

PREACHER'S

magazine

DECEMBER 1962

LET'S HAVE A CHRISTMAS WE CAN'T AFFORD

Editorial

THE TRUE CHRISTMAS

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COME BACK, O CHURCH, COME BACK

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FINANCING THE CHURCH PROGRAM

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THE MINISTER AND HIS "MANUAL"

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**THE "APPLE" ON THE TREE OR THE PAIR
ON THE GROUND?**

John G. Hall

—proclaiming the Wesleyan message

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NORMAN R. OKE, *Editor*

Contributing Editors

Hardy C. Powers
G. B. Williamson

Samuel Young
D. I. Vanderpool

Hugh C. Benner
V. H. Lewis

General Superintendents, Church of the Nazarene

wonder what God does every January

Let's Have a Christmas We Can't Afford!

ARE YOU an easy victim of rash resolutions? Well, I confess that I am, especially around Christmas time. Each January, I make the same solemn vow: "Next year I will not go in debt for Christmas. No more of these splurging Christmases for me." You see, January is the month I find myself flat on the financial floor—not only broke, but actually in debt. (And it is a good thing January is one of our longer months; it takes a long month for me to get to the place I can look my banker in the face again.)

What gives me such bad Januarys? Christmas! That's what does it. Christmas with its romanticism: romanticism which causes me to overbuy, to get better gifts for my family than I can afford. In fact, this Christmas spirit gets me. I buy little extras like special Christmas lights for the tree, a turkey which costs more but is extra tender—luxuries indeed. What has happened to my native practicality? Of course I can't afford to do it. But there I go again, splurging over the loud protests of my fast-flattening wallet, and despite the gasps of my dying bank account.

Then, come January, I slowly begin to get up off the financial floor, with a renewed vow, "This is the last time I go through Christmas like

this! Next year I am going to be financially ready for Christmas, so I can afford it."

Well, do you want to know how well I have done with my January resolutions? I have failed utterly, dismally, *wonderfully!* Yes, sir, the passing years have taught me one splendid thing—*Christmas is ruined the moment you can afford it.*

Here Is How I Found It All Out

Each year, as Christmas loomed up closer and closer, I made out my shopping list. Beside each name the suggested amount I could afford to spend. Sounds so precise and practical, doesn't it? But then I waged a private war over the battle of priorities. Who should get the best gift? Who means the most to me, and how much? How about the kinsfolk one step removed, like my father-in-law and mother-in-law? How much for my own children—the grandest kids in all the world? Then there is my wife; helpmeet through thick and thin—how much can I afford to spend for her? How much does she mean to me? See what I mean: the war of priorities is well-nigh fatal. Wounded and groggy, I retreat to get my breath.

At this juncture my well-planned Christmas budget gets the third de-

gree. What gives my Christmas plans the final knockout blow is this pause to re-evaluate my loved ones. So much of the year I take my family for granted. But here at Christmas time I put on each one the tape measure of love. Right at that moment my heart seizes the steering wheel of my finances and my head is relegated to the back seat. I upgrade all my shopping list and shut my eyes to my economic plight as I do so.

My wife's parents: they have been my prayer partners, all year—nothing too good for them!

My wife: when I realize what she has put up with in living with me, an inexpensive gift would be purple heresy!

My son and daughter: no little gift can repay the thrills they have showered on my unworthy heart!

So I go down my list, revamping it upward as I go. And all the while my head cries out that I am crazy. But at the same time my heart is turning flipflops for joy. In fact, my heart whispers gleefully, "Don't you know Christmas was never meant to be afforded? Don't worry if it leaves you in the red."

It Left God in the Red Too!

I drop my pencil, and lay aside my too-expensive Christmas list, and those words come back to me like echoes through the arches of an ancient cathedral, "Christmas is no longer Christmas when you can afford it. God couldn't afford Christmas either. It left God nearly bankrupt!"

Hear it again, Christmas shopper, "God couldn't afford Christmas either." Heaven's ledger went deeply in the red because of God's Gift that first Christmas. And I wonder if God will ever have enough Januaries to

get himself out of debt? I listened and mused.

The beloved Apostle John put it this way, "God put us at the top of His shopping list." Oh, no, those are not his exact words. Here they are in their unforgettable familiarity, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Perhaps God had also revamped His list, upgrading it as He went. Tender lambs? Slain doves? Bullocks of a year? No, all were too cheap. What could God give to show the measurement of His love? *His only begotten Son!* Not what He could afford; but rather, *what He could not afford!*

St. Paul states it thus, "For your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Oh, what it cost God that first Christmas!

.....

I still can't afford Christmas. Happy thought! God couldn't afford it either. So I've rather revised my whole philosophy of Christmas. Here it is. *I don't want to afford Christmas. For Christmas is no longer Christmas when I can afford it.* To be honest, I would lose much of the inexpressible thrill of Christmas morning if, when those gifts were opened, I were saying to myself, Well, I still have money left over.

Bethlehem's Babe still appeals to the hungry of earth. Not because the Father gave of His abundance; but He gave His only begotten Son. The Heavenly Father nearly went broke that first Christmas. I wonder how many Januaries or eternity of Januaries it will take for God to get the ledger of Heaven back in balance.

So I guess next January will be devoted on my calendar to the process of recouping my finances from Christmas spending. Am I complaining? Not for a moment. Inwardly I'm glad I can't afford Christmas. I hope I never can.

QUOTES and NOTES

MOST CHRISTIANS undergo something of the experience of Joseph and Mary. Things did not go as Joseph had planned. Outside interests invaded, plans had to be changed. The baby's place of birth was not as they would have wished it to be.

Many of the cherished dreams of the Christian are crowded out, left by the wayside; and feelings, like those of Mary as she thought of her baby's safety, take over our minds. We may be like Joseph, wanting to provide the best but finding ourselves amid circumstances that require us to make the best of whatever is available.

In spite of all the worry and anxiety, Mary and Joseph welcomed Jesus on that first Christmas. In our parties and engagements do we miss Him or is He thrust aside? Do we see Him in some child who has found the love and true joy of Christmas? Do we possess the Christmas spirit as found in the wise men, the urge to seek Christ until we find Him, and then worship Him and offer the gift of self? Christ enters the life that welcomes Him in love.

—E. PAUL HOVEY, in the *Upper Room*

THERE IS NOTHING I can give you which you have not; but there is much that, while I cannot give, you can take. No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today. Take heaven.

No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present instant. Take peace.

The gloom of the world is but a shadow; behind it, yet within reach, is joy. Take joy.

And so, at this Christmas time, I greet you with the prayer that for you, now and forever, the day breaks

and the shadows flee away.—FRA GIOVANNI, 1513.

The Spirit of Christmas

A five-year-old refugee was being shown the wonders of a large toy department by his foster parents. His eyes grew wide with wonderment but gradually an expression of disappointment clouded his face. He began to search up and down the aisles, under tables and counters. At last, he burst out, "But where is the *Child*?"

After an embarrassed silence, a store official ordered a Christmas crib to be found at once and set up in a prominent place in the toy department. And at this the little boy smiled with delight. Young as he was he had given a lesson in the true significance of Christmas.—REV. JAS. KELLER, *Living Tissues*.

A FOUR-YEAR-OLD orphan boy visited with us over Christmas. His greatest desire was a toy train. It was the only thing he asked for; he talked about it all of the time.

It so happened that, through a misunderstanding, on Christmas morning the train wasn't under the tree. I lurked in the doorway with a fearful heart. I expected tears because what he wanted was not there. It was a wonderful experience when he ran to me, his eyes shining, his face aglow with happiness:

"I didn't get the little train that runs around on a track," he said, but Santa was mighty good to me. I'm satisfied with what I have!"—NELLIE F. TURNER.

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November;
When December doth arrive,
Kids can't count past "25."
—J. H. HIGDON, *Phoenix Flame*,
Phoenix Metal Cap Co.

THE SHOP WINDOW displayed a familiar scene of a manger, plastic oxen, a mother and child with a fine entourage of angels. The small girl said indignantly to her mother, "Mummy, don't tell me they are bringing religion into Christmas now!"—*New Statesman and Nation* (London).

TRUE VALUES

"A thing that is bought or sold has no value unless it contains that which cannot be bought or sold. Look for the Priceless Ingredient. The Priceless Ingredient of every product in the market place is the honor and integrity of him who makes it. Consider His Name before you buy."—*Journal of American Pharmaceutical Association*.

GOD has put His gifts of love into our hearts, not to be kept locked up and useless, but to be given out.—J. R. MILLER.

What Child Is This?

*What Child is this who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap, is sleeping,
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!*

*Why lies He in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear, for sinners here
The silent word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through.
The Cross He bore for me, for you.
Hail, hail, the Lord made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!*

*So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh.
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of Kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high.
The Virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!*

—W. C. DIX, 1837-98

The True Christmas

By Clarence Williams

TEXT: John 1:14

We think about the story of Jesus in the light of some old ideas which may help us to arrive at a fresh version of the star of Bethlehem. First, let us picture the story of Jesus in the light of the Incarnation, which simply means *God in man made manifest*. Yes, "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."

The Fact of Condescension

In the Incarnation we are brought face to face with the *fact of condescension*. Christ condescended to become man by climbing down the ladder of love which began in heaven and extended to the depths of earth. Christmas is a time of condescension. Jesus, who was rich, became poor, so that we might become rich. He who is God became man that we might be reborn sons of God. He whom angels worship and adore unceasingly came to our vile earth to touch it with His grace and glory. He showed the path and angels followed, singing peace on earth, good will to men. Through the great wonder of the incarnate Christ it is now possible for Christians to sing angel songs, eat angel food, and walk where angels walk. More than all this, the true worshippers of Christ—men and women, boys and girls of every race and nation—now call Christ Saviour, a name which angels do not know.

Let us then, whom Christ has en-

riched beyond measure, possess the spirit of condescension and make the poor at Christmas rich materially, intellectually, and spiritually. Nineteen hundred years ago God sought a cradle in the dust and rubble of a poor Bethlehem stable. God had joined hands with mortals by His infinite Son—the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Fact of Reconciliation

The next word by which we get an idea of the true Christmas is *reconciliation*. Man had offended the true and holy God by breaking His command. Man with Satan had rebelled against God and had chosen to leave the Garden of Paradise which God had provided for the human race. Man and his new master were at constant conflict and war against the holy and righteous God. Nature and beasts became estranged to man the prodigal son of God. Like the prodigal of Luke 15, man had wasted his substance with riotous living.

A story is told of a once happy family of three: consisting of Mother, Dad, and Jerry, their only child. Life was modest and normal for many years. Then one Christmas Eve, when Jerry was a young man of eighteen years, he decided to disobey and desecrate the order of peace and quietness that had marked the precincts of his parents' home for more than eighteen years. Dad had spoken sternly to Jerry, and as a result Jerry

had grown so angry that he abused his father, and turned away from home with an uttered oath that he would never return home again. Despite every attempt of his dear mother to get him to change his attitude and seek his father's forgiveness and return home, Jerry dashed away.

Christmas Day had come, but there was sadness; a dark cloud had loomed over the dwelling of this once happy home. The Christmas dinner was lightly touched by the two. The days and weeks seemed to flow by rapidly, but Jerry's mother was failing rapidly. She would not eat, would not be comforted; the father himself grieved over his wife's condition, tried to comfort her, but failed. The last visit to the family doctor disclosed that Jerry's mother was suffering from a burdened and broken heart. "Nothing will help your wife," were the words of the doctor. She is grieving over something and will soon die, as her heart has no blood around it.

