoughts on Dr. Taylor, especially with respect to humility, which is a point he does not seem to me sufficiently to clear. As to absolute humility, consisting in a

*Editor, *The Wesleyan Advocate*.

mean opinion of ourselves, considered with respect to God alone, I can readily join with his opinion. But I am more uncertain as to comparative, if I may so term it; and think some plausible reasons may be alleged to show, it is not in our power, and consequently not a virtue, to think ourselves the worst in every company. . .

If a true knowledge of God be necessary to absolute humility, a true knowledge of our neighbor should be necessary to comparative. But to judge one's self the worst of all men, implies a want of such knowledge. No knowledge can be, where there is not certain evidence; which we have not, whether we compare ourselves with our acquaintance, or strangers. In the one case we have only imperfect evidence, unless we can see through the heart; in the other, we have none at all.

His mother, Susanna, rather chides John in a letter of reply, stating that he does not still understand her views. And perhaps, I might add, just as Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered, and just as Paul through many and bitter experiences had to learn to be content, so it took more age and experience for John to understand what his mother meant by her loving but analytic reply.

You say that I have obliged you by sending my thoughts on humility, and yet you do not seem to regard them in the least; but still dwell on that single point in Dr. Taylor, of thinking ourselves the worst in every company; though the necessity of thinking so is not inferred from my definition. I shall answer your arguments, after I have observed, that we differ in our notions of the virtue itself. You will have it consist in thinking meanly of ourselves; I, in a habitual

disposition to think meanly of ourselves, which I take to be more comprehensive, because it extends to all the cases wherein that virtue can be exercised; either in relation to God, ourselves, or our neighbor; and renders your distinction of absolute and comparative humility perfectly needless.

We may in many instances think very meanly of ourselves without being humble; nay sometimes our very pride will lead us to condemn ourselves; as when we have said or done anything which lessens that esteem of men we earnestly covet.

The other part of your definition I cannot approve, because I think all those comparisons are rather the effects of pride than of humility.

Though truth is the object of the understanding; and all truths as such, agree in one common excellence, yet there are some truths which are comparatively of so small value, because of little use, that it is no matter whether we know them or not. Among these I rank the right answer to your question, whether our neighbor or we be worse. Of what importance can this inquiry be to us? Comparisons in these cases are very odious, and do most certainly proceed from some bad principle in those who make them. So far should we be from reasoning upon the case, that we ought not to permit ourselves to entertain such thoughts, but if they ever intrude, to reject them with abhorrence.

Perhaps I could leave the matter here. Or I just might suggest two verses of scripture that have always challenged me: "In honour preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10), and "we dare not . . . compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they . . . comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12).

This materialistic age has produced a resistance to full surrender; hence the imperative need of preaching on entire sanctification.

—Murray J. Pallett

There was a lively emotion of happiness in the New Testament Church. No artificial boundaries could contain it. It was an energy that boiled over.

Energy That Boils Over

FORMER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE Melvin R. Laird has called the *Polaris* Submarine a “priceless asset in the Cuban missile crisis” which occurred during the administration of President John F. Kennedy. The man responsible for the development of the *Polaris* was Rear Admiral William Raborn, Jr. He carefully recruited his top management personnel. When they came on the job, he would give them and their families a patriotic pep talk on the importance of their assignment. On those occasions when it appeared that someone was not doing his best, he would call him into his office for “rededicating.”

One officer, recalling one of those emotional sessions, said, “When I walked out, I knew I was ready to die for someone. I didn’t know whether it was for the admiral, the

president, my mother, the head of the boy scouts. But, brother, I was ready to die!”

That is enthusiasm!

Enthusiasm has been defined as “energy that boils over and runs down the side of the pot.” One of the exciting characteristics of the New Testament Church was that they really enjoyed what they were doing. They reflected the instructions given them by Paul, “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:18-19, NIV).¹

Paul explained his advice that enthusiasm is part of the overflow of the Spirit-filled life when he noted that “the fruit of the Spirit is . . . joy” (Gal. 5:22).

Wait a minute. Is joy the same thing as enthusiasm?

If not, it is a close relative! The dictionary defines joy as “a lively emotion of happiness.” There was energy in the New Testament Church, an energy that boiled over. It was an energy that could not be contained. No artificial boundaries could hold it or restrain it. The old forms of worship were inadequate for its expression. The old relation-



by
Gene Van Note

Director of
Young Adult Ministries
Church of the Nazarene

ships were insufficient for its fulfillment.

They threw stones at that energy and thought they had killed it when Stephen slumped to the ground. But they succeeded only in splashing over geographical barriers. First it was Samaria, then Antioch, then the world.

Jesus predicted that it would happen. He said, "People do not put new tubes in old bald tires. If they do, the tires will blow out, and the tubes will be ruined and the tires torn up. But they put new tubes in new tires and both give good mileage" (Matt. 9:17, *The Cotton Patch Version*).²

Jesus knew that you could not patch up traditional religion. There was too much life in the new for the old forms to contain it. It would be split wide open. There was power, enthusiasm, energy. Something was happening. The New Testament Church possessed an energy that could not be contained.

The reason that energy could not be contained was that it had a divine source.

Enthusiasm is a fragile thing. It can be destroyed so easily. In his book *Spirit of St. Louis*, Charles Lindbergh recounts the trip home from his solo trans-Atlantic flight. After several days on board ship he went up on the bridge during a severe storm. He watched it for a while and then said, "I didn't know it was so big. I didn't know it was so vast. If anyone had told me, I wouldn't have tried it."

A hostile world tried to squash the enthusiasm of the Early Church. They used all the brutal techniques of the totalitarian state. But it simply did not work. For their energy had a divine source.

The enthusiasm of those early Christians looked toward the future rather than rested on the past. There

is a grave in Concord, N.H., which contains the bodies of five British soldiers who died in one of those early clashes in the war between England and her colonies in the New World. On it is a plaque which reads, "They came three thousand miles . . . to keep the past upon the throne."

The Church is fortunate to have a past worth remembering. The heroic deeds and valiant exploits of faithful disciples in distant generations deserve and receive our grateful recognition. Their example challenges us to give ourselves with comparable dedication. The past has a ministry. It encourages us to do our best. The excitement, however, is in the future. It is the delightful opportunity to see God at work in new ways. God is always a pioneer! There was tremendous vitality in the New Testament Church because their energy had a divine source.

Human attempts to counterfeit this splash-over of the Spirit-filled life are woefully inadequate. The delegates to a certain church convention had gathered on the second morning confused and without any sense of direction. The parliamentary maneuvering of the preceding day had left them perplexed. One man expressed the mood of the convocation when he remarked to a friend, "I feel like a farmer standing in the field with a rope in his hand who said, 'I don't know whether I've found a rope or lost a mule.'"

In that atmosphere the chairman had the delegates stand, close their right fist, drive it toward the sky, and shout, "Boy, am I enthused!" Three times they followed his instructions on the way to a disaster. What started out as a whisper ended in a whimper. But Paul said of the New Testament Church, "The fruit of the Spirit is . . . joy"—a lively emotion of happiness!

One of the principles of church growth in the New Testament was enthusiasm. It was not an artificial product nor a substitute commodity. It was real because it grew out of their relationship with the risen Christ. They were enthusiastic because they were filled with the Spirit.

Their energy boiled over and ran down the side of the pot. When it happened, the Church moved forward. The emptiness of the past was forgotten as they moved eagerly into the future. They were children of a nation that kept looking back to the great days, to kings like David, and prophets like Isaiah. "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:8), they asked. They wanted to know if they were going to be able to return to the "good old days." Give us back our world, they pleaded. Change it a bit if you will, clean it up as you wish, but give us back our world.

Jesus did not answer their question. He leaped out of the past into the future. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons . . . But ye shall receive power . . . and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem . . . and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:7-8). It is far more important to have the power, the spirit, the energy, and the vision to create new kingdoms than to restore and patch up any old kingdom that has served its day and belongs to yesterday.

The future is going to be determined, not at conference tables and committee meetings, but by the outgrowth of an enthusiastic Spirit-energy that boils over and runs down the side of the pot!

1. From *The New International Version*, copyright 1973, by New York Bible Society International. Used by permission.

2. *The Cotton Patch Version of Matthew and John*, by Clarence Jordan, published by Association Press. Used by permission.

Practical Points

that make a difference

The High Point of the Year

Dear Son:

Easter will be coming right soon now. We just got the crops in for the year, and we will wait for the spring rains and God's providence in bringing a good harvest. I think a farmer must have about as much faith as anyone. Easter, too, is a change of season, and the Christian festival speaks not so much of survival but resurrection and renewal.

