Washington for Jesus—really?
see page 10
Grace finds a way

I heartily agree with Mr. Smuts van Rooyen in asserting the primacy of grace over works ("Grace Finds a Way," May, 1980). However, a weakness appears to me in his concept of the "substitutionary" atonement. Scripture teaches that Christ was without sin. But more than that, He Himself bore our sin (2 Cor. 5:21). The sin that He bore (John 1:29) and expiated (1 John 2:2) was the sin of man imputed to Him. The very curse that was denounced against sinful man (Gal. 3:10) fell in its full weight upon Christ. Jesus was not just innocently punished in our stead, as the author seems to indicate; He took upon Himself our sin. This is the essence of "vicarious" atonement. Christ on the cross is no longer an innocent and sinless person. In complete freedom He takes upon Himself the sins and guilt of the whole world. Therein consists our righteousness before God.

Lutheran minister
Washington

I am an avid reader of a wide variety of viewpoints and appreciated especially the May, 1980, issue. In the article "Grace Finds a Way," J. C. Smuts van Rooyen presents the "substitution" theory of the atonement as being superior to the "moral influence" theory. In my opinion, both are inadequate explanations of the atonement.

The substitution theory provides for no forgiveness and no cleansing of guilt, and both are necessary for salvation. If I steal $1,000 from someone and a friend pays it back and assumes my jail sentence, I am off the hook; but I have not been forgiven, nor is my guilt removed. If I offend someone and he seeks revenge by doing me bodily harm, neither am I forgiven nor is my guilt removed if someone takes my place and receives the bodily harm. The substitution theory eliminates any significance of the Resurrection in the scheme of redemption. Yet the apostles were, first of all, witnesses to the Resurrection, and it was the climax of Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, and later in the book of Acts.

I like the word absorption rather than substitution! Forgiveness is possible only if the one doing the forgiving absorbs the pain, the hurt, and the distress caused by the sin. This is true of all forgiveness. I could not forgive anyone for sinning against me except by absorbing the loss, the suffering, the cost. When I absorb the loss, I reconcile the one who committed the sin against me. He or she is again my friend, my son or daughter.

God absorbed in His own person (Jesus) the sin of all humankind. The final consequence of all sin is the putting to death of God. Every human being has rejected Christ. God absorbed all the suffering of human sin on the cross by bringing Jesus to life. By resurrecting Jesus, He took the loss and treated it as if it never happened.

This is an all-too-brief exposition of my personal doctrine of redemption, but I hope you follow my reasoning.

Christian Church minister
Ohio

"Grace Finds a Way" was a truly excellent presentation on grace and redemption. Few expressions of the relationship of grace and atonement have been written in recent times that present the situation better. Much of it must have come from Martin Luther’s commentary on Galatians, it seems to me.

Luther would have asked one more question: "How can I be sure of all this grace and redemption?" Certainty that this is indeed God’s plan comes not simply because it is recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The crowning glory of this total plan of salvation is the Resurrection. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.... But now is Christ risen from the dead" (1 Cor. 15:17-20).

I would not be able to proclaim any certainty about substitution unless I had the evidence that the Substitute won the victory. If Christ had died and not been raised again, I would have never really known whether this was the plan of God’s grace or whether God’s grace had accomplished my salvation.

While there are good articles in Ministry, I would pray that there would be a greater focus on the resurrection of Jesus.

Lutheran minister
Tennessee

"Grace Finds a Way" states a belief in the finished work of Calvary as the only basis for salvation. If your denomination really believes this, well and good. However, I have been under the impression that you have added religious rites and works as a means of going to heaven, as have many other churches. By salvation I mean going to heaven when this life is ended, rather than simply the removal of past condemnation.

Independent Baptist minister
North Carolina

MINISTRY is the best publication of its kind I’ve read in a long time. Every paragraph, it seems, is helpful. The article in the May issue on the vicarious, substitutionary death of Christ is central to any understanding of salvation. If one is wrong in the matter of the atonement, one is wrong about the nature of God and His love.

United Methodist minister
Mississippi

(Continued on page 29.)
4 China Report. All Lohne relates his impressions of Chinese Christianity during a recent trip to that country. His conclusion: The picture is mixed, but optimism is certainly in order.

8 “Time Robbers” and How to Stop Them. William H. Willimon. Because few ministers punch a time clock or account to any other person for their time, they are easy targets. Here’s how to fight back!

10 Washington for Jesus—Really? How should a Christian relate himself to government? In this election year, the question has added impact. Roland R. Hegstad suggests three options and raises some questions regarding one option that many Christians choose.

12 United We Fall. Stan Mooneyham.

15 Feed Yourself First. John Osborn outlines a program of personal Bible study on the assumption that before one becomes a preacher of the Word, he must become a student of the Word.

18 A Tale of Two Churches. Edward Motschiedler.


22 Shepherds of the Mind. Gordon G. Creighton. Almost any random congregation will present a variety of emotional and mental health problems. The pastor is often the one people turn to for help first.


