

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER 1986

# PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

## STUDIES IN PHILIPPIANS

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*To all the saints . . .  
grace and peace.*

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## ON PREACHING

"No man can bear witness to Christ and himself at the same time. No man can at once give the impression that he is clever and that Christ is mighty to save."

—*James Denney*

146158

# We Get Letters

## EDITORIAL ADVICE OFFERED

Thank you for a brave editorial on the preaching of the good blessing [June, July, August 1986]. Your self-critique is evidence of a much wider move of God's Spirit in our church. God's grace is enabling us to probe our roots and ask the hard questions about the way we have handled the precious gospel.

There is an uneasiness about this task [proclaiming scriptural holiness]. The book reviews of Volume 2 of *Exploring Christian Holiness* demonstrate this. Dr. Grider offers readers a conventional, although stilted, assessment of Dr. Bassett's and Dr. Greathouse's excellent work. However, Dr. Dunning and the editor of the *Preacher's Magazine* seem uneasy in letting Grider's assertions stand or fall on their own merit. If investigated, they would fall.

A problem arises when Dr. Dunning is allowed to mix a positive, Wesleyan review of Dr. Bassett's and Dr. Greathouse's book with a critical, albeit correct, assessment of Dr. Grider's review. The thrust of both reviews was obscured by this one-sided criticism that should have been left to the reader.

The church needs proper forums if it is to debate whether Hoebe Palmer improved on Wesley or whether our best scriptural exegetes side with Wesley. The *Preacher's Magazine* can and must provide such a forum. Readers can be trusted to make their own judgments about book reviews and articles.

The Wesleyan position needs to be stated without polemic. My hat is off to Dr. Bassett and Dr. Greathouse for accomplishing this.

—Darrell R. Poeppelmeyer

## ENJOYS "ARK ROCKER"

I enjoyed the Ark Rocker column in the DJF 1985-86 issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*! In my own observations from a ongside seat at the General Assembly, I would have to say that the issues mentioned were the ones most disturbing to me as well.

I appreciate your boldness. I trust that there will always be some room for critique and that we as a denomination will always authorize such a platform.

The development of the *Preacher's Magazine* as a whole has been impressive. Keep up the good work!

—Stan Rodes

## FINDS "ARK ROCKER" WONDERFUL

Over Christmas I opened the *Preacher's Magazine* for the first time ever and found the "Ark Rocker" for the DJF 1985-86 issue.

Great stuff! Not because it pokes fun but because it reveals a choice: to deeply love the institution and to stay within it and attempt its perfection (or at least its refinement).

In my ignorance, I did not know our church published such commentary in an "official organ." Wonderful! So I decided to write and tell you while you still had a job.

—Dave Frisbie

## FINDS "ARK ROCKER" TACKY

The "Ark Rocker" is one of my favorite sections of the *Preacher's Magazine*. But that column in the March, April, May 1986 issue went far beyond helping us laugh at some of our own shortcomings. I have an earned doctorate, yet these comments about those who have been given honorary doctorates and those who give them cast some shadows and negative aspersions that were totally out of place. The article lacked taste, to say the least.

I felt badly for our present and past general superintendents as well as those who work with this conferred degree in our colleges. I hope the "Ark Rocker" will regain its balance and return to the function it has fulfilled most admirably in the past.

—Ronald J. Wells

## THANK YOU

I have never stopped to thank you and all who make available the *Preacher's Magazine*. Its quality and helpfulness continue to rise (and the price never changes!). Just want you to know you are doing a good job.

After reading the December—February 1985-86 issue, I was especially motivated to thank you for the "Ark Rocker," "Ministry to the Divorced," "Journey," "Christian Doctrine," "Evangelism," and "Biblical Studies."

Keep up the good work.

—John A. Payton

## COUNT ME OUT

This letter comes in response to the article "When You're Out You're Out" and the letters in response to that article.

My congregation has an average pastoral tenure of just under two years. Since coming here some 20 months ago, I have heard nothing but bitterness expressed toward the four pastors I follow. At our last board meeting it seemed my time had come to be thoroughly abused. It took my board three hours, but when they finished, I went home bleeding in my soul. The results seem to be: no desire to preach at this point; a sense of severe emotional bleeding; a feeling that I am alone; my wife wanting to never be in a parsonage again. In the midst of all this, as my wife and I have kept it from our children, my teenaged daughter wants to know why the adults of our congregation do not care about the teens.

I tried to share with a district superintendent early in my ministry. I know now that I'll never do that again. So after 11 years as a pastor, I'm hurting and I feel I have no place to go. In my area it is a mistake to even go to other Nazarene pas-

(Continued on page 56)

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# THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

Proclaiming Christian Holiness

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# Who's Afraid of Original Sin?

by Wesley Tracy

**V**arious brands of Christians argue and fuss about original sin. Some believe it's real. Some seem to think it exists only between the dusty covers of archaic theology books on the bottom shelves in the back of lonely libraries.

While some Christians may be confused about original sin, American businessmen (and businesswomen) are not. They have counted on it to ring up profits for more years than I can remember. They have counted on pure red-eyed lust to sell Buicks and burgers and bangles and beads. But the public began to learn that products were not necessarily good just because a near-naked model touted them. Then the chief tom-tom pounders of the profit from original sin movement became more crafty and sophisticated. Here's one example.

For the last several years a certain company has been counting on original sin in me to get me to cough up more dollars. You see they issued me a credit card about 13 years ago—it is green. About every six months for several years now they send me a brochure appealing to original sin, pride, ego, or hubris urging me to move up to the gold card. The artwork changes from time to time, but the message aimed directly at the good old reliable, sales-producing sinful human nature remains the same.

You might not notice the original-sin appeal at first. But when you compare it to the words and teachings of Jesus it stands out like a gopher on the 18th green. Here's how the gold card pitch sounds alternating excerpts from it with excerpts from the New Testament.

▽ **Come into your element . . . the Gold Card.**

**It says so much more about you.**

**And it does so much more for you.**

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! . . . He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 1:29; 3:30, RSV).

▽ **The close of a fine meal.**

**The presentation of the bill.**

**And you take out the Gold Card.**

**It is a gesture that speaks volumes.**

**It says you are someone special—whose style of living requires very special privileges.**

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant . . . and . . . he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8).

▽ **Someone who appreciates—indeed, has come to ex-**

**pect—an extra measure of courtesy and personal attention.**

"The Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28, RSV).

▽ **Someone whose finances and credit rating rank among the nation's highest.**

**With the Gold Card, you command an impressive portfolio of travel, entertainment, and financial services at home and around the world.**

"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20, RSV).

▽ **I am inviting you to apply for the Gold Card at this time.**

**I believe you've earned this invitation. You've worked hard and have been recognized for your efforts. And nothing is more satisfying than achieving your own personal goals.**

**Now it's time for you to carry the card that symbolizes your achievement—the Gold Card.**

"Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5, RSV).

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. 3:7).

▽ **Only a select group will ever carry the Gold Card. So instantly identifies you as someone special . . . who expects an added measure of attention. . . .**

"What we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ a Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (1 Cor. 4:5, RSV).

▽ **In fact the Gold Card in your name says more about you than almost anything you can buy with it.**

"He who is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11, RSV).

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. 11:29).

Does this approach work? Well, I notice in today's *Wall Street Journal* that this company's stock has increased 13 percent in the last 12 months. But there is evidence closer home. I took a struggling ministerial student out to lunch. It didn't cost him a thing. I paid the bill with my "green" card. Supposing that if I could possibly qualify for a "gold card" I would of course have one, and staring at the green card like I had just laid a dead bird on the table, he blurted:

"Oh—I see you don't make \$25,000 a year!"

# MIND THE SAME THING

## *Christian Unity in Philippians*

by Jirair Tashjian

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*Southern Nazarene University, Bethany, Okla.*

One dominant feature of Paul's thought is that confessing Christ as Lord demands harmony with others who make the same confession. Indeed, a Christian experience that does not include harmonious fellowship with the community of faith would be inconceivable for Paul. "We, though many, are one body in Christ" (Rom. 12:5, RSV). "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13, RSV). "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28, RSV). Unfortunately, this aspect of Paul's thought is often sidestepped by evangelicalism today with its well-intended, but exaggerated, emphasis on personal salvation, individualistic piety, and private spirituality. Note, for example, the sentiments of one commentator: "Unity is supremely important, but it is a by-product." "My salvation" must be personal and individualistic. "Steadfastness depends on unity, and unity depends on me."<sup>1</sup>

For Paul, Christian community is not simply an ethical ideal to strive for. Rather, Christian community is an essential ingredient to the very definition of being in Christ. It is made possible through God's redemptive and miraculous act in Christ. In fact, this is so necessary that an individual must at times forgo one's own precious ideas and cherished convictions and seek to please others in the Christian community for the sake of preserving communal harmony (Rom. 14:1—15:3; 1 Cor. 8:13). "Love does not insist on its own way" (1 Cor. 13:5, RSV).

This sense of Christian community and harmony is forcefully and passionately expressed by Paul in his letter to the Philippians. There is some evidence in the letter that strife was already a problem in the Philippian church. Paul appeals to Euodia and Syntyche "to agree in the Lord" (4:2).

Paul begins this letter with his customary opening statements, thanksgiving, prayer, and personal news. Then follows the first major section of the main body of the letter, 1:27—2:18, wherein Paul gives instructions and admonition to the church. The section opens with a

plea to the Philippian Christians to conduct themselves "in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (1:27, NIV). The rest of the section spells out what such conduct entails:

1. Standing first in the face of opposition and suffering for Christ's sake (1:27-30).
2. Loving harmony and unselfish humility (2:1-4).
3. Christ, the supreme Example of self-abasement (vv. 5-11).
4. Obedience and a blameless life-style while awaiting the day of Christ (vv. 12-18).<sup>2</sup>

All the qualities of Christian conduct listed above have to do with the communal life of the church rather than individual spirituality. Facing opposition for Christ's sake, for example, must be done "in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel" (1:27, RSV). Humility as a spiritual quality cannot become real except in a social setting in which Christians are afforded the opportunity and the challenge to regard



Jirair Tashjian

one another as more important than themselves (2:3). Even obedience and a blameless life-style (v. 12), which may be taken to be inner qualities of individuals, are in reality communal in nature. They can only be realized in the context of social interrelationships. Paul's exhortation to "do all things without grumbling or questioning" (v. 14, RSV) must be understood as an expression of the communal life of the church.

More specifically, let us focus on Christian unity as it is developed in 2:1-4. It is interesting to note that in Greek these four verses are actually one long, complex sentence made up of a series of clauses. It has only one main verb, "complete my joy" (v. 2, RSV). Paul seems to be in such an emotionally heightened state that he piles one clause after another much like a series of ocean waves splashing on a rocky shore.

### The Motivation for Christian Unity

The verbal barrage in these verses begins in the four-fold conditional clause, "If there is any . . ." (RSV). However, the word *if* is not meant to express uncertainty. Perhaps *since* would be a much better translation. What Paul means to say is: If there be any exhortation in Christ, *as surely there is* . . .<sup>3</sup> Here, then, are four certainties on the basis of which Paul makes a plea for Christian unity:<sup>4</sup>

1. *Encouragement, or rather exhortation, in Christ.* The plea for harmony in the church comes ultimately from Christ, not from Paul or any other human source.
2. *Incentive of love, or preferably, tenderness, consolation, solace of love.* It is the consoling love of Christ as a miraculous catalyst that makes Christian unity possible.
3. *Participation in the Spirit.* Literally it should be rendered "fellowship of the Spirit." Are we to think of this as the sense of community and oneness that the Spirit creates, or as the believers' participation in the person and gracious gift of the Spirit? Both meanings are perhaps present, as F. W. Beare's comment makes clear: "*Koinonia* (fellowship) is at once participation in the Spirit, enjoying a share of the divine Spirit which is given in measure to every believer; and the common life created by the Spirit and determined in all its motions by the Spirit, which informs the Christian society and makes it a true community."<sup>5</sup>
4. *Affection and sympathy.* The Greek words literally mean "bowels and mercies," which reflect the ancient view that the abdomen is the seat of the emotions, equivalent to the modern colloquialism, "gut feeling." That is, the very springs of the Christian's affections have been brought under the impact of Christ's loving and merciful tenderness, and thus mutual harmony in the Christian community becomes a possibility.

In the first three conditional clauses we have a triad of Christ, love, and fellowship of the Spirit, which corresponds rather closely with the triad in the benediction of 2 Cor. 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (RSV). Accordingly, it is quite likely that in

Phil. 2:1 we encounter an early traditional Trinitarian formula.<sup>6</sup> If that is so, it is another instance of the fact that Paul's interest lies not in abstract, metaphysical speculation about the triune nature of God as such, but in the soteriological, historical, ecclesiological, and hortatory implications of who God is and how He has acted. Consequently, the unity of the church has its basis and motivation in nothing less than God's redemptive work in Christ through the Spirit.

### The Mode of Christian Unity

Having laid the foundation for his plea for Christian unity, Paul now tells his readers what he expects them to do. Even though the only main verb in verses 1-4 occurs in the next statement, "complete my joy" (v. 2a), it does not in reality express the main thought of the passage. Rather, it is a transitional statement leading to what follows next.<sup>7</sup> What follows (v. 2b) is really the heart of this section, which spells out how Christian unity is to become a reality. What does Christian unity mean? What does it involve? Note that there is no mention of ecclesiastical, hierarchical, organizational, or managerial homogeneity. The mode of unity is purely ethical, personal, and voluntary. Paul spells out the terms of Christian unity in four terse statements. Translated rather literally and pedantically, they are as follows: Mind the same thing, have the same love, be of one soul, mind the one thing.

To mind the same thing or the one thing should not be taken primarily in the sense of intellectual uniformity. In Pauline exhortation it signifies a common direction, will, and disposition,<sup>8</sup> "the entire orientation of the emotions and the will."<sup>9</sup> The same word, which occurs twice in verse 2, is used again in verse 5 in the *kenosis* passage. There, the "mind" of Christ is described in intensely ethical terms as servantly manner and mentality. Thus to mind the same thing or the one thing is really a unity, the definition of which must be sought in nothing less and nothing other than Christ.

Within the context of minding the same thing or the one thing are placed two other exhortations. First, have the same love. The Christian community is knit together by cords of love understood in an active sense rather than as a passive sentiment. It has its source in the incentive of Christ's love (v. 1). Unity expresses itself actively. It is realized in the performance of loving deeds to one another. Paul's understanding of the active nature of love in the Christian community and its affinity to the idea of servanthood is expressed in Gal. 5:6, "faith working through love" (RSV), and in Gal. 5:13, "through love be servants of one another" (RSV).

The other exhortation, to be of one soul, or "being in full accord" (v. 2, RSV), is a single word in Greek—found only here in the New Testament. It recalls the earlier exhortation in 1:27 to "stand firm in one spirit." In both places, interestingly, the Greek *psyche* is used to imply that in the Christian community there exists a corporate spirit, a body life, a fellowship with a soul. Psychological and social factors are often significant in the formation and continued existence of any group, including a Christian community. However, the ethos of the Christian community is created and maintained, not by emotionalism or psychological and social manipulation but by a



deliberate decision to become love slaves to one another in the name of Christ.

**The Means of Christian Unity**

In verses 3-4 we find two sets of antithetical statements, each of which consists of a negative prohibition and a positive exhortation:

“Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves.  
Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (RSV).


The word for “selfishness” may also be translated as rivalry, strife, contentiousness. The word for “conceit” is more literally vain or empty glory. To “look . . . to the interests of others” (RSV) is a somewhat free translation. The original Greek has no word equivalent to “interests,” and “look to” is more literally “notice.” In a more literal rendering, verse 4 would read: “Each one noticing not only one’s own but also those of others.” A number of commentators have interpreted this as an injunction to take note of the gifts, good qualities, or strengths of others.<sup>10</sup> Verse 3b expresses an almost identical meaning, and the same word for “notice” appears in 3:17 with the clear meaning of emulation.

“It is a strange phenomenon in religious history,” comments Kennedy, “that intense earnestness so frequently breeds a spirit mingled of censoriousness and conceit.”<sup>11</sup> The greater the enthusiasm, the greater the danger of collision with one another.<sup>12</sup> Paul found that to be true in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 3:3-4). Apparently the church in Philippi was also facing the threat of a

factious spirit born out of excessive preoccupation with one’s own attainments (2:2-3). It is painfully ironic that selfish rivalry should crop up in the very circles that have supposedly come together in the name of the One who though equal to God has nonetheless taken upon himself the form of a servant (vv. 5-8).

To count others better than oneself is sometimes erroneously taken to mean self-depreciation. What Paul is saying here is not antithetical to the value of proper self-esteem, if we bear in mind that Paul’s exhortation is communal. Paul offers us a number of considerations that would nullify the need for mutual competitiveness in the Body of Christ and ensure Christian unity. First, when Christ is recognized and confessed as the exalted Lord, and God the Father as the only One worthy of glory (2:9-11), one’s need for vainglory would be undermined.

Second, humility, or the capacity to count others better than oneself, was in Paul’s time a disposition considered appropriate for slave mentality and abhorrent to Gentile society.<sup>13</sup> Here we find a subversive streak in Paul’s ethic, which takes an element from the value system of society at large, introduces a subtle revolutionary twist in the light of the gospel of Christ, and urges Christians to become participants in the new value system. Only in such an atmosphere, where the social values of power, position, and dominance no longer appeal to us, can we hope to live in Christian unity.

Third, if the translation and interpretation of verse 4 suggested above are valid, another means of maintaining unity in the Christian community emerges. Paul is quite aware that individual interests, goals, gifts, functions, or whatever else he had in mind in the indefinite “things” of verse 4, will not always be uniform throughout the Christian community. Paul recognizes the value of diversity of gifts and functions in the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12). Yet diversity need not lead to discord. The alternatives are not diversity or unity. Nor are they discord or uniformity. Both diversity and unity must co-exist. This can happen if we adopt the mentality advocated by Paul. We must always be willing to grant that the interests, goals, gifts, or functions of others in the Body of Christ may possibly be superior to our own. Thus, they may be of greater service to Christ and His kingdom, and therefore more worthy of adoption. 



**NOTES**

1. J. A. Motyer, *Philippian Studies* (Chicago: InterVarsity Press, 1966), 68-69, 72.
2. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Letter to the Philippians,” *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 2:248; Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, in the *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1983), vii.
3. Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians*, in *The New Century Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 86.
4. William Barclay, *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*, in *The Daily Study Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959), 40-42.
5. F. W. Beare, *Epistle to the Philippians*, in *Harper’s New Testament Commentaries* (New York: Harper, 1959), 71.
6. Motyer, *Philippian Studies*, 67.
7. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 67.
8. Georg Bertram, TDNT 9 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974): 233.
9. Beare, *Philippians*, 72.
10. Martin, *Philippians*, 90; Beare, *Philippians*, 73; cf. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 69.
11. H. A. A. Kennedy, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1897), 433.
12. Barclay, *Letters to the Philippians*, 38.
13. Walter Grundmann, TDNT 8 (1972): 2.

# Paul as a Model for Pastoral Leadership

by Lyle P. Flinner

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**T**here are many ways to define *leadership*, for the concept is complex and multifaceted. Some define it as the relatively high status or position occupied by the person, the one at the top of any hierarchy being designated the "leader." Other definitions emphasize popularity or esteem—the leader being perceived as such by admiring followers. Some define *leadership* in terms of traits or abilities. Many small-group studies define leadership as power or influence. Others define a leader as one who adequately performs the many functions expected of a leader.

But no matter how you define *leadership*, Paul was a great leader. A perceptive look at his letters to churches throughout the early Christian world reveals the characteristics, qualities, and traits that have always been associated with great leaders. Even more definitive of his leadership qualities are the expressions in his letters of "parental" care, concern, and depth of wisdom as he charts the course of these fledgling groups of Christians. There is no one else to whom they can turn, and Paul does not fail them. With keen insight into intricate problems, with wise appointments of qualified Christians to positions of responsibility, and with an empathy to the needs of these early churches, Paul ministered encouragement and hope from a personal stance of servanthood. He had a positive and optimistic view of those he was leading, being assured of God's abundant sufficiency for every possible situation.

In attempting to analyze Paul's leadership as a model for pastoral leadership we look carefully at the letter to his most supportive church—Philippi. This church evidently did not develop out of a structured synagogue background, for Paul developed the first converts from his contact at a riverside meeting. This could imply a need for developing in the church there a concept and philosophy of leadership in a relatively newly organized group.

In this short letter we can discern Paul's perception of himself as a leader, his perception of followers (or co-leaders), and his perception of the possibilities of the church.

## PAUL'S PERCEPTION OF HIMSELF

Self-image is directly related to our level of accomplishment. Paul had a positive self-image with a clear sense of mission and a deep-settled confidence in his abilities to do the job. This self-image developed from his intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and his absolute faith in the possibilities of their partnership.

Paul introduces himself in 1:1 as a "bond-servant of Christ Jesus" (NASB). He assumes a position of positive commitment and voluntary servanthood. He perceives Christ as the true and ultimate Leader and himself as subordinate. He makes no statement of apostleship and makes no attempt to lord it over those at Philippi.



Lyle P. Flinner

In 2:19 Paul demonstrates both his delegation of authority in sending Timothy, and the mutual encouragement he envisioned in the success of the group. Leadership may sometimes be a lonely experience. In prison, Paul felt the need of encouragement.

Paul's inward motivation was "for the sake of Christ" (3:7, NASB). His priorities were always determined within the context of selflessness.

Paul discloses a clear sense of call and mission in 3:12. He was determined not to miss God's plan for his life. He visualized himself reaching his ultimate goal, fulfilling Christ's expectations of him.

In 3:17 and in 4:9 he is willing to risk critical examination in order to model what he taught. His identification with his Lord was complete. He demanded of himself the same high level of Christian living that he expected of others.

Paul shows, in 4:11, ability to adjust and adapt to the situation—to be flexible, accepting what could not be changed. He had reduced his personal needs. His personal demands were few, and he was not controlled by the circumstances of the moment. Paul had to learn (as do we) to accept the negative, hurting circumstances, learn from them, and then forget them.

In 4:13 Paul discloses the source of his personal strength—his intimate relationship with Christ. Such a partnership gave him an attitude of self-confidence and undefeatability.

#### **PAUL'S PERCEPTION OF HIS COWORKERS**

In 1:1 Paul accepts Timothy's commitment as equal to his own. He has the utmost confidence in Timothy's dedication and trusts him implicitly. In this verse, Paul also demonstrates a lofty view of the people in the church at Philippi, calling them "saints." They may still be in an embryonic state of sainthood, but he saw them as on their way!

He sees his followers as participating in the gospel (1:5). They are workers together with him. He sees them investing themselves with him in a common objective. They are engaged in the same partnership—with each other and with God.

Paul expresses in 2:19, 22, and 29, confidence in the coleaders to whom he has delegated responsibility and authority and commends them to the church, requesting its respect and cooperation.

Paul was naturally concerned about the state of each of his fledgling congregations. But his ultimate concern was not for organizations or structures but for individuals. Though he dealt with obvious problems in the church, his administrative stance was person-centered rather than problem-centered.

So in 1:3-4 he not only expresses his appreciation for them but earnestly offers prayer support as well.

Paul's personal concern for the Philippians is clearly evident. Many references throughout this letter give a variety of practical advice to his followers. He was unable to be there physically to train them. But they could certainly benefit from his written instruction.

Let me paraphrase:

"Strive for excellence so that you will be a model to other believers" (1:10).

"Let your attitude and your performance model a lifestyle that is worthy of the Christ you serve" (1:27).

"There will be opponents, but don't be intimidated by them" (1:28).

"In an attitude of servanthood, exclude selfishness and conceit" (2:3).

"Even though you do have legitimate personal interests, be careful to balance those personal interests against the interests of others. Enter into empathetic relationships" (2:4).

"Choose to have the attitude of Christ—an attitude of selflessness" (2:5).

"Plan, set goals, control your life as much as humanly possible with awe and a proper sense of responsibility" (2:12).

"Make every effort to get along with others and maintain a positive attitude toward your assignment and mission" (2:14).

"Guard carefully your reputation and maintain your credibility" (2:15).

"Be accepting and understanding so that your lives become an 'advertisement' for Christianity" (4:5).

"In a spirit of thankfulness and praise release your anxieties and have confidence in the resources of God to answer your every legitimate request" (4:6).

Paul concludes his personal "training" advice by a glorious promise and benediction in 4:19. Because of their dedicated partnership with God, all of their needs would be supplied—both the needs they perceived and the needs God perceived. God will take care of His own. The promise is backed by His infinite resources.

#### **PAUL'S PERCEPTION OF FUTURE POSSIBILITIES**

Paul had a very positive perception of the future as he saw God working both in the lives of the individuals and in the corporate life of the Philippian church.

One important function of every good leader is to inspire confidence and enthusiasm in his followers. Throughout this entire letter, Paul is optimistic, encouraging, motivating, and supporting. He was a true visionary. Every leader has to dream, and it's all right to build those "castles in the air"—as long as you build a foundation under them. Every accomplishment of leadership is the end result of a thought, an idea, or a dream.

Paul's positive perception of the future is clearly evidenced in a number of supportive verses:

Paul saw the beginning of God's good work in his followers as developing toward completion. He saw growth, improvement, and maturity as the result of God working in them (1:6).

Paul saw a fruitful outcome of his labor among the church at Philippi. He believed that meaningful, productive activities would result in positive results (1:22).

Paul was confident of productive results because God was continually working in each person, stimulating each one to want to accomplish the work of the Kingdom (2:13).

Paul testifies to his secure hope in eventually achieving his spiritual goals and implies that this same

*(Continued on page 54)*

# EXEGETICAL STUDIES

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## THE VALUE OF KNOWING CHRIST

(Phil. 3:7-11)

Personal testimonies are relatively rare in Paul's letters. Boasting, travel plans, and exhortation are common enough, but he seldom opens the windows of his soul and shares the heart of his relationship with Christ. For that reason Phil. 3:7-11 offers us an unparalleled glimpse into Paul's most basic spiritual values. This unveiling of his heart may have resulted from his circumstances while writing to the Philippians; they definitely give poignant power to the testimony.

### Paul's Circumstances

The general nature of Paul's circumstances while writing these words is clear, though many specific details remain speculative. Verses 7, 13, and 17 in chapter 1 make it clear that Paul was a prisoner when this passage was penned. 1:19-20 and 2:17 suggest an imminent trial that could well result in a death sentence. 1:25 and 2:24, nevertheless, indicate that Paul expected vindication and release. 1:14-17 demonstrate that considerable evangelistic efforts were going on close enough to the apostle for him to know the motives of several evangelistic thrusts. Several verses, and especially 2:19-30, suggest that travel and communication between Paul and the Philippian church was relatively easy and quick.

The specifics of Paul's circumstances are much less clear. The traditional and perhaps still most widespread view has been that Paul was in Rome, in the imprisonment described in Acts 28:30, awaiting death or acquittal from a trial before Caesar. The 20th century has seen growing support for another view of the circumstances of Paul's writing Philippians. Building on passages such as 1 Cor. 15:32; 2 Cor. 1:8-11; 11:23; and Acts 20:18-19, and on the implications of quick travel in Philippians 2:19-30, many scholars now believe that Paul was in prison in Ephesus sometime between A.D. 54-56 when writing the Philippians. Occasionally, Paul's custody in Caesarea, described in Acts 23:26, has been suggested as the circumstance in which Philippians was written.

Regardless of which specific imprisonment one believes most likely, it is clear that Paul's situation was grim

and the possibility of execution was very real. Should the Ephesian hypothesis be correct, 2 Cor. 1:8-10 reveals a heart-wrenching despair and anguish of soul that, at least occasionally, paralyzed the apostle as he faced his future. Such circumstances often lead a person to think clearly and speak openly of the deepest commitments of their lives. Paul's testimony in 3:7-11 may arise from the potential nearness of his death. At any rate his testimony is powerfully focused by his circumstances.

The rejection of his achievements is not likely to be false modesty when overshadowed by the executioner's ax. The summing up of life in terms of profit and loss is much more meaningful when the bottom line of life is about to be drawn. The fellowship of Christ's sufferings and conformity to the Savior's death have moved from figures of speech to realities of life—and death. His ultimate desire to likewise share in the resurrection is at its fullest when death is imminent. The circumstances of Paul's life suggest that the testimony of 3:7-11 does not come tripping easily off the lips of a verbose preacher. They are the solemn, calculated revelations from the heart of one who knows this testimony might well be his last will and testament.

### The Surpassing Value of Knowing Christ

Verses 7 and 8 contrast perceived gain and loss. The words *gain* and *loss*,<sup>1</sup> though originally referring to advantage and disadvantage, were widely used in Paul's time in a commercial sense for profit and loss. Paul uses the commercial metaphor here to compare his credentials in Judaism (vv. 5-6) with the value of knowing Christ. Verse 7 notes that the Jewish credentials were "gain"; they were advantageous and profitable. Paul does not disparage the achievements of his past. Nor does he say that they are worthless. Rather, he regards them as loss. In fact, verse 8 notes that he is willing to write off all such credits in order to gain Christ. It is clear that Paul understands that many people will view Christ as a liability and Paul's credentials as assets. The issue at stake is the value system by which one establishes priorities.

The kind of knowledge of Christ that Paul desires,

# PHILIPPIANS

facing the issue of life or death, is the knowledge that arises from making Christ the ultimate priority. All else is loss compared to the possibility of knowing Christ. In fact the apostle changes metaphors to express the valuelessness of anything other than Christ. All else is manure. Paul's use of this almost vulgar term makes it clear how completely committed he is to the value of knowing Christ.

The tenses of the Greek verb usually translated "counted" or "considered" are also important for understanding the apostle's emphasis. In verse 7 he uses the perfect tense, indicating that at some point in his past he had changed the evaluation of his credentials and of Christ in a way that had continuing results. This is an obvious reference to his conversion and the resulting changes in his life. In verse 8 he shifts to the present tense of the same verb, indicating continuous or ongoing action. The decision of the past with its results is not adequate. He must reaffirm his evaluation continually, even daily. Human achievement must be constantly written off. It must continually be equated with manure.

## Knowing Christ Means Union with Christ

Paul indicates that knowing Christ is the reason for considering all his credentials as loss. Verses 8-11 are a single compound sentence. The structure is as follows:

*I am considering all things to be loss  
because of the excellency of the knowledge of  
Christ . . .*

*and*

*I am considering all things manure  
in order that I might gain Christ and be found  
in . . .*

The structure suggests that verses 9-11 describe in greater detail what Paul means by knowing Christ. It will include being found in Christ, possessing the righteousness of God by faith, knowing the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering, and being conformed to Christ's death.

The phrase "that I might be found in him" is often taken to point to the Last Judgment. However, the construction is parallel to that of gaining Christ. The two-pronged purpose clause describes Paul's desire for the whole course of his life. The word *found* does not suggest an unexpected discovery. Rather, the phrase simply speaks of "being in Christ." This is often described as Paul's "mystical union with Christ" concept. It speaks of personal identification with the death, suffering, and resurrection of Christ, as verse 10 illustrates. It may indicate belonging to Christ is parallel to a human being's belonging to Adam's race.

Though Paul's doctrine of justification by faith is often contrasted with his "in Christ" emphasis, verse 9 indicates that both belong together in his view of knowing Christ. To possess the righteousness that is from God and through faith in Christ rather than his own righteousness deriving from the Law, summarizes in a single verse the treatments on righteousness in Romans and Galatians. Counting his credentials as loss rejected a righteousness derived from the Law. The desire to gain Christ is expressed as the desire to have the righteousness that is from God.

Verse 10 indicates that knowing Christ requires knowing the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. The fact that a single Greek article modifies both *power* and *fellowship* makes it clear that the two cannot be separated. When Paul thinks of union with Christ he thinks in terms of identi-



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fication with both the Cross and His resurrection (see Rom. 6:2-5; 2 Cor. 4:10-11; and Col. 3:1-4). Knowing Christ in the power of His resurrection untaps that power. It is made available for the believer's own resurrection, for victory over sin, for life in the Spirit, and for general enablement of Christian living in a world of sin and death.

The "fellowship of his sufferings" is a necessary complement to the "power of his resurrection." Access to the resurrection power is by personal identification with Christ. Just as Christ experienced the resurrection power of God after enduring the Cross, so the believer cannot know resurrection power until he has also known the agony of the cross. Death to sin and the acceptance of privation and persecution for Jesus' sake is a major part of what Paul means by sharing the sufferings and death of Christ. The reality of this identification with Christ and the Cross is revealed by the explanatory phrase, "being conformed to his death." The present tense of the Greek participle speaks of a life continually lived in conformity to the Christ who "humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (2:8). Phil. 3:21 looks forward to the time when conformity to Christ will be conformity to His glorious body.

The final result of identification with Christ will be the resurrection of the believer. Verse 11 notes that future hope of Paul. But his earnest desire for resurrection is inseparable from his present identification with Christ, as chiastic construction suggests. Paul desires to:

- A. know the power of Christ's resurrection
- B. know the fellowship of Christ's suffering
- C. be conformed to Christ's death
- D. arrive at the resurrection

The very structure denotes that one cannot participate in the resurrection and resurrection power without sharing the sufferings and death of Christ.

### Conclusion

Knowing Christ was Paul's supreme value. When faced with the possibility of death, all his human achievements were written off as a loss. Knowing Christ was the priority that shaped the apostle's value system. That supreme value expressed itself in a life of identification with both the suffering and the power of the Savior. The bottom line of Paul's evaluation was not success or failure but the surpassing value of identifying all of his life with Christ.

### IN PURSUIT OF THE GOAL (Phil. 3:12-16)

Phil. 3:12-16 is a passage full of exegetical difficulties. The Greek constructions are rough, several verbs have no expressed object, and the apostle appears to contradict himself on perfection. In spite of these problems, the main idea is clear: Paul is not yet all he will become, but he is energetically pursuing that goal. Furthermore, he is confident that God is able to bring the Philippians into the same pursuit.

Though not all the exegetical issues of this passage can be neatly packaged, most of Paul's message falls into one of three categories. He begins the section with several denials, statements of what he is *not*. Inter-

woven with the denials are affirmations of what he *is*. He concludes the section dealing with what the Philippians *can become*.

### What Paul Is Not

Verses 12 and 13 are primarily statements of what Paul is not. He has not already taken hold, he is not already perfected, he does not account himself to have grasped, and he is not obsessed by the things behind. The precise nuances of each of these denials are not easy to master. The general reference of Paul's thought is not stated, and the metaphors can be taken in more than one way.

The apostle begins verse 12 with the denial that he has already taken hold. "Taken hold of what?" is the obvious question that he does not clearly answer. A variety of suggestions have been presented, including righteousness, the future resurrection, and Christ. Some suggest that Paul intentionally left the object vague. Further, the word translated here as "taken hold" (*elabon*) can also mean "to receive," "to obtain," "to accept," "to get," "to make one's own," and "to apprehend or comprehend either mentally or spiritually." The use of the cognate verb *katalambano* in verses 12-13 suggests the idea of grasping in the sense either of taking possession of or spiritually comprehending (taking mental possession of). The object must be the knowledge of Christ described in verses 7-11. Paul does not mean that he doesn't know Christ at all. Rather, the "already" and the past tense of the verb, "taken hold," indicate that the knowledge of God described in verses 7-11 is not a past event for Paul. It is an ongoing pursuit. Knowing Christ, being found in Him, sharing His sufferings and resurrection power has been and still is happening for Paul, but it is not done. The apostle is still (even as he faces the possible end of his life) vibrantly pursuing the knowledge of Christ.

Paul notes in verse 12b that he is not already perfected. The interpretation of this statement has naturally generated considerable differences of opinion. Many scholars believe that Paul is responding here to certain opponents or heretics among the Philippians who did claim to be perfect.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not that was the case, Paul denies that he himself has become perfect. This statement stands in considerable tension with verse 15a and the relation of the two phrases will be considered below.

Verse 13 states that Paul does not account himself to have grasped. The lack of object creates similar problems to those of verse 12a. However, the word translated *grasped* (*katalambano*) is so similar to the word "taken hold" in verse 12a, we should assume the same object—the knowledge of Christ. This is supported by Paul's comment in the latter part of the verse that he has been grasped by Christ. More importantly, Paul's denial is not of knowing Christ but of accounting himself to have grasped the knowledge of Christ. The word *accounting* (*logizomai*) is an accounting term, used here in the present, continuous tense. Paul is not constantly crediting his account with the knowledge of Christ as if he had all he needed. He is convinced he must press on for more of the knowledge of Christ.

