

1982

Review: Life-Style Evangelism

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Recommended Citation

Vandegriff, Steve R., "Review: Life-Style Evangelism" (1982). *Faculty Publications and Presentations*. Paper 79.
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strong political preferences which went beyond the literal text of the Constitution — a preference for national as opposed to state power, a preference for protection of property rights as opposed to public interest considerations, and so forth. Certainly men like Jefferson felt the Constitution was being radically altered by the Marshall Court. Jefferson referred to the justices as "miners and sappers" weakening the very fabric of the Constitution.

One more example will suffice. When the Supreme Court decided in the *Dred Scott Case* (1857), that Scott was not a citizen and that Congress had no authority to legislate on slavery in the territories whatsoever, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that five Southern justices and two Northern sympathizers were attempting to write into the Constitution their social views on race and to solve a problem which the other two branches had grappled with unsuccessfully for fifty years. In sum, I find the Supreme Court exhibiting clear value preferences much earlier and for reasons more manifestly political than does Mr. Whitehead.

I would also raise questions about the author's interpretation of federalism. If, as Mr. Whitehead argues, the framers intended to limit the federal sphere, why the deep fears of the antifederalists such as Richard Henry Lee and George Mason? More accurately, both supporters and opponents of the Constitution favored a federal system. They differed as to the distribution of power among the various civil governing bodies. Mr. Whitehead refers to the Constitution as a covenant or contract between the states and the new federal government (p. 207). While this was frequently argued before the Civil War, there was certainly no uniform agreement on the matter. John Marshall in *McCulloch vs. Maryland* stated that the Constitution rested on the authority of the people rather than the states as sovereign entities. I would add but one practical consideration. Mr. Whitehead appears to argue for a return to the constitutional balance

of 1787. Assuming there was agreement then as to where that balance should be struck, how do we undo two hundred years of national development which in some areas make national solutions the only feasible ones, and do so in a manner not totally disruptive of the social order? This problem, not really addressed in the book, appears to be fundamental.

Whitehead's book is stimulating and his analysis of contemporary American values accurate. He has recovered a significantly underestimated component in the American character. The book deserves careful reading by Christians and by those in the larger American community who still retain a mind sufficiently open to appreciate the fragility of human freedom and its serious erosion in the late twentieth century.

Life-Style Evangelism

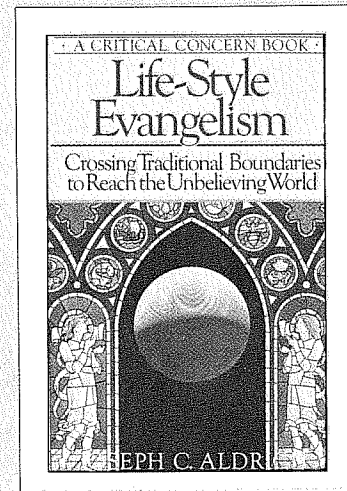
by Joseph C. Aldrich
Multnomah Press, 1981, 246 pp.,
\$9.95

Reviewed by Stephen R. Vandegriff,
youth pastor, Calvary Temple,
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Finally! Someone wrote a book on that popular subject of evangelism without repeating something he heard or rewriting something he had read. We all have heard sermons on evangelism till we know every reason that good Christians should evangelize. But for the most part, books on evangelism either give a different slant on technique (a new order of Scripture verses, or new questions or terms to use) or cause such a guilt trip you feel like leaving job and family to become a professional evangelist.

Joe Aldrich's *Life-Style Evangelism* deals with the first block of the evangelistic foundation, the Christian. Aldrich presupposes (and I agree) that local churches have had the right idea about evangelism but the wrong

emphasis. The church has placed emphasis on the message being presented rather than the messenger presenting it. Present-day Christendom has "flooded the market" with witnessing techniques. That was the reason I reluctantly bought this book, but its subtitle intrigued me, "Crossing Traditional Boundaries to Reach the Unbelieving World." And that is what *Life-Style Evangelism* does. Instead of being intimidated, I was challenged. No longer do I view my non-believing neighbor as the enemy, but, as Aldrich describes, a "victim of the enemy." Instead of dealing with information that only 10 percent of those in local churches who actually "go witnessing" can use, Aldrich writes to the other 90 percent who just cannot handle the idea of knocking on a stranger's door.



Life-Style Evangelism does not lessen the importance of those who are "aggressive" in evangelistic efforts but does offer interesting insights regarding results (see chapter 4). Joe Aldrich convincingly explains that evangelism should be a natural part of the Christian's life and not something he has to "psych himself up" each week to do. As Christians, we can and should relate to our non-Christian friends (and not isolate ourselves as we consistently do). By the natural process of friendships we will eventually have opportunity to share the gospel with non-Christian friends. Evangelistic efforts can be

a natural discipleship because of relationships.

