Your tie, more than any other aspect of your appearance, will determine how people view your credibility, personality, and ability. Conservative patterns symbolize respectability and responsibility.

The most acceptable dress shirts are white. Greater moral strengths are attributed to those who wear white shirts than to those who wear shirts of other colors. Pale, solid colors are acceptable substitutes for white, with pale blue being the most popular. Pink and lavender are too feminizing, and a man should never wear a solid red shirt, no matter who he is or what he does!

A trait common to all successful executives is that they always have their hair combed.

When properly tied, the tip of the tie should come just to the belt buckle. Bow ties give a negative impression.

Asked to select the men who were the most sympathetic, effective, well-educated ministers, the majority chose individuals in a conservatively cut, dark, two-piece suit. The pin-striped, three-piece business suit was rejected as often as was the leisure suit.

A minister wearing a conservatively cut, dark, two-piece suit is judged as sympathetic, effective, and well educated.

A well-dressed minister keeps his shoes shined.

CLOTHING
MEN OF THE CLOTH
see page 4
Amen to long pastorates

I have just read my first copy of MINISTRY and find it stimulating, accurate, and tastefully done. The article "Short-term Pastorates" was particularly relevant. I am in my fifth year of my current pastorate. It is without question the most productive and personally rewarding. Amen to the call for longer pastorates.

Baptist minister
South Carolina

Long not always best

I am one that gratefully receives and reads MINISTRY. You are truly providing "ministry" to me in more ways than one.

I would like to comment on the article "Short-term Pastorates" (January, 1980) — not in rebuttal, for I know the value of what it says. Having experienced both long- and short-term pastorates myself, I feel there are other perspectives, however, that need to be considered as well. 1. Our humanity is prone to allow comfort to take the place of zeal. The very stability lauded by the article can be a hindrance as well, both to one's own growth and to the growth of the congregation. I may be the only reader who finds less challenge in viewing the same faces and situations year after year, but I'm really not so sure. 2. The article assumes that churches relate ever more strongly to their pastor as the years go by. In a sense this is true, but it is also true that our human nature and complex personalities can just as easily alienate growing numbers of the community and church that we serve. I consider myself lovable, tolerant, gentle, wise, and ready to listen. The plain facts are, however, that I may well come across quite differently in the eyes of my church and community! 3. Even the apostle Paul, as I remember, found himself in conflict at times with those who seemed more comfortable and effective with someone else leading. 4. Finally, working in a church/community with limited resources drives most of us pastors almost "up the wall." Is the goal of spending one's limited life span serving as effectively and joyfully as possible to be subordinated to the "ideal" of the long pastorate? Is it a sin to want to do more with one's life than is possible in the present setting?

Again, thanks ever so much for MINISTRY. I and many of my fellow pastors in this area read and enjoy it.

United Church of Christ minister
Washington

Common truths

All the copies of MINISTRY I have received have been a blessing to me. I thank God for common theological truths such as those found in "The Christ Alone" (January, 1980). With such joyous writing of divine truth, your efforts to share His love with others of His church are being accomplished.

Baptist minister
Texas

Profitable

I appreciate getting MINISTRY, for very often there are articles in it that I can use profitably in my own ministry. The last issue had very stimulating articles.

Baptist minister
Minnesota

Creationist diatribes

As others do, I find many of the articles in MINISTRY interesting and some, indeed, exceedingly helpful. A specific example would be "Twentieth-Century Circuit Rider" (an article about Ralph Washington Sockman), appearing in January.

Among these I would include the creationist diatribes against the theory of evolution.

Baptist minister
Illinois

Archeology attractive

It was my privilege to come across a copy of your excellent publication recently on the desk of the pastor in a church I was supplying. While the format and topics were most attractive, I was especially interested in the articles on archeology. Please put me on your mailing list.

Southern Baptist minister
Tennessee

Biblical interpretations

I am receiving MINISTRY regularly and enjoying reading it much. Thank you for your Biblical interpretations of current events.

Christian minister
California

Cover to cover

MINISTRY is without doubt the best of the church magazines I receive and the only one I read cover to cover. I only wish that other denominations would follow your example both in publishing and in reaching out to share with others, as you have so generously done in your (LETTERS continued on page 29.)
4 Clothing Men of the Cloth. Why should you never wear short sleeves? What single article of clothing does most to establish credibility? Are beige raincoats superior to black? What two grooming traits are common to all successful executives? Hedwig Jemison answers these and other questions on the basis of modern research on how clothes affect success.

7 How to Lose Out. Howard Kuhnle.

8 Pseudo-Sermons. This second article in John Osborn’s series on preaching examines the tendency among ministers to use a scriptural reference as a religious setting for their talk, and by doing so to feel that they have preached the Word.

12 The Synod of Dutch Bishops. Raoul Dederen.

14 Modern Israel and Bible Prophecy. Many Christians see prophetic significance in the present state of Israel with its flourishing settlements. Ernest W. Marter examines the nature of the Old Testament predictions made to Abraham and his descendants.


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Clothing men of the cloth

Don't buy another suit (or shirt) until you have read this article! It may make a difference in the effectiveness of your ministry.

by Hedwig Jemison
After seeing some studies confirming the adage "Clothes make the man," we requested the author to prepare the following article. You owe it to yourself and your ministry to read it carefully.—The Editors.

Do you realize that clothing is one of the important factors that affect your ministry?

"Clothing? Preposterous!"

But before you discard the idea, consider this statement—"When you meet a person for the first time, before you open your mouth, that person judges you on your appearance and bearing."—Forrest H. Frantz, Sr., The Miracle Success System (West Nyack, N.Y.; Parker Publishing Co., Inc.). After all, first impressions are made in an amazingly short period of time—perhaps thirty seconds—and in that interval there is really little else to use in evaluation.

Today, reliable research can document down to the last detail how a man's clothing affects our perceptions of his wearer. John T. Molloy, author of the best-selling Dress for Success (for men), spent seventeen years collecting such data. His research includes the opinions and subconscious opinions of more than fifteen thousand people, constituting a wide cross section of the general public.

"We are preconditioned by our environment," says Molloy, "and the clothing we wear is an integral part of that environment. The way we dress has a remarkable impact on the people we meet and greatly affects how they treat us."

How can we avoid making mistakes in choosing the clothing we wear? The solution, says Molloy, a former teacher turned management consultant, is to let research choose your clothing.

Studies of verbal and nonverbal communication show the nonverbal has stronger effects. Thus clothes and appearance (nonverbal communicators) either reinforce verbal impressions or contradict (and often overwhelm) them. The business executive who dresses conservatively doesn't have to explain his authority. His clothes do it for him. In fact, those who adopt the conservative look assume the authority that goes with it. Molloy early discovered that the value of a man's clothing is important in determining his credibility and acceptance. People who are well dressed receive preferential treatment in almost all social and business encounters. If you don't believe it, try it when you go shopping.

Molloy, named "America's first wardrobe engineer" by Time magazine, did extensive research with the raincoat. There are two standard colors of raincoats sold in this country—beige and black. Molloy tested 1,362 persons by showing them almost identical pictures of two men assuming the same pose and in the same suit, shirt, tie, and shoes. The only difference was the color of their raincoats. Those being tested were asked to choose the most prestigious of the two. The beige raincoat was the choice of 1,118 people, or 87 percent.

Following this test, Molloy and two friends wore beige raincoats for a month. The next month they wore black raincoats. At the end of each period they catalogued the attitudes of people toward them. The three men agreed that the beige raincoat created a distinctly more favorable impression upon waiters, store clerks, and businessmen they met.

Finally, Molloy picked a group of twenty-five business offices and went to each with a copy of The Wall Street Journal, asking the secretary to allow him to deliver it personally to the individual in charge. When he wore a beige raincoat, he delivered the papers in a single morning. Wearing the black raincoat, he spent a day and a half to deliver the twenty-five papers.

Molloy conducted further research in a large corporation that had two branch offices. One office enforced a dress code; the other did not. Secretaries in the office that had no dress code were late or absent 3 to 5 percent more often than those in the office that had a code, stayed at their desks 5 percent less, and spent 5 percent less time at their typewriters.

After a dress code had been enforced for a year at the office that didn't have a code, the workers were found to have improved their performance in every area. They stayed at their desks longer, and their lateness record dropped 15 percent.

Molloy also conducted research to determine whether the white dress shirt was an important factor in IBM's spectacular success over its competitors. Most people in business know of IBM's once official but now unofficial enforcement of a rather strict dress code, particularly for its salesmen. Molloy surveyed 106 executives, asking questions that called for moral values. Which men were late to work more often? Which cheated on their expense reports? Which were better family men? Of the 106 in the study, 87 attributed greater moral strengths to the men dressed in white shirts than to those wearing shirts of other colors! Ninety-three said they thought that a white shirt was an asset to the IBM salesmen.

Fifty-six executives of those interviewed had made major purchases of IBM equipment the previous year. They stated that their primary motivation for choosing IBM was a belief in that company's moral—yes, moral—superiority, says Molloy. Although each of the executives cited multiple reasons for his purchases, the white-shirt response was glaring in its importance, and the decision to buy IBM equipment was based largely on the positive moral characteristics attributed to the dress of IBM's salesmen—a look the executives described as "conservative," "reliable," "efficient," and "morally upright."

When Molloy first began testing, he photographed a dozen men in conservative, well-matched colors and patterns. Then he photographed another dozen men in a more contemporary style of clothing such as is generally seen in fashion magazines. When these photographs were mixed together, 70 to 80 percent of those tested chose the men in the conservative dress as more tastefully attired than those in the more modern dress, even though as many as half the men being interviewed did not dress conservatively themselves! Even when 70 to 80 percent of the men being questioned themselves dressed in more modern colors combinations and style, their answers never changed significantly.

The fact that the colors, patterns, and combinations of clothing that score the highest positive results among the largest majority of the population are all traditional and conservative came as no great surprise to Molloy. The most successful businessmen have worn conservative clothing for years, and most likely will for many years to come.

When Molloy confirmed this "familiarity effect," he tested it further, using shirts and ties. He asked three hundred people to judge a grouping of traditional shirts and ties and another grouping that, although nontraditional, were not gaudy. The subjects were to score each combination as exhibiting good taste, poor taste, or as being neutral. Eighty-seven percent chose the traditional combinations as in good taste. Seventy percent chose the more modern combinations as being in poor taste.

Hedwig Jimison is assistant secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate, Andrews University Branch.

Ministry, July/1980
Molloy conducted more experiments testing the necktie than any other article of clothing. "Whether you like it or not, or believe it or not," he says, "your tie, more than any other aspect of your appearance, will determine how people view your credibility, personality, and ability." His surveys leave no question that the tie symbolizes respectability and responsibility. Hundreds of tie patterns exist, but only a few are suitable for professional wear. Illustrations of these appear in Molloy's book. When properly tied, the tip of the tie should come just to the belt buckle. Thus your height will determine the length of tie you will need and how to knot it. For business wear, bow ties give off several negative effects. If bow ties are worn as sports attire, the same patterns are recommended as for all other ties.

In all tests, the most acceptable dress shirts are, and will continue to be, white and solid pale colors. These evoke the best responses for credibility and effectiveness. Properly color-coordinated solids go with every suit and tie. Pale-blue is still the most popular of the solid colors for shirts. Pink and lavender shirts are too feminizing and have negative masculine reactions. And according to Molloy, research shows that a man should never wear a solid red shirt, no matter who he is or what he does.

What about shirt-sleeve length? Molloy gives the following all-embracing caution: "You will never, ever, as long as you live, wear a short-sleeve shirt for any business purpose, no matter whether you are the office boy or the president." Research shows that men who wear short sleeves have secretaries who arrive from lunch late 130 percent more often and come back from lunch late 130 percent more often than secretaries of those who wear long-sleeved shirts.

Molloy is frequently asked whether there are any traits common to all successful executives. He answers, "There most definitely are: they always have their hair combed and their shoes shined. And they expect the same of other men."

Molloy makes two important statements in his book: "If I have conveyed nothing other than the message that clothing should be used as a tool, then I have fully succeeded in my goal."

"If the reader has accepted my second message, that beauty is not the name of the game, efficiency is—then I'm a perfectly happy man."

Fortunately, cost is not a significant factor in dressing for success. Molloy states that if a man knows how to choose his clothing, he can, without substantial increase in his clothing expenditure, look right on all occasions. After years of tabulation, he has devised a simple set of do's and don'ts that make it possible for any man to dress in a way that will greatly improve his effectiveness. Many men have already done so through their own innate knowledge of good taste.

Some of Molloy's research involved ministers and their clothing. He showed pictures of men in various outfits and asked the respondents to identify the clergyman. Their image of a clergyman was a man in a conservatively cut two-piece black, navy, or dark-gray suit with a white shirt and conservative tie. They seldom identified men in three-piece business attire as clergymen.

This information is significant, because of the role of expectation. If people expect a man in a particular profession to dress in a certain manner, they are more likely to believe him and trust him if he appears in the expected garb.

The research also included pictures of several dozen men identified as clergymen wearing everything from traditional clerical attire to leisure suits. Molloy asked his subjects which ministers they considered most effective, sympathetic, best educated, et cetera. Then he had them choose the pictures of the men they would most like to have as their minister and the men they would least like to have. In both tests they chose men in conservative, two-piece suits as their favorites. Surprisingly, as many businessmen rejected "clergymen" wearing three-piece pin-striped suits as they did those wearing leisure suits.

Earlier research showed that the clergy who did not wear the conservative clergy garb were less effective in their ministry than were those who wore the identifiable clothing. Could it be that the way the minister dresses has some bearing even on his soul-winning activities? William Thurlby wrote recently: "Aside from the glamour professions like entertainment and advertising, the top executives in most conservative corporations wear traditional clothing that does not call attention to itself. Quiet reliability is part of the look. In fact, be wary of any item of clothing that you are complimented on—unless you sell clothing! You want to show that your mind is on business, not your clothes."—Sky, January, 1980.

