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Your Calling, Brethren

By **Brian L. Farmer***

BRETHREN, I call your attention to two extreme attitudes of the man in the street towards the Christian ministry. One said to me: "You ministers have an easy time." Just yesterday, however, another man told me that he did not think we ministers had a very good life. "It must be just an existence," he said.

Neither notion is true. We certainly do not have an easy time, but by God's grace we enjoy a most satisfying and truly rewarding life. Contend that last statement if you must. During doses of discouragement I have contended it too!

But consider your calling, brethren.

There is privilege, for instance, in ministering Christ in a human crisis.

In times of deep distress people silently yearn for God, and it is the prerogative of the Christian minister to point out the way to Him.

I returned home from a preaching appointment late one evening just before Christmas to be told by my wife that a call had come asking me to go to the hospital to see a woman who was dangerously ill. I was tired; so before setting out, I decided to telephone the hospital, feeling sure that our informant had exaggerated about the woman's condition and that it would be all right for me to see her the next day. The hospital sister, however, said that the patient was extremely ill and that I ought to make the journey right

away. I did. She died a little while after Christmas. I can never forget the look of gratitude on that woman's face—twenty-nine years old—as we read from Luke, chapter two, on Christmas Eve.

Sometimes we minister silently just by our being present at a time of crisis, as when a young man received momentary strength to take the shock of his father's sudden death simply by leaning on my shoulder. Then there was the occasion I stood with tear-filled eyes beside a young couple as we looked with sorrowing hearts upon the tiny form of their baby girl in a white coffin. Dedicated one day, sick the next, and in a few days lifeless. I read: "Suffer little children to come unto me . . . for of such is the kingdom of heaven." What could one say? What else needed to be said? The Lord had given and the Lord had taken away, and the young man and his wife did so appreciate someone to assure them of that truth.

Following morning service a few Sundays ago, I was asked to visit a young mother whose husband had been killed on his way to work the previous evening. He had been run down by a drunken driver. This was tragedy worsened by obvious sin. I tried to speak words of comfort, but the awfulness of sin showed up in its true colors that day.

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A crisis of a different kind, involving death, came my way the other day. A man who loves children and works for the relief of disabled ones had the misfortune of being involved in an automobile accident when a young lad was fatally injured. He needed prayer and sympathy. He was broken.

But, happily, we need not forget the more pleasant crises of human gladness. Recall the times you have seen despair pass from a penitent's face like the passing shadow of a

cloud as by faith he became a child of God. Or can you envisage again the glow of confidence on a young man's countenance as he realizes that besetting and inbred sin can be defeated and will be defeated in his life? In the ministry we are invited to share the most sacred moments in the lives of people because we represent their God!

In days of discouragement consider *your calling*, brethren.

Meditate upon it.

"Stand in awe, and sin not."

FROM the EDITOR

XIV. The Elements of Public Worship

IT IS NOT possible for us long to discuss the pros and cons of public worship without coming face to face with the practical problems of how we can correct the weaknesses which develop in worship and bring about the kind of worship that we envision. That is, we must do more than talk in vague and general terms; we must come to grips with the specifics of a given service until we can actually bring about the changes that we feel are necessary.

Hence we must take a look at the elements of the worship service, or the "ingredients" as some might call them. Here are the small "parts" of the service which when fitted together make up the whole. And it is only as we study these parts and make each of them all that it can be that we can really affect the total service. This month we want to list these elements of worship in a sur-

vey fashion. Then later we shall take each of them separately to see how they can be best used in a given service. The order in which these are presented does not indicate their order of importance. Rather we shall look at them in a rather arbitrary way, realizing that in any given service one might take precedence over another but realizing that all are important.

1. Let us begin with *music*. Here indeed is a very important part of worship. Many of our services begin with music and many of them close with music. From the earliest times of Christian and pre-Christian worship, music has held an important role. By this medium the human heart can in a unique way express its love to God.

Congregational singing is a vital part of the total music program. Here the people of God, in a united voice,

express their worship, their confession, their dedication, and countless other of the moods which arise out of true worship to God. As every person who has ever directed worship knows, the strength of the congregational singing sets the tempo of the entire service. The minister depends heavily upon this phase of the service to set the mood, direct the minds, and bring to decision.

"Special" music also has a part in nearly every service. With most of us, this type of music is really an outgrowth of the congregational singing. For we do not lean upon the vested choir to chant our religious expressions or highly trained, salaried choirs to sing anthems with musical precision. Ours is rather the selecting of certain of our group who have talents (more or less) as musicians to express for all of us the testimonies of our hearts.

So far as instrumental music is concerned, the organ or piano prelude or offertory plays the largest role with most of us. And yet, while often thought of as a secondary role, these instruments can do much to set the mood of worship. In some cases a church orchestra or individual instrumentalists are used effectively. These should all be dedicated to the principle that the total effect in the worship service is more important than the particular rendition of an instrumental number.

The invitation song fills a particular place in our services. While of a "congregational" nature in that usually the total group sings, still it is of a special type. Here is a point at which our music must be studied carefully. Here is music dedicated to one of the highest aspects of religion—calling men to make a decision for Christ. Many of our invitations fail because our invitation song fails.

There are other aspects of music which we shall call to attention later. Suffice it to say here that we must not fail our music or our music will fail us.

2. Let us step next to *prayer*. We could hardly think of worship without prayer. This is important in every service in which the people of God come together. And yet, too often it is thought of as a form, as time filler, as merely a part of the service "that is expected of us." Hence we can well afford the time to look at it in more detail.

The invocation is usually the beginning of the service. Here we call our people to worship and acknowledge that this is a holy service of worship. There are many ways that the invocation can be made useful to the total service. It is far more than an "attention getter."

Of course our minds center on the pastoral (or principal) prayer. In the morning service this is usually reserved by the pastor; in other services we encourage our laymen to participate in this prayer. Many pastors have fulfilled a significant part of their total ministry through their pastoral prayers. Here, in perhaps a more real way than any other, the Protestant minister moves into the role of a priest. Here he lifts the needs of his people before the throne of God.

The offertory prayer, benediction, prayer for special needs, services of prayer—these all should come in for consideration. They all have a part in the total service.

3. The place of the *scripture*. Without doubt one of the greatest contributions made to worship by the Reformation was the large place given to the Word of God in the services. In the Early Church this phase of worship was confined to the reading of passages from the Old Testament when they were available and the

reading of the "letters" from the early Christian leaders.

The Catholic church gives much place to the liturgies which originated in Rome. This was a particular point of issue on the eve of the Reformation. The Protestant movement wanted rather to give a large place to the Word of God. And we today must not lose this emphasis. There is no notion of men that should take precedence over the Bible. We need to give attention to the reading of the Word.

There is much value in the "responsive readings" either from the back of the hymnal or from selected portions relevant to the theme of the day which might be printed in the bulletin. Or in some cases responsive reading directly from the Bible is possible. This reading of the Word does much to bring into a given service the historic Church of all ages. This gives permanency and continuity to the Church.

Much could be said also about the reading of the scripture by the minister. In all too many cases this is thought of as being simply a "spring-board" for the sermon, with little thought given to it outside of its relationship to what "we" are going to say. But, indeed, oftentimes the most significant thing that is said in a worship service is that which issues from the Word of God. We need to learn the art of reading the scripture—meaningfully, carefully, expressively.

4. Let us look at the *offering*. "Worship with tithes and offerings" is a phrase frequently appearing on orders of worship and yet its true place in the service goes deeper than is commonly thought. This should be more than the "secular" and "mundane" part of the service. It should be more than an attempt to provide income for the needs of the church.

The offering should be thought of

as a significant part of Old Testament worship. Without the gift, the sacrifice, the individual was really not worshipping. So it must be thought of today. Here is the opportunity for the worshiper to give of himself, to make tangible his love for God. We must lift this part of the service until our people *feel* this aspect of the giving of gifts. This should be more than a "collection" that is a necessary evil of the service. It should be, and can be, a vital expression of worship.

5. And then the *announcements!* With some who discuss worship these days there is no place in the average service for such a "nonspiritual" element as the welcome of visitors and the announcements of the meetings of the church. However we should be careful lest we too quickly accept this interpretation.

To be true, all of us have seen abuses of this element of the service. All of us have suffered through long, drawn-out announcements which were wholly unnecessary. But we should not allow the extreme situation to dictate our conduct of the service. We hold that the weekday activities of the church are a part of the work of the kingdom of God too. We believe that it is religious for our young people to have a meeting; it is religious for the Sunday school teachers and officers to meet to plan.

We must not lose sight of the fact that Kingdom business, whatever its nature, can well be called to the attention of our people even in a worship service. This serves to tie worship to service, to relate the subjective aspects of religion to the objective aspects of outreach. Hence the announcements can actually contribute to a given service if handled rightly and if they are built into the total service intelligently.

6. And then, of course, there is the *sermon*. More has been said at this

point than at any other. The average minister has thought fairly carefully about the place of the sermon in the service. And yet in many cases he has not thought of this in the light of its relationship to the entire service of worship.

In a very unique manner, and we do not fully know how unique, God has placed the preaching of His Word at the heart of the service of worship. Here is scriptural exposition; here is practical guidance; here is the evangelistic invitation. And yet this does not and cannot stand alone without

a tie with the other phases of the service. The success of the total service will enhance the significance of the message. In turn, the relevance of the message will make the experience of worship more meaningful to the people.

The next few months we shall be looking at each of these elements of worship in more detail so that we might discover some ways that each of them can be made to fit into the whole service to make each one the kind of service it ought to be.

(To be continued)

The Preaching of U. E. Harding

By James McGraw*

ST. AUGUSTINE once pointed out that a preacher's listeners "must be persuaded not that they may know what should be done, but to do what they already know they should do." Many a speaker has forgotten this good advice as he has spent his time and energy in achieving the lesser goal of instructing his listeners, while missing completely the worthier goal of moving them toward a desired course of action.

An excellent example of a preacher who wasted little of his time in attempting to tell his listeners what they already knew, but instead used it in stirring them to act on it, was U. E. Harding. Known to thousands as an evangelist, pastor, and executive administrator, he was best known as a preacher of the Word whose ministry moved people. To hear U. E. Harding preach was to come away from a church service stirred in one's emo-

tions, blessed and inspired in one's spirit, and moved to go deeper and farther with Christ in the things of God.

Born the next to the youngest son in a family of eight children, U. E. Harding's earliest days were spent in the log cabin of his birth in Martin County near Shoals, Indiana, not far from the Kentucky border. From his birth on May 16, 1883, until his death May 8, 1958, his life left its mark on those who knew him and heard him preach.

All this may sound "ordinary" enough to the casual observer, but one fact makes it something out of the ordinary. That fact is that U. Earl Harding lost his eyesight when he was in the third grade, and this was before modern progress made possible for the sightless to have the benefits they may receive today. His outstanding success as a preacher came in spite of his limited eyesight, limited

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educational opportunities, and all the other limitations which would accompany such conditions.

Undaunted by the tragedy of almost total blindness brought upon him when his mother attempted a home cure advertised as good for "snake bites, dandruff, and weak eyes," which actually burned his eyes until he lost what little vision he did have, Earl Harding did not lose his zest for living. Nor did he ever become bitter about this tragic blunder which cost him so dearly. He knew his mother was doing what she thought was best for him, and he questioned neither her love nor God's wisdom in allowing this to happen. Instead he determined to do the very best he could with what he had.

Converted at nineteen, he began preaching later that same year. What meager formal education he received came soon afterwards when he enrolled in God's Bible School, with the help of those who spent time reading to him. He never used Braille.

His first pastorate was a Free Methodist church in Evansville, Indiana, which he organized and founded. He cast his lot with the Church of the Nazarene in 1911, mainly because of his deep conviction that music was needed in the church services. He later organized churches in Evansville and Indianapolis, and was appointed superintendent of the Indiana District. During his career he organized fifty-five churches in the state of Indiana!

His preaching ministry included a term of service as executive secretary of the Board of Home Missions, pastorates in Walla Walla, Washington; Berkeley, California; and College Church in Pasadena. He followed Rev. C. E. Cornell at the latter post, which was the largest church in the denomination at that time.

During his later years of ministry

he spent much time in evangelistic work—which was really his first love all the time—and pastored churches in Santa Ana and Pasadena, California; in Portland, Oregon; and Nampa, Idaho.

U. E. Harding gained nationwide attention when the cornea of the eyes of Miss Margaret Carr were transplanted, after her death, to his own eyes, giving him about 20 per cent normal vision in one eye. For seventeen years he had searched for someone who would consent to the use of his eyes after death so that this delicate operation could be performed and he might see. On one occasion a prisoner condemned to death consented. Harding's hopes were built up, only to die again on the eve of the execution after he had already gone to the hospital to be prepared for the surgery, when he learned the prisoner's wife had refused to give her consent. But Miss Carr, who had used her eyesight for more than eighty years, learned of his need through the wife of Rev. A. O. Hendricks of Berkeley, and requested that her corneas be used to restore sight to the eyes of Mr. Harding. It was a joyful and thankful Nazarene preacher who saw his vision gradually clear even partially as a result of this revolutionary technique, which since then has been used successfully in restoring sight to thousands.

One of the most interesting aspects of U. E. Harding's preaching is the method he used in preparing his sermons. With extremely poor vision—such that he could "bang away" on the typewriter keys but could not read what he had written there—how would he be able to study and perform the other necessary preparation in the development of his sermons?

The answer came in the love and patience of his wife and other members of his family, and a faithful sec-

retary. These "became his eyes for him," as Robert Harding, his son, described it. They read to him from the Bible, from the commentaries, from periodicals, from such other books and materials as he needed in preparation. He typed out his notes based on what he had heard them read, and what his prodigious memory could recall from his rich background of learning and experience. Then he had Mrs. Harding read his notes back to him until he had his message well in mind. He meditated upon it then until he was ready for the pulpit, and preached from the "photograph" of his sermon notes in his brain.