Exactly three months after the black and memorable Christmas Eve night she lay on her bed breathing heavily. She made a few requests to her husband which were of a general nature. Then followed the final one, which was to send for Jerry. The father got annoyed and tried his best to avert this last request from his dying wife, but she called him a third time and asked if he had loved her. When he had made his affirmation, with tears in her eyes she asked him to grant this request and send for Jerry before she died. An angry and unwilling father, touched with his wife's last plea, went to the cable office to seek out one of Jerry's friends to find out if any traces of Jerry could be obtained. The only person Jerry had confided in after his departure was Pat, the radio operator, who, on learning of the mother's re-

quest, offered to send through a wireless message to the last address of his friend. Jerry was preparing to catch a train to go into another part of that country to spend the Easter week end when the telegram was handed to him. His eyes caught the words, "Your mother is dying and requests to see you before she dies."

For two minutes Jerry was speechless. Then he feebly muttered something like this, "It is a trick. Mom probably wants to have me back home to make up the old matter with Dad, but I will not go." Upon a second thought he read the telegram again and noticed it was signed by his friend Pat. So he decided that he would go and see Pat and find out the facts. It was now three o'clock when the express train came in—Good Friday afternoon. Pat was awaiting the arrival of his friend and confirmed the sad new of Jerry's mother's sinking condition. "I'll see you later Pat"—and Jerry was off to the old home. On arriving there he was met at the door by his father, but in his youthful pride and arrogance he never said a word to his father but rushed forward to his mother's room. There he saw for himself the shrunken body of his beloved mother. As soon as she had set her fainting and falling eyes upon his, she lit up and reached forward with a somewhat heavenly glow and in her old, familiar tone cried, "Jerry, my boy, . . . I am glad that you came."

She drew him to her side, and requested the nurse to call her husband, who hesitated some time before entering the room. He did not want to meet the unforgiving, upstart rebel, but he slowly tiptoed into the room. His dear wife with tears in her eyes reached towards her husband and grasped his big hand in hers and also the hand of her rebel son, Jerry. With a faint, low voice

she said to her husband, "Dear, will you forgive Jerry and take him back as our son for my sake?" And she turned to Jerry and said, "Jerry, will you tell Dad you are sorry for all that you have done, and ask for his forgiveness?"

As both hands met together and tears flowed freely from both dad and son, the mother closed her eyes and breathed the last. Thus an angry father was reconciled with his rebel son over the dead body of a loving wife and mother.

Jesus in a divinely unique way joined the hands of a rebel humanity with a great and divine God as He came on Christmas to reconcile humanity back to God. Man that had run away from Him, man who was destroying his own soul, could not be restored back to God.

The Fact of Restoration

Now our third word for the true Christmas is *restoration*. "Shiloh shall restore all things upon earth." Jesus, our Shiloh, shall restore unto us the stolen joys of Paradise. He came to set captives free. He came to restore law and order where violence and chaos existed. We too must seek to restore our broken vows, restore our captured love. Restoration not only refers to restoration of strength and beauty in the material, physical, and military rank of life, but also in a deeper way in that of the Spirit.

This leads me to my final word in the meaning and expression of true Christmas. That is *salvation*. How else can man be delivered from the slave market of sin? How else can the fetters of Satan's chains be broken but by the person of Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten of the Father.

Angels sang as man was asleep in his drunken revelry. Can you imag-

ine the humility of the Saviour, as He stoops down to salvage the wrecked vessels of human nature in the whirlpool of sin, causing black and sinful hearts to sparkle and glitter like diamonds? This is God's transformation that came wrapped up in the first Christmas gift packet God gave to this world when He came to redeem us back to himself. This is too wonderful for us. Shall we not seek the lowliest in our district and our villages? Would we give up bread to the hungry beggars, and would we visit the sick and prisoners upon this blessed Christmas tide? God's salvation is true on Christmas Day, even in the most undesirable places: Christmas in the burial ground, Christmas on the battlefield, Christmas in the lunatic asylum, the prison cell, Christmas in the brothel, Christmas in the drunkards' den, Christmas in the leper asylum, Christmas in the hospital, Christmas in the morgue, Christmas for those away from home and loved ones.

Conclusion

Think about the sacrifice God underwent in order that we might have Christmas in its blessedness upon earth. Christmas on earth meant blackout in heaven for thirty-three and one-half years. Now it is Christmas in heaven, for Christ has returned to heaven. And it is war and greed upon earth for those who cannot see the star of Bethlehem. Eternal Christmas in heaven and war in hell shall be the future state and consummation of life. I pray that these old words of our Christian faith—incarnation, condescension, reconciliation, restoration love, salvation, and grace—might ring out the gladsome message of the true Christmas now and always.

A Happy Story from the Land of the "Happy Climate"

Port Alberni Church of the Nazarene, Port Alberni, British Columbia

Pastor: Rev. Bruce M. Fleming

Number of Members: 33

Average Sunday School Attendance: 79

Our "Sunday Night Story" for this month is a happy one and comes from British Columbia—the land spoken of by Stephen Leacock, the essayist, as "the magnificent province with its happy climate . . ." British Columbia is a mountainous region with tremendous deposits of lead, zinc, copper, silver, and gold as well as some pockets of natural gas. Luxurious forests of virgin timber are the result of the abundant rainfall. They boast of Douglas firs 260 feet tall. British Columbians harvest most of Canada's salmon from the Pacific Ocean. From the land of "happy climate" we have chosen this happy story for you this month.

Sunday night evangelism has been a great blessing at the Port Alberni church. Rev. Fleming shares with us an unusual visitation of God upon one of their "Fourteen Sunday Nights of Evangelism." It happened one Sunday evening in mid-December. The Holy Spirit took control. Conviction seized members of the congregation, and the evening climaxed with sixteen souls praying and weeping their way to victory.

A young couple knelt at the altar that night. They were traveling down

the highway of life and had come to a fork in the road and did not realize it. The satanic forces of evil persuaded this couple that there was but one way to take in the solution of their problem. Thank God for Sunday evening evangelistic services like those at Port Alberni, where pastors like Rev. Fleming tell of Christ and His power to save from all sin. Thank God, this couple were at church that night, so they could hear that there was another way—Christ's way. If this young couple had taken the wrong way, it would have meant defeat, heartache, and grief. Thank God, this young couple prayed through to victory that night and took Christ's way. They later testified that they were having acute domestic problems—so acute, in fact, that their home was about to break up. They give this Sunday evening evangelistic service credit for saving their home.

Once again we find that "Christ Is the Answer for Your Family." What a testimony to the power of the gospel! Experiences such as this are very precious to a pastor and church. Let's keep the fire of evangelism burning brightly and keep our mem-

ories filled with such blessed services.

Another seeker that night was a man in his late fifties. This service was important to him and yet he did not realize just how important. This was to be his last opportunity to be in church and no one knew it. He responded to the altar call that night and knelt at a public altar, never to have this opportunity again. Death struck him down suddenly with a heart attack.

Pastor, how little we realize sometimes the problems and burdens the people face as they sit in the pew before us! What a glorious privilege is ours to tell the lost the good news of salvation and encourage the saints with a message from God's Holy Word! God grant that we shall never fail to give the message which is needful. People go to church on Sunday night to hear an evangelistic message. We need to be at our best when we present our messages of salvation to sinners, who are lost and on their way to the judgment. Sunday night evangelistic services are important.

Rev. Fleming gives prayer as the reason their "Fourteen Sunday Nights" were effective. Prior to the emphasis a prayer chain was used on Sunday afternoons. This seemed to catch fire with the people and help to get the program off to a good start.

They started with an attendance goal of thirty-eight as set by the district. Each Sunday evening they made the goal, they added 10 per cent to the next Sunday night's goal. If they failed to reach the goal, they just tried again the next Sunday night.

Rev. Fleming established a new record in Sunday evening attendance. He reports, "The greatest attendance in our church's history in this valley was recorded in this church in December when over 200 persons were present on one Sunday evening." The

average attendance for the "Fourteen Sunday Nights" was 54, which is a definite increase.

During this time of intensive Sunday night evangelism the Port Alberni church was in an extensive building program. Heating problems along with a multitude of other details that go along with a building program demanded much attention. This used the lay man power of the church and limited their participation in all of the organized activity to promote the "Fourteen Sunday Nights." In spite of all of the problems and difficulties, the pastor and people were not to be denied a victorious evangelism. They did see souls saved. The souls that were born into the Kingdom made the hard work along the way seem as nothing.

Special vocal and musical numbers by members and friends of the congregation were used to add variety and interest to the services. The laymen were used to lead in prayer. The pastor made use of the promotional material and reported, "Your promotional material received from your department was invaluable."

We asked Rev. Fleming to give his personal feeling about the Sunday night evangelistic service. It stirred us and we want to share it with you. "People are looking in all directions for solutions to their perplexing problems. A reformation of their attitudes and actions makes it comparatively easy for them to fit into the so-called 'pattern of Christianity.' This is helpful but a poor excuse for regeneration. We need to get back to old-fashioned, hard-hitting, Holy Ghost preaching and revivals. People like good music, nice buildings, warm Christian fellowship but more than these they want a Christ-centered message from the man of God. People are tired of 'institutional religion.' Let's give them Christ!"

Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle

Ephesians 1:22-23

PUT IN SUBJECTION

THE WORD "put" (v. 22) is *hypotasso*. It was originally used as a military term, meaning "to place" or "rank under"; then, "to subject, put in subjection."¹ So the translation "put" (K.J.V.) is inadequate. It should rather be "put in subjection." "All things" (*panta*) will not only be placed under Christ's feet, but put there in a state of complete subjection to Him. Only then will there be peace among men.

The verb is in the aorist tense, indicating that this has now been done. But this might almost be called a prophetic aorist. In the mind and purpose of God everything is already in subjection under His Son. But the actual completing of this will, in action, waits for the end of this age (Heb. 2:8-10).

GAVE

The verb is *didomi*, which means "to give—in various senses, according to context—bestow, grant, supply, deliver, commit, yield."² Arndt and Gingrich prefer the translation "made" here³ (so R.S.V.). The *New*

English Bible has "appointed." But Alford objects to this rendering. He says: "'presented,' keep the literal sense: not 'appointed.'"⁴ Eadie agrees when he writes "There is no reason for changing the ordinary meaning of *edoke*, and rendering it 'appointed.'"⁵ Salmond also takes this position, against Calvin and some other earlier exegetes. He says: "The *edoken* is not to be taken in the technical sense of *appointed, installed . . .*, but, as is indicated by the simple dative *te ekklesia*, in its ordinary sense of gave."⁶

In the Greek "him" precedes the verb, which is the emphatic position. More than that, the pronoun—which in Greek is included in the verb—is expressed separately as well. This is done only in cases where the writer desires to give added prominence to it. So the position and separate expression of the pronoun give double emphasis to Christ. The thought is this: *Him*—the One whom God raised from the dead and exalted to His right hand (v. 20), far above every power and name (v. 21)—God has given to the Church as its Head. What a glorious thought!

¹Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, p. 463.

²*Ibid.*, p. 114.

³*Lexicon*, p. 192.

⁴*Greek Testament*, III, 86.

⁵*Ephesians*, pp. 104-5.

⁶EGT, III, 280.

HEAD

The word *kephale* occurs seventy-six times in the New Testament and is always translated "head." But the term is used both literally (of the physical head) and figuratively. In general one can say that the word is used literally in the four Gospels, Acts, and Revelation, as well as a few times in the Epistles. The metaphorical use is confined largely to Paul—I Cor. 11:3 (three times), Ephesians (four times), and Colossians (three times). In addition we have the expression "head of the corner" used of Christ several times (Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; I Pet. 2:7). One might also say that the figurative sense is found in Rom. 12:20 and Acts 18:6.