However, we must remember that most clergymen on any given day perform a variety of tasks and deal with a cross section of the public. Obviously, they would not wear a suit to help with church construction or when accompanying a group of young people to the beach. The first rule of dress is common sense.

The following words were penned in 1871, long before Molloy and his research: "It is important that the minister's manner be modest and dignified, in keeping with the holy, elevating truth he teaches, that a favorable impression may be made upon those who are not naturally inclined to religion. Carefulness in dress is an important item.

"Black or dark material is more be coming to a minister in the desk and will make a better impression upon the people than would be made by a combination of two or three different colors in his apparel. . . . The very dress will be a recommendation of the truth to unbelievers. It will be a sermon in itself.

"A minister who is negligent in his apparel often wounds those of good taste and refined sensibilities. . . . The loss of some souls at last will be traced to the untidiness of the minister. The first appearance affected the people unfavorably because they could not in any way link his appearance with the truths he presented. His dress was against him; and the impression given was that the people whom he represented were a careless set who cared for nothing about their dress, and his hearers did not want anything to do with such a class of people."—Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 610-613.
How to lose out

Chances are you won’t make all these mistakes, but even one or two can seriously hurt your ministry.

by Howard A. Kuhnle

Ministers, believe it or not, do have their faults. And some of those faults can have serious consequences on church growth. Put them all together in one pastor and they spell “How to Lose Out.”

If you recognize yourself in more than one or two of the following situations, chances are you’re right up there in the spelling bee—and right down there in church growth!

1. Tom, a prospective church member, is, in your opinion, a grouch. Even if he joined your congregation, St. Luke’s, you are convinced that his influence would be negative.

   (Tom joined St. Andrew’s church, where he became the jovial superintendent of the Sunday school. Maybe Tom was never a grouch at all.)

2. Sam is a tightwad. When he does attend St. Luke’s—rarely—he drops a dollar into the offering plate. You’re sure nobody but nobody could get him to make a substantial contribution.

   (But Sam contributed a generous $2,000 to the hospital drive.)

3. Ray, you conclude, is not yet ready to join the church. So you won’t make the mistake of rushing him. You’ll try him on Christmas or Easter, when the psychology of the season will be working for you.

   (Oops! Ray joined St. John’s just down the block last Sunday. Said something about being impressed he shouldn’t delay his commitment to Christ any longer.)

4. Soon after you became pastor of St. Luke’s, you visited old Mrs. Palmerson, a widow, and sized her up as a nonentity so far as the church is concerned. Her house and neighborhood indicated that she really didn’t belong at St. Luke’s—though her name had been on the books for forty years.

   (Mrs. Palmerson proved to be far more influential than her surroundings indicated, with a wide circle of friends and more than enough money for a new home, had she not preferred her old neighborhood.)

5. You really didn’t try very hard to interest Oswald in St. Luke’s when he transferred to your city. As vice-president of a manufacturing company, he would undoubtedly want to join a more fashionable congregation.

   (But Oswald’s father is pastor of a small congregation in Hicksville. Oswald likes small churches, as you found when you learned he had joined a small church of your denomination in a nearby suburb. Oswald explained to his new pastor that he liked both St. Matthew’s and St. Luke’s, because they were so much like his father’s church, but that St. Luke’s didn’t really seem interested in him.)

6. Laura was a good prospective member. You determined to call on her next time you were in her area.

   (And you did—a month later—only to find that the pastor of Faith Church had gotten there first.)

7. Your colleague Jonathan, of Grace church, is a very fortunate fellow. He has a big church, and it is growing. People just naturally seem to join Grace.

   (Truth is, things don’t just happen naturally at Grace. Jonathan is a worker, planner, enabler, and fulfiller. He comes through.)

Maybe there’s a message here that should come through, too. Monday mornings are a good time for a pastor to evaluate his performance. I’m typing this on a Monday morning—early!
There is a dangerous tendency among ministers to use a scriptural reference as a religious setting for their talk and by doing so to feel that they have preached the Word. An occasional text also adds a degree of palatability for the spiritual taste buds of those who still long to taste the Word of God. But are we preaching the Word when we use it only as a springboard for our religious remarks?
PREACHING THE WORD—2

Pseudo-Sermons

by John Osborn

Stepping to the pulpit as a visiting preacher, I was faced with an engraved wooden plaque that said "Preach the Word." Later, I discovered the congregational side of the plaque carried the words "Thus saith the Lord." The pulpit told the preacher what he was expected to do; the opposite side told the congregation what it had a right to expect.

How frequently would you say that preachers fail to preach the Word? How frequently would you say that a congregation is disappointed by not hearing a preacher fail to preach the Word? How right to expect what he was expected to do; the opposite tell the preacher what he was expected to do; the opposite side told the preacher that the Word was deserving of the clearest, the finest, the most accurate proclamation of which a minister is capable. Many of us have deplored the fact that the modern pulpit has changed that text to read, "Preach social betterment," "Preach cultural progress," "Preach Christian ethics." No attempt may have been made literally to change the text, but it has been ignored in favor of the proclamation of other subjects.

One week I sat in the worship service of one of the largest churches in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. The senior pastor read a text that immediately caught my attention. I said to myself, "What a magnificent portion of Scripture to preach on! Why haven't I thought of preparing a sermon on that scripture?" I sat up in eager expectation. The pastor finished reading the text, made a few preliminary comments about it, and then turned from it, never to return. He held up a book, announced its author and title, and gave what actually amounted to a book review. Now, the book was a best seller; it contained excellent psychological principles, as I learned when I later read it. The material that the pastor presented was interesting and easy to follow; it contained fine instruction. But under no circumstances could it be said that he had preached the Word. Except for the opening scripture and a few random texts, there was no proclamation of Bible truth. Yet, no doubt, had I asked the preacher whether he had preached the Word that morning, he would have looked at me in astonishment. Of course he did! Did he not open with a text? Did he not quote texts throughout?

When Paul said, "Preach the word," did he really mean to preach out of the Word? Did he mean to preach about the Word? Did he mean to preach around the Word? When we have preached psychologically, sociologically, or philosophically, accompanying it by the use of Scripture, have we really preached the Word?

I have noticed a dangerous tendency among ministers to use a scriptural reference to provide a religious setting for their talk and by doing so to feel that they have preached the Word. An occasional text also adds a degree of palatability for the spiritual taste buds of those who still long to taste the Word of God. But when the Scriptures are used to undergird a psychological or philosophical talk, they are being misused if such a practice is considered preaching the Word.

A basic homiletical principle, then, is that Scripture must not be used to support the sciences. When it comes to proclamation, the Word of God is not to support the word of man. This is not to say that a preacher should never undergird true science with Scripture, for God is the author of both. It does mean that when he is preaching the Word, it will be exalted rather than science.

Can it be said that we are preaching the Word when we use it only as a springboard for our religious remarks? When the Scripture is opened and then forthrightly abandoned, that is introducing the Word—not preaching it. Is profuse quotation of Scripture throughout the discourse preaching the Word? Some preachers have the unique ability to memorize Scripture and quote it with a speed and dexterity that amazes their listeners. The congregation marvels at this great ability, and often says, "That minister really knows his Bible." Of course, they haven't learned very much from this Gatling-gun approach. They have, as spectators, enjoyed the pyrotechnical demonstration of scriptural knowledgability. But Biblical preaching is not merely preaching that contains a great deal of Scripture. Such an approach can be called quoting the Word, but it does not necessarily qualify as preaching the Word.

Is the use of proof texts preaching the Word? Many people have made a decision to accept Christ through proof-text preaching. Their minds have been convinced of the validity of Bible truth; they see the beautiful chain of truth and accept it link by link. Being in harmony with what they hear, they give mental
assent to a checklist of doctrines and unite with the church. In some instances their heads are convinced, but their hearts remain unaffected. Such preaching is proving the Word. It isn't preaching the Word.

What, then, does Paul actually mean when he says, "Preach the word"? The word preach comes from a Greek word that means "to herald." Simply, then, the preacher is to herald the Word, that is, the Word of God. He must follow his spiritual heritage in this matter as it is revealed in both the Old and New Testaments. One of the earliest interpretations of preaching the Word is found in Nehemiah 8:1-9. Ancient Israel met at the square that was in front of the water gate and asked Ezra the scribe to open the book of the law of Moses, the Pentateuch (or Bible at that time), and to read from it. As Ezra and other spiritual leaders read, they gave the sense so that the listeners understood it, and all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law.

Here we have three aspects of preaching the Word. First, the Word should be presented so that it makes sense. Second, it should be clearly understood. Third, it must touch hearts.

On the Sabbath our Lord preached in the Nazareth synagogue, He chose as His text a portion of Isaiah 61. After standing to read, He sat down in typical rabbinic fashion to preach on that scripture, and He began to say to them, "'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing'" (Luke 4:21, R.S.V.). The incarnate Word of God was the expositor of the written Word of God! His purpose was to explain it, to unfold its true meaning, and to show its relevance to the current situation.

The deacon-preacher Philip followed essentially the same pattern with the eunuch in his exposition of Isaiah 53. Philip inquired, "Do you understand what you are reading?" To his negative response Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this scripture he preached Jesus to him. It was Philip's purpose to help the eunuch understand Isaiah 53 (see Acts 8:26-40).

The purpose of Biblical preaching, then, is to help the listener understand the meaning of the Word of God. The apostle Paul, who told Timothy to preach the Word, practiced what he preached. The book of Acts tells us that according to his custom, Paul went into the Jewish synagogue at Thessalonica and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidences that Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead. He did this by reading from the Scriptures and by explaining their meaning (see Acts 17:1-3).

Another brief example is found in Acts 28:23. During Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, he lived in his own hired house, and people came to him at his lodging in large numbers to hear him explain the Scriptures to them, solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus from both the law and the prophets.

In summary, these Bible concepts of preaching the Word include: (1) explaining it; (2) giving it sense so that it can be understood; (3) unfolding large Scripture portions; (4) reasoning from it; (5) showing its relevance to people's needs; and (6) presenting conclusive evidences from the Bible. Any type of preaching that does all these things certainly qualifies as preaching the Word.

Biblical preaching is best described by the expository approach rather than the topical. This is not to imply criticism for topical preaching, which is the usual preaching heard in most pulpits. Its heritage is too strongly entrenched. Its effectiveness has been too well demonstrated. Its ability to encourage the converted in his faithfulness to God and the unconverted into a relationship with God has been proved for centuries. Some of the greatest preaching of all times has been topical. The point is not that we abandon topical preaching, but that we should add a new dimension. Assuming that both topical and expository preaching are done properly, the more persuasive and appealing of the two is expository preaching. Initially, it may require more time and preparation. It will also be more demanding in study, but its results will prove more gratifying.

What is expository preaching? The word expository comes from a Latin root that means "to expose, to lay bare, to make clear, to explain." Expository preaching is first learning what the scripture actually says through exegesis. It is also learning what the scripture actually means through hermeneutics. This is followed by explanation so that what the scripture says and means can be understood by the hearers and shown to be relevant to contemporary life. Thus G. Campbell Morgan says, "The definite objective of all good expository preaching is to discover the meaning of God's message to mankind and apply it to contemporary life. That is reducing it to the simplest common denominator." Dwight Stevenson: "In true exposition the sermon must lie full length upon the passage. The proportion of parts in the sermon must be a faithful mirror of the proportions within the scripture under study. There must be no distortion through overemphasis or omission of the main ideas." What these men have said is that the highest form of Biblical preaching is the choice of a Scripture portion—long or short—out of which the truth of God is explained and made relevant to the lives of the hearers.

There are many effective methods of preaching expository. The expository preacher may organize his message around a key verse through which he interprets a whole passage. G. Campbell Morgan, who is considered by many to be the outstanding Bible expositor of the twentieth century, used the context principle in Biblical preaching, interpreting a given passage in the light of its context and giving diminishing importance to texts as he proceeded from near to far context. One of the least complicated and most effective ways to develop an expository sermon has been called the three-point pattern—the setting, the meaning, and the relevance. Biblical preaching is not confined to any single method of handling the Scriptures, but utilizes all the standard homiletical procedures.

The methodology that will be presented in these discussions was developed by F. D. Whitesell and Charles W. Koller, and perfected by Lloyd M. Perry. All three were conservative homileticians and evangelists at the Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago. Their methodology appears in the books they have written: F. D. Whitesell and Lloyd M. Perry, Variety in Your Preaching (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1954); Charles W. Koller, Expository Preaching Without Notes (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1962); Lloyd M. Perry, Biblical Sermon Guide (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1962) and Biblical Preaching for Today's World (Northbrook, Ill.: Moody Press, 1973).

The benefits of expository or Biblical preaching are many. First, it is an inexhaustible type of preaching. It is possible for an expository preacher to remain in one pulp it his entire lifetime and not be repetitive. This is not so with topical preaching. One soon runs out of subjects on which to preach. A pastor whom I once followed in a certain pastorate left after serving the church only a little
more than two years. I felt honored to be called to such a fine pastorate. Later, when meeting the former pastor, I asked him why he had left so soon. He said that he had preached all 266 of his sermons and therefore had to leave. Incidentally, he was a superb preacher whom congregations dearly loved, but his topical approach to preaching forced him to leave. He ran out of subjects after a while, and had to go to another church and play the record again. When dealing with the themes of the Bible expository, one finds there is an endless supply of sermonic material. In his short lifetime, a man can hardly touch the fringes of God's Word.