I hope and pray that you will make it a great day for your people. Get that sermon down until you know it from the deep of your spirit. Sing the great hymns of the church until your congregation will rise as if with one voice. Give special attention to the scripture and order of service until the Holy Spirit can feel free to work through the order rather than in spite of the order.

I pray that you will not succumb to the demotics of statistics on that great day. If you work hard, the numbers will take care of themselves. Easter is the "last day" for confusion. I have seen some of our pastors so involved in drawing the last drop of blood in numbers until Easter Sunday morning became a political or football rally instead of the great day of Christian celebration that it was meant to be.

Mother and I will stay in our own church and support our pastor in the morning, but we are planning to drive down to be with you for Thanksgiving day. I must practice what I preach. And your mother makes me whether I feel like it or not.

Love,
Dad

God's way to Canaan is the shortest and best way. He does not want His people wandering in the wilderness.

Two Roads to Canaan

By Ralph A. Gallagher*

A PARALLEL can be roughly drawn between Christian experience and Israel's history in their journey from Egypt to Canaan Land. Analogies are helpful if they are not stretched beyond reasonable limits. The holiness movement has drawn upon this portion of Israel's history to support the doctrine of two works of grace and other facets of Christian experience. Our gospel songs and theology of Christian experience bear witness to this fact.

One thing about this that bothers me is the fact that we have accepted the wilderness road as the main road to Canaan. From the standpoint of the number of travelers, it is the main road. But this does not make it the road of God's choice.

We must not forget that there were two roads to Canaan. The first was God's way. He led Israel from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea. This was the shortest road. There were no great deserts or large rivers to cross. A comparatively easy invasion route lay between them.

At Kadesh, as a result of the unfavorable report of the 10 spies, Israel rebelled and refused to accept God's road into Canaan. The writer of Hebrews points out that the motive for their rebellion was unbelief (Heb. 3:19). This act of disobedience

caused God to turn Israel into the wilderness, where they wandered for 40 long years before they were given another opportunity to enter Canaan.

We cannot recommend the "wilderness road" to Canaan. It was not God's way. He had chosen the shortest possible road. The wilderness road was filled with hardships. There were many failures and few victories. It was a long and time-consuming journey. This is the road of disobedience. Israel got on this road by an act of disobedience, and her history while traveling this way is little more than a chronicle of continued disobedience.

It is not possible to say exactly what God's way would have been like, because Israel did not go that way. However we can deduce a few things: It would have been the way of obedience. This, under any circumstances, in the eyes of God is important. To obey God is always better than any attempt to atone for an act of disobedience. No doubt there would have been fewer hardships and failures. The people would have had the blessing of God upon them. Their history, no doubt, would have been a chronicle of victories. It would seem that God's way had everything to commend it, but Israel did not take it, so it has become the forgotten road.

Does this mean that God has

*Fort Wayne, Ind.

closed His road to Canaan? Must everyone that desires to go to Canaan travel the wilderness road? Consciously or unconsciously, the holiness movement has too often assumed that most Christians must travel the wilderness road. That is, there is usually a long time span between conversion and the experience of Pentecost. God's plan for His people today is the same as His plan was for His ancient people, Israel. He desires to lead them by the shortest road to Pentecost in the shortest possible time.

No doubt there will always be travelers on the wilderness road. We should seek by every possible means to lead them into the experience of Pentecost. At the same time, we must do everything we can to popularize God's road into Canaan, and do our best to keep the new convert from getting on the wilderness road.

Our preaching and teaching should sharply contrast these two roads. The wilderness road should always appear in its true light. It is the road of disobedience and extremely high casualties. Good judgment advises against taking this road. It is the road of second choice, and it can never rise to the blessings of God's first choice. On the wilderness road there is a real danger that we may become confused in our religious experience.

God's road into Canaan has everything in its favor.

First, it measures up to biblical examples: (1) We see Jesus receiving the baptism of John the Baptist. This is symbolic of repentance, absolute surrender, and reconciliation with God. A few minutes later the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descended upon Him (Luke 3:21-22). (2) On the Day of Pentecost, Peter instructed those who were seeking to "repent, and be baptized . . . and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy

Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Neither of these examples suggest a long period between conversion and receiving the Holy Spirit. Nor is there a suggestion that they should wait until they are convicted of the need for a clean heart before they begin seeking the Holy Spirit.

Second, God's way wonderfully meets our needs. The new babe in Christ is in a very favorable position to receive the Holy Spirit. There should be no delay of acceptance. God's promise of the Holy Spirit cannot be rejected or delayed without considerable risk. (1) There may be an element of God's displeasure and judgment involved. (2) It could well mean that if Canaan is ever reached, it will have to be by the wilderness road.

The new babe in Christ may have had a glorious conversion experience, but he is still a very needy creature. These needs can be met only by the baptism and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit cleanses the heart, and His abiding presence strengthens with might the inner man. His gracious fruit is shed abroad in the heart and manifested in the life. He becomes the Counsellor and Guide of life. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal to the heart and mind the riches of the glories of Christ. Only in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit can the babe in Christ come to know full fellowship with the Father.

My earnest appeal to our holiness brethren is that we put forth a tremendous effort to make God's short and direct road to Canaan the popular road to Pentecost. Let us constantly hold up the example of the Lord Jesus. And may we iterate and reiterate the gospel formula as presented by Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38), until saints and sinners are convinced that this is God's way.

APRIL

NAZARENE FOCUS

FOR
PASTORS
and LOCAL
CHURCH
LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission |

EARL C. WOLF, Executive Director
STEPHEN J. SORENSEN, Office Editor

◆ General Superintendent Coulter

The Beauty of Holiness



FIRST CHRONICLES, CHAPTER 16, speaks of “the beauty of holiness.” Webster describes beauty as “an assemblage of graces or properties which command the approbation of the senses.” Matthew Henry says, “Holiness is the beauty of the Lord, the beauty of all sanctified souls and all religious performance.”

The beauty of holiness in the sanctified becomes appealing to all observers and especially to spiritually oriented people who are seekers after the Spirit-filled experience and life. In fact, the badge of authority to every Wesleyan-Arminian holiness preacher is the beauty of holiness seen in the life which he lives. God declares through Isaiah, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (52:7). The fruit of the Spirit evidenced in the life of the preacher makes his life a beauty to all who observe him and makes his pulpit ministry more effective.

My first Nazarene pastor was a godly man whose inner and outward life was the model of holiness. There was no deceit in his words or works, and he was completely open and honest in all of his dealings with his people and the people of the community. His life was transparent, and he bore a sense of Christlikeness. His holy life made his holiness preaching more effective. It was no wonder that he led his people into the sanctified life, because his life made us desirous to be pure and holy too. I shall always cherish the memory of the beauty of holiness as exemplified by this wonderful man.

This is the challenge, privilege, and responsibility of each of us. In Galatians 5:22-23 Paul says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

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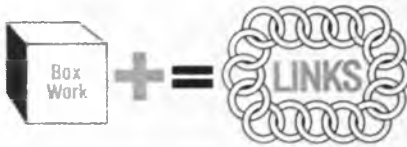
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DEPARTMENT OF EVANGELISM

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EASTER

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Christ Gave His

All

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E

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and
on
the third day
he arose

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SHARE CHRIST
GIVE

WORLD-WIDE EASTER OFFERING

Rejoice!
Rejoice!
Rejoice!

O Christian

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Lives**

... THAT
ALL MAY LIVE

GIVE

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Director, Senior Adult Ministries
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Kansas City, Mo. 64131

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Senior Adult Day

May 16

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- **Use Senior Talent**

It can be musical or non-musical. Sharing of experiences may interest the young.