Finally, verse 13 indicates that Paul is not obsessed with the past. "Forgetting the things behind" obviously

has reference to the credentials Paul had accumulated in Judaism, described in verses 5-6. However, those things do not exhaust the meaning here. His accomplishments as an apostle are also forgotten in the overwhelming pursuit of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. The present tense construction indicates a constant forgetting of things behind. Beare notes that in the metaphor of a race, Paul "does not stop to congratulate himself upon the ground already gained; he is wholly absorbed in the task of covering the ground between him and the finish line."<sup>3</sup>

### What Paul Is

Verses 12-13 also state what Paul is. Paul is pursuing in hopes that he might grasp as he has been grasped by Christ. He is stretching out toward things before him, pursuing the goal and the prize of the upward call.

Paul describes himself as "pursuing" in both verses 12 and 14. The word he uses is the same word used both in New Testament times and post-New Testament church history to describe persecution. It was used outside the New Testament to describe hunting and racing. Paul had used the same word in verse 6, drawing on the hunting metaphor. However, the context and the lack of a stated object in verse 12 suggest that the racing metaphor predominates here. He runs on, pushes ahead. The present tense of the verb shows that Paul perceives his pursuit to be continuous. After all his accomplishments of the past he is still engaged right now in pursuing the goal.

Verse 14 fills out the racing metaphor as a description of Paul's pursuit of knowing Christ. The words *pursue*, *goal*, *prize*, and *the call*, all contribute to the racing metaphor. As mentioned above, the word *pursue* was used for running in a race. The word for goal describes the marker placed at the end of the race. The prize, as is well known, represented the reward for victory. The upward call appears to reflect the practice of the Greek games in which heralds called out the name of the victor along with his father's and country's names. The victor then received the prize from the games' officials.<sup>4</sup> The metaphor is not worked out precisely by Paul. Knowing Christ appears to be both the goal and the prize. Whether the upward call points back to Paul's Damascus Road experience or forward to the heavenward call at death is not clear. What is clear is that Paul is still pursuing the goal of knowing Christ.

The apostle is also stretching forward to the things before him (v. 13d). The contrast to forgetting the things that are behind is stretching forward for the things before. Again the picture is that of a runner straining forward with all his might—leaning toward the finish line, stretching forward with every fiber. The present tense construction again indicates a continuous life-style of this effort. While Paul in no way suggests that the prize will be given him for his human effort, the metaphor makes it clear that Christianity is not passive, lazy, or apathetic. It is forward-looking, active, intense, even aggressive, and is goal-oriented—that is, oriented toward the pursuit of knowing Christ.

### What the Philippians Can Become

Paul then turns his attention to what the Philippians can become in verses 15-16. After 11 verses (vv. 4-14)

of exclusive use of the first person singular (I), Paul suddenly shifts to first and then second person plural (we and you all). The change is from the personal testimony of a life that was a good example, to direct exhortation to the Philippians to become imitators of Paul as he will finally, bluntly state in verse 17. They can become perfect, they can become unified, and they can live up to the level they have achieved.

The word *perfect* in verse 15 has long been a problem for interpretation. In verse 12 Paul denied being perfected; now in verse 15 he appears to claim to be perfect. He seems to contradict himself. The fact that the Greek construction in verse 12 uses a verb and in verse 15 uses a noun does not solve the problem. The majority of modern versions, and probably the majority of traditional commentators, solve the problem by assuming a different meaning in the two verses. Verse 15 is usually seen as a call to maturity or *relative perfection* as opposed to the denial of absolute perfection in verse 12. There are a growing number of scholars who view the reference to perfection in verse 15 as irony or even gentle sarcasm. They also generally assume that Paul is responding to opponents at Philippi who claim to be perfect, a claim Paul makes fun of here.<sup>5</sup> However, the postulate of opponents claiming perfection is not necessary to understand this passage.

The Greek construction of the phrase in verse 15, usually translated "as many as are perfect," is elliptic. That is, it does not include the verb, which must be supplied from the context. (The "are" was supplied by translators rather than being part of the text.) The context of this paragraph is forward-looking. It does not focus on present status or achievements but is stretching forward to things before. Therefore, Richard Howard suggests supplying a future verb and translating, "as many as shall be perfect."<sup>6</sup> Equally appropriate would be a subjunctive verb for the ellipsis with the translation, "as many as would be perfect."

Verse 15 is not sarcasm directed at supposed opponents. It is Paul's invitation to the Philippians to join with him in setting their minds on the goal of knowing Christ. The perfection he is dealing with here is the resurrection perfection of having experienced identification with the resurrection of Christ. Obviously, Paul has not yet experienced that perfection, as he says in verse 12. However, his goal of experiencing resurrection identification with Christ is possible. He is stretching forward toward that goal. He is pursuing it. And he invites the Philippians to join in that pursuit. They as well as he can become perfect.

Those who wish to join Paul in his pursuit should set their minds on it. If anyone has a different mind-set, Paul is confident that God will reveal the correct direction to them. The verb *phroneo*, "to set one's mind," indicates that the issue is not simply differences of opinion or required acceptance of Paul's views. "The verb suggests a blend of conviction which results in action; it is more ethical than intellectual."<sup>7</sup> However, that direction of life does not arise from apostolic coercion but from God's direction in the lives of those who differ. The Philippians can become united in their pursuit of identification with Christ if they submit to God's revelatory input into their lives.

The Philippians can also live up to the level they have achieved. Paul has been projecting his pursuit of the goal of Christ and urging the Philippians to join him in that pursuit. In verse 16, though, he urges them to stay in line at the place at which they have arrived. The differences of understanding and spiritual attainment must not cause the Philippians to live at a level lower than what they knew spiritually. Criticism, dissension, and competition must not be allowed to destroy the fellowship of the church. The Philippians could live up to the level they had achieved in their pursuit of the goal of Christ.

## Conclusion

In 3:12-16, Paul makes the transition from his own testimony, given in the previous verses, to an exhortation that the Philippians join him in pursuit of the goal of knowing Christ. He makes it clear that the goal is not in his possession, but that he is still stretching forward toward it. His life-style can be shared by the Philippians.

## JOY, PATIENCE, PRAYER, AND PEACE (Phil. 4:4-7)

Paul begins the conclusion of his letter to the Philippians in 4:1-9. The section is divided into three parts by three positive commands. Verse 1 commands, "stand fast in the Lord."<sup>1</sup> Verse 4 begins, "rejoice in the Lord." Verse 8 counsels, "think on these things." The middle section (vv. 4-7) focuses on joy, patience, prayer, and peace.

## JOY

Joy is an important theme in Philippians. The verb "rejoice" or "rejoice with" appears 11 times (1:18 twice; 2:17 twice; 2:18 twice; 2:28; 3:1; 4:4 twice; and 4:10) in the letter. The noun "joy" appears 5 times (1:4, 25; 2:2, 29; 4:1). Here, in 4:4, Paul makes his final appeal to the Philippians to rejoice.

Paul uses the present imperative, *chairete*, twice in verse 4. This suggests that the Philippians are to continually, regularly rejoice. It can be translated, "Keep on rejoicing." This implies that the Philippians were already in the habit of rejoicing. It is especially significant in the light of Paul's own circumstances while issuing this command. The imperative to keep on rejoicing is used five times in the letter. Paul's relationship with the Philippians through the years had apparently been marked by joy. He and the Philippians had formed a partnership to advance the gospel, and the joy of the apostle's successful missionary ventures had been a shared joy.<sup>2</sup> Now that he was in prison and facing a possible death sentence, he urges them to continue rejoicing. In 2:17-18, Paul witnessed to his own ongoing rejoicing in the face of his imminent death and commanded the Philippians to continue rejoicing with him. The apostle again commanded the Philippians to rejoice in 3:1 and indicated that it was no bother for him to repeat the command. And repeat it he does. Twice in 4:4 the imperative "keep on rejoicing" calls the Philippians to perseverance in their joy regardless of the outcome of Paul's trial.

The context defining their rejoicing was to be "in the Lord." This is what makes the command realistic rather

than an order to whistle in the dark. When joy is "in the Lord," it is more than a mood or emotion. It is the recognition, and response to it, that the meaning of all events is found in how those events are related to the Lord Jesus Christ. If the missionary work has been successful, one rejoices because it was carried out in obedience to and in proclamation of the Lord. If witness to Christ leads to prison and death, one rejoices because the witness is related to the Lord, again in obedience and proclamation. At the bottom line, Paul's continuing command to rejoice is an affirmation that our Christian faith must control our responses to life rather than allowing our emotional reactions to affect the expression of our faith.

## PATIENCE

Verse 5 is composed of two short sentences. The first is a command for graciousness. The second affirms the Lord's nearness. In neither sentence is Paul's meaning clear, nor is the relationship of the sentences to each other clear. However, the combination suggests that believers can afford to have patience.

The first sentence of verse 5 is constructed in the Greek text in the third person imperative. There is no equivalent grammatical construction in English. The only imperative construction in English is constructed in the second person. The customary translation of a Greek third person imperative uses "let" as in, "Let your graciousness be known to all." Perhaps the imperative could be expressed more forcefully by the translation, "Your graciousness must be known to all." The point is, Paul understands the sentence as an imperative. For us to properly understand it we must recognize it as a command, not as an expression of wishful permission.

The subject, "graciousness," is translated in a wide variety of ways. Magnanimity, forbearance, kindness, courtesy, sweet reasonableness, and considerate thoughtfulness have all been suggested as meanings of the word.<sup>3</sup> It describes that gracious spirit that does not insist on having the last word. The person who is gracious in this way is interested in fairness and justice. But he knows when to bend the *letter* of the law to accomplish the *spirit* of the law. Such a person allows others to have faults. They are graciously overlooked for the greater good of the community. This graciousness describes a patience that does not quibble over the minor inequities of life because it is confident of God's long-range justice.

The statement that follows, "The Lord is near," can be understood as an affirmation of either the nearness of Christ's presence or the soon (second) coming of the Lord. No particle suggests how or whether Paul saw a relationship between the command to make the graciousness of the Philippians known and the nearness of the Lord. If the apostle is speaking of the imminent return of Christ, then it is easily connected to the command for graciousness. The soon coming of the Lord is obvious reason for a believer to relax and be gracious about the shortcomings and differences of others. However, who could deny that the thought of the nearness of Christ's presence is also strong motivation to be graciously patient with others? It may be that Paul is satisfied with the double meaning. At any rate what is clear is

that the Philippian believers are to be patiently gracious in their relationships.

## PRAYER

The nearness of the Lord may also relate to verse 6. Here Paul forbids anxiety and commands prayer. Prayer is prescribed as the antidote to anxiety.

Paul prohibits anxiety. The tense of the verb indicates that Paul means "stop being anxious about anything." Here Paul is in contact with the teachings of Jesus. Similar instructions can be found in Matt. 6:25-34. Paul's own circumstances of imprisonment and imminent death make it clear that he is not speaking of any superficial cheerfulness. The prohibition of anxiety "is not because he makes light of the troubles which they face, but because he knows that God is greater than all our troubles."<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, to stop being anxious is no simple thing. It is no easy matter to change one's natural response to difficulty. It could be that the nearness of the Lord mentioned in verse 5 would be sufficient motivation to stop worrying. It is more likely, however, that Paul understood the prayer that he commands in the second part of the verse to be the means by which anxiety can be overcome.

The command to pray is, like the command to be gracious in verse 5, constructed with a Greek third person imperative. The subject is "your requests" and the imperatival force might be better captured by the translation, "Your requests must be made known . . ." than by the traditional, "Let your requests be made known." The use of the three virtually synonymous words, *prayer*, *petition*, and *request*, makes the command to pray even more forceful. In Paul's mind, prayer, prayer, and more prayer was the most effective way of eliminating anxiety.

However, it is likely that the real thrust of the verse is not simply prayer but prayer with thanksgiving. The second part of the verse might be translated, "With prayer and petition your requests must be made known to God with thanksgiving." Prayer must be prayed with thanksgiving. There is no suggestion here to thank God for everything, but the command is to pray with thanksgiving in every situation. Once again Paul's own circumstances provide the most powerful object lesson for his teaching. He was not necessarily thankful that he was facing death in prison. However, he was thankful that the gospel was being preached more energetically than it had been before his misfortune. He was apparently more grateful for the prayers and support of the Philippians than he had been previously. The thanksgiving rendered to God for the good things that he was experiencing quelled the rising anxiety over his circumstances.

## PEACE

Paul climaxes this section with the promise of the power of God's peace. Verse 7 is the only verse in this passage that does not contain an imperative construction. The implication is that this promise is intended for those who obey the commands of the previous three verses. Paul here suggests the meaning of the peace of God, the work of the peace of God, and the context of the peace of God.

The meaning of the peace of God cannot be ex-


hausted either in definition or in experience. It must not be limited simply to the peace the believer receives from God. Paul seems to be referring first and foremost to the peace that God possesses. The peace of God is that "calm serenity that characterizes his very nature . . . that which grateful, trusting Christians are welcome to share."<sup>5</sup> The fact that God is at peace with himself and His world is far more significant for guarding our hearts and minds than is our experiencing peace from Him.

Paul describes the peace of God as surpassing all understanding. The phrase may be interpreted in two ways. It may simply mean that God's peace "transcends every human thought." Or the nuance may be that God's peace is able to "perform more than human plans can accomplish."<sup>6</sup> It is not impossible that Paul intended both nuances. However, given the context here of exhortations to patience and to prayer in the light of his (and any) circumstances, it is more likely that he is affirming that God's peace goes beyond any human understanding. As such, it is a resource capable of working good for the Philippians.

The work accomplished by the peace of God is the guarding of the hearts and minds of believers. The word translated *guard* was derived from a military term describing a garrison of soldiers assigned to protect an outpost from being overrun. Such a garrison was in fact posted at Philippi in Paul's time. Thus the work of the peace of God was graphically portrayed by this metaphor. God's peace was like a garrison protecting the hearts and minds of the Philippian believers. It did not mean that they would not be attacked. It is the probability of attack that necessitates a garrison. What it did mean was that the attack would not overpower them.

The context in which the peace of God protects is "in Christ Jesus." If the sphere of the believers' lives is Christ, God's peace will protect. The promise of protection is good as long as the believer is in Christ. To live one's life in another sphere of influence is to move beyond the protecting promise of the peace of God.

## Conclusion

Paul's closing comments on joy, patience, prayer, and peace are powerful expressions of his faith. The circumstances of the apostle's imprisonment and possibly imminent death give both the exhortations and the promise credibility. Facing death, he was ready, willing, and able to describe some essentials by which the Philippians could live. Joy, patience, prayer, and peace are equally important for the life of the church today. 

## NOTES

Philippians 3:7-11

1. All scripture quotes are the author's own translation.

Philippians 3:12-16

1. See Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians*, in *The New Century Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 136; and Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, in *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1983), 43:150-51, for a discussion of various views.

2. See Hawthorne, *Philippians*, xlii-xlvii; and Joseph B. Tyson, "Paul's Opponents at Philippi," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 3 (Spring 1976), 1:82-95, for treatment of Paul's opponents and for further bibliography.

3. F. W. Beare, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1973), 130.

4. Jean-Francois Collange, *The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Philippians*, trans. A. W. Heathcote (London: Epworth Press, 1979), 134. Martin, *Philippians*, 139, and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 154-55, both follow Collange's interpretation at this point.

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# WORKING OUT YOUR SALVATION

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**P**aul's letter to the Philippians is different in form from most of his letters in at least two ways. Although this letter has some marvelous theological passages, Paul's basic intention is not to correct a theological error but to resolve the problem of disunity among church members. And instead of following the common format of a theological discussion followed by practical applications, he moves back and forth, crisscrossing over the same subject several times. His use of theological statements is for illustrative or grounding purposes, showing that the Christian ethic correlates with God's salvation plan.

The center of this reiterative pattern of discussion is in chapter 2, verses 12 and 13.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose (*NIV*).

Once this statement is clarified, it can be recognized as a common thread weaving through the “warp and weft” of the Epistle.

What needs clarification is the statement “work out your salvation.” Paul is not advocating salvation by works or that works meritoriously follow after faith. Such is contrary to his basic position of salvation by faith only. The expression relates to the *fellowship* of the faith, not to the *faith* of the fellowship. The fellowship is to be cherished and maintained at all costs. It is here that believers are to “work out” their salvation. John A. Knight explains, Paul “has the idea of bringing to completion.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, we are to extend and complete, *by our works*, the fellowship that we have in Christ to others, particularly to those within the faith.

It is strange that such a straightforward exhortation needs clarification. But we become slaves to words and forms of expression so easily that we lose sight of the intentions expressed. An example of this is when we disregard what biblical writers are really saying and take all of their statements as theological pronouncements. Paul was certainly capable of profound theological expression; his inspired insights are foundational. But we tend to forget that he was at all times a churchman and an evangelist maintaining that theology must always be translated into practical situations. Furthermore, many of his comments are personal or practical, not intended as theological statements. Such is his intention in the passage under consideration.

Paul consistently maintains that nothing is lacking in the vicarious sufferings of Christ. We can add nothing to the merits of the Atonement. Our salvation is based upon a life we did not live and a death we cannot die.

Wesley L. Harmon





What Paul suggests in this passage is not contrary to his position of the Atonement. The "holy walk" that every believer must follow adds nothing of merit to the grace received through Christ. Even though the life now lived is by "God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose," it remains so far below the life Christ lived that it merits us nothing. It is only in this sense that Wesleyans understand Paul when he suggests that believers "are sinners" (Gal. 2:17, NIV).

One persistent misunderstanding about the doctrine of entire sanctification is that the Holy Spirit enables one to perfectly fulfill the law of God. The vicarious sufferings of Christ only prepare us to live a life of holiness, *which now becomes the basis* of God's continuing favor. But such a position is not consistent with Paul's teaching. He maintains that favor from God for the sanctified is solely through the merit of Christ. Our life in Him is "a righteousness that is by faith from first to last" (Rom. 1:17, NIV). We must pray every day, "O Lord, I need the merits of Thy atonement."

So Paul has a practical intention when he tells the Philippian Christians that they are to work out their salvation. They are to bring their salvation to completion by focusing on getting along with others. "The Philippians are," states Knight, "to work *out* as a *community* in their social relationships what God had worked *in* by faith."<sup>2</sup> And to do this properly takes a lot of work!

The ability to get along with others, especially fellow believers, does not happen spontaneously. We really have to work at it. The Church is not a "showcase" with perfect Christians on display. It is a "workshop" with imperfect Christians in various stages of spiritual development. Consequently, there are all kinds of situations and people to generate disunity. Paul challenges us to work to overcome these factors. The *fellowship* is as important as the *faith*. We are to do so "with fear and trembling." Not because failure may result in the loss of one's salvation, but because there are so many fragile relationships that can be damaged. People can be lost if we fail to exercise appropriate concern and caution. The heart of church life should be in activity with other Christians, not activity in programs, or doctrines, or organizations. If we are not careful, we can give wrong impressions, can say the right things in the wrong way at the wrong time. There are many ways by which we can easily and innocently hurt others.

While works are not essential to salvation, they are crucial to relationships. What would the church be today if we gave as much concern to this as we do to the correctness of doctrine or the propriety of worship? Maybe we need more courses in our colleges and churches on how to get along with others. There is a real need for Christians to be sensitive at this point. We glorify God as much by the way we get along with each other as we do by personal piety and sound doctrine. And how does all of this affect relationships with people outside of the faith? "All men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35, NIV).

Paul addresses the Philippians as "saints in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:1, NIV). Everything said in this Epistle is grounded in this concept.<sup>3</sup> The expression "work out your salvation" is included in its scope. All effort in the direction of working to maintain good relationships

should be within the atmosphere of being "in Christ Jesus." Being in Christ Jesus is for the Christian what being in water is for the fish—our natural atmosphere. The Christian ethic is grounded in principles—not in precepts—and these principles are grounded in Christ Jesus; they are ultimately personal. The true expression of this ethic is not only with piety but also with redeeming, person-affirming relationships.

In Philippians, Paul gives several principles to follow as we "work out" our salvation in Christ in relationship with others. We will look at four, one from each of the four chapters.

**PRINCIPLE 1—Outward conduct should exemplify Christ. "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (1:27, NIV).**

By this principle, salvation is "worked out" outwardly. The most perspicuous evidence of our life "in Christ Jesus" is our conduct—how we treat people. Paul says that everything done in relationship with others should be worthy of Christ. He is our pattern. We should answer others as He would answer them. We are to be patient with a Christlike patience. We should seek to understand others from His perspective. The conduct of others should not influence our conduct toward them. Others' actions should not determine our reactions. Jesus Christ is our guide, our inspiration, our principle of conduct. In short, we should treat others as He would treat them. "In Him believers have the perfect example of how they should behave, an example of humility and self-renunciation with a view to the welfare of others."<sup>4</sup>

This kind of conduct will not always be understood or appreciated. Neither Paul nor Jesus were always well received; neither will we be. But they were victorious in the long run, and so will we, for it is the long run that really counts. In time, this quality of conduct will be significant to those who don't receive us now. Conduct grounded in Christ Jesus will not fail. What others may say about us should not deter us from "working out" a Christlike conduct toward them. Until our conduct is appreciated, we can be content with what we know of ourselves and of Him, not by what others may say or think about us.

**PRINCIPLE 2—Our attitudes toward others should be identical with Christ's. "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (2:5, NIV).**

By this principle, salvation is "worked out" inwardly. The outward pattern of Christlike conduct must be internalized. Christ's conduct was not based on what He had to do, but on what He wanted to do. His conduct was a manifestation of who He was. It is possible for one to conform outwardly to the pattern of Christ without an inward reality. This fact is in Paul's mind as he articulates this second principle.

Paul urges the Philippian believers to be "like-minded" (v. 2) to consider "others better than yourselves" (v. 3), to look "to the interests of others" (v. 4), and to strive for those attitudes that are exemplified in Christ. God, by the Holy Spirit and based on Christ's atonement, can cleanse and reorder one's intentional life. But the attitudes spoken of here will not automatically flow from us to others. Attitudes, like patterns of conduct, are matters of habit as well as intention. It is always hard to

break old habits and establish new ones. So we must work to achieve this change. We must exert effort daily to reshape our attitudes. It takes work, time, and determination to uproot everything in our attitudes that is crude. It can take a lifetime. We may have the *image* of Christ within us, but we must achieve the *likeness* of Christ. No one can say, "I have achieved all that is implied in the 'attitude of Christ.'"

Paul illustrates his point by the famous "kenosis" passage (vv. 6-11). Here he describes a pure, unselfish attitude: Christ's "emptied" himself of all of His prerogatives as God in order to reach mankind.<sup>5</sup> Here is the ultimate example of what it means to have the right attitudes toward others. Paul teaches here by description, not by definition. Words cannot say it, they can only point to it. The example is beyond man's ability to speak of it. But it is an example that we should hold before us each day as we go about the task of "working" on our attitudes.

**PRINCIPLE 3—Work to achieve life's highest goals. "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things" (3:14-15).**

By this principle, salvation is "worked out" objectively. Nothing is achieved without goals. And what makes goals worthwhile are the values that qualify them. So to "work out" one's salvation requires this forward look. Paul tells us that our outward and inward lives in Christ Jesus are enriched and made more significant by pressing forward to achieve the ultimate goal and by being committed to the highest values.

Although not found in this passage, the thought of "being in Christ" cannot be far from Paul's mind. Just as Christ is our model in behavior and attitudes, so is He our pattern here. Wherever we read of Him in the Scriptures, we are aware that He always had transcendent goals and values in view. It was this view that gave Him assurance, poise, and confidence while experiencing adversity, misunderstanding, and even death.

The more that Christians focus their attention on these goals the less the likelihood there is of them trying to "straighten each other out." Criticisms of fellow believers will rupture the fellowship every time. But the more we see others in the light of Christian goals and objectives, the more tolerant we will be of them. People working together to achieve common goals find ways of overlooking faults.

In addition to this, these goals will keep us from being bewitched by earthly allurements. There is an allure-ment of the secular society that barter selfish interests and humanistic values. This is the society of power politics, Hollywood idols, "Super Bowl" mentalities, and extravagant life-styles. It is a society of rising crime rates, international terrorism, human rights violations, personal and family disappointments. It takes real effort to shake off the effects of what we see in tabloids, evening news reports, and the peer groups who are always trying to "keep up with the Joneses."

There is the allure-ment of the society that urges us to "get rich at any cost." Because of this it is easy to become frustrated with what we *don't* have and get caught up in the spiraling snare of thinking we need more gad-

gets. We end up buying things we don't need with money we don't have to impress people we don't like. Adding sanctity to this allure-ment are those preachers proclaiming the "Gospel of Health, Wealth, and Indulgence." Sensitive Christians are caught in a conceptual vise. On the one hand they are frustrated by a secular society that flaunts its prosperity. On the other hand, they are confused by a religious society that undermines faith.

Then there is the allure-ment of the permissive society. What radical changes have come in our world in the past 25 years! What was once censored from magazines, movies, and television is now common fare. Playboy activities have come out from behind closed doors to be performed on center stages. Sex-for-fun is flaunted in our faces. While most people may not be tempted to play along, they are tempted to watch and applaud.

So, Christians are challenged by Paul to avoid the pull of these allure-ments by focusing on what is before us all. "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead . . ." (3:13) suggests strong, daily effort on our parts. Tangible allure-ments will have little hold on those striving to reach transcendent realities.

**PRINCIPLE 4—Manifest an authentic Christlike regard for the other. "Let your gentleness be evident to all" (4:5, NIV).**

By this principle, salvation is "worked out" individually. A casual reading of this verse could lead one to believe that Paul is just reiterating what he said about Christlike attitudes in 2:5. But he's not. He is distinguishing that unique characteristic of Christ that drew Him to others with compassion and sacrificial concern. Luke illustrates this in chapter 8 of his Gospel, verses 43-48. The disciples could not see the sick woman because of the crowd of people; Jesus was aware of her in spite of the press. His was a "gentleness" going far beyond theirs.

The Greek term used by Paul (*epieikes humon*) is translated "forbearance" in the RSV, and "magnanimity" in the NEB. Robertson translates it as "your sweet reasonableness, your moderation."<sup>6</sup> William Barclay, however, says that this term is almost impossible to translate into English, for it means far more than the above-mentioned translations. It is basically a judicial term used by the Greeks

in those cases when strict justice becomes unjust because of its generality. A law or a regulation or a condition may be in itself perfectly just: but there may be cases in individual instances, when a perfectly just law becomes unjust, or where, to use modern terms, justice is not the same thing as equity. A man has the quality of *epieikeia* if he knows when *not* to apply the strict letter of the law, if he knows when to relax justice and to introduce mercy.<sup>7</sup>

Jesus was this kind of man at all times. And it is this kind of person that Paul is urging us to become.

Many times it is easy for us to not see individuals' needs because of our "concern for the Kingdom." It is easy for us to look at outsiders as possible converts instead of as individuals needing love and understanding. It is easy for us to look at others within the church as "problem Christians" instead of Christians with prob-

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# THE POURED-OUT LIFE:

## The Kenosis Hymn in Context

by Dennis R. Bratcher

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One of the most well known and moving passages in Paul's writings is Phil. 2:5-11, known as the Kenosis Hymn (from the Greek word *ekenōsen*, "he emptied," v. 7). Few would deny the centrality of this particular passage in the Book of Philippians or its broader importance for a deeper understanding of the person and work of Christ. However, there is a lack of consensus on how exactly to interpret the passage, and still less agreement on the role it should play in the life of the community of faith.<sup>1</sup>

It is easy to forget, accustomed as we are to viewing the Bible through large theological categories such as "Word of God" or "Truth," that much of the Bible emerged from a community of faith that was itself grappling with the down-to-earth problems of service to God. This is especially true of the New Testament Epistles, which are real letters written (usually) by individuals to particular people in particular situations in a given time frame. To acknowledge this is not to assume that they are frozen in the past by time and circumstance with no real value for today. Quite the contrary, the community of faith has continually affirmed that the Epistles communicate God's word to humanity and so have enduring value for faith and practice. Yet the fact that the Epistles are real occasional letters must be taken seriously in interpreting their message for appropriation by the Church today. The recognition of this fact establishes some guidelines for interpreting the Kenosis Hymn in Philippians.

First, while Paul did not hesitate to use loftily and magnificent theological formulations to address the rather mundane problems of the New Testament churches (compared by one writer to using a cannon on a rabbit!<sup>2</sup>), this particular passage is not a theological treatise. The assumption that the passage is a mine out of which propositional truths about divine reality may be dug has led to some bitter divisions within the Body of Christ.<sup>3</sup> Rather, the passage should be approached initially in terms of the context and purpose of the letter itself, and its function within that context.

Second, the Kenosis Hymn is generally recognized by scholars to be an early Christian hymnic affirmation of faith quoted secondarily by Paul. Much ink has been spilled trying to establish the "original" meaning of the hymn to the Early Church. However, if we take seriously the fact that Paul is writing to a community of faith to deal with practical matters, then the original meaning of the hymn must be subordinate to its present context and function within the Epistle.

Finally, being a letter, the "book" of Philippians will to some degree reflect the needs and concerns of the persons involved, both the author's and the recipients'. While a complete portrait of neither Paul nor the church can be painted from the Epistle, the life situation of both, their relationships to each other, and the matters that concern each of them have shaped both its content and its manner of expression. An awareness of these factors and how they are expressed will provide both a social and a literary context in which to set the Kenosis Hymn while providing a basis for application to the modern church.

Paul's relationship with the church at Philippi had been warm and cordial. Although he had been imprisoned on his first visit there (Acts 16:11-40), it was the first church founded in Europe. The initial success there was fondly recalled by Paul (Phil. 1:3-5). The church had continued to support Paul in his missionary efforts (4:15-18). The warm introduction to the Epistle, its cordiality second only to 1 Thessalonians, reflects the continuing close relationship between Paul and the Philippians (note 4:1).

However, it is clear that Paul is in perilous circumstances. Not only is the gospel that he has preached faithfully being threatened by self-serving, ambitious preachers (1:15-17; 2:20-21; 3:18-19), but he himself is in prison, facing imminent death (1:7, 12-16; 2:17; cf. 3:8-14). Yet there is no depression or gloom in this Epis-



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tle. On the contrary, joy and rejoicing are prominent (1:4, 8, 25; 2:2, 17-18, 29; 3:1; 4:1, 4, 10). Paul faces his circumstances with a faith born not only out of God's past sustenance and provision (4:11-13) but also out of a lively hope in the future. His hope is based on his own commitment to a set of values that so transcend earthly concerns that he can refer to things highly valued by earthly standards as rubbish (3:4-11; cf. 1:19-26; 3:20-21)!

Paul is so committed to values beyond himself that he can actually rejoice in his own dire circumstances because they have advanced the opportunity for the proclamation of Christ (1:12-14). This attitude is reflected in the opening line of the Epistle by a self-designation common of Paul: servant (or "slave"; Greek, *doulos*; cf. Gal. 1:10; 2 Cor. 4:5; 1 Cor. 7:22). It is significant to note that while Paul customarily establishes his authority as an apostle in writing to the churches (as in the first verses of Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians), in this Epistle he simply calls himself (along with his coworker, Timothy) "servant."

It is this warm relationship between the Philippian church and Paul, and his portrayal of himself as the faithful bond-servant of God who suffers and rejoices because he has chosen the path of service to others, that provides the backdrop for Paul to address the needs and concerns of the church at Philippi.

Paul's introduction is cordial, including a prayer (1:3-12) in which he emphasizes the communal nature of the gospel by the repeated use of "all of you" (1:4, 7 [twice], 8; also 1:25; 2:17, 26). He also emphasizes the commonality between them ("sharing," *koinōnia*, 1:5; "partners," *sugkoinōnous*, 1:7; cf. 4:4-16). He then expresses his earnest desire to continue serving and working with them (1:23-25). While the whole tenor of the letter to this point has evoked images of community, close relationship, and selfless servanthood to God, the first hint of a problem emerges in 1:27. Here Paul begins addressing practical concerns relating to the life of the community of faith at Philippi. The emphasis on being "steadfast in the spirit" and "struggling together with one mind" for the sake of the gospel suggests that the unity of the community needs strengthening.

It is critical for the interpretation of the rest of the Epistle to note that the first imperative Paul directs to the Philippian community concerns proper Christian lifestyle. While Paul makes the same appeal to other churches (cf. Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:12), here he departs from his usual vocabulary and uses a technical word (*politeuesthe*, 1:27) that means "to discharge one's obligation as a citizen" or "to fulfill one's obligation to the community."<sup>4</sup> The Philippians were proud of their status as Roman citizens, their city being a Roman colony, and would clearly understand Paul's call to fulfill societal obligations. But Paul is not calling them simply to be good citizens but to fulfill their obligations to the Christian community. This would result in a unity of spirit, mind, and purpose. Paul does not immediately explain what that obligation entails, but there is built into the letter already an expectation that it is somehow related to Paul's dire circumstances, a hint given support by his reference to suffering related both to himself and to the Philippians (1:29-30).

**Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: who, being in the very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

—Philippians 2:5-11, NIV

This call to proper citizenship in the gospel is reinforced by the first verses of the second chapter, where the love, compassion, and sense of community (*koinōnia*, 2:1) that come from Christ are used as a basis for a renewed appeal for unity (the same mind-set, the same love, united in spirit, of one purpose).<sup>5</sup> The problem in the Philippian community is finally revealed to be selfishness and arrogance (v. 3). Internal dissension is threatening the love, unity, and fellowship of the community (cf. 2:14; 3:18-19; 4:2). While the cause is not revealed, the solution is understood by Paul to be a proper ordering of one's life. Priorities must be made according to a set of values that places the welfare and interests of others above concern for self (2:3-4); a humility arising from the very nature of being Christian. This would have two implications: the Philippians would fulfill their obligations to the community of faith as citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and the community itself would be built around a set of values and concerns far different from the rest of the world (3:17-20).

The Kenosis Hymn, then, occurs in this setting, giving expression to Paul's call for worthy fulfillment of Christian obligation and servanthood.

The introductory line to the Kenosis Hymn (2:5) presents several problems of interpretation. First, there is no clear referent for "this" (*touto*). From the present context it is reasonable to conclude that Paul is referring to the whole attitude of like-mindedness, unity, and humility that has been the Epistle's focus since 1:27. Second, the phrase *en humin*, usually translated "in your-

selves," as a personal attitude each person should have, probably should be understood within the context of the strong emphasis on community as "among all of you"; that is, as an attitude toward each other. Third, the last phrase lacks a verb in Greek. The usual practice is to supply a form of the verb "to be": "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus" (2:5, NASB; cf. NIV, KJV). While this is permissible, it is also possible to use the original verb ("have . . . attitude") in the second clause, a common Hebrew usage found less frequently in Greek. Understood in this way, the verse reads: "Think this (in this manner of humility) toward each other which you also think in Christ Jesus (as Christians)." "In Christ Jesus" refers to those who have been baptized into Christ (cf. Rom. 6:11, 23; Gal. 3:28; et al.). Therefore, being "in Christ" is the basis for having the attitude of humility that Paul has just shown to be necessary: On the basis of the attitude of humility that you have before Christ as Christians, you should also have the same attitude in your relationships with one another (cf. NEB). This understanding of 2:5 fits well with the context as Paul elaborates the nature of the worthy conduct that is the obligation of Christians.

The actual Kenosis Hymn begins in 2:6. It can be divided into three parts: verse 6, introduced by the pronoun "who" referring to "Christ Jesus," which focuses on the privileged status of Christ; verses 7-8, introduced by the disjunctive "but," contrasting with verse 6, which focuses on the self-abasement of Christ; and verses 9-11, introduced by a strong referential conjunction (*dio kai*, "therefore also"), implying that the last part is a necessary result of the preceding, which focus on the activity of God exalting Jesus. Thus, there is a movement of the status of Christ within the hymn. He first appears on a level of equality with God (v. 6). Then, by His own choice, He lays aside that equality and takes on the role of a servant (vv. 7-8). Finally, He is exalted by God to a status equal with God (vv. 10-11).