CHURCH

The Greek word *ekklēsia* occurs sixty-two times in Paul's Epistles. Salmond gives a good summary of its meaning, as follows:

Used by the Greeks to designate an *assembly of the people called for deliberation* (cf. Acts xix. 39), and by the Septuagint as the equivalent of the Hebrew *qahal*, the congregation of Israel, especially when called in religious convention (Deut. xxxi. 30, 35c.) it expresses in the New Testament the idea of the fellowship or assembly of believers meeting for worship or for administration. And it expresses this in various degrees of extension, ranging from the small company gathering for worship in one's house (. . . (Rom. xvi. 5; I Cor. xvi. 19, etc), or the single congregation of village or city (Acts v. 11; viii. 3; I Cor. iv. 17, etc.), to the larger Christian communities of provinces and countries (I Cor. xvi. 1, 19; II Cor. viii. 1; Gal. i. 2, 22) and finally to the Church universal, the Church collectively, the whole fellowship of believers throughout the world (Matt. xvi. 18; I Cor. xii. 28; Phil. iii. 6; Col. i. 18, 24, 35c.). Here and in the other occurrences in this Epistle the word has this largest extension of meaning, with the further mystical idea of a unity vital-

ly related to Christ, incorporated in Him, and having His life in it.⁷

BODY

The word *soma* was used by Homer (ca. 9th cent. B.C.) for a *dead* body. But beginning with Hesiod (8th cent. B.C.) it came to be employed for *living* bodies, whether of animals or men. Metaphorically it is "used of a (large or small) *number of men united into one society, or family as it were; a social, ethical, mystical body; so in the New Testament of the church.*"⁸

This figure of the Church as the "body" of Christ is found no less than ten times in the New Testament. As would be expected, it occurs most frequently in the Cristological Epistles—five times in Ephesians (1:23; 4:12, 16; 5:23, 30) and three times in Colossians (1:18, 24; 2:19). It is also found once each in Romans (12:5) and I Corinthians (12:27). Besides this, the Church is referred to as a "body" in several other passages (I Cor. 10:17; 12:13; Eph. 2:16; 4:4; Col. 3:15), without being specifically stated to be "the body of Christ." The meaning of the latter phrase in I Cor. 10:16 may be open to debate.

Concerning the significance of this Alford writes: "He is its Head; from Him comes its life; in Him, it is exalted; in it, He is lived forth and witnessed to; He possesses nothing for Himself,—neither His communion nor His glorified humanity,—but all for His Church."⁹

Salmond points out the implication of "body" in this way: "The relation between Christ and the Church, therefore, is not an external relation, or one simply of Superior and inferior, Sovereign and subject, but one

⁷Op. cit., p. 280.

⁸Thayer, *Lexicon*, p. 611.

⁹Op. cit., p. 86.

of life and incorporation."¹⁰ The Church is "the instrument also by which He works."¹¹ The latter is a very solemnizing thought.

Eadie points out a bit more specifically some further implications. He says:

There is first a connection of life: if the head be severed, the body dies. The life of the church springs from its union to Christ by the Spirit, and if any member or community be separated from Christ, it dies. There is also a connection of mind: the purposes of the head are wrought out by the corporeal organs—the tongue that speaks, or the foot that moves. The church should have no purpose but Christ's glory, and no work but the performance of His commands. There is at the same time a connection of power: the organs have no faculty of self-motion, but move as they are directed by the governing principle within . . . Energy to do good, to move forward in spiritual contest and victory, and to

exhibit aggressive influence against evil, is all derived from union with Christ. There is, in fine, a connection of sympathy. The pain or disorder of the smallest nerve or fibre vibrates to the Head, and there it is felt. Jesus has not only cognizance of us, but He has a fellow-feeling with us in all our infirmities and trials.¹²

The above has been quoted at length because it presents a splendid, usable outline for a sermon on this subject. Aside from a contemplation of the members of the Trinity, there are few topics more rich in blessing and helpfulness for the Christian than the relation of Christ to His Church. A sermon on this subject should serve to inspire and uplift, to challenge and comfort. The trouble with most Christians is that they live—in their conscious thoughts and feelings—too much in isolation from Christ, the Head.

¹⁰*Op. cit.*, p. 281.

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²*Op. cit.*, pp. 107-8.

I'm Glad I Heard Them Pray!

IN THE PAST more than thirty years in the Church of the Nazarene, it has been my privilege to hear many different singers. Some with unusual talents, beautiful voices, and radiant personalities; a few with extraordinarily anointed spirits. I have heard many varieties of preachers, and these have been so very interesting: silver-tongued orators, great Bible expositors, and many in the mediocre class.

But nothing has impressed me like the pray-ers I have heard: young pray-ers with lots of green zeal; seasoned veterans whose praying caused my soul to tremble in the presence of Jehovah. Their prayers were not always couched in beautiful rhetoric.

Sometimes the language was crude and without grammatical polish. They spoke in reverent, familiar terms. Their prayers lifted me up close to the heart of God. A depth and quality of spirit gave you to understand that the one doing the praying was in the throne room talking to the King. Boldness and humility, beautifully blended, inspired me to spread my petitions before the Lord. Their praying inspired my faith, renewed my strength, gave fresh courage for the battle.

I am glad I heard them pray.

—W. H. JOHNSON,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Come Back, O Church, Come Back*

By Floyd Doud Shafer

ELEVATE the pulpit in the church once more, in its zeal and its assault against hell. Station a Bible on that pulpit, an open Bible, and assert that, whatever is heard elsewhere, in God's house hearing shall be accorded the preached Word. Let this preaching be a curiosity and a persistent exposition of the Word: make it valuable, vociferous and violent.

The Church Aggressive

Inform the world that heralds are in it with clear words to call a people back from the abyss' edge. Forget the sales pitch, abandon the soft sell, discard the grey flannels, pigeon-hole the pushed programs and incinerate the sure-fire charts. Let the minister confess it: soft talk is ridiculous in a hard world, meek answers do not fit ominous questions, dilettante dialogue does not guide bewildered souls, and entertaining wit generates no conviction. Ground the ecclesiastical ad men, the promotion experts, the organizational conformists and the itinerant executive: ground them to pulpits and pews. Pull the firing pad from under their mercurial feet before they have us all in orbit, dizzily wheeling in circles, reaching for

goals no one wants and landing on moons nobody needs. Challenge men with the Word's either/or, enthrone eternity's message on the consciousness of all, raise the call to repent across the luxury-laden land, and lay comfort on the line where the knees bend, the fears coalesce and the tears fall.

Let preaching command the life of the Church, rock persons free from sin, uproot them from false securities and drive them to pursue conformity to Christ. Make the articulated impact of pin-pointed preaching block fallacy's roads, blow the bridges on pride's highway, close all self-saving bypasses, and leave no avenue traversable except the way to Him who is the Way.

Electrify peoples and pastors into dialectical societies reasoning around the Word: the weather can wait, the Word won't. Companion with the men of courage who come with the Word, and wise thought, strong comfort and counsel deep. Force the world to know that liberty's voices are rising and faith's thoughts are flowing from the gushing up of the Gospel interpreted, heard, exchanged and applied. Command the pulpit voice to preach on, to sustain the weary with words, to provide reason's medicine for the mind, and to give hope's balm for the heart. And,

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let the people's Amen punctuate the words from the Word.

When the voice from the sacred desk ceases and the amens from the pews fade, remember: they have returned to Him who sent them, never void, but with long lines of the redeemed leagued in love to Lord Jesus Christ. *Come Back, O Church, Come Back to the preached Word!*

The Church in Unity

Recall the Church to knowledge of itself as the body of Christ: summon persons to join Christ's body. Tell it abroad that no one who belongs to Christ is alone but is member of all who are His; and illustrate the fact through fellowship's acts. Admit that He has imposed unity but we are reluctant to receive it. Declare that our one Head prays still for the co-operative efforts of His body, its oneness of heart and singleness of love.

Let response to the Word gain momentum. Stay it not for fear or favor. Dare the proponents of aloneness before God to repeat the Lord's Prayer in the first person singular. Provide people their one, last opportunity to quit majoring in minor distinctions and become the one mind and heart of Christ before an macerated world. While we are a spiritual unity before God, strive to serve Him however varied the means, the world will note well that God's encounter with man redeems from self-concern and builds the community of His will where none has been before.

Fire the technicians of togetherness and throw open the roof to the floods of grace requiring everything said to be WE, and everything done US. Outlaw all audiences and actors before God. Put a people of God before Him and affirm that He is the only

Auditor of our worship, ever mindful of our response to His Word and our brother's need. Make Christ's Church, now, earth's grandest joy and this life's nearest touch on the things of eternity: a window on truth, an aperture to love and a bit of heaven on earth: Thy kingdom come!

The Church Aflame

This is the Church militant, allied to the cross and companioned to the resurrected Christ. Command it to march on, thrusting united praise to the ramparts of heaven, thrilling all with rhapsody of trust, and hoisting a harmonic paeon to Christ above the din of this world's jarring noises. Oh, for a singing Church, a kneeling Church, a hallelujah Church, a Church orchestrated to the unity of the Holy Spirit!

Trumpet the call to regroup to Christ, and acknowledge that His is the glory that binds us in the circle of unrelenting effort and love unalloyed. Pray for a chill to set on us from Calvary, a blaze from the Upper Room and a thrill from Easter Morn. Magnify the worship of Christ's Church: assemble the Church around the Lord's Board and proclaim: This is the family of God, nourished by Christ, sustained by grace and vitalized by the Spirit. *Come Back, O Church, Come Back to the worship of God through the Saviour and by aid of the Holy Spirit!*

The Church Alert

Give nerve and muscle to the decisions and convictions of a worshipping people. Let new knowledge grip us. Cease trivializing the loyalties of the redeemed by merely adding their names to committees, putting them to odd jobs and extracting portions of time and pieces of money from them.

Can religious hobbies absorb the energies of a people in communion with the Lord and in communication with the Word? Society can protect itself against stacked committees and professional stances; but evil has no defense against Christians exercising 24-hour-a-day commitment to Jesus Christ. Let the results of preaching-worship materialize wherever the people go. Charge Christians to think and act Christianly in their cars, their homes, their jobs, their politics and their play. Have at home a little church, guided by forgiveness, correction and love. Make affairs of office, factory and field opportunities to unravel the meaning of the Gospel, and make the long hours of leisure targets for minds that have heard from the Word and hearts that worship the Lord. Let all life become live footnotes to preaching-worship. Deny the plea to do "something special" for Christ, deny it with the declaration that everything must be done for Christ. Say aloud that there is no protected niche for those who have preached, heard and worshipped; tell these favored ones that every facet of life must be brought captive to Christ, every act impelled by His will, and every attitude squared with His Lordship.

Are we so soon done with His mission? Eager ones, returning with report of having done the Christian task, stand at the foot of the Cross and see that ten lifetimes will not take you beyond its shadow! Bow before the empty tomb and understand that a hundred life-spans will not open all life's crevices to its brilliant rays!

Remind those startled by this day's leaping advances in science, and horrified by the same day's plunge to new lows of immorality, that Christ reigns beyond the rocket's final sputter, and that He still calls for the re-

pentance of those who befoul themselves and all they touch. Say to those beguiled by the pretensions and idolatries of Left and Right that Jesus Christ is King. Assert that those purchased by His blood and pardoned by His life must be patriots to His purpose. Show that earthly loyalties are valid only when derived from homage to Heaven. Say to all that the day of all knees' bowing to His personal and cosmic Lordship will come. Meantime, following Him, it is ours, through evil days, to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.

This is mission: to proclaim Christ's redeeming grace to people where they are. There is little glamor here, but grace, not glamor, is our glory. There is small public favor here, but fidelity, not acclaim, is our goal. There may be meagre success here, but success is God's to give or withhold: our job is to try where the trying is hardest. Our mission's crown of success may be made of thorns: He whom we serve found it so. From dark nights, in due time, God splits the sky for the bursting forth of Easter Morn. *Come Back, O Church, Come Back to the mission of Christ!*

The Spring of Our Hope

Soldiers of the cross! You may crumple under the crossfire of this world's hell, but for you the security of an impinging eternity is infinitely greater than the calamities of earthly deviltry. While earth's battles rage, the veteran Captain of our salvation trains all for destiny's decision and eternity's call through total loyalty to His Word, worship and work.