This method of preparation lent itself to the memorization of scripture, which U. E. Harding used extensively in his preaching and which provided an authority and power to his words which would not have been possible otherwise. It did something else which made his preaching effective; it lent itself to the memorization of hymns, which he quoted often in making his sermons poetic and beautiful. He had the soul of a poet. He loved the hymns; he loved poetry, and not only quoted it often, but composed it frequently.

Also significant in his preaching was his descriptive language. He used illustrations freely and skillfully. Many of them were from his own rich experiences and eventful life. Most important of all, he had the ability to "tell a story" in such a way as to make it live and sparkle. He had a vivid imagination, and he knew how to utilize it in making Bible characters real and events seem close at hand. For example, with his characteristic wit coupled with his unique powers of description, he spoke of Elijah praying for rain, seeing a cloud the size of an umbrella, and sending word that there was going to be rain. "He sent a report to the *Herald of*

Holiness," quipped Harding, "'Great revival on Mount Carmel; thousands saved; two joined the church; closed in a blaze of glory!'"

He described Elijah fleeing to the wilderness, stopping to ask a native for directions. The native began his reply, "Well, if you want the smooth way, go right here, but it is five miles further . . ." But Elijah interrupted, "I'm not looking for the smoothest way. I'm looking for the quickest and shortest road!" And the native answered, "Then go this way; turn here across the brook, and up that mountain. You can't miss it!"

The reader can see how such details filled in by an imaginative preacher, who is careful all the while to stay with the known facts of the story, can make the story seem much more real and close at hand than the simple repetition of the same words which have been used so many times in telling the same event.

Spurgeon and Beecher gained much of their preaching power through their ability to use the commonplace and interpret it skillfully. Lincoln was perhaps best known for this ability insofar as his public speaking was concerned. U. E. Harding must be considered as in a class by himself when it comes to this method. Yet Harding's imagination, and his descriptive powers in the relating of an illustration, did not do what would be done if many preachers were to try to imitate him in this method. It did not result in calling attention away from the thought and focusing it only upon the illustration. This, as everyone knows, is not the desired aim in using such material. John Henry Jowett writes concerning this: "I have seen illustrations that were like pretty drawing-room lamps, calling attention to themselves. A real preacher's illustrations are like street lamps, scarcely noticed, but throwing

floods of light upon the road." U. E. Harding's illustrations were neither like ornamental decorations nor drab, commonplace street lights—they flooded the way with light, yet they attracted the delight and attention of those who passed by.

Harding's voice was low and resonant. It carried well, although it was not as loud or strong as many preachers'. He spoke with varied inflections, not too much volume, and with a great deal of feeling.

He stood at the side of the pulpit much of the time, after a few minutes of his sermon, gesturing moderately. One of his favorite gestures was the bringing of one hand down upon the other fist. Often he pointed his index finger, not toward his listeners, but toward heaven or the horizon. The open palm was a frequent gesture. His hands were delicate, and his gestures were never extreme. He could not see well enough to read his Bible, but he held it in his hand often when he preached, for he recognized its power and authority and wanted his audience to see it.

U. E. Harding preached mostly

topical sermons. He liked the sound of words, and he often used alliteration, as is seen in some of his sermon titles such as "From Prison to Palace," "Facts About Fools," "Help from the Hills," and the like.

Perhaps the most significant quality of all in the preaching of U. E. Harding was the unction of the Spirit upon his ministry. This he realized was necessary. This he always sought earnestly, and this he had.

One of the many books and pamphlets he wrote was one entitled *A New Grip on God*. In it he decries selfish ambition, unholy aspirations, secular preoccupations, spiritual indifference. He speaks of his own experience when he cries out, "Oh, for a new grip on God!" Those who heard U. E. Harding preach would say that he preached like a man who had a firm "grip on God." For after hearing him his listeners went away from church feeling as if they had been drawn toward a deeper devotion to Christ, a warmer love for others, a keener sense of values, a clearer perspective of truth, and above all, a "new grip on God."

An Impressive Tribute to Lincoln

In his estimate of President Lincoln, John Nicolay, the historian, paid him this stately tribute: "He was not a man—he was a mountain. Abraham Lincoln conquered the rebellion; liberated the slaves; disarmed all criticism by shouldering all faults; held the people to their great task; made the strongest arguments for peace and the best defence of war; wore honour without pride, wielded power without oppression; died a martyr, and was wept by the civilized world."

I. A Study of the Scripture

By Eric Jorden*

THERE IS general awareness of the place of confession in *becoming* a Christian. The promise is, "If we *confess* our *sins*, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). Proverbs 28:13 says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso *confesseth* and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

Moreover, recognition is given to the necessity of confessing to others our new relationship to Christ. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," Paul states in Romans 10:10; "and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Jesus said in Matthew 10:32-33, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Confession, then, is not an *idea* that is foreign to Christian experience.

But what is the place of confession within, or as a part of, Christian experience? Psychologists tell us that confession has therapeutic value. Repression of guilt gives rise to anxiety and frustration. Since psychology is really nothing but "the science of human behavior," could it be that we as Christians are bypassing a natural and necessary means for more radiant Christian living? Is the evident weakness of Christian character due in part at least to the fact we have not used confession as a means of growth?

Interest in this subject was aroused during some research done in Wesley and Methodism. After reading Wesley's religious writings and analyzing the place of the society in the growth of the movement, there appeared this growing conviction, that the secret of the success of Methodism lay in Wesley's use of the society. In examining the nature of the society, particularly the band meetings, it was discovered that the place of confession loomed large. There is evidence that what Wesley urged upon others he practiced himself.

Such an introduction, of course, raises many questions. Let a confession be made right now. This paper does not have all the answers. Let it be stated clearly, too: This is *not* a *dogmatic* thesis. Interest in this area is still *explorative*, or *investigative*.

The method of approach will be twofold. First, an endeavor will be made to indicate the scripturalness of such a teaching. If there is *no* foundation for it in Scripture, then we had best let the study alone. Secondly, there will be presented a portion of some studies made in Wesley which relates directly to this matter.

There is perhaps only one passage of scripture upon which the confession in Christian experience can be built directly. That scripture is James 5:16: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed." While it might appear that one scripture is too shaky

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a foundation upon which to base such an important practice, let us see that this idea is inherent in many other passages. Let us look at some of the more important of these.

Upon closely examining this verse, it is seen that there are *two* very definite commands—or at the minimum, suggestions—if we obtain the result. That result is, of course, “healing.” This is obviously a spiritual healing, as much mental and spiritual as the healing of verses 14 and 15 is physical. *The New Bible Commentary* ties all of these verses together with this statement—“When the elders anointed the sick man with oil, he would probably be encouraged to confess his faults in prayer to God that they might be sure of the patient’s penitence, or, perhaps, so that they might have some explanation of the causes leading to the malady. Or, James may be referring to sins which may have injured both parties and not to sins which have no bearing on the life of another. Confession would then be the means of seeking mutual forgiveness in the spirit of the Lord’s command in Matthew 5:23, 24.” *The Cambridge Bible* says, “The writer urges the habit of mutual prayer and intercession, that when sickness comes there may be a quicker work of healing in the absence of spiritual impediments to the exercise of supernatural powers working through natural media.” Good exegesis demands that we do not lift a text out of its context to make it teach something not intended. The least we can say here is that *if* we believe in and teach divine healing for the body we must go on to accept the place of confession as a part of the spiritual healing which may be involved.

The *first* command is that we are to *confess*. That raises two questions: *What* are we to confess? and, *To whom?*

Believing the “to whom” will throw some light upon the “what,” the beginning will be made at the former. We are told to confess *to one another*. Now this may be interpreted in several ways, each correct according to other scriptures.

It might mean, as was suggested in *The New Bible Commentary*, confession to those who were doing the anointing. This is in the plural—“elders.” Hence it rules out auricular confession as practiced by the Catholics to the priest. If *this* is the interpretation, the confession is within a small group.

Again, this passage might be interpreted to mean “to one another” in a singular sense, that is, *one* person confessing to *another* (one) person. Matthew 18:15-33 would support this interpretation, although it sounds like confession in reverse. Jesus said, “If thy brother *trespass* against thee” (the original word here is *hamartano*, “to err, to miss the mark”) “go and tell him his fault” (*elegcho*, “to convict”) “between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.” The inference is that the brother, hearing his fault outlined, confesses it, and by so doing the one drawing his attention to his “missing the mark” has “gained” or saved him. It ought to be stressed that in this passage, as in Luke 17:1-4, one’s attitude toward *anyone* who misses the mark in his relationship to him must be that of genuine forgiveness.

There is such a thing then as *person-to-person* confession.¹ Matthew 5:23-24: “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and *there* rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first

¹Compare Wesley’s treatment of one W. G., “a member of our society.” It took two meetings to get the differences threshed out. *Works* (1829), III, 349.

be reconciled to thy brother, and *then* come and offer thy gift." It seems that Matthew 7:3 is appropriate here: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and *then* shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." The best way to get a confession out of your fellow Christian is to begin by confessing your own shortcomings, according to Jesus.

Inherent in Matthew 18:15-33 is also the idea of confessing within the group. Jesus said, "If your brother doesn't receive you *personally*, take two or three with you. Then, if he won't receive them and you, take it to the church." One can see how confession within the group, small or large, is *possible* here, if the brother rebuked sees fit to let it go that far. Now the confessions implied in the passages just given are of an *ethical* nature. They represent a "missing the mark" in our interpersonal relationships. This is "the what" in the aspects of confession thus far.

There is one more area with which we must do business if we are to be scriptural. The "what" we are to confess in James 5:16 is *paraptoma*—"a falling aside, a defect." It is used only here and in Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." It is that last word which gives some insight into these two verses. Temptation is the lot of all Christians. While we do not *need* to succumb in different areas of our Christian living, sometimes we do. We do not all

yield at the same point. One may be tempted at the point of prayer, and because he failed to pray as he ought, he spoke more sharply than he ought to someone. One can see how easy it is "to fall aside," to have a "defect." It is entirely possible for a sanctified person to make an error in judgment that results in a wrong attitude and a wrong relationship. John Wesley said that a thousand infirmities were quite consistent with perfect love. As long as people are human and subject to the onslaughts of Satan, they are quite apt "to fall aside" from what they *ought* to be as Christians. There is none so holy but he admits the possibility and probability of "defects" in Christian character. The difficulty is, one can do very little if anything about them until he is conscious of them.

What is it then that we will *confess* in the group? Our faults—our failings aside, or defects. Is there not *value* in this—in the confessing of these shortcomings? Two related values can be seen.

First, to the one confessing. It has been stated that psychologists insist that confession has therapeutic or healing value. To acknowledge a weakness is to do *two things* for you. It will relieve the pressure under which you operate in your inner man—the conscience is relieved if nothing else. Then, *in* confessing you gain a strength to overcome at that point. Once acknowledged, you are *more apt* not to be caught off guard at that point again.

Secondly, group confession has value to the group. When one person confesses to failure, to weakness, to failing to pray, to read the Word, to faithfully attending the means of grace—confessing *any* or all of these (with the attendant result or results)—such a confession has an influence upon the group. In the first place, it

may serve as a means the Spirit might use to bring *conviction* to other careless souls. Second, for *you* to confess might be the means of *strength* to another to confess—which would be therapeutic for him. Third, your confession could easily have the result of *encouragement* for others. If one knows by your confession that you are fighting, if not the same, yet similar, battles as he is, then your confession becomes a means of spiritual encouragement to him.

This leads to the question, Why should one be reticent to confess his defects? There may be two reasons. One is, we are in bondage to secret fear and perhaps to a subtle form of pride. We are afraid perhaps that we feel we are so perfect that where we fail has little or no connection with so called “spiritual people.”

The second reason why we may be reticent to confess is simply that confession is not practiced. Some can recall when a prayer meeting was as much (or more) a “confessional” as a testimony meeting. Why can’t we have *both*, and *in the same service*? Perhaps a few of us ought to begin a move in this direction.

Getting back to James 5:16, we notice the *second* command. We are

not only to *confess to one another*; we are instructed to *pray one for another*. Prayer is as necessary to group confession as the confession itself. We shall see in the second section of this paper that Wesley put a lot of emphasis on the prayer aspect. After the confession of our faults, we are to pray, not simply or only for ourselves; we are to pray *for each other*. This spirit of union is evident in Galatians 6:1: “If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness . . . lest . . .” Because of our own frailties we identify ourselves with the faults of others. We not only bear our own burdens; we “bear . . . one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” Burden bearing is done best in and through prayer. There is incumbent upon us—and this is inherent in genuine intercessory prayer—the spirit of meekness. Because one confesses to failure is no reason for you to pray *at* him. You are required to pray *for* him. In praying *for* him, you vicariously suffer with him. Prayer, real intercessory prayer, is the second of the two keys which bring healing to the soul.

(To be continued)

SIMPLICITY

Joseph Parker quoted Lord Jeffries as saying, “Simplicity is the last attainment of progressive literature and men are very long afraid of being natural from the dread of being taken for ordinary.” He quoted Martin Luther as saying, “As a preacher he took no notice of the doctors who heard him, of whom there were about forty, but he preached to the young men and servants, of whom there were about 2,000.” You will not hesitate to say that Luther was right. He was right, too, even so far as the doctors were concerned, because as learned men they did not need mere criticism or brilliance of expression. While they were sinners before God, they did continue to require to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.—Contributed by B. V. Seals.

II. Some Positive Aspects of Biblical Preaching

By Mildred Bangs Wynkoop*

VERY FRANKLY, it is much easier to say in what Biblical preaching does not consist than to offer a constructive alternative. Fortunately, a full treatment of the subject is not required here. Knowledge of the well-recognized and currently published criteria of sound Biblical exegesis and preaching will be assumed. There are, however, some important considerations to keep in mind regarding it that need to be recorded in this study. All of them have a direct bearing on holiness preaching as it comes under the judgment "Biblical."