26 Preparing for Widowhood. Beverly Lauderdale. The average wife in America can expect to outlive her husband by ten years. Some preparation now can save untold difficulties later.

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MINISTRY (ISSN 0026-5314), the international journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association © 1980 is printed monthly by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, 6856 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. U.S.A. Subscription price, US$12.50 a year; single-copy price, US$1.25. Price may vary where national currencies are different. For each subscription going to a foreign country or Canada, add US$1.75 postage. MINISTRY is a member of the Associated Church Press and is indexed in the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C. Editorial offices: 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed and will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. Vol. 53, No. 9.
Clockwise from top: In the Shanghai Seventh-day Adventist church every seat is taken during services. Worshipers come as much as three hours early to secure a seat. As the pastor reads an opening text, worshipers follow along in their Bibles, many of them standing next to the platform because of crowding. Yin Hsiang (right), manager of the National Three-Self Movement office for China and secretary-general of the Shanghai branch, stands beside Cheng Bu Ying, member of both the national and Shanghai committees. Bishop K. H. Ting, acting chairman of the National Committee of the Protestant Churches of China for Self-administration, Self-support, and Self-propagation of the Gospel, is flanked (from left) by W. T. Clark and Alf Lohne, Seventh-day Adventist visitors to China.
Despite difficulties, Christianity in China is alive and even flourishing with a zeal and intensity that many Christians in the West could wish for themselves.

by Alf Lohne

On our recent tour of China (March 13-25), W. T. Clark, president of the Seventh-day Adventists' Far Eastern Division, and I were in a teeming city where as yet no Protestant churches have been reopened for services. There we found an Adventist Christian from the United States who teaches English in a nearby university. He gave us a touching account of the worship services he and his wife share with a small group of Chinese Christians.

"Just by chance," he said, "we heard about a family who sang religious hymns in their home. We visited them, and now we meet there regularly every week."

"Do you speak Chinese?" we wanted to know.

"No," he said, smiling. "And they don't speak English. Yet we have a satisfying spiritual fellowship." Seeing our questioning looks, he continued, "We have found a way to conduct a service that we all understand. First we hum the tunes of a few hymns until we find melodies all of us know. Then we sing them together—they in Chinese and we in English. Next we select a text or two. They read it from the Chinese Bible and we from the English. Finally we have prayer, with each praying in his own tongue. This is our simple worship service, and we all enjoy it!"

Only a few years ago, especially during the cultural revolution and the subsequent rule of the gang of four, such a meeting would have been unthinkable. From 1966 to 1976, those who had contacts with foreigners or who practiced religion were in danger of being sent to prison or suffering an even worse fate. Torture and death were not uncommon.

One Christian leader, who was sentenced to fifteen years of imprisonment, told us that his incarceration probably saved his life, for the worst excesses took place outside prison walls. The Red guards ransacked his house several times, confiscated all his religious books, and mistreated his wife. They beat her savagely and cut off her hair. For six months she was forced to stand in the street an entire day every week, holding a poster that read, "I am a Christian reactionary." This Christian worker has now had his "hat of disgrace" removed, as he put it.

In other cases Bibles and religious books were gathered from homes and burned. Some Christians were forced to kneel by the fire with their heads so close to the heat that eyebrows and hair were burned and their faces permanently injured. When the complete story of those terrible years comes to light, it will be a sad account indeed, and the list of modern martyrs will be greatly lengthened. Both the faithfulness of the persecuted and the cruelties of the persecutors in China rival the record of past ages and make it easy to believe that the final trials prophesied for God's people during the last days can and will take place. One can hardly avoid recalling such prophetic texts as Revelation 6:9-11: "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne; they cried out with a loud voice, 'O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?' Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been" (R.S.V.).

Christians weren't the only ones to suffer injustice during those ten hard years in China. Other individuals spoke freely of what they had gone through and of their bitterness. We attended a lecture given by the vice-president of the Technological College in Hefei in which he spoke openly of the setback China had suffered from the cultural revolution. Teachers, students, and educational institutions alike suffered, he declared, and practically all development stopped or even went backward. Now enormous efforts are being made to catch up, and
the government is making every effort at a just restitution.

**Rapid changes taking place**

Today the situation for Christians in China is quite different, and further improvement seems to be rapidly on the way. Every week tens of thousands of Christian believers meet in private homes and in the few available halls and churches for prayer, Bible study, and worship. In a country that closely regulates the lives and activities of all its citizens, such groups are no secret to the authorities. But no one tries to prevent or disturb these gatherings. As a matter of fact, a new article in the criminal code, article 146, makes it a crime for government personnel to obstruct the religious freedom of citizens. Conviction carries a sentence of imprisonment for as long as two years. However, even such regulations do not mean that Christians in China live under the same favorable conditions as do those in the Western world.