This pattern of privilege-servanthood-exaltation, which is presented in the hymn as Paul's elaboration of the proper Christian life-style, is shown to be working out in Paul's own life and is used as a basic structural element of the entire Epistle. Paul has clearly cast himself in the servant role by the initial greeting (1:1) and the recounting of his circumstances (vv. 12-16). He also testifies that he himself has enjoyed privilege, which he has gladly and freely laid aside and has "counted as loss for the sake of Christ" (3:7, NASB; cf. vv. 8-14). He makes it clear that he anticipates a day of exaltation so eagerly that "to die is gain" (1:21). Paul sees himself so clearly following the path of servanthood that was established by Christ, especially in his present circumstances, that he can refer to "the fellowship of His sufferings" and "being conformed to His death" (3:10, NASB). It is in this spirit that Paul can point to himself and say, without trace of arrogance or pride, "Follow my example" (3:17).

Paul deliberately uses himself and his circumstances to illustrate the proper exercise of the role of servant exemplified by Christ. Paul repeatedly uses the word *phronein* (to set one's mind on, to have an attitude) to refer to the mind-set of humility and selflessness to which he originally called the Philippians and which the Kenosis Hymn illustrates (2:5; cf. 2:2; 1:7). He also uses

it to refer to his own attitude of selfless commitment, which he invites them to share (3:15). He uses the same word to highlight the wrong mind-set, that of selfish preoccupation with earthly values (3:19), and to commend their own concrete expression of the proper concern for others (4:10).

It is this willingness to lay aside all rights of personal privilege—to submit in the spirit of servanthood to the needs and concerns of others—that is the heart of this letter. From Paul's side we see it as one who is a faithful servant following the Servant-Christ. From the Philippians' side it is as those who are obligated to exhibit that servanthood as followers of Christ. To show Christ as a servant, then, is to illustrate what being "in Christ" entails.

Paul argues that to fulfill one's obligation as a citizen of the heavenly kingdom is to empty oneself as He did, and to take on the role of a servant. One must commit oneself not only to sharing grace but also to suffering (1:5, 7, 29-30). He must be willing to be "poured out" in the service of others (2:17), to have a mind-set and life-style that is different from the values of the world (3:18-19). He must exhibit true humility, understanding that to be "in Christ" means to be a servant because Christ came to the world, not as Lord but as Servant (cf. John 13:2-20)!

The Kenosis Hymn functions as an ethical example, an illustration of what Christian citizenship means. Unity comes in serving God through service to each other. There is danger of selfishly looking out for one's own interests at the expense of others, or of arrogance born of pride in one's status, birth, or achievements (cf. 3:2-11). The solution to problems in interpersonal relationships is an attitude of humble commitment to others. A spirit of self-sacrifice is an expression to others of the love exemplified in Christ, love that was "obedient unto death, even a cross-death!" True servanthood empties self. Paul uses Christ to illustrate this. He had every right *not* to choose the path of servanthood rather than claim His rightful status. And Paul bears witness that he himself is walking the path of servanthood, perhaps to his own cross. And he calls the Philippians to follow!

There is no room for triumphalism here! There is no room for a feel-good religion that does not take its servant role seriously. There is no room for a victory that does not first know the "fellowship of His sufferings" in behalf of others; no room for piety that does not pour out—yes, even totally empty—oneself for the interests of others.

But there is hope here. It is found in the last part of the Christ Hymn (2:9-11). God eventually exalted the Servant-Christ. His humility became glory. And Paul strongly points to an exaltation as well, affirming that "the body of our humble state" God will transform into "the body of His glory" (3:21, NASB). Jesus said to the religious people of His day: "The greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:11-12, NASB). But for Jesus, the path to that glory led through an emptying of himself—through servanthood that led to a cross. For Paul, the path to that glory led through a prison cell, through a poured-out life that caused him to say, "To die is gain" (1:21).



There is joy here, too (1:4, 25; 2:17-18; 4:4). It is not a superficial joy that evaporates at the first adversity. It is a joy that goes hand in hand with servanthood and sings in the face of death itself (2:17-19)! To take seriously this sort of servanthood disallows any sense of exaltation as reward or motivation, or as a formula for spiritual success: "Last now, first later!"<sup>6</sup> That is not authentic servanthood.

The Church today is beset by petty quarrels and selfish attitudes not unlike the churches of Paul's day. There are conflicts between larger branches of Christianity (Catholic-Protestant), between denominations (Baptist-Methodist), and between groups within denominations (moderate-fundamentalist). But there are also conflicts within local churches on all political (pastor-church board), economic (businessman-welfare mother), social (executive-laborer), racial (black-white), and personal (Smith-Jones) levels.

One local church board scrapped a successful busing program for underprivileged children because the bus was bringing children who were poor and of the "wrong" color into their affluent suburban church. "We can't afford it! They don't pay their way," one said.

"They're ruining our carpet," said another.

Still another, "They're not like us. Don't they have their own church?"

Another church, claiming they could not possibly pay their excessively high \$8,000 mission and educational budget because of the tight economy, spent nearly \$10,000 to refurbish the church offices and landscape the grounds. "We must maintain our image in the community," they said.

Still another church nearly disbanded because of a severe conflict between opposing groups over how the worship service should be conducted.

"It doesn't fit our needs. There needs to be more freedom," one group said.

"We've never done it that way," another group said.

This sort of pettiness even creeps into the ministerial ranks. I still painfully recall the conversation with a young preacher who, nearly a year after completing his ministerial education, was still working for a local company. "Oh, yes, I've been called to four different churches," he said, "but none of them could pay me more than \$15,000 a year, and we have to have at least \$20,000 to maintain our standard of living."

The examples are endless. To persons with these attitudes Paul points to the example of Christ, who traded His exalted position for the role of a servant, eventually to give His life for others. "Look at the servant-Christ," Paul says, "and be like that!"

The Church needs the unity of mind and purpose to which Paul is calling the Philippians. It needs a unity built around servanthood—a servanthood illustrated by the emptied Christ and the poured-out Paul. Perhaps the Church needs to see itself in a new light. Maybe it needs to see itself less as the proclaimer and defender of divine truth, and more as the servant of humility, the foot-washer who expresses his love by humble service (John 13). Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who poured out his own life at the hands of the Nazis because he refused to allow the church to be the tool of oppression, wrote:


The church is the church only when it exists for others. . . . The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving. . . . It must not underestimate the importance of human example which has its origin in the humanity of Jesus.<sup>7</sup>

We who profess holiness need the unity of mind and purpose to which Paul is calling the Philippians. We need to see ourselves in terms of our obligations to the community of those "in Christ" of which we claim to be a part. Maybe we need to see ourselves less in terms of "those who never sin" and more in terms of "those who serve," those to whom Jesus commanded, "Take up [your] cross, and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24, NASB). Maybe we need to see ourselves in terms of the Servant-Christ, the "man for others" who bends himself to struggle for the wholeness and healing of a wounded world.<sup>8</sup> Maybe we need to reexamine our own value structures that have been so subtly shaped by the success-oriented society around us. We need to see if we are acting in a manner worthy of the heavenly citizenship we claim. For Paul, to claim that citizenship meant to have a mind-set different from others. It meant a commitment to servanthood, a life poured out in service to others, totally emptied of self.

We live in a society dominated by rights-activism, permeated with the philosophy of "me first," and molded by the corporate ideals of efficiency and success. The Church must be called to remember that demanding one's rights and privileges may be popular, even necessary in some cases, but if it does so at the expense of Christian unity and love, it is not Christian! The Body of Christ must be called upon to refocus on Christian humility, unity, and fellowship. We must make service to others, perfect love in action, our primary responsibility. An attitude of Christlike humility does not demand rights or protect its own interests; it seeks servanthood.

C. C. Meigs expressed this attitude in the song "Others":

*Others, Lord, yes others!  
Let this my motto be!  
Help me live for others,  
That I may live for Thee!*

Idealistic? Yes. But then, so was Paul as he quoted the Kenosis Hymn to the Philippians from his jail cell! 

## NOTES

1. For a survey of interpretation of the Kenosis Hymn and an extensive bibliography see Ralph P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians 2:5-11 in recent interpretation and in the setting of early Christian worship*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

2. Fred Craddock, *Philippians*, in the *Interpretation Commentary* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985), 43.

3. See Dr. Stephen Gunter's article elsewhere in this issue.

4. The only other occurrence of the word in the Greek New Testament is in Acts 23:1 where Paul's defense of himself and his mission to the Gentiles before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem is that he is fulfilling his duty to God. The same implication is carried through Philippians by Paul's use of a nominal form of the same word in 3:20 to contrast the mind-set of Christians who are citizens of heaven with those whose mind-set is on earthly things.

5. See Professor Tashjian's article elsewhere in this issue.

6. Craddock, *Philippians*, 42.

7. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 2nd ed., ed. Eberhard Bethge (New York: Macmillan, 1971), 203-4.

8. The "man for others" is an idea developed by Bonhoeffer to describe the servant dimension of the Incarnation. Bonhoeffer, *Letters*, 202. On the function of the church as *diakonos*, "servant," see Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 132-44.

# KENOSIS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

by Stephen Gunter

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One of the most perplexing passages of Scripture for students of the Word to interpret is Phil. 2:6-8: "Though [Christ Jesus] was in the form of God, [he] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (RSV). The reference to these verses as the "kenosis passage" comes from a Greek term signifying the act of self-emptying. Older English translations often rendered the phrase that is translated "humbled himself" in the RSV with a more elaborate phrase, "made himself of no reputation." When we combine this idea with the words "emptied himself," we encounter parts of the exegetical and theological kenosis puzzle. Does Christ humbling himself imply that He was vain or conceited and therefore needed to be humbled? Did He think more of himself than would reflect a proper self-image and thus need to "make himself of no reputation"? Such questions imply a more comprehensive question, "How has the Church through the ages developed the doctrine of Christ as both God and man?"

When we survey the various Christologies of the past, we will discover that the kenosis Christologies made a rather late

appearance on the theological stage, not appearing in full costume until 17th-century Germany. A dispute arose between theologians from the faculty of Giessen with those from Tübingen over the nature of the self-emptying and of what, if anything, did Christ actually divest himself when He became man. We shall return to these in due course, but we can see those questions in better perspective if we first briefly survey the development of Christology through the history of the church.<sup>1</sup> It will readily become apparent that the doctrine of the theanthropic (God-man) nature did not appear "full blown from the head of Zeus." In other words, although the different references to Jesus as God and to Jesus as man are found throughout the Gospels and in the writings of Paul and John, the Church went through many attempts at synthesizing these ideas into a composite statement before any consensus was reached. Even then it was not a statement upon which everyone of devout testimony could agree! The Church has struggled heroically to formulate her best statements in order to adequately convey the faith we have in our Savior.

In the earliest writings to appear after those contained in our New Testament, of which the writings of John are probably the latest, written prior to A.D. 100, we encounter only simple and practical statements that reflect the biblical phrases themselves. This is indicative of the proclaiming posture they assumed, in contrast to an explaining posture. In approximately A.D. 107, Ignatius of Antioch simply refers to Christ as God, without any qualification or reference to His humanity (cf. his "Letter to the Ephesians," 7. 18 and also his "Letter to the Romans," 6). Not more than a year later Polycarp, who was personally acquainted with the apostle John, calls Jesus "the eternal Son of God" (cf. "The Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians," 2:8). It is probably not until we get to the apologist Justin Martyr that we encounter any significant level of theological speculation regarding the person of Christ. This is not especially surprising if we keep in mind that the earliest church fathers were more interested in proclaiming than they were in explaining. But it is also not unexpected that converts began to ask what was implied in such comprehensive and expansive preachments to the effect that the man Jesus was also God. The attempt to answer these legitimate questions



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marks in general terms the transition from a predominant proclaiming posture to one that includes explanation. The men who engaged in this explanation eventually came to be known as "apologists," those who gave a rational defense and explanation of the accepted faith.<sup>2</sup>

Justin, who was martyred around the year 163, appropriated the Johannine *logos* concept from John 1 and developed it from the double meaning of the Greek term *word*, which can refer to the "principle of rationality" or to the "spoken phrase or word." Jesus represents both the fundamental rational order of the universe and the active presence of God. Justin's formulation lends itself quite well to proclamation and does not lead into a high degree of abstract speculation. The step was taken in a discernible way by Clement of Alexandria (d. ca. 220) and in an even more pronounced manner by Origen (d. 254).

Clement projected a comprehensive definition of the Logos as the ultimate principle of all existence (beyond time), the perfect Reflection of the Father, the Sum of all knowledge and wisdom, the Source of personal insight into truth, the Creator of the universe, the Genesis of light and life, the Teacher of every creature, who finally became a man so that we could partake of His divine nature. In discernible lines we find an early distinction by Clement that is pertinent to the kenosis question. He envisioned the publicly observable humanity of Jesus to have been without form or comeliness (Isa. 3:2-3), but he made a distinction between two kinds of beauty—the outward beauty of the flesh, which soon fades away, and the moral beauty of the soul, which is permanent and shines brilliantly through the servanthood of our Lord. (Cf. "The Pedagogue," 3:1.)<sup>3</sup>

Highly speculative, but extremely influential, were the theological projections of Origen. He was perhaps the first to see clearly the problem depths of the presuppositions that were attached when a rational defense of Christology was attempted. So heavy did this insight weigh on Origen that he went far in the direction of philosophical theologizing in an attempt to vindicate the proclamation that Jesus was God and man. He was probably the first to use the term *God-man* as a single distinct word or concept, although many before him had spoken of Christ implying both. Origen was a master at allegory and illustration, and he explained how God could enter humanity without changing either His essential form or the form of the man by comparing the process to the manner in which fire heats and penetrates iron. The iron can take on a different shape under heat, but it remains iron. The fire itself glows a different color but does not change in its essential nature, it remains fire. This is obviously not an example of Origen's speculative philosophy, but it is indicative of how he reduced speculative thought to a communicable illustration.

Before we leave the Eastern Church theologians, we must anticipate a later development and add that Origen prepared the way both for the heresy of Arius and the orthodox answer of Athanasius in the next century. On the orthodox side, he approximates the Nicene *homo-ousion* ("same substance") by bringing the Son into union with the essence of the Father and ascribing to Him the attribute of eternity. He is the source of the Nicene doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son from the essence of the Father (although he usually represented the generation as an act of the will of the Father). On the side that opened the door to the position labeled heresy, Origen taught a subordinationism by calling the Son simply "God" and "a second God" but not "the God." This led him to teach

a form of Docetism, that Christ only "seemed to be" God and man.

The influential writers in the West were, on the whole, not as philosophical and abstract as the Eastern theologians, and the general consensus is that their thought is more easily understood. One of the foremost thinkers, famous for his close adherence to Scripture, was Irenaeus (130-200).<sup>4</sup> Like others in his day, he uses the terms "Logos" and "Son of God" interchangeably, and even concedes to the Valentinians (a group he opposed because of their gnosticism) the distinction between the "inward" and the "uttered" word in reference to man. However, he rejects the application of this distinction to God, for He is beyond all antitheses; God is absolutely simple and unchangeable.

In contrast to Origen, Irenaeus repudiates any speculative attempts to explain the derivation of the Son from the Father. As far as he is concerned, this is an "incomprehensible mystery." He is quite content to define the distinction between Father and Son by asserting that the Father is "God revealing himself" and the Son is "God revealed." The Father is the "ground of revelation" and the Son is the "revelation itself." Hence Irenaeus calls the Father "the invisible of the Son" and the Son "the visible of the Father." Following the second Adam motif of Paul in the Letter to the Romans, he asserts that Christ must be man, like us in body, soul, and spirit, though without sin if He would redeem us from sin and make us perfect. As the second Adam, He is the absolute, universal man, the prototype and summation of all humanity was intended to be. In this union of God and man, divinity is the active principle and humanity is the passive and receptive principle.

There is not another significant stage of progress in this emergence of the Church's Christology until we get to Dionysius, the bishop of Rome in approximately 262. Along the way we pass another famous name. Tertullian (ca. 160-220), but he does not escape the correct accusation that he was guilty of subordinating the Son to the Father in a rather extreme way. He bluntly calls the Father the whole divine substance, and the Son a part of it, illustrating their relation by the figures of the fountain and the stream, the sun and the beam. In all fairness to Tertullian, who was quite a brilliant (if at times bombastic) defender of the faith, his more extreme forms of subordinationism are reflected in his "Against Praxeas" (213), which is a fiery rebuttal to Praxeas' teaching that God the Father suffered on the Cross. In order to defend against this error, Tertullian sharply distinguished the Son from the Father, but he went too far. An instructive lesson is available to us from the mistakes of Tertullian. Namely, do not overstate your case in an attempt to make a point or win an argument. In so doing you can "win the battle but lose the war."

We return to the bishop of Rome, whom we described as representing the next "significant stage of progress" in the Church's emerging Christology. The reason we refer to Dionysius in this manner is that he comes the nearest of any of the pre-Nicene theologians in anticipating what would eventually become the orthodox statement of Christology. In controversy with another Dionysius (of Alexandria), the bishop of Rome maintained distinctly the unity of essence and the threefold personal distinction of Father, Son, and Spirit. In all probability, we can conclude that it was on the insights of the bishop of Rome that Athanasius rested his case in the conflict with Arius at Nicaea. (Our knowledge of Dionysius of Rome

comes from a fragment of his writings, *De sententiis Dionysii*, v., preserved by Athanasius in his *On the Decrees of the Synod of Nicaea*.)

It is to the Council at Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381) and their eventual "finalization" at Chalcedon (451) that we must turn to understand the formulas that have been bequeathed to us as the accepted orthodox standard by which all subsequent Christologies must be measured. Between 325 and 381 the Church struggled to define her accepted statement on the relation between the divine and human natures. On the one side were the Arians and Semi-Arians. The Arian heresy denied the strict deity of Christ (His absolute coequality with the Father) and taught that He was a subordinate divinity. He preexisted before the creation of the world but was not eternal. Thus, He was of a "different substance" from the Father and "there was a time when He was not." Arius taught that Jesus was a creature of the will of God, "out of nothing," who in turn created the world and afterward became incarnate in the world to accomplish our salvation.<sup>5</sup>

The teachings of the Semi-Arians is similar, but it takes a step in the direction of "orthodoxy." Whereas Arius taught that Jesus was of a "different substance" from the Father, and Athanasius would contend that Christ was of the "same substance," the Semi-Arians proposed that the Son was of a "similar substance" with the Father. This theological tug-of-war that stretched on for over half a century was full of ecclesiastical and political intrigue, and the position of the Semi-Arians certainly smacked of the fence-straddling type of thinking the Church has produced when trying to please everyone. Conveniently, "similar substance" proponents could contract this elastic term into Arianism if the Arians occupied the chair of power, or they could stretch the term to an orthodox connotation when that was to their advantage. While we might forgive such theological vacillation on the part of those who simply are not sure what or whom to believe, it is said that the Church has historically produced many clerics who believed what it was convenient or advantageous to believe.

Athanasius was not to be counted among those who believed what was convenient or expedient. Born in 295, this young theologian, only 30 years of age at the Council of Nicaea, along with the Cappadocian bishops—Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa—maintained and defended with superior ability and vigor the essential oneness of the Son with the Father. Although he died in 373, too soon to witness the final eclipse of the heresy he had combatted throughout his life, his name is more often remembered than any other when the orthodox statement of Christology is recited. As a matter of fact, church history's "shorthand" to refer to the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed is simply the "Athanasian Creed":<sup>6</sup>

(We believe) . . . in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary . . .

The fight to establish this Christological statement was costly for Athanasius. At times the supporters of Arius were in political and ecclesiastical power, and they did all they could to silence the young theologian. He was exiled no less than five times, but with each change of power he made his way back.

The full statement of traditionally accepted orthodox Christology was formulated at Chalcedon in 451.<sup>7</sup>

Following the holy Fathers, we all with one consent teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in Manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [coequal] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin, begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person, and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two Persons, but one and the same Son, and only-begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.<sup>8</sup>

After this classic formulation, the centuries are marked by various attempts to understand the affirmation, but no serious and sustained effort was made to improve or restate the doctrine. The scholastic theology of the Middle Ages confined itself to a dialectical analysis and defense of the Chalcedonian dogma. The Reformation theologians were busy fighting theological battles on other fronts and were more than content to affirm the traditional orthodox statement on Christology. A brief comparison of Article iii (*De Filio Dei*) of the Lutheran church's *Augsburg Confession* (1530), the Swiss Reformed church's *Second Helvetic Confession* (1566), chapter 11, the *Thirty-nine Articles* of the Church of England, Article 2, and the Calvinistic *Westminster Confession* (1648), chapter 8.2, are all in agreement with the Chalcedon Christology.<sup>9</sup>

It is at this point, however, that the Protestant theological waters cease to be clear, and differences emerge that disturb the tranquility of their respective theological pools. No unanimity was possible when attempts were made to explicate what was meant by two natures in one historical form. The Lutherans became engaged in struggle with the followers of Zwingli in Switzerland over the real presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, and this eventually spilled over into a difference of opinion with the followers of Calvin as well. The difference of opinion centered in the question of the communication of the attributes or properties between the two natures of the God-man. All agreed that Christ was theanthropic (God-man), but the manner in which this phenomenon was explained differed. A brief attempt at a concise and hopefully simplified statement of these differences is necessary in order for us to understand the simple truth that there are no easy answers to be found when interpreting Philippians 2.<sup>9</sup>

The Lutherans generally asserted that there were three ways in which the attributes were communicated between the two natures of Christ (*communicatio idiomatum*). (1) The properties of the one nature are transferred and applied to the

whole person (Rom. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:18; 4:1). (2) The redemptory functions and actions that belong to the whole person are predicated only on one or the other nature (1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 1:2-3). (3) The human nature is clothed with and magnified by the attributes of the divine nature (John 3:13, 27; Matt. 28:18, 20; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:10). Along these lines the Lutheran church, from its various perspectives, has claimed a certain ubiquity or omnipresence for the Body of Christ, on the personal union of the two natures.

The Reformed (Calvinistic and Zwinglian) side of Protestantism never committed themselves to the Lutheran premise of *communicatio idiomatum*. Zwingli was willing to accept the possibility of the first two types of communication on the basis of a concept that might best be described as "a rhetorical exchange of one part for another," but he decidedly rejected the third type of communication because omnipresence, whether absolute or relative, is inconsistent with the necessary limitations of a human body, as well as what he considered the Scripture facts that prevented the validity of such a position (i.e., Christ's ascension to heaven and the promised return). In his mind, the third type of communication of the properties could never be carried out unless the humanity of Christ was also eternalized. This would, of course, be a contradiction in terms—eternal humanity, or some such term. In the light of these logical problems, Reformed Christianity has traditionally held that the communication of attributes would imply a mixture of natures. The divine and human natures can indeed hold free and intimate intercourse with each other; but the divine nature can never be transformed into the human, nor can the human nature be transformed into the divine. Christ possessed all the attributes of both natures; but the natures, nevertheless, remained separate and distinct.

The early part of the 17th century saw yet another chapter added to the saga of the Church's theological march. Once again it was the Lutheran divines who were the delineators of yet another difference of opinion. It is here that the question of kenosis is brought into bold relief. The question is whether Christ, in the state of "humbling himself," entirely abstained from the use of His divine attributes or whether He used them secretly. Professors at the University of Giessen (Germany) were of the opinion that Christ abstained from using the divine attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence while the Tübingen faculty maintained that they were used "cryptically," secretly. This theological difference of

opinion was more than a pebble in a pond of theological tranquillity; it raged for more than a decade at a level of violence that threatened to destroy the Protestant Reformation in Germany. The Giessen kenoticists eventually won out, but the Tübingen theologians defended their position until the controversy was lost in the ravages of the Thirty Years' War (1618-48).

After this we enter once again a rather extended period in which no significant strides are made in clarifying the traditional orthodox two natures statement. For the most part, orthodoxy emphasized the divinity of Christ and left His humanity more or less out of sight. However, with the rise of rationalism during the Enlightenment at the end of the 18th century, a reaction set in against scholastic orthodoxy, which went to the other extreme in emphasizing the humanity of Christ to the exclusion of the divinity. Once again at the risk of oversimplification, we will attempt a brief survey of the Christological tendencies, this time of the 19th century, with special reference to Hegel, Schleiermacher, and those who followed them in their tendencies.

There are both a more conservative and a more liberal wing of the followers of Hegel, but it is fair to say that both are more humanistic in their Christological formulations than even generous interpretations of Chalcedonian Christology would allow. Starting from the idea of the essential unity of the divine and human, a doctrine is developed that teaches a continuous incarnation of God in the human race as a whole. This leads eventually to the denial of Christ as the one and only God-man. The most that can be asserted is that Jesus awoke to a consciousness of His unity with divinity and that He represents it in its purest and strongest form. In other words, Christ is placed highest in the scale of humanity, not only in the past, but for all time.

Schleiermacher takes over where this form of Hegelianism left off, but is willing to take it a step farther, admitting a supernatural or divine element in Christ's essential sinlessness and absolute moral perfection. Jesus was no less than a moral miracle who makes available to us His forgiveness and thus is our only hope of salvation. There is only one hope of redemption, and that is the incessant flow of spiritual life begun in Christ as our Redeemer. Salvation is our disposition of absolute dependence upon Christ, even though Schleiermacher would not grant to Christ an eternal pre-existence of the Logos, which would correspond to the historical indwelling of God in Christ. Any unity between God the



AND I UNDERSTAND THAT IT'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENTERTAIN HIM WHILE HE'S HERE.



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Father and the Son is only an abstract unity, and hence the rejection on the part of Schleiermacher of the Trinity.<sup>11</sup>

In the footsteps of Schleiermacher, we finally cross the Atlantic to the United States in the middle 19th century in the person of Horace Bushnell, who died in 1876.<sup>12</sup> In essential agreement with the romantic view of Schleiermacher, Bushnell differed from him by adhering to a type of eternal preexistence of Christ. Since this statement on preexistence, which was announced in a commencement address at Yale in 1848, took on strong Sabellian lines, it gave rise to his trial for heresy.

The question of the Trinity in relation to Christology has stood in the wings of our theological stage all along waiting for its grand entrance, and this is the appropriate cue to introduce it. In his *God in Christ* (1877), we read how Bushnell rejected the theory of "three essential persons in the being of God." He substitutes for it simply a trinity of revelation, or what he calls (p. 175) an "instrumental trinity," or three impersonations, in which the one divine being presents himself to our human capacities and wants, and which are necessary to produce mutuality between us and him. The real divinity came into the finite and was subject to human conditions. There are not two distinct natures in one person; it is the one infinite God who expresses himself in Christ and brings himself down to the level of our humanity, without any loss of His greatness or reduction of His majesty.

In the minds of some who came after Bushnell, there was a positive affirmation in these final assertions about real divinity coming into the finite and being subjected to human conditions. More inclined to orthodoxy, they could not accept his rejection of Trinitarianism, so they developed a kenosis Christology that accepted the Trinity and the eternal deity of Christ. But at the same time, these late 19th-century kenoticists rejected what they termed the "dyophysitism of Chalcedon." In other words, whereas Chalcedonian Christology postulated two natures in one person, the modern kenotic theory teaches an emptying on the part of Christ that carries the kenosis much farther than the Giessen Lutherans and makes it consist, not in a concealment, but in an actual abandonment of the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence during the whole period of humiliation from the Incarnation to the Resurrection. The proposal is for a temporary depotentiation of the preexistent Logos. In other words, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity reduced himself literally to the limitations of humanity. This self-limitation is to be conceived as an act of God's love for man—so complete that in order to accomplish our salvation such condescension as complete kenosis was not too dear a price to pay.<sup>13</sup> This is essentially the conclusion reached by a group of Lutheran scholars (including such notables as Thomasiaus, Von Hoffman, Delitzsch, and Gess) and Reformed theologians (Lange, Ebrard, and Godet) in Europe, and Henry M. Goodwin and Howard Crosby in America by the end of the 19th century. Not satisfied with the many attempts at stating in rationally acceptable terms the mystery of the two natures in one person as taught since Nicaea, they succumbed to the temptation to reduce the two to one through a radical restatement of the "self-emptying."

The objections to this restatement were not long in coming. One of the most famous names to enter the fray was the archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple. He asked a most telling question, to which the modern kenoticists do not sup-

ply an adequate answer, "What was happening to the rest of the universe during the period of our Lord's earthly life? To say that the Infant Jesus was from His cradle exercising providential care over it all is certainly monstrous; but to deny this, and yet to say that the Creative Word was so self-emptying as to have no being except in the Infant Jesus, is to assert that for a certain period the history of the world was let loose from the control of the Creative Word."<sup>14</sup> Objection along this line is carried a step further by D. M. Baillie: "Instead of giving us a doctrine of Incarnation in which Jesus Christ is both God and man, the Kenotic Theory appears . . . to give us a story of a temporary theophany, in which He who formerly was God changed Himself temporarily into man, or exchanged His divinity for humanity. . . . If taken in all its implications, that seems more like a pagan story of metamorphosis than like the Christian doctrine of Incarnation."<sup>15</sup>

The most explosive set of opinions of recent origin rolled from the press in 1977 in a small book edited by John Hick.<sup>16</sup> It is an understatement to say that much in this little book is antithetical to traditional Christology, but in fact most of the storm over the essays is a result of the term *myth*. Many who bought the volume could in fact not read the essays with any degree of comprehension, but they were very interested in reading what this latest "group of heretics" were offering in place of the traditional doctrine. The use of *myth* was understood to refer to a "fairy tale," whereas the authors intended the term in its more technical connotation to refer to "a story of profound meaning by which men guide their lives."<sup>17</sup> It is not within the scope of this essay to go into any detail of the various lines of reasoning, or lack thereof, which is displayed in the essays of these two volumes. With the exception of the rebuttal essays, they are a rejection of traditional incarnational theology on the simple but forthright presupposition that such theology no longer makes any sense to the modern mind. Their attempt is to restate Christology in a way that makes sense, but indeed they do little to improve on the more human-analogy-centered thought of Schleiermacher in the previous century.

Is there no way to restate traditional Christology that will do justice to the profound truth enshrined in the statements going back to Athanasius and the bishop of Rome and at the same time be acceptable to the modern mind with its penchant for logic and coherence? It is doubtful that the degree of unanimity eventually reached in the Early Church and held for centuries will ever be attained again in this age of pluralism and "think and let think," but some of the Church's best minds are at work producing new perspectives that could prove to be fruitful. To this writer, one of the most creative and promising is from the pen of professor emeritus of Christian dogmatics at the University of Edinburgh, Thomas F. Torrance.<sup>18</sup> This book is short on words (*not short words*) but long on background and penetrating thought. It is not intended for the uninitiated, and even the professional scholar will be amazed at the grasp of scientific knowledge, in its broadest definition, which Torrance brings to the task. In brief, these are his thoughts. With regard to the two natures, we have been accustomed to conceptualizing the deity and humanity of Christ as two entities within two containers, one human and the other divine. It is with this level of conceptualization that we must first dispense if we hope to make any progress in restating Christology. Such static categories of thought are relics of thought forms that belong to the past. Since the discov-

(Continued on page 57)

# THE PHILIPPIAN FILE

## *Sermon Outlines from Philipians*

by Derl G. Keefer

### **THANKSGIVING ABOUNDS**

(Phil. 1:1-30)

- I. Thanksgiving Begins in Grace and Peace of the Good News (vv. 1-2)
- II. Thanksgiving Continues in Partnership in the Good News of God (vv. 5-11)
  - A. A partnership that culminates in Jesus
  - B. A partnership of witness
  - C. A partnership of prayer
  - D. A partnership of love
  - E. A partnership of righteousness
- III. Thanksgiving That Advances the Good News (vv. 12-14)
  - A. Advances to more people
  - B. Advances the faith of the brethren
  - C. Advances the boldness of the Word of God
- IV. Thanksgiving Is Rejoicing (vv. 15-26)
  - A. Amidst the trials and tribulations
  - B. Amidst the good times
- V. Thanksgiving Expressed in Lifestyle (vv. 27-30)
  - A. Standing firm in Jesus
  - B. Standing together in faith
  - C. Standing individually and congregationally, in the world but not of it.

### **HOW DOES UNITY COME?**

(Phil. 2:1-10)

- I. Unity Comes by Encouragement
- II. Unity Comes by Love
- III. Unity Comes by the Holy Spirit's Participation
- IV. Unity Comes by Human Effort
- V. Unity Comes by Following Christ

### **REJOICE IN THE LORD!**

(Phil. 3:1-11)

- I. Rejoice in the Lord (v. 1)
- II. Rejoice in the Lord Through Worship in the Spirit (v. 3)
- III. Rejoice in the Lord in Whom We Have Confidence (v. 3)
- IV. Rejoice in the Lord for Freedom from Things (vv. 4-9)
- V. Rejoice in the Lord the Faith-Giver (v. 9)
- VI. Rejoice in the Lord Whom I Know (vv. 10-11)
  - A. In resurrection power
  - B. In suffering servanthood
  - C. In conformity of death to life (v. 11)

### **HUMAN PERFECTION**

(Phil. 3:12-16)

- I. Human Perfection Is Not Wholly Perfection (v. 12)
- II. Human Perfection Is in Constant Need of Refining (v. 12)
- III. Human Perfection Is Always Reaching Forward (v. 13)

- IV. Human Perfection Is Goal-Oriented (Reaching to God) (v. 14)
- V. Human Perfection Is Maturity Needed (v. 15)

### **AS A CHRISTIAN**

(Phil. 3:1—4:1)

- I. As a Christian, I Will Give All for Christ (vv. 1-11)
- II. As a Christian, I Press Toward a Great Goal (vv. 12-16)
- III. As a Christian, I Have Citizenship Papers for Heaven (3:17—4:1)

### **IMPORTANT POINTS**

(Phil. 4:2-9)

- I. Unity Is Vital in the Church (vv. 2-3)
- II. Rejoicing Is Vital in the Church (vv. 4-7)
  - A. Rejoicing in gentleness
  - B. Rejoicing at the nearness of the Lord
  - C. Rejoicing through peace
    1. By prayer and petition
    2. By thanksgiving
- III. Honesty Is Vital in the Church (vv. 8-9)
  - A. Truth
  - B. Nobleness
  - C. Righteousness
  - D. Purity
  - E. Loveliness
  - F. Admirability

# MONDAY MORNING DEVOTIONS FOR MINISTERS

Meditations from Philippians

by Lyle P. Flinner

September 1  
**"A BOND-SERVANT OF CHRIST"**

*Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons (Phil. 1:1, NASB).*

Incongruous with his situation (imprisoned in Rome), Paul sends a message of "joy" to the church at Philippi. There is no statement of his apostleship in his letter; he does not remind them of his authority. Instead, he humbly identifies himself as a bond-servant, or slave, of Christ Jesus. His voluntary commitment and submissiveness to Christ made Paul oblivious to persecution, afflictions, and opposition. His primary service was to Christ. The spin-off of his service to Christ was ministry to people.

Paul had a lofty view of the individual's spiritual worth. He called them "saints"—those who were different, set apart. His confidence in their spiritual position was based on his perception that they were "in Christ." To be "in Christ" is to be continually immersed in His grace and surrounded by His presence, strength, and power even as a bird in the air or a fish in the water is immersed in its element.

These relatively new Christians at Philippi may not have been *mature* saints, but their relationship to Christ made them saints in the beginning stages. And this relationship had the potential to deepen with the passage of

time. Paul had every confidence in his converts.

September 8  
**ABOUND IN KNOWLEDGE  
AND DISCERNMENT**

*And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment (Phil. 1:9, NASB).*

If anyone needs "real" knowledge and discernment, it's the pastor. The role-perception many church members have of the pastor is that he should be an expert in almost every area. We need supernatural help! The more experienced or trained we are, the more convinced we are that Solomon chose the highest priority gift when he chose wisdom.

The constant pressure to lead people to make correct decisions, the urgent necessity to see clearly to the very heart of complex situations, and the need to be highly discriminative, informed, and perceptive makes us realize our absolute dependence upon God. We all need to reduce the distortions we carry with us from preconceived ideas and, with God's help, develop a clear vision of the reality of any given situation. We need to see things as they really are and discern the highest and best for all involved.