In what then does confidence in the total Biblical message consist when it issues in a presentation of truth suitable to being called holiness preaching? Prior to a detailed study it may be said in general that Biblical theology, which structures Biblical preaching, must arise from sound exegesis informed by an intelligent historical sense, a clear spiritual perspective, and an intuitive ability to grasp the total Biblical message. The intensive exegetical discipline necessary must derive its character from extensive factual information and a deep and fundamental participation in the Christian commitment necessary to spiritual life and understanding. This is simply another way of saying there is need to recognize the experiential dimension of Biblical truth in order to understand it and to have put one-

self within the framework of that experience.

If holiness is inextricably woven into the warp and woof of the Bible, as we believe it is, a sound exegesis will find it and no theological, logical, or psychological manipulation can long obscure it.

Biblical preaching, then, arises out of a way of thinking, first, which is structured by a profound acquaintance with and a deep understanding of the spirit of the whole Bible. This takes more than a mere knowledge of the words or history or literature of the Bible, though responsible exegesis cannot bypass these things. No more could I, a non-Buddhist, interpret Buddhism authoritatively as an outsider looking in than a Buddhist could build a Christian theology as a Buddhist. One must stand within its truth and message as a participant, not as a cold scientist. A scientist can only count and weigh the external, superficial features and classify them on the basis of logic or sociology or some scientific principle or psychology. Only one whose moral commitment permits him to sense the spiritual currents which sweep through the Book can begin to adequately weigh the parts against the whole. If it be said that this is too subjective a consideration for serious thinking, it must be recalled that all spiritual things or meanings lie deep in the common experience of men, far below the test tube, and that in that experi-

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ence stable norms of communication exist. Only a committed Christian can be a Christian theologian.

This existential understanding must, of necessity, be related to a concept of Scripture as communication. Whatever theory of inspiration one holds, to fail to see that God is saying something to someone whom He intends shall understand is to forfeit the right to claim rationality of one's thought. There may be and are things difficult to understand, but the difficulty is not intentional on God's part. Paul's "mystery" is not the Greek *gnosis*, hidden from the uninitiate, but it is that which is revealed by God's Spirit. We have trouble because the human mind is limited in its ability to fully grasp some truths. God will always exceed human capacity to fully understand Him. But to see the Bible as communication is important to a true Biblical theology. This seems almost axiomatic.

EXPERIENCE AND INTERPRETATION

Of particular interest to this study is the further observation that communication must proceed along the lines of human experience. This does not define inspiration but recognizes the ground of mutual understanding. Wesleyans think that experience is an important focus of theological truth. This does not mean that personal experience is the source of truth or that any pattern of human experience becomes the norm of all experience and orthodoxy. It simply means that the Bible message was given in human experience; and to understand it, it is necessary to share in some way in that human Christian experience. Experience, here, means the total involvement of a person in any event in distinction from any limited involvement such as emotion or intellect only.

If the Bible were simply a textbook

of abstract theological statements, our appropriation of them would be on the level of intellectual comprehension only. It would lack the moral element so necessary to Biblical understanding. The Bible is a Book of experience. Its events occurred in history, among people in profoundly human involvements. It was not handed down to us on golden plates but lived out among people. Revelation was not given in a vacuum but concretely, in experience. Jesus was a Man who was seen, heard, touched, loved, hated. He spoke to real persons enmeshed in the web of life and sickness and family concerns and labor and social involvements and death. The language of the Bible is the language of experience. Because this is so, it is timeless and able to bridge the passing cultures without loss of meaning. There are not many occasions in it where words were given apart from human co-operation. The Ten Commandments were etched by God on stone, and then the plates were broken. Jesus wrote on the dust of a street and busy feet obliterated the words. It is well that it was so. Only that which is lived through is really understood.

This in no sense means that experience itself is revelation. This is not a naturalism. It assumes that God introduced into the stream of history events which He intended as revelation. It means that divine revelation, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was given to men in a universal language—human experience, which included the heart as well as the mind. In this way, meaning transcends language barriers and divine inspiration structures *any* serious translation and gives the possibility of the Word of God to all men.

This has significance for Biblical exegesis. History is important to the revealed message. It is not simply the

words of the speaker that bear importance, or some isolated fact in the story, but the whole complex of events as recorded. In other words, the context is as important to the message as the words. Where the context is spelled out, that fact must be taken seriously in exegesis. The context is inspired too. It matters very much about the problem to which the text is an answer. One may know very little about the situation in Corinth which archaeology is gradually unfolding for us; we will have to wait patiently for that story to be finished and it will help us a lot. But the things which *are* told us in the letter are vital to an understanding of the message of the book. Marriage counseling, or decisions about feminine dress or participation in worship service, or lawsuits for Christians, or instruction about the Lord's Supper and the place of "tongues," requires a profound understanding of the situation in the Corinthian community. We would like to know much more than is told us, but *what is told us* by Paul cannot be lightly dismissed if one presumes to apply truth from that book to local problems under the label Biblical preaching. Actually, a great deal is shared with the reader, but it takes sanctified diligence to find it. Failure to apply this diligence has resulted in useless and harmful and divisive teaching from the book.

Biblical exegesis which structures Biblical preaching must look behind the words to find the human situation to which the words are addressed in order to properly apply the truth of the words themselves. Those who hold as high a view of inspiration as evangelicals do will understand the force of this statement. When this principle is honored, interpretation is stabilized. "Literal" interpretation is no longer simply an inflexible, grammatical absolutism imposed on the dy-

namic Biblical text but is a proper transposition of the meaning resident in the original life situation to our situation when it is comparable to the first one. A human judgment here is required and implicitly assumed in the interpretive act. A thoughtful analysis of Biblical stories shows clearly the reason people so universally recognize themselves in the Bible. The emphasis is not, mainly, on the temporal, the local, the cultural. There is no bondage to prescientific ideas or the passing philosophical systems of thought. True, the whole environment in the Bible is authentic and we are comfortably assured by this that the Bible people were actually live people on this earth; but standing out from the environment we see people who think and observe and feel and react just as we do. The Bible is, fundamentally, the heart pilgrimage of humanity; and what God said to people three and four and five thousand years ago is just as relevant to us as it was to them. The passing cultural contingencies seem to fall away from the eternal truth of the message. Yet the cultural forms cannot be sealed away as uninspired, for they contribute a vital kind of meaning. "Demythologizing" (Buttmann) is derationalizing the preaching.

FLEXIBILITY OF BIBLICAL LANGUAGE

The reason it seems important to take time to say these things that are so commonly understood is that we tend to forget that the passage of time is not a sufficient reason for investing the flexible Biblical language of experience and devotion with absolute scientific precision. This does not mean that we are free to take liberties with the text and mutilate the record by deed or spirit, but it does mean that the word must re-create a situation in the human heart today comparable to the situation out of which

the word was given, before the true meaning can come through in interpretation. It is just as false to Biblical meaning to woodenly literalize the poetical phrase "the four corners of the earth" into a scientific judgment as to define God or sin philosophically or to inflexibly absolutize, theologially, such terms as grace, love, justification, or even sanctification. None of these terms can properly be lifted out of their environment—or context—and frozen into immobile, lifeless, hard, polished scientific nomenclature. They were put into a setting which would, when respected, preserve their warmth and relevancy and dynamic quality. The human element in the Bible to which the divine speaks is the common lifeblood that keeps the divine meaningful to all who partake of life. The story is the flesh around the idea. It preserves the idea from becoming so detached and irrelevant and intellectualized that it loses all contact with reality.

It saves justification and sanctification from abstraction. It saves redemption itself from becoming a museum piece which men may only study scientifically and write learned tomes about but never partake of.

Again, this does not mean that the inspired Word of God can be separated from the fallible human element in the Bible. It does mean that the human element is itself inspired in such a way as to be inseparable from the divine and to be the avenue of communication to all men. The divine message requires a thorough understanding of all the context provided by way of history, culture, event, problem, teaching, and all together it is the "given" which is called the Word of God. It is a revealing experience to see how much meaning Acts 15:1-11 gives to the eighth and ninth verses, which are usually considered totally apart from the context.

(To be continued)

The Secret Service

By a Concerned Evangelist

THERE IS A little story about a prominent church official who was engaged to speak at a special service. However, on arriving at his appointment he found only one person present. The speaker was greatly disappointed and asked the pastor if he had announced the meeting. "No," was the reply, "but this man found it out somehow."

So many times revivals are scheduled but there is little advertising, no revival banner or sign in front of the church. Often the church is too cool, no one at the church, no lights on even within five minutes of service

time. It is difficult to have a successful revival under these circumstances.

Why not place a revival sign or banner in front of the church? Do a reasonable amount of advertising. Have the church comfortably warm during cold weather, as comfortably cool as possible during warm weather. Have the lights on at least an hour before service, when darkness comes before service time. Make sure there is someone there to welcome people, especially strangers and visitors. These matters observed will help the inspiration and success of the meeting.

Augmented Life Reactions

By Jack M. Scharn*

WHAT IS YOUR reaction to reality? Often we are confronted with the unreality of a world of make-believe, but however we are affected by fantasy, we must face reality and face life honestly.

Recently the listening public has been made aware of radio and television program producers. Now they manufacture audience reactions. The elegant effects of laughter and applause that accompany the program might be only the artificial accomplishment of sound effects. Occasionally the live audience participation will be enlarged and increased. That is what they mean when they flash the words, "Augmented audience reaction technically produced."

The word augment, according to Webster, means "to increase; to enlarge in size or extent." This technical skill increases the effectiveness of the program as it plays on the imagination of the listening audience.

There is something about the increasing and enlarging effect that reminds me of the providence of God as it touches the lives of mankind. Only it is not a dream world of fantasy, but a vital experience and a dynamic reality. Jesus once said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

The Christian life is a life "augmented," or increased and enlarged with a view of eternity and a discovery of Divinity. There is a divine difference, a Christlike change. It is produced with skill far greater than technical knowledge. The greatest miracle of ancient or modern times

is the change that is providentially produced in the "augmented" life. These are the enlarged effects and the consequent life reactions to spiritual transformation:

1. Darkness becomes light.
2. Blindness becomes vision.
3. Despair becomes hope.
4. Turbulence becomes peace.
5. Uncertainty becomes assurance.
6. Seeking becomes finding.
7. Weakness becomes strength.
8. Selfishness becomes service.
9. The soul cries out, "Not my will, but thine."

Ask Isaiah about the time he saw the Lord high and lifted up in the Temple. His life was "augmented." He caught the vision, he felt the transformation, and he went forth to serve, crying—"Here am I; send me."

Ask Paul, whose life was "augmented" on the road to Damascus. Indeed it was enlarged, increased, expanded, and multiplied for God and righteousness.

We all enjoy our air castles, our dream world of fantasy, and the realm of make-believe; but as we face the reality of life, we seek also the best that it has to offer. Religion does not narrow our horizons and shrink our world about us. It rather opens up a new world, an expanding universe. It permits travel in religious rockets into the outer space of boundless grace. It is all so exciting, so thrilling, so wonderful, and yet so real and practical. This is the secret of the "augmented" life providentially produced. This is the meaning of Christ's message—"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

*Pastor, Lone Pine, California.

Those to Whom We Preach

By Bernice L. Roedel*

I PREACHED to a woman who committed suicide. Not once but several times she sat in the congregation of the Nazarene church during the revival I conducted in the small Illinois community two and a half years ago. Little did I realize as I ministered to her that she would be in eternity a year later as the result of a self-inflicted gun wound. Had I known, would the results have been different? Would I have tried harder to reach her for the Lord? Jesus had a would-be suicide among His disciples, but one Bible scholar says Jesus tried seven times to save Judas from the thing he did.

I remember now that, though this woman professed to be a Christian, played the piano for Sunday school, and taught a children's class, she needed spiritual help. Like Judas, she had tightened the string on the moneybag and had refused to let her husband tithe their income. That love of money and giving to the church was an argumentative issue in the home was evidenced, also, by a question dropped in the question box by their youngest son. It was: "If no souls are saved in the revival, should we pay for it?" It was aimed as a reflection upon the "worthlessness" of the evangelist who had preached a week without visible results, but proved rather a revelation of a discordant family debate. But after the question was

placed in the box and before it was answered in the N.Y.P.S. service, God had broken through and given us souls in the Sunday morning service. In answer I quoted the words of Paul. "[One has] . . . planted . . . [another] watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (I Corinthians 3:6-7).

I know that God helped me and other ministers to sow good seed—His Spirit bore witness to the truth. But ". . . some fell on stony ground"—upon a woman's hardened heart. She went from the house of God to live a life of open shame—committed the sin of adultery, left her husband and family to become the common-law wife of another man. Though she became sorry of her bargain, she sought no place of repentance. Life for her was not worth living, so she took her own life.

Somewhere this soul crossed the line between God's mercy and His wrath. Was it during the revival? Was it while I ministered to her? I know not. Eternity holds the answer. It is best that I do not know lest reflection upon past failures hinder me in my service for the present. I have a message to preach tonight in this same church. God, help me to make full proof of my ministry and to be true to men's souls. Someday I, as an evangelist, must give an account as well as those who sit in the pews.

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Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle*

Romans 11:25

MYSTERY

THE WORD "MYSTERION" (v. 25) is a favorite one with Paul. It is found five (or six) times in I Corinthians and ten times in Colossians-Ephesians, as well as once in II Thessalonians and twice in I Timothy. But strangely, it does not occur at all in Galatians and only twice in Romans (cf. 16:25). Elsewhere in the New Testament it is used once in each of the Synoptic Gospels (in parallel passages) and four times in Revelation.