Another benefit of expository preaching is that it makes the preacher an expert in the field in which he is expected to excel. The minister is required to do many things and to do them well. He must be a teacher, counselor, administrator, financier, and organizer. There are people in his congregation who spend a lifetime in teaching, counseling, administrating, and business. They are more highly trained than the preacher in these areas. He couldn't possibly be superior to those who spend a lifetime in one of these various professions. The only area in which the preacher is expected to be better than anyone else is in preaching the Word. Like Apollos of New Testament fame, he must become mighty in the Scriptures. Like Wesley, he must be known as a man of one book. Expository preaching can do this.

Also, Biblical preaching will help fill our churches with truly regenerated and Spirit-filled men and women. As they gather for worship from week to week, they ask the mute question: "Is there any word from the Lord?" They're not interested in the cleverness of the preacher or his opinions. Biblical preaching will win more souls to Christ and give the assurance that a larger portion of them will stay saved.

Whatever our ability may now be in the pulpit, it can be improved, and it should be improved. In future discussions we will see just how Biblical, expository preaching can open new dimensions in the Scriptures both for ourselves and for our congregations as we preach the Word.

Preaching is...

1. Sacramental: it brings people in touch with the grace of God. (I wonder how many preachers believe that in any serious sense?)

2. Saving: it creates opportunities for precious human beings to come to terms with their Redeemer and in fact be made right with Him.

3. Satisfying: both preacher and parishioner have a need to share thoughts and feelings under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

4. Scholarly: every local pastor should be a "theologian in residence." Too long we have attempted to separate the preaching and teaching functions. The pulpit is to be occupied by a preacher who is also a teacher. Today's sensitive and well-educated laity eventually will not settle for anything less.

5. Searching: it does not claim to lay before a congregation pat answers to those mysteries where Scripture does not provide clear answers. Nevertheless, it points to The Answer. And it humbly admits that its value is being a means and not an end in itself.

6. Selfless: it becomes obedient to the work of the Holy Spirit in and through both our intellects and emotions. In short, we do not preach "the" sermon: we preach the crucified and resurrected Christ.

7. Sensible: it explicitly or implicitly presents the option of belonging to Christ and spending eternity with Him or belonging to the world and being lost in hell. (We may not especially like the word hell, but our Lord manages to use it upon several occasions.)

8. Sensitive: it does not seek to dominate and manipulate those whom God loves. (Of course, some will perceive anything other than positive pointers to worldly success as being insensitive.)

9. Serious: it deals with man's whole being, in both the present and ultimate terms. We are not entertainers; we are under orders from the Master—and that's serious business.

10. Significant: it really doesn't have any substitutes. In preaching, the Holy Spirit is uniquely at work creating a dialogue between preacher and people.

11. Social: it does not occur in a vacuum. Common kindnesses, courtesies, and compliments are important to gaining the right to be heard. Most will listen gladly without padded pews and a revolving spotlight on the pulpit. However, few—if any—will tolerate arrogance and disrespect by the preacher.

12. Spiritual: the preacher in the pulpit represents a historical Figure who is now present through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, both a mystical and mysterious quality exist with true preaching, and we must beg God that it be recovered in our churches!

13. Stimulating: it renews moribund congregations and calls to repentance those who hear and thus discover the saving power of the Lord. Let us not write off mass evangelism with integrity. Yet, we are mandated to be on guard against questionable—even enormously hurtful—methodology, which stresses the preacher and not Christ.

14. Strong: it brings the Word of God into meaningful contact with the living needs and concerns of a congregation. Therefore, it is not apologetic; it does not back away from the truth as it is given by God in His Word.

15. Subjective: while the Word comes to and for human beings, it also comes through a preacher who is tainted by original sin and whose perspectives are limited. "Truth through personality" is an accurate depiction.

16. Submissive: we are called to deliver what is given to us and not necessarily what we might like to preach about. We are to die daily to the will of the Master—and that means Sundays in the pulpit.

17. Survival: there is an urgency on the part of the preacher who believes that preaching has to be done. "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" was never more valid than today.

18. Sustaining: we nourish our flock and they, likewise, nourish us. The interaction that can and should take place between preacher and people is often a banquet!

19. Sweaty: we are to toil and perspire until the riches of the faith give forth their life-giving gems. We who preach must prove the Word, study and apply preaching skills, draw wisely upon the unlimited sources that inundate us from the secular world, and make use of various literary forms in our preaching.

20. Symphonic: there is a harmony that results among God's people with convincing clarity when preacher and people agree that to be right with Him is all that ultimately matters. Only the Maestro of marvels, the Master Himself, can conduct such a concert!—By Dr. Donald C. Lacy, pastor of the First Methodist church, Princeton, Indiana. Reprinted with permission from the Nov./Dec., 1979, issue of Good News, 308 E. Main St., Wilmore, Kentucky 40390.
The synod of Dutch bishops

by Raoul Dederen

A few months ago a special synod of the Dutch bishops met in Rome under the auspices of John Paul II to attempt to find a solution to the controversies and divisions that have characterized the Catholic Church in that country for the past two decades.

This synod was of major importance for at least two reasons. First, it was a concrete sign of Pope John Paul's insistence that the Catholic Church put its house in order. He is not about to let problems and divisions fester within the Catholic community. Second, the synod was important because the problems and questions that arose in the Netherlands exist to some extent in nearly every Western country, including the United States. Solutions and programs that have come from this special synod may very well set an agenda for the Catholic Church in the Western world. Its results will probably have a dramatic impact on Roman Catholicism for the next decade and beyond.

The Dutch troubles are fairly recent. Until World War II, Dutch Catholicism has been strongly traditionalist. Most aspects of daily life bore confessional labels in a country where 5.6 million Catholics make up 40 percent of the population. World War II brought Catholics and Protestants closer together in their fight against the occupying Nazis. The process continued after the war, encouraged by the innovations that followed the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Indeed, Vatican II introduced such an abrupt change in the Catholic Church's self-image that Dutch Catholicism found itself in danger of splitting. Some Catholics took the conciliar decisions as an encouragement to experiment in new life styles, while others maintained their traditional outlook. The clergy divided along the same lines. The Catholic press became increasingly progressive in its views and opinions, and the Dutch bishops supported the publication of a new adult catechism that was suspect in Rome for sidestepping several traditional teachings. A serious effort was made to encourage people to speak and think critically and also to express their encouragement, reaction, and criticism to those in authority. A national pastoral council suggested the themes to be considered by discussion groups around the country. Several controversial propositions were adopted, such as making celibacy for priests optional, ending the obligation to attend Sunday mass, and demanding much wider freedom and simplicity in liturgical forms. To add fuel to the fire, priests who had left the ministry to marry were retained on theological faculties, while theologically trained (but unordained) laity—referred to as "pastoral workers"—were invited to supplement the dwindling parochial teams, performing nonsacramental duties and contributing their expertise and training in many areas considered indispensable to the building of the Catholic Church.

Tension was high. The Dutch bishops' willingness to follow the lead of the laity in some of these reforms worried the Vatican. Pope Paul VI began to call a halt, or at least to downplay some of the experimentation. Against the wishes of the Dutch clergy, he appointed two conservative bishops—Adriaan Simonis, to Rotterdam (1971), and Jan Gijsen, to Roermond (1972), thus altering the balance within an episcopal conference of only seven members. By Roman decree, the pastoral council was downgraded to a pastoral consultation.

Holland's Catholics were confused, divided, and perturbed, often quoting one bishop against another. Soon after his accession to the pontifical throne, John Paul II attempted to mediate between the two factions. He met in Rome with each of the Dutch bishops individually, and decided to summon a
The synod of that province of the Catholic Church—a synod that would concern itself with the “postconciliar route of the Dutch church, the pastoral work of the church to be exercised in the Netherlands in the present situation.” 1

This was no usual synod. It was indeed the first ever held for the bishops of one country. The idea itself was provided for in Pope Paul VI’s Motu proprio Apostolica solicitude 2 and his Ordo Synodi Episcoporum celebrandae. 3 These documents set up the institution of the Synod of Bishops and distinguished between the general Synods of Bishops, which are held every three years; the extraordinary synods, in which only the presidents of episcopal conferences participate; and special synods, which consider questions pertaining to a restricted geographic area, such as one country. The synod John Paul had in mind belonged to this third category.

It was held in Rome, from January 14 to January 31, 1980, ending five days later than anticipated. This was indeed an interesting implementation of collegiality. Besides the Pope and the seven Dutch bishops, others who shared in the deliberations were: two Dutch religious; the archbishop-designate of Malines-Brussels, Belgium; the secretary of the synod council (the permanent body charged with preparing synods); the secretary of the Pontifical Biblical Commission; and a “special secretary” of the synod, along with six members of the Roman Curia, who functioned as occasional participants according to the topics being discussed. Cardinal Jozef Willebrands, Archbishop of Utrecht, and Belgian Archbishop-designate, Godfried Danneels, were nominated by the Pope to chair the sessions. Because the Dutch bishops had been expected to split as five progressives against two conservatives on most controversial issues, the number of curial prelates voting was important. Brother bishops from outside of Holland helped their Dutch colleagues to arrive at answers to their problems that would be “in union with the universal church.” This had been, indeed, the Pope’s intention. 4

The synod’s conclusions, expressed in a twenty-two-page document, suggest that the synod was able to unify the Dutch bishops along the lines devised by the Vatican. At the closing mass in the Sistine Chapel, John Paul said that “he had learned” from the synod and that he took satisfaction in the bishops’ “clearer awareness” of the universal church. In other words, the Vatican had won on each of its major complaints.

As the synodal document indicates, the bishops agreed to caution ecumenical workers, catecheticalists, pastoral workers, and liturgists against further experimentation. They would underline the importance of eucharistic attendance on Sundays and holy days. They would also seek to revive the practice, nearly extinct in Holland, of individual confession. They agreed to prepare a new catechetical decree to go along with the controversial Dutch Catechism. The bishops also bowed to papal insistence on a more stringent policy regarding interconfessional marriages, and a proscription of interfaith communion services. They also ruled out definitely any alternative to a celibate, all-male clergy. John Paul had made his position clear on this point, and as bishops, the Dutch prelates could only agree. While discussion of a married clergy may continue in the Netherlands, Dutch Catholics know now that their bishops will continue to follow the decision of the Pope.

John Paul, whom the press at first described as limiting himself to jotting down notes while never saying a word during the fifteen days of deliberation, seems in fact to have spoken several times, and decisively, to persuade the bishops to enforce the guidelines from the Vatican. The bishops, obviously, took his advice. For the past few months they have been meeting with their clergy, councils, and lay leaders to explain and implement the conclusions of the Roman meeting.

The mood thus far in Holland has ranged from reserve to negative judgment. The possibility of schism is remote; Dutch Catholics are still too conformist to opt for separation from Rome. They appear, rather, to be retreating to their parishes. Rome’s refusal to dialogue—which is how they have interpreted Rome’s reaction to most of their attempts at renewal—has led them to conclude that it is useless to attempt action at the national level. Many will probably try to follow their own inclinations while giving formal obedience to the synodal guidelines. The Italianization of the Dutch church is probably under way, and that church will be severely tested in the curial fire.

As an indication of John Paul’s understanding of his responsibilities as Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church, this unprecedented special synod may very well have weighty implications for the entire Catholic community. Some see the Pope as intent on restoring the unity of Catholic teaching, which in recent years has been disturbingly fragmented. He and Vatican officials have indicated great concern about teachings that they consider to be causing confusion in the minds of the faithful. For example, in recent months Rome has been drawing the theological line in Hans Küng’s case, while at the same time the Pope has reacted to curb further episcopal experimentations in Catholic teachings and life styles. He apparently is not going to tolerate a wandering Catholic episcopacy.

To others, the Dutch synod has not only disclosed the Pope’s position on current issues, it has also demonstrated his determination to foster collegiality by sharing responsibility with other bishops. Such recent initiatives as convoking the College of Cardinals last summer, and the synod of Dutch bishops in January (which will be followed by the synod of world bishops later in the year) show that he may have in mind new methods of governing the Catholic Church. He obviously did not want to speak alone on the difficult questions that arose in the Netherlands. He wanted, just as Vatican II said, to speak in collegiality. He exerted the Dutch prelates to manifest “the collegiality of the episcopate which, in communion with the pope and under his direction, exercises supreme authority in the pastoral service of the church.”

Some see here an attempt to clear up the tension that was left unresolved by the First and Second Vatican Councils, between the principles of episcopacy and of papal primacy. The direction that Pope John Paul seems to have set for himself could very well mean a deliberate and gradual evolution of the theology of the papacy, towards a conciliar mode rather than a monarchical mode, a move bound to have an enormous appeal to numerous Roman Catholics. Much, however, of the entire structure of the Catholic Church is still so firmly based on a monarchical papacy that one wonders how it could fit into a conciliar conception of episcopacy.

The coming months should test which analysis of the situation has been the more perceptive.

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1 See the Pope’s letter to the Dutch church in Origines 9, 32 (January 24, 1980), p. 524.
2 Dated September 15, 1965. See La documentation catholique, 1456, pp. 1663, 1664.
3 See La documentation catholique, 1547, p. 815.
4 John Paul II’s letter to the Dutch church, op. cit., p. 524.
5 Ibid.
Should the return of 3 million Jews to their homeland mean something to Christians? Was the repossession of Jerusalem by Jews in 1967 forecast by Jesus? And are these things signs of the times?

by Ernest W. Marter

MINISTRY is aware that within the Christian church, widely diverging views are held regarding the role of modern-day Israel and her prophetic significance. Doubtless, no single denomination exists in which there is absolute unanimity on this subject (including the Seventh-day Adventist Church). Therefore, this article is not presented as the final word, but as a means of stimulating thought and awakening investigation. We welcome comments and alternate viewpoints.—The Editors.

I 

s the present state of Israel, with its flourishing settlements, a fulfillment of prophecy? Should the return of 3 million Jews to their ancestral homeland mean something to Christians? Was the repossession of Jerusalem by Jews in 1967 forecast by Jesus? And are all these things signs of the times?