Paul sees this ability to understand and discern as a progressive function of increasing love—love directed both to

Christ and to people. Someone has said, "Love is always the way to knowledge." We know the persons or things we love most intimately. One experienced church leader, when asked what he would do if he were to assume a new pastorate, replied, "I would love my people." In addition, a constant deepening of your love for the Lord will result in clearer vision, perception, and understanding as you begin to see things more and more from His perspective.

September 15  
**MADE PERFECT FOR CHRIST**

*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6, NASB).*

Remember that Paul is writing to relatively new converts. He calls them "saints," but they still have a lot of growing to do. After all, they did not even have a synagogue in town to give them spiritual training and background. Paul met some of them at the riverbank. Still, he is confident of what is happening in their lives because God is working in them. Actually, God had been working and moving in the hearts of the people long before Paul arrived. Now He is continuing that work. Implicit in Paul's statement is his concern for persistence, perseverance, growth, and maturity—a never-ending process.

There is an end toward which our

spiritual development moves. It is to be prepared to offer ourselves as a worthy gift to Him in "the day of Christ Jesus." This is the purpose of all spiritual development—to make our lives acceptable to Christ. Christ's work at Creation was always judged "good." That same dynamic, creative power is working in each of us, perfecting us so that some day we may hear those glorious words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21).

Paul's prayer reflects his confidence that what God has begun continues. And it shall, by His grace, conclude.

September 22

### **"SHOW 'EM HOW IT'S DONE!"**

*Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ* (Phil. 1:27, NASB).

Paul lifts our expected standard of conduct beyond the mere standards of a person, a manual, or a church. The criteria of our life-style are to be found in "the gospel of Christ!"

In saying "conduct yourself" Paul is saying, "Let your life be ordered by conscious effort so that it is worthy of your calling." He is calling for personal attention and deliberately chosen actions and reactions. He is calling for a living demonstration of Christianity.

We are constantly open to the critical gaze of a world that needs a clear demonstration of authentic Christian living. What they see demonstrated in you may well influence their perception of Christianity. The concern here is that you not tarnish or cloud that image.

In addition, this verse calls for a modeling of true Christianity before those of "like faith" among us. Many of the converts at Philippi had recently come out of a pagan culture. They needed the support, the challenge, and the example of those who were adequately living a Christian life above reproach. Paul is saying, "Show them how it's done!"

September 29

### **THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST**

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus* (Phil. 2:5, NASB).

It is essential that we as spiritual leaders, become students of our Lord's actions and attitudes. Our lives have a true directive as we understand and appropriate and emulate Him.

This does not mean that we mimic Christ. God has always placed a premium on the uniqueness of personality. Instead, our own individual personalities are to express His attitudes. And that is to be a strong and confident expres-

sion, not one of self-depreciation. As one evangelist preached, "Don't say, 'Oh, to be nothing.' Nothing is zero in any language. Pray instead, 'Oh, to be something!'" You're not doing yourself or anyone else a favor when you back away from life.

Christ did not lose His power, authority, or status with God in His "self-emptying." But He deliberately laid aside His rightful glory temporarily in order to assume the role of a servant.

We see self-interest and self-seeking permeating the lives of people throughout our world. How sad when we see it in the church. One definition of sin is "my claim to my right to myself."

"Lord, help us to make Christ's attitude operative in our lives."

October 6

### **WORKING OUT OUR SALVATION**

*. . . work out your salvation with fear and trembling* (Phil. 2:12, NASB).

Salvation depends on the atoning and redeeming work of Christ on Calvary, with a merciful and forgiving God receiving us into the fellowship of the redeemed, and the Holy Spirit cleansing and empowering us for Christian life and service. But there is still a deep sense in which we have a great deal to do with our own salvation.

In the first place, God does not force himself on us. He merely creates conditions in which we are confronted with personal decisions. All of our subsequent lives become a series of choice-points where we have the privilege of opening or closing the door.

Many plan their lives seriously, pray expectantly, open themselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit, walk in all of their known light, and carefully choose and take advantage of every opportunity to realize their potential under God. These make more of their Christian lives than others. By their fervent application of thought, prayer, and creative choice, they move far beyond the ordinary and the average. They have much more of an impact on the lives of others.

God gives us gifts and opportunities; we must determine the responses, make the choices, and discern His plan. God will never override our freedom, but He will certainly bless our efforts as our wills become one with His.

October 13

### **IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD**

*For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure* (Phil. 2:13, NASB).

In ministry, we are involved in a partnership with God. We have the same

basic mission and purpose as God. So He works within us to accomplish our objectives. This provides not only an inward dynamic but also a corrective measure, as our intimate fellowship with God allows Him to refine our goals to be more in harmony with His.

But remember, in this case, God's effective action requires the same of us. God provides the inward drive, the compelling force, our motivating power, but we must take action and work diligently "for His good pleasure."

It is a continuous process. God is at work in you even when you may not be conscious of it. God is working even when your feelings and "drive" are low. Just hold steady and "hang in there." We must operate by faith, not by feelings, knowing that our Partner is already working in and through us.

We can accomplish God's goals and plan for us. This is more than "self-talk" or "psyching ourselves up." It is a glorious cooperative venture.

As long as you leave yourself in the hands of God, He will work toward developing you into the person He has in mind for you to be.

October 20

### **IT COMES WITH THE TERRITORY**

*Do all things without grumbling or disputing; that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent* (Phil. 2:14-15, NASB).

Love your calling and your work! The Christian ministry is the most creative and exciting of all vocations.

Even so, we experience negative situations that we surely would not choose. Few people enter the professional ministry with a clear and completely realistic view of their "ministerial" responsibilities. For many, there is a kind of romanticism that affects their vocational vision. Of course, that is true of other vocations too. Remember, every vocation in the world has some negative things about it.

We need to accept and work through the negative situations. It is through them that you "purchase" the right to enjoy all of the positive experiences of your calling!

Paul's exhortation here is a plea—again—to truly model the gospel in our lives. We are to live lives so pure that no one can find anything to blame or find fault with. It is a call for absolute sincerity and integrity, for motives that are un-mixed, clean, and pure.

October 27

### **IN PROCESS**

*Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of*

that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:12, NASB).

Paul had clear consciousness of a "call"—a vivid memory of a confrontation with Christ, which gave him a sense of mission. He had confidence that God had personally selected him for a specific task. He was saved not only from something (sin) but also to something. That something was to find and fulfill God's plan for his life.

Paul strove for perfection throughout his Christian life. "Mediocrity" was not in his vocabulary! He called for excellence in everything he did. Perfection and excellence is our calling too. We'll approximate it more by earnestly striving for it; by giving it intentional concern and effort.

Long before the Lord calls us, His providence develops a distinctiveness in us that makes us ideally suited for the ministry to which we are called. Scripture never suggests that Christianity means ceasing to be an individual. God has given each of us unique features. Our experiences, choices, and responses have determined that no one else in this world is exactly like any of us.

It is our responsibility to constantly survey our strengths, weaknesses, abilities, talents, and interests and use them to fulfill our lives' potential under God.

#### November 3 PRESS ON

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13-14, NASB).*

The more specific we are in identifying our life's purpose, the better chance we have of reaching our goal. Paul had a very complex career—theologian, preacher, missionary, executive, writer, traveler. Yet he was able to so unify every aspect that he could truly say, "This one thing I do."

Paul lived his life in light of both the past and the future. He did not forget the lessons and traditions of the past, nor did he ignore the exciting possibilities of the future. But his immediate concern was with the quality of his life today. He pressed forward—eagerly, earnestly, and expectantly facing each new day.

Paul was no doubt tortured by memory. He remembered his own pride and arrogance. He remembered Stephen. He remembered his intensive and destructive activity against the Early Christian Church. But he learned to conquer failure and put it "under the Blood." We,

too, need to face the past boldly (not repress it), correct what is possible (make restitution), and leave the rest with God.

While his most important job was making sure of today, Paul maintained a visionary stance, looking to the exciting possibilities, the potential, and the ultimate prize of tomorrow. He knew that a happy, successful future doesn't just happen; it comes as the result of fulfilling the plans and dreams of today.

Try to forget yesterday's failures and mistakes. Learn their lessons and then dismiss them. Concentrate on living in the "now" and pressing forward into the days ahead with positive expectation.

#### November 10 SPIRITUAL CATHARSIS

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Phil. 4:6, NASB).*

Psychology emphasizes the cleansing value of "catharsis"—the ventilation of our feelings to someone in whom we have faith and confidence. Intimate communion with God performs the same function. We communicate with Him, sharing our deepest needs and concerns. But somehow, the concerns, worries, and anxieties that press us down become lighter as we mix our confession with praise and thanksgiving.

Conflict and anxiety are inescapable, but they can work for good rather than evil. The committed person does not have to struggle with himself, but he may struggle with objective difficulties. To store our troubles within ourselves is self-defeating. To express them to God with thankful expectations is liberating.

Anxiety is really imaginary worry. While imaginary worry may be unreal, a worried imagination is very real. Anxiety cuts down our effectiveness. But faith and fear are opposites. The more you have of one, the less you have of the other. Faith is a powerful emotion of confidence and trust. Anxiety disappears in the presence of a vibrant, praising faith.

#### November 17 YES, I CAN!

*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13, NASB).*

Paul faced every situation with self-confidence, Christ-reliance, and a positive attitude. He indicates that nothing—in the line of duty—is impossible. The work may be taxing, but it is always accomplished through strength in Christ.

My own efforts may be weak, but when I am in partnership with Him, He gives the needed strength. And I can

look forward to the next "impossible" task, knowing that what has been done is only a preview of what will be done.

Christ does not require anything of us in ministry for which He does not guarantee strength. He strengthens our faith and quickens our mental faculties. In spite of weakness, opposition, and even failure, we take heart to persevere "through Christ."

Paul testifies to his ability to do "all things." This means he could do everything that needed to be done to accomplish his objectives and fulfill his ministry. We coast along at only a small percentage of our capacity. There is a potential that lies dormant in each of us—a potential often released by crisis. We need not fear any challenge when our success is guaranteed by His strength.

Occasionally, new and unexpected demands may come your way that you do not feel qualified to handle. These seemingly impossible demands, too, are included in "all things." God has adequately prepared you for the task to which He has called you. Move ahead in confidence, and you will tap areas of potential and ability you never knew you had!

#### November 24 SUPPLY AND DEMAND

*And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19, NASB).*

Here is a promise that speaks of abundance with no limitations. Our needs may be many, but the resources are always greater. You might stimulate your faith to include not only personal needs but also the needs involved in all aspects of your ministry—needs that you have, in empathy, assumed as "your" needs.

God will not do for us what we can do for ourselves. Nor will He gratify our whims. The promise has an obvious limit. God will supply our need. But remember, we may not have the perception and insight and knowledge to feel the need that God sees we require. Sometimes what we need (for our good) may not be something that we want, or even understand, until later. Then, we may say as the man in the TV commercial who is slapped in the face, "Thanks, I needed that!" One thing is sure, "No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly" (Ps. 84:11, NASB).

No good thing shall be withheld from he who lives in harmony with God's higher laws. There are no legitimate desires that shall not be satisfied for the one who knows and wisely uses the powers with which he is endowed as a servant of the Lord.



# PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SEXUAL SIN

by Keith Drury

*General Secretary for the General Department of Youth  
The Wesleyan Church, Marion, Ind.*

I'm alarmed! I don't mean disturbed, and I don't mean concerned. I mean I am outright alarmed! I see the devil making gigantic strides into the homes of holiness people, and he has doubled his assault on ministers in the area of sexual sin. It is time to address this.

I don't want to write about this subject. I like to talk about things like mobilization, goal-setting, commitment, movement development, and leadership. But I am forced to write about sexual sin. How can we have a great movement for God when the ministers—the movement's very leaders—cannot control their own carnal desires? Where is our credibility with the world if the church's own leaders are caught up in the very same sins as the world? How do we expect to teach others if we ourselves are discipline disasters?

In the last six months I have bumped into nine cases of sexual indiscretion among ministers or key church leaders. Some are serious indiscretions, some are "minor" indiscretions, and several are outright adultery.

A number of you need to read this a dozen times. Several of you are right now on the brink of falling headlong into Satan's arms. Others of you are playing around the edge of disaster, thinking you'll not be pulled over. This comes just at the right time for you.

The devil is a liar. No one falls in this area without believing some of the devil's falsehoods. God tells the truth. His Word is light, not darkness. The devil is multiplying his attack on Christians now that he has the use of modern weapons like TV, movies, new wave advertising, cable, and satellite TV. His lies pour forth daily, into the living rooms of the average Christian . . . and especially ministers who watch TV "to unwind."

This is written with a heavy heart. I am not that old, but I have seen too many of my fellow ministers go down the drain because of carnal cancer. I can't stand quietly by while more fall off the cliffs of sin and ruin their

lives, their marriages, their ministries, and their families. The Lord has given to me some gifts of communication through writing so I must give you the following thoughts.

1. *Don't start anything.* I am convinced that most sexual indiscretions—even adultery—start innocently. A man and woman are attracted to each other, maybe even on a spiritual level at first. Maybe you work together, or she is your best friend's wife. You understand each other so well. You have so much in common and enjoy quiet conversation with her. She seems more eager to listen than your wife is. Soon there are special little words or phrases spoken softly between you. These lead to an "innocent pat," a grateful squeeze of her arm, a meaningful glance, a lingering gaze, a quick hug, a short embrace and—eventually you wind up in bed with someone you never intended to defile.

Don't start up this ladder of affection with anyone other than your wife. "Can a man scoop fire into his lap without . . . being burned?" (Prov. 6:27, NIV). If you are involved in any stage of expressing affection, you are playing with fire. Stop, turn around, and go back.

Don't misunderstand me. I am not calling for men to be cold, distant, or uncaring to women. You know what I am talking about. You don't need anyone to tell you "how far you can go" with anyone else. The Holy Spirit is not on vacation. He will prick your conscience if you are headed the wrong way or if any coals are being fanned. You know it. If you are "climbing the ladder" with someone, get off. Now. Don't think you can play with some delectable temptation any longer. The best time to stop disobedience is always now.

2. *Listen to your wife's advice.* God has given women the special ability to sense a "strange woman." Listen to her advice. If she notices a particular woman "coming on to you," welcome her alerting advice. Don't blow up

Nazarene

# Update

UPDATE EDITOR, MARK D. MARVIN, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

## DENOMINATIONAL EMPHASIS

It must be admitted that our denominational headquarters, through the directors of our ministries and services, are developing today programs of an especially high caliber and well suited to the growing needs of our church. The fact that groups outside our denomination and our sister holiness bodies study and use these materials is good witness to their practical value and worth.

In the field of Christian education the finest graded literature to be found anywhere is available to our churches. In church growth the latest research materials on church growth are available. In church planting and building the expertise of many years' experience is available. In the new emphasis on Christian discipleship a program is now available that employs the latest biblical studies and churchmanship principles.

The forward action line of the church's evangelistic thrust, however, is the local church. Programs formulated

by the various ministries of the general church and promoted through the district organization must finally be filtered through local church leadership. They must be adapted to its needs and capabilities and executed by the appropriate department or committee of the local church led by the pastor. The real effectiveness of any given program is determined by its application and execution at the point of need for which it was designed.

It is encouraging to observe that the majority of our pastors appreciate the programs presented and the emphases suggested through the general church and district. They feel good about it and use the strength of a coordinated emphasis and work willingly through "the system" to achieve common goals.

There are some leaders who enjoy cutting new channels, making new trails, departing from the common road. They feel the challenge of the untried and the individual victory of unshared achievement. There are a few who are not moved by team goals or challenged by individual achievement. Theirs is to hold the "status quo." They will risk no involvements, disturb no precedents, nor reach for higher goals.

It requires only casual observation to realize that no church can remain still. We advance and grow or we slowly die. As the physical body must have proper exercise to develop, so must all departments of the church advance in order for the church to fulfill its true mission to win people for the kingdom of God. Let's improve our local filter system and apply the denominational programs to our local churches in achieving larger goals and winning more people to Christ.



by General Superintendent  
Charles H. Strickland

# Evangelize

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## Conference on Evangelism

FEBRUARY 24-26, 1987

in

### Kansas City



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CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
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# 1986-87



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Fresh ideas and materials for presenting the monthly missionary study. Highlights of this year's Adult Missionary Resource Packet are the resource book, and leader's handbook, 10 teacher posters, and informational cassette.

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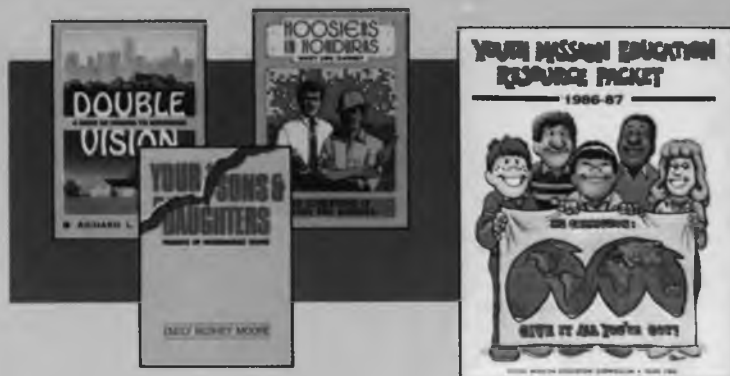
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# FAITH

# Walking



I am interested in training for  
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Please send me the following information:

- ☐ Admission Packet ☐ Scholarships/  
Financial Aid  
☐ Catalog ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

The area of ministry I am thinking of is:

- ☐ Biblical Studies ☐ Church Ministry  
☐ Christian Education ☐ Lay Ministry

Send to:



Nazarene Bible College

POST OFFICE BOX 15749  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80901



astors:

# YOUR COLLEGE PRESIDENT

---



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061-445-3063

Hugh Rae  
President



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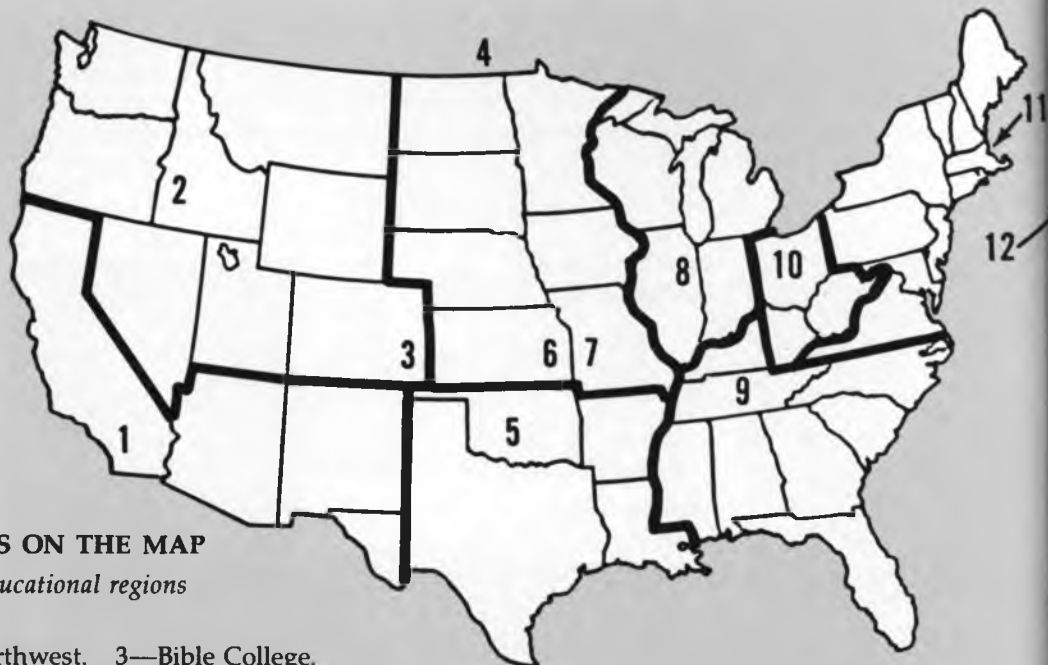
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1111 Chapman Dr.  
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Jerry Lambert  
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---

# THANKS YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## LOCATED TO SERVE NAZARENE YOUTH



### NAZARENE COLLEGES ON THE MAP

*Black outlines the eight educational regions in the United States.*

1—Point Loma. 2—Northwest. 3—Bible College.  
4—Canadian. 5—Southern Nazarene University.  
6—Mid-America. 7—Theological Seminary.  
8—Olivet. 9—Trevecca. 10—Mount Vernon.  
11—Eastern. 12—British Isles.

## NAZARENE COLLEGES ARE...

### ... VERSATILE

The comprehensive academic programs give quality learning opportunities for nearly every student who wants a college education. Courses are designed to prepare students for a career among thousands of possibilities.

### ... VALUABLE

The caliber of teaching by dedicated professors in small classes and groups gives Nazarene college students an academic edge over those in a massive university setting. The personal influence and outlook of Christian teachers has unmeasurable value.

### ... AFFORDABLE

When you consider the total cost for tuition, fees, and room and board, students at Nazarene colleges are on a par with those in state universities of their regions, and have lower costs than at most other private colleges.

Commuting costs and actual living expenses at home for even a community college student often exceed the net expenses for a student living on campus at a Nazarene college.

Financial aid through federal and state grants to students with demonstrated need generally provide more money to a student attending a Nazarene college than one attending a community college.

### ... SUPPORTED GENEROUSLY BY NAZARENES

Every Nazarene college student benefits from a built-in scholarship that has already reduced the cost of tuition by 20 to 30 percent because of the generous support each year of Nazarene church members through the educational budget.

Alumni and friends are also contributing generously to more scholarship funds than ever.

Loans and grants are readily available to every student who can demonstrate need on the financial aid forms and applications. However, students and families must plan for an equitable investment from their own resources first.

### ... A LIFELONG CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The personal decisions young men and women make in the college-age years have lifelong results. Friendships built on a Nazarene college campus mature into important lasting relationships. Christian faith becomes stronger for each individual through shared experiences in the realms of faith and learning.

... Make your first choice the best choice ...  
a Nazarene college!

## A MISSION OR EXCELLENCE

The success of an institution is shown in its ability to meet its objectives. Nazarene colleges, and seminaries have always had a goal of serving God and the church by meeting educational, professional, and spiritual needs of Nazarene youth.

From their beginning days, our colleges sought to offer the best in education in the context of truth. The quality of that education was tested when Nazarene college graduates competed successfully in universities and professional schools.

Today, accrediting teams routinely praise the quality of the faculty, the motivation of the students, and adherence to our objectives.

The No. 1 question is, "Will we continue to achieve our mission in the future?"

Dr. James Billington, director of Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, said, "To a very large extent, American universities have fallen down on the job of transmitting values to the students." In the light of this, the question of mission takes on greater importance for Nazarene colleges.

The success of the Church of the Nazarene in fulfilling its God-called mission will to a great extent depend upon the colleges and seminaries in their continued loyalty to truth, adherence to the doctrinal standards



of the church, and in education and training of young people for the highest degree of excellence.

Nazarene colleges serve the youth of the church and place emphasis upon spiritual goals, religious mission, campus life-styles, and education with excellence. Nazarene college administrators and faculty are truly committed to value education, emphasizing holiness of doctrine and life.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Mark R. Moore".

Mark R. Moore  
Director of Education Services

## PARENTS:

It is not too late for your student to enroll and seek financial aid. Encourage your student to attend your regional Nazarene college.

Write to me for a brochure. Or call your college recruitment officer. Your effort may

change the course of your son's or daughter's life.

Mark R. Moore  
Secretary of Education Services  
6401 The Paseo  
Kansas City, MO 64131  
(816) 333-7000

# *Pastors:* YOUR COLLEGE PRESIDENT

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## **NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

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816-333-6254

Terrell C. Sanders, Jr.  
President



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Jim L. Bond  
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Gordon Wetmore  
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Ponder W. Gilliland  
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Leslie Parrott  
President



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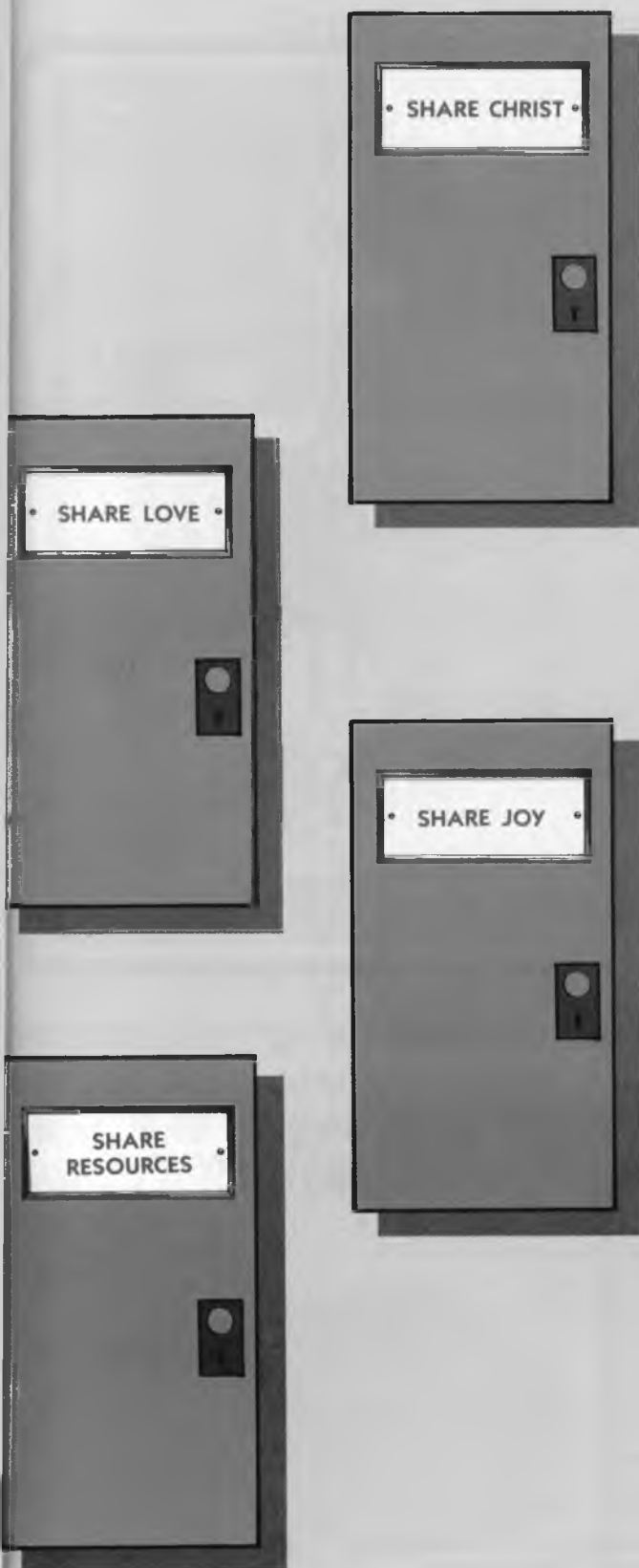
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Homer J. Adams  
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---

# THANKS YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

# YOU HOLD THE KEY



**SEPTEMBER IS  
STEWARDSHIP MONTH**



*"I'd give more to my church if I thought I could afford it."*

Mrs. Peters has inherited some stocks and would like to put them to work for the cause of Christ. But, with living costs rising, she also could use more income herself.

**What should she do?**

Arrange a Gift Annuity with the Church of the Nazarene! It will pay her a guaranteed regular income for life, and it will benefit her church. Find out more about this double-blessing gift plan. Just use the coupon below to request our free booklet. No obligation.



**Life Income Gifts Services  
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE  
6401 The Paseo  
Kansas City, MO 64131  
Attn: Robert Hempel**

**In Canada:  
Church of the Nazarene  
Executive Board  
Box 30080, Station B  
Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
T2M 4N7**

**Rev. Hempel:** Please send me a free copy of  
"Giving Through Gift Annuities."

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Mr.  
Mrs.  
Miss

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Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate of Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Brochure—"Answers to All the Questions You Have Wanted to Ask About Life Income Gifts Services."

# **PASTORS**

Remember these two special mission  
emphases in your church!

SEPTEMBER IS

**ALABASTER**  
MONTH

*Like Mary—  
pour it out  
on Jesus*

"There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head . . ." (Matthew 26:7).



OCTOBER IS

**MISSION AWARD**  
MONTH

## **LOCAL CHURCH Mission Award PROGRAM**

### **I. Mission Prayer Ministry**

To encourage prayer for all the activities of world evangelism through the missionary arm of the Church of the Nazarene

### **II. Mission Education Program**

To provide an informative program to increase the knowledge and understanding of the needs of the world and the efforts of our church to reach all with the gospel

### **III. Mission Involvement for Youth and Children**

To inspire and challenge our youth to keep their lives available to God's will

### **IV. Mission Stewardship**

To help raise funds to support the missionary outreach of the Church of the Nazarene

# Never Out of Date!

## Church of the Nazarene WEEKLY OFFERING ENVELOPE SYSTEM

The answer for churches desiring a "Church of the Nazarene" imprinted offering envelope, but wanting to order less than 50 sets and/or needing immediate delivery.

A year's supply of perpetually dated\* envelopes that can be used starting *any week*. Packaged in attractive flip-top boxes suitable for optional mailing.

Each set of 52 single-pocket envelopes has the same number throughout to identify it to the contributor and designated space for writing in how the offering should be disbursed. A pledge card, "How to use" leaflet, and "defray the cost" envelope are included.

Available in consecutive numbers (example: 324-56) with orders filled from the next series of numbers available in our stock.

**NOTE:** Requests for specifically designated numbers series and imprint will be treated as custom-printed orders and prices will be adjusted accordingly. Write for special **CUSTOM PRINTED ENVELOPES** brochure.

\*May 1st Sunday, "May 2nd Sunday," and so forth with five extra envelopes for "5th Sunday" months

### CHECK SIZE

3 1/8" x 6 1/4"

PAO-603 . . . . . \$1.70; 10 sets for \$15.30; 25 sets for \$38.00

### REGULAR SIZE

2 1/2" x 4 1/4"

PAO-502 (single fund) . . . . . \$1.45; 10 sets for \$13.00; 25 sets for \$29.00

PAO-503 (multiple fund) . . . . . \$1.45; 10 sets for \$13.00; 25 sets for \$29.00

### CHILDREN'S SET

Challenges girls and boys to a sense of personal responsibility and encourages the habit of systematic giving. Set of 52 envelopes feature an attractive two-color design and include space for writing in amount and name. Single pocket style.

PAO-5001 . . . . . \$1.60; 10 sets for \$18.00; 25 sets for \$38.00

Add 4% for handling and postage Prices subject to change without notice

## NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

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. . . THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW

Thanksgiving Offering • Church of the Nazarene

# THRUST TO



**C**hicago is one of the most diverse cities in the world, with many ethnic neighborhoods—a City of Many Nations. Ministers and laypersons are needed to help impact the great city for Christ.

Church planters, support families, and volunteers for various church and social ministries are desperately needed. Needs vary according to the economic and ethnic nature of each community. People to minister in other languages are crucial to the success of Chicago '86.

Existing churches need both paid and volunteer workers.

Is God calling you?

Information is available from Thrust to the Cities, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131, or Nazarenes In Volunteer Service (NIVS), same address.

**1987**

**MEXICO CITY**

**ONE MILLION N**



# THE CITIES

## 1986

## CHICAGO

### 100 NEW CHURCHES IN FIVE DISTRICTS

**M**exico's capital city, with distinction as the world's second largest, claims 15 million people in its metropolitan spread.

Much like the countryside in and around it, dripping with bougainvillea, gladiolus, and bright cactus bloom, color and variety seem to be splashed on everything—people, history, music, and religion.

In its people, the blood of Aztec mingles with the blood of Spanish and Creole, producing a people as colorful as their history.

The city's old stone carvings of suffering Christian martyrs stand with those of pre-Christian gods, depicting its replete history.

Even its religion, 97% Roman Catholic, is mixed with the old and the new, blending in its colorful festivals as brightly arrayed carnival devils seize and pass sentence on priests in mock battle.

It is to this panorama that the Church of the Nazarene goes to plant 100 churches in 1987.



## ARENES BY 1995



# THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE

Coming to you each quarter from Pastoral Ministries, Wilbur Brannon, Director

LEADERSHIP • INSPIRATION • FULFILLMENT • ENRICHMENT



## HEARTLINE AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE

CōNET is the trade name of a COnfidential COounseling NETwork. COnsultation and COntinuing education are its integral components. The "Heartline" is the telecommunications center for a personnel resources referral network available to all Nazarene ministers and their families. Pastors, spouses, and children (even married children) have access to the toll-free number, 1-800-847-2021. The number in Tennessee is 1-800-233-3607. A special access number is available to pastors in Alaska.

Nearly every district has responded positively to CōNET Heartline. In May, it was presented to the last of the U.S. regions, making the Heartline a nationwide network. It is an extension of the district superintendents' care and concern for his parsonage families. Not only are pastors able to find the help they need, CōNET Heartline is also available for consultation in dealing with difficult counseling issues.

Use of the "800" number is increasing. Try it—even if you don't have a specific need right now. Get a feel for the caring and professional way the counselors at Christian Counseling Services, an established social agency largely funded and directed by Nazarenes, responds.

Dr. Norman Henry, clinical psychologist in Nashville, is available to all districts participating in CōNET. He conducts seminars and workshops for ministers on difficult coun-

seling issues, and the legal aspects of pastoral counseling free of charge. He comes highly recommended by Dr. Talmadge Johnson, superintendent of the Tennessee district, and his pastor, Dr. Millard Reed. ☐

## TRANSFERRING LICENSED MINISTERS

It is important to the licensed minister who transfers from one district to another that his records be transferred with him. Those records should be a reliable documentation of his progress in the Course of Study. New transfer forms are available from Pastoral Ministries. ☐

## INTENTIONAL MINISTRY CONTINUING EDUCATION MODULE HELD

Module II, "Intentional Ministry," conducted by Dr. Bill Burch, Arizona district superintendent, was held March 3-6 at Nazarene headquarters' King Conference Center. Forty pastors from Massachusetts to California were involved.

Dr. Burch challenged the pastors to become "intentional" in their ministry and to "be themselves in the power of the Holy Spirit."

If you would like more information concerning this mode of continuing education contact Pastoral Ministries. ☐



Bill Burch, superintendent of the Arizona District, addresses pastors at Continuing Education Module II.



## MINISTRY INTERSHIP RECRUITING ADVANTAGE

After years of academic training for ministry, the graduating student anticipates his first assignment. He is excited but he is also anxious, uncertain, and fearful. His skills have yet to be tried. His ability to adapt to a radically different way of life will be tested.

For those entering the pastoral ministry, it is good news to learn the district superintendent is providing an internship for his new pastors. He is linked up with an experienced pastor with whom he will enter into a covenant. This covenant is developed out of a self-evaluation from which the intern determines the areas of growth he wants to concentrate on. With his mentor, the intern sets down learning goals and projects that lead toward their fulfillment.

The intern keeps a log on one ministry event a week. He describes that event, his responsibility in that event, his feelings, the issues, biblical reflections, and a summary of the last conference he had with his mentor. That sets the agenda for their meetings.

New pastors already involved in ministry internship express appreciation of this kind of support. The mentors are stimulated by the growth that takes place by reflecting on their own ministries. The purpose is to increase the retention level among ministers, lower the frustration level, and help make pastors more effective in their ministerial commitments. ☐

## PALCON III PLANNING UNDERWAY

At their regular meeting in February, the Board of General Superintendents named a steering committee for PALCON III to be held during the summer of 1988. The committee is:

J. V. Morsch	Southeast Region
Howard Chambers	Eastern Region
Bruce Petersen	East Central Region
Bill Burch	Southwest Region
Joe Knight	Northwest Region
Mel McCullough	South Central Region
Robert Cerrato	North Central Region
Jim Mellish	Central Region
Thomas Schofield	Europe Region
Don Dunnington	College Representative

Wilbur W. Brannon, Pastoral Ministries director, met with the steering committee on May 26-27 to discuss the theme, program, and format of this significant conference for ministers. Dates have been worked out with the colleges in the U.S.A. to facilitate these regional meetings. More announcements will be made as

the event begins to take form. Begin planning now to attend. It will be a time of enrichment in the environment of a mutually supportive fellowship. ☐

## COURSE OF STUDY CONVERSION

We are helping District Ministerial Studies Boards (DMSB) make the conversion from the old Course of Study to the new as easily as possible. (That may not be easy enough, but we are determined to help you.)