- **Find Senior Neighbors**

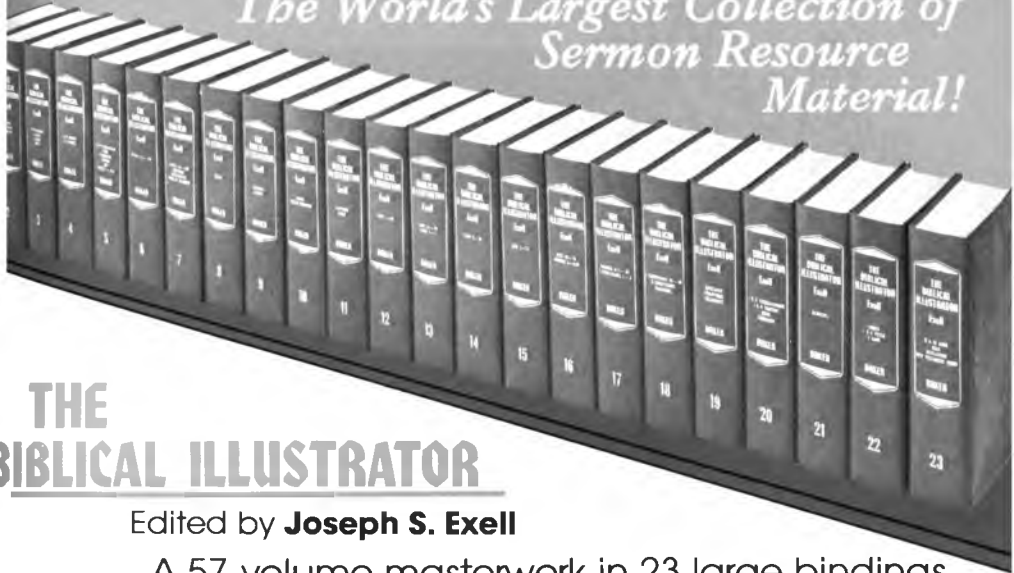
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might LIVE!***

1975-76
**DISTRICT
RECORD**

for
payment of the
Pensions and Benevolence
budget

Annual premiums for Primary Group Term Life Insurance for ministers are paid by the Department of Pensions and Benevolence. "Double Coverage" is automatic to all ministers for the 1976-77 assembly year if: (1) they are insured under this plan, and (2) the district of which they are a member paid 90 percent of its official Pensions and Benevolence budget apportionment during the 1975-76 assembly year.*

*This budget is equal to 4 percent of the total spent for local purposes, except monies spent for buildings and improvements and church indebtedness, in the past assembly year (4 percent of the sum of Column 9 less Columns 1 and 2, in the pastor's annual church financial report).

1976 Summary
Pensions and



Department of
Pensions & Benevolence
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, Mo. 64131

Listing by Percentage

DISTRICT PERCENTAGE	
★ Canada Pacific	101.76
★ Hawaii	100.65
★ Intermountain	100.43
★ Western Latin American	100.18
★ Minnesota	100.14
★ Central Latin American	100.12
★ Alaska	100.00
Canada West	98.88
Illinois	98.22
South Arkansas	98.21
Northwest	97.79
North American Indian	97.72
Philadelphia	97.22
Kansas	97.14
Southern Florida	97.13
Northwest Oklahoma	97.11
Rocky Mountain	96.72
Southwest Oklahoma	96.24
New Mexico	96.12
Canada Atlantic	96.00
Central California	95.87
Georgia	95.84
Maine	95.67
Dallas	95.43
Mississippi	95.19

Southern
Washing
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Oregon
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Pittsbur
Arizona
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Iowa
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South
Dakota
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DENOMINAT

Percent Districts

plence Budget



BLY YEAR 1975-76

95.13	North Arkansas	91.89
95.13	Kansas City	91.83
94.61	Eastern Latin American	91.70
94.59	Eastern Kentucky	91.50
94.55	Central Florida	91.25
94.55	Nevada Utah	90.86
94.49	Missouri	90.56
94.48	Alabama	90.48
94.44	Tennessee	90.18
94.41	Akron	90.09
94.40	Los Angeles	90.02
94.28	Central Ohio	90.00
93.96	Eastern Michigan	90.00
93.86	Houston	90.00
93.63	Indianapolis	90.00
93.44	Joplin	90.00
93.35	Kentucky	90.00
93.20	Michigan	90.00
92.86	New England	90.00
92.63	North Carolina	90.00
92.53	North Central Ohio	90.00
92.49	Northeast Oklahoma	90.00
92.49	North Florida	90.00
92.26	San Antonio	90.00
92.15	South Carolina	90.00
92.13	Southwestern Ohio	90.00
91.91	Upstate New York	90.00

RAGE-93.26

DENOMINATIONAL AND DISTRICT PENSIONS AND BENEVOLENCE BUDGET PAYMENT RECORD

The shaded spaces indicate each year the district paid at least 90 percent of its Pensions and Benevolence budget.

DISTRICT	1973	1974	1975	1976	
Akron					90.09
Alabama					90.48
Alaska					100.00
Arizona					94.41
Canada Atlantic					96.00
Canada Central					93.20
Canada Pacific					101.76
Canada West					98.88
Central California					95.87
Central Florida					91.25
Central Latin American					100.12
Central Ohio					90.00
Chicago Central					93.96
Colorado					94.61
Dakota					92.49
Dallas					95.43
East Tennessee					94.28
Eastern Kentucky					91.50
Eastern Latin American					91.70
Eastern Michigan					90.00
Georgia					95.84
Hawaii					100.65
Houston					90.00
Intermountain					100.43
Illinois					98.22
Indianapolis					90.00
Iowa					92.86
Joplin					90.00
Kansas					97.14
Kansas City					91.83
Kentucky					90.00
Los Angeles					90.02
Louisiana					91.91
Maine					95.67
Michigan					90.00
Minnesota					100.14
Mississippi					95.19
Missouri					90.56
Nebraska					92.49
Nevada-Utah					90.86
New England					90.00
New Mexico					96.12
New York					92.63
North American Indian					97.72
North Arkansas					91.89
North Carolina					90.00
North Central Ohio					90.00
North Florida					90.00
Northeast Oklahoma					90.00
Northeast Indiana					92.26
Northern California					94.48
Northwest					97.79
Northwest Indiana					94.59
Northwest Oklahoma					97.11
Northwestern Illinois					92.15
Northwestern Ohio					92.13
Oregon Pacific					94.49
Philadelphia					97.22
Pittsburgh					94.44
Rocky Mountain					96.72
Sacramento					93.35
San Antonio					90.00
South Arkansas					98.21
South Carolina					90.00
Southeast Oklahoma					95.13
Southern California					93.63
Southern Florida					97.13
Southwest Indiana					92.53
Southwest Oklahoma					96.24
Southwestern Ohio					90.00
Tennessee					90.18
Upstate New York					90.00
Virginia					94.55
Washington					94.55
Washington Pacific					95.13
West Texas					94.40
West Virginia					93.44
Western Latin American					100.18
Wisconsin					93.86

DENOMINATIONAL AVERAGE

92.01 92.66 92.32 91.26

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Let's Get Back to:

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

*"... and thou shalt teach them
diligently to thy children ..."*

For information on Family
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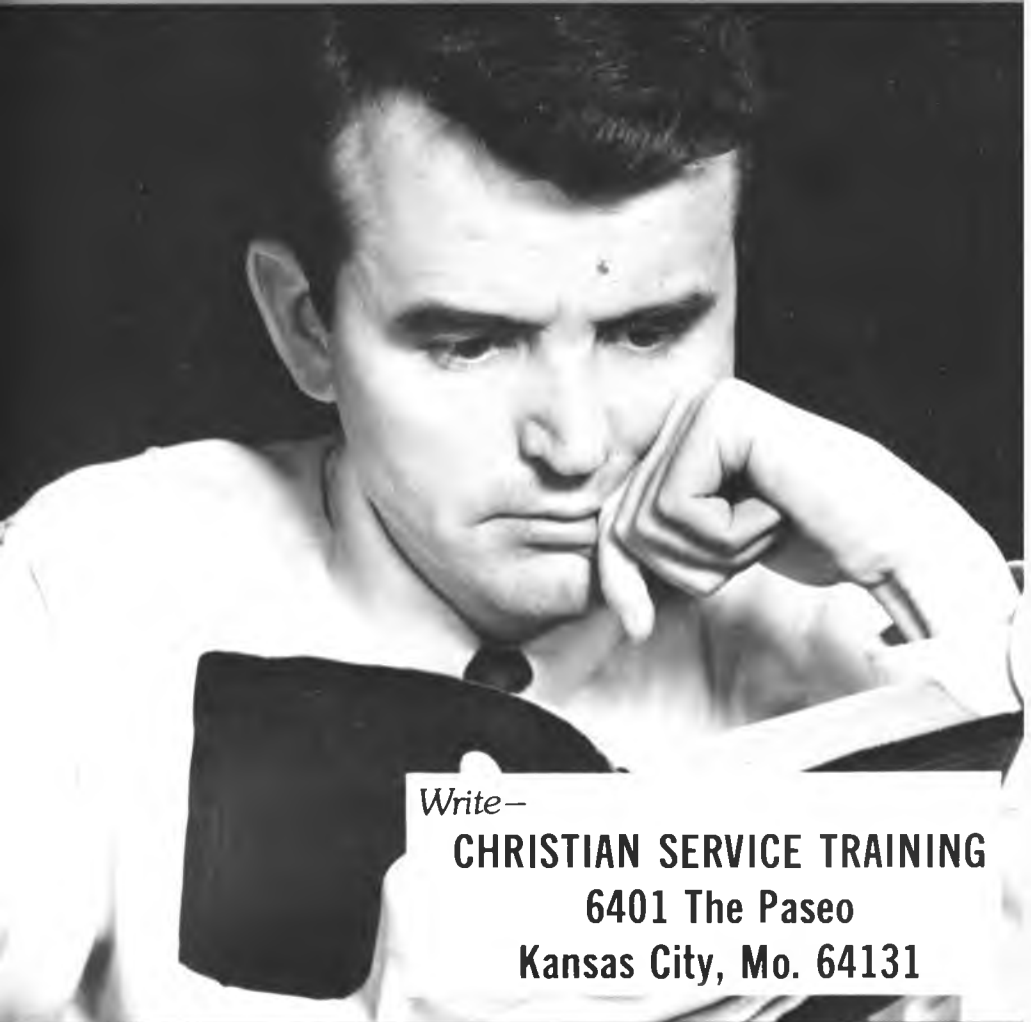
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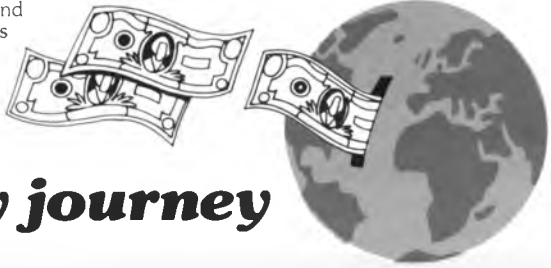
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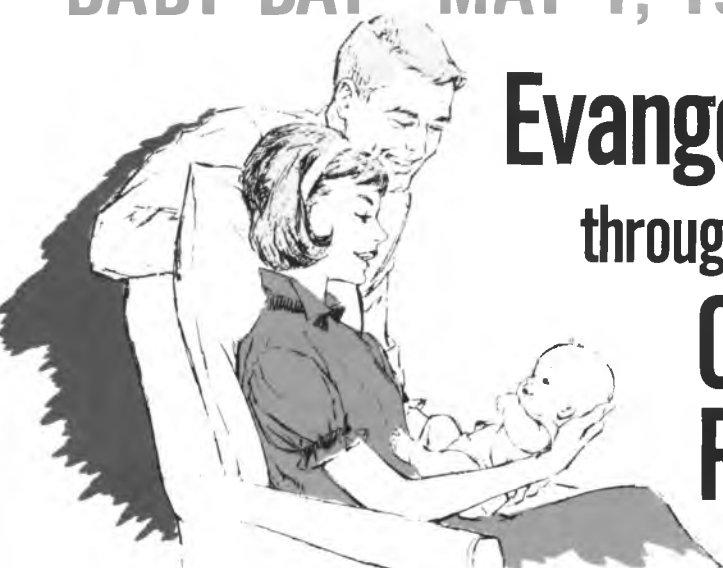
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Industry and business have learned that numbers mean victories. Is the church aware of this?

Productivity and the Pulpit

By Jerald L. Duff*

IN MY 28 YEARS of experience around production managers of both large and small corporations, I have found a similarity in office decor. On the wall facing the desk are numerous grid squares with unusual line patterns. From these the manager, at an instant, can relate shipping schedules, key personnel, missed targets, costs, and so forth. He can also predict potential shortages and view developing trends before they become problems. This information is constantly bombarding him for review. The manager makes use of a tremendous productivity tool—the *graph*.

On the credenza sits a basket of papers. Sifting through it reveals a series of weekly exception reports, monthly progress reports, departmental goals, projections, etc. Here again lies a common tool—the *written report*.

The local church has a manager, and the name of the game is still productivity—producing the highest quality and quantity for the lowest possible per man hour. Yet, belittled is the pastor who dares keep more than a simple chart. Both clergy and layman alike fail to see the value of information. “Numbers!” they say,

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as if some satanic depersonalization were involved. Why has industry learned that numbers mean victories, but the church has not? Why is it universally accepted in industry and rejected in church? Is there something intrinsically wrong with recognizing a concern before it becomes a disaster?

Then the report. When is the last time department heads submitted targeted goals and followed up with a quarter's end review? What would happen to the Sunday school of supervisors selected goals, knowing that an appraisal of performance (and a helping hand) would accompany?

Big business succeeds because of delegation of authority and responsibility. From the plant manager to the man on the line, everyone has a target for the month and is held accountable for the objective. The church still lets “clerical George” do it, because clerical George is not aware of what is transpiring “on the line.”

The U.S.A. is the world's most productive nation. Is it possible that the church could profit by utilizing a few simple tools of industry? Perhaps it is time for some productivity from the pulpit.

THE PREACHER'S WIFE

Praise Your Way Through

THAT IS NOT a typographical error in the title!

We are familiar with the slogan "Pray your way through." And how vital it is to Christian growth and accomplishment. But God's Word richly attests the fact that *praise* is a very real element in victory. At times it is even the deciding factor between near defeat and outstanding triumph.

It seems almost an anomaly. How can one summon to the lips expressions of praise and joy when the heart is heavy with burden and concern? And yet the Word constantly reminds us that thanksgiving and rejoicing are weapons the Spirit actually uses to rout the enemy.

This is beautifully illustrated by an event recounted in 2 Chronicles

20. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, received word that the Moabites and the Ammonites were coming to do battle with him and his kingdom, and he was greatly afraid. Naturally so. And he immediately sought the Lord, which is a good thing to do under such circumstances; and he proclaimed a fast, which is also a good thing to do. And he called the whole nation to seek the Lord's help while he, the king, led in prayer. All commendable.

Then through the priest, Jahaziel, God spoke to His people, assuring them that He had assumed control. And all the priests "began to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high." The battle was not yet set in array, nor was the victory won, but with a loud voice the ministers of the Lord began to praise Him.

The following day as all Judah went out to the engagement, Jehoshaphat encouraged their faith. Then he got his music committee together ("consulted with the people," v. 21) and appointed singers that should praise the beauty of holiness and should say, "Praise the Lord," as they went out before the army.

"And when they began to sing and



by
Audrey Williamson

Wife of General
Superintendent Emeritus
G. B. Williamson,
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to praise" (italics are mine), the Lord set ambushments against the enemy and they began to destroy one another! Evidently, the singing and the praising was the catalyst that triggered the victory for the children of God.

Music was a very real part of the worship of ancient Israel. Massed choirs assembled on the hills of Jerusalem and lifted their voices in mighty anthems of praise to God. They were accompanied by musical instruments, trumpets, harps, and psalteries, stringed instruments and organs, cymbals and the high-sounding cymbals. Praise and rejoicing were a consistent part of their worship experiences. The Psalmist said, "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand" (Ps. 149:5-6).

If we have lost it, let us rediscover the lifting effect of congregational songs of praise and thanksgiving in our gathering together. The spoken word of rejoicing and thanksgiving should also be heard frequently in our services. Nothing takes the place of the testimony of young and mature Christians alike voicing their praise to God.

But, pastor's wife, there is also a very special application of this emphasis to you in your unique position. Are you faced with some very particular problem which perhaps is yours alone? Begin to praise your way through to a solution. Are you charged with a responsibility which seems too great for you? Praise your way through to accomplishment. Do you feel overworked or misunderstood or frustrated? Try praise. Let words of joy and thanksgiving sound audibly from your lips. They may come out sad and squeaky at first. But they are a start, and if you will keep it up, the quality and the

genuineness of your rejoicing will rapidly improve.

Try saying aloud, "Praise the Lord!" "Jesus, I love You." "Thank You, Jesus." "Lord, I adore You." "Praise God for His goodness." "Praise Him for His mercy." "Praise Him for His faithfulness." "Lord, You are able." "Father, I trust You." "Praise be to God." "Glory! Hallelujah!"

There is something contagious about praise to God. It is more than the power of positive thinking, which is all right too. But glory and honor, majesty and power, ascribed to God our Father and to Jesus our Saviour and to the Holy Spirit our Comforter, have a reactionary effect upon our own spirits. "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:10), and we simply cannot remain weak and defeated when genuine words of praise and rejoicing are proceeding from our hearts. It is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, but occasionally the mouth has to stimulate and stir up the depths of the heart.

The psalms of David encourage us so to rejoice in the Lord even in times of perplexity and adversity. Says he, "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Ps. 34:1).

"My tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long" (Ps. 35:28).

And from Paul comes these inspiring words: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication *with thanksgiving*, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4, 6-7).

I challenge you to try it! Praise your way through!

THE STARTING POINT

A Thought on the Church

David H. C. Read, pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, raises a good question in one of his articles—"Belong to a Church: Covenant or Covenant?" (*Pulpit Digest*, July/August, 1976, p. 9).

That's a good question to pursue as you study the Early Church's life-style in Acts 2.

Thoughts on Discouragement

Here are some thoughts on discouragement from Elijah's life.