K. H. Ting, acting chairman of the National Committee of the Protestant Churches of China for Self-administration, Self-support, and Self-propagation of the Gospel, is an Anglican. The organization he heads embraces all Protestant churches and is commonly referred to as the Three-Self Movement. Bishop Ting is also a lecturer at the University of Nanking, where the government established a Center for Religious Studies in 1979. While we were visiting the university, Bishop Ting invited us to his home. Mr. Han, chairman of the local Three-Self Movement in Nanking, was also present.

The goal of the Three-Self Movement, set in 1951, is to unite all Protestant groups into one organization, the bishop informed us. The purpose is not to eradicate religion as such, but the state considers the proliferation of Christian denominations as practiced in the West to be an unhealthy situation. "We concentrate on that which we consider most important," Bishop Ting stated. As an example, he cited the belief of the Anglican Church regarding apostolic succession. "That may be very important to the Archbishop of Canterbury," he remarked, "but not to Chinese Anglicans. Here we are busy building a socialist state!"

"But what about denominational practices?" we wanted to know. "For example, can Baptists practice baptism by immersion?"

The bishop was very definite on this point: "If that’s important to the Baptists, no one will interfere. Our country respects the religious convictions of individuals. No one will now be persecuted for his faith or for following certain religious rituals."

Being Seventh-day Adventists, we couldn’t hold back our questions regarding Sabbathkeepers. "Would there be any problems for people who keep holy the seventh day of the week, and accordingly worship on Saturday?"

Again the bishop was unequivocal: "If anyone has a serious conviction on such a matter, it will be respected." Both he and Mr. Han mentioned that in the city of Nanking about thirty Seventh-day Adventists, along with forty other Sabbathkeepers, meet regularly for worship on Saturday in the Three-Self Movement office, and Pastor Wu, a 60-year-old Seventh-day Adventist minister, serves as their teacher.

In the city of Canton, a Baptist church has been open for Sunday meetings for some time, and since October 20, 1979, a service is also conducted on Saturday. On Sunday the 1300-seat church is packed; on Saturday about 200 people come. The same sermon is preached on both days, and the Baptist, Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist, and Chinese Free churches take turns providing the speaker.

**Injustice rectified by the party**

One Seventh-day Adventist pastor told us about a Sabbathkeeper who worked in a factory that gave Thursday as its day off. (In order to avoid traffic congestion caused by the large population during weekday rush hours, and on Sunday in resorts and shops, many factories choose a day other than Sunday for its day off and stagger working hours.) This particular Seventh-day Adventist factory worker managed to arrange for his day off on Saturday and worked Thursday instead. But during the cultural revolution this privilege was denied. Although he continued to work on Thursday to make up for his absence on Saturday, the factory deducted four days' pay from his check every month. After the gang of four fell from power, and law and order had been restored, he asked for redress. The party reviewing his case ruled that he be permitted to keep the Sabbath as before and that all the money deducted from his pay should be refunded to him!

Fortunately, military service presents no problem for Chinese young people who have conscientious objections to
training with weapons or who follow a special practice with regard to their day of rest. All military service is voluntary, and we were told that many more young people volunteer than the country needs. A strict physical examination is used to select personnel from among the volunteers. Even so, the government is able to muster many millions of soldiers—all volunteers. Therefore, young Chinese Christians can choose to serve their country in nonmilitary ways, and do so in harmony with their convictions.

Eighty tons of new Bibles
Most Christians lost their Bibles during the cultural revolution and the succeeding rule of the gang of four, and we noticed a great lack of Bibles everywhere we went in China. Even now one cannot buy a Bible in Chinese bookstores. However, Bishop Ting gave us some good news that will bring about a change in this situation. For some time the government has planned to print Bibles, but the special India paper has not been available. Now four truckloads of this special paper, each weighing eighty tons, have been allotted to the Three-Self Movement. A printer has been selected, and Bishop Ting expects that before the end of 1980 the eighty tons of paper will have been transformed into 100,000 Bibles to be placed on the market in China.

"Will it be a new translation?" we asked.
"Originally we thought we would do that, but rumors started that we would make a special Communist translation that would destroy the Bible’s meaning and message. Therefore, we finally decided that we would take the 1919 translation and follow it word for word."

Before leaving the bishop’s home, we asked permission to pray together. He gladly consented, and we were happy to include him and his associates, as well as the rulers of the world’s most populous country, in our prayer.

Large crowds attend divine services
Attending a Sunday-morning service in one of the three Protestant churches that have been reopened in Shanghai was one of the highlights of our visit. Prior to the Sunday service, we had an interview with Ms. Yin Hsiang and Mr. Cheng Bu Ying, of the Shanghai Three-Self Movement office. Ms. Yin, manager of the Three-Self Movement headquarters office and secretary-general of the Shanghai branch, and Mr. Cheng, a member of both the national and the Shanghai Three-Self Movement committees, received us cordially, and willingly answered our questions.