A matrix has been designed to assist in evaluating students transferring from one track to another and from the old courses to the new number. These are being sent to all District Ministerial Studies Boards secretaries. The video training tape will help answer many of your questions. But if you get bogged down and need help, please call Pastoral Ministries. ☐



## VIDEO HELP FOR COURSE OF STUDY

*Exploring Christian Education* with Dr. Wesley Tracy is now available on videotape. It was filmed in Los Angeles with a group of ministers in a live teaching/learning setting. Dr. Tracy developed his material to correlate with the existing study guides and exams. The series is 15 hours of viewing and available from Pastoral Ministries for \$125.

A second 15-hour series on *God, Man, and Salvation* was developed by Dr. H. Ray Dunning. His was also a live setting with a group of ministers in New York. Although his material does not follow the existing study guide, he does add a section at the end of the video series in which he recaps the important points to cover for an examination. This is available at the same price as the first one.

Rev. David Felter has developed an interactive videotape on the course on the 1985 *Manual*. This format uses shorter segments on a one-hour tape with written material that "interacts" with what is being learned from the tape.

A training tape for District Ministerial Studies Boards has been developed by Rev. David Felter that is an attempt to answer most of the questions that have been raised since the latest revisions in the Courses of Study.

Inquiries concerning these tapes may be made to Pastoral Ministries. ☐

## VIDEONET/MINISTRY TODAY TAPES AVAILABLE

In the first three years of production more than 30 videocassettes containing resource material for pastors and local church leaders have been offered to Nazarene pastors and local churches. Some recent subjects covered include:

"The Pastor and Church Buildings"

"Use of Media in the Local Church"

"Planning for Growth"

"The Element of Praise in Worship"

A complete list of tapes will be sent upon request. Write to Pastoral Ministries, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

Nine productions a year (September through May) are available at a reduced rate through a subscription plan that allows for purchase or rental. Many districts are subscribing and making tapes available through a library check-out system. Check to see if they are available in your area. ☐

☐ YES . . . I want to receive VIDEONET's *Ministry Today* video program series.

☐ 1. One year's subscription (nine programs) \$99.50 per year paid in advance.

☐ 2. One year's subscription (nine programs) \$12.75 billed monthly.

☐ 3. One year's rental (nine programs) \$59.50 per year paid in advance.

☐ 4. One year's rental (nine programs) \$7.75 billed monthly.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Payment enclosed ( ) Bill me ( )

Church: \_\_\_\_\_ NPH Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ My VCR format is:

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ VHS ☐ Beta

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Church ( ) Home ( ) District: \_\_\_\_\_

3

**You're part of a caring family...  
and caring brings responsibility.**



Photo: H. Armstrong Roberts, Inc.

The Church of the Nazarene, through the Board of Pensions and Benefits USA, provides the Basic Group Term Life Insurance Plan without charge to each Nazarene minister serving on a United States or Canadian district.

Your Pensions Board is pleased to announce increased benefits for all participants in this plan effective October 1, 1986.

- Coverage for district-licensed ministers increases from \$1,000 to \$1,500.\*
- Coverage for ordained ministers increases from \$1,500 to \$2,500.\*\*

Districts paying at least 90%, 95%, or 100% of their Pensions and Benefits Fund will receive "Double Coverage," "Triple Coverage," or "Double-Double Coverage" based on the increased benefits.

\*Maximum coverage for district-licensed ministers age 70 and over is \$3,000.

\*\*Maximum coverage for ordained ministers age 70 and over is \$5,000.



**"SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE THROUGHOUT THEIR MINISTRY"**



## Christmas Calendar Checklist



- ✓ Children's program practice ... Dec. 20
- ✓ Christmas caroling for teens ... Dec. 22
- ✓ All church Christmas dinner ... Dec. 10
- ✓ Mail our evangelist Christmas gift check ... on Dec. 1st
- ✓ Cantata practice ... Dec. 6, 13, 20 from 7-9 p.m.

Office staff: Be sure to get all these on the monthly schedule. Thanks! Pastor

Over 570 evangelists have ministered to churches throughout 1986. Be sure your church ministers to them this Christmas season by remembering them with a **CHRISTMAS LOVE GIFT**. Evangelism Ministries recommends a minimum of \$25.00 for each evangelist. Check the "Evangelist's Directory" in this issue of *Preacher's Magazine* for the correct mailing address, or call our toll-free number (800) 821-2154\*.

\*Hawaii, Alaska, Missouri call 816-333-7000

# EVANGELIST'S DIRECTORY

EVANGELISM MINISTRIES, CHURCH OF THE  
NAZARENE INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

(Monthly slates published in the first issue of the "Herald of Holiness" each month)

## A

ABNEY, JOHN K., JR. (R) 8301 N.W. 38th Terr., Bethany, OK 73008  
ADAMS, MICHAEL D. (C) 1653 Guava Ave., Melbourne, FL 32935  
AGNER, J. C. (R) Rte. 1, Box 2570, Lee, FL 32059  
ALLEN, JIMMIE A. 205 N. Murray, No. 244, Colorado Springs, CO 80916  
ARCHER, DREX. (R) 411 S. Colorado, No. 2, Spearfish, SD 57783  
AREY, DONALD. (C) RFD 1, Anagance Ln., Wolfboro, NH 03894  
ARMSTRONG, LEON, LINDA, AND FAMILY. (C) 3906 Poplar Grove Dr., Vinton, VA 24179  
ATKINSONS, DEAN & PAT. (R) Atkinson Family Crusade, P.O. Box 517, New Castle, OK 73065-0517  
ATTIG, WALTER. (C) 404 Elm St., Mascoutah, IL 62258

## B

BAGGETT, DALLAS. 1313 Fletcher Ave. S.W., Decatur, AL 35601  
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## "I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU CAME TO VISIT ME."

(Matt. 25:36, NIV)

Sometimes someone we are close to, or one of the church family tangles with the law and ends up in prison. What can a church or a pastor do when this happens to one of their own? To put them out of mind after they are out of sight does not speak well of our "burden for lost souls."

### WHAT CAN THE CHURCH DO?

If prisoners are hostile to the church and its people, there may be little we can do except pray for them. If, however, they are open, there are a few basic rules to follow in ministering to them and their families:

1. When you find out where the prisoner is incarcerated, send him a short letter assuring him of your prayers.
2. Organize the church to write letters on a rotating basis, so the inmate will receive at least one letter a week from the church. (The pastor should not be a part of this group. He has a responsibility to write or visit whenever the opportunity arises.)
3. Write positively about the church's activities and of your concern for his spiritual welfare. Enclose a bulletin from the previous Sunday's service.
4. Remember the inmate's birthday, Christmas, or other special days with a card. Do not send gifts without first checking with prison officials to see if it is permissible.
5. Place a couple extra stamps in your letter. Inmates usually live on one dollar a day, which doesn't go far in buying stamps.
6. If you want to send money, send it to the institution, credited to his account. Commissary purchases are charged to his personal account.

7. Be supportive of the spouse left at home. Drop off a dish of food. If there are children, the hands of the parent at home are full, being both father and mother.

8. Include the inmate's children in activities from time to time. Accept responsibility as a church for them rather than leaving them to community programs.

9. A visit each month from a couple of church people would be appreciated. Men should visit the male inmates; ladies visit the female. Be sure you are on the inmate's visitors' list—and observe all rules while there.

10. Keep your relationships with both the offender and his family as normal as possible under the circumstances. Don't make promises you aren't prepared to keep.

11. Treat the prisoner, regardless of his problems and circumstances, with the same love and compassion Jesus would have shown.

### WHAT CAN A PASTOR DO?

Apply for state or national correctional chaplaincy. The chaplain is welcomed by correctional officials as an important part of the rehabilitation team. The chaplain provides preaching, pastoral care, counseling, orientation, discipleship, and moral development classes. Nazarene pastors who are creative and understanding; who have some clinical pastoral training, are well equipped to minister to these oft-forgotten "other sheep."

—from *Midwest Christian Prison Ministries, Inc.*  
Keith Kelly, President

For further information, contact **Chaplaincy Ministries,**  
6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

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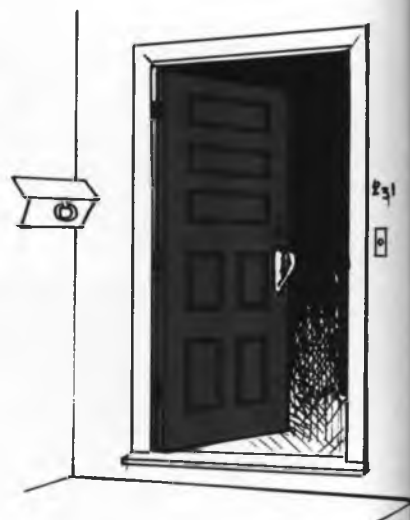
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### BOOKS

- *Communications and Growth* (Oster)
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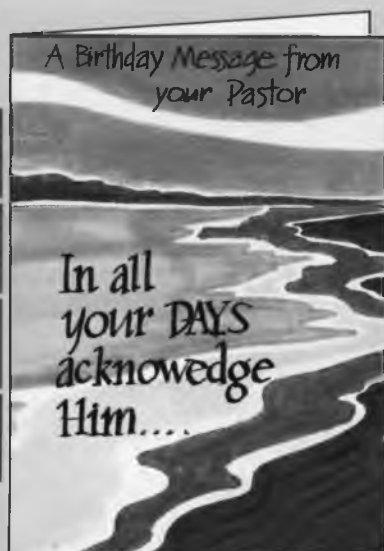


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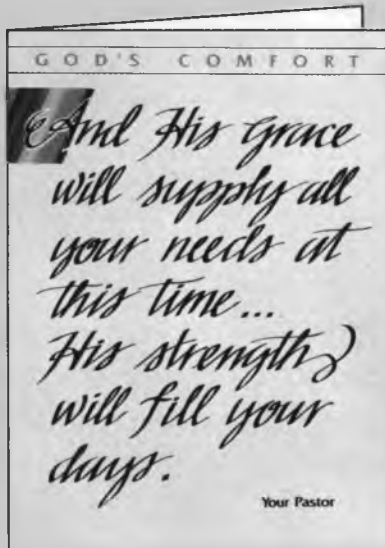
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PAG-872



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# RESOURCING THE CITIES

God has provided resources to reach America's cities for Christ. As Nazarenes prepare to focus on 10 world-class cities over the next decade, some of us may wonder what will be done for the rest of urban America.

A look at the 23 cities of half a million or more shows that we have only one church for every 156,000 city dwellers. Further, very few of these large cities have ministries to the whole person. With one "Thrust to the City" in North America every second year, it would take 45 years to focus just on these cities, to mention nothing of Canada's major cities.

But God has been at work among Nazarenes. Each major city in the United States is surrounded by a good group of Nazarenes, whom God has given resources.

While any city would be greatly helped by denominational focus in a Thrust to the Cities campaign, almost every major city in the United States is surrounded by Nazarenes who gave \$1 million or more in 1985.

What resources are available to reach your city? Which churches are near enough to reasonably accept the challenge of reaching out to the city near you?

The Church Growth Research Center analyzes church locations to see what has been done as well as what can be done. If there's a question you have about Nazarene resources, contact the Research Center.



Robert Brunson

City, State	Population	Churches	Members	Total Money Raised in Area
New York, N.Y.	7,164,742	21	2045	\$3,030,708
Los Angeles, Calif.	3,096,721	20	2427	\$16,215,219
Chicago, Ill.	2,992,472	7	494	\$4,589,611
Houston, Tex.	1,705,697	10	869	\$2,751,965
Philadelphia, Pa.	1,646,713	2	141	\$3,298,738
Detroit, Mich.	1,088,973	5	374	\$4,577,316
Dallas, Tex.	974,234	11	1420	\$5,528,591
San Diego, Calif.	960,452	7	1722	\$2,156,742
Phoenix, Ariz.	853,266	10	2095	\$3,973,863
San Antonio, Tex.	842,799	13	1165	\$690,652
Baltimore, Md.	763,570	1	71	\$1,213,171
San Francisco, Calif.	712,753	4	243	\$4,496,212
Indianapolis, Ind.	710,280	22	3258	\$4,472,066
San Jose, Calif.	686,178	6	780	(with San Francisco)
Memphis, Tenn.	648,399	10	944	\$905,288
Washington, D.C.	622,823	2	484	\$2,168,533
Milwaukee, Wis.	620,811	2	192	\$552,250
Jacksonville, Fla.	577,971	10	1402	\$1,075,142
Boston, Mass.	570,719	2	80	\$2,294,909
Columbus, Ohio	566,114	11	2118	\$4,053,298
New Orleans, La.	559,101	3	135	\$300,702
Cleveland, Ohio	546,543	5	169	\$3,111,550
Denver, Colo.	504,588	5	313	\$4,391,518

STATISTICAL RESEARCH CENTER, 6401 THE PASEO, KANSAS CITY, MO 64131

# THE EDITORIAL BOARD

For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain" (1:21). "Therefore if *th*  
ny consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship o  
pirit, if any affection and mer... fill my joy by being like-mi  
2:1-2). "Let nothing *be* done t... ambition or conceit,  
owliness of mind let each este... on himself" (2:3). "Le  
mind be in you which was... the name of  
very knee should bo... less that  
hrist *is* Lord" (2:1).



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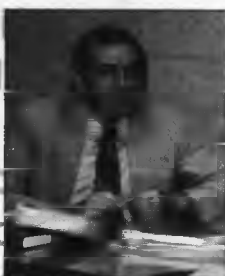
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In October 1985, the editorial staff of the *Preacher's Magazine* met with the religion faculty of Bethany Nazarene College (now Southern Nazarene University). Together, they worked to bring you this issue on Philippians.

hrist Jesus" (4:19). "To our God... be glory forever and  
k:20). "The grace of our Lord J... be with you all" (4:23).

and call her jealous. Listening to her may save your marriage and your ministry. My wife has alerted me several times that she felt uncertain about a particular woman. The first two times I doubted her identification but followed her advice to "steer clear." Interestingly, in both cases the women were later immorally involved with other men. How do wives know? God tells them! You had better listen.

3. *Tell on other women.* If a certain woman begins to come on to you, tell your wife that very day. Don't wait until the next morning; tell her before you sleep again. She is the most important person to help protect your marriage. Don't say, "I need some accountability with some other guy," when it comes to this matter. Tell your wife. You are in this marriage together, and both of you must learn together to protect your relationship with each other and with God. Ministers and actors are the two most attractive types of men to women. They are attracted to your power, prestige, standing in the community, and spiritual insight. Some women—especially those whose husbands are not committed—are thinking, "If only my husband would be like him." This is wild-fire, and it makes you especially vulnerable to temptation. Steer clear! And when you spot someone who is melting toward you, tell your wife. She has as much to lose as you do. The quicker you realize that you are trying to protect the marriage together the better.

4. *Don't counsel women alone.* Enough has been said about this in other places, but let it be said that "he who goes alone to the church to meet a woman for counseling hath no brains at all." Make sure somebody is in the outer office at all times, and if you and your wife have a "Yokemate" ministry, counsel women as a team. Failure to heed this advice has ruined too many thoughtless pastors.

5. *Drink from your own spring* (Prov. 5:15). The best defense is a good offense. Though it is no guarantee, keeping the fire hot at home is a good defense against sexual temptation. Paul said as much when he told the Corinthian people, "But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. . . . Do not deprive each other . . ." (1 Cor. 7:2-3, 5, NIV). Full sexual fulfillment in marriage is God's plan. You and your wife need to recognize this truth and make sure you are not "defrauding" your partner (v. 5) by providing a dry or boring spring at home.

Do not allow Satan to suggest to you, however, that lack of fulfillment in your private family life somehow justifies a little sin on your part in thought or deed. It does not. Marital fulfillment is God's plan. Some of you are simply too impatient with your wives to allow God's plan to develop. Be patient. Stick to your own spring.

6. *Beware of "emotional adultery."* While this is a greater problem for women than men, beware of getting emotionally attached to any women other than your wife. These emotional attachments can lead to explosive situations where temptation crashes in on you with greater force than you have ever experienced. It is obvious you are not to find sexual fulfillment outside of marriage. Be careful to guard against gaining emotional fulfillment from another woman. Such relationships of-

ten develop into more than emotional attachments and are potential disasters. Even if they don't lead to something between you and her, it can hinder your own marriage relationship. Listen to a letter from one minister who lost his wife to another man partly through his own emotional attachment (minor changes to protect individual):

Now I see how she was hungry to talk to me when I got home—and I was so tired that I just picked up the newspaper or mail and read it. I never cheated on her, or even did anything wrong. But I allowed innocent relationships to replace our marriage relationship. Now I realize how I allowed my relationship with one particular person to fulfill my need for conversation, for small talk about the ordinary things of life. Then when I came home, they were already spoken and "released," and thus I never shared them with my wife. She got the message I didn't care, or took her for granted. She started looking for someone to share the "little things of life" with. And, she found him. . . . Now I've lost her. My life is ruined. It's a wreck.

Need I say more? Emotional attachments are explosive—steer clear.

7. *Bring your thought life into total obedience.* Holiness is pervasive. God wants to do more than purify a man's outward deeds. God offers divine power to take captive every thought, making it obedient to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). There are numerous voices today (several of them "Christian") urging that sexual fantasies are innocent, acceptable—even good for us. This is a lie of Satan. Lust is the label God's Word puts on such thoughts. They are sin. If you are keeping pure actions toward other women, and you have not uttered even the slightest words of attachment, yet you are guilty of impure thoughts, you are perching yourself on a precarious precipice that leads nowhere but over the brink into deeper and deeper violations of God's commands.

Who do you think you are? Do you believe that you will be the first to escape God's law, "As a man thinks in his heart so is he"? Do you think you can play with fire without burning your soul? Do you believe you can keep God's anointing on your ministry as you dwell on thoughts of disobedience? I'm not talking about temptation—you will likely never escape that. I am talking about willfully dwelling on impure thoughts—thinking them. This is sin. This is the incredible power of the human mind. It can multiply and produce much from little. If you think negative thoughts as the habit of your life, you will eventually get negative results. If you plant positive thoughts, you'll reap positive results and attitudes. This is a universal principle recognized by believers and unbelievers alike.

Can't you see what this means applied to thought purity? If you plant seeds of disobedience in your thought life, what do you suppose will sprout—and in incredible abundance? Certainly you will reap a harvest of disobedience.

Please, let me challenge you to bring every thought into captivity, making them totally obedient to Christ—100 percent. If you have been allowing disobedient thoughts to creep into your mind, confess and repent of this sin. Recognize where these seed thoughts will lead.

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Find out what triggers such temptations, and starve these sources—certain people, times, places, and especially TV. Begin memorizing Scripture. Establish some accountability. Have faith in deliverance. Men and women all down through history (and many today) can testify that there is no sin that cannot be conquered. Seek deliverance. There is power in the Blood.

8. *Recognize that you'll get caught.* Finally I wish to address a point to anyone involved in any way with a questionable relationship. I want to unmask the ultimate lie that Satan is telling you: "You'll never be caught." Satan is telling you that you are the exception—you can get away with it. He says a little bit of sin for a season won't hurt you, and no one will ever find out. Listen to me carefully. Satan is a liar. You will be caught.

Sinners have believed they could get away with sin from the beginning of time. Adam and Eve believed it. They got caught. Cain thought he'd gotten away with murder. He got caught. Rebekah and Jacob thought they had deceived everyone. They got caught. Joseph's brothers thought their sales agreement with the Midianites cleared them of ever being found out. They got caught. Moses thought he had buried his sin in the sand. Moses got caught. Achan thought the evidence was well hidden under the floor of his tent. Achan got caught. Saul thought Samuel would never find out about a few animals kept back. Saul got caught. David figured a little sin on the rooftop or in the privacy of his bedroom would never come to light. David got caught. Ananias and Sapphira thought they'd devised the perfect plot. They got caught. It's a simple fact: sinners get caught.

Do you think you can get away with a little sin? Who do you think you are? You will be like every other sinner down through history. You'll be caught. It is a universal law of life: "Be sure your sin will find you out." Do you think you can break God's universal laws of life? Do you think you will be the first who gets away with sin?

How will you be found out? Perhaps the woman will tell. She may break under her burden of sin and blurt out the whole story in confession at some altar or to another minister. Or someone else may tell. You think no one saw you, but someone somewhere did, and they will tell. Or believers will know it. Christians have a special sixth sense about sin in the camp, and they will sense something is wrong. Or you may tell on yourself. The burden of guilt may eventually be so much for you to handle that you yourself will give up and confess to this sin just to find spiritual release. Or if you seem to be getting away with it for a season, you will be more and more bold so that you will eventually cause yourself to get caught.

Or, God will tell on you. Even if you don't get found out by any other way, God himself will bring sin into the light. Do you think you can hide from Him? Don't you think He will continue to do what He has always done—expose sin? Do you think you will be the first human in history to get away with sin? He will find a godly, Nathan-like prophet and reveal directly to him what you have done. It may take weeks, months, or even years to crop up, but sooner or later your sin will be found out. You can't hide sin and get away with it. That is the devil's lie. If you are fooling around with sexual indiscretion, you will get caught.

I list this last because it is Satan's ultimate lie. Is there not enough evidence about us to illustrate that people do not get away with sin? If you are perched on the edge of sexual indiscretion, turn back now. Flee—leave your coat behind. Recognize the consequences. You'll be caught eventually. And you, your family, your church, and all your friends will pay a heavy price. The devil promises you all the kingdoms of this world if you will simply bow down and worship at his altar of carnal desires. But you can't have it all. God says your sin will find you out and you'll pay the price. And God is truth.

Listen to this letter (minor changes to protect individual):

It all started innocently, or at least it seemed so. My ministry kept throwing a certain girl and me together. She was one of the most active laypersons in the church, and we both carried the identical burden for the church people. It all began in common ministry—that's what's so ironic. We worked together—not just her and me, but in a group. Yet there was an attraction there; a spark between us that lit a fire!

My wife was busy with the kids and her job. She never suspected anything. I was continually around this lay woman. It happened just like you warn—we started "climbing the ladder," exchanging little pleasantries, meaningful glances, double-meaning kidding, and finally little touches, pats, a squeeze of the hand, a quick hug, all accompanied by very spiritual overtones. It was exhilarating! I'm not saying I wasn't guilty, just that sin had such a powerful attraction to me. I wanted more, and I was willing to risk anything—everything—to get it.

Well, to make a long story short, so did she. It seemed like I was a teenager again—going too far, then repenting and promising to do better; then just as quickly, I was hungrily seeking more sin. Soon I quit resisting and was swept into outright adultery. All this time I kept up my "ministry"—I don't think anyone really knew it. That's scary, isn't it?

Then, it all came crashing down. We got "found out." Now my life is a shambles. My dreams have shattered. I've lost my beautiful wife—I loved her all the time, and still do. I've lost my wonderful children—oh, how I ache to be with them again. I've probably lost my ministry forever—what an ache it is to sit in a service without running it! It's all gone.

My future, my hopes, my dreams, my family, my reputation, my ministry. The devil doesn't show you where the little temptations lead you. The excitement, the delights, the powerful seductiveness of sin is fleeting.

If my story can help others, use it. Tell your young men to "stay off the ladder" and "drink from their own spring." Tell them to clean up their thought lives. Tell them sin doesn't pay, and sooner or later it will "find them out." Maybe the ashes of my dreams can teach others to say no to the devil.

*With little hope anymore*  
This plea is based on his advice. I have done what the young man asked.

If this letter saves just one of you from the brink of destruction, it will have been worth it.



# The Ministry of Example

by Raymond C. Kratzer

1 Tim. 4:12: *But be thou an example to the believers . . .*

Across the years in myriads of parsonages the godly lives of a pastor and his wife have wrought more change for good than anyone can know. The gossamer garment of beauty that adorns these dedicated lives often impresses a whole community for good.

The regal aspect of a pastor's home makes a profound impact upon those within the scope of its influence. The parsonage palace may be an antiquated house with little of material consequence, or it may be the last word in 20th-century decor, but in either case its inhabitants are kings and queens in God's economy.

It is difficult to assess the influence that radiates from the lives of the spiritual leaders of a congregation. Whether in the pulpit, the pew, the classroom, the home, or in the marketplace, there is an aura of goodness about most of them that transcends the average. Because of this, an unusual measure of responsibility is inescapable.

The pastor and his wife are on display a great deal of the time. Their lives may appear to them ordinary or common. But to the congregation they serve, they are something "special." If the pastor has a flat tire, it becomes a conversation piece at the next gathering. Should his wife get a new dress, everyone notices it.

Passing the time of day with someone, or waving at them across the street often elicits a warm feeling and a lingering blessing far out of proportion to the simple act of friendliness on the part of the pastor or his wife. God uses His servants to lift the spirit and encourage the heart.

It is refreshing to observe the love and

esteem manifested by a congregation in giving to their pastor and wife at Christmas or some other occasion. While the wrapping is being removed by nervous fingers, the eyes of the congregation sparkle with delight, radiating their love and affection.

This esteem should be a sacred trust. Through it great good can be accomplished. On the other hand, a careless attitude can do damage that not only diminishes good influence but also may begin a trend that injures the whole cause of Christ.

An awareness of the high calling of God can do wonders in overlooking people's flaws. It is so easy to become irritated by things laymen do, especially when we are hurt by them. Their unkindness toward the pastor or his wife may be but an echo of some deep hurt they are feeling at the moment. The parsonage family often becomes their "sounding board."

If the first reaction is to "fight fire with fire"—to give them "a piece of your mind" or to "write them off"—don't do it! Make it the opportunity to manifest the Spirit of Christ. Pray for them and let the Lord do the chastening. Find some ways to return "good for evil" without malicious intent. Miracles will happen!

A pastor's wife is in a vulnerable position in the congregation. Many of the ladies will seek to monopolize her time and garner her affection. It will take time not to offend these ladies, and yet not to become enmeshed in too narrow a fellowship.

In our first pastorate the missionary society had a weekly quilting day with a potluck dinner in the church basement. Our son, three years old, usually amused himself playing on the lawn in front of the church while the ladies quilted.

While quilts were being tied, much

pleasant conversation passed between these gracious ladies. My wife not only learned to be an expert quilter, she also developed a "sixth sense" for potential gossip. One of the ladies remarked one day: "You know, every time we start to gossip the least little bit, Sister Kratzer says, 'I wonder where Ronnie is?' And then we all look for him and our juicy gossip is dissipated or forgotten." The other ladies got the adroit suggestion and loved my wife for her sagacity.

There are many other areas where the "Queen of the Manse" may wield an influence far out of proportion to her quiet personality. The way she dresses can set a pattern of modesty and attractiveness that will lift the level of feminine attire for all the ladies of the church and demonstrate that a "meek and quiet spirit" is of great value.

The pastor can likewise be a pattern of holy living through his attitudes, the courtesy he shows his wife and family, and the manner in which he deports himself. He may be tempted to show his authority as leader, but if he is wise, he will use less divisive ways to solve problems.

Paul could say, "Follow me as I follow Christ," because it was born of years of thoughtful concern in which he discovered the best way of leading people. His earlier methods of dealing with what he thought was right brought heartache and shame. Through the valley of experience he discovered that love covers a multitude of sins. Restraint and tolerance became his emotional balance wheels. His heartbeat had a touch of compassion for the needs of people as he strove to follow in the steps of Jesus in finding solutions.

May each day find us more proficient in the ministry of example. Perhaps this is our greatest ministry!



Rev. Stephen G. Green is an effective biblical preacher. He has mastered the biblical languages and seldom studies from an English Bible. Yet his homiletical procedures are very usable to all preachers, including those who have not mastered Greek and Hebrew. At the request of the editor, Steve shares his weekly sermon preparation procedure. This is the first in a series.

# HOW I PREPARE TO PREACH

by Stephen G. Green

*Pastor, Springdale Church of the Nazarene, Cincinnati, Ohio*

Here I am, sitting at my desk, knowing that in just a few days I will step to the pulpit again. My congregation will expect to hear a fresh, interesting, and even powerful word from the Lord. God knows that I want to bring them one. But how? What do I preach? The Lord and I know that many of the people I will preach to have tremendous needs and problems. If these people are to make it, they need a word that will address these difficulties. Yet at the same time, I know that what I have to say has very little power unless it is God's word. The great task that all of us who are preachers of the gospel face, is, "How do I allow the Bible to speak to the situations that my congregation faces?"

In this article I seek to join the tasks of biblical exegesis and homiletical theory. These tasks, as practiced by a great many preachers today, do not function in a complimentary manner. They pull in different directions. The move from exegesis to proclamation doesn't seem natural, but more like a turning to a distantly related second task. Exegesis pulls toward the past. This can best be seen in the exhaustive search for "what happened." Proclamation pulls toward the present and can be detected in today's "life situational" preaching. The desire to be biblical has made much proclamation irrelevant to contemporary life, and the desire to be relevant has removed the Bible from the pulpit, for all practical purposes, and left it on the desks of scholars.

Most biblical passages intend to address human needs that find some common ground with people today. This premise is not built upon a wooden notion of the Bible; it rests upon the belief that the interpreted experiences of ancient Israel and the Early Church open up, for the present-day communities of faith, new ways to live in relation to God and humanity.

The basic issue I am addressing is how to move from exegesis to the proclamation of a text's intention and purpose so that it addresses people of a different time and worldview—yet still comes to them as God's Word.

The journey from the Bible to the pulpit involves three major steps: (1) exegesis; (2) hermeneutics; and (3) homiletics. In this article we will look at these three major steps in detail. In subsequent articles we will model how these steps are taken with different types of biblical material.

### EXEGESIS

The goal of exegesis is to find out what the original author intended his audience to know. This is the goal whether the passage is a prophetic oracle, a poem, a story, a part of a letter, or a parable. In every type of literature each author has a particular meaning to convey to his audience. Exegesis is the process of coming to understand that meaning.

The process of exegesis has many steps. There are so many specialized areas within biblical exegesis, scholars become experts in one or two of these areas. For our purposes, we will not look at all of the different areas of biblical exegesis but will concentrate on four major questions.

The first questions one should ask of every biblical passage relate to *context*. What do we mean by context? There are two basic kinds of context: HISTORICAL and LITERARY. Let us briefly note each of these.

The *historical context*, which will differ from book to book, has to do with the time and culture of the author and his readers. It is in understanding the events and worldview of the author and his audience that one gets

a feel for the tensions and hopes of that day. This understanding allows us to begin to perceive what may be the occasion and purpose of each biblical book.

*Literary context* essentially means that words only have meaning in sentences, and for the most part biblical sentences only have meaning in relation to preceding and succeeding sentences. In looking at the literary context, we attempt to trace the author's train of thought. What does he mean here in relation to what he has said and to what he is about to say? We must learn to recognize units of thought, whether they be paragraphs in prose, or lines and sections of poetry.

A second major set of questions that one needs to ask every passage concerns those relating to *form*. What does "form" mean in relation to exegesis? Let us look at this for a moment.

We come across many different "forms" of communication in our daily experiences. We wake up to the smell of bacon sizzling and the sound of, "Good morning." We get dressed and go to work to hear someone else say, "How are you?" Though we know that the people who said, "Good morning" and "How are you?" are truthful, on days when they are in a hurry and not really thinking about spending an hour hearing our problems, they will still say the words. Why? These are "forms" of greetings. The variety of forms is so vast that we could never classify them all. They include letters, poetry, and stories. Within each of these there are varieties—of letters, poetry, and stories. You would not send the same type of letter to your boss as you would to Aunt Sue. Not only would the content be different, but the way you open and close the letter would be different as well. "Forms" are the vehicles that carry our messages to each other. They help us receive and respond to the messages.

The messages of the Bible are also in forms. These forms include "genres" (types of literature): narrative, letter, poem, oracle, proverb, law, and many other types of literature. Within each of these there are many subtypes of literature. Each genre has a particular "function" to perform. The task of the preacher is to discover that function.

For us to understand the "form" of any passage we must answer the following four questions: (1) What is the structure of the passage? (2) What is the genre? (3) What is the setting in which the genre is used? (4) What is the intention of the genre?

In determining a passage's structure, we are doing two basic things. First, we are looking for clues to help us determine the appropriate unit. In other words, we are trying to decide where the passage should begin and end. It is impossible to make sense out of a passage if you start in the middle and end in the middle of the next passage. Clues to this include introductory and concluding formulas, style, and sometimes content. The other key step we take in determining the structure is to outline the passage. By looking at the outline of the passage we are able not only to understand the author's thought but also to determine what type of literature we are dealing with.

How do we determine what type of genre we are dealing with? Initially, we need to determine if the passage is prose or poetry. Next, we need to ask what type of

prose or poetry we are dealing with. The more specific we can be, the better we will understand how to interpret the passage. An example of this can be seen in one of the oracles of Amos. Amos 4:4-5 is an oracle (type of literature) that is in the form of a call to worship. The cultic functionary would call to the pilgrims to come and receive life. Amos uses this "form" ironically. Rather than call the pilgrims to worship and life, Amos calls them to rebellion and sin. Understanding this helps us understand the function of this passage. It is to shock, much like a call to worship in our services would if it were stated, "Come to church and sin."

The third question many times is answered in the second question. It is important to know where the "form" was used normally. Another example from Amos can be seen in 5:1-3. This oracle is in the form of a dirge used in funerals. Singing a funeral song to the congregation sets the stage for what is being communicated. Many commentaries will help you understand where a particular form was used in that culture.

The fourth area of concern is intention. We attempt to discern what this particular type of literature tries to do. All literature attempts to move the audience to action. We are best able to preach biblically if we understand what the intention or function of each passage is. For a sermon to be truly biblical, it must "function" the way the biblical passage functioned. It is not biblical if it only explains what the passage meant! Answering this fourth question will help us determine what our sermon should ask the congregation to do.

The third major set of questions that one must ask of every passage relate to *content*. Content has to do with the meaning that the author had of words, symbols, grammar, and literary devices. How does our author use the words he chooses? Word studies and grammatical analysis are of vital importance. These studies are not concerned with how a particular word is used in the Bible, but how the biblical author is using that word in the passage we have before us. Good commentaries and biblical dictionaries are helpful in this stage of exegesis.

The final set of questions that we will concern ourselves with have to do with bringing to light the *theological rationale* of the passage. I find it useful to ask three specific questions of every passage. These questions are not the only important theological concerns of each passage, but they form a place to start thinking within the passage. These questions are: (1) What is the human *need* that the passage is dealing with? (2) What is the *answer* that God gives to that need? (3) How does the author want the audience to *respond*? These three questions become cornerstones for reflection upon the passage. Further, they will help guide the hermeneutical step that follows exegesis. A fourth question that sometimes proves helpful asks what kind of *result* one can expect if God meets the need.

Let us look, for a moment, at how these questions can be asked of a familiar text, John 3:16. What is the *need* in this passage? The answer is "perishing" or "being condemned." This can be seen both in the text and in context. What is God's *answer* to perishing people? He gave His Son. What is the *response* the author

wants his readers to have? That they believe in the Son. The result of believing is that they will have eternal life. These are but bare answers to these questions. It is important to give more depth to them, but you can see how this theological thinking works within a text.

### HERMENEUTICS

Many of us, when we hear the word *hermeneutics* ask, "Herman who?" We say to ourselves, "I don't know what this long word means, and I have still preached many effective sermons from God's Word." We practice hermeneutics even though we may not know what it means. It is the merger of our situations with the text. Most preachers bring an enlightened common sense to this task. Our problem is that we lack consistency as we approach different texts. We do not intend to do this, but we bring our own theological traditions, our own world-views, and our own concerns to this task. This is not all bad, but we must be aware of what we are doing.

In making the jump from the biblical world to ours, we must insist upon this criteria: a passage cannot mean to us what it could never have meant to its author and first audience. This means that the theology underlying the passage cannot change. If there are similar situations in the world of the text and in our world, then the application of the text is easy. But if situations differ, then we face the problem of extended application.

In an extended application, we look for the theological principle that supports the text. We attempt to look through the specific situation to see a basic human need. After we discover the basic human need addressed in the text, then we look for a correlation in our world. This correlation is a specific situation in our world, which is involved in this basic human need. We must guard against applying this principle at random to any situation. It must be applied to genuinely comparable situations.