In classical Greek the word meant "a hidden thing, secret, mystery."¹ It was used of "that which is known to the mystes (initiated), a mystery or secret doctrine."² Arndt and Gingrich note that it was "a religious technical term, applied in secular Greek (predominantly plural) mostly to the mysteries with their secret teachings, concealed within many strange customs and ceremonies."³

The use of this term familiar to the first readers of Paul's Epistles was for secret information which was divulged to those initiated into one of the mystery religions but not to be divulged to outsiders. It thus suggested something unknown to the initiated. Moulton and Milligan give ample illustration of its use as a "technical term in pagan religion to denote a 'secret' or 'secret doctrine' known

only to the initiated, which they are not at liberty to disclose."⁴

Cremer points out this common usage of that day as follows: "Thus *mysterion* does not properly denote that which is wholly withdrawn from knowledge, or cannot be known, but a *knowledge of hidden things* which is itself to be kept secret, or which at least is unknowable without special communication of it."⁵

There is probably a parallel, at least in part, to be seen in the Christian use of this term. For only those who have become "in Christ" can understand the real meaning of the gospel. Paul underscores this fact in the early chapters of I Corinthians, where he writes: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14).

When we turn to the New Testament we find a distinct meaning given to this important word. Arndt and Gingrich express it this way: "Our literature uses it to mean the secret thoughts, plans and dispensations of God which are hidden from the human reason, as well as from all other comprehension below the divine level, and hence must be revealed to those for whom they are intended."⁶ On Romans 11:25 they comment: "A se-

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¹Thayer, *Lexicon*, p. 420.

²Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, p. 298.

Lexicon, pp. 531-32.

³VGT, p. 420.

⁴*Lexicon*, p. 424.

⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 532.

cret or mystery, too profound for human ingenuity, is God's reason for partial hardening of Israel's heart."⁷

After citing a number of scripture references Cremer concludes: "It is evident from the passages now quoted that *mysterion* here designates information dependent on divine revelation, a knowledge of the truths of the gospel so far as these have been or are made known by divine revelation, and this must be regarded as the Biblical or New Testament meaning of the expression."⁸

J. Armitage Robinson gives a very full treatment of the term. He notes that in its New Testament sense a mystery is "not a thing which *must* be kept secret. On the contrary it is a secret which God wills to make known and has charged His Apostles to declare to those who have ears to hear it."⁹

Thayer makes it a bit more specific. He writes that in the New Testament *mysterion* means "God's plan of providing salvation for men through Christ, which was once hidden but now is revealed."¹⁰

Alford suggests that in our passage the word signifies "a prophetic event, unattainable by human knowledge, but revealed from the secrets of God."¹¹ Meyer notes that it "always refers to the relations and development of the Messianic kingdom."¹²

Westcott sums up the New Testament connotation of the term thus: "Truths which are the characteristic possessions of Christians are 'mysteries.' Among these the universality of the Gospel . . . is preeminently 'the mystery.'"¹³

In his commentary on Colossians, Lightfoot calls attention to the pagan associations of this term. But then he continues: "Thus the idea of *secrecy* or *reserve* disappears when *mysterion* is adopted into the Christian vocabulary by St. Paul: and the word signifies simply 'a truth which was once hidden but now is revealed,' 'a truth which without special revelation would have been unknown.'" He adds: "Hence *mysterion* is almost universally found in connexion with words denoting revelation or publication."¹⁴ Westcott underscores this idea when he writes: "The fact of revelation is always implied in the word 'mystery' in the New Testament."¹⁵ G. S. Hendry goes so far as to say: "In the Pauline terminology mystery is correlative with revelation."¹⁶ Godet affirms this in almost the same words. He writes: "The two notions *mystery* and revelation are correlative."¹⁷

Sanday and Headlam pinpoint the difference between the pagan and Pauline meanings of the term thus: "Whereas among the heathen *mysterion* was always used of a mystery concealed, with St. Paul it is a mystery revealed."¹⁸

Yet it seems to us that there is a parallel, as noted above, between the use of the word in the Eleusinian mysteries and in Christianity. We would agree with Benjamin W. Bacon when he says: "In Biblical and in ancient use generally the 'mystery' is simply that which is made known only to the initiated, be its content easy or hard to understand, hence *revealed* as against *reasoned* knowledge."¹⁹

⁷Ibid.

⁸Op. cit., p. 425.

⁹J. Armitage Robinson, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (2nd. ed.; London: Macmillan and Co., 1909), p. 240.

¹⁰Op. cit., p. 420.

¹¹Greek Testament, II, 434.

¹²Romans, p. 446.

¹³B. F. Westcott, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 44.

¹⁴J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 168.

¹⁵Op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁶G. S. Hendry, "Mystery," *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, ed. Alan Richardson (London: SCM Press, 1950), p. 156.

¹⁷Romans, p. 409.

¹⁸Romans, p. 334.

¹⁹HDCG, II, 213.

On the New Testament sense of this significant term there is general agreement among scholars. Stewart states it very briefly thus: "The great 'mystery' of the New Testament is the Divine plan of salvation, but now made known in Christ."²⁰

One of the best summaries of its meaning is that given by Vine. He writes: "In the New Testament it

denotes, not the mysterious (as with the English word), but that which, being outside the range of unassisted natural apprehension, can be made known only by Divine revelation, and is made known in a manner and at a time appointed by God, and to those only who are illumined by His Spirit."²¹

²¹W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, III, 97.

²⁰HDB, III, 466.

How to Heal a Broken Heart

By S. L. Morgan, Sr.*

AN EVENT in my home on the night of April 16, 1960, will remain unforgettable through time and eternity. My once-brilliant wife had been in the State Hospital, Raleigh, for ten days, slowly approaching her end. For over fifty years she had been my soul-companion and equal partner. I was overwhelmed with a sense of loneliness and desolation. I deeply needed the solace of friends I could trust, needed also their advice on how to live creatively the days or months remaining to me at eighty-eight. For I couldn't forget that my wife had taught me and the four children that we must live "dangerously," meaning that we must die rather than swerve an inch from right and duty. I must continue in her tradition, or be ignoble. And time was short.

By phone I asked a group of stalwarts to my home: the sainted Dr. W. R. Cullom, ninety-three; the president, the dean, and several other

eminent professors in Southeastern Seminary nearby. I knew they wouldn't have the heart to refuse one in desperate need of help. My pastor belonged but couldn't come.

My friends indulged me to tell with some emotion of my slowly dying wife, and how I felt bound to carry on her brave tradition to the end. Like her, I must carry on "dangerously." That seemed a sacred trust handed down to me.

My own need of comfort prompted me to appeal to a great seminary to produce a new generation of preachers fitted to be comforters. We had just heard that prince of preachers, Dr. George A. Buttrick, tell the seminary community how, as a student in London, he had often heard the famous preacher-expositor Alexander Maclaren close his sermons with the charge to his people, "Be kind, for *everybody has a burden.*" And our great seminary must send out comforters, for our troubled world desperately needs comforters.

*Wake Forest, N.C.

Out of my experience of suffering I pointed out certain essentials if one is to be a comforter, whether preacher or layman.

First is the *capacity to care deeply*. My favorite definition of a Christian is *one who cares*. Jesus is our Model; He deeply cared about the burdens and sorrows of the people He met. He was "moved with compassion." He somehow made even the "publicans and sinners" feel He deeply cared. Despised by others, they "drew nigh" and followed Him, nestling up to His warm heart.

I testify. I've known deep sorrow, and only here and there have friends and neighbors made me feel they understood or deeply cared. An exception was the young wife of a professor. She called to me at the post office, and with a look and tone that went to my heart she said, "I've heard about your wife, and I'm so sorry!" In the sheer joy of her warmth my heart sang all day long. She cared!

I wrote a postal card to a woman I had never seen. I knew she had a great sorrow. She wrote touchingly, "I put your card in my purse and took it out and read it several times in the schoolroom, just to feel that somebody cared!"

And this deep capacity to care comes only to those who have laid their hearts in glad surrender close against the warm heart of Jesus to be melted by its warmth.

The second essential for the best comforter is the *actual experience of deep suffering*. I dared to illustrate for seminary friends out of my own experience of suffering. Several friends had just been to see me from a former parish. Noble souls, they knew of my sorrow and came to comfort me. And because they had been great sufferers they knew how. Each had gone through desperate bereavement, one without a parallel. She had lost a

fine daughter preparing to be a foreign missionary. Then four other admirable daughters had fallen dead in a heap from a bolt of lightning. I had seen their four white caskets buried in one huge grave, with thousands of people gathered from several states, the funeral service carried to them over loud-speakers.

I was able to tell the seminary heads that such sufferers had learned the perfect technique for comforting others. They helped me as no others; they helped to cry out and talk out my grief—not to bottle it up. Most others thought it kind to dry my tears; they knew by experience that healing comes, first of all, by weeping out and talking out one's grief into hearts that deeply care. That is the lesson that preacher or layman must learn if he would be a healer of broken hearts. And to learn it well, he must himself learn it by suffering—at least suffering with those he would help. I had to say that, as a pastor, I had long felt my technique must be wrong when I couldn't keep people from weeping; I had learned that helping people freely to weep and talk out their grief is God's own first step in healing the broken heart.

A third necessity if one is to be a great comforter is the *daily nurture of the soul life in a quiet hour*. I had invited the venerable saint Dr. Cullom to be present to be the object lesson for this great truth. I had lately extracted from him the main secret of his sainthood, known over all the South. In his first year in college he began the habit of keeping a "quiet time" with God as the first act of the day. He had kept it up now for seventy-three years, only rarely missing when away from home. It was the main secret of his saintly, fruitful life up to his ninety-third year. I dared to hope his eminent example would mightily influence the new

seminary with its 750 young preachers and the generations to follow. Nothing else could do more to make godly preachers and comforters.

A fourth essential if one is to be a comforter after the divine pattern is that he will stoop to *comfort the despised and outcast*. Jesus was known as the "friend of publicans and sinners." Meant as a contemptuous thrust, He welcomed it, delighting most in a ministry of healing and comfort among those treated as outcasts by others. So Gandhi espoused the cause of the millions of outcasts in India. They had no persons of influence to speak for them, and he went to their side in sympathy and pity.

I declared to the seminary group my conviction that the ministers of today and tomorrow must humbly but frankly declare God is no respecter of persons nor races nor colors. God's minister must humbly but boldly declare that every person of every color or race is a "soul for whom Christ died" and infinitely dear to God, and so to be treated as a person, regard-

less of nationality or color, each with as much right to be respected as any other.

The bitter fight sweeping the nation over the rights of certain of her citizens cannot be pleasing to Christ, who taught humility as the first law of Christianity. He stooped to wash the feet of the disciples quarreling over who was greatest, to teach them humility as the first law of Christianity. He was "in the form of God," but He refused to grasp and cling to that exalted position, but He "emptied himself" and came down, down, down, to the form of a man, then a servant—then down to die—on a cross (Philippians 2:3-14).

Peter refused to eat with gentiles, but God rebuked him by pouring out the Holy Spirit on gentile converts (Acts 10:34-35) and convinced Peter he had been wrong.

The new generation of preachers must bravely but humbly preach the brotherhood of all men of all races and colors, and so be God's prophets in leading toward universal brotherhood.

A NEW PILOT

Old Bust-Me-Up. Some years ago an old tugboat with a very bad reputation was running between London and Portsmouth, in England. The tug was strong enough, but it developed a very bad habit: it could not run into any harbor without colliding with some vessel. It did so much damage that the sailors all along the coast came to call it "Old Bust-Me-Up." But one bright morning a miracle happened; Old Bust-Me-Up came into Portsmouth harbor and missed every boat in sight. The men on the docks just couldn't understand it.

One sailor called out, "What's come over you, Old Bust-Me-Up?" A sailor on the deck of the tug shouted back, "Got a new skipper aboard!"

That is exactly what being born again means—taking a new Pilot aboard to guide one's life.—FRANK S. MEAD in "Tarbell's Teachers' Guide, 1961" (Fleming H. Revell Company).

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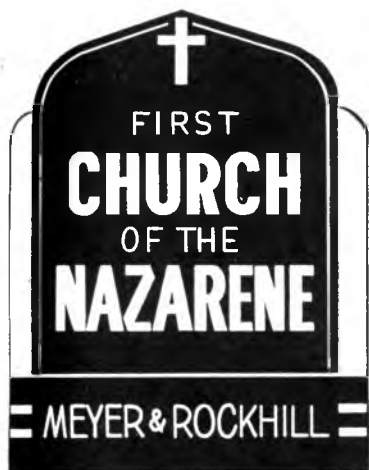
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II. Some Basic Foundations

By Raymond Kratzer*

HAVING LOOKED at the discouraging trends in regard to Sunday night attendance, let us suggest some ideas this month that are working in many churches which might implement what is being done already.

In the *first* place, one cannot over-emphasize the *importance of Spirit-anointed services*. This must be the supreme purpose with pastor and people in order to have the prime Christian attraction, whether the congregation be large or small.

It is self-evident that when the glory of God pervades the atmosphere of a worship service a church has the prime ingredient to assure the kind of victory it desires. Immediately following the baptism with the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost there came the largest influx into the Christian Church on record. Two days produced 8,000 conversions. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

We have many passengers today who cry for the "good old days" but who refuse to examine themselves in the light of their own soul-leanness. If the church does not have the "glory" today, it is because the individuals in that church do not have the "glory" themselves; for people are the church.

In many places the Sunday night service has been rejuvenated through

a planned effort to deepen the spiritual life of the congregation. As a consequence, the attractiveness of the Spirit's presence has become the most effective advertisement that could be found, for people want to see what happens when God is present in the church. Much else that might be considered commonplace in the service suddenly takes on beauty and grace when touched by the Divine Presence. In reality there is no substitute for the Shekinah from God in any service.

In the *second* place, *good preaching* adds strength to the motives which cause people to want to come to church on Sunday evening when so many other interests call them. "Blessed is the pastor that does not relegate his Sunday night message to the inspiration of the moment, or compound it from the fragments that are left of his sermonic meanderings."