They informed us that one Roman Catholic and three Protestant churches are now open on Sunday in the city of Shanghai. So many people want to attend services in the More memorial chapel, which seats 1,200, that two services are held, one at 8:00 A.M. and the other at 10:00 A.M. Actually, about 1,700 people squeeze inside during both meetings. The other churches are equally crowded, and it is estimated that 6,500 people manage to get inside the churches every Sunday. No one is certain how many others meet for worship in private homes, but the figure probably runs into thousands.

"Why doesn’t the Three-Self Movement open more churches, and why can’t Seventh-day Adventist members have services on Saturday in the churches that have been opened for Sunday meetings?" we asked. Yin Hsiang and Cheng Bu Ying replied that all church buildings are used for schools and other purposes during the week, so they are unavailable. But, as Bishop Ting had done, they assured us that the religious views of the people will be respected, and that as soon as possible more churches will be opened so that Sabbathkeepers will be able to worship on Saturday as they do in Canton and a few other cities.

From observer to worshiper
One of the three Protestant churches open on Sunday morning in Shanghai is the Seventh-day Adventist church on Wu Tsin Road, right beside the hospital the church operated before the revolution. The service was to begin at 9:00 A.M., but we were advised to be there at least an hour earlier in order to get in. Even eight o’clock proved to be too late! Not only were all the seats taken at that time, but people were standing in the aisles and the entrance hall. Latecomers such as ourselves had to stand on the steps outside and try to get a glimpse of the service through the open doors.

Fortunately Mr. Cheng Bu Ying and a church deacon met us outside and took us around the building to the back door. Even here people filled the entryway and crowded the steps leading from the church into the yard. But somehow, people smilingly squeezed together to let us through until we found ourselves in the space beside the platform. We tried to insist on standing with the hundreds who had no seats, but there was no alternative—we had to occupy the chairs the deacons provided for us.

To begin with, I had a strange feeling of being only an onlooker—somewhat outside of what was really going on. I saw no one I knew. The language was strange to me. Somebody put a hymnal into my hand, and I hardly knew which way to hold it, or whether I should look at the characters from right to left, or left to right. But when I looked into the faces of the people, everything changed.

All the seats were taken. All standing room was occupied. Those crowding around the platform placed their elbows on it to make standing a little easier. The church has only 600 seats, but my friend from the Three-Self office whispered that he estimated 1,500 persons to be present! Then came the opening hymn. The tune was familiar, and I could sing along in my own language: "He leadeth me, He leadeth me; By His own hand He leadeth me; His faithful follower I would be, For by His hand He leadeth me." The sound of more than a thousand voices raised in song filled that simple sanctuary, and melted something within my heart. I realized that this throng of people meant what they were singing. In spite of all they had been through (perhaps because of what they had suffered), they trusted in God’s care and guidance.

When one of the pastors read a scripture, a church elder handed me a Bible with both Chinese and English text, pointing out that the pastor was reading Psalm 23. I watched the faces—most were elderly, but I also saw some teenagers and young people. Very few had Bibles. Almost everyone had his eyes on the man who was reading from God’s Word. One lady near me could not hold back her tears. It was evident that she loved the Word. When I looked at her face and the other faces around me and felt their attitude, I was no longer a mere observer. Now I too was a worshiper. Although the minister was 78 years old, he preached a powerful sermon on Luke 15 and held his listeners spellbound.

The service lasted about an hour, during which everything was quiet in spite of the crowded conditions. Nobody left. None of those standing moved. And when the service was over, the people left quietly. I had been on holy ground. I felt the power of the Holy Spirit, I was reminded of what a former atheist had said to me some years before: "Some think they can wipe out Christianity. But it’s impossible; Christianity can’t die!" Such has certainly been proved true in China.
Meet my friend Joe. Joe serves a church of about 300 members. He is a conscientious, hard-working pastor who takes all of his pastoral duties seriously. Joe enjoys the parish ministry. But he seems to have one persistent problem—a lack of time. At the end of a typical day, as Joe returns home from his usual round of pastoral visitation, administrative duties, sermon preparation, calling on prospective members, and church-related meetings, he always has a list of things that he needed to do, things he intended to do, but somehow just did not have the time to do them. He remembers the calls he intended to make but never found time to make, the book he intended to start reading, the stewardship drive he intended to prepare for. "I just never seem to have enough time. If only there were more hours in a day. Where did my day go?" he asks himself in utter puzzlement as his day ends.

I think Joe’s story is typical of many of us ministers. The parish ministry is a multifaceted job filled with a daily round of regular duties, major and minor crises, immediate needs and long-term projects. It is easy to get bogged down and give all of our time to one aspect of ministry at the expense of some other aspect. It is easy to get sidetracked from the things we intend to do and need to do. Because few ministers punch a time clock, or account for their time to any other person, or are engaged in tasks with easily defined beginnings and endings or priorities, many ministers become frustrated about their poor management of time.

Time management is similar to the management of money. If you and your family continually come up short financially at the end of every month (another frustration for many ministers!), there comes a time when you must sit down and analyze your use of the money you earn, identify problem areas of expenditure, select appropriate solutions from a list of alternatives, and then adjust your spending habits accordingly. Time can be managed the same way.