The last day comes when the bruised and broken body of Christ, target of satanic fury, becomes the

(Continued on page 23)

How should money be handled in the local church? This and many other financial matters are treated in this informative discussion.

Financing the Church Program*

By David L. Saucier**

IN HIS LETTERS to young churches, the Apostle Paul not only gives light upon spiritual truths, but also gives light upon financing the church program. Paul will be our guide as we develop this subject.

I. His Program

Paul's particular program was directed to give financial aid to the poor saints of the Jerusalem church. Their financial biceps were too weak to lift their benevolences, budgets, and bills free from the mire of debt.

The need for this program was clear to Paul, the church program should be clear in every pastor's mind. The churches in Corinth, Macedonia, and Galatia were among the churches that believed with Paul that this program was worth financing.

We come immediately to the key question of successful financing. Is the program worth financing? This question is important to businessmen who would promote their new programs of plant expansion, personnel increase, and expanded production. If this question is vital to businessmen on Wall Street, it is equally important to pastor and laymen on Church Street.

Is the church program worth financing? We are immediately brought to an evaluation. When we look at the church program achieving its purpose of redeeming, perfecting, and establishing lost souls to meet God, we gladly agree that the church program is worth financing. However, some church programs are marginal: ministering to the circumference of the social rather than the core of salvation, appealing to the mass rather than to the Master, selling rummage rather than redemption, selecting the supper room and neglecting the Upper Room. How tragic! After the final evaluation of church programs, the immediate return of their financial investment is an uncommitted generation.

In January, 1958, some thirty-four hundred Methodist students from over a thousand colleges and universities met in Lawrence, Kansas, for the sixth quadrennial Methodist Student Conference. From the formulated statement, which they adopted and read from the floor, I quote: "We are uncommitted. . . it is because the church has not called us to her Lord or her mission clearly enough to excite our responses. The church as she stands now, is not, we believe, worth our lives. But the mission of the church obedient to her Lord is." If people believe that the church is not worth their lives, then

*Presented to the Houston District Preachers' Retreat.

**Houston District Treasurer.

they also believe that the church program is not worth their finances.

The church program geared to holiness evangelism, however, demands more than our money. It demands our souls, our lives, our all. How interesting! The highest per capita giving rests in the churches that emphasize holiness evangelism.

How is our program dollar spent in the local church? I ran a survey of six representative districts and the 1961 church program. From this survey, we can see not only the channels of expense, but also the amount paid out of each dollar on various items in the church program. The survey is as follows:

- 32c on local expense
- 25c on pastor's salary
- 14c on indebtedness
- 12c on building and improvement
- 9c on General Budget and approved specials
- 6c on District Budget, home mission, district center, and other district expense
- 2c on schools and colleges

The magnitude of the church program is as international as our modern army, but it will die without the dollar. The local church is the unit on the front line. Without the coordination from the *district* command posts and the central command of the *general church*, the church program is local, not international. The reward of the church that supports the local, district, and general budgets is world-wide evangelism, but the pastor must give the green light. As a pastor I know the ease of giving the local budget a green light. Yet I am always concerned that the lights of district and general budgets stay

green in my church, for danger and malfunction are marked by the red light of reluctance. The local church is working correctly when all systems are go: the local budget is go—the district budget is go—the general budget is go—the *church program* is “A—O.K.”

II. His Plan

Paul had ways; he needed means. He had a program, and he needed a plan to finance that program. The plan that Paul directed is adaptable to the small congregation as well as the large. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “Now concerning the money contributed for the relief of the saints: you are to do the same as I directed the churches of Galatia to do” (I Cor. 16:1, *Amplified New Testament*).*

His plan to finance his church program did not involve bazaars, bingo, banquets, clam bakes, or big business, but it did involve simple systematic giving. “On the first day of each week, let everyone of you personally put aside something and save it up as he has prospered in proportion to what he is given” (I Cor. 16:2, *Amplified New Testament*).*

Paul no doubt knew the great value of this simple plan of teaching systematic stewardship—*tithing*. In addition to the emphasis of stewardship in preaching, Bible studies, and Sunday school, Dr. Mavis, in his book *Advancing the Smaller Church*, also suggests a stewardship revival and even a stewardship reading club.

The Apostle Paul's plan was directed to a specific people—*everyone of you*; for a specific time—*the first day of each week*; with a specific responsibility—*put aside something*; and a

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specific amount to put aside—as he has prospered in proportion to what he is given. His plan was specific as well as systematic. Trying to run a church on sporadic financial appeals is like trying to erect a building without concern of measurements, materials, or blueprints. Aimless financing becomes a conglomeration of good intentions, a rolling stone that gathers no money.

III. His Promotion

Presenting the plan plants the seed. Promoting the plan cultivates and picks the fruit. Enthusiasm in the local congregation is no guarantee of final success, however. The Corinthian church had enthusiasm over Paul's program and plan, but a year had gone by and their giving was not complete (I Cor. 8:10). After Paul reminded them that they had failed to meet their intended giving, he challenged them to finish the plan that their enthusiasm had accepted (I Cor. 8:11). Paul's plan was a success, because he kept it before his people. It appears that the successful finance of the church program is influenced by keeping the program and plan before the people—*promotion of stewardship*.

As a promotive scheme, Paul used one church as an example to stimulate the giving of other churches. He proudly told about the Corinthians to the people of Macedonia, and the result was that the majority of the Macedonian people were stimulated by the Corinthian enthusiasm. Paul also used the churches of Macedonia as an example to the Corinthians to finish what they started. Paul told the Corinthians that the Macedonians gave beyond his simple plan; yes, and beyond their ability. They gave voluntarily.

All our programs, plans, and promotions are focused on one point of service—*receiving the money*. Let us make the best of our offerings. Paul sent some brethren to receive the offering from the Corinthians. He was particular about the brethren he chose to lift the offering. He testified of the brethren that they were a credit and glory to Christ, the Messiah (II Cor. 8:23). The brethren that we send forth with the plates should also be a credit and glory to Christ.

There are certain things that detract from taking the offering and these are mentioned as follows from Leonard M. Spangenberg's book *Minding the Church's Business*: (1) Too long a prayer while the ushers are standing restlessly; (2) Long stories with little point to them just before the plates are passed; (3) Attempts to save time by making announcements during the offering; (4) A choir singing during the offering many times takes the people's mind off the subject of giving; (5) Ushers making a speed record; (6) Too few ushers; (7) Having special-purpose envelopes in the plate. This last one was suggested because the offering plates are passed for people to give, not to receive.

Dr. Spangenberg also gives us help with ten hints for taking special offering.

1. Always name the amount you hope to raise.
2. Never apologize for the special offering.
3. Ask for reasonable amounts to start with.
4. Give plenty of time to pay, but stress the cash side as well.
5. Have a secretary who knows practically everyone to record the amount pledged.

6. If things get dead, encourage the people; never scold them.
7. After you complete counting one-dollar pledges, pass the plates.
8. Never waste time by asking for twenty-five-cent amounts.
9. Take part in the giving yourself; it lends confidence.
10. Express profound appreciation at the end.

The greatest aspect of Paul's promotion is the spiritual emphasis. For successful finance not only provides certain needs of the church, but overflows with much thanksgiving to God (II Cor. 9:12). Standing behind the finances of the church, the believer is able to prove the sincerity of his love to God (II Cor. 8:8). As the Christian abounds in everything, in faith utterance, knowledge, and in all diligence, he is to abound in this grace of giving and financing the church program also (II Cor. 8:7). Whether grudgingly, or of necessity, or of love, every man gives as he purposes in his heart, and God loves a cheerful giver (II Cor. 9:7).

IV. His Principle of Administration

The finances of the church program are sacred. Paul administered the funds with one following principle: To be honest and absolutely above suspicion, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men (II Cor. 8:21, *Amplified New Testament*). Paul never advocated a careless, irresponsible, and shameful handling of funds. He said, "We are on our guard, intending that no one should find anything for which to blame us in regard to our administration of this large contribution" (II Cor. 8:20, *Amplified New Testament*).*

There are several questions to help

keep us on guard and above suspicion. Have we had our church books audited once a year? If a certified public accountant cannot be afforded, then compose an auditing committee of two or three who can add a column of numbers twice and come out with the same answer both times. Is our church keeping adequate records, and in so doing have we knowledge of where our money is? Do we leave money in the collection plates unattended? Who counts our money? The treasurer should not count the money by himself. The preferred group counting the money should be two people excluding the local treasurer. Pastors, do we have a slip of paper giving us each Sunday the amount of receipts from that Sunday's offering? Do we ask our local treasurer for a monthly report of the financial standing of the church treasury? We have a right to know what is going on in our church. Does our church have an assistant treasurer? Although the size of our church might not warrant an assistant treasurer, yet having one that can sign checks in the absence of the treasurer can be an advantage in the case of paying the pastor's salary as well as in emergencies.

We cannot improve on Paul's principle of administration. Let us be honest and absolutely above suspicion, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

In conclusion, we have examined the high lights of church finance with the Apostle Paul. Paul had a *program* that was worth financing. He directed a *plan* of systematic giving to achieve that program. He *promoted* this plan to a successful completion. Last, he handled all sacred funds under the *principle* of administrative honesty. According to the Apostle Paul, this is "Financing the Church Program."

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The Dignity of the Pulpit*

By Fred Smolchuck

HOW SHOULD a minister behave in the pulpit? Is there a happy medium between stiffness and excessive freedom? The Scriptures admonish us to do all things “decently and in order.” Most people will agree that the pulpit requires a sacred dignity. But what is meant by dignity? Is it ecclesiastical pompousness, aloofness, or religious arrogance? Decidedly not! Webster defines dignity as “worthiness, nobility, high repute, honor, degree of worth.”

When the preacher stands behind the pulpit, he is God’s representative, God’s messenger, an exponent of God’s Word, a demonstrator of God’s methods. The very position demands a careful preparation and presentation of himself so that his message may be accepted as solemn and authentic.

The high priest of Old Testament times was very careful of his attitude, dress, and mannerism. His appearance inspired the people to respect his mission and provoked them to a reverence for God.

Pulpit Attitudes

Deep *spirituality*, developed in private devotions, should be evident on the minister’s countenance just as surely as it was on the face of Stephen at the time of his martyrdom, or on

Moses’ face when he came down from the mount. This divine glory shown in God’s servant makes a profound impression on those to whom he ministers.

The preacher should enter the pulpit with great *humility*. He is there as God’s mouthpiece, ready to yield himself fully to God’s desires. He must have great regard for the position entrusted to him. His task is not to demonstrate self but rather to stand as a humble servant of God, ready to minister to the needy.

His pulpit attitude should be one of confidence, as a manifestation of faith that God will help him render proper and fruitful service. This will not hint of cockiness or overfamiliarity, which detract from the effectiveness of God’s message.

An attitude of belligerence should have no place in the pulpit. The preacher is a shepherd. As such he should stand behind the sacred desk with *tenderness, sympathy, and passion* to feed and lead the flock.

Pulpit Mannerisms

Not only is the message important, but the behavior and manner of the messenger have a distinct bearing on the effectiveness of his ministry. More than in any other place, the minister in the pulpit is on public display. His stance, his dress, and his eccentricities are carefully scrutinized.

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Pulpit mannerisms should lead people to think of God's holiness and character. Unfortunately, there are times when this is far from the case. People are distracted from thinking about God.

Here are some of the habits that ministers would do well to eliminate in order to maintain the dignity of the pulpit.