Many Christians see prophetic significance in these events; others see little or none. Although both believe as they do on the basis of Scripture, a consideration of certain Biblical themes may shed light on the issues.

God’s promises to Abraham that he would become a great nation and possess the land in which he dwelt were conditional on his loyalty to God. Likewise, the promises were to be fulfilled to his children if they served God as he did (Gen. 17:1-9; 18:19). Later God specifically declared to Abraham’s descendants, the covenant people, that He would keep the covenant He had made with them and their ancestors only on the condition of their obedience to Him

the other hand, if they were unfaithful to God in heart. The divine prediction came true, and they were banished beyond the Euphrates in Babylon. God intended that the invasions and conquest by Nebuchadnezzar would serve as a disciple to help them learn obedience (Jer. 25:1-7; 46:26-28). While the people were concentrated at Ramah awaiting deportation to Babylon, the promise of restoration based on obedience was reiterated (chap. 31:15-17, 27-34). God's gracious purpose was to restore them to their land after seventy years of exile if they would return to Him with all their heart (chaps. 29:10-14; 16:13-16).

During their exile, Ezekiel also encouraged them with God's promises of restoration accompanied by reformation and obedience on their part. Subject to their repentance, Ezekiel prophesied of a new temple, of Israel's lost sheep being brought home again by the Great Shepherd, and of the dried bones of the nation being resurrected to life again (Eze. 36:17-38; 43:10, 11; 34:11-15; 37:20-23).

Under divine direction the Jews returned to Israel from 537 B.C. onward (2 Chron. 36:15-23). Zechariah predicted that the Temple would be rebuilt and the throne restored if they would diligently obey (Zech. 1:2-4, 12-17; 6:15). They were then to fulfill their mission of living to the praise of God as His witnesses. If faithful, they would be, as God had always intended, the priests of the world and a blessing to all nations. Foreigners would learn of the true God and come to worship Him at the Temple (Isa. 40:1, 2; 43:10, 21; 61:4-9; 60:1-3; Zech. 2:11; 8:22, 23; Micah 4:1-5).

Thus Isaiah and Jeremiah before the Exile, Ezekiel during the Exile, as well as Zechariah and Micah immediately after the Exile, sought to encourage the Jews to return in a spirit of loyalty to God's original purpose for them as a missionary nation and to depend upon His promise of renewed favor.

Moses had warned Israel, at the beginning of her national existence, that continued disobedience would bring not only anxiety and suffering but uprooting and dispersal, from which he promised no restoration (see Deut. 28:49-67). Daniel understood the implications of Moses' warning, and feared that the prophecy of the 2,300 days indicated that, because of their continued sinfulness during that time of banishment, God could not restore Israel from their seventy-year exile. Hence, his heartbroken prayer for forgiveness and restoration (Dan. 8:26-9:23). In answer he was assured that Jerusalem would again be built, and that his people would be granted another five centuries of probation "to make an end of sins," and that within this period the Messiah would come to them (chap. 9:24b).

However, the companies that returned from Babylon were small, their efforts halfhearted, and their obedience so defective that less and less room appeared for God's promises of blessing to be fulfilled. The first returnees, numbering about fifty thousand, were dilatory in rebuilding anything but their own homes. Temple worship was conducted negligently by unfaithful priests. The people intermarried with the heathen and departed from God (Ezra 2:64; HaggaI 19; Mal. 1:8; 12; 13; 2:1; 2; 7, 8; 11-16; 3:7, 13, 14). And when the Messiah did come, the nation rejected Him and thereby brought upon itself the tragic result Gabriel had predicted—that though rebuilt, Jerusalem would be destroyed a second time. Jesus Himself, when leaving that Temple never to return, quoted Daniel's very words (Dan. 9:25-27; Matt. 23:37-24:2, 15). Forty years later the Romans destroyed city and Temple, and a hundred years later the Jews were banished completely from the site.

But before these tragic events, the Lord's apostles had already revealed how God would fulfill His promises of blessing upon Israel. They applied the promises to the new believers in Christ from all nations who were assuming the mission of Israel. Those who believed in Christ became Israelites; a new heart and a new spirit were given to them (Eph. 2:11-13, 19, 20). Gentile believers began to fill up the household of God (Eph. 2:11-13, 19, 20). The apostle Peter called them the new "chosen race" (1 Peter 1:1; 2:9, 10). Before Jerusalem began its long, sad experience of being trodden down by the Gentiles (Luke 21:24), the apostles made it clear that its next restoration would be as the Holy City from heaven, and that the divine promises of prosperity and peace for a repentant Israel would be fulfilled in the new earth (Heb. 11:8-10, 15, 16; Isa. 65:17-25; 2 Peter 3:13). The picture Ezekiel painted of a prosperous, faithful Judah being divinely protected against the invasion of an envious Gog and Magog never happened. But it will find its fulfillment in the final assault of Satan against the people of God and His destruction (Ezekiel 38 and 39; Rev. 20:7-9). The twelve city gates, the life-giving river, and the fruitful trees, seen by Ezekiel as characteristics of a restored Israel, would be fulfilled in the pearly gates, the river of life, and the tree of life in the Holy City as seen by John (Eze. 47:1, 2, 8, 9, 12; 48:30-35; Rev. 21:10-13; 22:1, 2).

Some readers believe that the Biblical expression "the last days," which appears in a number of prophecies and promises of Israel's restoration, always refers to the period just before the second coming of Jesus. Thus they believe that the literal descendants of Abraham are to fulfill Bible prophecy in our times, and often quote such Old Testament verses as: "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice, . . . he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them" (Deut. 4:30, 31). "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord . . . in the latter days" (Hosea 3:5).

It is true that the expression "the last days" or "the latter days" often refers to the end of the world, especially in the New Testament passages that speak of that event. Seldom is this the meaning of the expression in the Old Testament, however. The phrase "in the last days" occurs only three times in the King James Version of the Old Testament. Its equivalent, "in the latter days," occurs eleven times in the Old Testament of the Revised Standard Version and twelve in the Old Testament of the Revised Standard Version. With one exception, all are translated from the same Hebrew words—be 'acharith hayyamim. (One occurrence in Daniel comes from the Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew.) The Hebrew expression literally means "in the after days." The usual rendering in modern versions (such as The New English Bible and The New International Version) is simply "in days to come."* Other equally good renderings include "in the future" (T.L.B.), † "in the future days'" (Beckley), ‡ "in the days to come'" (N.A.B.),§ and "later on"
A consideration of some actual verses will demonstrate the correctness of these renderings.

Jacob told his sons what would happen to them “in the last days” (Gen. 49:1, K.J.V.). Fulfillments were apparent in most cases soon after the settlement in Canaan and were complete by the reign of David, that is, seven hundred years “in the future” from the time Jacob spoke.

Balaam told the king of Moab what Israel would do to Moab “in the latter days” (Num. 24:14, K.J.V., R.S.V.). These “days to come” (N.E.B., N.I.V.) occurred when Moab was conquered by David, and again when Moab was severely chastised by Israel in the days of Ahab. There are no Moabites today for Israel to do anything to.

Moses knew that after his death Israel would forsake the Lord and suffer the consequences. This would occur “in the latter days” (Deut. 31:29, K.J.V.). According to Judges 2:7-11, Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and the elders that outlived Joshua, and then the decline and trouble predicted by Moses began.

How then should we understand Moses’ earnest words at the beginning of his farewell speech to Israel? After warning them of the chastisement that would come upon them if they were unfaithful, he said, “But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him. . . . When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, . . . he will not forsake thee” (Deut. 4:29-31). Were not Moses’ words taken to heart and fulfilled over and over again in the deliverances effected by the judges, and again many times during the kingdom, and eventually in the Babylonian captivity? Are we justified in demanding that this promise find a fulfillment just before the second coming of Christ at the end of the world? These words have found fulfillment scores of times, as acknowledged by the Levites in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. When reviewing the history of Israel they declared, “And in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies” (Neh. 9:27).

Prophetic statements

The prophets before the exile were still hopeful that Israel would recover their faithfulness to God. Both Isaiah and Micah presented to them a glorious picture of the possible elevation of Jerusalem “in the last days” (Isa. 2:1-5, K.J.V.; Micah 4:1-5, K.J.V.). Neither prophet was saying anything more than Moses had said seven hundred years earlier—that restoration was possible only if Israel would walk in the light of God’s leading.

Isaiah knew that first there would have to be the exile to Babylon (Isa. 39:6, 7). After the Exile he foresaw a return across the Euphrates, from what in his day was known as Assyria, as a kind of repetition of the Exodus” (chap. 11:11, 15, 16). The context indicates that we deceive ourselves and those who hear us if we interpret this “second” deliverance as a return of Israel in our times from their dispersion. The words clearly indicate that it was to be a deliverance from the Babylonian exile—a deliverance that was still two hundred years in the future when Isaiah wrote. It would be the next great act of God after the deliverance from Egypt.

The prophets who lived during the Exile period also spoke of what would happen in later days. Jeremiah predicted that both Moab and Elam, which were also subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, would be restored “in days to come” (Jer. 48:47; 49:39, N.E.B.). The “latter days” for these nations occurred after the power of Babylon waned. The captives of Moab and Elam would have benefited by repatriation under the humanitarian policy of the Persians in the same way that Israel did. Thus, the “latter days” for Israel came in the same way and at the same time (chap. 23:20; 30:24, K.J.V.). In these passages the prophet expressed the earnest hope that his people “in days to come” would benefit from the disciplinary experience of captivity and eventual deliverance by taking time to consider the kind providence that had been over them through it all.

Ezekiel’s use of these expressions parallels that of his contemporary Jeremiah. The exiled prophet sought to encourage his fellow exiles to take heart after they had heard that Jerusalem had been destroyed (Eze. 33:21). He pictured not only the return of the people to Judea (chaps. 34, 36, and 37) but a condition of such peace and plenty that it might well arouse the covetous ambitions of powerful northern neighbors (chaps. 34; 36; 37; 38; 2, 6; 27:14; 32:26). But he assured them that though Gog and Magog should come “in the latter years [or days],” their great Deliverer would protect them and destroy the invader (chap. 38:8, 16). These dangerous “years [or days] to come” could have arrived at any time after the return to Judea in 537 B.C., and doubtless they would have occurred if Israel had become prosperous enough through her faithfulness under divine blessing to invite such invasion.

Phrases using “until”

Besides the passages containing the phrase “the latter days,” two other frequently quoted scriptures deserve our attention. Both use the word “until.” “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25).

In contemporary English the word “until” almost always bears a temporal sense. We customarily use it to imply that an activity or a situation, existing up to a certain point, will cease at that point. Because of this common usage, some have concluded that Luke 21:24 and Romans 11:25 were fulfilled in 1967 when the Israelis regained Jerusalem from Gentile control. This event, they believe, was a sign that the times of the Gentiles have ended, and that the Jews will now get over their “hardness of heart” and turn to the Lord. Are we justified in such a belief based on these verses? The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary says that the conjunction “till” or “until” may mean not only “to the time that” but “during the time that” and “so that at length.” A look at other examples from Scripture will enable us to catch the significant differences.

In Daniel’s report of his first vision he says, “I considered the horns, and . . . there came up among them another little horn. . . . I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit. . . . The judgment was set, and the

“The apostles applied the Old Testament prophecies to new believers in Christ who were assuming the mission of Israel.”
books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: and I beheld even till the beast was slain. . . . I saw in the night visions, and . . . one like the Son of man came . . . to the Ancient of days. . . . And there was given him . . . a kingdom" (Dan. 7:8-14). Twice in the course of his description he says he beheld till, but in neither case does he cease beholding at that point. Here is an instance where the second meaning of "until" is in use. Daniel meant to say that he beheld "during the time that" the thrones were placed, and the beast was slain, and that he continued to behold during all the other events of the judgment scene while they were being presented to him. According to Koehler and Baumgartner's Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros, the Hebrew word translated "till" may mean "up to," "until," or "while." Grammatically, then, we may read Jesus' statement this way: Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles during the time that or while the Gentile period runs its course. The grammar does not require us to understand Him to say anything at all about what might happen to Jerusalem after that. And if we take His words in this sense, we have no conflict with the rest of the teaching of Scripture.

Consider Jacob's experience. At Bethel the Lord promised the fleeing Jacob that He would accompany him on his journey to Haran and bring him safely back to the land of his birth. Then He added: "I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen. 28:15). Surely we would not want to understand that the Lord would be with Jacob only "up to the time of his return. The Lord did not intend to say that He would forsake him after that. The emphasis here is upon the purpose of God's being with him during the time of his absence "so that at length" He could bring him back.

Now let us apply this meaning to the language of Paul. The context of Romans 9 to 11 makes it clear that not all physical Israelites are included in the true Israel of God. Unbelieving descendants of Israel are not Israel; only believers, whether Jewish or Gentile, belong to Israel. But the present unbelief of the majority of the Jews, disappointing as it was to Paul, was actually causing the Christian mission to be concentrated upon the Gentiles. Paul sees that in the overruling wisdom of God, blindness in part is happened to Israel "so that at length" the fullness of the Gentiles may come in. They will become part of the Israel of God, and so all true Israel will be saved (see Rom. 11:25, 26). This is the end of Paul's argument. He does not take the additional step of saying that Jewish unbelief would cease when the Gentiles had had their full opportunity, although obviously nothing would be dearer to his heart. Nor are we required by his language to look for this to happen, as much as we would like to see it.