1. Discouragement does something to one's self-image. "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4).

2. Discouragement causes us to evade responsibilities. "And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:9).

3. Discouragement causes a person to blame others for his situation. "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am

left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:10).

4. Discouragement causes a blurring of the facts. Elijah thought he was the only man in the region who had been faithful to God. But the Lord said, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:18).

A Preacher's Style

Dr. Duncan E. Littlefair, pastor of Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., might not do much for us Wesleyan preachers, due to his content and thought. But there is something from his style of preaching that is worth noting.

In 1970, the University of Chicago awarded Littlefair its Alumni Citation for "creative citizenship and exemplary leadership." Among other things, one of the nominating statements gave this account of his preaching style: "rich with love, warmth, faith, and hope" (from the preface by David W. Ewing, *Sin Comes of Age*, Duncan E. Littlefair, Westminster Press, 1975, p. 15).

These four great characteristics should be a part of every preacher's style. And while the preacher may have good content and know the Wesleyan truth backwards and forwards, it cannot be effectively conveyed without love, warmth, faith, and hope. May these increase in your preaching style—and mine.

Tricks of the Enemy

In Exodus, chapter 5, we have the experiences of Moses as he encounters Pharaoh. The experience reveals how the enemy works to create distrust and discouragement.

1. The first thing Moses faced was rejection by the enemy, through ignorance of God's plan: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (v. 2).

The enemy has no idea of the ways of God. Hence, his arguments can be a barrier to our faith and our courage.

2. Moses faced rejection by his friends because they became suspicious. Verses



By C. Neil Strait

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19-21 record the reaction of the people when they saw how Pharaoh had increased their work load. It is hard to keep the levels of belief high when friends are encouraging you to go another way.

3. Moses faced the reality of his own doubts. Verses 22-23 record the haunting doubts that tortured Moses as he began reflecting on Pharaoh.

The last barrier, often, is doubt. It rolls in like a sea and engulfs us. It is the plan of the enemy to keep us doubting.

There is one phrase that occurs in the chapters following that is the clue to survival and victory—for Moses and for anyone. "So Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded them" (it occurs first in 7:6).

IN THE STUDY

Seeds for Sermons

April: Alms or Psalms

This month read the first 72 psalms. Here is a definite break in the Psalms. Psalm 73 begins a large section by other writers. Often we come to the Lord asking ALMS. This month let us come unto Him with PSALMS. The story is told that when Mr. Roosevelt was president in the 1930s, one came to him, saying: "Mr. President, you know your secretary of state is under heavy criticism. Why don't you dismiss him?" To which President Roosevelt replied in effect, "If someday you should sit where I sit and know that everyone who comes to you through that office door wants something from you, then you would know what it is to have

someone who asks nothing of you but to serve."

April 3—Palm Sunday

ALMS—PALMS—PSALMS

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 24

INTRODUCTION: The Psalms are a smorgasboard of good things. We wish we could feast on all of them. In that Psalms 22; 23; 24 are a trilogy of Christ-honoring psalms, it is fitting that we study them this Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and the Sunday after Easter. Psalm 24 is a fitting psalm for Palm Sunday. It asks no alms, no "give me" from God, but only waves palm branches of praise in psalm.

I. WHAT HE HAS DONE ABOUT ME (vv. 1-2)

When I read these first two verses, I too sing "How Great Thou Art" and "This Is My Father's World." We have watched men walk on the moon. We have seen pictures from the surface of Mars. More than ever our psalm of praise is "This is my Father's world." Frank Borman said it well that Christman Eve in 1968 as he circled the moon. The three astronauts had just finished reading the



by
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creation story from Genesis, and Borman concluded with "God bless all of you—all of you on the good earth."

II. WHAT HE HAS DONE WITHIN ME (vv. 3-6)

Today we wave palms and think of Jesus coming to Jerusalem. We also think of what a day it will be when we come to the New Jerusalem and crown Him Lord of all. To the fearful question "Who shall stand in his holy place?" we rejoice for what He has done within us: (a) Clean hands—sins all forgiven; (b) Pure heart—heart purity through the Holy Spirit; (c) Victorious living—kept from false vanity and deceit. Wave a palm branch! Shout and sing like Jacob (v. 6). Our generation too will seek His face.

III. WHAT WE WILL DO TOGETHER (vv. 7-10)

This is the greatest part of the psalm. It was likely written when the ark was brought from Obed-Edom to Mount Sion (Adam Clarke, cf. 2 Sam. 6:1-15).

But its import is greater than this. Handel caught its majesty as he set these words to music in his great *Messiah*. Adam Clarke, in his Bible exposition, writes: "Jesus has conquered sin, Satan, and death by dying. He now rises from the dead; and, as a mighty conqueror, claims an entrance into the realms of glory, the kingdom which He has purchased by His blood, to appear ever in the presence of God for us . . ."

CONCLUSION: Today we ask no alms of God. We rejoice! We wave palms! We sing psalms! Rejoice and sing "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

April 10—Easter Sunday

OUR SUFFERING SAVIOUR

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 22

TEXT: "He hath done this" (v. 31).

INTRODUCTION: The story is told that when President Lincoln had been shot, and the funeral procession was going by, a slave set free lifted high her small son and said: "Take a good look, Honey-child. He died for you." This glorious Easter morning may I point you to Jesus

and say: "Take a good look, Honey-child. He died for you!"

This psalm is indeed the "Psalm of the Cross—which our Lord must have recited to himself during those hours of anguish" (F. B. Meyer). While some of the psalm is definitely "David," no Christian can fail to see Christ.

I. HE HATH DONE THIS—suffered and died

Reading this psalm, we see our suffering Saviour. In the hymn "There Is a Green Hill Far Away," Cecil Alexander said, "We cannot tell what pains He had to bear."

He suffered the pains of: (a) The agony of "Why me, Lord?" (v. 1; cf. Matt. 27: 46). Others had found God near in their hour of trial (vv. 3-5), but Christ suffers alone. (b) The agony of mockery (vv. 7-8; cf. Matt. 27:39-44). (c) The agony of crucifixion (vv. 15-16; cf. John 19:18,28; also for v. 18, cf. John 19:24). I am constantly prodded by this thought I keep on my desk: "Is the life you are now living worth the price Christ paid for it?"

II. HE HATH DONE THIS—He lives again

Verse 22 changes to praise. A teacher was vividly telling the story of Jesus dying on the Cross for us. A little girl hearing it for the first time began to cry. Her friend said, "Don't cry. This is one of God's stories and they always come out all right." Adam Clarke says this portion "contains a clear prophecy of the resurrection of Christ; that, having conquered death and Satan, He was to reign and gather a church out of all nations, which was to continue forever."

This Easter day we have brought our offering for world missions because we know (vv. 27-28) all people of the world can know and worship our Christ. The rich and the poor (the fat of the earth and those who labor in the dust, v. 29) alike worship with Him. We must share Christ, for "none can keep alive his own soul" (v. 29).

III. I SHALL DO THIS (v. 31)

For several years my wife and I had no children in our home. Then came the thrill of a girl, a boy, and again a girl. Any Christian parent knows that the only thrill comparable to having a child born

into the home is having that child "born again" in your home. But this thrill of v. 31 reaches beyond our homes. Dr. Bresee said it well: "We are debtors to every man to give him the gospel in the same measure as we have received it."

CONCLUSION: "I'll Live for Him . . ."

April 17

ME—HE—WE

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 23

INTRODUCTION: This best-loved psalm speaks to all of us. Let me share what it says to me.

I. ME (vv. 1-2). What the Lord does for ME

I often think of the blessings that are mine all because of Jesus. MY shepherd. I want not. He satisfied ME. He leads ME. Dr. Purkiser, commenting on this psalm, says: "Sheep never lie down, we are told, until they are satisfied with their grazing. Every spiritual need is supplied" (BBC, III, p. 194). I am constantly awed by the personal attention the Lord gives me.

II. HE (vv. 3-4). What the LORD does for me

Quickly I turn from my blessings to the Blessor. Only He can restore my soul. HE leads me because He is who He is. HE always knows the right path. His leading glorifies His name. David continues—through life, through death, HE leads. In life we have a changing path and an unchanging companion. I like D. L. Moody's comment on v. 4. In the last, or at least nearly last message he ever preached, he said: "The Twenty-third psalm is more misquoted than anything else in the whole Bible." He goes on to say people talk about the *dark* valley of the shadow of death, and it is the devil who puts in the word *dark*. "What is the difference? Must not there be light where there is shadow? Can you get a shadow without light? All that death can do to a true believer is to throw a shadow across his path. Shadows never hurt anyone—there is nothing to fear." A shadow is a testimony that the light—Jesus our Light—is shining brightly.