It is very distracting to a congregation to watch the minister parade up and down the platform during the course of his sermon, with his hands in his pockets, perhaps jingling coins.

We are in a spiritual battle and no one knows it any better than the minister. However, under the stress of preaching, it is certainly in bad taste for the preacher suddenly to pull off his coat and fling it backward in the direction of the pulpit chair, where it flops into a disorganized heap. As if that were not enough, down comes the necktie, and up go the sleeves in an apparent demonstration of dynamic personality. But in reality the dignity of the pulpit has been lowered many degrees.

One source of annoyance to congregations is a speaker who habitually muffles his voice by wiping his mouth every two or three minutes. Clearing his throat constantly or repeating an "Amen" or "Glory to God" after every sentence are habits that woefully distract.

A minister should make sure that he is well groomed before entering the pulpit. A full-length mirror in the church study will enable him to check his appearance before making a public entrance—and may spare him later embarrassment. Once in the public eye, it is almost too late to correct the position of clothing. And certainly he should avoid such actions as combing the hair while on the platform. Order and neatness enhance the dignity of the pulpit.

Pulpit Influence

The minister's presence in the pulpit should immediately communicate to the people confidence that the service is in capable hands. Confusion is a mark of disorganization. The minister should know what he is going to do any say. It is important that announcements be given correctly and that nothing be overlooked. A card or small sheet of paper with notes pertaining to announcements, prayer requests, etc., will prove helpful.

The church is a place of worship for the minister as well as for the congregation. It is most unfortunate and distracting to true worshipers when ministers sitting on the platform engage in unnecessary and animated conversation, or exchange laughter over amusing anecdotes during the song service. Let everybody sing—including the preacher.

The sanctity of prayer is often desecrated by the unnecessary activity of ministers during those sacred moments. One would be led to think that prayer time was the signal for the pastor to whisper, walk, make arrangements, etc. Prayer time for the congregation should also be prayer time for the pulpit. Program preparations should be made before the service.

The purpose of this message is not to criticize preachers but to challenge the minister to be a gentleman, to be orderly, to be alive and alert, and to reveal a wholesome dignity in the pulpit. As a result, the effectiveness of the message will be enhanced, believers will be edified, the influence of the church will be extended, and God will be glorified. Both church and minister will benefit from an orderly and serious, yet warm and friendly, pulpit.

A Plea for a Church Prayer Room

By E. E. Wordsworth*

HERE IS SOMETHING that seems strange to me! Church planning and building committees or boards give very careful and studied attention to the matter of proper location, a commodious and lovely sanctuary, an adequate choir loft, suitable and ample Sunday school rooms, offices for the pastors and secretaries, the nursery, and even a storage room for brooms and other cleaning and beautifying equipment; and then they wholly overlook the need of a cozy, warm, carpeted, and lovely prayer room. I ask, isn't it rather strange? Do we assume that most any room will meet such a need? If so, is this the correct answer? I trow not.

I recall a certain church in a large city that had an ideal private prayer room. On the outside of the door was an attractive sign, "The Prayer Room." As you stepped within you walked on nice, clean, and new carpet—wall-to-wall carpet. It was warm and inviting, roomy and exclusive. Upholstered chairs and davenports and chairs of adult size abounded. The room was kept warm and the door unlocked so that any saint of God could enter there for prayer and be comfortable. Some could not kneel because of physical afflictions, but they could prevail with God nevertheless, while rocking in a chair.

And they did. The pastor, a Nazarene, told me this room was the most important room in the church—the *powerhouse*. Now do I need to tell you that I know that this place had a perennial revival—weeks and months would pass without a barren altar service on the Lord's day?

The writer has traveled from coast to coast in the evangelistic field. From Maine to California we have sounded the gospel trumpet, in Alaska and the Dominion of Canada, and my observance has been that little if any planning has been made for a suitable prayer room. This is deplorable, I believe, and should be remedied. And let me say that the church altar, though indispensable in our church work, will not supply the need. Yes, we must frequently use the altar for seasons of prayer. Amen. But I am urging the necessity of a special, exclusive prayer room. Too often have I heard, "We'll meet half an hour before the service in a room in the basement. Everybody come and help us pray for a revival." Then we have found the selected room to be a cold, crowded place, with a concrete floor and about a dozen old chairs or rough benches. Scarcely a soul comes besides the pastor and wife and the evangelist. And we wonder why.

A further word about the regular, church, midweek prayer room. Too often this is in the church basement

*Redmond, Washington.

with a concrete floor. No linoleum, rugs, or carpet. No, it is not pride that keeps people from kneeling when so requested; there are other good reasons, and especially for those who do not come in jeans or old house dresses.

It is true that many of our churches and good pastors are doing all possible for the good of Zion, but let us give more careful attention to this important matter, for by so doing we would do more and much better praying, which would accrue to spiritual advancement and the winning of more souls for Christ. Make the prayer room the spiritual powerhouse of your church. Let us "pray the glory down" and have another Pentecost.

I wish to say a further word about the camp meeting prayer room. This is vital. It is my opinion that the altar of the large tabernacle for preaching services is not always the best place. It is open, spacious, and frequently the place for many religious activities. Pianos, song leaders, and those preparing for special singing and musical services use the musical instruments for practice. This is proper and right.

Further, the early morning prayer meeting in the large tabernacle, in many places at least where it is

cold, open, and very uninviting, hinders attendance and frustrates spiritual exercises. There would be a much larger attendance, greater burden-bearing, and soul travail, if only a warm and comfortable place was provided. Therefore we urge camp meeting boards to give serious and proper attention to this vital matter. A sizable room away from the tabernacle would be ideal for a place of prayer, so that God's saints could retire there at any time during the day to prevail with God. I have been a camp meeting prayer leader for many years, and many of God's dear saints have asked me where to find a suitable prayer room on the campgrounds. No, we are not criticizing, dear brethren, for we are all doing the best we can under the circumstances, but I do want to stress the fact that at all our district camps intercessory prayer is indispensable, and if any improvements can be made so that more prevailing can be offered it ought to be done. Let us give this due consideration. A camp meeting without much prayer is like trying to drive a motorcar without gasoline. Let us all go to the nearby filling station and fill up. On with the revival and let the Pentecostal glory fall.

Come Back, O Church, . . .

(Continued from page 15)

Church victorious. Its stigmata shall be its glory, the scandal of its cross shall be its crown, and its shredded garment shall become its seamless robe clothing the redeemed of all ages. It shall keep only what it has given away in Christ's name, and it shall enter Paradise, at God's call,

supported by those to whom it is the messenger of grace.

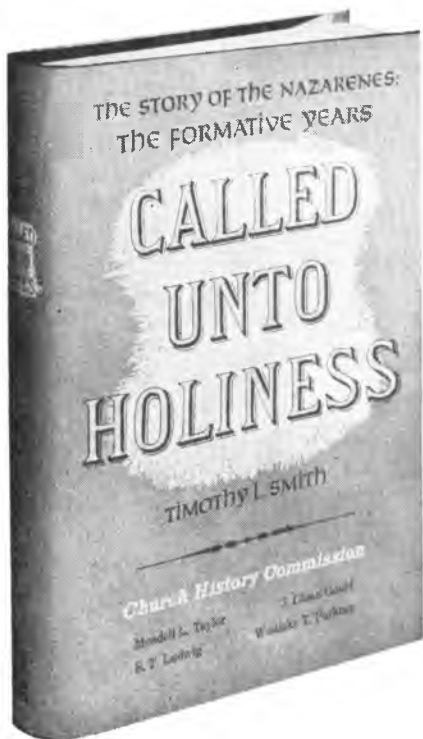
The Christ of God, long since returned from Calvary's bloody victory, shall meet it and greet it and claim it as His own for ever.

Come Back, O Church, Come Back: the Master calls you to His preaching, His worship and His mission. Come back, bearing your shield of faith, or be carried on it, but come back!

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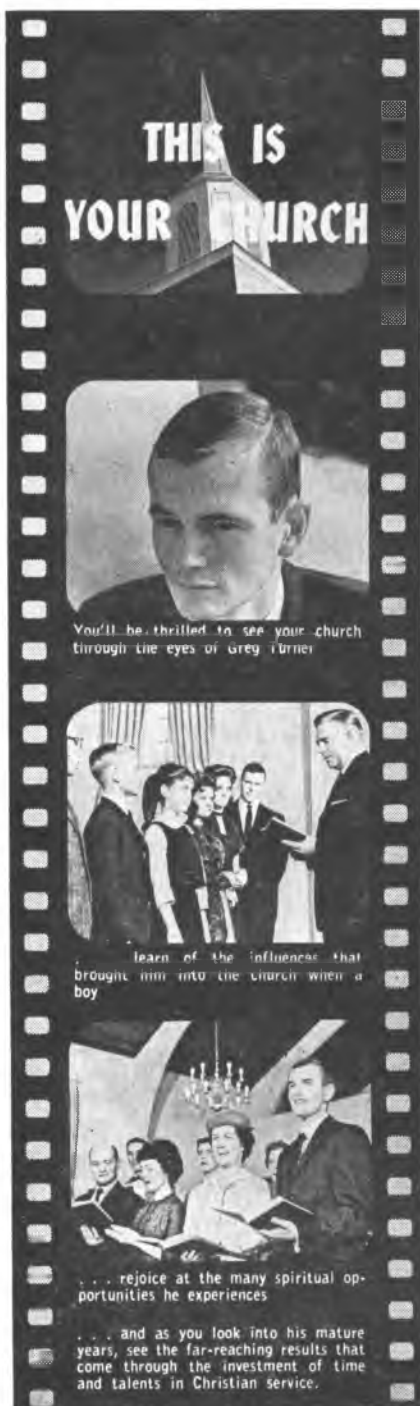
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A discerning writer of present-day verse, Grace Noll Crowell, has coined a phrase, and pleads that we keep what it signifies. She calls it

The Old Amaze

By Audrey J. Williamson

WONDER is easily lost in the complex, hurried, superficial living we sometimes feel forced to do. There is more to wonder at in this our day, but we wonder less; more marvels of science and invention and discovery, but more boredom, more sophistication, more disdain.

It takes time to wonder. The mind must be in a contemplative mood. To wonder, we must be fresh, unspoiled as children, who, starry-eyed, experience for the first time the marvels of the moon, of a popsicle, a birthday cake, or a mountain.

We have ceased to wonder because we have too much. Surfeiting in life's experiences has dulled the appetite, tarnished and corroded the sensibilities, and blighted our reactions.

Anticipation, expectancy prepare one for wonder. They do not develop well in the din and confusion of daily living. We must pause to let them come spontaneously and genuinely.

Let us keep and cherish wonder—this breathless something that grips us and awes us in the presence of great beauty or tenderness, of sublimity or truth. It may be stirred by the magnificent sweep of mountain majesties, or by the soft pressure of a baby's hand against one's face. It

may come to us as we hear a robin's song in spring twilight, or as we gaze at new-fallen snow, hiding nature's scars and transforming the landscape, till “every pine and fir and hemlock wears ermine too dear for an earl, and the poorest twig on the elm tree is ridged inch-deep with pearl.”

There is marvel in the love shining in our dear one's eyes, and in the precious security of home. Above all, we must “stand amazed in the presence of Jesus, the Nazarene, and wonder how He could love” us—sinners, “condemned, unclean.”

Some have stifled the impulse to wonder lest they appear naive and inexperienced, too simple and too uninhibited. Some have insisted they are too old and too tired to feel deeply again. But it is disturbing when young ministers and their wives, not out of their twenties, assert that nothing stirs them deeply any more. The charge of insincerity is sometimes brought against those who spontaneously express their emotions. Could not a countercharge of insincerity be brought against those who voluntarily suppress them?