A story is told of a minister who commented to Mrs. Brown on her faithfulness each Lord's day and of the joy he felt when he saw her in her regular pew. She replied: "Indeed, sir, I'm real glad to come, for it isn't often that I get such a comfortable seat and so little to think about."

Great congregations have been built and maintained through the consistent quality of the preacher in bringing great messages Sunday after Sunday. And with the wealth of material at one's disposal, any pastor should be ashamed to give hash or warmed-over

*Superintendent, Northwest District.

potluck to his congregation. The admonition of the Word is to "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

It is helpful at times to begin a two-sermon series on Sunday morning and conclude it Sunday night. It would not be irreligious to close the morning message in the middle of a thrilling story that would whet the appetite or curiosity of the congregation to be back in the evening to hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Of course it is imperative that the first course be so delicious that only a sudden illness would be sufficient to keep the parishioners from being on hand to get the second course.

An alert pastor will always be on the lookout for some special speaker who would add variety to his evening service. Such guest speakers as missionaries, visiting ministers, etc. can be a real boon to a service, especially if they are well advertised and put in a setting of inspirational atmosphere.

A *third* item which is an invaluable aid to Sunday night attendance is a *good musical program*. The ministry of music is of inestimable worth in attracting people to the church. In fact, many persons have been wooed and won to the Lord through music when nothing else in the world could have reached their needy, calloused hearts.

A good song leader is essential in order to fulfill this ministry adequately. He should be a person who knows what type of music is fitting for a Sunday night service. Gospel songs should be the order of the occasion, well infiltrated with lively choruses. A few testimonies are always welcome and help the atmosphere of the service.

Wherever possible, the Sunday night choir is a "must" in the music program. It can be composed of the same personnel as the Sunday morning choir but with a bit less formality. Periodically it is good to vary the program by having a different type of choir. For instance, a mother-and-grandmother choir is unique and is a wonderful feature to encourage Sunday night attendance. At times like these, perhaps on Father's or Mother's Day, the musical program could be varied with a mother-and-daughter duet, a grandmothers' trio, a grandfathers' quartet, etc. People are captivated by these variations and they will lend themselves to increasing the interest of the congregation.

A youth choir and musical program are excellent innovations several times a year in line with annual emphases of youth activities. A children's choir with musical ensembles adds interest to the evening service occasionally, and such a program will get a lot of parents out who would ordinarily stay home. The pastor's sermon on these occasions could be directed toward the evangelism of youth and parents alike.

Instrumental night is a wonderful plan to encourage the use of talented folk who enjoy playing some instrument but have little opportunity to share with others. Many churches have developed good orchestras which they use regularly in their Sunday night services. With music being taught in the public schools, we should take advantage of our youth and encourage them to use their talents for the Lord.

It is in line with the over-all ministry of music to have several full musical programs during the year which will include the entire evening service. Spring and fall musical festivals are valuable. Easter and Christmas cantatas are routine expectations

and can be made superb with well-planned pageantry and decorations. A sacred-patriotic concert is appropriate on the Fourth of July Sunday night or on Veterans Day in November. Occasionally a musical program built around the theme "A Balm in Gilead" can be a real encouragement to the church. Songs of faith and solace can be sung which point up the availability of God's help in every circumstance, which may change the whole tenor of life for some person.

Music should be used in all of its component parts to implement the worship of the Lord as well as to motivate people to share in the worship experience. It can revolutionize the entire ministry of the church if it is well planned and anointed of the Lord. A small girl was visiting her aunt in the country. The child was from a very formal church and made some interesting observations concerning the excellent service in her aunt's church. "What do you think of our minister?" the aunt asked her after one of the services. "Wonderful," said the little girl, "but our minister could preach good too if our choir would root for him like yours does for your minister."

Baby dedications, reception of church members, and other ceremonies which ordinarily take place on Sunday morning, can be shifted to the Sunday night service at times. Special nights such as Visitor Night, Neighbor Night, Cousin Night, In-Law Night, and a dozen other adaptations can be invoked to stir up interest. The business world increases its sales by similar methods, and Jesus must have had this in mind when He said: "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8).

If we care enough for God's cause to work at the job diligently, we can see it succeed. We should become so constituted that nothing Satan can throw at us will discourage us or defeat us. We must determine not to be caught in the meshes of twentieth-century indifference to spiritual things, but rather, by figuratively squirming, twisting, pushing, pulling, and striving, free ourselves from the toils that threaten our existence.

There is unlimited value in an alive and active Sunday night service. Fortune lies there for the church that will expend the necessary energies to stake the claim and work at it from all angles.

The gold of precious souls which eventually will be wrought out on the altar of prayer is in itself worth all the effort to see that the Sunday night service becomes an institution of strength. The midweek service is bound to increase proportionately because of a new awareness of worship responsibility. Likewise, from increased attendance and additional seekers at the altar there will be a consequent growth in church membership. In fact, there is bound to be a dynamic growth and development in the entire church economy when the service of evangelism is given its rightful place.

We need a re-emphasis upon "first things" and a return to some of the values of the past which have not been outmoded by a veneer civilization. Among these values is the Sunday night service of song and evangelism. This service should return to its former glory until it serves again as a great factory which refashions broken men and women into the likeness of God.

Gifts are not estimated in heaven by dollars and cents.—J. R. MILLER.

"QUEEN of the PARSONAGE"

*May she who in the parsonage dwells be radiant, poised, serene;
And every moment of each day be every inch a queen!*

Contributed by Ruth Vaughn*

Portrait of a Queen

IT WAS assembly time for the Minnesota District. It was a busy, hectic time for everyone concerned . . . but especially for one, the queen of the district parsonage, under whose guidance came all of the details to which attention must be given. She rushed down the center aisle of the church after the service, intent upon her many duties. Then a shy, slender girl approached. Looking into the depths of the girl's eyes, Mrs. Roy Stevens could see hurt and confusion lurking.

There were duties calling. And there was a girl with a problem. Her keen, fair mind quickly weighed the situation. The girl won out. Mrs. Stevens gave to her warmth, concern, and help. Her duties came later.

Such is the character of Mrs. Stevens. Under all circumstances, no matter how rushed, harried, or demanding, she has time to talk with all who need her and is concerned deeply with each problem that is presented. She accepts that problem as her own until the person who came to her feels that everything will be all right, after all.

The quality of enthusiasm is personified in Mrs. Stevens. She looks at all of the many tasks about her which demand attention, smiles upon them, catches them to herself, and somehow they are lifted from just

routine into something splendid and wonderful. She makes the most trivial tasks which are to be done glow with the real joy of true accomplishment.

Optimism is a predominant note in the melody of her life. She has never been known, even by those closest to her, to give out a discouraging word. It is always, "Yes, we can do that." Then she seeks out a way to accomplish her goal. Gracious and smiling, she leads all who know her into a daring for God that would be incredible to anyone with a smaller vision, a weaker faith, or a less dauntless spirit.

Mrs. Stevens keeps a beautiful and artistically arranged home, somehow achieving the impossible goal of having it always ready for company. She enters into the unpredictable life of her husband with poise and enthusiasm. She is a part of her teen-age daughter's life as she helps her in her many projects, and gives interest and support to the phases into which she cannot enter.

There have been many dark days, many tears shed, many crushing blows in her life, but Mrs. Stevens has learned to be firm in difficulties and superior to adversity. For in spite of the heartaches she has a tremendous capacity for happiness. Laughter sets with easy grace upon her lips. Her quicksilver eyes always smile as if to twinkle, Hello! I like you!

*Pastor's wife, Lubbock, Texas.

She possesses such a contagious, joyous expectancy toward life that it seems that she believes that each new day will bring some lovely, valued thing. And she is never disappointed. For she looks deeper than the superficial for beauty and value. Beneath a freckled face she sees a tiny personality; beneath teen-age giggles and frivolity, she sees a hungry soul; beneath a pink print house dress, she sees a longing heart. And she spends her life helping to develop the beauty and value which she discovers—beneath the surface.

Mrs. Roy Stevens is a rare and unusual personality. Truly this is a portrait of a queen!

ROYAL COOKBOOK

The first time I ever fed a district superintendent was a real occasion—as it always is for the new parsonage queen! Our budget in that home mission church was incredibly small. In desperation I came up with this recipe that was attractive, edible, and economical. It has since become rather standard at our house. Incidentally, that first district superintendent was recently elected as our sixth general superintendent. You may fix this and know you are truly following in the path of royalty!

Brown 1 lb. of stew meat in skillet. Mince one clove garlic and add to the meat, browning until yellow. Add 1¼ tbsp. soy sauce, salt, and ¼ cup water and cook for about 40 minutes. Then add 1 chopped medium onion and 1 medium green pepper chopped in small pieces. Stir in 1 tbsp. cornstarch mixed in 1 cup water. Add two tomatoes sliced into eighths, and cook for five minutes. With this mixture, surround hot, fluffy rice served in the center of your platter.

OVER TEACUPS

“So many times since I have entered the parsonage, people have

come to me seeking counsel. I am totally unprepared and indaequate in this capacity. Are there some basic rules which I, as a minister's wife, could follow as a counselor?”

An authority on “queen's” problems is Mrs. Dell Aycock. She has answered the above question with a very informative and helpful paper. We shall feature this for the next several issues. We present Mrs. Dell Aycock's paper on “The Preacher's Wife as a Counselor.”

“As a preacher's wife, you are going to be the only landmark of help some women will ever have along their way between tragedy, bitter experience, an unhappy existence, and the courts of heaven. Make certain they find in you the strength and the help they have sought so long. Let them find in you a station, a way station, for weariness, a place of strength for weakness and courage for discouragement. These women and girls will be strewn along your way like pebbles on the beach. Do not think that you are the exception, for they will be there. And it is up to you to see them and to let them know that you will never betray them. See that you do not.

“There are certain technical rules for counseling and it would be well for you to read as much as you can in this field. However, here I am not speaking about counseling in general or counseling with people outside of the church, but counseling with our own church group, and counseling which has at its center the spiritual purposes for which we are working as ministers. Many so-called counselors do not have a Christian viewpoint. They will say to one who is in trouble: ‘If you are bored, go to a theater, see this picture or play, or go to a dance. Follow the path of your desires [the most vicious advice ever handed out]. Get out and have a good

time. Do not attend church; it will make you nervous!' As Christians, we know that advice of this sort is not sound. We must do our best to tie the principles of sound counseling with Christian principles. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

"Be sincere. Be honest. Be frank. And most of all, be true to the soul with whom you are dealing. You might say, 'The person with whom you are dealing.' No, the soul. For when people come to you (a preacher's wife) for help, they most always are looking for help for their souls, spiritual help. And remember, a soul never dies. Give her scripture to take away with her, scripture that fits her case. Hence you must be prepared ahead of time with portions of God's Word which will be helpful in given situations. Do not give a needy soul occasion to feel that she has come to the wrong counselor."

BOOKSHELF WITH LACE

Your husband may have these in his library. If not, he needs them. If so, you use them. *Meet the Major Prophets* and *Meet the Minor Prophets*, both written by Ralph Earle, are two of the most informative and inspirational books concerning the Old Testament in print. After my studying these books by Dr. Earle, the Old Testament prophecies have come alive for me. Do study these books. Your

life will be richer. (N.P.H., \$.75 and \$1.00.)

THE KING'S HOUSE

We saw a lovely idea in a "royal" house the other day. It was a tailored canopy bed made by simply taking the same fabric as the bedspread and running the fabric (the width of the bed) up the wall and out into place with brass rods at the corner lines, and at the end of the bed length the fabric dropped over the brass rod, hanging down about six inches in pleats. V-E-R-Y elegant and so inexpensive!

HEART TALK

One of the most wonderful lessons we learn in the parsonage is to truly believe the verse we learned as children: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). When frustration, misunderstandings, and heartache come, how blessed it is to relax in the midst of the turmoil, realizing that we do not live by our own cleverness or abilities but rather that we can just *trust*—such a wonderful word—*trust* in the Lord with *all* our hearts! And not to what we understand—which is usually so pitifully small—but just *trust* in the Lord! What a priceless lesson we have learned when we change this verse from mere words to be quoted into a living, vital belief!

CHRIST

A great violinist, an artist with the music of Beethoven always in his ears, once said that a man could work for fifty years on a Beethoven concerto, and still not know all there is to know about it, because "it is an alive thing."

So is Jesus Christ alive; one can love and worship Him for a lifetime, and, still, the day before death, discover in Him new beauty and meaning. That is one proof of His Lordship.—FRANK S. MEAD in "Tarbell's Teachers' Guide, 1961" (Fleming H. Revell Co.).

II. A Limited Congregationalism

By S. W. Strickland*

LAST MONTH we opened up the study of Nazarene church government by looking at the principle of limited episcopacy. Let us turn here to the second basic principle of our government, a limited congregationalism.

In unlimited congregationalism, governing power centers in the local congregation. It also is a time-honored system of church government with some large and influential churches successfully operating under the system. But in the union of 1907 and since, the Church of the Nazarene has not accepted the plan of extreme congregationalism. Nazarenes wanted instead a connectional pattern of church organization, composed of the local, district, and general parts. Full congregationalism, with the local group fully autonomous, could not be adjusted to this connectional pattern of organization. Consequently just as the supervisory principle of episcopacy was retained in a modified form as superintendency, so there were retained some, but not all, of the principles of congregationalism. Certain definite and specific rights as well as responsibilities were left to each Nazarene congregation, regardless of size. Each congregation should be aware of these and be encouraged to intelligently exercise them. This is necessary for the protection of each church and the progress of the church as a whole. Thus the two principles

of a limited episcopacy and a limited congregationalism are complementary, not contradictory, parts of Nazarene government.