But there is an even more instructive example. In both Luke 21:24 and Romans 11:25 the word "until" is translated from the Greek achrís hou. The identical expression is used also in Hebrews 3:13, and there it is not translated "until" at all, but receives a translation in version after version that amply justifies our conclusions so far. That passage reads: "Exhort one another daily, while [the R.S.V. and N.I.V. have "as long as"] it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." If we use this meaning in Luke 21:24 and Romans 11:25, we have: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, while the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, as long as the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

The election of Israel by God to be His special people was not primarily an election to salvation, though it would have resulted in that. It was an election to service (Ex. 19:5, 6; Isa. 43:10, 21; 61:6). It was His intention, confirmed many times, that they should be His people forever (2 Sam. 7:23, 24). But even the original offer of the covenant at Sinai contained a plain "if" (Ex. 19:5, 6). After centuries of pleading and discipline designed to help them to accept His divine call to service from the heart, God eventually accepted their refusal (Matt. 21:24; Rom. 11:20). He now offers that privilege to any who will accept it, Jews or Gentile. Thus, to Jews as individuals the door both to service and to salvation remains open. We cannot, then, interpret either Luke 21:24 or Romans 11:25 as a renewal of the call to national service, for that has been withdrawn. Neither can we take these verses as implying a new call to salvation, for that call has always been open.

Still a distinct people

In spite of Israel's failure to fulfill the terms of their mission as His own special nation, God has chosen in His wisdom to keep His promises by preserving them as a distinct people (Gen. 12:2; 15:5; 18:18; 22:16-18; 26:4; 28:14). He would not destroy Israel utterly, in spite of all they might do (Lev. 26:44, 45). Even near the end of the road He could say, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6). Thus, though Babylonians, Romans, Ammonites, Moabites, Phoenicians, Assyrians, and Hittites have all ceased to exist, the Jews have continued as a separate and distinct people. Their very existence is a witness to the truthfulness of God.

If one takes the predictions of Old Testament prophets about the return from the first dispersion and expects them to be fulfilled to literal, unbelieving Israel nineteen centuries after the second dispersion, he ignores the conditional nature of Hebrew prophecy both in its threatenings and its promises (see Jer. 18:7-10). He also takes no account of the fact that Daniel's prophecies, which foretold the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the first dispersion and its destruction again, did not mention another restoration before the judgment and the eternal kingdom (see Dan. 7:26, 27; 9:24-27; 11:43-12:3). He also leaves unexplained Jesus' silence about any restoration after the vineyard of the Lord had been taken from the unfaithful husbandmen and given to others (see Matt. 21:43).

We conclude, then, that the reoccupation of Jerusalem by modern Jews is not an event included in the purview of prophecy. The nation and people of Israel have not returned to Palestine in penitence and faith in order to fulfill God's purposes for them. Though modern Israelis are to be commended for their energy and idealism, their present prosperity is not the result of special divine favor except as His blessing comes upon all diligent effort. Christians may indeed take an interest in the affairs of Israel, but not on the basis of Bible prophecy.
The message of Revelation is the story of the great struggle between Christ and Satan in its ultimate issues.

Since the articles in this series build closely upon one another, we would suggest that readers refer to the first two installments (March and May, 1980) as a background to this discussion. Those who did not receive the preceding articles may obtain them by sending $1.00 to cover the costs of copying and postage.—The Editors.

The previous article in this series emphasized the great conflict brought to view throughout Scripture, centering on the everlasting gospel (see Rev. 14:6, 7). The “mark of the beast” principle versus the “seal of God” principle runs through Scripture like a black-and-gold thread of death and life. On one side stands a faithful remnant who have understood and accepted God’s true plan of salvation. On the other stands the mighty host of rebellious sinners who have failed or refused to believe and accept it. This “great controversy” theme permeates all of Scripture. There we see the great controversy between Christ and Satan over universal leadership, the great controversy over the salvation of men, the great controversy over the way of salvation.

These are supreme and ultimate issues.

It should be repeatedly stressed that both the Old and New Testaments speak of a twofold concern. First is the vindication of God’s character, which is inseparably linked with His right to be the supreme commander of the universe. Second is the method and plan of God to save man. Both of these concerns are priority targets at which Satan aims his special blows. Our one little lost-sheep planet is the battlefield on which the great controversy struggle is being fought.

Although the principle of the mark and seal may be traced throughout Scripture, there are unique, identifiable elements in both, which have fulfillment only in these last days. The seal of God and Satan’s opposing mark are brought to their final, universal struggle and resolution in the verses constituting the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14.

Daniel 7 throws light on the symbolism of the beast found in Revelation 13. In Daniel 7 we find world history clearly symbolized by a lion, leopard, bear, and a horrendous, indescribable fourth beast. The identification of Daniel’s beast symbols is not left to speculation. Daniel 7:17 specifically states that the four beasts represent four kings (or kingdoms, according to the LXX, Theodotian, and the Vulgate). Daniel 7:23 equates the fourth beast with the fourth kingdom. Most scholars agree that the four beasts of Daniel 7 represent the same world empires symbolized by the image of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay of Daniel 2. Beginning with the Babylonian Empire, symbolized by the head of gold in Daniel 2 and by the lion in Daniel 7, we can easily trace the identity of the other symbols as verified by history (see box).

Coming to Revelation 13:1, 2, we find the beast depicted there to be a composite of the four beasts found in Daniel 7. John alludes to these characteristics in the reverse order of their appearance in Daniel, since he starts with the world government at the time of his writing, Rome, and then traces the line back to Babylon.

We should note also that the beast with its mark that God warns against in Revelation 14:9-12 is undoubtedly the same as the beast of Revelation 13:1, 2. Revelation 14 specifically refers to the beast and his image, while Revelation 13 describes this beast and the creation of an image to it. The beast and its image are united in their demands that men receive the mark of the beast. Thus, anyone who worships the beast also worships the image and is a bearer of the mark.

In our study of the beast and its mark, we need to keep in mind that the story of Revelation is the story of Christ versus antichrist. Especially in chapters 11 to 20 do we find antichrist occupying the scene. Next to Christ Himself, antichrist is the most prominent feature of the book. The actual word antichrist is not found in Revelation, but the meaning is. It is a term that clearly refers to one who is opposed to Christ, against Christ, instead of Christ. All these rebellious roles assume the prerogatives of Christ and militate not only against His person but also against His spirit and principles. The term antichrist appears in the New Testament only in the writings of John (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7). In these passages the apostle assumes his readers’ knowledge concerning antichrist and that they believe the antichrist’s full manifestation will be in connection with the last days. As a result, John does not specifically identify antichrist as a particular person or organization. So also the beast symbolism in Revelation 13 and 14 far transcends any identification of a specific individual, emperor, or other personage. Rather it is a composite power. Paul describes the same power in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12 as a developing apostasy, beginning in the days of the apostles and culminating in the manifestation of the “man of sin” or “man of lawlessness,” who opposes God by sitting in the temple of God and equating himself with God. Furthermore the work of this spiritual kingdom of evil climaxes with the second coming of Jesus Christ, who will destroy the an-
tichrist, the beast, the dragon, the scarlet-clad woman, and all those associated with them.

It should also be noted that the dragon of Revelation 12, specifically identified as Satan, is the one who gives the beast his power, seat, and authority (see Rev. 13:2). Thus there is an unholy confederacy of evil that permeates earthly powers and kingdoms manifested throughout history. It is an unholy union of political and religious power, which seeks to dominate and control the minds of men not only through force but by means of intrigue, falsehood, and error.

The controversy theme is continued in the two women of Revelation 12 and 17, embracing the faithful and the faithless of all ages. In Revelation 17 we see what some interpret as a symbol of an apostate church—a woman riding on a scarlet-colored beast, full of blasphemous names, with seven heads and ten horns. This gaudily clad woman is in marked contrast to the sun-clothed woman representing true Christianity, in Revelation 12. The apostate woman is arrayed in purple and scarlet, bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication, and on her forehead is written the name of “mystery: Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of earth’s abominations” (see Rev. 17:4, 5, R.S.V.). Many Bible students have identified this woman, drunk with the blood of saints, as Rome in both its phases of pagan and spiritual apostasy. The apostle Paul saw this spiritual apostasy working within the church very early (see Acts 20:29, 30). Those persecutions and martyrdom of pagan Rome were few compared with those in later centuries.

It is not our purpose to indict any now living, whatever their spiritual heritage. All who oppose Christ and His church, either by persecuting cruelty or doctrinal counterfeit, come under the heading of antichrist. Above all, Satan himself, as Revelation 12 portrays him, is the supreme antichrist. Yet he rarely works against Christ in a direct, open confrontation, but through individuals and religious and political institutions.

Thus the beast has a repeated application. First to pagan Rome, second, to the medieval persecutions of the state church, and last, in the final days of earth’s history to a revival of a political and religious persecuting power that seeks to destroy Christ’s faithful, patient remnant.

The climax of Revelation 13 combined with the third angel’s message of Revelation 14 describing God’s warning against those who receive the mark of the beast, clearly indicates a worldwide enforcement of a “mark” under pain of boycott and death. The Greek word for “mark” is charagma, which means an etching, a stamp, a badge of servitude, or a sculptured figure. Note carefully that the image to the beast figures prominently in Revelation 13. This symbolism draws heavily from Daniel 3 where a death decree initiated by Babylon is connected with the worship of an image. In essence John is saying that the same situation found in ancient Babylon (in which a political-religious power demanded worship on pain of death) will prevail on a worldwide basis in the last days.

The climax of the third angel’s message with its warning against worshiping the beast and receiving his mark is found in Revelation 14, verse 12: “Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, for those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (R.S.V.). Central in the controversy between Christ and Satan is the relationship of law and grace, which is so greatly misunderstood by many today. Organized religion seems to fluctuate between the equally fatal extremes of antinomianism and legalism.

In connection with this concept, it is significant to note that God’s faithful, who are protected by His seal instead of receiving the mark of the beast, are described as commandment keepers (Rev. 14:12). The worshipers of the beast, in contrast, violate the first commandment, for they worship the beast (chap. 13:8); the second commandment, for they worship an image of the beast (verse 15); the third commandment, for they prefer the name of the beast to the name of the Creator (verse 17); and the fourth commandment, for no idolater can rightly observe the memorial of Him who created all things.

The fourth commandment, which calls men to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy on the basis of God’s Creation, is echoed in the first angel’s message of Revelation 14:6, 7, which commands every nation, kindred, tongue, and people to worship God who made “heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” What an appropriate command in these last hours of earth’s history when the inroads of evolutionary concepts have to a large extent obliterated from the minds of earth’s inhabitants the creative power and acts of the God of the universe. These are memorialized by the fourth commandment. Those loyal to their Creator and Redeemer find it impossible to experience true worship.

When Babylon’s King Nebuchadnezzar recovered from the beast syndrome (see Daniel 4), the record says that he lifted his eyes to heaven and his own testimony states that “my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives for ever” (Dan. 4:34, R.S.V.). When will men know and understand that God is supreme, God is the Creator, God rules the universe? Beasts look down to the earth, not up to their Creator in praise and acknowledgement. Not until Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to Heaven was his reason restored. This is an important point. Nebuchadnezzar’s disgraceful downfall was to be a subject of the beast kingdom was a result of his own self-glorification and pride of (Continued on page 25.)

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Ministry, July/1980 19
A DOCTRINE OF HEALTH?

The Scriptures present health of body, mind, and soul as a doctrine on a level with other basic truths.

by J. Wayne McFarland

Should physical health be a concern of the clergy? Does it have theological importance? Is it an issue the ministry can take or leave according to individual inclination, or is it a basic truth that has concern both for here and the hereafter? Can it be doctrine?

A doctrine, in the ecclesiastical sense, means a teaching that is to be believed and implemented by appropriate action on the part of the hearer. In Mark 4:2 the Greek word translated doctrine literally means “teaching”—“And [Jesus] said unto them in his doctrine [teaching] . . .”


Since the lawyer was a student of the law (Torah) he had no trouble, so he thought, in answering Christ. He quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself” (Luke 10:27).

Christ commended the lawyer. “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live” (verse 28).

Jesus plainly affirms that man’s supreme love for God—the love that results in eternal life—involves all of his strength (body); all of his soul (spiritual); all of his mind (mental faculties); and his fellow men (social outreach).

Now the discussion focused on the question Who is my neighbor? The lawyer asked for clarification, for this question was a source of endless debate among the clergy of Christ’s day. Samaritans and non-Jews were obviously outside the pale of consideration. But where did one draw the line between priest and peasant—ruler and layman?

In answer, Jesus told of the man who was beset by robbers on his trip from Jerusalem to Jericho, beaten, robbed, and left for dead. He told of the priest and Levite who passed by, ignoring his need. And He told of the Samaritan who stopped because of his compassion and cared for the man’s physical needs.

“Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?” asked our Lord (verse 36). There was no evading the answer. The one who stopped to render first aid, medical care, and hospitalization was the neighbor, not the priest and the Levite, who passed by. An unnamed layman, a Samaritan, was the benefactor.

Forever the question was settled—we all belong to one great family, and the saving of human life, the alleviating of human suffering, is a part of Heaven’s teaching. It goes beyond caste, custom, dogma, or creed. Whatever we know that will help reduce pain, hurts, grief, and extend the life of the humblest of men, it is our duty to gladly perform.

Then Jesus summarized His story: “Go, and do thou likewise” (verse 37).

The truth of complete salvation for the entire man has been obscured, buried beneath the theological clutter of lesser issues. We have at times majored in minors, and minored in majors.

Christ not only taught the truth, He was the truth. He lived the truth. He fulfilled the mission of Heaven in showing that saving truth always frees man from the effects of evil, whether it be a disease-racked body; an anxious, troubled mind; or a soul bowed down with guilt. His program of saving man was set forth at His inaugural address in the synagogue in Nazareth. It was an emancipation proclamation from sickness and disease, and from all the effects of evil on poor, frail human mortals. Listen to the words ring out as Christ reads from the great Messianic prophecies of Isaiah 61. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. . . . This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (chap. 4:18-21).

Christ’s healing ministry, His care for the body, took a great share of His time—in fact, more than He spent in preaching. This becomes very clear as one goes through the Gospels. Jesus was the embodiment of the good Samaritan. There were whole villages where not a sick person could be found. “He laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them” (verse 40).