Ladies of the parsonage, it is Christmas! A wonderful season to let

the old amaze grip us again! Let us take time to feel "as children do, waking from their sleep on Christmas morning." Let the infinite stoop of Deity, when God came down to indwell the Babe in Bethlehem's stable, mystify us once more. Let the marvel of salvation's plan appear all fresh and new. Let us experience such a quickening that we can say:

*"When all Thy mercies, O my
God,
My rising soul surveys,*

*Transported with the view, I'm
lost*

In wonder, love, and praise."

Let us create in the areas where we are responsible—in our homes, our churches, and in our hearts—a rapture, a glow, a breathless wonder that shall make this Christmas live with meaning. It will be stirred by memories, no doubt. But it will be more than nostalgia! It will be something vitalizing and uplifting, and yet something as old as human need. It will be *the old amaze!*

Survey shows that ministers' most pressing needs are—

More Time, More Money

A NEW SURVEY sponsored by the Ministers Life and Casualty Union, Minneapolis, indicates (to no one's great surprise) two main problems confronting Protestant ministers in this country: Not enough time, not enough money.

Although some slight improvement in the clergyman's financial situation is noted in the past four years since a similar study was made, more than a third of the ministers surveyed cited "the financial problem" or "insufficient salary and/or expense allowance" as the major problem affecting their work as ministers.

Even more serious, in the minds of the ministers, was the matter of time. A full half of them listed "demands of time" as the chief problem they encounter.

Ranking third behind these two basic problems was lack of parishioners' interest in Bible study and religious fundamentals. Nearly one-fifth

of the ministers expressed concern in this area.

In specific questions relating to time problems, nearly two-thirds of the ministers replying to the 1962 survey said that administration takes too much of their time. At the same time nearly half of the ministers said that they do not get enough time for study and prayer.

A comparison of the 1958 and 1962 surveys reveals that the "administration takes too much time" problem has become worse.

It bothered 52.1 per cent of the replying ministers in 1958 whereas it now troubles 63.3 per cent of them.

Financing college education for their children appears to be the single most critical money problem facing the clergymen. Nearly 65 per cent said this will be a serious problem for them. Little difference in this regard was found among ministers earning less than \$5,000 a year or those earning more than \$5,000.

Another area of financial concern was that of housing after retirement. Eighty per cent of the ministers said their churches had no provision for any. In reporting on living expenses, the ministers indicated some improvement in the past four years. They are now a problem for 39 per cent of the ministers, compared with 44 in 1958.

Forty-eight per cent of the replying ministers said their car allowances were inadequate or nonexistent. Nearly one-third (31.2 per cent) said they have no allowances for car expenses.

Nearly half of the replying ministers (49.4 per cent) said that they have inadequate allowance or no allowance for attending conferences.

The percentage indicating no allowances at all for this purpose was 37 per cent.

Five questions were asked about church office staff and church office equipment. More than half of the replying ministers said their church office staff is too small. This was true of ministers of congregations in all three budget categories—under \$15,000, between \$15,000 and \$29,000, and \$30,000 and over.

Church office equipment was rated as poor and inadequate by nearly half of the replying ministers. Less than a fourth said their office equipment is good and efficient.

—Official Weekly News Service of the Evangelical Press Association. Used by permission.

Noting that suicides are most common at happy seasons we are reminded of—

The Separated Chasm

By David E. Sparks*

IT HAS OFTEN BEEN noted that suicide is more common at happy times in the year than at more normal times. In the blossoming green of spring, look for news of suicides. At Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter, be aware of the tragedies of self-murder. In times of family celebration in the home, joy often turns to ashes when one of the group takes his life. While the sun shines, the bell tolls.

*Protestant Chaplain, Harlem Valley State Mental Hospital, Wingdale, New York.

The reason for this is explained psychiatrically on the basis of the great disparity between what is and what ought to be. The individual who tends to be withdrawn or despondent, or who has much to make him anxious, can often handle his problem if the world outside of himself looks gray, uninteresting, and somehow despairing, like himself. Bring out the sun, the Christmas bells, the Thanksgiving turkey, or the lilies of Easter, and he sees his own inner hopelessness in the light of outward

joy, and often cannot accept the sight. The result—suicide.

Not always is suicide the tragic outcome. There are throngs of people who live in a dull world of spoiled joy, suffocating despair, and ruinous disinterest in life, because of their inner awareness of the chasm between their inner feelings and outward conditions.

There are two approaches to the problem in the mentally ill. Either the therapist has to downgrade outer conditions or upgrade the inner condition of the individual. To do the first is both unwise and impossible. The great times of the year, of the family, of the changing seasons, would have to be eliminated. The other approach necessitates a whole new education of the individual, developing a completely new view of life and of the self, to close the gap by raising the inner feelings.

Some are mentally ill because of feelings of guilt that have developed as a result of seeing the great chasm between their own sin and the holiness of God. Certainly not all who feel the pangs of guilt are in psychotic condition. Yet the problem remains the same.

When we think of these things from the standpoint of ministers whose purpose it is to be instrumental in bringing God and man together

through the cross of Christ, we run into the same situation. There are, again, two methods open. One is to downgrade God to a point where His standards are low enough for sinful man to reach. Many say, "Since I sin every day, I must find a God small enough to fit my condition." Thus they go through life continually defeated by sin, explaining it on the ground that God expects no more. What spiritual suicide is this!

The other method is to upgrade the inner spiritual condition of the individual. Thus he says, "I know that I am a sinner, and that God demands a holy heart. By His grace my sins can be forgiven, my sinful heart cleansed, and my character can be made more and more like unto the stature of Christ."

This opens a whole new facet to the story of the rich man in hell who was overwhelmed by the great gulf fixed between himself and the joys of heaven. He said, "Send some one down." Never! The only solution is trust in a high and mighty God, who has promised, "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name" (Ps. 91:14). The chasm between sin and holiness will never be closed by any futile attempt to lower God's standard, but only by a cleansing of the human heart to fit it for fellowship with a holy God.

CHRISTIANITY—The success or failure of Christianity depends upon the individual Christian. It cannot be purchased like vitamin pills at the corner drugstore. Its strength lies in personal participation and service.—JUDGE ROGER ALTON PFAFF, Los Angeles Superior Court, *Vital Speeches of the Day*.

The Minister and His "Manual"

By Audry Williams Miller*

ANY ORGANIZATION worthy of recognition has a set of rules and standards which it asks its members to know and obey. The Church of the Nazarene, a most worthy organization, has a superb discipline, encompassing much more than heretofore mentioned, which we call our *Manual*. To the honest, sincere Nazarene, the *Manual* is to be revered and obeyed above all books with the single exception of God's Holy Word, the Bible.

The 1956 edition of the *Manual* states, "Next to the Bible is the *Manual* of the church. . . . Therefore it is the duty of all who identify themselves with the Church of the Nazarene to acquire a thorough knowledge of the *Manual* and to live in harmony with its doctrines, its rules of conduct, and its polity."

Where the *Manual* is known and followed on a church-wide basis, we find, almost without exception, growth and success in every department of the church. However, wherever the *Manual* is little known and little used, there is always danger of misunderstanding and friction.

When the people do not know their discipline, do not follow its rules of conduct or church polity, and misunderstanding and friction do rise up in the local church, who is to blame?

I say that, unless the pastor is new—that is, he has pastored that church for a year or less—THE PASTOR IS AT FAULT. Every minister of the Church of the Nazarene MUST know his *Manual*. It is his responsibility to make his people familiar with it. This book should be carried to every board meeting. I'll grant that it may not be directly referred to at every meeting, but it should be there for reference if needed. No business should ever be conducted which is not in keeping with church polity as set forth in our church *Manual*. No member should ever be admitted who is not willing and able to meet our standards of conduct and life. There is no excuse for people sitting on our church boards who do not agree with our church doctrines as set forth in this *Manual*.

One of the beauties of our church *Manual* is that it is concise and clear. There is little or no room left for private interpretation of the rules. Yet—and this is tragic—there are those, and ministers too, who would twist them to what they think is their own advantage. Problems that should never have arisen within any local church brought about disunity within the local church and, sometimes, shame outside it. Tragedy for the minister and the church can be avoided if the *Manual* is strictly followed.

I can tell of heartache, misunder-

*West Portsmouth, Ohio.

standing, missing members, and disillusioned preachers that happened all because the *Manual* was not strictly followed in a few cases. You may know of others.

I want my church to grow. I want, in every way possible, to avoid friction and misunderstanding. I want my members to be Nazarene through and through. I honestly believe that one great, long step in this direction is to strictly follow all the precepts laid out in the *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene as if it were the

very law—which it is. Then, as a pastor, I can take another great, long step toward success by teaching this same *Manual* to my people in such a way that there will be no doubt in their minds but that they too must obey it.

My prayer is for the success numerically, financially, and spiritually of every local Church of the Nazarene everywhere. I am convinced that, other things being equal, this will be accomplished if we all use, obey, and teach our church *Manual*.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas unites us in the quest for all that is good and beautiful and true. The color of our skin, the quality of our culture, the place of our habitation, do not separate us in this eternal search. Christmas is a reminder that the star of hope stands over every land and sends its light into every life. Christmas is truly universal, but we miss the point if we do not realize that it is most of all a deeply personal experience. For unless "peace on earth, good will to men" is born first of all in your heart and mine, it cannot truly be born in the world.—MARCUS BACH, "The Star Is for Everyone," *Rotarian*, Rotary International.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas crystallizes the highest aspirations of people everywhere and brings into focus the ideals of all the great religions of mankind.—MARCUS BACH, "The Star Is for Everyone," *Rotarian*, Rotary International.

BABIES are little angels, whose pretty wings grow shorter as their legs grow longer.—MADISON PRESS, *London, Ohio*.

The "Apple" on the Tree or the Pair on the Ground?

By John G. Hall*

GOD COMMANDED ADAM not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Since that exhortation the world has been dominated by sin. Adam had the privilege of eating of every other fruit but he chose to indulge of the forbidden fruit.

The "apple" has received all of the blame down through the centuries for the fall of man. However, it was the pair on the ground who had the power of choice. The "apple" represented sin, and Adam and Eve could either partake of it or refuse it.

We are faced with the very same problems in our day. The devil lures our people by the beauty and attractiveness of worldliness. However, these become sin only when we yield to a desire for them.

Many people are taken up with the task of getting rid of the "apple," but they fail to deal with the inward workings of sin. Had Adam and Eve so loved God, they would have never yielded to the wooing of the forbidden fruit.

As a minister of the gospel I am challenged by this great truth. We can bring back prohibition, become

Carrie Nations, defeat communism, outlaw houses of sin, and an edict can be passed that all must attend church; but unless there is a change within the heart of man, sin will remain.

Essential is it to see how we are frittering away our ministry when we dwell upon incidentals and never go into the deeper things of God. The world situation today affords me one of the greatest opportunities to preach the words of my Saviour and to point people to a refuge that will last when the bombs are falling to this earth. May the Lord help me to remain faithful to my calling.

The "apple" might remain on the tree, but if there is no desire for the "apple," then it is of no significance. But if the pair remain on the ground and they desire what God forbids, then the fault is in the pair and not in the apple.

The things that we call sin today are only the manifestations of a heart condition. Clean up the heart and the "apple" will hold no more sway on your life.

It wasn't the "apple" on the tree, but the pair on the ground, which was responsible for sin.

*Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Supplied by Nelson G. Mink

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS

"To the child, Christmas is wondrous because it is so new; to his grandfather, Christmas is wondrous because it is old."—*Cambridge Associates*.

A STUDENT wrote on an examination paper just before the Christmas holidays, "Only the Lord knows the answer to this question. Merry Christmas."

When he got his paper back, the professor had written: "The Lord gets an A; you get an F. Happy New Year."—from *Nuggets*.