The constitutional rights and responsibilities reserved to each Nazarene congregation are as follows:

1. The right to select its own pastor.

The Nazarene constitution (*Manual*, p. 40) says: "Each church shall enjoy the right to select its own pastor, subject to such approval as the General Assembly shall find wise to institute." The right to select its own pastor is one of the basic constitutional rights of each Nazarene church regardless of size. The right to select is in the local church and not in any system of approval. The method of approval is only one way of helping each church to maintain its proper relationship to the denomination as a whole. The *Manual* is meant to help each church in selecting and getting the minister of its own choice as pastor, if that minister is in good standing in the Church of the Nazarene. Through the years the exercise of the approval has been placed in the district superintendency, but this does not mean the authority in selecting the pastor has been divided equally between the church and the district superintendent. The choice of the pastor still remains the choice of the church, but the church is assisted by the district superintendent in mak-

*Pastor, Nashville, Tennessee.

ing the best possible choice. The approval system, if used as intended, does not hinder a church in the free exercise of its choice of pastor, but is a help, instead, to the wisest exercise of its choice. Even with those churches leaning toward episcopacy the voice of the congregation is having more and more weight in getting its pastor.

2. The right to elect its own delegates to the various assemblies.

This, too, is one of the constitutional rights and responsibilities of each local Nazarene church. Delegates duly elected by each congregation go to the district assembly to help transact the business of the district. Prior to the meeting of the General Assembly the delegates from each church in the district assembly help to elect the delegates to the General Assembly to represent the district and local congregation in all business transacted by the General Assembly.

3. The right to manage its own finances.

Another constitutional right of each Nazarene church is the right to manage its own finances. Each local church is a vital part of the connec-tional life of the whole church. With the exercise of the right to manage its own finances goes the responsibility of each church to support the *whole work of the church to the best of its ability*. The right to say how much it will give to the support of

all the interests of the church—local, district, and general—resides constitutionally in each local church. The right to say how much each church shall give is not in the district ways and means committee, nor in the district assembly, nor even in the General Assembly, but in each local church. This is a part of the congregational principle guaranteed by the Church Constitution to each church (*Manual*, p. 40): "Each church shall . . . manage its own finances, and have charge of all other matters pertaining to its local life and work." The district assembly makes official all district and general budgets by officially adopting the budgets recommended by the ways and means committee. Because of this the assembly could be said to apportion budgets, but technically this is not true. The ways and means committee gets recommendations from each church. It then operates through the channels of the representative assembly body. Finally, the local church board may (but seldom does) change those budgets if it thinks best. A church whose financial income changes drastically during the year is not penalized in any way for failing to meet all of its budgets. The exercise of this right and responsibility by each church to say how much its budgets shall be can best be done through the church board under the leadership of the pastor.

(To be continued)

SPEAKING OF THE CROSS

"The manner in which you speak of the Cross is to my mind the best assurance of the success which awaits your ministry. Your apostolic enthusiasm shall not be wanting in apostolic results. He who uplifts the Cross shall surely share the exaltation and blessedness of his Lord. This holy earnestness will affect for good your entire relations with the life and service of the sanctuary. Making you covetous of time—impatient of all trifling; sincere in sympathy; at once dauntless and tender in the exposition of truth; a watchful servant and brave soldier."—DR. JOSEPH PARKER. Contributed by B. V. Seals.

Leading the Church in Prayer

By E. E. Wordsworth*

THE FAMOUS pastor of Chicago First Church for over fourteen years, Rev. W. G. Schurman, once said to me, "Keep your church on her knees." I humbly say this scribe always endeavored to do this in forty years of pastoral experience. And it never failed to produce spiritual, numerical, and financial results. If you depend on works you will get what works can do. If you depend on prayer you will get what prayer can do. If you depend on mighty, prevailing, and much prayer that issues in hard pastoral labors you will get what prayer and works will accomplish.

The constant tendency is to over-emphasize works to the tragic neglect of intercessory prayer. Prayer will solve problems, lift burdens, harmonize the membership, kill divisions, defeat carnality, uplift the horizons, deepen the spiritual church life, produce Pentecostal revivals, defeat the world, the flesh, and the devil, and "get the glory down" as nothing else will.

I once served a much-divided church that had two very distinct factions. The devil was in the saddle for sure. It was heartbreaking. Fellowship was broken. Gossiping and unwarranted carnal criticism prevailed. Many district advisory board sessions were held, visits of the district superintendent, and a general superintendent had been there to try to heal the deep wounds and save the church. When I assumed this pastorate I ignored divisions and immedi-

ately started Tuesday all-day fasting and prayer meetings; also other special times of prayer—sometimes all night. I was neutral throughout, but stressed much prayer. I saw the day when factions died, fellowship was restored, altars were lined with seekers, saints wept, rejoiced, shouted, and the glory fell again and again. And from that time on, victory has perched on the banners of that church. But I had to lead in prayer. Brethren, it is not enough to exhort and preach unity, fellowship, and revivals. You must be a striking example of the ministry of prayer. You must have an intense passion for souls.

All great soul winners have been men of much and mighty prayer. There must be knee work in the secret closet, days of fasting and prayer in the church, special seasons of crying mightily to God and weeping over the lost. Jesus, Leader of His disciples, prayed forty days before He began His ministry, Paul prayed without ceasing. Pentecostal baptism with the Holy Spirit was preceded by ten days of prayer.

But listen, my ministerial brethren, you are responsible for leading in prayer. Set the example. Be a man of much prayer at any cost. If you will pray in your closet you will have power in your pulpit. Saturate your sermons with prayer. Go from your knees, not your commentaries and reference works, to the pulpit. Go weighted down with prayer and lead your congregation close to God, for He will bless His people. Amen.

*Evangelist, Redmond, Washington.

The Art of Reading Aloud**

By J. Edward Lantz*

READING THE BIBLE aloud requires some imagination. The reader becomes an interpreter of a message written many years ago in a language other than the one used for speaking. The writer lived in a land far away from the United States and belonged to a civilization and culture very different from that of present-day America. It would all seem quite strange to us if we were suddenly thrust into it.

The message this Biblical author wrote was not even coded in our language. Editors and copyists, as well as translators, may have made some alterations in the original discourse before it finally became transcribed into English. Hundreds of such messages constitute our Bible. We read them as God's Word, given to His people—through His inspired leaders.

So it is important for the reader to do more than merely pronounce words. He must interpret them, relating them to the time and place in which we live. And God's message must come to him before he can pass it on to the hearers.

The reader needs to be consciously aware of his relationship both to his Bible and to his listeners. It is a three-fold connection—the reader, the Bible, and the listeners—that is essential if there is to be effective communication.

Reading aloud the Word of God is

different from all other parts of the public worship service.

In public prayer, for instance, the person who prays seeks to establish the man-to-God relationship. Public prayer is addressed to God—not to people—but the leader in prayer must be conscious that other people are listening, and that to the degree that they listen, his prayer becomes their prayer. He is their mouthpiece insofar as he expresses their aspirations and shortcomings and desires before God.

The preacher, by way of contrast, communicates as a man to his fellow men rather than as man to God, and he thereby creates a man-to-man bond. He is a spokesman for God, to be sure, but from a different viewpoint from the one who offers prayer.

The office of the reader is still different. He speaks as from God to man rather than as from man to God or man to man.

Both the reader and the preacher, therefore, direct their utterances to the people. The main difference in function is that the preacher proclaims a message that he himself constructed, while the reader of the Bible delivers one that someone else composed. The reader must so interpret what he reads that the listeners can both comprehend its purpose and respond to its motif.

This means that the reader must re-create the message and mood of

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**The *New Christian Advocate*, condensed from "Reading the Bible Aloud." Used by permission.

the author. Achieving this experience produces a most satisfying rapport of worship, because both the reader and his hearers are responding sympathetically to the same stimulus at the same time. No matter how many times he has gone over the passage before, nor how much time he has spent rehearsing it, the reader must feel what he is reading at the very moment of reading.

The reader is not an impersonator or an actor. Rather he is an interpreter.

The Bible interpreter does not create the good news that he proclaims, although he does re-create its thought and mood just as the language interpreter does. As that interpreter retains his own identity and does not strive to imitate any of his participants, so the Bible interpreter should not strive to copy the author or his characters. To suggest various character roles and to differentiate one from the other is usually sufficient.

Take, for example, the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15). Note that the reader can appropriately distinguish between the father, the prodigal, and the elder brother, using a slight inflection of voice, a turn of the head, a pause, a lifting of the hand, or some other manner without resorting to acting or impersonating.

Actors and impersonators "take parts" and become assumed characters. True enough, the reader may indicate the individual idiosyncrasies of his various characters up to the point of portrayal. He may even wear Biblical costume. But as soon as he begins to imitate his characters by assuming their roles, he leaves the art of reading and enters the arena of acting.

As interpreter, the reader must un-

fold the Scriptures by sharing Biblical concepts and convictions with his hearers. He should not concentrate on the mechanical aspects of delivery, but rather on shared insights. To think of the imperative in "Thus saith the Lord" is a stronger motivation in developing the proper attitude for effective reading than to think of one's own voice or gestures. This requires reading the familiar with a fresh, vital, and spontaneous approach. One should read the Bible with his whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Such focus upon the significance of the message is spiritual preparation at its best. It is spiritual because it stresses the content of the reading more than the desire for self-adulation in its delivery. It helps to cement a cohesive circuit among the reader, his Bible, and his hearers.

When Jesus said to Peter, "Feed my sheep" (John 21), He could have been speaking to every reader, for a reader is expected to feed the flock spiritual food by reading from the Word.

To obtain the reader's proper perspective of his function he should think of the author as person number one, the reader as person number two, and the listener as person number three. His role is like that of the musician who takes a composition and interprets it musically for his listeners. He unfolds the music according to his intellectual and emotional response. He must be true to the author, to himself, and to the listener. Actually, the reader is an artist in the best sense of the word.

The ideal of a good reader is to read as the writer would speak if he were a good speaker.

Submitted by Nelson G Mink

CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT

The pastor met a young girl, member of his church, who was rather worldly. Talking on the street he asked, "Charlotte, where are you going?"

"I'm going to the ball, if it's any of your business," she said.

The pastor tried to show her that as a member of the church she should not go. But she did go on.

She came home from the night of fun in a heavy frame of mind. Her conscience made her feel bad. She saw her mistake and begged his pardon. Then she asked, "How can I be a Christian? How can I come to Christ?"

"Come just as you are, Charlotte; don't try to improve yourself before coming."

She did just that, and then after being saved wrote the words of the now-famous hymn "Just as I Am."

THE BOY IN THE GALLERY

"It was a cold, rainy night in England many years ago, and the pastor of a certain church hesitated to go to the service. But he did go. There were only a scattered few in the pews. At first he thought to dismiss the service without any sermon, but finally went on. A boy in the gallery heard the text and the sermon and was converted. That boy was Charles H. Spurgeon, who led thirteen thousand into his own church, and was the means of the conversion of tens of thousands the world around."

—EVANGELIST J. W. MAHOOD

From *Youth in Action*, someone has worded our fast age like this: "This is the Age of the half-read Page. With the bright Light and the nerves Tight. The plane Hop with the brief Stop. The lamp Tan in a short Span. The brain Strain and the heart Pain. With cat Naps till the spring Snaps and the fun's Done."

"WHERE IS THE ZEAL?"

Theodore Roosevelt told a story once connected with the ministry of Dr. Adams, the pastor of Madison Square Presbyterian Church in New York City. Dr. Adams had a little grandson that was very much afraid to enter the big church alone. The family seemed unable to discover the cause of this fear. One day, however, Dr. Adams took the little boy into the church with him. The little fellow held tightly to the hand of his grandfather. On reaching the pulpit the boy said: "Grandpa, where is the zeal?" "The what?" asked Dr. Adams. "The zeal," repeated the boy. "Why, don't you know?—'the zeal of thine house' that eats you up."

The president added that the "zeal" would never eat up some church members.

THE WILL OF GOD

Nothing more,

Nothing less,

Nothing else! (Quoted by Rev. Don Peterman)

Lessons from the Last Supper

TEXT: *When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.*

- I. THE LESSON OF THE LASTING LOVE.
"He loved them unto the end"
(John 13:1).
- II. THE LESSON OF THE LONELY LORD.
"Whither I go, ye cannot come"
(John 13:33).
- III. THE LESSON OF THE LINGERING LIGHT.
"One of you shall betray me"
(John 13:21).
- IV. THE LESSON OF THE LISTENING LOVER.
"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23).

—NELSON G. MINK

God's Answer to Affliction

SCRIPTURE: I Peter 5:9-11

1. The strain is the same for your fellow Christians (v. 9b; see Phillips).
2. The suffering is temporary (v. 10).
3. The sharing (of glory) is through union with Christ (v. 10, Good-speed).
4. The sequel is wholeness, security, and strength (v. 11; see Phillips).

—LEONARD J. DEAKINS
Selma, California

Our God Delivers!

TEXT: Daniel 3:29

- I. FROM THE BONDAGE OF SIN AND SATAN
- II. FROM THE POWER OF INBRED SIN
- III. FROM THE TEMPTER, THE WORLD, AND THE FLESH
- IV. FROM THE BONDS OF DEATH

—BOB BREEDLOVE
Athens, Georgia

Life's Sweet Surprises

TEXT: *And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread* (Luke 24:35).

- I. ONE OF LIFE'S SURPRISES IS THE STRENGTH GOD GIVES US TO CARRY ON BEYOND OUR SUPPOSED ENDURANCE.
- II. ANOTHER SURPRISE IN LIFE IS THE TREASURE GOD GIVES US FROM THE DARKNESS.
- III. A THIRD SURPRISE IS THE UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCES OF JOY IN OUR HEARTS.
- IV. ANOTHER SWEET SURPRISE IS HOW NEAR GOD IS WHEN WE MAY HAVE THOUGHT HE WAS SO FAR AWAY.

—ANON.