This healing ministry was to continue through the disciples, for it was Heaven ordained. “Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick” (chap. 9:1, 2).

When the working force for the carrying of the good news was enlarged, the marching orders were the same. “The Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two” to the towns and villages to “heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you” (chap. 10:1, 9).

Nothing can open hearts and reveal love and compassion and the character of God’s kingdom so clearly as the relief of suffering. Here is a lesson for the ministry of today. Note the sequence of instructions in this commission: “Heal
the sick,” then let the listeners know that Heaven is nearby, saying to them, “The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”

For many years the truth of complete salvation for the entire man has been obscured, buried beneath the theological clutter of lesser issues. We have at times majored in minors, and minored in majors.

This vital truth was not vague or hazy in the early Christian church. It stood out as a clear, distinct doctrine. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God” (Rom. 12:1). No doubt Paul had in mind the ancient sacrificial system that did not permit an animal that was sick, crippled, or blemished to be used as an offering to God (Lev. 1:3, 10; 3:1; 22:20; Deut. 15:21). The old sacrificial system has lost its significance, but now the human being is to present to God his own body as a living, dedicated offering for God’s use. Paul assures us such an offering “is your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1).

But what are some placing before God? An abused stomach; a burned out pair of lungs; jagged irritable nerves, due to lack of rest, sleep, or recreation. There is nothing reasonable about giving such blemished offerings to God.

Paul adds, “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind!” (verse 2). Our mental abilities, our thoughts, are to be renewed until we are transformed into a new creature. A healthy mind in a healthy body is what Paul is talking about. Why? “That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (verse 2). Knowing God’s will depends on straight thinking by a healthy mind in a healthy body. Physical, mental, and moral health are inseparably bound together. Whatever affects one will affect the others. This is the way we are made. This is the true nature and relationship of mind, body, and spirit.

Nor did Paul simply hold forth the idea to church members in Rome without setting the example. Paul practiced what he preached. “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27). “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things” (verse 25).

The apostle Peter supports Paul, giving the same emphasis to temperance when enumerating those graces that cause us to “be partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). After knowledge he adds “temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness” (verse 6). Obviously, a person without self-control, or an intemperate person, has grave problems being patient and considerate. Thus physical considerations are vital to developing a Christ-like character.

John the Beloved also preaches a message of saving health. In fact, he places the saving of the body and the saving of the soul side by side in his letter to the “wellbeloved Gaius.” “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 2). This relationship of obedience to God and buoyant health is also taught in Old Testament scriptures. “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee” (Ex. 15:26). “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones” (Prov. 17:22).

James, who may have been the preceding voice at the early church councils (see Acts 15:13), gave explicit instructions on prayer for the sick. We are familiar with these verses, but we tend to overlook an important part of his instructions—the prayer for the sick must be a “prayer of faith” (James 5:15), and James has already stated that “faith without works is dead” (chap. 2:26). To know what to do in order to have health and then to do it—that is a working faith. James says, “The prayer of faith shall save the sick, . . . and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven” (chap. 5:15). Will a person who has been healed as a result of the prayer of faith then go right back to his old style of living that produced his illness? No, indeed! He gratefully follows the laws of health; he carefully husbands his strength in gratitude for what Heaven has done for him.

It is high time for more pulpits to proclaim 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20: “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

The call of the angels found in the book of Revelation includes an appeal to glorify God: “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come” (chap. 14:7). Giving glory to God, of course, is manifest by reverence, worship, song, prayer, and offering; but we must also recall, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

To some of the saints, sitting comfortably in their pews, it could be a new experience to learn that proper eating and drinking can be a means of glorifying God, and that the care of the body temple for the indwelling of God’s presence is not something to pass over lightly. It is not an optional doctrine that we may accept or reject as we please. “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy” (chap. 3:17).

As ministers, we need to reemphasize with Paul that physical fitness—a vibrant, healthy body—is good religion and that God’s plan for man includes the gospel of health. The totality of the good news places the question of health on a sound theological basis. Christ paid the price necessary for complete restoration. “Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

This grand truth needs to be dusted off and placed in its proper setting of salvation for the whole man. Christ taught it and lived it; the disciples preached it and lived it. We, as Christ’s ministers, can do no less.
For many years I have pondered the question: Why do so many persons openly oppose teaching scientific creationism in the public schools? Would not their energy be better spent attacking real evils than in opposing creation concepts? Indeed, why attack something like creationism that doesn’t hurt anybody? In view of the fact that there are hundreds of creationist scientists with Ph.D. degrees in the natural sciences, the assault against teaching creationism could be construed as nothing more than another example of the majority repressing the minority.

I’ve often wondered why evolutionists become so emotional, even unreasonable, in their efforts to force scientific creationism out of the public schools. They rarely allow public school educational material to contain any antievolution data that would cause the reader to doubt the adequacy of the evolution model. The only answer I’ve come up with is that many evolutionists have doubts about their own position! Doubts, not confidence, cause one to react emotionally against the possibility that a creationist view of both the living and nonliving world may be correct.

One would think that fully adjusted, convinced evolutionists would just smile and wonder how anyone could believe in “simple-minded” creation theories. Yet the emotionalism sometimes exhibited by evolutionists and their unkind words about creationists inevitably raise the question: Is such behavior a defense mechanism to deal with basic uncertainties regarding their beliefs? When we run short of ways to discredit a position, even the best of us resort to name-calling and generalizations.

How many evolutionists have carefully researched with an open mind the other side? Few that I know. But I have found that many of those who do this at least change their tone from contempt to respect. Sometimes they even switch sides!

Unfortunately, most science majors never hear the other side. Most State university libraries have very few, if any, antievolution or pro-Creation books. Of the dozen or so prestigious American universities I have visited, few had more than twenty-five books on creationism. But thousands of proevolution books lined their shelves. In the process of earning several degrees from secular universities, I have found, almost without exception, that my professors mentioned creationism or even the arguments against evolution only for the purpose of ridiculing all nonevolutionary positions. Rarely did they clearly and cogently explain the problems of evolutionary theory, although many such problems are apparent in the scientific literature.

As a result, most students, even in Ph.D. programs, either are totally ignorant of the creationist position or are unaware that any competent scientist seriously holds a position other than evolution. One biologist even wrote to Science News magazine expressing amazement that certain scientists did not accept evolution. This biologist requested that someone send him information about nonevolutionary positions to reduce his ignorance regarding alternative viewpoints. Obviously, on this issue our country’s schools effectively indoctrinate only one side. In my opinion, such a situation is deplorable.

Fortunately, a number of forces are working against the current state of affairs. A number of well-researched articles that look at both sides are appearing in highly respected journals. For example, an article in the June, 1979, issue of the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy pointed out that it is unconstitutional under the Establishment Clause to teach evolution alone; scientific creationism must be taught together with evolution if either is taught. Another article by Wendell Bird, published in Yale Law Journal, discusses the creationist movement in general and the fact that a two-model approach is the only constitutional one for teaching theories of origins. In addition, a booklet that discusses many sound educational reasons for teaching both sides of the creation-evolution controversy was published in 1979 by the Phi Delta Kappa Educational...
Telling students that scientists know life originated by evolutionary processes is not honest.

This does not mean that many of these ideas cannot be supported beyond a fairly reasonable doubt; it does mean that we should demonstrate a willingness to listen carefully to every side. It also means not coming to a conclusion before we have heard all the facts. Ideally, we should have enough respect for others to listen, while having sufficient confidence in our own convictions not to be unstable. Believing we are correct is one thing, but being so sure we are correct that we will not listen to the other side is one reason so many of us never grow beyond our first set of childish beliefs.

It is often said that religionists are dogmatic, narrow-minded, and have an amazing ability to block out dissonant information. There is abundant evidence that evolutionists equal the religionists' unenviable record. No doubt this dogmatism exists because both creationists and evolutionists are human, not because they opt for one theory of origins or the other.

Students should be trained to look at all sides, to not terminate the case before they have finished researching it, to not condemn (or accept) anything without careful consideration of all the data. The school system should be honest in fairly considering all of the information available. This is of extreme importance in view of the tremendous amount of damage that has been caused (in the history of science as well in the history of religion) by uncritical acceptance of a set of beliefs—any set of beliefs—and a reluctance to reason, question, ponder, think, examine, doubt, and explore. To assume we know and then to build a science upon our assumptions and dogmatize it in the schools without allowing the structure to be questioned is pernicious.

In all communication, whether in the classroom, the pulpit, or elsewhere, let us be honest enough to distinguish clearly between what we know and what we believe. And let us be secure enough to consider viewpoints other than our own.

4 Jerry Bergman, “Teaching About the Creation-Evolution Controversy” (Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 8th and Union, Box 879, Bloomington, Indiana 47402, 1979).
A new world opened to this pastor’s wife when she learned that the greatest gift she had to offer was an honest sharing of herself.

A relaxed morning brunch together and a quiet drive through a countryside awakening to spring released a spurt of courage and openness within me. “Nancy,” I began, “you just can’t imagine what your inviting me out like this has meant to me.” She looked startled. “Well,” I tried to explain, “being a doctor’s wife, you’ve probably never heard anything like this before, but ministers’ wives just aren’t supposed to have friends. I mean, we’re supposed to be gracious and kind and all that, but we’re not supposed to be close, share from the inside, be real human beings. Oh, I understand the well-meant cautions, but I do need people—so much!”

Stopping the car so she could look at me, she began a speech that, hours of reflection later, would still provide fresh insights and prompt new fountains of courage.

“That explains it,” she stated emphatically. “I invited you today partly because it seemed the thing to do, your being the new pastor’s wife and all, but mostly—I confess—because I was curious about what makes you tick. You’re just not a”—she hesitated and then resolutely continued—“a benevolent nobody like so many of the rest of them. They all smile and shake our hands and respond discovery about my inestimable worth in the eyes of my Creator. To this day when we cross paths with friends from our first congregation, we laugh together about the day I tried so desperately to be quiet and reserved, gracious and poised, and even managed to play the opening hymn flawlessly, as it was written.

Fortunately the strain of such a major personality overhaul proved too great, and I decided that, come what may, our church members would have to accept or reject me as I am, for I could neither pretend to be nor become somebody else. And as often happens, resignation led to discovery. I learned that churches would indeed challenge my talents to the full, but since churches are not programs and dinners and fund drives, but people, the greatest gift I had to offer was not talent but friendship—an open, honest sharing of myself.

To be a friend is risky business. For true friendship is a two-way revelation, a sharing of our inmost being. As John Powell puts it, it’s scary to show you who I really am, because you might not like me, and I’m all I’ve got. But a corresponding discovery about my inestimable worth in the eyes of my Creator and Redeemer has given me courage to take the risk. A new view of the risks God has taken in loving, of how His character has been maligned and His Son rejected, has crystallized for me a mission in life. My prayers as I stand beside my husband in his ministry have become very simple and specific on this point.

“Lord, make me the kind of friend with whom others can experience on a human level the acceptance and love they can know with You.” While the challenge of representing God still leaves me awe-struck, the rewards of sharing myself as I am in relationship to Him have brought some of the richest experiences of my life.

Learning to share openly from the inside, risking not only my success stories but my discouragements and struggles, as well, came hard. Somehow I thought—and church members did too, I discovered—that sleeping next to a minister must bring sanctification by osmo-

by Karen M. Flowers

Karen Flowers is a pastor’s wife living in Takoma Park, Maryland.
sis! Our parishioners need to see us for real; they need to experience our humanity. Letting them know us as we really are gives added depth to our testimony of trust in God. How meaningful, then, becomes our sharing of what we have learned through a trying experience and how, even in the darkness, Jesus and the salvation He offers is truly more than enough for us all.

Quality friendship requires the development of communication skills. I have been richly blessed by several communication courses I have taken. I learned that for me talking came easily, but listening needed a great deal of cultivation. I needed to become consciously tuned to the feelings, as well as the words, that were expressed. I struggled to become better at creating an atmosphere of love and acceptance, even if the feelings or messages a person was sending made me uncomfortable. I learned the value of checking to be sure I really understood how another felt inside and to treat this opening to me as a sacred trust.

Friends come in all shapes and sizes; some of my most cherished ones are children. I'm a mother of two little boys now, so on Monday afternoon I am a volunteer in my second-grader's classroom. I've always enjoyed Jeffrey's friends, and I've known one, Terry, since kindergarten. Actually, you couldn't be even a casual visitor to the classroom and not know Terry. His desk seems always to be separated from the others by about six feet. And if he doesn't cause a problem on a particular day, it's newsworthy.

Last Monday we made bread together. The science lesson had been about measures, so the children took turns measuring ingredients and mixing. Finally, one by one, they came up to knead. Then Terry stood across from me, his sticky hands working the dough with mine. Suddenly he raised his freckled face, grinned, and said, "Jeffrey's mom, I like you."

"Well, I like you, too," I stammered. "I know." He pushed the dough toward me. "That's why I like you."

I really didn't mind that he saw the tears. My thoughts reached heavenward in thanks to God for friends, still more evidence that His blueprint for relationships really works. Love does break every barrier down! And I hoped many more opportunities would be mine to say "I love you," even to the unlovely, and by my friendship declare, God is like this.

Prayers from the parsonage

by Cherry B. Habenicht

I do not know who lives here, but I can tell a lot about the owner.

Everything is tidy; trim painted and windows washed. There's no clutter on the porch or trash in the yard. The trees have been pruned, the bushes shaped, and the lawn mowed and edged. Even the car in the driveway shines!

I can picture someone kneeling in the garden, first planting, then thinning, later weeding. He has a plan and the diligence to make it work. Already he has been rewarded with vegetables and berries.