First, analyze how you presently spend your time. Specialists in time management suggest keeping a time log, dividing your entire day into fifteen-minute segments and then recording what you do during each of these segments of time throughout the day. The time log should be kept for at least a couple of weeks.

Don’t think that you already know how to spend your time. Our perceptions of where we spend time, when compared to detailed analysis, usually appear badly distorted. Keep honest! Don’t kid yourself when you record your activities, or your data will be of little use. Record everything you do which takes time.

Once your time log is completed, analyze your use of time. There are a number of ways to do this. You may want to divide your time in terms of discretionary versus nondiscretionary time, with the objective of increasing your discretionary time. You may have no power over some of the things you must do as a pastor, but there are many demands upon your time that you do have the power to say "no" to in order to invest your time more wisely. You may feel that only you are able to prepare and preach the sermon on Sunday. But are you the only one in the church who can prepare for and teach the children’s church school class? Or you might want to break down your time between the job, family, community, and personal time. Unfortunately, when a pastor’s time is used up by the demands of ministry to parish and community, it is the pastor’s family who suffers.

Professor Jack D. Ferner of the Babcock Graduate School of Management, Wake Forest University, notes that research with large numbers of people’s use of time reveals a list of what he calls "Time Robbers." A "time robber" is something which keeps us from doing other things which have more value or importance to us. The "time robbers" cause us to consume large chunks of time in relatively unproductive, low-value activities. Nineteen of the most common "time robbers" are:

- Interruptions:
  - telephone
  - visitors
  - crises, "firefighting"

- Meetings:
  - too long, too many, ineffective

- Objectives unclear

- Disorganization:
  - lack of planning
  - fuzzy priorities
  - poor communication
  - inadequate or confused information
  - unclear responsibility and authority personal disorganization—cluttered desk

- Personal traits:
  - procrastination/indecision
  - ineffective delegation
  - overly involved in routine, detail work
  - lack of self-discipline
  - doing it myself
  - inability to say "no"
  - attempting to do too much
  - leaving half-completed tasks

While these "time robbers" were cited mostly by business executives, I think most pastors would see many that are their "time robbers" too. Let us return to our friend Joe. After keeping a time log, Joe found out that his normal day consisted of nearly two hours of telephone conversations. Joe frequently complained of having to spend much time phoning, checking on parish problems, etc. While contacts made by tele-
find that he averaged seven hours a week on the phone are less expensive and time consuming than personal visits. Joe wondered if he might cut down on his phone time. Joe was also surprised to find that he averaged seven hours a week in congregational meetings. Since most of this time was in the evenings, it meant time away from his family. Added to these surprising revelations were the discoveries that Joe spent one hour per day just opening the morning mail, an average of two hours per day in his car driving around town on errands, visits, etc., and a whopping forty-five minutes per day picking up and delivering mail at the local post office.

Having identified his “time robbers,” Joe was now ready to determine some simple steps to control them. Not all “time robbers” can be eliminated; they may be part of the tasks of ministry, a characteristic of the congregational setting, or just one’s personal style of operation. But we can usually cut down some of the excess by planning some specific actions to better use our time. For example, Joe decided to continue to use his office phone to do necessary checking, follow-up, and administrative communication but he also decided to be more conscious of unnecessarily lengthy conversations, taking the lead in each call, getting down to business quickly, and terminating the conversations when the business was over. When Joe evaluated his plethora of congregational meetings, he realized that he had thought it necessary to be at every meeting. “To be honest, my own pastoral insecurity compels me to be involved in every detail of congregational life. Why can’t the church day-care committee meet without me? I could call the chairman the next day and get a report on the meeting. That would be enough.”

Of course, there are many meetings that the pastor must attend. But Joe realized that some of his church meetings lasted over two hours not because of the work done but because they were poorly prepared, started late, dragged on, and spent too much time in irrelevant conversation. Joe decided to recommend that: 1) all church meetings begin on time, 2) that no meeting last longer than one hour, and that time be allowed after each meeting for fellowship with refreshments. The church leaders agreed that these were good ideas since people are more willing to come to a meeting that they know will not drag on. Joe also picked up some skills for moving his church meetings along with helps like suggesting that chairpersons plan the agenda in advance and asking a few helpful questions during the course of the meeting like, “Can we get back to the agenda item we were discussing?” and “Aren’t we ready to make a decision on this matter?” He was surprised to find that every church committee was able to complete all of its business in the allotted hour. Joe realizes that many things a parish minister does may seem a “waste of time” if viewed from a strictly practical, utilitarian, “businesslike” perspective. An hour spent listening to a troubled teen-ager, a day in which one’s planned schedule is scrapped in order to be with a family in grief, a morning for personal meditation, prayer, and reflection, are not wasted time for the spiritual guide, the keeper of the flock. And yet, Joe is also honest enough to know that sometimes a pastor lets the nonessential crowd out the essentials. Pastors complain that they are too busy to sufficiently prepare their sermons, that they have too little time to spend with their families, that the daily demands of the parish keep them from doing the study, personal growth, and continuing education that they know they need.