CHRISTMAS! Let's spend less time looking forward to this one, and more time looking backward at the first one.—RICHARD HANSON.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CARD

It is said that the first known modern Christmas cards appeared first in 1843. Sir Henry Cole, an imaginative and distinguished London museum director, had his artist friend, J. C. Horsley, design 1,000 cards for him which bore the now standard greeting: "A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year."—From *Today's Health*.

"CHRISTMAS IS a beautiful sentiment. It is a beautiful faith. It is the trusting, the strong faith of a child. It is the never-failing belief of humanity in the truly miraculous. But it is even more. It is a force against which the most powerful evils cannot stand for long, nor the most wicked of men have power over. Christmas has altered the world."—*Sunshine Magazine*.

THERE ARE STARS in the sky, as well as thunder and lighting.

There is goodwill in the hearts of men at Christmastime.

Clouds scud along the horizon, sometimes building up to frightening thunderheads. Angry voices thunder without reason. And threats, like lightning, break over the people's heads.

Yet, the eternal stars are there—stars of hope, of faith, of love—now dimmed or hidden by clouds, now breaking through with clarity and brilliance and strength, that will not be denied.

May these stars be the guiding stars of the wise men of all nations. May they light the path of peace.

That is the Christmas prayer of the people.—From *TITMUS TIDINGS*.

"PEACE, therefore, is a vain hope so long as men are ruled by selfishness, disregarding the rights of their fellow creatures. It was said by Edward Benes in 1929 that to make peace in Europe possible, the last representative of the prewar generation must die and take his prewar mentality into the grave with him. It was a harsh saying, perhaps too harsh, but it recognized a fundamental principle. There can be no peace where war mentality prevails."—*Sunshine Magazine*.

GOOD CHARACTER

"Sometimes the sun seems to hang for half an hour on the horizon, only just to show how glorious it can be. The day is done, the fervor of shining is over, and the sun hangs golden in the west, making everything look unspeakably beautiful, with the rich effulgence which it sheds on every side. So God seems to let some people, when their duty in this world is done, hang in the west, that man may realize how worthwhile they really are."—HENRY WARD BEECHER.

KEEP JUMPING!

An ambitious young man asked a great merchant to reveal the secret of success. "Just jump at your opportunity," answered the merchant. "But," said the young man, "how can I tell when my opportunity is coming?" "You can't," replied the merchant, "just keep jumping."—*Anon.*

DEDICATION

William Carey cobbled shoes with a map of the world on the wall. But it wasn't the world on the wall that took Carey out of the cobbler's shop and sent him to India. It was the world in his heart!—*HERSCHEL H. HOBBS.*

STEPS DOWNWARD—MODERN TERMS, THAT IS:

1. Mixed up.
2. Messed up.
3. Screwed up.
4. Tied up.
5. Fed up.
- Remedy?—6. Give up.
- Result?—7. Fixed up!

—*E. STANLEY JONES in The Way*

WATCH THE TURNS IN DRIVING

1. Turn around, that is, if you're going the wrong way.
2. Turn down, turn down the old habits and the old ways.
3. Turn in (and tune in) so you can be where God can speak to you.
4. Turn up (and tone up) if you are flat and out of tune.
5. Turn out. Turn out from self-centeredness. The end of life is to get beyond yourself and to be of help to others.

—*E. STANLEY JONES in The Way*

SHORT TAKES FROM REAL LIFE

One speaker sat down sadly after a wordy discourse and remarked: "I couldn't have said less, unless I had said more."

A LITTLE BOY, late for school, asked God to help him to be there on time.

He ran, stumbled, and then breathlessly said, "God I asked You to help me, but don't push me."

ONE MAN PRAYED this prayer very often, "Fill me, Lord." A man nearby was overheard to say, "You can't Lord. He leaks." "Many are not filled, because if they were, they would leak out by undisciplined living."

SOMEONE has said that "there are seven deadly sins: The first is dishonesty, the other six are selfishness."

A WOMAN who had been healed of paralysis in both limbs and arthritis, when she surrendered all and fully trusted, said to the Lord, "Now, Lord, you've healed me. What are You going to do about my overweight?" This answer came: "This kind goeth not out save by . . . fasting."

TWO PREACHERS were being analyzed by two laymen. They came to this conclusion: "When one stands up to preach, he preaches eloquently, but he is alone. When the other man stands up, there isn't the eloquence, but the effect is astonishingly different. The reason is, now there are two." His abilities had been taken hold of by Another and heightened. His words had within them the Word.

HE BEGAN—THEY BEGAN

Acts 1:1. "Jesus began . . ."

Acts 2:4. "They began . . ."

—*E. S. J.*

MODERN AGE

"The keynote of our daily living is 'rush.' Nobody seems to have enough time for work or leisure, nor even good manners. Our mass media, radio and television, certainly add their share to our tension-ridden time. We do not even read books any more. We rush through 'condensed digests.' Frozen food and the pressure cooker have supplanted pride in the cooking of a meal."

DR. WALTER J. GERSTLE

Theme: Christmas Light

TEXT: *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined (Isa. 9:2).*

ILLUSTRATION: "Your little candle may not light the room, but it can light the candle next to it, which in turn can do the same, until all the candles are lighted and darkness is gone."—RUTH SMELTZER.

1. There was the light of prophecy.
2. There was the light of the Annunciation.
3. There was the light from the star.
4. There was the light from God's presence, illuminating the stable.
5. There is the Light that lighteth every man.

Theme: Immanuel

TEXT: *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (Isa. 7:14).*

Christ's mission is revealed in a two-fold name—Immanuel, Jesus.

Immanuel in Isaiah had reference to Someone who should deliver the nation from immediate troubles.

Jesus—Common Jewish name. Hoshua means "the Helper." "Je" added means "God." Hence, "God, our Helper."

Joseph's dream rich in understanding Christ's mission.

Theme: Mary's Wonderful Spiritual Experience

TEXT: *And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord (Luke 1:45).*

Van Doren says: God's promises during 6,000 years have not failed in one letter. He is faithful in rewarding His friends and punishing His foes. Zacharias, unable to speak to Mary, a guest three months under his roof.

The rabbis assert that the joy of mothers at the escape at the Red Sea caused unborn offspring to leap for joy.

Theme: The Advent Story Told

TEXT: *For, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people (Luke 2:10).*

Why the great joy?

Because of the "fulness of time"

Because of the person of Christ

Because of personal salvation

Because of a great consummation

Theme: The Manifested Christ

TEXT: *For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us (I John 1:2).*

1. Manifested in order to take on tangible form
2. John's testimony of the life manifested
3. Manifested to "take away our sins"
4. Manifested to "destroy the works of the devil"
5. Manifested so that we may be able to live His life through us

Theme: This Is the Victory

TEXT: "I have given . . . you . . . the blood . . ." (Lev. 17:11).

THEME: Victory Before Battle

TEXT: II Cor. 2:14

"I never raise a glass of water to my lips without asking God's blessing. I never seal a letter without putting a word of prayer under the seal. I never take a letter from the post without a brief sending of my thoughts heavenward."—GENERAL STONEWALL JACKSON.

THEME: He Can Do It Again!

TEXT: II Chron. 16:8

THEME: Deliverer and Defender

TEXT: Ps. 33:20

We Have an Altar

SCRIPTURE: Gen. 22:3-8

TEXT: Gen. 22:9; Heb. 13:10

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The word altar appears many times in the Scriptures.
 1. Implied with Cain and Abel.
 2. On through the scripture to the golden altar of Rev. 9:13.
- B. Always connected with worship.
 1. Not always of God. Solomon, Ahab, and others.
 2. Hebrews speaks of the Christian's altar. That is what concerns us.

I. THE ALTAR OF THE ANCIENT JEWS.

- A. Built according to God's instructions.
 1. A sacred, hallowed thing.
 2. Not to be treated lightly or common.
 3. Here their sacrifices were offered to God. They were to be something that cost them something, as with David in II Sam. 24:24.
- B. It was a part of their everyday life.
 1. In their journeys it went where they did.
 2. Later it was established in the Tabernacle and then in the Temple.
 3. Always in their thinking was the fact of the altar.
- C. It represented God's presence.
 1. A constant reminder.
 2. There God often met with them in a special way.
 3. Abraham offered Isaac and again he waited as in Gen. 15:9-17.
 4. Because it represented God's presence they knew they could meet Him there. Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple.

- D. It often stood between them and disaster.
 1. In times of war.
 2. Because it was being used.
 3. Hezekiah's letter from Sennacherib (II Kings 19:14).

II. WE HAVE AN ALTAR

- A. Differs in churches.
 1. Some ornamental, elaborate, ritualistic.
 2. To some it is a place to humble oneself.
- B. We no longer offer sacrifices upon it.
 1. No literal fire burns, no sprinkled blood, no smoking incense.
 2. We know it has no merit in itself, but a convenient place to pray, to humble oneself.
- C. As long as it is a vital part of our churches it too marks God's presence.
 1. Must be more than ornamental, formal, or ritualistic.
- D. Who knows how many times it too has kept us from disaster?
 1. God does have regard for His people.
 2. They have been saved from disaster often.
 3. Not that sorrows do not come, but God's presence softens the blow and endurance is given.
 4. There is a God to turn to, the God symbolized by the altar.

III. THERE IS ANOTHER ALTAR THAT WE MUST HAVE.

- A. We do not use the altar as did Israel.
 1. We do have one in the church, but that is not enough.
 2. We need the altar in our homes. A place where one can gather the family together and shut the door on things of stress, strain, and distraction.

3. "The family that prays together stays together." There is a bond that nothing can break. An invisible tie.

B. In ancient Israel the father was the priest in the home.

1. He instructed as to what to do. Taught the children. Answered their questions and set the example of a devoted, godly life.

2. God paid Abraham high compliment in Gen. 18:19. And God blessed him because the altar was established in his home.

C. But these blessings are not all of the past.

1. Dr. J. G. Morrison tells of pioneer life in the Dakotas in the early days. Storms came, fire swept the prairies, but his father always knew the right passage of scripture to turn to. And there was the feeling that his prayer had touched heaven.

2. In my own life Mother was widowed with two small children. Left with a heavy load. But God gave a promise one day, Ps. 91:10, and she went on in the strength of that.

CONCLUSION:

A. We all want God's help at times. Often need it more than anything else.

B. We must then prepare for those times.

1. Seek Him when all is going well. Build up a backlog of prayer.

2. Job had prepared himself for the day of trouble. God even challenged Satan to take a look at him.

C. We live in strenuous days.

1. We need to be fortified for events that could occur. We can do that only by being in touch with God constantly.

2. How could we do it better than around the family altar?

—ARTHUR J. STOTT

Selah, Washington

A Study in Holiness

SCRIPTURE: I Pet. 2:1-3

INTRODUCTION:

This passage begins with "wherefore," indicating that it is a continuation of what was being said in the previous chapter.

Note the reason why the apostle exhorts us to do the things in vv. 1 and 2; because we have been born again.

Let us consider the content of vv. 1-3 within the framework of chapter one.

I. THE NEGATIVE APPROACH TO HOLINESS (v. 1).

A. The exhortation is, "laying aside . . .," implying that effort is necessary on our part to become wholly sanctified and mature.

B. A complete separation is required—"laying aside all [italics] malice . . ."

C. This exhortation is an echo of the Apostle Paul: "Put off the old man with his deeds."

II. THE POSITIVE APPROACH TO HOLINESS (v. 2).

A. This is an exhortation to growth.

B. A command to "desire." Be true to your natural inclination as a babe in Christ and clamor for milk.

C. The purpose of our desire is that we "may grow thereby."

III. PROVE YOUR EXPERIENCE BY YOUR WORKS (v. 3).

A. If you've found it worthwhile serving the Lord, act like it!

B. If God has saved you and changed your life, live differently!

C. If you're a "babe in Christ," either newly born or of long

standing, nourish yourself on the Word and grow!