III. WE (vv. 5-6). What WE enjoy to gether

A national organization called Al-Anon has as its purpose to "give fellowship, help, and strength to those who must live with an alcoholic." They stress that you must not allow hatred to build up in you toward an alcoholic companion or parent. The prayer is used which includes: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change."

Likewise, no matter who or what may be the enemies around me, I can enjoy His fellowship, His anointing, His blessings all the days of my life.

CONCLUSION: David ends this great psalm on the same note of victory as Paul. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life . . . nor things present, nor things to come . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39).

April 24

THE BEATITUDE OF PROSPERITY

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 1

TEXT: "And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (v. 3).

INTRODUCTION: I could get along better with the psalm if our text phrase were not in there. Especially that word *whatsoever*. It makes it hard on all the alibis and reasons I have for my failures. But since David begins his psalm with the beatitude of prosperity, I must see what he has to say.

I. AVOID THE NEGATIVE (v. 1)

This could be applied to our spiritual, physical, and material life. Spiritually we have the classic example of Peter who denied the Lord the night he stood and sat with the sinners and scornful. Physically we know many who are sick because of negative and defeatism thinking. Avoiding the negative is necessary in our total life. If the Wright brothers had listened to the scornful, they would never have taken their gliders and planes to "Kill-devil Hill" in North Carolina and given wings to man.

II. DELIGHT IN THE POSITIVE (v. 2)

M. Lunn, in his book *Treasures in*

Heaven, wrote, "We are told that one must be a 'go-getter' in order to succeed . . . We hurry through our meals, through our devotions (if we have them), to our work, and we rush back home . . . But we pay too high a price if we let the pressure of business or pleasure crowd God out of our lives."

Many a success story is that of a man with a positive attitude who refused to allow circumstances that defeated others to defeat him.

III. EXPECT TO PROSPER (v. 3)

A speaker at a high school commencement said to the seniors: "One of the problems of our day is that we have a Polaroid psychology. Like the camera we expect instant results. But life is not like that." Another has said that when we ask God for "fruit of the Spirit," He only gives us the seeds. But as we expect the planted fruit tree to grow and prosper, so may this be in our lives. God's rules are so simple: Avoid the negative. Delight in the positive. In time your life will testify that God's Word is true. For the righteous man, "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

CONCLUSION: The ungodly do not have the stability and assurance that the righteous have. David ends with the same assurance as Job. "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (23:10).

Wesley's Words—

"The world is my parish." Mr. Wesley was a man of far-reaching vision and a wide range of travel. Being an Anglican clergyman—even to his death—Mr. Wesley was often asked about the location of his parish. From a big heart he gave the above answer. Today, outside City Road Chapel in London is a statue of Mr. Wesley, at whose feet are the words "The world is my parish."

As Wesley's "sons in the faith" we have an even greater world parish. The message of Wesleyan holiness is reaching a greater number than ever before.

—Submitted by Robert Emsley

By
Ralph Earle

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



Gleanings
from the Greek

2 Corinthians 4

"Faint" or "Lose heart"? (4:1)

Today the verb *faint* is used as a synonym for "swoon"—becoming dizzy and falling down. But the verb *enkakeo* means "become weary" or "lose heart" (AG, p. 214). Achilles comments: "Weariness here is not physical but spiritual" (DNNT, 1:563). The correct translation is "lose heart" (RSV, NASB, NIV).

"Dishonesty" or "shame"? (4:2)

It is difficult to see where the King James translators got the word "dishonesty" here. The Greek simply says, "the hidden things of shame."

But what does this mean? Arndt and Gingrich suggest, "what one conceals from a feeling of shame" (p. 24). This idea is taken over in the NASB: "the things hidden because of shame." The NIV puts it a little more generally: "secret and shameful ways."

"Craftiness" (4:2)

In the Septuagint, *panourgia* means "cleverness," in a good or neutral sense. But in classical Greek and the NT, it is used in a bad sense—"craftiness" or "deception" (NIV).

"Handling deceitfully" (4:2)

In the Greek this is the present participle of the verb *doloo*, which comes from the noun *dolos*, a "bait" or "snare." So the verb literally means "ensnare." But both noun and verb are used metaphorically in the sense of "deceit" or "treachery." Arndt and Gingrich say that the verb means "falsify, adulterate" (p. 202)

—it was used in secular Greek for adulterating wine. One could deduce the idea here: “Don’t water down the Word of God!”

“Hid” or “Veiled”? (4:3)

The Greek word here is not related to the one translated “Hidden things” in verse 2. There it was the adjective *cryptos*, from which we get *cryptic*. Here it is the verb *calypto*, “To cover or veil.” So the best translation here is “veiled” (RSV, NASB, NIV).

“Lost” or “Perishing”? (4:3)

Evangelical Christians are familiar with the thought that the unsaved are “lost.” But does this word communicate the truth accurately and adequately to an outsider?

The verb *apollymi* in the active voice means “destroy” (cf. 1 Cor. 1:19). In the middle voice, as here, it means “perish.” So it seems that the best translation if “those who are perishing” (NASB, NIV). It is the same verb that is translated “perish” in John 3:16. The main argument for using “lost” here would be a connection with the three parables of the lost in Luke 15, where this verb is rendered “lose” or “lost” (seven times). But we also find the prodigal son saying, “I perish [*apollymai*] with hunger” (v. 17).

We should not discontinue using the term *lost* to describe the condition referred to here. But the other concept is also important. Oepke says that *apollymi* indicates “definitive destruction, not merely in the sense of the extinction of physical existence, but rather of an eternal plunge into Hades and a hopeless destiny of death” (TDNT, 1:396).

“The Lord” or “As Lord”? (4:5)

Paul declared, “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord” (KJV). In the Greek there is no article before “Lord.” So the correct translation is “as Lord.” Alfred Plummer comments: “To ‘preach Christ as Lord’ is to preach Him as crucified, risen, and glorified, the Lord to whom ‘all authority in heaven and earth has been given’” (p. 118).

The alert reader may have noted that NASB has “Christ Jesus as Lord,” whereas NIV has “Jesus Christ as Lord.”

Which is right? The answer is, “We cannot be sure.” Our two oldest Greek manuscripts of the NT (as a whole) come from the fourth century. Of these two, Vaticanus has *Christon Iesoun* and Sinaiticus has *Iesoun Christon*. All three fifth-century manuscripts have the latter. That is probably why this reading was adopted in the United Bible Society Greek Testament, now considered the best in print. It may be noted that the correct reading at the end of verse 6 is “Christ” (NASB, NIV), not “Jesus Christ” (KJV). In this case the Greek is very clear.

“Earthen” or “Clay”? (4:7)

The adjective *ostracinos* is found only here and in 2 Tim. 2:20. Arndt and Gingrich say that here it is used “as a symbol, denoting breakableness” (p. 591).

This adjective is the basis of the archaeological term *ostraca*, used for broken pieces of pottery that often have ancient writing inscribed on them.

“Vessels” or “Jars”? (4:7)

The word *Skevos* is rendered “vessel” in the KJV 19 out of the 23 times it occurs in the NT. Most of the time it refers to what we today would call “jars” or “containers.” “Vessel” is now used more for a ship. There “jars of clay” (NIV) is more contemporary than “earthen vessels” (RSV, NASB).

What is meant? Gen. 2:7 suggests that God made man’s body from clay. So some have thought that the reference here is to the physical body. But Plummer writes: “It was in the man as a whole, and not in his body in particular, that the divine treasure which was to enrich the world was placed to be dispensed to others” (p. 127). He notes that this metaphor is common in the OT (Isa. 29:16; 30:14; 45:9; 64:8; Jer. 18:6).

The figure used here emphasizes the frailty of our humanity. This is in contrast to the greatness of God’s power and glory.

“Troubled” or “Hard pressed”? (4:8)

The Greek word is the present passive participle of *thlibo*, the verb meaning “to press.” Occurring 10 times in the NT, it is translated “troubled” 4 times and “afflicted” 3 times. But since the

basic meaning is “press,” it seems that “Hard pressed” (NIV) is best here. Plummer declares: “Here the radical signification of ‘pressure’ (MK. iii. 9) must be retained, because of *stenochoroumenoi*” (p. 128).

“Distressed” or “Crushed”? (4:8)

The verb *stenochoreomoi* is found in the NT only here and in 6:12 (twice), where the KJV has “straitened.” This catches better the distinctive meaning of the word. It comes from *stenos*, “Narrow,” and *choros*, “space.” So it means “To compress.” This idea is caught by “crushed” (NASB, NIV).

A play on words (4:8)

“Perplexed but not in despair.” The Greek has “*aporoumenoi* but not *exaporoumenoi*.” *Ex (ek)* is a prepositional prefix meaning “out of.” It acts here, as often, in the sense of strong intensive of the simple verb. Plummer suggests: “In despondency yet not in despair” (p. 129).