How we spend our time tells something about our priorities and our own personal needs and insecurities. The goal of wise time management is simply to use one’s time to the best advantage. After true “time robbers” are identified from an analysis of your time log, pick only one or two which are the most wasteful. Then look for a few simple remedies to reduce the “time robbers”; planning your day by listing what must get done, controlling interruptions, setting aside stated office hours, shortening your meetings, may be among your remedies. Do not rely upon others to determine your time priorities. You are the only person who is qualified to judge the relative importance of all the things you must do in a given day. Overcome your ministerial inability to say “no,” or “I must go now,” or “I’m sorry, I will have to see you tomorrow.” When someone calls and says, “Pastor, are you busy? I need to talk with you,” respond with something like “I would like to talk with you. How about coming by this afternoon at three and we can talk until four.” Most counselors will tell you that a definite beginning and ending time for a pastoral counseling session is of crucial importance to the effectiveness of the session. As pastor, you must be available and accessible. But if you are always totally, unreservedly accessible you must be neglecting some other important pastoral task.

Poor time-usage habits are hard to break. But it is worth the effort. Keep checking yourself out. Look over the list of “time robbers” again, and think about your own time-usage patterns. If you are able to retrieve only one extra hour a day from expending it for something you don’t want to do and don’t need to do, this will be one more hour for you to use for ministry, study, family, or much-needed ministerial recreation. What was the point of that story Jesus told about the faithful stewards of investing our God-given talents wisely? The same point applies to our stewardship of the God-given gift of time.


Ministry, September/1980
An increasingly influential segment within Christianity seeks to use political power to “turn the nation back to Jesus.” Perhaps its members ought to ask themselves, “What would He do with it if He had it?”

by Roland R. Hegstad

Let me tell you about Washington, D.C. It’s the one city in the country where your best friend will stab you in the back with your knife—and then report you to the police for carrying a concealed weapon. That’s politics!

This description of political reality came from a friend on Capitol Hill. And he was quick to adapt it to other capitals—London, Moscow, Tokyo. In his mind politics was, well, politics.

“How better can one define a sewer than by calling it a sewer?” he asked. “So politics is politics. You remember Lord Acton’s saying—‘Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.’”

And it does. One has only to pick up the latest newspaper with its revelations of moral turpitude in high places: a governor and cronies sentenced to prison, allegations of influence peddling, an FBI scam implicating a number of the nation’s top lawmakers in an allegedly illegal scheme—and who can forget the shame of Watergate, with the subsequent illusion-destroying revelations about the degree to which our laws were broken by agencies sworn to uphold them?

To put it simply: There aren’t many little boys clutching their mother’s apron strings and saying, “I know what I want to be when I grow up—a politician!”

In April a quarter million Christians gathered in the nation’s capital to, in their words, “turn the nation around to Jesus.” Others seek to “put God back into the public schools,” elect “the right

Roland R. Hegstad is editor of Liberty, a Magazine of Religious Freedom, in which this article is appearing in the September-October issue.
kind of Christian to public office,” and rate candidates by their commitment to Christian principles.

It is the removal of God from public life, we are told by evangelical Christian spokesmen, that has brought “a series of plagues” on the United States, including “the assassination of John F. Kennedy, racial conflict, the Vietnam war, Watergate, the increasing divorce rate, the rise in teen-age pregnancies, venereal disease, drug addiction, and the present economic crisis.”

One recalls with mixed amusement and chagrin that other evangelicals had a sky-written cross traced over the head of Premier Khruschev during his 1963 visit, so that he would know he was in a Christian nation! With less amusement one might report the attempts of others who, convinced that threats to the national security can be met only by acknowledgement of the authority of Jesus Christ, are attempting to write the cross into the Constitution through a religious amendment.

In his latest book, Between a Rock and a Hard Place, Senator Mark Hatfield (R.-Oreg.) wrestles with the question of how a follower of Christ should serve his government—and even whether he should serve at all. The Senator, an unapologetic Christian, doesn’t spare himself. He admits his struggle to preserve convictions, admits to urges to vacate politics, with its “cosmetic pursuit of image,” and writes frankly of “the corrupting lust for power that characterizes our entire political system.”

The Senate has valid credentials for such criticism: at a national prayer breakfast held during the Nixon administration he criticized American civil religion and called for national repentance. Among the 3,000 present were President and Mrs. Nixon, Billy Graham, the mayor of Moscow, and top Congressional and judicial figures. Hatfield was not intimidated and he did not dispense bromides—as the subsequent anger of Nixon, Haldeman, and Erlichman confirmed.