It is during this stage of sermon preparation that all kinds of other studies can be brought in to help us see the merging of both worlds. It is important to use the theological rationale of our exegesis to guide our thinking in this area of reflection. Remember, a text can never mean now what it could never have meant then.

### HOMILETICS

We have finished a careful examination of a passage. The context, form, content, and theology are understood. We have carefully thought the passage and our own situation through and have uncovered the theological principle that applies to both situations. So we are

now faced with the question, "How do we preach this passage?"

The answer to that question involves answering questions about our audience and our style. But the most important question is: "How does this passage want to be preached?" To answer this question we must go back to our exegesis and look at the passage's form. The author wanted his audience to respond in a particular way, and we want our audience to respond in the same way. This means that we start at the end of our sermon, determine how we want our congregation to respond to the sermon, and then design the sermon to allow it to happen.

This is the most important element in making our sermon truly biblical. We can explain a biblical passage in detail, but we have not preached biblically unless we have allowed that Word from God to function.

Our sermons are also "forms" of communication. Within this form of communication we are attempting to let the message of a biblical passage function in the hearts and lives of our congregation. Since sermons are "forms" of communication, they have structures. The types of structures that make up this form of communication are many and varied. Many preachers use the structure of the passage itself to communicate its message. Others use a variety of topical structures to communicate the message of the passage.

Most of the time, my preaching style uses two structure types. The first is the structure of the text itself, though not always in the same order that we have it. The second sermon structure is narrative. Because this is not as well known, we will look at it briefly.

A well-told story is almost like magic. Everyone will listen to it. It is this magnetism that makes the narrative one of the most well received forms of preaching. Now what do we mean by narrative? Do we design a story for every sermon we preach? None of us have that much creativity, and even if we did, our time demands would not allow us that luxury. All narratives have a basic structure. This structure is the human experience itself that motivated the author to write. Preaching that uses a narrative structure seeks to create the human problem and God's answer of grace.

We have looked at what goes into sermon preparation. It involves time-consuming steps of exegesis, hermeneutics, and homiletics. Even after this preparation, let us not forget that we are not yet ready to step to the pulpit and preach. For preaching is not only a merging of our world with the world of the biblical text but also a merging of our spirit with His!

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# PASTORAL VISITATION: A PERSPECTIVE ON MOTIVATION

by Peter G. Hargreaves

*Pastor, Medina Valley Church of the Nazarene, Devine, Tex.*

*Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction (James 1:27).*

They practiced door-to-door evangelism rather forcefully. Angry tenants slammed doors in their faces just as forcefully. But they called. Even verbal tirades didn't deter them. Attack dogs pursued them, sicced on by gospel antagonists within. But they persisted. All but one.

"Such negative responses cooled my ardor. I left that zealous religious group. I do not now consider home visitation part of my pastoral responsibility," commented that minister at a pastor's conference. His confession evoked shock and amazement from most of the pastors. Others were equally amazed that their own feelings about visitation were voiced so openly.

Since the theme of the conference was evangelism in the local church, many questions followed this pastor's comments. Among them was a question of basic motivation, "Why should we visit anyway?"

It became clear quite quickly that motivation for evangelistic visitation must be deeper than standards of accepted practice. There must be a clear understanding of purpose and procedure, and that will determine to a great extent the effectiveness of ministry.

Why do so many seem to falter and fail in this area of ministry? Dr. Eugene L. Stowe observes that some pastors feel visitation is somehow beneath their educational status. Other rationalize away their time. Some fear saying the wrong things. Others fear rejection. And still others allow anxieties about relating to people to defeat them. Finally, many do not develop a clearly defined purpose or motivation for visitation.<sup>1</sup>

Visitation is more a part of the pastoral call than is

generally understood. It is an integral part of the spiritual and social health of a church and its pastor. Dr. P. F. Bresee noted,

Ministry is burden-bearing, weeping with those who weep, rejoicing with those who rejoice, serving and caring for those whom the world despises, and helping those whom the world would trample under foot, digging in the pit and rescuing from sin and despair those who otherwise would perish. This is ministry—the ministry of Christ—whether there is any churchly recognition or not.<sup>2</sup>

All this cannot be done without the pastor—entering the homes of those to whom God has sent him. His motivation must come from the conviction that *visitation is ministry in its most literal sense*.

It is not duty, an official inspection, or high pressure salesmanship. Calling finds its motivation in friendship and a desire to serve.<sup>3</sup>

If a pastor is to fulfill his call, he must be one who "seeks to bring the church to people where they live."<sup>4</sup>

Most pastors visit and make calls, first, because it is the essence of true pastoral ministry.

Jesus taught this principle by *precept* when He instructed His disciples concerning their office. They were to teach, baptize, and heal. *And* they were to *Go*, and to visit. They were to meet needs where the needs were found whether in the synagogue, in the streets, or in the home. Jesus so emphasized this aspect of ministry that He stated that those who visit and meet needs minister not only to the individuals with the particular needs but to Him as well: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40; see vv. 31-46).

He taught this principle by *example* in nearly every recorded event of His earthly ministry. Jesus met needs where they were. He made himself available. He knew that true ministry meant visiting people where they lived. John T. Sisemore says that Jesus visited people in their homes, sent His disciples to visit in the homes of people, made wayside visits, visited specific individuals, visited family groups, and visited crowded places.<sup>5</sup> Jesus visited.

As surprising as it may seem, visitation is so important to pastoral ministry that the preaching service depends to a great degree upon the time and burden invested in this area. It was John Wesley himself who instructed his preachers:

By repeated experiments we learn that, though a man preach like an angel, he will neither collect nor preserve a society, without visiting from house to house.<sup>6</sup>

Preaching, as the proclamation of the Word of God, is received far more quickly as it meets needs. Another writer states, "The caring preacher wants his or her parishioners to grow, to move from immaturity to maturity."<sup>7</sup>

But we cannot care unless we know . . . It follows, of course, that the preacher must make the effort to know. He or she must take time to talk with, to question, to listen carefully to people. The preacher's ears and heart must be open to the members of the parish as they are open to the Lord.<sup>8</sup>

Visitation is the pastor's chief vehicle for expressing love and concern for his church and his community. Again, our Lord's own testimony is our guide and motivation. People responded to Jesus not because of some magical charisma, but because of His love. How did they know He loved them? Because He visited them where they were. And He met them on a one-to-one basis in familiar scenes and places. The Great Commission is not—and never has been—"Bring them in." The Great Commission of Jesus Christ is "Go!"

Donna Clark Goodrich aptly describes this fundamental aspect of motivation in her book, *Winning Souls Through the Sunday School*. She says,

When we love someone, we see past the physical appearance, past the words which are spoken, past the family background. We see a personality, an individual, a soul that needs to be saved.<sup>9</sup>

And,

You cannot have compassion for the multitude without first having concern for the individual.<sup>10</sup>

This kind of concern can develop only as the pastor visits his people. Another writer, Gaines S. Dobins, says, "A church that does not minister to human need has abandoned the New Testament pattern."<sup>11</sup> Love must be a God-given, heartfelt burden. But, equally significant, love must be an active, dynamic reality in expressed ministry. Jesus' words were given credence by His actions. The pastor's gifts of preaching and shepherding

are "fleshed out" and made real by caring, loving visitation.

Dr. Stowe makes another observation, important to understanding how vital visitation is to the pastoral ministry. He says,

Whether it comes easily and naturally or not, *no pastor can dispatch his shepherding responsibilities and maintain a healthy flock without a program of consistent calling on his sheep.*<sup>12</sup>

Pastoral visitation is a requirement for spiritual leadership, for those who follow will never go further than they are led. The recent trend for "discipleship" among Christians seems to have ignored the needs of the world. Pastors should lead their people to reach out to that world.

Pastoring is much more than preaching sermons. It is reaching the lost. It is serving the Body of Christ. It is visiting.

Pastors visit because it is *integral to the spiritual life* of the church. Church growth expert, C. Peter Wagner, states,

Christian people need counsel, exhortation, guidance in their lives, and support during periods of crises. If they are not receiving these things, spiritual development will be retarded.<sup>13</sup>

Regular, caring visitation brings a healing that cannot really take place otherwise. The pastor who gives visitation low priority weakens the effectiveness of his own ministry, for,

he cannot fully obey God without it,  
he cannot strengthen his people properly without it,  
he cannot heal his people without it,  
he cannot build the human bonds necessary for church growth without it,  
he cannot love his people deeply without it.

Another author points out the importance of visitation to the spiritual health of the church in a historical perspective:

Anyone who remembers the success of the great evangelistic meetings and revivals of years gone by will recall that results came not alone by strong and appealing preaching. There were always two other factors. The first was prayer . . . The second factor was the personal workers.<sup>14</sup>

Those were the pastors and dedicated laymen who visited from house to house.

Pastoral visitation is an important, exciting, vital ministry—a basic ingredient for pastoral effectiveness. Wesley said of pastors,

They are supposed to "watch over your souls, as those that shall give account" . . . They watch, waking while others sleep, over the flock of Christ; over the souls that he has bought with a price, that he has purchased with his own blood. They have them in their hearts both by day and by night; regarding neither sleep nor food in comparison of them. Even while they sleep, their heart is waking, full of concern for their beloved.<sup>15</sup>

# CHARITABLE DONATION DEDUCTION INCREASES FOR 1986

**T**he 1986 tax year is special for all charitable organizations, including churches, and for those who support them. Until recently, the only way to receive tax credit for charitable donations was to itemize deductions, using Schedule A. In 1983, the tax law was changed to allow thousands of non-itemizing taxpayers to deduct part of their contributions.

Until the 1985 tax year, the amount that could be deducted by non-itemizing taxpayers was modest. In 1985, the deduction was substantially increased to 50% of all contributions. Essentially, this meant it was only beneficial to itemize deductions if the "excess deduction," the amount above the Zero Bracket Amount (ZBA) already built into the tax tables, was greater than 50% of all charitable contributions.

Many taxpayers were not aware of this opportunity and focused on trying to find enough deductions to itemize. Review last year's return. See if it would have been advantageous to use the special contribution deduction instead of itemizing.

Understanding the special contribution deduction is even more important for the 1986 tax year. The amount allowed as a charitable deduction on a non-

itemized return increases to *100% of contributions*. This means that "excess deductions," those above the ZBA for 1986, must be larger than the total of all contributions before it is advantageous to itemize.

For example: Rev. and Mrs. Smith file a joint return with total deductions of \$4,540, of which \$3,000 were contributions. If they itemize, they will deduct the standard deduction ZBA for 1986 from the total deduction. If the ZBA remained at the 1985 level of \$3,540, the "excess deduction" would be \$1,000 which could be deducted from their income. However, if they do not itemize, they can deduct the full \$3,000 from their taxable income.

There is, however, an unfortunate note to add to this information. The tax law allowing these generous deductions was set up as an experiment to run through the 1986 tax year and then self-destruct unless extended by congressional action. Unless Congress acts to extend the deduction beyond 1986, taxpayers will lose this benefit.

—*Researched and prepared by  
Pensions and Benefits Services USA,  
Church of the Nazarene.*



And he said of pastoral visitation,

I know of no branch of the pastoral office which is of greater importance than this.<sup>16</sup>

Pastoral visitation is basic to pastoral ministry. It is ministry's real expression. It is pastor and church in the process of growth.



## NOTES

1. Eugene L. Stowe, *The Ministry of Shepherding* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1976), 100.
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11. Gaines S. Dobins, *A Ministering Church* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1960), 12.
12. Stowe, *Shepherding*, 101.
13. C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Be Healthy*, edited by Lyle E. Schaller (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 105-6.
14. Dawson C. Bryan, *Building Church Membership Through Evangelism* (New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, n.d.), 77.
15. Wesley, *Works*, 7:110.
16. *Ibid.*, 4:7.

# DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

by Pat and Bill Bouchillon

**P**astors and physicians share more than irregular hours and crisis calls. They serve the same population of people in need. They share such human qualities as weakness, strength, anger, and love. Both are expected to see only the best in others. They may feel their role demands that they be always strong, always caring, untiring, unemotional, yet supportive to all. Some feel they must be superhuman, without negative feelings. Physicians have been warned to recognize their feelings, even adverse feelings, toward some patients. If physicians should acknowledge their own negative responses to some people, should pastors not do the same?

Dr. James E. Groves, psychiatrist, writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, counsels doctors to recognize "hateful" patients by their own reactions. Once they recognize and handle their feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and simple rage spurred by the difficult patient, they are able to treat the patient. We suggest that pastors have the same reactions toward difficult people.

Let us look at the categories of "hateful" patients used by Dr. Groves. Considering that these patients or similar ones may be in the congregation, we shall view these categories from the pulpit. We choose to call these people "difficult" and to add a category of our own.

## **Dependent Clingers**

Physicians recognize a group of patients with inordinate requests and demands. For these, the doctor knows no

hours—has no other patients. What they seek is attention.

In the church, the dependent clinger greatly desires attention. They call often to speak with the pastor. "My husband is sick; what should I do?" "My son doesn't obey. Will you talk to him?" Or, "Do you think I ought to . . . ?" And, the clinger may be the most regular in church attendance.

You, the pastor, represent a loving God who cares for both independent and dependent persons, but if giving in to demands for attention by clingers leads only to more numerous demands, their desires, not their needs, are being met. What then?

You can recognize that your distaste is caused by your limited ability to help. You can observe clingers' unwillingness to help themselves. You have to limit contact that plays to their weakness, and you may risk being called names for this necessary action. At the same time, you can help through prayer and spiritual guidance. Clingers can be pointed upward to One on whom they can both depend and cling. They can be encouraged to attempt action, then find the behavior rewarding. You can enlist mature Christians as prayer partners for clingers. These helpers need instruction in rewarding positive statements from the clinger and ignoring their statements of self-devaluation. Desires for attention are satisfied to some degree by Christian friends spending time with the clingers. They can be led into service-oriented activities. As the clinger grows spiritually, more responsible behavior

emerges. The dependent posture diminishes with personal growth.

Dependent clingers can be easily used for ego gratifications, and you need to be aware of this. Clingers will follow suggestions, applauding all the time. If you allow this to happen, you are playing to the clinger's weakness. If you can become aware of your own reactions to difficult people, perhaps you can avoid any tendency that might misuse them. Thus, you have refrained from playing to the weakness of a needy person and have, with the cooperation of others, enabled one to grow.

## **Entitled Demanders**

These complain to physicians of not getting the care to which they are entitled. Moving often from one doctor to another, they seem to feel that doctors don't care anymore. The physician is advised by Dr. Groves to reason with these patients, to agree that they are entitled to the finest of medical skills.

Pastors know entitled demanders, but the demander's stance is more likely to be a whine than a demand. A few demand of God, but more are prone to whine as they pity themselves for lacking that to which they feel entitled. Whatever the facade, entitled demanders seek to involve others in a power struggle. They threaten, pity themselves, give generously, make large donations, or work hard for the church. Through it all they seek to control—to be boss. They want to feel you owe them. Pastors tolerate the situation for a while. However, entitled demand-



ers are like a spring. Push it down, but when least expected, the tension of the spring snaps back at you. Entitled demanders may leave the fold only to attempt control elsewhere.

When people are motivated by power, physicians encounter demands; pastors encounter whines. In both groups, reason may help. In the church it helps these demanders to see their own motivation. Explain: A gift asks nothing in return. Gifts are, by definition, free. We give because we love. We work for God because we wish to serve. Work for any other reason is unacceptable. If entitled demanders can "hear" this reasoning, they may be able to apply it to themselves. A renewed appreciation of God's power helps reduce petty attempts to control. Those who feel powerless often try to use people as things. Point out their attempt to "play God" when this happens. Counting our blessings and remembering whence they came helps affirm our dependence on God. Seen in this perspective, entitled demanders may limit power play.

You can become aware of your own wishes to control, especially when clashing with demanders. For all power

seekers, we recommend a double portion of God's grace. A heart filled with thanksgiving has little room for plays with the lives of others.

#### **Manipulative Help-Rejecters**

Physicians find this category the most numerous and filled with people they find difficult to help, as these patients derive pleasure in believing that no treatment works. A symptom relieved is quickly replaced by another symptom. Dr. Groves recommends that physicians see these regularly admitting the necessity of long-term treatment. Their fear of losing the doctor is thus reduced.

Pastors also see many who reject help—most in a spirit of revenge. "See there, I knew it wouldn't work for me," they seem to say. Suggestions go unheeded, because "it won't work." Indeed, these people refuse to do what they know.

Help-rejecters do not realize that they want to hurt someone as they have been hurt. To show help-rejecters the world is not "out to get them" someone has to work with them without any spirit of retaliation. Feeling that they have inflicted pain by rejecting advice and returning for more, help-rejecters appear

often. But, don't forget, pastor, you are supposed to be there. The rejecters' best chance for understanding lies with you, and they don't want to lose you.

Persons who reject help can be shown that they misuse human effort. A vicarious message, through books, accomplishes much. Reading how others solved problems explodes the chosen theme of "nothing works." Some pastors keep a list of titles or a few books to lend. Group discussions may be beneficial. Since this problem is ongoing, continued group participation is suggested. How do rejecters feel when efforts to help are ignored? They need to find out. Voluntary activity in hospitals, rest homes, or rescue missions enables rejecters to see themselves. Remember, help-rejecters have a variety of techniques used to avoid aid. Only as they see others use their techniques can they recognize these debilitating behaviors.

Don't forget a program of prayer and devotional time for help-rejecters. True, this suggestion they have heard and probably discarded. Coupled with reality gained from voluntary activity, rejecters may be ready to accept that God is not a rejecter but a Helper.

#### **Self-destructive Deniers**

Physicians view these people as unconsciously suicidal—those who have given up on aid from every source. Doctors, rendered helpless by the self-destructive denier, wish for release. Committed to nurturing life, physicians see release through the patient's death, according to Dr. Groves.

Pastors see self-destructive deniers as failures at the task of living; they are filled with self-pity, self-blame, and self-remorse. Talking of dying, they have given up on life. They exclude themselves from God's message of love.

You can remind deniers that life is sacred—even their life. To destroy life is to destroy God's creation. God is love and He cares.

Hope is one missing ingredient, along with faith. Since both hope and faith come from God, pastors may be able to help once the denier is "shocked" into reality. We recommend a big dose of crises—ambulance calls, maternity wards, drug rehabilitation centers, to start. Someone must go with the denier and explain it all. If the pastor cannot go, send along a stable Christian. The denier's romantic, glorified ideas of death are to be challenged. Even to witness those in extreme pain jars some self-destructive deniers back into the real world.

#### **Limerents and LOs**

This category was not mentioned by Dr. Groves in his article to physicians. We choose to call attention to this position. (Continued on page 46)



# HOW TO BUY A CHURCH COMPUTER

by Wallace W. Wagner  
*Computer Consultant to Churches, Prineville, Oreg.*

**I**s there a computer in your church's future? For most churches with a membership over 100, there could be.

With computer prices plummeting with each new breakthrough in technology, many churches can now look at computers as a means of helping them do the Lord's work. How? By giving the church the tools to become more aware of and accountable for the talents, gifts, and needs of its membership, as well as providing financial reports that are consistent, up-to-date, accurate, and informative.

Here are some of the functions that church computer systems can perform:

1. Provide a file on each attendee, containing personal information—name, address, birthday, anniversary, family members, class attending, membership status, committee assignments, group participation, and so forth.
2. Allow inquiries on the attendee file by individual, by selected group, or by logical selection such as "married," "teacher—adult class," and so forth.
3. Based on the inquiry selection, display the results on the terminal, on a printed page, or on mailing labels.
4. Provide an aging process whereby actions are automatically taken when, for instance, an attendee misses more than three "Care Group" meetings.
5. Provide automatic memo generation when changes of information require attention, such as marriages, changes of address, or other changes that might affect what care group or class a member would be transferring to.
6. Provide statistical reports on church attendance and income.
7. Provide a tracking and reporting system for contributions and pledges.
8. Provide a general ledger system.

9. Provide a word-processing capability for all correspondence needs, both private mailings and customized correspondence for mass mailings.
10. Provide a word-processing capability that can produce camera-ready copy for bulletin, invitations, brochures, and books.
11. Plus payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, billing for services such as day-care and seminars; Bible reference searches for pastors and laymen, inter-office memos, and self-paced instruction courses in various topics, using the computer terminal as a learning tool.

So what are the proper steps in planning for and purchasing a computer system?

1. Buy experience via a consultant who has worked with other churches. He will explain what computers can do for you; work with you to determine which functions you would like your computer system to perform; give you an unbiased opinion on what specific computer systems will best give you that capability; and then help you work out any compromises necessary in case you cannot initially afford the system you really would like to have eventually.

Beware if the consultant only presents one manufacturer's product. He probably is not knowledgeable enough to give you an unbiased opinion. Try another consultant. A computer system is a major investment. Make sure you get good advice. Any money spent at this phase will return manyfold at purchase time.

2. Select the software that will best meet the needs of your church. Again, you probably will need the help of the consultant. Request a demonstration of the software in the presence of the consultant before making any decision to purchase software. There are not many church-oriented software



Mark Marvin

packages available, and many are poorly constructed and poorly supported.

3. Now select the computer hardware that will best run the selected software, considering what you can afford to pay for the entire system, hardware *and* software. Many churches make the mistake of thinking that because they can afford the computer, they can get into a computer system. They are not aware that many times the software, particularly well-written software, can cost as much as the hardware.

Make sure that you are looking at the total hardware costs, not just the computer cost. There are printers, interfaces, additional memory, disc drives, and much more to consider. Many of these peripherals are as costly as the computer. Also, don't forget that such a costly investment should be covered with a maintenance contract. Find out how much that will cost, and where maintenance will be done. Will there be huge shipping costs and time delays when the hardware needs repair?

4. Plan on a transition time of at least a month, converting from a manual system to a computerized system. If you don't have a CPA in your congregation, hire one to help you do the conversion. One big bonus you will get from this step is a clean set of books, getting a true picture of where your church is financially.

What are the consequences of not taking the right steps in acquiring a computer system?

One consequence is discouragement. A system that doesn't work as expected is set aside and not used. Or the system is used even though it is not adequate for the church's needs.

Hardly any church is willing to admit that it bought a system that was doomed from the start not to meet the needs of the church. Some reasons for ending up with such a system are:

1. Failure of the selection committee to get professional, unbiased help in the selection process. They depend on vendor salesmen, who are obviously going to find a solution with their company's equipment, or on a self-proclaimed "expert" from their own church who recently discovered computers and, as far as he knows, is fully capable of selecting the proper system for your church.
2. Purchase of the computer before the software, before analyzing what they want the computer to do for them (the classic case of getting the cart before the horse). Many computer purchases are unaware that *software* is the key ingredient, not the computer.
3. Purchase of a computer system incapable of growing to meet future needs of the church.

Since software is the key, let's look at the kinds of software that might be needed.

Software is the package of computer programs that makes the computer produce the results you want. Without software, the computer does very little. Software selection is even more important than the selection of the hardware.

There are several types of software:

1. Packaged software purchased from vendors, such as a General Ledger package, a word-processing package, etc. This type of software is sold at a great discount from the actual development cost because the vendor will sell the package to many users and spread the cost out.
2. System software that is generally purchased from the computer manufacturer. This software is necessary to support development of custom software on the computer.
3. Custom software is written to provide the user with results that are uniquely his. Most users find some tasks for which there is no suitable software on the market. There would also be some custom

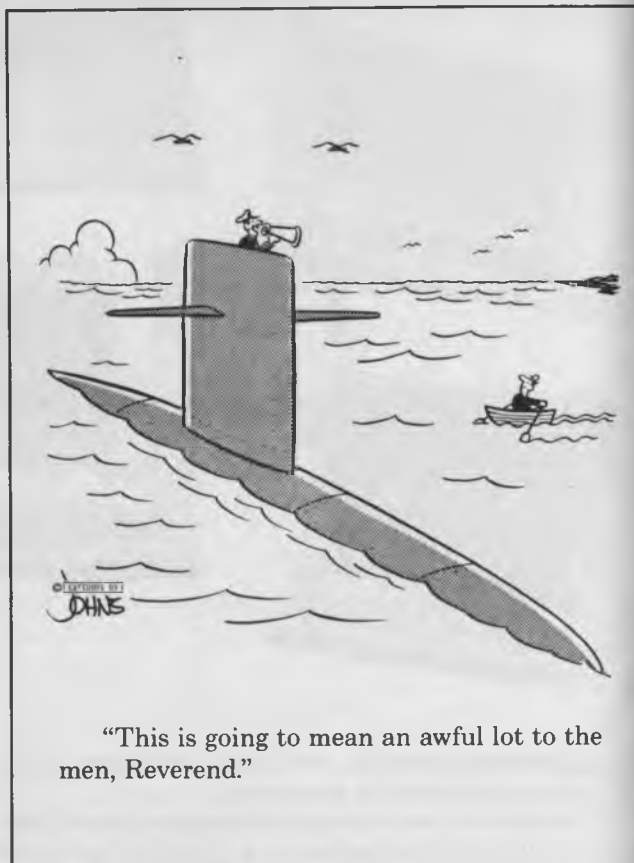
modification to the software purchased from other vendors to make the packages do exactly what you want them to do.

Custom software costs. There may be big chunks of software that you wish custom written to meet the needs of your church. Remember that all development costs for custom software will usually be billed to your church, so be prepared to pay much more than for packaged software. Programmer's fees run around \$25.00 to \$30.00 per hour. A large software module may also take months to analyze, design, program, and check out.

A word of warning: Don't try to save money by having a "generous" self-proclaimed expert in your congregation do the custom programming if he doesn't have considerable experience. I don't know why I say that since few listen when I try to warn them! But most would have to honestly admit that they got what they paid for . . . poorly written software that constantly causes problems, is not easy to use, is not "goof proof," and causes endless delays.

Don't forget to include in your cost estimate for a computer system such items as installation costs, computer furniture, training, manuals, and supplies (paper, ribbons for the printer, discs for the computer data storage devices, and special forms such as checks that can be run on a computer printer).

Is there a computer in your church's future? There could be. If there is, make sure that it's a wise investment, capable of helping you do the Lord's work.



## DIFFICULT PEOPLE

(Continued from page 43)

tential problem for male pastors. Dr. Dorothy Tennov, *Love and Limerence* (1979), coined the word *limerence* as a "barely perceptible feeling of increased interest in a particular person but one which nurtured by appropriate conditions can grow to enormous intensity." Limerence can decline, be transferred to another person, or through mutuality grow into an emotional response more suitably described as love. Since the pastor is so visible, offers understanding, and symbolizes God's power, we speculate that the pastor is often an unknowing object of a limerent. Male pastors fear the woman who wishes a "special relationship," sometimes termed "preacher worship." Note, the pastor is chosen without his cooperation just as limerents choose their objects, without knowledge and consent.

We believe it possible that some women in the congregation fantasize a special relationship with the pastor, of which he may be unaware. Since limerence is a perception, his words on Sunday, extended to the congregation at large, may be taken personally. The fantasies may be kept alive by weekly exposure. Since part of the pastor's job is

to be available, hope by the limerent is kept alive. The pastor is invited to the home for a meal, asked to solve some problem, or the women may volunteer to work in a capacity bringing her into contact with the pastor. His skills, compassion, and strength may be enlarged in the fantasy while his human foibles are ignored.

When the limerent makes some overt move revealing her feelings, the pastor reacts negatively even to the point of rejection. And a church problem results from a situation that began without design by one individual. Better to stop the limerent before this overt move is made. The real tragedy is the pastor whose ego needs are so great that he accepts adulation wherever he finds it. His appreciation is accepted by the limerent as "evidence" that he secretly shares her feelings. Thus encouraged, the limerent progresses in her fantasy.

We choose not to elaborate upon the results when a pastor cooperates with a limerent. The pastor is human, vulnerable, and has a demanding job. Some pastors, unfortunately, have experienced real problems. What can be done? Tennov suggests that the one chosen as object "do whatever is necessary to eliminate any trace of hope." Pastors can be alerted by their own response of

shock or disbelief to a tentative move by a limerent. Dismissing their own feelings and trying to see only the positive behaviors, initial moves by limerents may be ignored or misinterpreted. Thus, the limerent is encouraged. One does not have to judge or condemn the limerent. The pastor must signal, "No!"

How? The pastor can make sure that his goals are clear—God, family, and others. He has a forum—his pulpit—and he has the Bible for supporting material. He can realize that his position offers opportunity to demonstrate behaviors of a loving family man toward his own family. He can reevaluate his own priorities and order his time accordingly. Which comes first, administration or family? The pastor plans time for church duties and can do so for family matters. He can let the congregation know where he stands. Given this firm position from the pastor, the limerent who finds no hope will tend to find another object.

Pastors serve difficult people and can carefully monitor their feelings. The responses aroused by those they serve signal warnings. To recognize and not deny distaste may be the first step in the helping process. May God grant us the wisdom and patience needed to serve those who find life difficult.

# JOHN WESLEY AS EDUCATOR

by Robert A. Mattke

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Few question John Wesley's reputation as evangelist, social reformer, and practical theologian. His status in these areas has been well-documented by extensive research. Many non-Wesleyans are quick to laud the contributions of this great man of the 18th century. But Wesley as an educator is quite a different matter. His reputation is not unsullied in this area.

Some of Wesley's friends are embarrassed by his advocacy of "breaking the wills" of children. Visions of harshness and abuse come to mind, and modern educators are cautious about such matters. The regimen at the Kingswood school doesn't win any points for Wesley, either. It is easy to think of Wesley as austere and autocratic, qualities not generally attributed to a good teacher.

Fortunately, a few students of Wesley are taking a second look at his role as an educator as weaknesses within contemporary education are becoming more and more obvious. The permissiveness and antinomianism he feared is very much a part of our modern scene. Consequently, renewed attempts are being made to understand Wesley within the context of his own circumstances. Reflecting upon his own school days at Charterhouse, he concluded that he "entered it as a saint and left it as a sinner." Wesley writes, "Outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eyes of the world" (Body, *John Wesley and Education*, 36-37).

In the light of new research, Wesley's stock as an educator is on the rise. The day may not be too far distant when Wesley's educational endeavors will be more fully appreciated. It has been said that "John Wesley could no more escape being an educational statesman than he could escape being a flaming evangelist" (Gross, *John Wesley: Christian Educator*, 8).

Much could be written about Wesley's efforts in founding schools and colleges, organizing Sunday Schools, designing curriculums and writing textbooks in English grammar, French, Greek, and Hebrew. But his

training of lay ministers has special contemporary significance.

Refresher courses have been important to some secular professions for a long time. More recently, pastors have been encouraged to become involved in continuing education. Some churches are budgeting for their pastors to take educational sabbaticals. For pastors in the Wesleyan tradition there are some interesting historical precedents for continuing education. Ministers in early Methodism were in constant training under Wesley's tutelage. He was their mentor. Their spiritual and intellectual development was of great concern to him. It is amazing that one man took on the "responsibility for the training of 653 lay preachers, 57 percent of whom continued preaching under Wesley's guidance until their deaths" (Garlow, *The Layperson as Minister*, 447).

All of these lay ministers were active in the ministry. But it was Wesley's conviction that "on the job training" in itself was not adequate. Practical experience was essential, but so was academics. He constantly exposed them to the best in the ancient classics.

The literature Wesley published for the ministers of the 18th century would stand in marked contrast to the modern "how to do it" books. In his theology of ministry there were few easy answers and no shortcuts to success. His disciplined life helped him escape these traps.

Wesley's involvement with lay ministers was not the result of an overnight decision. Its beginning is a fascinating story. In 1740 Thomas Maxfield, a bricklayer, was pressed into service to preach when an ordained preacher failed to appear. Upon hearing about this unconventional incident, Wesley hurried from Bristol to London for the purpose of "putting a stop to such wickedness and folly." Fortunately, Susanna Wesley intercepted him and said, "John, take care what you do with respect to this young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are" (Daniels, *History of Methodism*, 184).

As Wesley searched the Scriptures, he eventually expanded his ecclesiology to include two orders of ministers. There were the "pastor-priests who functioned as

the ordinary, established institutional ministers of the church, while the preacher-evangelists were the extraordinary ministers raised up by the more immediate divine inspiration somewhat outside institutional channels" (Snyder, *The Radical Wesley*, 91).

It was this latter group that Wesley equipped for the ministry. Once their status was determined, no efforts were spared to increase their effectiveness. Along with their warm hearts Wesley was convinced they needed a disciplined mind. To provide for such was a formidable task. Few had even a little formal education. To supply the need, Wesley, who was a master at the art of abridgement, began to put together THE CHRISTIAN LIBRARY. Between 1749 and 1756, he extracted sufficient material from well-known divines to make a 50-volume collection of works of "Practical Divinity." He says, "We not only preached the whole gospel (including both justification and sanctification), but [printed] plenty of literature (all true, all agreeable to the oracles of God: As in all practical, unmixed with controversy of any kind; and all intelligible to plain men)" (the preface to the *Christian Library*).

After having published these works, Wesley's next step was to get the lay ministers to read them. A letter to one of his preachers read:

What has exceedingly hurt you in time past, nay, and I fear to this day, is want of reading. I scarce ever knew of a preacher read so little. And perhaps by neglecting it you have lost the taste for it. Hence your talent in preaching does not increase. It is just the same as it was seven years ago. It is lively, but not deep; there is little variety; there is not compass of thought. Reading only can supply this with meditation and daily prayers. You wrong yourself greatly by omitting this. You can never be a deep preacher without it any more than a thorough Christian. O begin! Fix some part of every day for private exercises. You may acquire the taste which you have

not; what is tedious at first will afterwards be pleasant. Whether you like it or no, read and pray daily. It is for your life; there is no other way; else you will be a trifler all your days, and a pretty superficial preacher. Do justice to your own soul; give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer. Take up your cross, and be a Christian altogether.

Yours & c. ("Letters," 4:103)

In his book *The Heart of True Spirituality*, Frank Baker illustrates Wesley's methods of adapting and paraphrasing in order to meet the spiritual needs of his own preachers. Lest we think Wesley was only interested in their spiritual welfare we discover his concern for their physical well-being. "His training was of such intensity that it pervaded one's total being" (Garlow, *The Layperson as Minister*, 447).

The bond between Wesley and lay preachers must have been exemplary. Sir Robert Peel, a man of some importance, once asked Wesley to breakfast with him during a Lancashire Conference. Wesley promised to do so on condition that he might bring some of his children with him. At the appointed hour he appeared, accompanied by 36 of his itinerant preachers (Telford, *The Life of John Wesley*, 225).

Someone needs to make a study of the annual conferences in Wesley's day and compare them with our own. I suspect that we would see more of Wesley teaching than with gavel in hand administering parliamentary procedures.

Various pictures have been drawn of Wesley through the years. We see him standing on his father's tombstone preaching in the open air. Or he is at the entrance of the mines preaching to the miners at five o'clock in the morning. At another time he is riding in his chaise or on a horse poring over some book. I suggest that we hang one more picture up in the gallery of our minds. In this scene Wesley is behind the teacher's desk instructing the lay preachers.

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**FOR SALE:** *The Seminary Tower* issues: Winter 1954-55, Winter 1955, Spring 1955, Summer 1955,

Spring 1956, Summer 1956, Fall 1956 (2), Spring 1957, Winter 1957; *The Other Sheep*, five copies: September 1954, January 1956, June 1957, December 1958, and December 1959. Contact Rena Hess, P.O. Box 551, Victoria, VA 23974. 804-696-7793.

**WANTED:** Old edition of the Schofield, loose-leaf Bible, leather-bound; *Vessel of Honor*, by Orval J. Nease (collection of sermons). Contact S. Ellsworth Nothstine, Rte. 4, Box 242-3, Mocksville, NC 27028. 704-284-2504.

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# JOHN WESLEY'S SERMONS

**The first volume of a new edition, reviewed by Timothy L. Smith,  
professor of History, the Johns Hopkins University**

Frank Baker, editor, *Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, Volume 1, Sermons 1-33*, edited by Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984).

The day has arrived when scholars can begin to use the sermons of John Wesley with the same confidence with which they have already begun to use his *Letters* and his *Appeals*. The latter appeared recently in what was begun as the Oxford edition of the *Works* of Wesley and now has become the Bicentennial Edition. Its 26 volumes contain, or will contain, the texts that have been carefully collected and edited by Frank C. Baker, now of Duke University. Although Professor Baker added to the corpus many letters from John Wesley and crucial ones to him, and made many corrections of earlier printings, fewer revisions appear in these of the *Sermons*. However, Professor Outler was convinced by Richard Heitzenrater long ago that some early sermons preached before the Aldersgate watershed and published under Charles Wesley's name after both Wesleys had died were, in fact, John's. Moreover, two sermons formerly attributed to John Wesley—early ones on "The Holy Spirit" and "Grieve Not the Holy Spirit of God"—were preached by him, but turn out to have been written by others.