The verb, *aporeo*, occurs four times in the NT. It means “be at a loss, in doubt, uncertain” (AG, p. 97). *Exaporeo* is found only here and in 1:8. It has the force of being “utterly at a loss,” and so “in despair.”

“Cast down” or “Struck down”? (4:9)

The latter is preferred for *katabalomenoi* by the NASB and NIV, as being more contemporary. Phillips puts it very vividly: “We may be knocked down, but we are never knocked out!”

“By” or “With”? (4:14)

The KJV says “by Jesus” and “with you.” The Greek has the same preposition in both places—*syn*, which means “[together] with.”

“Redound” or “Abound”? (4:15)

“Redound” (KJV) is obviously out of date. The verb is *perisseno*, which occurs 39 times in the NT. In the KJV it is translated “abound” 17 times and “redound” only here. The former gives the correct sense.

“Far more exceeding” (4:17)

This represents another play on words in the Greek: *kath’ hyperbolon eis hyperbolon*. Arndt and Gingrich define

the first part of this as “beyond measure.” To get the full force of the double expression, they suggest “beyond all measure and proportion” (p. 848). The NASB has “far beyond all comparison,” and the NIV “that far outweighs them all.”



Easter Sermon

The Meaning of Easter

By James F. Spruill

SCRIPTURE: 1 Cor. 15:1-9; 12-20

INTRODUCTION: There have been many great events in our lifetime. Man in space. Man walking on the moon. The space age has made an enormous impact on our lives, but it will be many years before the full significance is realized.

We are here to look again at the greatest event of all time—one that has had a greater impact upon the lives of men than all others. It is not my purpose to try to prove the Resurrection. For those of us who believe in the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, it is enough to know the mighty impact of the Resurrection on the early believers. It was life-changing—it turned them from discouraged, disillusioned men to mighty warriors for Christ. It was personally real to them.

Easter is not a memorial service, but a celebration—

Jesus is alive! Jesus is alive today! Jesus will be just as alive next Sunday! Let us look at the meaning of Easter.

I. A LIVING CHRIST MEANS AN AVAILABLE CHRIST (John 20)

A. *They came to the tomb expecting to find a dead Jesus.* (Luke tells us they came to finish embalming Him—for they brought ointment and spices.)

1. A Jesus who could no longer speak to them

2. A Jesus who could no longer hear their questions

3. A Jesus no longer aware of their troubled hearts

B. *They found a living Christ.*

1. A Christ able to speak. He spoke to Mary. She wept, but her tears were turned to joy.

2. A Christ who could answer their questions

3. A Christ who had compassion for their troubled hearts

Illus: v. 15, "Whom seekest thou?"

C. *A Christ who can still be found by those who look for Him.* Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is still available to all men.

An alive Christ is indeed an available Christ. He sees us. He knows us. He hears us. He helps us. He guides us through this maze of life.

II. A LIVING CHRIST MEANS A CONQUERING CHRIST (John 20)

A definition of conquer: The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* gives among other definitions: "To gain or win by overcoming; To gain the victory." Synonyms: "defeat, beat, lick, subdue, overcome, surmount."

A. *He is Conqueror over all that plagues the human race.*

He replaces: hate with love; fear with trust; doubt with faith; despair with hope; death with resurrection.

The disciples were discouraged, bewildered, and troubled. In their sad condition nothing but an alive Christ could have conquered their troubled condition. But look what happened when Jesus came.

Look with me at John 20:19-20: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

Sin may defeat us, but it could not defeat the Son of God. In Him you and I can conquer. For this scripture teaches, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Matt. 28:18

says, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

B. *He is Conqueror over death.*

Illus: You may have your body frozen.

Jesus faced the grim reaper on a Roman cross and conquered him with resurrection.

III. A LIVING CHRIST MEANS A COMING CHRIST

The angels made this announcement and Luke recorded it.

Acts 1:10-11, "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Illus: If the last of Jesus had been the sealed grave, then we would have no reason to look for Him.

Christ has not yet done all He is going to do for us. We have not yet the full benefits of the Resurrection. Rom. 8:23, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

CONCLUSION: I remember when Easter meant to me: A marshmallow chicken, a chocolate rabbit, a gritty, yellow candy egg, a basket filled with grass that never lived.

Easter is the celebration of life:

The birds sing about it.

The trees proclaim it with new green robes.

The flowers announce it with fragrance that no man can match.

Not just breathing life, nor arm-waving life, but ETERNAL LIFE.

Jesus lives; and because He lives, we can live also.

Communion Worship Outline

The Body and the Blood

"Beneath the Cross of Jesus"

Prayer

Matthew 26:1-16

SILVER FOR A SOUL—the little things which can damn a soul

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

Matthew 26:17-41

SLEEPING OR SERVING—“Could ye not watch with me one hour?”

“Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?”

Matthew 26:42-75

Prayer

“Lead Me to Calvary”

Matthew 27:1-5, 29-66

STONE OR SELF—the world’s gift compared to the believer’s gift

Quartet vocal music

COMMUNION

“Near the Cross”

Benediction

—J. GRANT SWANK, JR.

I. THE ANSWER OF NATURE: A grain of wheat (John 12:24). The yearly return of spring life after the winter death tells us the answer.

II. THE ANSWER OF OUR OWN NATURE: inner desires, longings for God and life in heaven. Life here is so incomplete (see Gal. 6-7). Often the reaping is not on earth.

III. THE ANSWER OF THE BIBLE: The Book of Life. Through its pages runs the scarlet line of life through sacrifice (see Heb. 9:27).

IV. THE ANSWERS OF JESUS: “I am the . . . life” (John 14:6). He died and rose again (John 14:9). His promise, “I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2).

FRANK A. NOEL, SR.

Funeral Outlines

A Sure Refuge

(Psalm 46:1)

There are times when all of us need a refuge. Our eyes are dim with tears; our hearts are broken; our burdens are heavy. God is our Refuge. He offers strength and help in our time of need. He is a Refuge—

- I. IN THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we can stand. Joseph.
- II. IN THE HOUR OF TROUBLE. Job found God with him.
The promise, “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee . . . they shall not overflow thee.”
- III. IN THE HOUR OF SORROW. When sorrow came to Mary and Martha, Jesus ministered to them. He will help us.
- IV. IN THE HOUR OF DEATH. Because His own Son died on the Cross, God knows the heartaches death brings. He is our Refuge when our loved ones are taken by death.

FRANK A. NOEL, SR.

Does Death End All?

Job may have been the first man to ask this question, “If a man die, shall he live again?” (14:14).

Ideas That Work—

Family Concern

“Family Concern” is a program in which families in the church adopt a family represented by nonchurched Sunday school children. The purpose is for each church family to make at least one contact each week with their adopted family. The weekly contact can be made through a visit in their home, having the family for dinner, sharing a picnic, or any other family activity. First of all, they are to become friends, and then influence them to attend the church, and eventually to share Christ with them.

—BETTY B. ROBERTSON

Kids' Korral

“Kids' Korral” was planned by a local church as a participation night on a Sunday evening for all Sunday school children. The emphasis was for all Sunday school pupils to come with their families and friends. Songs were selected which would appeal to the children. A skit was presented by the older boys and girls. A reading was given. Children participated in the service by ushering, praying, singing in the choir, and presenting the offertory. The message was given with the use of puppets and special visuals. This proved to be a profitable evening with

many accepting Christ as their personal Saviour. Careful follow-up was conducted those on the church visitation committee.

—BETTY B. ROBERTSON

BULLETIN



BARREL

HOW DO I KNOW?

How do I know that Christ is risen?
What proof have I to give?
He touched my life one blessed day
And I began to live!

How do I know he left the tomb
That Easter long ago?
I met Him just this morning, and
My life is all aglow.

How do I know that endless life
He gained that day for me?
His life within is proof enough
Of immortality!

How do I know that Christ still lives,
Rich blessing to impart?
I know it's true because He lives
And reigns within my heart!

—EUGENE M. HARRISON
Source unknown

LOST AND FOUND

Ever share in the shock that enveloped
a town
When a child became lost and in
danger;
And plod all through the night in a
storm or sharp cold,
Though the child which you sought
was a stranger?
Jesus shared such a shock when He
learned I was lost,
'Till no danger was able to still Him;
And the search which He made led to
Calvary's cross,
Where His enemies waited to kill
Him.

ROY McCALEB

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CROSS

Our crosses are hewn from different trees, but we all must have our Calvaries.

We do not need culture, but we need Calvary.

The Cross is God's plus sign to a needy world.

The Cross is the only ladder high enough to touch heaven's threshold.