Hindsight tells us that the Nixon-initiated Sunday religious services at the White House should have emphasized the distinction between a religious façade and that individual heart commitment that alone constitutes true worship. Religious leaders—Protestant, Jewish, Catholic—presided at the services, but, one must report, without the candor of Hatfield. Billy Graham, the nation’s conscience, went there several times, took the pulse of the Presidency, and pronounced it good. And we all headed for the golf course or the tennis courts, after communing with the Infinite through the Sunday comic section (Charlie Brown seems to be America’s favorite theologian), content that the nation (the favored nation) was in good shape. How comforting it was, in our Christian nation, to know that in our confrontation with atheistic, materialistic Communism, we were not being caught with our prayers down. Chosen men—God’s chosen men—were at the helm. And surely God was on the side of truth and decency. Our side.

In retrospect, it seems no wonder that religion and morality figured prominently in the 1976 Presidential election. They became an issue not only because of Watergate and surrounding events but also because of the candidacy of James Earl Carter, Jr., Democratic aspirant for the Presidency and an enthusiastic Southern Baptist. Was he sincere? Too sincere? Too sincere for Realpolitik? Is anybody in politics sincerely religious?

Carter claimed to be. He was, he said, “twice born.” In evangelical code that means totally committed. His administration, he said, would reflect Christian principles—compassion, brotherhood, love, truth, honesty, and decency, in its policies, both domestic and foreign.

This “platform” did not set well with the Washington veterans: the pundits of press, radio, and television. They’d heard it all before, they said. In New York City the cynics on the Times implied that if Carter did get into the White House and there did practice Christian principles, God help the nation! In other words, you can’t be an effective President and turn the other cheek. When you’re in a world where other nations play dirty, you’ve got to play dirty too, or pretty soon you won’t have any yard left to play in.

Are the rules of the game such that there simply isn’t any place in government anymore, anywhere, for the Christian? Can he serve the differing demands of two governments—one spiritual, one all too carnal? Should he confine his citizenship to voting only on such transcendentally moral issues as whether margarine can be colored (on ballots in two States recently)?

Politics and packaging

Politics, I’ve learned during 22 years in Washington, D.C., does not hover in the form of a dove over a scarlet-draped altar. It coughs its way through smoke-filled rooms, steps on toes, harangues, hurrahs, whippers, whispers, seduces, and is seduced. It’s parades up Constitution Avenue, Inauguration prayers and promises—and ghetto children munching lead-based paint chips. It’s Uncle Sam in a top hat, wearing stars and stripes, and far-off sounds of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic.” It’s disillusioned youth shouting obscenities and bearded radicals throwing bombs. It’s the hippies and yuppies and beatniks and rednecks... long hair and skinheads... pipe organs and guitars... ecology and eschatology... men on the moon and machines on Mars... women on the march and abortion on demand... bishops and bankers, campaign managers and candidates, ward heelers and statesmen, OPEC and NATO, unenlightened management and Mafia-dominated unions, dream and disillusionment, victory and defeat.

Politics: “the science of government.” A strange blending of the visionary and the pragmatic, with voters who know little more than what they read in the papers. And here is the dilemma of the Christian citizen: How does he learn who the candidate really is? And what he is? Answers are not easy to come by. In his book The Selling of the President, Joe McGinniss reprints a memo of Raymond Price, a speechwriter for Richard Nixon in the 1968 election: “We have to be very clear on this point that the response is to the image and not to the man... It’s not what’s there that counts, it’s what’s projected—and carrying it one step further, it’s not what he projects but rather what the voter receives. It’s not the man we have to change, but rather the received impression. And this impression often depends more on the medium and its use than it does on the candidate himself.”—Joe McGinniss, The Selling of the President, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970, p. 35.

And so, in politics, we often are confronted not only with the blind leading the blind but with the “bland leading the bland” (John Kenneth Galbraith, in The Affluent Society). Images are tailored to our vote: homogenized for the city, pasteurized for the country; farm subsidies are backed in Paducah, Kentucky (“How y’all, neighbor. I was born a right smart piece up the holler myself”); “subsidized inefficiency” is bucked before the Daughters of the American Revolution meeting in Washington, D.C.’s, Constitution Hall (where the candidate’s pronunciation sounds as Bostonian as baked beans).
Through the media (Theodore White has called it the "opinionated Mafia") the politician is transformed into a commodity to be marketed. The voter is left to ask, Isn't anything real? (Is reality an actor running for the White House? Or have we had actors there all along?) Isn't anything true? (A Supreme Court justice, addressing an audience in Rockville, Maryland, said: "Truth is a chameleon, changing colors to whoever views it.") The intrinsic hypocrisy of the "system" is a common theme in a growing number of analyses of society.

The result is widespread cynicism—of all modern society. Says R. D. Laing: "Unfortunately we are forced by the cynical lies, multifarious deceptions, and sincerely held delusions to which we are subjected through all media . . . to a position of almost total social scepticism" (R. D. Laing, "The Obvious," The Dialectics of Liberation, ed. David Cooper, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968, p. 32).

Said Jimmy Carter, in an interview in Liberty magazine just before the 1976 presidential election: "In the aftermath of Vietnam, Cambodia, Chile, Watergate, and revelations of CIA excesses, a lot of people feel that the stability that has always been in their lives—a deep sense that my government is great, my government is pure, my government is decent, and my government is honest—that assurance has been lost" (Liberty, September-October, 1976, p. 8).