The Power of the Early Church

TEXT: Acts 1:8

- I. HER POWER CAME FROM THE HOLY GHOST (Acts 2:4).
- II. HER POWER IN PRAYER (Acts 4:31).
- III. HER POWER UNDER PERSECUTION (Acts 5:25).
- IV. HER POWER IN OPPOSITION (Acts 5:11).
- V. HER POWER AS A UNIT (Acts 4:33).

—NELSON G. MINK

The Church Behind Closed Doors

TEXT: *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you* (John 20:19).

- I. THINGS THAT CLOSED THOSE DOORS THEN.
- II. THINGS THAT CLOSE THE DOORS TODAY.
- III. THINGS THAT WILL OPEN THESE DOORS NOW.
- IV. DOORS THAT NEED TO BE OPENED.

—NELSON G. MINK

The Easy Way or the Right Way?

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 7:13-14

INTRODUCTION: The subject of transportation instantly brings to mind several methods (train, air, boat, cars, etc.). With the last we must associate the subject of roads. When we delve into this area we are faced with the problem of which road is best, the smoothest or the most direct. But one thing is certain, a road, to really be of use, must be going in the right direction, i.e., it must have a purpose for the traveler. Certainly, if roads of material structure must possess a sense of direction, how much more must our spiritual roads over which we travel?

I. THE DIVINE "ROAD WARNING"

A. Describes the quality of the wide road (v. 13).

1. Its alluring appearance.
2. Its many travelers.
3. Its direction.

B. Knowledge of the road is not enough.

1. There must be power to turn from it.
2. There must be power to gain the right highway.

II. THE DIVINE ROAD EXHORTATION

A. Need for entering the straight way—straight to the heart of Jesus!

1. It is narrow—too narrow to allow excess of the world to weigh it down.
2. It is rough—harassed by Satan's highwaymen.
3. It is the pressing way—pressing its occupants to hold course in it.
4. It is direct.
 - a. No satanic detours.
 - b. No holds of sin to detain.

B. Its direction leads to life.

1. Purpose of man's sojourns is revealed here.
2. Brings out the best in its travelers.

3. It holds the attention of its travelers on Christ because Christ is the only One who can pilot its travelers.

a. It brings man out of himself in Christ.

b. Man cannot rely on his wisdom or power.

III. THE TRAGEDY OF FORGETTING THE LITTLE-USED ROAD

A. Quantity not always depicts quality.

1. Road can be broad but deceptive.
2. Road can be narrow but true.

B. Yet people flock to the thoroughfare of quantity.

1. Many passengers.
2. Brightly lighted.
3. Universal nature of man is corrupt, so man "naturally" falls in step with the corrupt way of least resistance.
4. Blinded to the beauty of spiritual road however narrow.

IV. THE BEAUTY OF THE NARROW WAY WHEN IT IS FOUND

A. Traveler possesses the Christ as personal Guide.

1. Protector.
2. Adviser.
3. Host.
4. Provider.

B. Narrow road is not for narrow-minded people.

1. The gospel takes in the greatest problems of the universe and enlarges and makes them richer in meaning.
2. It challenges and satisfies the intellect and the soul.
3. Its narrowness allows for no refuse of sin to be thrown along its way.

C. Its truest beauty is found in its being the way of holiness.

1. It is a restricted, yet encompassing, road.
2. Holiness allows no "selfish" inclination of detours.
3. Its holiness demands wholeness of person and purpose.

CONCLUSION: The turnpike of Satan's design may have no visible toll stations—it will collect at the end of its course only one fare, your soul.

—REV. ROBERT JANACEK
Chadron, Nebraska

The Potter's Work

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 18:1-6

- I. **GOD IS THE PATTERN OF HUMAN LIFE.**
 - A. God is working with us all (v. 3).
 - B. God's work may be marred (v. 4).
 - C. God is patient as He works (v. 4).
 - D. God does His best with the material with which He has to work.
 - E. God is reasonable as He works (v. 6).
 - F. God is justified in His dealings with us (v. 6).
- II. **GOD IS AN ABLE POTTER BECAUSE:**
 - A. He is our Creator (Genesis 1:26-27).
 - B. Before creation.
 - C. He would equip us for His service here and in the world to come.
 - D. He knew the end from the beginning, and has been over the way before us.
 - E. He would have us to miss hell, and would see us all safely home to heaven.
 - F. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (II Peter 3:9).
- III. **GOD EXPECTS OUR CO-OPERATION.**
 - A. Be pliable.
 - B. Lest the work be marred, be pliable.
 - C. As God is patient with you, be patient with Him, and His dealings with you.
 - D. God is reasonable with you; be not unreasonable with Him.
 - E. God is dealing justly; likewise deal justly with Him.

—A. H. EGGLESTON
Picture Butte, Alberta

A Burning Strength to Overcome

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 33:14-16; 40:29-31;
John 16:33; Revelation 7:13-17

INTRODUCTION: Our Lord in heaven is a God of victory . . . and His victory can be yours! Isaiah has prophesied it. Christ fulfilled it and left the Holy Spirit to bear witness to it!

- I. **THE NEED FOR SPIRITUAL POWER**
 - A. In Old Testament situations.
 - 1. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David.
 - 2. Spiritual injection of power.
 - B. In New Testament situations.
 - 1. Paul and Silas.
 - 2. Peter.
 - C. In the Early Church age.
 - 1. Martin Luther, John Huss.
 - 2. John Wesley.
 - 3. D. L. Moody, Dr. Bresee.
 - D. In contemporary life.
 - 1. No religion—no conscience.
 - 2. No spiritual power—no victory here.
 - 3. All real spiritual achievement comes from the mind of God and we are His tools.
 - a. Often we are everyone's tools except the Carpenter of Nazareth.
 - b. We allow Satan to wield us.
 - E. In achieving eternal life.
 - 1. We need spiritual power brought out by Christ.
 - 2. Anointed of the Holy Spirit.
- II. **THE ABUNDANCE OF GOD'S POWER**
 - A. Overshadowing personality and situations.
 - 1. A standard is lifted.
 - 2. Life takes new meaning.
 - B. More than enough for every situation.
 - 1. His riches unexhausted.
 - 2. His promise uncomprehensible.
 - C. A certainty and a reality.
 - 1. No speculation but realization.
 - 2. Problems seem small when measured on Calvary's brow.
- III. **THE IMPACT OF SPIRITUAL POWER**
 - A. We shall be light of the world and reflect the beauty, truth,

and power of Him who is the Hope of the world.

B. We can have God in our midst.

1. This can be realized only by putting Christ in the center of our lives.
2. By having Him be the deeper meaning of our souls.

C. It burns a holy path to glory.

1. Lifts up the area through which it is routed.
 - a. Holiness makes a change over the person, home, and all areas it contacts.
 - b. God's holiness burns away the dross of sin.
2. He pervades and envelops all human life.

D. Your own life is transformed and it in turn transforms the situation through Christ.

1. Heart of Christianity is Christ, the Creator of all.
2. Yet Christianity is always a minority group.
3. Its life has been held together at the center by men and women with fire in their souls.

IV. THE METHOD OF GAINING THIS POWER

A. Going to right source.

1. Jesus Christ.
2. Holy Spirit.
 - a. Theory alone not reality.
 - b. Real religion not cold creed, but love.

B. I.e., something must happen between you and Jesus Christ.

1. We can never be channels of power until His power has swept through us like fire through a coal.
2. Drop "old" picture of yourself.
3. Let Christ's impression of you take hold instead of your depression.
4. His photo of the real you is the one to look at.

CONCLUSION: If you wonder why God won't change your situation, check and see if you yourself are changed or will be changed. Spiritual power

can do it! Let its essence surge through your total being.

—Author Unknown

SERIES: John Looks at Christ Christ, the Light of the World

SCRIPTURE: John 1:1-14

INTRODUCTION:

A. Illustration: Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, and the darkness which filled a nation.

B. Symbolic of the darkness that was present in the world after sin came.

I. THE LIGHT IS GOD.

A. Creation (v. 3).

B. Eternal (v. 1).

II. CHRIST CAME TO BRING LIGHT TO A DARKENED WORLD.

A. Life from Christ is light. Illustration: Oregon caves. In deep cavern all lights are turned off. After a few minutes a match is struck. Seems a tremendous light.

B. A few recognized this light. John the Baptist—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (v. 29).

III. CHRIST MUST BE ACCEPTED.

A. Andrew said, "We have found the Christ" (v. 41).

B. Philip said to Nathanael, "We have found him" (v. 45).

CONCLUSION:

A. Christ is the Light of the World.

B. He calls, "Follow me" (v. 43).

C. Heaven shall open and you shall see the truths of God.

—ALLAN W. MILLER
Florence, Oregon

SERIES: John Looks at Christ Christ's Faithfulness to Divine Purpose

SCRIPTURE: John 2:1-11

INTRODUCTION:

I. JESUS HAD A SENSE OF DIVINE PURPOSE (v. 4).

A. Illustration: Atomic submarine, "Nautilus," under icecap with compass.

B. Necessary to have a purpose and goal in life.

- C. In the world of today a person is considered successful when he has set a goal and reached that goal.

II. JESUS WAS FAITHFUL TO THAT SENSE OF DIVINE PURPOSE.

- A. Faithfulness to God's will brings victorious living.
- B. Losing sight of God's will and purpose for our lives will result in wandering. (Illustration: The children of Israel in the wilderness.)
- C. Not influenced to make a hasty decision.
- D. Also discharged his responsibility faithfully.

III. FULFILLMENT OF DIVINE PURPOSE HONORED GOD (cf. v. 11).

CONCLUSION: Hymn, "A Charge to Keep I Have"

—ALLAN W. MILLER

SERIES: John Looks at Christ Christ, the Gift of Love

SCRIPTURE: John 3:16-21

TEXT: John 3:16

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Story of shepherds on the hillside beside the fire, appearance of the angels, and their instructions.
- B. To these shepherds had been proclaimed the greatest news ever to come to mankind.

I. CHRIST IS A GIFT.

- A. A gift is freely given.
 - 1. Illustration: Cayuse Indian chief gave land to Marcus and Narcissa Whitman. When he saw the land producing, he became resentful and began to demand payment.
 - 2. God freely gave Christ. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given" (I Corinthians 2:12).

- 3. The Holy Spirit was given that we might know.

- B. A gift is given for good.

II. CHRIST IS A GIFT OF LOVE.

- A. The true meaning behind a gift is the motive of the giver.

- 1. The story is told of a little boy who went to a doctor for some help. He had little of this world's goods. He had a tattered Teddy bear, which he gave to this great doctor, who treasured it above many other gifts.

- 2. God so loved the world He was going to do everything possible to save the world.

- B. We didn't deserve any consideration from God because of our rebellion against God.

- 1. Romans 5:6-8.

- 2. Difficult to love someone who is a righteous person and lives the best he knows how. But God loves even those who rebel against Him. (Hymn, "Love Divine," by Gerald E. Bonney.)

III. A GIFT TO FULFILL ITS PURPOSE MUST BE RECEIVED.

- A. In the same way that it is given.

- B. Jesus said, "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8).

CLOSING HYMN, "Love Divine," by Charles Wesley

—ALLAN W. MILLER

SERIES: John Looks at Christ The Beloved Disciple

SCRIPTURE: John 3:16-21

TEXT: *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved* (John 13:23).

INTRODUCTION:

- A. John was close to Jesus.
- B. He was active in the Early Church.
- C. He lived to a venerable old age.

Tradition says that John was carried into church. His words, "Love one another."

- D. Characteristics of John that caused Jesus to love him and entrust him with responsibility.

I. JOHN HEEDED THE CALL OF JESUS (Matthew 4:21; Mark 1:19; Luke 5:10).

- A. Father Zebedee (a man of means).
- B. Sufficiency in this world's goods.
- C. Gave this up with James to follow Jesus even with lack of assurance of daily sustenance.
- D. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth . . ." (Matthew 6:19).
- E. A vision of eternal values.
- F. One of the twelve (Matthew 10:2; Luke 6:14).

II. FAITHFUL TO HIS PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

- A. The privilege of walking with Jesus also entails some responsibility.
- B. John's privileges.
 - 1. One of three disciples at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28).
 - 2. One of three disciples at healing of Peter's mother (Mark 1:29).
 - 3. One of three disciples at healing of damsel (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51).
 - 4. At Gethsemane, one of three disciples (Mark 14:33).
- C. His responsibilities.
 - 1. Privileges were used in preparing John for later responsibilities.
 - 2. Peter and John—healing of man at Temple gate (Acts 3:1-11).
 - 3. Peter and John sent to Samaria to further lead new converts (Acts 8:14).
 - 4. John, with James and Peter, was recognized by Paul as a pillar in the Early Church (Galatians 2:9).
- D. He was faithful in the smaller responsibilities.

- 1. Along with Peter sent to prepare for the last Passover (Luke 22:8 ff.).

- 2. Later a leader in the Church.

- E. A searching mind (Mark 13:3). With Peter and James, he went to Jesus seeking out an answer to something Jesus had said.

- F. Faithful to his family responsibilities (John 19:26-27).

- G. Faithful to Christ—went into palace of high priest (John 18:15).

III. JOHN CONSECRATED HIMSELF TO GOD.

- A. He had a distinct personality.

- 1. Sons of thunder (Mark 3:17).

- a. Called for fire on Samaritans upon their refusal to accept Christ (Luke 9:49).

- b. John forbids other healer and is rebuked by Christ (Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49).

- 2. Physical prowess—outran Peter to tomb (John 20:4).

- 3. Zeal—wanted to sit at the right and left hands of Jesus with James (Mark 10:35 ff.).

- B. Followed Christ's command to tarry in Upper Room (Acts 1:13).

- C. Results

- 1. A boldness that even angered authorities (Acts 4:13-19).

- 2. A willingness to work with others in Kingdom work.

- 3. A faithfulness to God in spite of persecution. The experience on the Isle of Patmos used to the glory of God.