Details on these additions and omissions must await Volume 4, for Professor Outler has decided to first publish the sermons that Wesley included in his own edition of his *Works* in 1771. Then will follow, in a pattern set by the edition of Thomas Jackson in 1829 (from which all our modern editions spring) the sermons Wesley published occasionally in the 1770s; then those that first appeared in his *Arminian Magazine* after 1781; and finally, those existing in manuscript form when Wesley died. The last group includes, of course, all the pre-Aldersgate sermons except the one published in 1746 and 1771, on "Circumcision of the Heart."

That one and the other early sermons demonstrate the consistency of many of Wesley's views before and after Aldersgate. The latter event, which John Wesley regarded as the moment of his regeneration, altered his theology only in respect to the instantaneous character of that experience and the conscious assurance of salvation that it brought. For the rest, Aldersgate signaled more a fulfillment of Wesley's beliefs than a mark of departure from them. And the evolvement over a year later of his belief that Scripture taught a second experience of grace, which he called "Christian perfection," added only the notion of an instant of faith and of cleansing from

"inbred sin" to Wesley's lifelong concern with the believer's progress toward absolute perfection.

This volume, then, puts on full display the first portion of Outler's splendid editorial achievement. The fame of John Wesley, not only as evangelist and religious leader but as theologian and intellectual, has risen steadily throughout the 20th century in circles outside Methodism. The Bicentennial Edition is the fruit of the somewhat belated participation of Methodist scholars in that estimation. Professor Outler tells us in his preface that one of his major concerns is "a methodological redefinition of 'Wesley studies,' with special emphasis on Wesley's sources and his special way of using them." And those words (spelled out more fully in his two essays in the volume recently edited by M. Douglas Meeks, *The Future of the Methodist Theological Traditions*, and published this year by the same press) point to the most notable accomplishment of this book. Outler's long introduction, in six parts, comprising 103 pages, distills half a lifetime of research on Wesley's career, his preaching, his theological method, and his sources.

Many of Wesley's sources are set forth in Outler's footnotes to the sermons, and he tells us to regard these as incomplete and in some cases, experimental. These sources, not surprisingly, begin with the Scriptures themselves, which Wesley knew "so nearly by heart that even his ordinary speech is biblical." They also include the pre-Nicene and post-Nicene fathers of the church; the "little tradition" of Roman Catholic piety, as Professor Richard Heitzenrater calls it, beginning with Thomas à Kempis and going forward to the 17th-century mystics; and the great tradition of Anglican theology, resting, as it did, to some degree upon its Lutheran and to a larger degree upon its Calvinist roots.

The feature that will seem remarkable to most readers is Outler's concentration upon Wesley's debt to the Puritan and Anglican divines of the 17th century, particularly the Anglican. To read his footnotes is to get a firm hold upon the English theological debates of that era, and to some degree upon the Scottish as well. They offer proof, as Professor Outler puts it, of "Wesley's actual stature as a theologian and, therefore, of his place in the transition from Protestant orthodoxy to 'modernity,' and of his relevance in later ages." And he makes clear that Wesley's "unadvertised alliance between sound learning and vital piety" is especially clear in his handling of Christian antiquity. Professor Outler pays close attention to Wesley's emphasis upon the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and to his insis-

tence that the Christian believer is "indwelt and led by the Spirit within rather than being possessed by the Spirit as if by some invisible force." He notes that Wesley found this doctrine pervasive in the literature of the early church fathers and, having done so, understood the marrow of orthodoxy to lie in those references that his Anglican and Puritan forebears made to it.

Outler also shows how central the doctrine of Christian perfection is to Wesley. He mutes, however, in both the introduction and the notes, what is clearly his own awareness of Wesley's teaching that a "second work of grace" called "perfect love" was generally instantaneous, and indispensable to the later fulfillment of the processes of spiritual growth that began earlier in the believer's awakening and experience of regeneration. Wesley's argument, so simple to insiders, that the New Testament teaches a perfection of degrees will seem puzzling to outsiders unless they read carefully Outler's discussion, which illuminates numerous passages in the sermons.

The one lapse in Dr. Outler's search for sources lies in his general inattention to Calvinist contemporaries, notably those around George Whitefield. These were deeply sympathetic to Wesley's movement but disagreed with him about predestination and Christian perfection enough to pull away from it. The testimony of those who are almost but not quite insiders is always invaluable in historical research, for the desire to respond faithfully to such friends is usually an important impulse to what a person says or writes. Yet Whitefield, Howell Harris, and, later, Lady Huntington, show up only occasionally in the footnotes—almost always not as sources but as Calvinist antagonists, about whom Dr. Outler seems to assume his readers already know enough. We don't.

My enthusiasm for Professor Outler's introductory comments on the individual sermons is also moderated somewhat by two factors. One I have just mentioned—the long-standing reluctance of Methodists to emphasize Wesley's doctrine of purity of heart and perfect love. Beginning in the fall of 1739, Wesley preached this belief to the end of his life, and thus made God's promise to fully renew His children in the divine image the distinctive teaching of Methodism. Outler's emphasis upon perfection as the goal of all that God does and all that believers are expected to do is pervasive. But he remains, alas, so afraid of what he calls (mistakenly, I think) the narrowing of this doctrine by the 19th-century American holiness movement, that he stresses the progressive aspects of sanctification and minimizes cleansing from inbred sin. Wesley, however, emphasized both alike, in his letters to believers, in his counseling of preachers and class leaders, and in his and his brother Charles' hymns.

On this account, Professor Outler sometimes telescopes Wesley's doctrine of sanctification into his doctrine of regeneration, as for example in the introduction to sermons 13 and 14, "On Sin in Believers" and "The Repentance of Believers." Outler shows the reason for his conflating the two; he seems to have thought that the Wesleys were primarily concerned with sin as transgression, when Wesley himself, in both sermons and letters, is equally concerned with "inbred sin," or the root of corruption. There is no question that from the beginning of 1740 onward, Wesley proclaimed, first to his own followers and then, after some hesitation, freely to the whole world, that the moment a Christian experienced perfect love he was delivered from inbred sin.

A part of this problem, along with several others, stems from the second matter, which qualifies my enthusiasm: Professor Outler's decision not to date the origin of the sermons, except when existing manuscripts bear a date in Wesley's handwriting or when we know the date they were published. True, in many of the introductions he mentions the times when Wesley preached from a text earlier and later than the date he

published the sermon. But he does not accept the clues, often strong ones, in the documents he knows so well, that indicate a sermon was likely written out at an earlier date. Wesley himself tells us in the preface to the first volume of *Sermons on Several Occasions*, published in 1746, that the discourses printed there represented, with one exception, his preaching done since Aldersgate.

The result in several key cases is misunderstanding. Sermon 9, for example, deals largely with the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, though in the very last sentence it promises something more, and nowhere contradicts number 13, "On Sin in Believers," as Dr. Outler suggests. Perhaps the former sermon shows that early on Wesley was clearer about regeneration than about entire sanctification; but Dr. Outler dates it at the time of Wesley's publication of the volume of 1746, though he mentions that it appears in the sermon record 13 times up to and through 1743, but not later than that! A similar example is sermon 8, "The First Fruits of the Spirit." Again, it deals only with regeneration, and the victory over the power of sinning which that experience brings, and not with the experience of Christian perfection or heart purity at all, unless the latter is understood exclusively as a process.

Outler's comment in the introduction to sermon 9, dated 1746, concerning the spiritual despair that often stemmed from Wesley's uncompromising preaching of humanity's fallenness simply will not fit the editor's insistence that hysterical phenomena receive an occasional mention in Wesley's *Journal* from 1739 through 1744, then seem to have tapered off. Sermon number 6, on "The Righteousness of Faith," comes to a climactic optimism, in section 3, paragraphs 2, 3, and 4, as does the sermon on "The Way to the Kingdom." Both of the latter are also dated in 1746, though Outler almost says Wesley preached the second one June 6, 1742, from his father's tombstone in the Epworth churchyard. If the editor had considered seriously that dating, he would not have followed the young Melville Horne's incorrect statement, again in the introduction to sermon 6, that Fletcher, Whitefield, and Charles Wesley spared their hearers the "extremes of despair" by suggesting that once penitence began to grow into faith, "this was in itself" a sign of their acceptance with God, but that John Wesley "did not admit this distinction into his pulpit." Indeed, both sermons express a comforting and hopeful view of the faith of a servant that leads sinners to repentance before they are endowed with saving faith.

A final and most important example of this overly cautious approach to dating sermons is in the introduction to the 13 grand ones on the Sermon on the Mount, with which the book closes. Dr. Outler says there is "no recorded instance of his having treated that Sermon as a whole anywhere" except in the written discourses prepared for publication in the volume for 1748. In fact, Wesley preached a series of sermons on it at the very beginning of the great revival in Bristol, in April 1739, and preached a like series again at nearby Bradford in August 1739. The discourses printed here, then, likely reflected not only that early preaching but also the two subsequent occasions in 1740 when he preached a series on the Sermon on the Mount. For during the 12 months after August 1739, Wesley was moving decisively to believing and declaring the doctrine of entire sanctification. His first few discourses on the Sermon on the Mount cannot be understood except as a part of that development. This is plain from section 2 of the second one in the series, which is all about the blessings of believers being "filled" with the righteousness for which they hunger and thirst.

But the grandeur of the whole of Albert Outler's work, and of John Wesley's preaching, makes these qualifications seem only scholarly cautions. They certainly should not deter one from exposing his mind to the volume's rich contributions.

## Serving Joyfully

by Anna Marie Lockard

*Pastor's Wife, Port Elizabeth, Republic of South Africa*

**V**olumes have been written about the pastor's wife and low self-esteem, depression, and marital stress. The problem seems to be epidemic. Many of God's chosen servants have become victims. This article is not meant to minimize anyone's wounds and scars. Rather, I wish to stand up and wave a banner for those pastors' wives who have, by God's grace, conquered Satan's deadliest trap—low self-esteem.

As long as we are human, we will hurt. As Christian women, however, we can and must determine to rise above feelings of worthlessness. There are several steps we can follow that will lead to joyful service.

1. Realize that low self-esteem cripples service to God, family, and the church.

*Scripture affirmation:* "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" (Ps. 27:1).

2. Acknowledge that a low self-image leads to self-pity and self-pity leads to depression.

*Scripture affirmation:* "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, in thee I trust" (Ps. 25:1-2).

3. Guard your thought patterns against negative, defeatist attitudes. Think positive, healing thoughts.

*Scripture affirmation:* "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). "Whatever is true . . . right, honorable . . . pure . . . lovely . . . think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

4. During distressing times, resolve to ascend above negative moods.

*Scripture affirmation:* "David was greatly distressed; but . . . encouraged himself in the Lord" (1 Sam. 30:6). "I will go in the strength of the Lord" (Ps. 71:16).

5. Lack of motivation hinders self-esteem. Cultivate personal interests apart from the church; take classes in calligraphy, creative cooking, pottery, etc. Pursue your personal affections.

*Scripture affirmation:* "This I know . . . God is for me" (Ps. 56:9).

Believe that in God's eyes you are a woman of worth. Isa. 41:9 says, "Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee." The Lord felt you worthy enough to call you into His service. You are important to Him.

Believe that He can turn your weaknesses into strengths to be used for His glory.

Believe that the Lord can help you become a joyful servant and "in quietness and trust is your strength" (Isa. 30:15, NASB). Most importantly, remember, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men" (Col. 3:23, NASB).

Finally, "Serve the Lord with gladness" (Ps. 100:2).

## As I Was Saying

**N**o one has to tell me minorities are "in" these days. I am one. I'm a preacher's wife.

When people talk to me, my name is preceded with "Miz," "Mrs.," "Miss" (I like this one), "Pastor's wife," "Sister," "Mrs. 'Reverent,'" "Honey," or "Hey, scandalous thing" (I don't care much for this one).

Part of my duties require me to laugh at all jokes told in public by the counterpart of this union despite the number of times I've heard them—and that's been a few, I can tell you. At the same time there must be rapt attention while he's preaching, no matter the number of times I've heard the sermon.

My house is supposed to look like a picture in *Better Homes and Gardens*. In the event it looks lived in when someone comes, I grab the vacuum in one hand and place it in the middle of the floor while turning the door knob with the other hand. If it's late at night, I say, stifling a yawn, "Well, I'm just one of those night people."

It's important that I dress modestly, but with style. But I shouldn't be *too* stylish (remember the last name I'm called sometimes?). Should I be caught in an unglamorous situation, like cleaning the oven, it's handy to have a coverall apron hanging on a hook and a wig on the hall tree. I have to remember not to put the wig on backwards, and be sure to cover up the pink curlers before opening the door.

Telephone counseling is a whole other area. I have to keep one eye on the beans so they don't boil over and the other eye on my children. I have to provide insightful counseling while relaying meaningful hand signals that have been worked out so the kids will know I'm still in charge.

Sometimes I wonder what makes me and others in this minority group keep on with life in a glass manse. It certainly isn't for the love of money. It isn't for the challenge of seeing how low a candle can burn at both ends. It isn't for sitting at the head table during church suppers. It isn't for the despair that comes on Monday mornings when my partner asks, as Moses did, "Why was I given the job of nursemaid for all these people?"

I do it for the love of God and my husband, in that order.

—Clara Reynolds 

Moral Awareness Week, October 27—November 2, 1986

# The Abortion Issue

by John A. Knight, Sr.  
*General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene*

## *Extent of the Problem*

In 1970 the state of New York passed an abortion-on-demand law that initiated momentous consequences across the nation. A woman was permitted to terminate for any reason the life she bore through her 24th week of pregnancy. On January 22, 1973, the United States Supreme Court ruled 7 to 2 in its landmark *Roe vs. Wade* decision that a Texas law prohibiting abortion except to save the life of the mother was unconstitutional. As a result, antiabortion laws in all 50 states were modified or overturned, giving a woman legal authority to end the life of her unborn child.

During the 12 years since the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court, an estimated 15 million legal abortions have been performed in the United States. More than one-quarter of all pregnancies now end in abortion, at a rate of roughly 4,000 a day (*Newsweek*, Jan. 14, 1985, p. 20), or about 3 abortions per minute. Approximately 1.5 million fetuses, many in advanced stages of development, were aborted in 1984.

Clearly, the practice of abortion has grown to such proportions that the moral implications cannot be ignored. Every Christian must look at the issues squarely and arrive at perspectives and conclusions that seem consistent with Christian teachings and values. However, the questions are so complex that admittedly Christian thinkers and ethicists do not all assert the same positions. Differing viewpoints on the issue do not necessarily divide persons of "reason" from persons of "emotion"; nor Christians from non-Christians. Clearly, Christian charity and nonjudgmental attitudes of others whose views are different must obtain.

There are two crucial questions confronting individual believers, if not the Church itself, in the matter of abortion: (1) What are the moral implications related to this increasing practice? and (2) What social or legal policy should Christ's disciples seek to persuade Congress and state legislatures to adopt, if any?

## **MORAL IMPLICATIONS**

Moral analysts of abortion generally take one of three main positions:

a. *Pro-life advocates* subordinate all other considerations to the fetus's right to life. In this view, the taking of innocent life is always immoral.

b. *Feminist advocates*, as well as others, take the opposite view, and hold that the mother's rights are prior to all other considerations.

c. A *mediating* position is sometimes taken between these absolutist views, evaluating each case on its own merits and seeking to balance the rights of mother and fetus.

Justice Blackmun, who wrote the *Roe vs. Wade* opinion, stated that the question of when life begins is moot. However, advances in medical technology since that position was asserted bring it into serious question.

From the Christian perspective, the abortion issue turns largely, if not completely, on the status of the fetus. If a fetus is merely a biological collection of cells, then abortion itself, aside from related attitudes of the mother, etc., is a morally neutral surgical procedure. If, however, it is a "person" and not a "thing," then moral questions are clearly involved. Most informed persons acknowledge that a fetus is alive, human, and unique—a developing human being. While this is not necessarily to vest the fetus with legal rights, the moral implications are sobering.

Dr. James Dobson, noted Christian psychologist, has observed that a woman who intends to terminate her pregnancy usually refers to the life within her as "the fetus." However, if she plans to deliver and care for the child, she affectionately refers to "my baby." Dr. Dobson comments: "The need for this distinction is obvious. If we are going to kill a human being without experiencing guilt, we must first strip it of worth and dignity. We must give it a clinical name that denies its personhood" (*The Strong-willed Child*, Tyndale House, 1978).

## *No Easy Answers*

When we assert that our moral response to abortion is dependent on our view of when life begins, the complexity of the issue becomes immediately apparent. If one claims that

life is defined as beginning at the age of independence (ca. two or three), then one must face the related question of infanticide. It is but a short step to euthanasia for severely handicapped newborns, the aged, and the infirm. Francis Schaeffer pointed out that if the rights of the unborn child can be sacrificed by legal fiat, other unnecessary or unproductive persons can be "legislated out of existence" as well. Indeed, some in our society are willing to take the life of an unborn child if the sex, as determined through amniocentesis, is not the desired one.

If it is held that *life begins at birth* (legally and morally), and not before, this would allow any abortion on demand and would hardly encourage sexual responsibility.

If it is claimed that *life begins at conception*, then the IUD must be viewed as immoral since it allows conception but prevents implantation of the embryo. Although the primary function of the birth control pill is to prevent ovulation, it apparently has a secondary function that prevents implantation if, for some reason, fertilization occurs. Whatever else may be said about the official Roman Catholic position of prohibiting contraceptives, at this point it is consistent. In the case of the IUD, we don't know for certain if implantation is prevented or if it is allowed and then the embryo is scraped off the uterine wall—an effective abortion. Probably both occur. The dilemma here is that if in seeking to deter irresponsibility one defines life as beginning at conception, then by delegitimizing the IUD and possibly the pill, one also does away with the two most effective agents of responsibility vis-à-vis family planning.

Because of these considerations, it appears that in answering the question about the beginning of life, the high court chose the simplest option and defined life as beginning at "viability" (the point at which the fetus could survive on its own if delivered). While on the surface this may appear to be a reasonable compromise, medical technology is advancing so rapidly that at some point in the not too distant future a fertilized egg will be viable with the entire gestation period spent outside the womb—the ultimate test-tube baby.

To declare that artificial birth control means are immoral, including the pill and the IUD; and to assert that at a given stage of fetal development abortion is wrong, one is immediately confronted with the third-world overpopulation problems, which are becoming increasingly critical. To make such a claim must apply not only to the United States but also to the underdeveloped and overpopulated societies as well.

All of these considerations underscore the fact that we are dealing with a *moral* issue and not merely with a set of biological or sociological facts. Our position as Christians cannot be established by appealing to majority opinion or to some pragmatic set of circumstances.

Before seeking to advance several guidelines to assist in dealing with the moral implications of the abortion issue, we may remind ourselves of the current status of the question legislatively.

### LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Two types of legislation designed to approve abortion on demand are being proposed to Congress.

a. First is an amendment to the Constitution. While more than 50 "Human Life" amendments have been proposed, there are two main types: (1) That which would give to states

the right to limit abortion (ex.: The "Hatch" Amendment). (2) That which would declare life to begin at conception and would protect life with the Constitution (ex.: The "Helms" Amendment).

A constitutional amendment would be more permanent, but assuming it to be possible, would require an extended period of time as two-thirds of Congress and three-fourths of all 50 states must approve.

b. Second is the introduction of a Human Life Bill, which would declare that life begins at conception and would permit the individual states to restrict abortion as they choose. If adopted, this measure would permit abortion's being continued in some areas while being illegal in others (cf. *Moody Monthly*, May 1982).

### SOME GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY

In the light of these moral and legal issues, what are the Christian's perspectives and attitudes to be? Or better, what guidelines can inform the Christian who is seeking to arrive at viewpoints that take seriously the Christian view of the sanctity of human life, while at the same time demonstrating the spirit of Christ.

1. If the fetus is a developing person—and there is increasing evidence that it is; and if human life is a gift of God—as Christian faith affirms; then the boundaries of the Christian's position become fairly well defined. Abortion on demand, that is, for any reason, must be rejected.

However, while the Christian view cannot unequivocally approve any or all abortion, the Christian must not glibly affirm that abortion is wrong, without at the same time becoming involved in helping those who are hurting because of poverty and substandard living conditions, which engender unwanted pregnancies.

While the pro-life alternative guarantees the birth of the child, what then? Many in these circumstances do not celebrate life as we do, but rather endure, or even detest it. Francis Schaeffer and Everett Koop pricked our easy conscience with their pointed claim: "Merely to say [to a married or unmarried woman], 'You must not have an abortion,' without being ready to involve ourselves in the problem—is another way of being inhuman" (*Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*).

Our commitment to the sanctity of human life will exact certain costs, which we must be willing to pay.

2. For the Christian, the abortion issue should be discussed and analyzed from a higher perspective than merely one's rights—either the rights of the child or of the mother. This way of understanding the problem is alien to the fundamental principles of Christian faith and living, which place greater emphasis on responsibility than on rights. To justify abortion on the grounds that otherwise an inconvenience or unbearable burden will be placed on the mother, or that her freedoms will be curtailed by bearing a child, is an exercise not worthy of a Christian believer whose ideal is to be like Christ.

It is true that Christian leaders are divided on the issue of bringing a retarded child into the world. Some would argue that compassion for the mother should not require this of her, and that severe retardation or handicap are valid grounds for abortion. In any case, the one making the decision must not arrive at it because of personal selfishness. For the disciple of

**The Christian must not glibly affirm that abortion is wrong, without at the same time becoming involved in helping those who are hurting because of poverty and substandard living conditions, which engender unwanted pregnancies.**



Christ it is unthinkable that one would end the life of a fetus just to make life a bit easier or less demanding. It is this Christian principle that caused John R. W. Stott to write: "The Christian conscience rebels against the notion that an unborn child may be destroyed because his birth would be a 'burden' to the mother or her family" (*Eternity*, Mar. 1981, p. 43). History seems to confirm that God can fulfill His purposes, sometimes dramatically, through limited instruments. But we must quickly assert that until one has stood in the shoes of another who has faced this excruciating alternative, all judgment as to the motivation and character of that person should be withheld.

3. While the Scriptures do not address directly the practice of abortion, they do have a word from God on the subject of life, reminding us of God's creative knowledge and care of the child *even before birth* (cf. Ps. 139:13-16; Isa. 44:24; Job 10:11-12; see also Gen. 25:21-23; Matt. 1:18), and of the mystery of life (Eccles. 11:5). The word of the Lord to Jeremiah is suggestive: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5, NASB). If the Creator gave life, as we believe, then that life must be revered, and no believer can dispose of it lightly. No social or financial considerations can justify the destruction of those lives, particularly healthy ones, who are being fashioned in the image of God himself. Admitting that rationalizations and justifications are all too easy, only unselfish reasons can justify exceptions so far as the Christian is concerned.

4. In the light of the principles of the Scriptures and of the affirmation of Christian faith regarding the sanctity of life, it should not surprise us that often the person having an abortion experiences various kinds of emotional, mental, and spiritual pain. The torment of sacrificing a developing "baby," a person, has become a reality for multitudes of persons. And this is the experience not only of the prospective mother but also of others who are involved. One cannot calculate the hurt to many persons of a single act of one individual. Bitterness,

resentment, and guilt, resulting from a selfish deed, can destroy one's spirit and zest for living and leave permanent emotional and physical scars.

5. Since a variety of perspectives within the Christian framework may be taken by equally devout and faithful Christians concerning the issue of abortion, it would be unchristian to promote or demonstrate a dogmatic and judgmental spirit regarding the decisions of others. Jesus' words are applicable here: "Judge not, that ye not be judged" (Matt. 7:1). The Christian must avoid a harsh, judgmental attitude, while at the same time affirming the sanctity of human life, endorsed by the Creator, and insisting on sound, moral decisions that are guided by the Spirit of Christ and the priorities of Christian faith as he or she understands them.

6. In all our decision-making, the corporate community must take precedence over personal, self-serving desires. What is good for the Body of Christ is good for all mankind. A vision of His kingdom of love must capture our thought processes and activate our wills.

7. Each believer must seek the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit regarding the matter of abortion. He has been promised to guide us into all Truth. While being Christian does not guarantee that all our judgments will be sound, the work of the Spirit is to illuminate the mind and bring discernment to the human spirit. A total commitment of our lives to Him will provide an avenue for directing each of us personally, and for healing of our societal hurts and sins.

With His leadership, we must assume our responsibility to become increasingly informed and sensitized to the delicate and real moral implications of the all too easily accepted practice of abortion. Further, we must use our influence for righteousness in the legislative struggles against any national policy that would cheapen human life and defame the name of Christ.

This article provided by the Christian Action Committee and the Commission on Bioethics, Church of the Nazarene.

## PAUL AS A MODEL

(Continued from page 9)

confident expectation should be their attitude as they earnestly press on (3:12-14).

Paul concludes with a strong statement of faith that all things are possible through inward strength and power provided by God (4:13). He coveted for his followers this same expectant hope.

### CONCLUSION

Many references to Paul as a model for pastoral leadership in Philippians are inferred and implied from a free reading of the English text. Paul's expressed attitudes lend insight into how he viewed his inherent position of authority and how he viewed his coleaders, coworkers, and followers.

The servant-leadership so dramatically demonstrated in the actions and attitudes of Jesus are clearly reflected in Paul's ministry. His writings clearly reflect his success as a good leader. Those abilities could be summarized as follows:

1. The ability to recognize and analyze situations accurately
2. The ability to communicate effectively
3. The ability to be keenly aware and sensitive to the

attitudes, opinions, and feelings present in his group

4. The ability to take the calculated risks of initiating those activities necessary to achieve the goals of the group

Paul encouraged inward spiritual motivation in his followers. He made every effort to maintain harmony within the group. He specified ways and means for accomplishing goals.

He was both member-oriented and task-oriented. He was both a task specialist and a maintenance specialist, initiating the activity necessary to get the job done while at the same time making each person feel that he was being encouraged and supported by a leader who had solid confidence in him.

Paul looked on his leadership as an opportunity to carry out the will of God. He did not see himself adequate or sufficient for this task in his own strength. He constantly reflects his absolute reliance on God for wisdom and guidance.

Paul had a keen sense of adventure as he faced every new challenge. He looked forward with confident expectation to the successful completion of every goal and to the final commendation: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joys of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21).



# TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

*Word Biblical Commentary*, Volume 16, "Ezra, Nehemiah" (Word Books), 417 pages. \$22.95 (PA084-990-2150).

Even though the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah are a tiny percentage of the Old Testament corpus, the editors of this commentary do not short shrift these books. Instead they set one of the best scholars of these books and the historical era loose to produce one of the thickest volumes of this set so far. H. G. M. Williamson wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on Ezra and his times. He is now lecturer in Hebrew and Aramaic at Cambridge University. He is an active and publishing Old Testament scholar.

The commentary is based on the Hebrew text. Each pericope is treated with (1) a bibliography of 6 to 30 of the best sources for study, (2) translation of the passage, (3) brief critical notes on each verse, (4) a section in which *form, structure, and setting* are explored, (5) comment, (6) explanation.

With all this in the way of rich resource some preachers can discover that there is more to preach from Ezra and Nehemiah than building program fund-raisers.

—David Knaile

*The Hunger of the Heart*, by Ron DelBene (Winston Press, 1985), 90 pages. Paper. \$5.50 (PA086-683-8015).

*The Hunger of the Heart* by Ron DelBene is interesting, well-written, and appealing. There are many strengths in this volume: simplicity, illustrations, case studies, good use of Scripture, and a positive approach. DelBene selects the analogy of tree to reinforce his position concerning spiritual growth. Of course, any analogy has its breakdowns that tend to weaken the apologetics, but overall, this one is good. The author describes 14 stages of this development; stages through which each person must pass. We would be in agreement with 13 of these, but would probably find a difficult time supporting number 11, which dwells on a person's sinfulness. DelBene describes this as the confession stage. His definition and description of sin and sinfulness, feelings of

guilt and the like, leave one cold. He describes the old English "sin" of missing the target, and he says that as we progress along the pilgrim's way, we become more aware that that target is God's love. Here he says we missed the target, which leaves us with an accumulated sense of failure and feelings of sinfulness that we can't always identify readily. I'm sure that many of our readers would have a difficult time accepting that position. The other stages that are mentioned are without too much debate. They positively reinforce spiritual growth, especially praying without ceasing or a vital prayer life. Overall I found the book to be acceptable and helpful, but not spectacular.

—Hugh L. Smith

*Jesus Loves Me, Too*, edited by Clara Shaw Schuster (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City). \$6.95 (PA083-411-0741).

"Ten percent of the population of the United States is composed of persons with some exceptionality. Yet when one looks at church congregations, handicapped persons are conspicuously absent. Where are they?"

Not too many disabled persons or their families are brave enough to fight the battle of going to many of our churches. There is nothing there to fit their particular needs anyway, so why bother? It is easier for most disabled people and their families to stay home and hope that God will find them there. Less than 2 percent ever attend any church with any regularity. But they want to! They want the fellowship and acceptance of Christians and the teachings of Christ. Physical and mental obstacles too often block their way.

This book was created by specialists in many different areas to help pastors and church leaders as well as Sunday School teachers learn about different handicaps and how to minister to those who have them. It deals with theological issues as well as practical implications. It gives several helpful suggestions on how handicapped persons can be fully accepted as a part of the family of God and as members of the Body of Christ.

This book should be required reading for every pastor and church leader as well as Sunday School teacher.

—Lillian Johnston

*Consultation: Practice and Practitioner*, by Jonell Kirby (Muncie, Ind.: Accelerated Development, Inc.). \$18.50 (PA091-520-2484).

Consultation occurs in every profession. Jonell Kirby provides an overview of the "art of consultation."

Dr. Kirby illustrates the art of consulting through her definition of the consulting role. She suggests consulting occurs in four ways: Voluntary building of relationships; establishing relationships outside of the formal authority structure; relationships that focus upon role responsibility; and situations that define the consulting person as having expertise in the area of consultation.

The counselor, whatever the field, will find sound models of theory and practice in this work. The references and illustrations are varied enough to provide understanding for many different approaches to counseling. While her collaborators deal with several public types of consultative relationships, the minister will find plenty of "how to" examples that can easily transfer to "ministry" situations. The minister will be able to apply principles found in the data and case studies to domestic and personal psychological counseling situations. In addition, various methods of "leading" groups (committees, boards, etc.) to stronger relationships are evident. "Problem solving" is dealt with in several consulting situations. While dealing with technical terms and processes, the reader will find clarity throughout the book.

The book contains hundreds of forms and work sheets that may be adapted to ministry. While not every case study will be usable, the theory behind each may be applied.

The book is certainly not light reading. But once read, it will be a reference volume used again and again to develop programs, plans, and problem-solving strategies for the minister.

—Morton L. Estep

*Let's Listen to Jesus*, by Reuben R. Welch (Francis Asbury Press [Zondervan], 1985). Paper. \$5.95 (PA031-075-1012).

The author has already established himself as a creative presenter of biblical truths that immediately apply to the real areas of life. Originally published under the title *We Really Do Need to Listen*, this book is a successful continuation of his unique ministry. The subtitle, "Reflections of the Farewell Discourse," indicates the scriptural base of John 13:31—17:26.

The book consists of 12 short provocative chapters—concise, direct, and easy to read. Chapters include such stimulating titles as "Don't Try Harder—Trust More," "Don't Quit Now," "Give Me Your Glories," "Hunger to Be Holy," and "I Vote Yes on You." A relevant prayer is given at the end of each chapter. At the end of the book are discussion questions for each chapter, leading to convenient group use of the book.

The use of the personal "you" throughout and the clear, easy-to-understand vocabulary contribute to enjoyable reading. Interesting illustrations aid in giving fresh insights into old truths. The entire book is filled with personal challenges that make the Lord's farewell discourses relevant to persons today. Reading the book leads to a de-

sire for commitment to Christ and the church.

For the pastor searching for truths that can be applied to meaningful life situations; for the pastor looking for relevant preaching material on the denominational quadrennial theme "That the World May Know" (based on John 17), this is a "must" book.

—Lyle Flinner

*Beyond Fundamentalism: Biblical Foundations for Evangelical Christianity*, by James Barr (Westminster Press, 1984). 195 pages. \$9.95 (PA066-424-6206).

James Barr, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford University, again takes aim at fundamentalist understanding of Scripture (biblical inerrancy and associated concepts), but without the vehemence and sharp ridicule evidenced in his earlier work, *Fundamentalism* (Westminster, 1977). The tone of the present book is pastoral with a lay-intended audience.

Barr has set out to provide guidance and assurance to individuals who have become uncomfortable with a fundamentalist understanding of faith. The principal theme running through the work is, "Fundamentalism is not, as its adherents suppose, soundly founded upon the Bible itself. On the contrary, it is a particular tradition of interpretation,

only one among several that can be reasonably maintained, and not by any means the most natural or the most faithful one" (p. viii). The conclusion of his argument is that persons who reject fundamentalism need not believe they are "disqualifying themselves from membership within evangelical Christianity" (p. 159). In the course of his presentation, a number of topics (Jesus and the Old Testament, justification by faith, Christology, prophecy and prediction, theological inerrancy of Scripture, origin of the world, etc.) receive brief but thoughtful treatment.

Those acquainted with literature critical of fundamentalist/conservative hermeneutics will recognize that Barr has not written anything new. But his work is attractively produced and raises important issues concerning biblical authority and Christian life. While some will have a strong negative reaction to Barr, the book deserves attention. One might suspect a number of laymen may be troubled by the way they perceive Scripture being used within their congregations, and have questions similar to those addressed by Barr. Further, reacting to the issues raised creates an opportunity to probe our own concepts of how Scripture functions within the Christian faith. Recommended reading for those willing to be challenged.

—William C. Miller

## We Get Letters

(Continued from page 1)

tors, for news travels fast. My one hope, it seems, is in a weekly meeting with four other pastors as we study the Word, give each other support, and pray together. That group is made up of a Nazarene, an Assembly of God, a United Methodist, a Baptist, and a Congregational pastor. As they have ministered, I have found them a source of support and encouragement. But at this point, I'm not sure I want to pastor again. I believe I'll get my first negative vote this spring, and it will be from a minority within the congregation.

I'm not a quack. I'm a fourth-generation Nazarene, a supporter of our great church, and a holiness preacher. But I function in a denomination where the minority rules and our D.S. is given no power to come in and do whatever is necessary to correct a church that has a long history of pastoral abuse. I feel like I'm bleeding to death. There is no one to help me, and I'm not sure at this point if I want to pastor any more, at least under a system that seems to allow for a few to hold such strong negative power and control an entire congregation. This group I meet with seems to be my one source of help at the moment. I trust I shall find my way in this group, but I'm not sure I ever want to preach again.

—Name withheld by request

*Editor's note:* The gentleman who wrote this letter has subsequently left the ministry.

## "WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN?"

I enjoyed and agreed with Richard Taylor's article, "Taking a Second Look at the Bad Vote" (Fall, 1985).

The question that came to my mind was, how does a pastor explain this to his children? The pastor is expected to demonstrate this degree of spiritual maturity and this degree of a servant's heart, but the parsonage children are just that, children. I would like to see an article dedicated to this important issue.

—Rodger D. De Vore

## ON THE OTHER HAND . . .

Am I having a nightmare, or am I just hearing the clash of thunder? There are some flashes of lightning generated over all this about being voted out.

Granted, being voted out is humiliating. But need it cause all this static? What if I am humiliated? Isn't a "holiness" person spiritually mature enough to face the facts? The church obviously must want a change, and doesn't the church have a right to vote any pastor it wants either in or out? Doesn't the pastor himself declare to the church that the Lord is leading him elsewhere? Should it be considered degrading and humiliating for the church to say, "We feel the Lord is leading you elsewhere"? Does God only speak from the pulpit, never from the pew?