But it is the flowers, Lord, that dazzle my eyes. Spikes of gold snapdragons, rows of scarlet salvia, borders of lavender ageratum, clusters of pink geraniums. I'd like to know the person who loves such color and variety! Not afraid to get dirt under her fingernails, she designs flower beds that proclaim the loveliness of nature.

Thoughts of admiration for these unknown people ultimately turn to praise for You.

Thank You for midsummer when the earth teems with life. Thank You for being wonderfully extravagant, perfectly designing even flowers that bloom once and die. Thank You for instilling a desire for beauty in each of us.

Thank You, too, for people who wouldn't think of replacing grass with green gravel or plants with plastic arrangements. Many, like Adam and Eve of old, still dress and keep their garden, thrilled with the miracle of growth.

Attractive homes inspire me. Please show me what I can do to make our bit of property declare the glory of Your creation.

Three Angels

(Continued from page 19.)

achievement. "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power and as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?" (verse 30, R.S.V.). The record states that while the words were still in his mouth his kingdom was taken from him and he became like an animal. The same self-magnification is the basic principle also of those who worship the beast and receive his mark. The line is thus drawn between those who acknowledge that they are but creatures and worship their Maker in harmony with His prescribed way and those who worship the creature—themselves and others like themselves—and worship not in the way God prescribes but in their own way.

Thus John paints the issue as obedience or disobedience to God's commandments. The test in the last days will not center primarily on the commandments of the second table of the law—man's relationship to man—but on the first four, which deal with man's relationship to God. All unrighteousness grows out of ungodliness. Man cannot behave properly toward his fellow man if he is not in a right relationship to God (see Rom. 1:18). Thus the test centers on the first table, not the second. And the first table of the law revolves around the recognition of God as Creator. In fact, the whole plan of salvation has as its basic underpinning the doctrine of Creation.

Think it not strange that throughout all Scripture prominence is given to the Creation doctrine. We will discuss this more fully in our next installment. Carl H. F. Henry says: "The doctrine of creation is so basic as to be the indispensable foundation for any tolerable, viable human existence. The proof of this is being spelled out in the progressive disintegration of the spirit and life of modern, homeless man. When the truth of this is clearly seen, the Church will speak about God the Father, Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, with a new relevance to today's growing crowd of lonely men, to its lost and nameless, to its homeless and hopeless men."—Christianity Today, Jan. 5, 1962, p. 3. J.R.S.
The ancient world of coins can give modern students an interesting look at everyday life in Bible times.

by Stan Hudson

Few tangible reminders of everyday life have seen as little change over the centuries as have coins. Except for production techniques, coins have received little improvement in concept from Bible times.

The value of gold and silver as a medium of exchange was widely known, of course, even before the invention of coins. In the Old Testament we find references to such usage. Abraham's wealth was measured in gold, silver, and cattle (Gen. 13:2). When precious metals were meant to be used as money they were formed into ingots or wedges (such as Achan's wedge of Joshua 7:21) and large rings, easy to transport (the bundles of money of Genesis 42:35). This latter usage is preserved in the word kikkar, or talent, meaning "circular" or "ringlike."

Before coins in standard shapes and sizes were invented, payment was determined by weight. In fact, the terms "to pay" and "to weigh" were expressed by the one word shaqal. From this verb we get the word shekel (or more accurately, sheqel), which came to denote a somewhat fixed weight of approximately 12 to 14 grams.

By the time of Solomon standardized stone weights, some with inscriptions of values, were used to determine the value of precious metals in barter transactions. Solomon warned against the practice of cheating by using more than one set of weights (Prov. 20:23).

Herodotus accurately assigned the invention of coinage to the Lydians, a small but wealthy merchant nation in western Asia Minor. The first coins, minted about 640 B.C., were struck in electrum, a naturally occurring alloy of gold and silver, originally thought to be an element in its own right. Soon gold alone was being used: silver followed in the time of Croesus (mid-sixth century B.C.). These tiny coins were of similar styles, having either a crude animal (often a lion) or geometric designs on one side, and deep incuse, or sunken, impressions on the other.

When, in 547 B.C., Cyrus took Sardis, and all Asia Minor became a Persian possession, the Persians quickly saw the advantages of the coin. Darius I (Hystaspis) (521-486 B.C.) introduced the gold daric, perhaps named after himself, and its silver counterpart, the siglos. These coins were the first to depict a human being (the issuing king). The daric is mentioned in the Old Testament in Ezra 2:69 and 1 Chronicles 29:7, and it is probably the coin mentioned in Ezra 8:27 and Nehemiah 7:70-72, although different words are used. Also, the shekel of Nehemiah 5:15 may refer to the siglos. These are the only Old Testament coin references.

By the end of the fifth century B.C. coins were being produced in Gaza, Aradus, Tyre, and Sidon, but the Persians deserve the credit for introducing coinage to Israel. Small silver coins, perhaps minted locally, exist with the word Yehud, the Persian name for the province of Judea, inscribed in Aramaic. These were struck in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

One coin of particular interest shows a bearded head in a Corinthian helmet on the obverse, and a throned deity on the reverse. Since rendering a conquered nation's god on local coinage was a common Persian practice, it is generally thought that this deity is none other than a Persian representation of the God of the Jews (based, perhaps, on Ezekiel's vision), and thus unique in coinage. The rarity of the coin suggests its unpopularity in Judea.

With the entrance of Alexander III (the Great) came the Attic standard of coinage, consisting of the drachma. Alexander established dozens of mints

Lydia, seventh century B.C., 1/48 stater (size: 5 mm; note its size as compared with a U.S. dime).

Judaea Province (Persia), fourth century B.C., "God of Jews" (Courtesy of British Museum, 15 mm).

Above, Jerusalem, Antiochus VII, 132 B.C. (14 mm); below, Jerusalem, Alexander Jannaeus, c. 100 B.C. (14 mm).
throughout his empire. Acre, later called Ptolemais, became the mint for Palestine. Alexander’s coinage became a standard for centuries. On the obverse of his drachma and tetradrachma was depicted Hercules (or Alexander as Hercules), and the reverse pictured a seated Zeus. The already old custom of placing a “mintmark” on the reverse was continued. The usual legend consisted of Alexandrou—that is, Alexander’s (money). The quality of these coins was excellent; they were popular and often counterfeited. The following Ptolemaic and Seleucid rulers continued using similar styles and weights.

The earliest Jewish ruler to strike coins was Alexander Yannai (Jannaeus) 104-78 B.C. For reasons of political dependency and poor economic conditions, these coins were struck only in bronze. Jewish silver coins weren’t made until the time of the first Jewish revolt, A.D. 66-70. Jewish coins were never made in gold.

Both in style and weight Yannai’s first coin resembled an earlier coin struck in Jerusalem between 132 and 130 B.C. by the Seleucid ruler Antiochus VII (Sidetes). It was slightly smaller than a United States cent and bore a lily on the obverse, with an anchor on the reverse. Yannai’s coins had both Hebrew and Greek inscriptions. The Hasmonaeans retained the Hebrew script on coins, as more classical, albeit less common, than the spoken Aramaic.

Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.) showed his desire for strengthening foreign elements in Judaea by means of his coins. Only Greek inscriptions were used, a practice copied by his sons. The military character of his reign also shows on his coins in such symbols as shields, helmets, and warships.

Though usually careful not to offend his Jewish subjects, Herod made the only coin ever produced by a Jew for Jews depicting a living thing (contrary to the second commandment). The small bronze coin carried the figure of an eagle—probably the same eagle figure, erected on a Roman-style standard in the Temple courtyard, that caused a riot at the end of Herod’s reign. If so, we can date this coin to about the time of Christ’s birth—5 or 4 B.C.

Archelaus (Judea, Samaria, and Idumea), Antipas (Galilee and Perea), and Philip (Ituraea, Trachonitis, and other territories) continued minting bronze coins of various sizes, all bearing both the name of Caesar and their own. Later Herods showed less and less Jewish flavor on their coins, preferring to imitate Roman coins.

After Herod Archelaus was banished from Judaea, Roman procurators governed his territory from A.D. 6 to 41 and again from A.D. 44 to 66. These rulers minted small bronze coins of uniform size, copying those of the Hasmonaeans and Herods. It was two of these coins, either of the Hasmonaeans, Herods, or procurators that the poor widow of Mark 12:42 cast into the Temple offering box. Such a coin was called a prutah in Aramaic, but this word would be unknown to Mark’s non-Jewish readers. Instead, he used the word leptón, which meant a “trifling or tiny thing.” He then adds, “which make a farthing,” i.e., a Roman quadrans, smallest of Roman coins, to show how monetarily insignificant the widow’s offering was.

The procurators weren’t allowed to mint coins bearing their own names. Fortunately, however, the coins are dated; and together with the names of the Caesars and other historical records, we can determine the procurator who minted them.

The infamous Pontius Pilate (A.D. 26-36) made three coins of two different designs. Either he was ignorant of the Jews’ religious feeling or he didn’t care, for his coins portray strikingly pagan symbols—the lituus (augur’s wand) and the simpulum (libation ladle).

Antonius Felix (A.D. 52-59/60) minted two coins of different designs. One coin bore crossed palm branches, the other crossed war shields. Interestingly, the latter is the more common of the two types. A third type, having a barley ear, has usually been attributed to Felix, but now some think that Porcius Festus (A.D. 58 or 60-62) may have struck this type shortly after arriving at Caesarea to replace Felix. Whether produced by Felix or Festus, this coin, struck in Caesarea, the Roman capital of Judea, was current while Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea.
Since these small bronze coins (lepta) were usually poorly struck and had irregular flanges, often with sharp edges, Jesus' reference in Luke 12:33 to "bags which wax not old" (that is, leather purses that don't wear out) is more understandable. It wouldn't take long for these coins to wear out any leather purse they were in.

Seven coins are mentioned by name in the New Testament—the lepton (Mark 12:42; Luke 12:59; 21:2); three Greek silver coins, the drachma (chap. 15:8), the didrachma (Matt. 17:24), and the stater, or tetradrachma (verse 27); the quadrans (chap. 5:26; Mark 12:42); the assarius (Matt. 10:29; Luke 12:6); and the denarius (Matt. 18:28; 20:2, 9, 10). Mina and talent are money terms used in the New Testament, but they refer to weights of silver rather than coins.

The drachma is an unusual coin of Christ's time. The Roman denarius has long replaced the Seleucid/Greek silver coins and was their equivalent. It has been thought that perhaps the coin (mentioned only in Luke 15:8) was a Cappadocian drachma, bearing Tiberius' bust, since these coins have been found in Palestine and were contemporary with Jesus' story of the woman and her lost coin. I feel, however, that the coin was Seleucid. Jesus' reference seems to be to a bride's dowry portion retained from a wedding. Such coins would be passed from mother to daughter and would ex-cite some sixty years earlier, dating the inscription and the woman's desperation.

The didrachma and tetradrachma (actually stater) are references to silver coins from the city of Tyre, used in the business of the Temple. The staters were equal to shekels, and because the Jews were forbidden to issue their own silver coins, they were forced to use coins from this merchant city. Ironically, the coins bore the image of Israel's old nemesis, Baal. Money-changers were on hand to render service, changing foreign currency into these Tyrian coins for a percentage. Judas was paid with thirty staters.

The quadrans and the assarius were Imperial Roman coins meant to circulate throughout the Empire. The size of a United States cent, the quadrans bore religious symbols, while the larger assarius usually pictured the emperor. The King James Version renders both these coins as "farthing" (Matt. 5:26; 10:29; Mark 12:42; Luke 12:6).

By far the most frequently mentioned coin of the Bible is the denarius, mentioned sixteen times. The denarius was a silver coin the size of a U.S. dime and was worth ten assarii. This is the coin rendered "pence" and "penny" in the King James Version. Civil taxes to Rome had to be paid in this coin. Pious Jews questioned the morality of such an act.

When the Jews revolted from Rome in A.D. 66, they immediately melted down all the Tyrian silver coins in the Temple coffers (and perhaps the circulating denarii as well) and minted the first Jewish silver coins. These shekels and half shekels had a chalice on the obverse, and pomegranates on the reverse. Bronze coins were also struck with similar designs. These coins bore revolutionary slogans such as "The Freedom of Zion," and were dated according to the year of the revolt—"Year Two" (A.D. 67) or "Year Four" (A.D. 69). For the first time since the Hasmonaeans the inscriptions were all in Hebrew.

The second revolt, A.D. 132-135 (led by Bar Cocheba), again saw the Jews minting coins in silver and bronze. During this period, coins were struck over existing Roman coins, often leaving some of the original design showing. As the Jews intended, this infuriated the Romans. The shekel from this revolt is the only coin of antiquity to depict the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Since the Temple had been destroyed by the Romans some sixty years earlier, dating this coin was, for a time, a problem. It is now thought that the design was meant to recall the past abuses of the Romans and instill in the Jews moral outrage and courage for battle.

Thus the ancient world of coins, involving politics, religion, and culture, gives modern students an interesting view of everyday life in Bible times. [Note: Diagrams of coins mentioned in the text are included in the text.]
Professional Growth Seminars. The seminar in Vermont I recently attended with my wife was a great blessing to me. Each speaker was excellent, with much of value to say.

United Methodist minister
Vermont

Article requested
Of the many periodicals I receive, MINISTRY is one of the few I file for future reference. Especially I have appreciated the varied articles and the thorough research. I'm not an Adventist, but I am as conservative and Biblically oriented as one! There seems to be renewed interest conservative and Biblically oriented as the varied articles and the thorough research. Seventh-day Adventists keep the Sabbath, not to be saved, but as a response of love and obedience to the Lord, who has saved them. Legalism, then, is a matter of one's motive for obedience rather than the specific form that that obedience may take. Although there may be those who observe the Sabbath (or Sunday) thinking to gain merit for salvation, such misguided individuals do not make automatic legalists of others who worship on those days.—Editors.