IV. HE BENEFITED FROM HIS EXPERIENCE.

- A. Once a son of thunder in a selfish way; now a "servant of God" (Revelation 1:1).

- B. Once calling for fire on those who refused Christ; now sings the song of love.

- C. Once concerned about himself and his place in the Kingdom; now surrendered even to lose his life. He came close to this when his brother, James, was killed (Acts 12:2).

CONCLUSION: God took John and made a pillar of the Church of him. He took misguided zeal and channeled it into service for the Church. God gave John an experience he knew about, for in the conclusion of his Gospel is his testimony (John 21: 24-25).

- A. God can give you new life.
- B. He can channel your physical and spiritual energies into worthwhile service.
- C. He can give you an experience you can know about.

—ALLAN W. MILLER

SERIES: John Looks at Christ The Exalted Christ

SCRIPTURE: John 3:22-36

TEXT: *He must increase, but I must decrease* (John 3:30).

PURPOSE: To show that the important attitude in life is to exalt Christ in our lives.

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Setting.
 - 1. John the Baptist is baptizing.
 - 2. Jesus and His disciples baptizing.
 - 3. Discussion follows as to whose baptism is the right one.
 - 4. John's disciples come to him with question.
- B. John the Baptist's answer provides us with a statement that could well be our goal for the coming week, year, and lifetime, e.g., to have Christ increase in our lives to the place where we can say as did the Apostle Paul in Galatians 2:20.
- C. Exalt Christ in our lives!
- D. John the Baptist exalted Christ because:

I. CHRIST CAME FROM GOD.

- A. "Every good gift and every perfect gift . . ." (James 1:17).
- B. Bride and Bridegroom.

II. CHRIST IS ABOVE ALL (v. 31).

- A. The earthly.
- B. Testifies of God's love for all.

III. OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST BRINGS LIFE (v. 36).

A. John recognized that his own way prepared the way for Christ.

- 1. He needed to exalt Christ.
- 2. His own way without Christ would fail.

B. The only way to salvation (Acts 4:12).

CONCLUSION: Only as we have Christ in our lives and give Him full allegiance can we really find the life that satisfies.

—ALLAN W. MILLER

SERIES: John Looks at Christ Christ, the Divine Son of God

SCRIPTURE: John 5:17-25

TEXT: John 5:26

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Setting
 - 1. Jesus healed the blind man.
 - 2. Sabbath.
 - 3. Equality with God.
 - 4. Jews persecute Jesus.
- B. As the Divine Son of God.

I. CHRIST SOUGHT HIS FATHER'S WILL.

- A. Judgments determined by God (v. 30).
 - 1. Just.
 - 2. Based on God's law.
- B. Judgment in Christ's hand.
- C. Selfish will leads to destruction. "I do what I want to."

II. CHRIST YIELDED HIS LIFE TO GOD.

- A. Was a Life-Giver (v. 26).
- B. Eternal life (v. 25).

III. CHRIST HAD WITNESSES TO HIS DIVINE SONSHIP.

- A. Witness of man (vv. 32-35).
- B. Witness of Jesus' words (v. 36).
- C. Witness of the Father's voice (v. 37).
- D. Witness of the Scriptures (v. 39).

—ALLAN W. MILLER

SERIES: John Looks at Christ Christ, the Personal Worker

SCRIPTURE: John 4:5-42

INTRODUCTION: Christ was a master Personal Worker. From His methods we can learn some important pointers on how to deal with those who have spiritual need.

- I. HE WORKED IN LIFE'S SITUATIONS (v. 7).
 - A. People need help where they are.
 - B. Overcame prejudices.
 - C. No mental blocks.
- II. HE TALKED ABOUT HER INTERESTS AND PROBLEMS.
 - A. Outward interest.
 - B. Deeper interest. All people are seeking what only God can offer.
- III. HE DREW HER ATTENTION TO TRUTH.
 - A. By His life.
 - B. By His attitude.
- IV. HE WAS NOT DISTRACTED FROM HIS PURPOSE.
 - A. By His disciples (v. 27).
 - B. By others.
- V. HE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITY TO ENLARGE WITNESS (vv. 39-42).

—ALLAN W. MILLER

SERIES: John Looks at Christ Christ, the Bread of Life

SCRIPTURE: John 6:26-39

TEXT: *I am the bread of life . . .* (John 6:35).

INTRODUCTION: Setting

- I. WHAT IS THE BREAD OF LIFE?
 - A. Imperishable (v. 27).
 - B. From God the Father (v. 38).
 - C. Jesus is this Bread.
The Father has given this into His hands and He will not refuse anyone.
 - II. HOW PARTAKE OF THE BREAD OF LIFE?
 - III. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?
 - A. Gives life (v. 33).
 - B. Gives security (v. 37).
- CONCLUSION: Isaiah 55:1-13

SERIES: John Looks at Christ Christ, the Light of the World

SCRIPTURE: John 9:1-11

TEXT: *I am the light of the world* (John 9:5).

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Physical light means a lot to us today.
 - B. What would we do if we had to grope in darkness?
 - C. We depend on sunlight.
 - D. The blind man was in darkness but he came in contact with Christ, the Light of the world.
- I. THE QUALITY OF THIS LIGHT
 - A. Opposed to darkness (John 3:19-21).
 - B. Darkness cannot comprehend light (John 1:5).
 - C. Everyone is lighted by this Light (John 1:9).
 1. All good is from God.
 2. Natural conscience—telling right from wrong.
 - D. Life, the Light of men (John 1:4).
 - II. RECEPTION OF THIS LIGHT
 - A. Attempt to walk in the darkness of one's own heart (John 11:10). Illustration: Martin Luther and Hippo riding in darkness.
 - B. Those in darkness hate light (John 3:20).
 1. Want to do evil works under cover of darkness (John 3:19).
 2. Unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5:3-7).
 - C. Those already in the light should keep walking (John 12:35).
 1. Keep our first love and grow in spiritual graces.
 2. Most important thing in our relation to God is: We are now walking in the light. Not whether I have in the past been saved or joined a church.
 - III. BENEFITS OF WALKING IN THE LIGHT
 - A. Stumbleth not (John 11:9).

- B. Know where we are going. The opposite of the condition in John 12:35.
- C. Followers of Christ will never walk in darkness (John 12:46).
- D. Always seek light (John 3:21).
 - 1. Not led off by every little whim in life but judge one's place according to God's light.
 - 2. Illustration: Develop in various colors as light spectrum from a prism.

CONCLUSION: How obtain this Light? Believe (John 12:36). Follow Christ and leave the old way behind.

—ALLAN W. MILLER

Prayer—Top Priority!

TEXT: I Timothy 2:1

I. THE VARIETY OF PRAYER

- A. Supplications—personal aspect.
- B. Prayers—general.
- C. Intercessions.
- D. Giving of thanks.
- E. Prayer need not be dull, monotonous, boring—but varied, thrilling, adventurous, appealing to the whole man and to all ages.

II. THE RANGE OF PRAYER

- A. For all men—its universal scope.
- B. For kings and all that are in authority—its political, civic, ecclesiastical, industrial, and social range.
- C. It can affect the decisions, example, and influence of all in authority—in school, hospital, plant and shop, church and state, community and commerce.
- D. It is more potent for public order, peace, godliness, and honesty than all laws and force.

III. THE MOTIVE OF PRAYER

- A. It is the will of God that all men should be saved.
- B. There is no other hope for men—only one Mediator.
- C. Christ died for all men—as their Ransom.

- D. The Christian minister is commissioned to reach as many men as possible.

IV. THE MANNER OF PRAYER

- A. A privilege without respect of person or place
- B. Demanding of men clean lives and controlled spirits.
- C. Demanding of women freedom from vanity and laziness.
- D. A sanctified, sensible partnership of the sexes—the man having greater responsibility in the public sphere, the woman in the home.
- E. No interpretation of “Let the women learn in silence with all subjection” is consistent that ignores local customs in Paul's day, the promise of the Spirit to both sexes, the testimony of history to God's use of consecrated women, and scriptural examples of called and gifted women who have been leaders in the work of God.

—REV. A. J. LOWN
Paisley, Scotland

Daniel, or “I'm Going Through”

TEXT: *Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God (Daniel 6:23).*

- I. THE VALUE OF GETTING STARTED OUT RIGHT.
- II. THE VALUE OF A GOOD SET OF CONVICTIONS.
- III. THE VALUE OF AN UNDIMMED FAITH.
- IV. THE VALUE OF A CHARACTER-MOLDING GOD.
- V. WE HAVE THE VALUE OF THIS SAME GOD IN OUR LIVES TODAY.

—NELSON G. MINK

Book Club Selection, December, 1960

STAND UP IN PRAISE TO GOD

Paul Rees (Eerdmans, \$2.00)

A book from the pen of Paul Rees is always welcome news and this book, throughout, carries the same stamp of quality that characterizes the writings of this pulpiteer of the twentieth century.

There are ten sermons. The book is built on a Trinitarian format, around the well-known creedal statement, "Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, to the great One in Three."

There are three sermons addressed to the Father, three to the Son, and three to the Holy Spirit. There are incisive insight, scriptural integrity, and Wesleyan loyalty. The outlines are logical and fresh. As soon as they are stated they seem so obvious that the reader is inclined to say to himself, Why didn't I see this long ago? The book would have been strengthened definitely with more attention given to illustration, but the warmth of the evangelistic urge breathes throughout the book. Here is a man who is not satisfied to describe his product. He pleads that it be bought and used.

THE IVOR POWELL SERIES

(Zondervan, \$2.50 each title)

Because of the similarity of the four books in this series, I prefer to give them one review. Each one is worthy of strong commendation. In each book there are eighty brief, but striking, character sketches. Each is well outlined; each is the germ for a good sermon. The three books are as follows: *Bible Treasures*, *Bible Pinnacles*, *Bible Cameos*.

Bible Treasures consists of brief glimpses into the lives of characters in the Bible. Each one of these is really an extended sermon outline, fresh and sparkling.

Bible Pinnacles (with a foreword by Frank W. Boreham, which gives the book added incentive) discusses the miracles and the parables of the Lord. It touches briefly the lives of outstanding Bible personnel, and those who are more generally misunderstood.

Bible Cameos are biographical sketches that plead for preaching, because of their pithy, inspiring, sparkling appeal.

What has amazed me is the freshness with which the author lifts out men and women from the Bible, many of whom have never been given any kind of prominence. He has broad Bible background, which helps him to clothe these persons in an attractiveness that fairly challenges pulpit presentation.

Each sermon outline is really a sermonette in that the development covers two pages of this book. The titlings throughout are striking, and the author reveals a winsomeness of style that will endear him to you.

WINNING WHAT YOU WANT

J. Clyde Wheeler (Bethany Press, \$2.95)

The author writes well. He is down-to-earth in language and illustrations. But he finds his solutions to the problems of life apart from the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord. The book is tame, bloodless, and to the evangelical hearts is dull and tepid. It reflects the "self-help psychology" altogether too prominent and popular in many of modern books on religious life.—W. E. McCUMBER.

GOD'S COLONY IN MAN'S WORLD

George W. Weber (Abingdon, \$2.75)

This is a provocative and a disturbing volume, which hits hard at the ease, pretense, conformity, and materialism of today's institutionalized Christianity. While one may not agree at every point with the author's doctrine of the Church, he will be challenged to rethink the whole matter of the individual's relationship to the Church and the Church's relationship to the world.

The author's dim view of mass evangelism, of the Billy Graham type, would seem to suggest a decided weakness in the author's power of discriminating evaluation. Every thoughtful minister will profit in his soul and his service by reading this. Few books about the Church have disturbed and challenged me more.—W. E. McCUMBER.

THE ROYAL ROUTE TO HEAVEN

Alan Redpath (Revell, \$3.50)

This is subtitled "Studies in First Corinthians." Even a casual glance shows the vast amount of careful analysis and research which has gone into this book. The author previously gave us similar expositions of Joshua under the title *Victorious Christian Living*, and of Nehemiah under the title *Victorious Christian Service*. So he is no newcomer or novice at Biblical exposition. There are thoroughness and grasp of an entire book of the Bible denoting an artistry and finesse which are to be admired.

But you will not have more than begun this book till the doctrinal bias of the author fairly leaps from the page. So First Corinthians must be subjected to a stubborn Calvinism! The very title suggests that there is more than one road to heaven (one of these being "The Royal Route"). The author's treatment suggests the subtly dangerous idea that there can be a lower path, one of frequent defeat and willfully retained carnality. What, we ask, about "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"?

The reader thrills as the writer expounds the higher or "Royal" route. It is the path where the believer senses his inner depravity, exposes it to God, and consecrates himself to God in utter finality. Gracious are the hope and prospect for victory. Even as Alan Redpath did in his study of Joshua, he urges a second crisis, clear-cut and definite. But at this very point of hope he sadly confuses the reader by suggesting that this crisis experience will lead neither to full and daily victory nor to complete deliverance from carnality or indwelling sin. The confusion becomes as disappointing as the prospect was delightful.

What value would there be in the book? It shows how a book of the Bible can be treated expositively. It will whet your appetite to do more expositional preaching and writing. And I am also sure you would lay the book down at its conclusion, and thank God for a Wesleyan faith in eradication and victory through the Blood.

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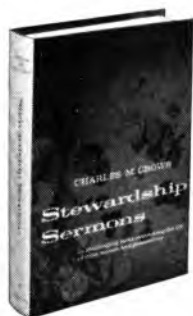
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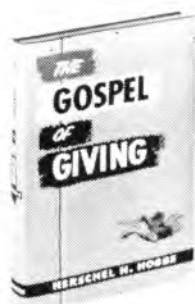
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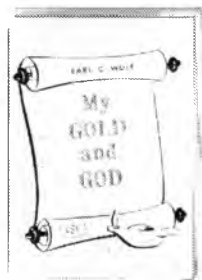
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