—WILLIAM C. SUMMERS
Washington, D.C.

God's Search for a Man

TEXT: Ezek. 22:30

INTRODUCTION:

The context of the scripture

- I. GOD WAS LOOKING FOR A MAN.
 - A. He could have found an angel.
 - B. He could have created a being that would have done His bidding.
 - C. God uses men to assist Him in dealing with other men.
- II. GOD HAD A SPECIFIC JOB TO BE DONE.
 - A. To stand in the gap.
 - B. To form a protecting hedge.
 - C. To stand in the place for others, as Abraham did for Sodom.
- III. BUT THERE WAS NONE.
 - A. There was no one to carry a burden for the lost.
 - B. There was no one to visit the sick.
 - C. There was no one to greet the visitors at the door and welcome them.
- IV. GOD'S PROTECTING HEDGE IS KEPT IN GOOD REPAIR BY LOYAL CHRISTIANS.
 - A. Loyal to God.
 - B. Loyal to the church.
 - C. Loyal to oneself.
 - D. Loyal to the lost.

—WILLIAM C. SUMMERS

The Conflict of the Carnal

SCRIPTURE: Gal. 5:22-26; Rom. 12:1-2

INTRODUCTION: It has always been known that man could not save himself. Now psychiatrists are saying that the Christian religion comes nearer to meeting man's need than any remedy that has ever been found.

Notice that:

- I. THE UNSANCTIFIED PERSON IS IN CONFLICT.

- A. He is in conflict with God. "For the carnal mind is enmity against God."
- B. He is in conflict with others. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."
- C. He is in conflict with himself. "The double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

- II. GOD REQUIRES A TOTAL SURRENDER.
 - A. A total denial of one's own interests.
 - B. A total death to selfish ambitions.
 - C. A total commitment to God's will.

- III. THE EXPERIENCE AND SUBSEQUENT LIFE OF HOLINESS WILL INTEGRATE ONE'S PERSONALITY.
 - A. It will unify your aims and purposes.
 - B. It will clarify your vision.
 - C. It will bring one's moral concepts into focus.

ILLUS. 1. Song: "Then Jesus Came."
2. George Mueller said: "There was a day when I died, utterly died; died to George Mueller, his opinions, preferences, tastes, and will—died to the world, its approval or censure, died to the approval or blame even of my brethren and friends—and since then I have studied only to show myself approved unto God."

3. "Try Christ's way; it's a glorious way of joy and peace. Try Christ's way; then the conflicts of your life will cease."

—WILLIAM C. SUMMERS

*A little light in Bethlehem,
No larger than a candle's flame,
A wee white light in Bethlehem, . . .
Silver and small it came.
And many slept and did not see
The faint, far gleam when dark
unfurled
The little light that grew to be
The Light of all the world.*

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Staying Within the Lines

INTRODUCTION: My little three-year-old was coloring one day and said to me: "Daddy, am I staying within the lines?" And I began to think of how appropriate that question is when applied to our lives. Are we staying within the lines proscribed by the gospel?

I. THE BE'S OF THE GOSPEL

- A. "Be ye therefore perfect" (Matt. 5:48).
- B. "Be not ye therefore like unto them" (Matt. 6:8).
- C. "Therefore be ye also ready" (Matt. 24:44).
- D. "If thou wilt be perfect" (Matt. 19:24).

II. THE GO'S OF THE GOSPEL

- A. "Go ye also into the vineyard" (Matt. 20:7).
- B. "Go ye therefore into the highways" (Matt. 22:9).
- C. "Go ye out to meet him" (Matt. 25:6).
- D. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19).
- E. "And go quickly, and tell" (Matt. 28:7).

III. THE DO'S OF THE GOSPEL

- A. "But seek ye first"
- B. "Do ye even so to them."
- C. "Therefore whosoever . . . doeth"

—WILLIAM C. SUMMERS

Witnesses First

TEXT: *And ye shall be witnesses*

I. THE REASON FOR WITNESSING

- A. Because we are commanded to "go ye into all the world, and preach."
- B. Because we are empowered—"And ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."
- C. For Christ's sake—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . . ye have done it unto me."

II. SOME EXAMPLES OF WITNESSING

- A. Andrew brought Peter; Peter won thousands.
- B. The woman of Samaria is a good example.
- C. Philip, the layman.

III. SOME METHODS OF WITNESSING

- A. Mass witnessing—the preaching of the gospel.
- B. Witnessing to families—the hospitality method.
- C. Personal witnessing.
 1. Jesus did personal and mass witnessing.

ILLUS. Moody said he wanted "a monument with two legs going about the world—a saved sinner, telling about the salvation of Jesus Christ."

—WILLIAM C. SUMMERS

THE CHURCH

"The church that does not reach out, fades out."—*Christian Advocate*.

From the *Christian Observer* comes this story: "Once, near the close of the first world war, a chaplain said to his men: 'Cheer up! Remember you are building a new world.' To which one of his men replied, 'You are wrong, chaplain. We are not building a new world; that is your job and the job of the Church. We are just destroying the old one.'"

Back Seats: Human nature doesn't change very much even in the matter of church habits. As a proof that the practice of crowding the rear seats in our churches is not merely of recent development, we quote from the Apostolic Constitutions dating from the year A.D. 380 in Syria:

"Let the deacons have charge of the seats in the church so that all who come in may take their own place, and not stay back near the door."

The *Christian Union Herald* observes: "There are more women in church services than men; but there are more men in jail than women."

THE NEW BIBLE DICTIONARY

J. D. Douglas, Editor (Eerdmans, 1962, 1,400 pages, cloth, \$12.95)

This is called a "new" Bible dictionary because each article in it has been prepared specifically for this volume. These are not revisions of earlier writings found in other dictionaries, but each of the scores of authors prepared the material especially for this volume, taking advantage of the most recent Biblical studies and the most recent findings of archaeology.

There are 2,300 articles and 140 authors. Throughout the volume there has been an avowed purpose of maintaining a loyalty to the Scriptures and a conservative approach to every controversial issue.

CHRIST AND THE POWERS

H. Berkof (Herald Press, 1962, 64 pages, paper, \$1.25)

Here will be found a careful and scholarly discussion of Paul's concept of principalities and powers. Strongly supported by scripture, here is a careful and conservative exegesis of some of Paul's references such as Rom. 8:38; I Cor. 3:22; 2:8.

We have read so frequently Paul's references to "powers," and in my reading I have not previously run across an able discussion of this technical expression. You will not agree with all of the author's conclusions, but he does stimulate the mind and opens up a channel of thought that, as far as I have discovered, is largely neglected. The little book is overpriced, however, for a technical study, but is worth the price.

THE PASTOR: THE MAN AND HIS MINISTRY

Ilion T. Jones (Westminster, 1961, 158 pages, cloth, \$3.50)

The author is concerned to deal, not with the minister's task, but with the minister himself, feeling that many of today's young ministers are woefully at odds with the New Testament concept of a pastor. He writes searchingly of call and commitment, concept of the task, acceptance of its disciplines and sacrifices, and the pastor's stewardship of body, time, money; the pastor's personal life, social life, marital life, and family life.

Jones has a message of special relevance to the ministers of his connection. I am not sure he speaks too well to ours. He is vague when discussing the pastor's personal experience of salvation through Christ. He betrays a weak exegesis of Christ's temptation. The strong thing in the book is the chapter on the pastor's "Conception and Acceptance of His Role."

As a general book on the minister's task and the sort of person he needs to be to fulfill it, the book has real merit. The insistence on New Testament norms of ministry is especially welcome. Most all ministers could read this with profit.—W. E. McCUMBER.

A HISTORY OF IMMERSION

William L. Lumpkin (Broadman Press, 1962, 40 pages, paper, 75c)

Scarcely would one expect to find in such a brief compass so thorough a study of any subject as this. It is avowedly in favor of immersion, and yet presents a carefully documented story of the movement among religious groups relative to baptism. I have read books four or five times this large that did not have as much factual, documented material as does this little monograph. While our denominational position is one of freedom regarding the mode of baptism, any minister will increase his store of knowledge regarding the background of baptism by possessing and reading carefully this little paperback.

HEART CRY FOR REVIVAL

Stephen F. Olford (Revel, 1962, 128 pages, cloth, \$2.50)

One of the encouraging signs in modern-day church life, especially among the conservative groups, is the widespread and deep-seated yearning for genuine revival. There is seen on every hand an abhorrence of superficial emotional stirrings. Men are calling out everywhere for revival with a depth that affects the moral, ethical lives of the church and community.

Heart Cry for Revival is one of the strongest books that has been produced recently. Speaking to this very point, the author is the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, New York City. The chapters of this book were originally lectures given at various conventions. The author apologizes by stating that these were taken down electronically as he preached and were not originally prepared in manuscript form. Thus they have a sermonic style, but they also have a warmth and fervency that is superb and thrilling. There are eight chapters, each one dealing with a different approach to revival. Out of his deep research the author includes some of the most potent material that a minister can use himself in illustrating his own sermons when he also pleads for revival.

I think you will not agree with the author on his definition of revival. I did not agree with him, for he insists that revivals are sent by the sovereign will of God, and I think this is an oversimplification. The author also, not being Wesleyan, does not plead for full deliverance from inbred sin. He feels that dual nature is something that is retained in every Christian until death. But recognizing some of these weaknesses in the book doctrinally, let me urge you to read it on your knees until your heart there will well up an equally fervent heart cry for revival.

SERMONS FROM THE PSALMS

Calvin P. Swank (Baker, 1962, 128 pages, cloth, \$2.50)

Here will be found seven sermons, each based upon one of the penitential psalms. The author organizes his material in these psalms by addressing them to the seven deadly sins. This gives a distinct contribution to the book that makes it valuable as sermonic material. In the early part of the book he has a discussion of the psalms which is helpful as introductory material to the seven sermons which make up the body of the book.

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I Timothy

1:15 (outline) My-46
4:8 (outline) Ju-42

II Timothy

1:10 (starter) A-41

Philemon

14 (outline) A-42
15-16 (outline) A-43
16 (outline) O-41
17 (outline) A-43
19 (outline) F-45
21 (outline) A-45

Hebrews

1:2-4 (outline) JI-41
11:1 (outline) My 44
12:14 (starter) S-39
12:12-22 (outline) My-45
13:10 (outline) D-36

James

1:8 (outline) JI-44
3:5-8 (outline) JI-46

I Peter

1:1-4 (outline) J-45
2:1-3 (outline) D-37
4:8 (outline) My-41
5:1-4 (starter) My-43

I John

3:14 (starter) S-39
4:17 (outline) J-40

Jude

3 (sermon) A-6
20-25 (outline) N-45

Revelation

3:7 (outline) Ju-43

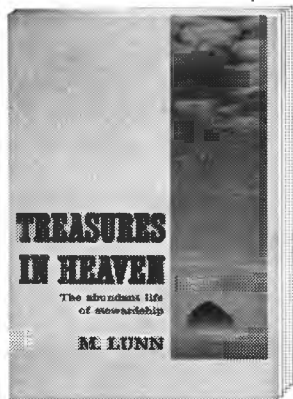


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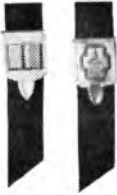
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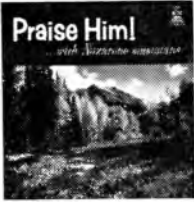


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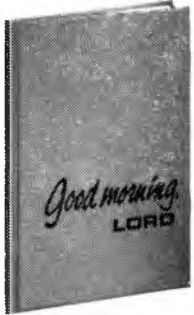
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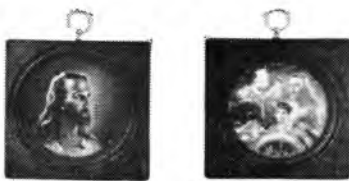


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