—Ruth Mitchell Blowers

## WORKING . . .

(Continued from page 18)

lems. Our virtues easily become vices without *epieikeia*. In a Peanuts comic strip, Charles Schulz has Linus telling big sister Lucy that she doesn't really love humanity. She replies, "Oh yes I do love humanity, it's just people I can't stand!"

Jesus personalized and individualized His love to the most unpleasant, unclean, and uncouth person He met. He never saw a harlot; He saw a woman in need. He never saw a publican; He saw a man struggling with guilt. He never saw sinners; He saw people needing love and acceptance. He never saw a thief; He saw a dying man grasping for another chance. He never saw men as sinners; He saw sinners as men. He never spoke to an individual as "you," but as "thou."

It appears, then, that Paul has reserved this fourth principle until the last chapter in order to highlight it. For he knows that it is possible for Christians to work hard to conform their conduct, to correct their attitudes, to focus their attention on the highest goals, and yet fail to manifest that most essential ingredient necessary for redeeming relationships, *epieikeia*. Above all else, suggests Paul, work on this virtue.

The very best Christians at their very best moments still have a lot to do in "working out their salvation." And so do we all.

### NOTES

1. John A. Knight, *Galatians—Philemon*, *Beacon Bible Commentary* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1965), 9:323.
2. *Ibid.*, 323-24.
3. This locution and its synonyms occur many times in Paul's writings: "in Christ Jesus," 48 times; "in Christ," 34 times; and "in the Lord," 50 times.
4. Jacques J. Miller, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians and to Philemon*, in the *New London Commentary on the New Testament* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott Ltd., 1955), 77.
5. For over 1,900 years men have pondered the meaning of this passage. It continues to baffle New Testament scholars. "What," they ask, "is implied in the term *Neauton ekenosen*?"
6. Archibald Thomas Robertson, *The Epistle of Paul*, in *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1931), 4:459.
7. William Barclay, *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*, in *The Daily Study Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), 92-93.

## JOY, PATIENCE . . .

(Continued from page 15)

5. See Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 155-56; Martin, *Philippians*, 140; Collange, *Epistle to the Philippians*, 134-35; and Beare, *Commentary*, 130-31, for discussion of varying points of view on this issue.

6. Richard E. Howard, *Newness of Life: A Study in the Thought of Paul* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1975), 216-17.

7. Martin, *Philippians*, 141.

Philippians 4:4-7

1. The translation used in this article is the author's own.
2. See J. Paul Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ: Christian Community and Commitment in Light of Roman Law* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 51-77, for a description of the legally binding relationship between Paul and the Philippians.
3. See F. W. Beare, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1973), 146; Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, in the *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1983), 43:182; and Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians*, in *The New Century Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 154-55, for discussions of the meaning of the word.
4. Beare, *Commentary*, 147.
5. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 184.
6. Martin, *Philippians*, 156.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

(Continued from page 27)

eries of Einstein regarding relativity theory and those who followed him in applying these concepts to the development of the nuclear age, we all should know full well that the essential construct of the universe is not static but dynamic. We are no longer limited to thinking in terms of static substances but are forced to think in terms of energy and power. If we apply this dynamic concept to the structure of reality to the power of God's being, whole new vistas open up to us that could rationally communicate to the modern mind. The divine reality of God is not a substance to be poured into a human container; it is a dynamic power of being that gives existence to all forms of being. While not all will be convinced by Torrance's reasoning, his attempt as a modern theologian who will take seriously the creeds of the ancient church is certainly to be applauded.

We have surveyed in a rather hasty manner almost 2,000 years of the church's history with special reference to understanding Christology. One of the lessons of historical theology is that we should learn not to repeat the errors of the past, but our overview should convince us that only a few have learned this lesson well. Some have not even considered it a lesson worth learning and have been willing to offer us "new" heresies that have already been condemned more than once.

An awareness of these many differences of opinion regarding Christology from the pens of so many men who were very devout in their faith and allegiance to Christ as Lord and Savior should be a word to the wise to proceed cautiously when interpreting the Scriptures, especially Phil. 2:6-8!

### NOTES

1. Various encyclopedias of religion will provide an adequate survey similar to this study. I recommend the articles on "Christology" and "Kenosis," C. A. Beckwith, in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950). Although dated in age of composition and therefore needing expansion to cover the 20th century, I have used these as a frame of chronological reference for this study.
2. A brief but lucid discussion of the role of the "apologists" and their intentions is given by J. G. Davies, *The Early Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965), 81 f.
3. Unless otherwise indicated the references to primary sources are taken from the American editions of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* and *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Any good university or seminary library will house these volumes, and many public libraries will have them on their reference shelves.
4. Cf. J. Lawson, *The Biblical Theology of Saint Irenaeus* (London: Epworth Press, 1948).
5. For a most readable description of the fundamental theological differences between Arius and Athanasius, I recommend William C. Placher, *A History of Christian Theology, An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 72-87.
6. Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, 3 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1890). Volumes 1 and 2 are especially helpful for discussions of the rise of the creeds as well as the relevant documents.
7. Cf. R. V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953).
8. Schaff, *Creeds*, 2:62-65.
9. For the respective creeds see John Leith, *Creeds of the Churches*, 3rd ed. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982).
10. Cf. Beckwith, "Christology" in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, 3:56 f.
11. The best survey of Schleiermacher's theology available in English is Martin Redeker, *Schleiermacher: Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973).
12. Beckwith, "Christology," 59.
13. *Ibid.*, 59-60.
14. William Temple, *Christus Veritas* (London: Macmillan, 1925), 142 f.
15. D. M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), 96-97.
16. John Hick, *The Myth of God Incarnate* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977).
17. Michael Goulder, *Incarnation and Myth: The Debate Continued* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1979), vii.
18. T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

# THE IDEA MART

## INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

### Suggested Order of Worship

Call to Worship: *Ps. 119:33-40*

Hymn: "How Firm a Foundation"

Offering: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (*Acts 20:35*).

Introduction of Teachers: *Chairman of the Board of CL/SS*

Children's Choir: "Tell Me the Story of Jesus"

Scripture: *Eph. 4:11-16*

Teacher's Choir: "I Love to Tell the Story"

Anointing for Service: *Pastor*

Special Song: "So Send I You"

Sermon: "If Jesus Were My Sunday School Teacher"

Hymn: "Make Me a Blessing"

### SERMON OUTLINE

**Introduction:** Sunday School teachers I remember.

If Jesus were my Sunday School teacher, how would He relate to me?

#### I. He would love me . . .

- A. enough to know my name.
- B. enough to care about what I became.

#### II. He would pray for me by name.

- A. He would make it His business to know my spiritual and temporal needs.
- B. He would carry a burden for my soul.

#### III. His teaching would extend beyond the classroom.

- A. He would call in my home . . .
  - 1. during sickness
    - a. Peter's mother-in-law
    - b. Jairus
  - 2. for fellowship
    - a. Lazarus, Mary, and Martha
  - 3. for evangelism
    - a. Zacchaeus
- B. His daily life would be an example of holiness.

#### IV. He would get right to my need. He would take time to talk to me privately about my spiritual life.

A. The Samaritan woman

B. Nicodemus

#### V. He would be prepared.

- A. Spiritually
- B. Academically

Jesus worked at the job of teaching. The parables didn't just "come to Him," He searched for them.

#### VI. He would seek to enroll new ones in His class. He would pass His excitement for evangelism on to me and train me to be a "fisher of men."

#### VII. No matter who I was, I would be welcome in His class.

- A. Peter denied Him.
- B. Thomas doubted Him.
- C. Judas betrayed Him.
- D. Jesus rejected none of them.

#### VIII. He would do anything to bring about my salvation.

- A. My attendance record would be only secondary to Him.
- B. I would be too important to be lost.
- C. He would never be too busy for me.
  - 1. The woman with the issue of blood stopped Him when He was on His way to another mission of mercy, yet He took time for her.
  - 2. Two blind men cried out, "Have mercy on me," and He stopped to help them.

**Conclusion:** We can't have Jesus as a Sunday School teacher, but we can have those who teach by spirit and example as He would teach if He were my Sunday School teacher.

—Harold L. Bowlby

### HOW ABOUT USING THE ALTAR?

(A suggested insert for your morning service bulletin)

Sunday morning before the pastoral prayer, I invite folks to come and kneel at the altar. Why do I do this? Because the altar is a special place of prayer.

When we refer to the altar or the altar railing or the mourning bench or some other such term, we mean that it is a special place that has been hallowed by the church over many years. We do not come there to offer sacrifices to God as a way of appeasing Him or to gain His favor. The one, perfect sacrifice has already been offered by our Lord Jesus Christ. We trust in Him for our salvation, not in a church altar.

Nevertheless, the altar is a place where profound events occur and where we experience the intimate presence of the Lord. The Lord is everywhere present, and we can call upon Him and commune with Him anytime, anywhere. Yet, there is something special about the altar as a place of prayer. Kneeling there seems to help us draw near to God.

Consider the significant things that occur at the altar of the church. Many of us have knelt at the altar with hearts heavy with conviction. We repented of our sins and received our Savior by faith. We also recall times of recommitment when we felt deeply moved to go to the altar and offer ourselves anew to the Lord.

The altar is also a place of petition; a place where we can seek his help for ourselves and for others. Spiritual counsel and earnest intercession occur at the altar. We gather around the seeker and we pray for him and with him.

Sometimes we kneel at the altar simply to worship God and to tell Him that we love and adore Him. The open altar is a reminder of the open invitation of our Lord. We dedicate our children there. We corporately offer the child and the parents to the Lord and His grace. A man and woman are married at the altar.

Where do people join the church? At the altar. Sometimes new converts are baptized at the altar. We come forward to the table of the Lord and kneel at the altar to share in Holy Communion. We



bring our tithes and offerings to the altar and sing together the Doxology.

The Word of God is preached near the altar and the congregation is invited to respond by coming to the Living Word at the altar.

So we continually hallow the altar as a special place in the life and worship of the church. Sunday morning, during the organ or piano prelude, it is appropriate in my church to come and kneel at the altar. We may pray for God's blessing to be upon the service or simply kneel in adoration to our King. Our presence here may also help others prepare for worship.

Another opportunity precedes the pastoral prayer. People are free to come forward and kneel. They need not have a special burden. Perhaps they simply want to use this as a means of drawing closer to the Lord.

How marvelous when entire families come and kneel at the altar during the pastoral prayer. What a wonderful way to help children feel comfortable about using the altar.

A third opportunity in our Sunday morning worship service comes at the close of the message. This is a time for hearts to respond to what the Spirit of God has been saying to them. So often the mood is conducive to an immediate response, and if we delay, the sense of need may dissipate.

Though there have been some abuses and excesses relating to the altar, it is also true that our temporary sanctuary is far from conducive to worship. But let us not neglect the altar that we have. Let us use it reverently, respecting the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the sacred volition God has given us.

The altar, as a special place of prayer, belongs to all of us. It's a beautiful place to meet with the Lord and with each other.

—G. Roger Schoenhals

## DEDICATION OF HYMNBOOKS

Here is a ceremony used by Donald Sides and the Church Street Church of the Nazarene to dedicate their new hymnbooks.

**Pastor:** O Lord, we thank You for Your Presence.

**Choir:** O Lord, we thank You for Your help in the past.

**Congregation:** O Lord, we trust You expectantly for the future. We acknowledge Your Lordship over our lives.

**Musical Director:** And what is the chief aim of man?

**Choir:** To bring glory to God.

**Congregation:** And sing praises to Him in His sanctuary.

**Pastor:** O Lord, our purpose is to give

glory, praise, and honor to our God. For He is worthy to be praised.

**Congregation:** Our Lord, we again dedicate ourselves to Your work and service.

**Choir:** We dedicate ourselves to bringing praise to Your holy name.

**Music Director:** We dedicate these hymnbooks to God, for His praise and glory.

**Congregation and Choir:** We dedicate these hymnbooks to God, for uplifting His people.

**Pastor:** For edification, instruction, and conviction.

**Congregation:** We dedicate these hymnbooks to the glory of God.

**Pastor:** For encouragement, praise, joy, and growth in grace.

**Congregation:** We dedicate these hymnbooks to the praise of God.

**Unison:** That all God's people may sing His praise and be lifted up, that we all may benefit from the ministry of song, and that God's holy name may be praised in His sanctuary, we reverently dedicate these hymnbooks.

—Donald E. Sides  
Carlsbad, N.Mex.

## AN IDEA FOR MIDWEEK

The letter from my friend reads, "I'm writing this in Wednesday night church. It should die a natural death here or be revamped. I liked our system you developed in \_\_\_\_\_. I no longer feel ill will toward anyone who doesn't go to Wednesday night services. We're not meeting needs. We should listen more to our customers."

When I pastored this family they were among the most faithful in the church. They still are, or he wouldn't be sitting in such a boring service. I only say that to point out that this was not the comment of a malcontent.

My system, to which he refers, will not work everywhere. In fact, I am not using it in my present assignment. It will work in some places and it might trigger some fresh ideas of your own.

The system sought to address problems we were experiencing. It was designed as a solution to needs in a particular situation. One problem was that the traditional prayer meeting was boring and only attended by a few of the older people. Younger generations were not interested. Another problem was that many adults desired a time to have everyone together. The teens had their own meeting. A third need was to give people opportunity to study and discuss topics of interest and relevance to the Christian life.

We came up with a schedule in three segments. The first was 6 P.M. to 6:55. The second was 7 P.M. to 7:30. The third

was 7:30-8-30. In the six o'clock segment we offered classes or study groups. These were built around currently popular books or book studies in the Bible. Depending on the number of people involved, classes were planned to have from 10 to 15 persons. We held preregistration for four weeks in advance. Based on interest indicated there, we purchased materials. During this first segment, the children's choirs met for practice.

The second segment was the heart of the evening, even though it was only 30 minutes long. It was called the Praise Gathering. It was 30 minutes of praise in song, testimony, and prayer. There was no message unless it was to share a promise of the week or something like that. Once we emptied promise boxes into the offering plates and had everyone draw a promise. Praise Gathering brought everyone together. The children and teens and adults all packed the chapel for this segment. We kept it lively and happy.

The third segment consisted of additional classes. The adult choir had rehearsal. The children had Caravan. The teens had their own Bible study.

We considered the program a success. Classes lasted for 13 weeks and then new classes started. Some Bible studies were longer.


If you are already enjoying a program on Wednesday night that meets the needs of your people, stay with it. However, if the traditional prayer meeting is an idea whose time has past and you find you are missing the younger generation, maybe this idea will work for you.

The key is planning. Let the Christian Life and Sunday School Board discuss it and sponsor the program. Offer classes that address the interests and needs of people. Give plenty of advance publicity and information. Determine a minimum number of people to make up a class. Secure the best teachers possible.

In planning the Praise Gathering, remember to fill the time with happy things. Use special music, readings, different prayer approaches, and provide a theme to which the people can respond in their testimonies.

Before the first segment of classes ends, start publicity for the next set. Set up a display with copies of the books, so people can look them over. Publish a brief statement of the content of each class. Announce who will be teaching. The pastor can teach one himself. There are many possibilities for studies these days.

The midweek gathering ought to be an encouragement to Christians. This is one way to accomplish that objective.

—Larry H. Lewis 

# SERMON OUTLINES



## TAKE TIME TO BE THANKFUL

**Scripture:** Ps. 116:12-14, 17a

**Text:** Ps. 116:17a, "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving."

### INTRODUCTION

- A. We must have gratitude in our hearts.
- B. To "think" is to "thank."
- C. Is our thanks expressed openly to God?
- D. Thanksgiving is a daily practice.

### I. BE THANKFUL FOR THE DAY IN WHICH WE LIVE

- A. Some wish for the "Good ol' days."
- B. Be thankful in the midst of problems.
  - 1. Paul leaving Titus in Crete
  - 2. Paul staying in Ephesus
- C. Thankfulness is a "lubrication" for life.
- D. Be thankful in every situation.

### II. BE THANKFUL FOR OUR HERITAGE

- A. We owe a debt to our forefathers.
- B. The American tradition of thanksgiving stems from the Pilgrims' deliverance.
  - 1. Their trip to America
  - 2. Their first winter in the new world
- C. Our rich spiritual heritage.

### III. BE THANKFUL FOR OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH

- A. Faith is not based on material wealth or progress.
- B. Thankfulness even through suffering.
- C. Appreciation for what we do have.
- D. Gratitude: the rarest of virtues.

### IV. BE THANKFUL FOR OUR HOPE IN JESUS CHRIST

- A. Available to all who will receive.
- B. God's fellowship brings comfort to man.

C. How do we measure God's blessings?

D. Fellowship with God provides us with divine power.

E. God's presence dispels fear.

### V. BE THANKFUL FOR REDEMPTION

A. Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us.

B. God's grace provides strength for those who receive Him.

C. The Blood of Christ is our "passport."

D. We are obligated to pay a debt of thanksgiving to God.

### CONCLUSION

Thanksgiving is a sacrifice of gratitude flowing freely from the hearts of God's children.

—J. Walter Hall, Jr.

## WORDS ALMOST LOST

**Scripture:** Acts 20:32-35

**Text:** "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (v. 35).

**Introduction:** When looking for words of Jesus we usually turn to the Gospels. It is left to Paul, however, to tell us something Jesus often must have said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The life of Jesus demonstrated the principle, but only in the closing sentence of a farewell message of Paul have the words been preserved for us. The sentiment expressed in those words almost lost tends to be lost in our world, and even more sadly is lost in this season celebrating the birth of the One who gave and lived this truth.

### I. RECEIVING AND GIVING ARE BOTH NECESSARY

- A. Necessity to receive
  - 1. Helplessness of childhood, illness or old age
  - 2. Interdependence of normal living

B. Necessity to give

- 1. Government and society demand it
- 2. Family and friends require it

### II. EITHER RECEIVING OR GIVING MAY BECOME DOMINANT

- A. Pressures toward receiving
  - 1. Selfishness we see about us
  - 2. Selfishness we find within us
- B. Pressures toward giving
  - 1. Thankfulness and love toward God
  - 2. Thankfulness and love for our fellow man

### III. GIVING IS BETTER THAN RECEIVING

- A. Receiving is an end; giving a beginning
  - 1. Receiving is for now
  - 2. Giving is forever
- B. Receiving is narrow; giving is wide
  - 1. Receiving is for one
  - 2. Giving is for many

**Conclusion:** Let God have the final word as to why it is better to give than to receive. He has demonstrated it by a great object lesson in the Jordan Valley. There He has made two seas, the Sea of Galilee, blue, fresh, and a source of food for the people who live about it, and then there is the Dead Sea. It is all the name suggests. No fish are there. The water is impossible to drink and unpleasant to the touch. The reason is simple. The Sea of Galilee gives to all who live around it; the Dead Sea only receives. What was almost lost in the Holy Scriptures is also written in our geography books, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

—Edward F. Cox

## SPIRIT-FILLED RELATIONSHIPS

Eph. 5:21—6:9

### INTRODUCTION

- A. Context of the fullness of the Spirit

1. 3:14-21—Prayer for the indwelling Spirit and the fullness of God
  2. 4:1-16—Spirit-filled unity and gifts for service
  3. 4:17—5:2—Spirit-filled attitudes
  4. 5:3-20—Spirit-filled conduct
  5. 5:21—6:9—Spirit-filled relationships
  6. 6:10-20—Spirit-filled influence; taking a stand in an evil world
- B. Verse 18—"keep on being filled" (present imperative)
1. We know the doctrine of Spirit-fulness
  2. We need to know how the doctrine affects our daily lives

#### PROPOSITION:

When we have been filled with the Spirit of God, something dramatic takes place in our relationships.

#### I. WIVES (5:21-24)

- A. Focus—husbands  
Surrendered self-centeredness; purged of self-sovereignty; filled with the fullness of God; focus on the other person
- B. Duty—submission  
Verse 22 has no verb. It borrows the verb from verse 21. The submission of the wife to the husband is an extension of our submission to the other members of the Body of Christ.
- C. Purpose—husband's authority  
Wives must be willing to surrender to their husbands in order that the husband may exercise the authority that is his responsibility.

#### II. HUSBANDS (5:25-33)

- A. Focus—wives
- B. Duty—loving leadership  
As Christ gave himself up for His Church, a husband must be willing to make any sacrifice, even the sacrifice of his own life, if necessary, for the well-being and happiness of his wife.

- C. Purpose—unity  
One flesh

#### III. CHILDREN (6:1-3)

- A. Focus—parents
- B. Duty—obedience
- C. Purpose—righteousness; honor parents

#### IV. FATHERS (6:4)

- A. Focus—children
- B. Duty—consistent discipline
- C. Purpose—nurture with a sense of responsibility to the Lord

#### V. EMPLOYEES (6:5-8)

- A. Focus—employers
- B. Duty—obedience; single-minded service
- C. Purpose—reward for good

#### VI. EMPLOYERS (6:9)

- A. Focus—employees
- B. Duty—reward for good
- C. Purpose—mutual respect; no favoritism

#### CONCLUSION

When we have been filled with the Spirit of God, something dramatic takes place in our relationships.

—Richard Knox

#### PEACE IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM

**Scripture:** Acts 27:13-26

**Text:** Verse 25

#### INTRODUCTION

- A. We are in the midst of the hurricane season.
- B. The Bible relates a number of stories about storms.
- C. In the midst of storms, prayers arise!
  1. Jonah (chapters 1—2).
  2. The disciples and the storm (Mark 4:35 ff.).
  3. Paul, on his voyage to Rome (Acts 27:13-26).

#### I. THE STORM (vv. 13-19)

- A. The suddenness of it (v. 14)

- B. The frustration of it (vv. 15-16)
- C. The acceptance of it (vv. 17-19)

#### II. THE SCARE (v. 20)

- A. There was darkness (v. 20a)
- B. There was helplessness (v. 20b)
- C. There was hopelessness (v. 20c)

#### III. THE SECRET (vv. 23-25)

- A. Seeking counsel from God (vv. 9-11)
  1. Prov. 3:5-6
- B. Listening to the voice of God (vv. 23-24)
- C. Being an example of faith and courage (v. 25)

#### IV. THE SERENITY (v. 25)

- A. Know the promise of God. We will be safe.
- B. Claim the promise of God. Believe it; have faith.
- C. Share the promise of God. "Believe it with me!"
  1. The Moravians' example on Wesley in the midst of the storm on the Atlantic.

#### CONCLUSION

- A. What storms are you weathering now?
- B. Don't give up. God has victory for you!
- C. Learn the secret of prayer, believing, claiming, and sharing.

—Wayman F. Davis

#### GOD'S SURETIES

**Text:** Matt. 6:24-34

**I. GOD'S SUPPLY:** Phil. 4:19; Matt. 6:33

**II. GOD'S SERENITY:** Matt. 11:28

**III. GOD'S SECURITY:** Matt. 28:20

**IV. GOD'S SALVATION:** Col. 1:14

**V. GOD'S SYMPATHY:** Heb. 2:18


**VI. GOD'S SIMPLICITY:** James 4:8

**VII. GOD'S SUNSHINE:** John 8:12

**VIII. GOD'S SURPASSING:** Eph. 3:20

**IX. GOD'S SANCTIFICATION:** Heb. 7:25

**X. GOD'S STABILITY:** Phil. 4:7

—J. Grant Swank, Jr. 

# SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS



## IT'S ALL HOW YOU LOOK AT IT

"I'm the greatest baseball player in the world," the little boy boasted as he strutted around his backyard. Shouldering his bat, he tossed a baseball up, swung, and missed. "I am the greatest ball player ever," he reiterated. He picked up the ball again, swung, and missed again. Stopping a moment to examine his bat, he stooped and picked up his ball. "I am the greatest baseball player who ever lived!" The momentum of his swing nearly knocked him down. But the ball plopped, unscathed, at his feet.

"Wow!" he exclaimed. "What a pitcher!"

### Source

*Robert Schuller's Life Changers*, Robert A. Schuller, ed. (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co.).

### Truth, Concept, or Doctrine Illustrated

Concentrating on that which is positive and noble enhances our character, and can change our outlook and approach to life.

### Two Supporting Scripture Verses

Phil. 4:8-9

2 Kings 6:16-17

*Submitted by  
Jonathan Merki*

## A CURE FOR CRITICISM

An article from a church bulletin teaches a very good lesson about criticism. It begins with this poem:

*A little seed lay in the ground*

*And soon began to sprout;*

*Now, which of all the flowers around  
Shall I, it mused, come out?*

The seed could then be heard contemplating the possibilities: "I don't care to be a rose; it has thorns. I have no desire to be a lily; it's too colorless. And I certainly wouldn't want to be a violet. It's much too small, and besides, it grows too close to the ground." The story concludes:

*And so it criticized each flower,*

*That supercilious seed,*

*Until it woke one summer hour*

*And found itself a weed!*

### Source

*Our Daily Bread*, March-April, 1985, devotion for March 17.

### Truth, Concept, or Doctrine Illustrated

We should take care not to think too highly of ourselves or to spend time finding fault in others. The cure for being too critical is to look inward rather than outward at others.

### Two Supporting Scripture Verses

Phil. 2:3

Rom. 12:3

*Submitted by  
Bob Bracy*

## THE STRIKE-OUT KING?

Most people know that Babe Ruth held the record number of home runs hit until Hank Aaron took the title in 1976. But do you know who held the record number of times struck out (1,330)? His name was—Babe Ruth!

It was a crucial game for the Yankees. The year was 1927, and they were playing Philadelphia. Babe Ruth was up to bat three times in that game. The first time, it was three pitches, three strikes. His second "at bat" was the same story.

By the eighth inning, the Yankees were behind, three to one. The bases were loaded, and "The Babe" was up. Lefty Grove, the Philadelphia team's pitcher, had already struck him out twice, and it looked as though he could do it again. Grove threw the first pitch. Babe swung hard—and missed. Second pitch: Babe wielded his bat with all the power he could muster. Again he missed, stumbled, and fell. He picked himself up, dusted off his uniform, and braced himself for the third pitch. Grove sent it flying toward home plate with such speed, no one saw it. Babe swung. There was a sharp crack, and then the inevitable. The ball shot back toward the fence. The game belonged to the Yankees and Babe Ruth, the "Home Run King."

But what about the 1,330 strikeouts? Nobody remembers them. Those past failures lost their significance in the light of his achievements. But Babe

Ruth could not have become the Home Run King without them. And he never would have made that achievement if he had feared the stigma of failure, of striking out.

### Source

*Robert Schuller's Life Changers*, Robert A. Schuller, ed. (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co.).

### Truth, Concept, or Doctrine Illustrated

• We should put every ounce of energy into achieving our goals, forgetting whatever failures are behind us.

### Two Supporting Scripture Verses

Phil. 3:12-16

Heb. 12:1-2

*Submitted by  
Jonathan Merki*

## PARDON ME, PLEASE

A governor once appointed a representative to visit a prison. This emissary was to select one man from among the thousands of prisoners to receive a special pardon.

As he interviewed the men, he heard countless claims to innocence. Some claimed that they had been framed; others charged that "crooked" judges or prejudiced juries were responsible for their convictions.

There was, however, one man who confessed that he had indeed committed the crime for which he had been sentenced. "I deserve to be here because I broke the law," he said, "but I am truly sorry for what I did."

It was this man who received the pardon.

### Source

*Illustrating the Lesson*, by Arthur H. Stainback (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press).


### Truth, Concept, or Doctrine Illustrated

Forgiveness is not for the self-righteous but for the penitent.

### Two Supporting Scripture Verses

1 John 1:9

Luke 7:36-50

*Submitted by  
David W. Sifferd* 



# NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

## GRACE

**T**he Greek word *charis* is translated "grace" 150 out of the 156 times it occurs in the New Testament (including "gracious" in Luke 4:22, where the Greek says "of grace"). It is significant that 102 of those 156 times, it is found in Paul's Epistles. Luke uses it 24 times (8 in his Gospel and 16 in Acts). It will be remembered that the early church fathers are unanimous in saying that Luke gives us the preaching of Paul. *Charis* occurs 4 times in John's Gospel, but not at all in Matthew or Mark. Aside from the books we have mentioned, the word is found 10 times in 1 Peter and 8 times in Hebrews. C. F. D. Moule of Cambridge University has rather convincingly argued that the Epistle to the Hebrews was actually composed by Luke under the direction of Paul. We have found a considerable number of Greek words that occur in the New Testament only in Luke's two books and Hebrews. So, with the exception of 1 Peter, *charis* ("grace") is almost a Pauline term.

*Charis* is closely related to *chara*, "joy," which comes from the verb *chairo*, "rejoice." The first statement that Conzelmann makes about *charis* is this, "*Charis* is what delights" (Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 9:373).

In the light of this, we can understand the three stages in the use of this term in classical Greek: (1) "gracefulness," (2) "graciousness," and (3) "grace." Conzelmann says, "The word is widely used in the clas-

sical age. *Charis* is the 'favour' of the gods in Aeschylus" (p. 374). That furnishes the background for Paul's use of *charis* as the "favor" that God shows to mankind in Christ.


What a pity that so many people today are content to settle for "gracefulness" of appearance and "graciousness" of personality, without seeking and receiving the "grace" of God through faith in Christ! The others are fleeting; the last is eternal in its benefits.

J. H. Thayer, in his *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, has a very good treatment of the development of this word in Greek usage. He observes, "*Charis* is used for the kindness of a master towards his inferior servants, and so especially of God towards men." He goes on to say, "Moreover, the word *charis* contains the idea of *kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved*: Rom. xi. 6." He also writes that "the N. T. writers use *charis* pre-eminently of that kindness by which God bestows favors even upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon of their offenses, and bids them accept of eternal salvation through Christ" (p. 666).

The importance of "grace" in the Pauline Epistles is underlined in this statement by Conzelmann: "In Paul *charis* is a central concept that most clearly expresses his understanding of the salvation event" (TDNT, 9: 393). Perhaps Paul had a special appreciation of God's grace because of his personal experience. He had

violently persecuted the followers of Christ. In fact, he told the Jewish mob in Jerusalem that wanted to kill him (Acts 21:35-36): "I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison" (22:4, NIV). Yet God in His great mercy had arrested him on the road to Damascus, spoken to him clearly, and forgiven him for all his sins. No wonder that Paul was constantly talking and writing about God's unmerited favor to sinners.

Appropriately, he writes to the Ephesians about Christ: "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding" (1:7-8, NIV). He also twice tells his readers, "It is by grace you have been saved" (2:5, 8, NIV).

*Charis* is used in the New Testament not only for God's initial unmerited favor in the forgiveness of sins but also of His continued favor to those who have been saved by grace through faith. This is shown in the frequent use of "grace" in the greetings and benedictions of the Epistles. Paul regularly begins his Epistles with "grace and peace to you." God's grace constantly enriches our lives as Christians. We should be grateful every day for His abundant grace so freely given to us in Christ. And this should make us gracious to others. 





# THE ARK ROCKER

## PR AGAIN

It may comfort some of you to know that our editor does try to keep this column from getting too acid. He turned down my last offering—he and I agreed that it was too true to be good—and went to the file for a substitute. The question was not basic content. He's never gotten terribly overwrought about that, even when we disagreed on the point being made. His concern was the "how" much more than the "what." So this time I propose a very serious topic, seriously done.

It still distresses me to see that ghastly moment in which the space shuttle *Challenger's* crew went to stand before the Lord. Whether they died in the fireball or in a nine-mile fall makes no difference at all in the level of my frustration, even anger. You see, one reason it all distresses me is its revelation of human weakness, meanness, and sin. The yen for good PR created that tragedy, or, at least it played a lead role in it. And behind the yen lay greed and the itch for power and the lust for recognition—personal and institutional, and utter selfishness. The yen itself only served to fuel the fundamental corruption of the human spirit. It made the greed, the itch for power, the lust for recognition, and the utter selfishness go underground, only to surface in slick disguises.

Folks who assured us all along that only the very best minds and the most humane of hearts were working out the details and making the significant decisions, finally demonstrated profound moral cowardice in the face of the question: "What will others think?"

Even the confessions of the Company and Agency were transformed into PR events. Carefully crafted statements confessed and did not confess at the same time; they aimed to help the public see or hear what the public wanted to see or hear. They said what they said with an eye and an ear cocked to catch the reactions of those holding the purse strings and the cords to the public media. Again, the yen for good PR corrupted the entire process. And the end is not in sight.

And now to the point of this particular column:

Not one week after seeing that lethal ball on television, in fact, while the controversy between the Company's engineers and the managers at both the Company and the Agency raged most fiercely, two meetings with clergy, one meeting that was prominently with laity, and two conversations with ministerial colleagues all proved conclusively that even in the holiness movement we're not about to let history speak to us.

That question, "What will others think?" holds awesome power over us. So much power that it could be truthfully said of at least one person in one of those occasions, "He's absolutely predictable. He will do whatever makes himself look good."

You know what that says of the message of heart holiness in that case, don't you? We have been quite critical of the way in which the children of Calvin have described the sovereignty of God, and rightly so. But at least they have insisted that it is God himself who is sovereign!

At one of the meetings mentioned, someone suggested, and some acceded to the suggestion, that while the basic reason for such-and-such was clearly thus-and-so, it would be "best for the reputation of the institution" if a quite secondary reason was the one publicly disseminated. "It will satisfy curiosity and stop the rumor mill." When objection was raised, on ethical grounds, the objector had to face both the stony silence of those who supported him privately and a deeply cynical display of "kindness."

You know what that says of the message of heart holiness, don't you? We have criticized those who have suggested that one cannot live a life of perfect love to God and neighbor here on earth, and rightly so. But at least they have kept the standard for assessment credibly high, and they have resisted self-deluding casuistries and word games.

Our tradition once showed tremendous resistance to the lure of "good PR." In fact, in our zeal, we sometimes bent over backward too far. We aired our dirty laundry in public and we zestfully identified ourselves as the noisiest, least decorous crowd in town. We picked fights in the name of perfect love and were so contentious on occasion that people had a hard time believing that we had experienced the *first* work of grace, let alone a second one. Public relations, we said, were of little importance when put in the light of our relationship to God. We had the "what" straight. The "how" needed work.

Then (to use the *Challenger* as an analogy), we were in danger of never getting the machine made, let alone launching it. Now, we must alert ourselves to the danger of destroying the machine. Not by poor manufacture, but by faulty (to use a tame word), self-serving presentation; by presentation that refuses to accept the limits of manufacture and recognizes only the question, "What will others think?"



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LI

**laity** (LAY-uh-tee) *noun*:

Laity means all the people of God. It includes Christians who are not preachers or priests. The difference between the laity and the clergy does not make this difference. All the laity have a special place of service in the church. The Greek word *laos* means "people."

Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Peter 2:4-10

See Christian, Church, Clergy, Layman, Priest

**Lamb of God** (LAM uv GAHD)

The Lamb of God is a name given to Jesus Christ (John 1:36). Lambs were used as sacrifices in the Old Testament. Jesus Christ is the final sacrifice for the people.

Genesis 22:1-14; Exodus 12:1-7; Isaiah 53:7; 1 Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 5:1-14

See Christ, Cross, Expiation, Jesus, Propitiation, Sacrifice, Sacrificial Blood

**lament** (luh-MENT)

1. *verb*: To lament is to show deep sorrow and grief. The prophet Jeremiah lamented the sins of his people. He lamented the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus lamented when the people rejected Him.

2. *noun*: A lament is the cry of one who is in deep sorrow or grief.

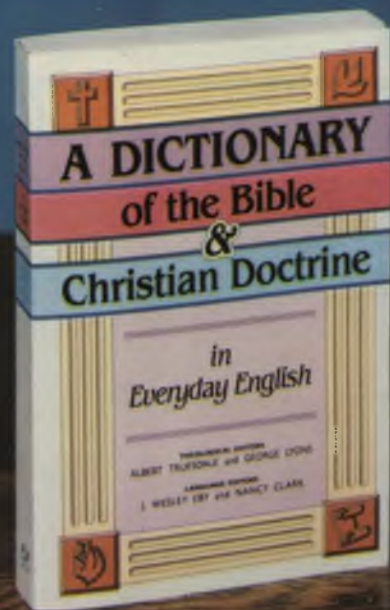
2 Samuel 1:17; Isaiah 3:26; Jeremiah 4:5-8; 7:29; Matthew 23:37-39

See Jeremiah, Jerusalem, Jesus, Lamentations, Suffering

**Lamentations** (LAM-un-TAY-shunz) *proper noun*: Lamentations is a book in the Old Testament. The book tells of the destruction of Jerusalem.

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