ADULT DELINQUENTS

The way American adults manipulate children to make dollars is a sin. They rape their morals and seduce their minds with television commercials and advertising, as they pound into their heads that: "If you only have one life to live, live it as a blonde."

No! I have only one life to live, but the Bible says I can go on living forever if I love Jesus (1 John 2:25).

"You should escape and come on over to Cola."

No soft drink can save you! Come on over to Jesus Christ. He's the Real Thing!

—BOB LAURENT, in *What a Way to Go*

* * *

Shoulders which carry responsibility
have little room for carrying chips.

* * *

There is nothing wrong with being a self-made man, provided you don't consider the job finished too soon.

* * *

PHOTO FACTS: Gossip is a negative that is developed and then enlarged.

* * *

A man may fail many times, but he is not a real failure until he begins to blame somebody else.

* * *

There are some saints that the devil cannot tempt with the usual sins; for these he especially reserves discouragement.

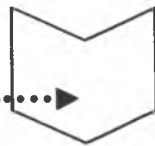
* * *

One should marry out of fullness, not emptiness. Lonely people marrying often double their loneliness.



HERE AND THERE

AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
your Publishing House

Emsley's Expositions

By *R. Kettlewell Emsley* (Published by the author, 432 Eden St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14220. 66 pp., paper, \$1.25 postpaid).

Dr. W. T. Purkiser rates the author of this little book a preacher who "has the well-deserved reputation among us of a Bible expositor in the best British tradition."

This book offers selected passages from Luke and John and the Thessalonian Epistles. Preachers should find it helpful in suggesting thoughts for sermon preparation. It will also be useful in prayer meetings and Bible study groups.

J. M.

"Family Life"—God's View of Relationships

By *Ray C. Stedman and others* (Word Books, 1976. 245 pp., paper, \$4.50).

The authors discuss in four parts, God's view of marriage, God's view of parents and children, God's view of the single person, and God's view of relationships. Ray Stedman, David Roper, and Jack Crabtree are pastors of Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, Calif.; and the other three coauthors—Jean McAllister, John Fischer, and Del Fuller—are a part of the same church.

Roper strikes the keynote in declaring,

"A successful marriage in terms of God's criteria consists not in finding the right kind of person, but in *being* the right kind of person. In the Scriptures there are clear-cut directives as to how to be what God intends us to be."

The book is stronger in exposition than it is in practical solutions. However, there are many practical illustrations that apply the scriptural principles to marriage and home problems. Stedman recalls "a family that sent a note to the teacher when their child started to school which said, 'Please don't hit our Willy. We never hit him at home except in self-defense.'"

Stedman's chapter on "Life Without Marriage" offers help where there is little available for the single adult.

J. M.

Expository Sermons of the Book of Daniel

By *W. A. Criswell* (Zondervan Publishing House, first printing of one-volume edition, 1976. 522 pp., cloth, \$12.95).

Introduction to the Intertestamental Period

By *Raymond F. Surburg* (Concordia Publishing House, 1975. 197 pp., cloth, \$8.95).

I would recommend this book to the pastor and any other person interested in gaining knowledge of the general historical developments of intertestamental times. It also covers in general the main religious groups of these times, the main theological emphases, and a resume of the intertestamental writings called the Apocrypha.

The list of sources at the back enhances the value of the book immensely for the person who wishes to extend his reading or study beyond this volume.

HARVEY FINLEY

New International Version With Study Helps

(Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1976. Paperback, \$2.95). (TR-80545)

The New International Version of the New Testament is now available in heavy paperback. Study helps in the back include a subject index, "How to Study the Bible," "Ministry of Jesus," and maps.

Luther and the Mystics

By *Bengt R. Hoffman* (Augsburg Pub. Co., 1976, 282 pp., \$9.95).

Wesleyans will welcome this superb study of Luther's relationship to mysticism. Historically, Luther has been identified with an objectivism which did little to identify his obligations to the mystics and their relationship to his understanding of justification by faith. Usually his mysticism is treated as a minus factor in our understanding of Lutheran theology.

Dr. Hoffman has examined primary sources with a scholarship which places a new dimension to our understanding of the subjectivism in Luther. He is very careful to show what mystics influence him, and which he refuses to inculcate in his understanding of the tradition. His documentation and notes are exhaustive.

His writing on God, man, and salvation, including "purity of heart" grounded in the Word, will enrich a pastoral experience as well as enlarge the understanding of a tradition which has been interpreted confessionally.

The author certainly has sources on his side to argue that mysticism has not been

given proper attention as a "creative force" in Luther's thought. May I strongly recommend this new book to the thoughtful pastor.

OSCAR F. REED

Family Love in All Dimensions— A symposium

By *John B. Nielson, Ed.* (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1976. 201 pp., paper, \$2.95).

Twelve blue-ribbon authorities affirm here the time-honored principle of the solidarity of the family and offer practical and biblical guidance for countering the insidious forces conspiring to destroy the home today. John B. Nielson, Dr. Howard Hamlin, Millard Reed, Darrell E. Luther, Leslie Parrott, Aarlie J. Hull, Richard S. Taylor, T. Crichton Mitchell, Earl G. Lee, Audrey J. Williamson, and Joseph Nielson write chapters. Also contributing is the noted psychologist, Dr. James Dobson. This book is a must for pastors. There are not enough books to meet the demands for help in this vital area of need, and many of them fall short of our expectations. We believe this one will live up to them.

J. M.

Expository Sermons on the Epistle of James

By *W. A. Criswell* (Zondervan, 1975. 128 pp., cloth, \$4.95).

There is something refreshing about Criswell's preaching, and it shows in his books of sermons. His book of sermons on Daniel, as one would expect, takes a strong position in defense of the validity of this material and our responsibility to heed it. The author believes in "prophecy" and makes the reader believe in it. The sermons are interesting, and they are scholarly. The book is filled with word studies, background information, provocative analysis, and colorful descriptions of the text.

The book of Daniel is a reprint of what formerly made up four volumes.

His expositions on James capture the unwholesome Christian attitudes and

dead faith, with the words of rebuke and encouragement that the apostle adds as corrective to the distress of suffering and sin. The material is well illustrated and effectively applied to life today.

J. M.



Preachers' Exchange



WANTED: Three vols. *History of Nazarene Missions* by Taylor. Larry Stover, 6617 Walrond, Kansas City, Mo. 64132

FOR SALE: Good condition—Complete set, 7 vols., Epworth Press Edition, hardbacks—4¼" x 7"—*Wesley's Veterans*. \$15.00 including postage. Robert Emsley, 432 Eden St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14220.

FOR SALE: *Pentecostal Papers: The Gift of the Holy Ghost*, S. A. Keen (1st ed., 1896); *Commentary to the Acts of the Apostles*, Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (1st ed., autographed copy, 1883); *Sociology and Social Problems*, Chas. A. Ellwood (1913); *Heart of Sone San*, Elizabeth Cooper (about Japan); *Efficient Religion*, Geo. Arthur Andrews (1912); *Moody's Anecdotes and Illustrations*, Dwight Moody (1896); *Beacon Lights of History*, John Lord, Old Pagan Civilizations (1883); *Swan's Sermons*, Vols. 1 & 3, Geo. Swan; *Heroes for the Truth*, W. K. Tweedie (1890); *The King in His Beauty*, Richard Newton (1st ed., 1878). Prices on request. S. T. Moore, 211 West Park Ave., Greenfield, Ind. 46140

Items for this Exchange may be either WANTED or FOR SALE, but must be confined to old periodicals and out-of-print books. All response should be directly with the advertiser and not with this office or the Nazarene Publishing House. We are glad to render this free service on these terms. This service not available to bookstores or laymen.



● Toward a Theology of the Family

Family life can be a festive relationship, a foretaste of the blessedness of the kingdom of God.

● Pornography and the X-Rated Community

Christians are asking if anything can be done to stop the flow of filth.

● How to Entitle a Sermon

Can preachers learn a lesson from highly paid professionals who know how to gain and hold attention?

● A More Excellent Way

A successful pastor is more like a maestro than a one-man band.



AMONG OURSELVES

There is not a more significant quality in good preaching than its biblical content. If it is not biblical, it is not real preaching, but something else. There are, of course, other necessary qualities, but this one must not be ignored. It is encouraging to witness a revival of interest in expository preaching, not only among those who preach but also among those who listen to preaching Sunday after Sunday. They find the Bible to be much more interesting, exciting, and relevant than they had thought it to be—back during their days of wandering in the wilderness of churning out topical themes on various subjects. Dr. Price has a word for us (p. 3), and there will be other helps as time and space permits. Halford Luccock put it so very aptly: “Now abideth these three: topical, textual, and expository; but the greatest of these is expository.”

Yours for souls,



*We're ready!
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