Healing sick churches
MINISTRY has been coming to us for some time, and I feel I cannot let another month go by without writing "Thank you." I have derived so much benefit and inspiration from it that I’m beginning to feel guilty for such an undeserved gift. Halvard J. Thomsen’s article, "What Do You Do When a Church Gets Sick?" (March, 1980), seemed as if it were written to encourage me. My husband is the pastor of a small-town American Baptist church, and I work part-time as a nurse. My concern for the church seems to parallel my concern for my patients. We work as a team in the hospital; why can’t we be as effective in our ministry of spiritual healing? Couldn’t our sick churches turn out some well persons over a period of time? I think we could. No doubt your articles are aimed at ministers, but at this parsonage it’s his wife who is really being helped by MINISTRY.

American Baptist minister’s wife
Colorado

Often eye to eye
A pastor friend lent me a copy of MINISTRY recently. Frankly, I was surprised at how many areas there are where we see eye to eye, although I am not a Seventh-day Adventist. My wife and I are missionaries with the North American Indian Mission.

Minister
British Columbia

Life-changing
I feel MINISTRY is one of the best periodicals I receive. I also wish to thank you for the seminars. I’ve attended both of those held in my area and found them very valuable. I feel that such a program should have more exposure. I invited five fellow Christian Church ministers to the last one and then felt guilty about taking advantage of you! The session on health at the seminar two years ago was a life-changing one for me, resulting in a change of diet and an exercise program that has made a drastic improvement in the way I feel and function. I’d like to see you add a session to your seminars on church-growth dynamics. Thank you for MINISTRY.

Christian Church minister
India
Voice backs Reagan

Christian Voice, a multimillion-dollar political action lobby of evangelical Christians, is backing Ronald Reagan for President, says the organization’s legislative director.

“We are mailing several million letters on behalf of Reagan,” said Voice’s Washington-based legislative director Gary Jarmin. Christian Voice is the largest of new Christian lobbies organized to enlist fundamentalist support for conservative Christian candidates and to target liberal office holders for defeat.

Mr. Jarmin said the organization has 126,000 registered members across the country, including 2,000 ministers from more than 40 denominations and 350 Roman Catholic priests.

President Carter has lost the group’s confidence because he has “subordinated his own [religious] principles,” said Jarmin. “He also surrounded himself with people and advisors who don’t have strong spiritual convictions and don’t reflect Christian principles. They are secular humanists.”

The number one priority of Christian Voice, according to Jarmin, is a school prayer amendment. Also on the organization’s hit list are sex and violence on television, pornography, abortion, and the ordination of women priests.

“We are mailing several million letters in Jerusalem until ye get power from on high.’ This, not political action, which can only have the effect of further dividing Christians who have differing ideas on political matters, is the great need of our day.”

Swiss reject separation

Swiss sundaeas will still have to be eaten on Monday.

And Swiss Thomas Jeffersons must flee to fairer shores.

By a 3-1 margin, voters in Switzerland have rejected a referendum that would have separated church and state.

Volunteers in all 26 cantons rejected the referendum, which was put on the ballot by an initiative signed by more than 60,000 citizens. The two French-speaking cantons had the highest percentage of supporters for the referendum—Geneva (35 percent) and Neuchâtel (31 percent). Roman Catholic cantons overwhelmingly defeated the referendum—in one the vote ran 96.2 percent against.

In most Swiss cantons direct aid is given to the churches or they are allowed to collect their own taxes. The proposed amendment would have transferred authority over aid to the churches from the canton to the federal government and would have ended government collecting of taxes for the churches.

Presently, for example, Basel imposes taxes on Protestants, Catholics, and Jews and turns the money over to the churches and synagogues. (Basel is unique in its recognition of Judaism.) A person can avoid the tax by renouncing church membership.

With the referendum defeated, Switzerland’s strict Sunday laws can be expected to remain in force. And Swiss Thomas Jeffersons must still flee if they feel as their namesake did: “To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical.”

“Unsure” prophecies

Judging by failure of their predictions, America’s top psychics, including Jeane Dixon, had better consider trading in their crystal balls for the “sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19).

Items: Jeane Dixon, who announced in 1977 that the late Pope Paul VI would be around for four more years, predicted that in 1979 Pope John Paul II “will ease church rules,” and that “many Catholics will find John Paul unorthodox in his thinking.”

Psychic-astrologer Frederick Davis must have mistaken a comet for a star when he predicted that in 1979 Pope John Paul II “will stagger the religious world by announcing his plans for the ordination of women priests.”

Chicago psychic Olaf Jonsson predicted that the “real” Holy Shroud (or burial cloth of Jesus) would be found in Egypt.

Other predictions from psychic fancies of 1979:

“Blood will be spilled as fighting breaks out between Israel and Egypt again in May. Surprisingly, [CBS anchor] Walter Cronkite will be influential in getting both sides back to the conference table, where a new peace agreement will be hammered out.”

“Muhammad Ali will win a seat in Congress.” (Instead, in early 1980, he won an assignment for Carter in Africa.)

“President Carter will be injured in a hang-gliding accident between April 8 and 10.”

“Uganda dictator Idi Amin will be assassinated March 13.”

One prediction was half right: “Ted Kennedy will make a bid for the presidency, with John Connally as his running mate.”

These, and other predictions relating to an “alien space station,” the stopping of inflation “dead in its tracks,” and so on, were published in editions of the National Enquirer and The Star—the supermarket staples.

Neither Jeane Dixon nor any of the ten leading psychics had a word to say about Iran, let alone predicting the upheaval there and the taking of American hostages.

Jesus, however, had something to say of our age when He predicted that “false prophets” shall arise (Matt. 24:24). In contrast to the false, He set forth His own credentials, based on His integrity as a sure foreteller of events: “Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come, ye may believe that I am he” (John 13:19).

The “unsure” prophecies of the psychics would seem to provide their own testimony to the integrity of Jesus, “the way, the truth, and the life.”
Reprint available


Dr. Horn, noted archeologist, recounts recent discoveries in the area of both Old and New Testaments that illuminate our understanding of the Bible text and times. The conclusion is that not only is one's knowledge increased, but faith in the veracity of God's Word is upheld.

Dr. Specht, professor of New Testament studies, surveys the tools ministers can use to advance in their study of the Bible—translations and versions of the Word itself, commentaries, word studies, lexicons and grammars, Bible translations and versions of the Word itself, concordances, and others. A unique feature is that the uses for all these tools are illustrated by actual examples within the scriptural text itself. Thus one learns a great deal just by reading the paper. A bibliography of selected basic tools concludes the paper.

You can order copies of this 24-page insert, including both papers, for only $1.00 postpaid. Send your order to: MINISTRY, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

ABS and SDA

H. M. S. Richards, founder of the Voice of Prophecy and a pioneer in religious broadcasting, was presented with an American Bible Society Good News Bible in honor of his 50th year on the air.

The presentation was made at Long Beach, California, by Dr. Theodore R. Van Der Veer, a field secretary for the American Bible Society. More than 3,000 people witnessed the ceremony at the Long Beach Convention Arena.

In a letter to Dr. Richards, American Bible Society general secretary Alice Ball congratulated Dr. Richards on his long career in broadcasting and wrote, "The American Bible Society has enjoyed close cooperation and fellowship with the Seventh-day Adventists for many years. "The Seventh-day Adventist Church," she continued, "has been one denomination that has faithfully increased its support for the American Bible Society."

The American Bible Society, the world's leading Scripture distribution organization, received more than $50,000 in support last year from Seventh-day Adventists.

Personalized slides

Make your own Bible-text slides for evangelism or seminar preaching with Kodak Ortho Film #6556, Type 3. This is an extremely high-contrast film used in graphic-art applications. In fact the contrast is so high that there are no gray tones at all, only black or white. The developed film becomes a negative slide ready for mounting. Typed black letters on white paper become white letters on a dense black background that allows no light penetration from the slide projector. Contrast is so high that with rear projection, slides are clearly visible even in lighted situations.

Shoot film with tungsten illumination at f/8 at ½ second. Developing procedure is very simple, requiring only three steps taking a total of 15-18 minutes. Bypass the developing tank and develop by inspection for the best results.

Advantages of making your own slides include being able to select versions of the Bible, and reduced cost (approximately 10¢ per slide including film bought in bulk, developing chemicals, and plastic slide mounts). With imagination the uses of this film are endless.—Hans Varmer, Petersburg, Virginia.

Family life

Edith Schaeffer, well known around the world as an author and lecturer (and wife of Dr. Francis Schaeffer), will be among the outstanding speakers for Family Life Workshops '80 to be held September 8-17 on the Andrews University campus, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Among more than a dozen other participating family-life professionals, theologians, and writers are Karen Burton Mains, author of Open Heart—Open Home, and Raymond S. Moore, author of School Can Wait, who recently was featured on James Dobson's Focus on the Family.

The ten-day workshop is designed to train teams, preferably husbands and wives, in methods for organizing a family-life program in the local church. The emphasis is nonclinical, focusing on preventive approaches.

Cost for the ten days is $245 (spouses can participate for $30), and academic credit is available. Five specialized seminars may also be taken for an additional fee. To receive a brochure and registration card, write: Director, Family Life Workshop, Administration Building 102, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49404.

Gardener’s gifts

During the growing season, pastors and parishioners suffer either want or excess of abundant home garden produce. To encourage the joy of sharing and receiving the wonderful, nutritional benefits of home-grown goods, we have placed fresh fruit and vegetable bins in the church kitchen. Each week during the harvesting season, home gardeners place their abundance in these bins, and parishioners take what they need freely. This opportunity has met with enthusiastic success from all concerned.—J. H. Voss, Rancho Cordova, California.

Comfort after the shock

Because the family is usually distraught and upset during a funeral service, I have followed the practice of giving a typed copy of my funeral sermon and the texts used to the immediate survivor so that when the shock of the death wears off and the person has been able to collect his or her thoughts, they have an opportunity to read the service again and again to find comfort and hope.—Joseph E. Seiler, Belle Chasse, Louisiana.
THE JOY OF DISCOVERY IN BIBLE STUDY
Oletta Wald, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1975, 96 pages, $2.50, paper.

THE JOY OF TEACHING DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY
Oletta Wald, Augsburg Publishing House, 96 pages, $2.95, paper.

These companion books introduce the reader to the steps to follow in an inductive study of the Bible—a process the author prefers to call discovery Bible study—and how to teach that method of personal Bible study to others. Far too many are merely accepting the diet of Scripture served up to them by others, when they could be feeding themselves and finding joy in doing so. These inexpensive books can help you to do just that.

Russell Holt

CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE

Foster, pastor of the Newberg, Oregon, Friends church, is not an anachronism. His book is not a call to medieval monasticism but to an adventure in spiritual growth in the midst of normal daily activities. It is an answer to the threat modern Western man sees in the fall of his gods of materialism.

The book’s structure consists of three balanced parts dealing with inward, outward, and corporate (church body) discipline. Each of these is covered in four subdivisions.

The chapter on fasting illustrates Foster’s treatment of inward discipline. The author is aware that fasting can have beneficial physical effects, but his goal is neither physical nor political (i.e., hunger strikes). “Biblical fasting always centers on spiritual purposes,” he writes. In addition, a chapter in this section giving suggestions for study habits can be extremely helpful to clergy.

Two sentences summarize his treatment of simplicity in the section on outward discipline: “Because we lack a divine center our need for security has led us into an insane attachment to things. We must clearly understand that the lust for affluence in contemporary society is psychotic.”

Chapter 12 is useful for any church. Here Foster calls for a careful balance of the Spirit’s guidance tempered with corporate discernment. It is not in democratic planning, he says, but in a loving community that this is found. Joy and freedom will be the outworking of God’s grace in the disciplined life.

Lester Bennett

FOR BETTER, FOR WORSE—A PREMARITAL CHECKLIST
John M. Drescher, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri, 1979, 32 pages, $1.00.

This booklet is designed to assist those seriously contemplating marriage to think through key areas of concern that have much to do with happiness following marriage. It consists of 61 topics for discussion—everything from friends, family, and career goals to money, sex, and religion. It may not be possible to fully understand what marriage involves prior to marriage itself, but couples who honestly cover the items included here ought to have few unwanted surprises.

The checklist can serve equally well as a couple’s own self-evaluation instrument, as material for a pastor or counselor to use in his work with about-to-be-marrieds, or as the basis for group premarriage counseling sessions.

Russell Holt

ISLAM RECONSIDERED

From age to age books have appeared that might be said to be called forth by the times. Islam Reconsidered, by Dr. Kenneth Oster, is a book for the times.

We are living today during a great rejuvenation of Islam. Thirteen centuries ago the world was shaken by its birth, and history changed in great areas of Western civilization. Islam has had periods when immense religious energy was displayed. It is an aggressive faith, as is the civilization that goes with it. Yet, in spite of a growing awareness of Islam among people of the West who find themselves more and more dependent on oil controlled by Islamic nations, many have only a general understanding of the barest outline of its history.

Oster’s book is brief, but every page is packed with important material. The author has spent a great deal of his life in an Islamic environment. He is well acquainted with the languages of Islam. With strong historic understanding he describes the world before Islam, especially the pre-Islamic Middle East. For all Bible believers, and especially for ministers and Bible students, he has a very valuable section on prophetic-historic detail. The roots of modern Islam are clearly exhibited, and the section on Moslem theology and the five articles of Islamic faith is very important, as is also the explanation of the crucial difficulties between Moslems and Christians.

The appendix covers three especially significant areas: first, ethnological table of nations; second, chronology of events; third, a table of Mohammed’s genealogy—followed by an excellent bibliography and index. A series of maps show the spread of Islam, its greatest extent, its reduction somewhat for about a thousand years, and now its modern movement to push out on all sides.

Every minister and gospel worker should own this book, study it carefully, and really master its contents. It has appeared just when it is needed.

H. M. S. Richards

MINISTRY
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