The mandate of this subtitle is a realistic understatement when the mission becomes opposed to the "Christ."

Life-Style Evangelism into three parts (Evangelism: Deal with evangelism easily be situational evangelism and You) examples to reach you, the book makes a good regardingly be more school level.

Life-Style Evangelism mandatory requirements to witness are struggling evangelism own ideas of leadership courses or just for This book should be on the books on

Criswell's
by W.A.
1980, 38

Reviewed
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a natural occurrence, and discipleship a natural process because of already established relationships.

The author writes as with a mandate from heaven, to deal with this subject objectively and realistically, in language all can understand. (i.e. "There is a time when those who refuse communion because of pierced ears must be opposed because it is a distortion of the saving grace of Jesus Christ.")

Life-Style Evangelism is divided into three parts. The first two (Evangelism As It Should Be and Evangelism and the Local Church) deal with pertinent philosophy of evangelism, even though it can easily be applied to practically any situation concerned with evangelism. Part three (Evangelism and You) gives the reader real-life examples of evangelistic endeavors to reach your neighbor. Structurally, the book is well outlined and makes a great series for instruction regarding evangelism. It could easily be modified to fit in as Sunday school lessons or sermons.

Life-Style Evangelism is mandatory reading for those who want to witness effectively, those who are struggling with the idea of evangelism or still forming their own ideas about it, those in places of leadership who want an effective course to teach on evangelism or just for their own edification. This book can stand shoulder to shoulder with any of the other great books on the subject.

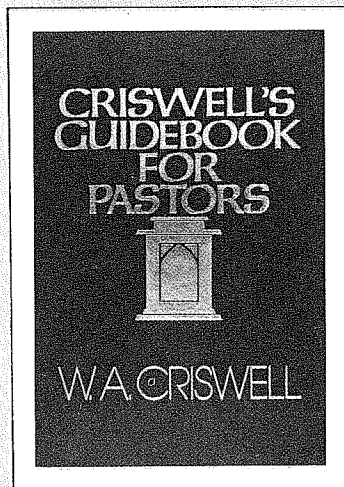
Criswell's Guidebook for Pastors
by W.A. Criswell, Broadman Press,
1980, 385 pp., \$9.95.

Reviewed by Robert L. Sumner,
Editor, *The Biblical Evangelist*.

If a man, raised in abject poverty on the wrong side of the tracks, went into business for himself and became a multimillionaire, all other young businessmen of rational mentality would want to sit at his

feet and learn his secrets. If a man spent his entire life in politics, never losing an election and proving himself to be an outstanding leader of people, other would-be politicians by the thousands would pay big money to attend his seminars and take copious notes. If an author produced one best seller after another, winning Pulitzer prizes and Nobel awards for his work, every aspiring writer of even microscopic intelligence would jump at an opportunity to learn from him.

By the same token, any young preacher endowed with the slightest measure of spiritual ambition should glory in the opportunity



to learn from a man of the stature of Wallie Amos Criswell. He has pastored the same church, First Baptist Church of Dallas, for nearly a half-century, watching it grow over the years until it now averages about 8,000 per week in Sunday school, and dedicated members pour more than \$8 million into church collection plates annually. Best of all, W.A. Criswell baptizes over one thousand persons upon profession of their faith every single year. Obviously, a man such as this has something to say of immense value, and preachers anxious to do a better job for God will want to both hear and heed him.

His chapter on "The Pastor Facing Discouragement and Failure" is a gem, easily worth the price of the book. But this is only one chapter and there are twenty others in

which Criswell examines such themes as the place of the pastor-preacher in Christ's plan, the pastor in the pulpit, the pastor in his study, the pastor and sermon preparation, the pastor and his staff, the organization of a new church, financing the church, the pastor and the construction of new buildings, administering the ordinances, the pastor doing the work of an evangelist, the pastor as a counselor and shepherd of the flock, the wedding ceremony, the funeral service, the pastor and his personal life, do's and don'ts for the pastor, plus other important subjects. Here is a volume that would be ideal for use as a textbook in pastoral theology. And many preachers reading this review would benefit from such a refresher course with great and lasting profit.

If we have a criticism — and we do — it pertains to some of the men Criswell quotes. He is not careful to distinguish between "good guys" and "bad guys," but, with regard to this flaw, we simply repeat Criswell's own advice concerning the books of others: "So let the pastor read as he would eat a fish — when he comes to an unpalatable bone, just eat around it; do not swallow it!"

Taken as a whole, *Criswell's Guidebook For Pastors* is an outstanding volume, one we highly recommend to every preacher of the gospel. It will inspire, enthuse, encourage, and instruct. □

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