Destroy the system?

How then shall the Christian relate to the system? There are three options:

1. To destroy the system. This is the way chosen by the radicals, the revolutionaries of our day. In the United States it was the way chosen by the New Left of the 1960's. Initially the youth talked of "participatory democracy." An early slogan was "Build, not burn!" But as Os Guinness has observed, "Pragmatism has an uncanny way of toying with the loftiest of principles."

By 1968 the call was for "discriminating intolerance" (Marcuse's concept). But as change was resisted by the system and frustration mounted, the slogans graduated to Mao's "power grows out of the barrel of a gun." Carl Oglesby, president of the Students for a Democratic Society, who had written, "We want to create a world in which love is more possible," took a more pragmatic—and violent—line: "Revolutions do not take place in velvet boxes. . . . Nuns will be raped and bureaucrats will be disembowedel" (in a speech at the Washington Peace March, November 27, 1965). But the revolution failed. The radicals were tranquilized, often by the same prescription that had corrupted the system—$$$$$. Royalties for radical memoirs and speeches added up to a tidy sum. Force was not the answer in America—though less stable, less constitutionally oriented, less adaptable governments have fallen; and on a world scale, terrorism is emerging as a fearful force for change. Unfortunately, the change is always toward repression: it seems quite impossible to create a political system through terrorism and then change it into a humanitarian govern-
to be an increasing feeling that it would be a shame not to use just a little of all that accumulated visibility and influence for political purposes.

The strange thing about this is that less than two decades ago religious conservatives were scathingly critical of religious liberals who were political activists. Public pronouncements by clergy, men, denominations, and ecumenical committees were regularly denounced and disowned. When the "liberal" National Council of Churches issued a statement with political overtones—as it frequently did—embarrassed conservatives in and out of the Council's constituency rushed to say, "They don't speak for me!"

Now one wonders if evangelicals are little more than liberals—come-lately.

Political power has long been recognized as a seductive secular temptation. It also must be seen as a seductive religious temptation. It requires no Biblical language expert to paraphrase into our modern evangelical mood the words of Israel in 1 Samuel 8:19, 20: "We will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations." Simply substitute "President . . . congressman . . . senator . . . governor" for "king," and translate "all the nations" into "power blocs."

I sense that is the mood of some of my fellow evangelicals in 1980, and it scares the daylight out of me. The Israelites discovered, after they got what they wanted, that power, even with anointed beginnings, has an unfortunate way of turning in upon and magnifying itself. I see little to convince me that evangelical power—past or present—is less immune to that kind of misuse than any other kind of power.

Failure to adopt a hard-line political position—right or left—and to mobilize behind the appropriate party or candidate seems to have become the evangelical cardinal sin. I know I already have alienated friends on both sides by declining invitations to endorse their respective positions. It is no longer enough, I have learned, to support a candidate who is simply a Christian. He or she must also carry the appropriate modifier of "liberal" or "conservative."

Fragmentation is sure to occur as sup-

of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and external measures. "I am the way," He said—an affirmation that society can be changed only as men are changed individually.

The Christian who holds this position may choose not to bear arms as a soldier or serve as a police officer, judge, legislator, or executive. He may not even protect himself if assaulted.

**Change the system**

Many Christians opt for a third alternative:

3. **To change the system.** What did Jesus mean when He told His followers to "render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's"? At the least, to pay taxes, the question that brought His response. And there was not much more the Christian citizen in Rome could do. But in a democracy or a republic numerous avenues of "rendering" are negotiable. One may vote for politicians holding views most compatible with Christian concepts of justice and virtue—though we have noted the difficulty of penetrating the media cosmetic. And there are moral issues on which we may help shape the posture of the nation—abortion, religious amendments, nonestablishment of religion, equal rights—all more consequential than whether marginale can be colored! The Christian voter can make a difference.

But he cannot establish the kingdom of God on earth. And this limitation he must not forget. Senator Hatfield has said: "All efforts to turn an unregenerate and rebellious world into a utopian tomorrow are doomed. The Christian vision centers in a New Order proclaimed by Christ that involves allegiance and hope grounded in the Spirit and not in the efficacy of our world's systems and structures."

The promise of God's intervention in human affairs permeates all Scripture. An early prophetic book, Daniel, traces world history down to our day and concludes: "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever; just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure" (Dan. 2:44, 45, R.S.V.).

Two conclusions relevant to a Christian political philosophy may be drawn from these verses. God is going to establish His kingdom in our day—in the day of the nations that came out of the breakup of the Roman Empire. And it will be done without the aid of human agents. The "stone," representing the kingdom of Christ, is cut out without the aid of human stone masons (or empire builders). Its foundation is not placed on the existing political or social order; rather, it smashes and supersedes all human governments. And on a remade planet the long-looked-for universal empire of peace and justice will become an eternal reality.

The same theme of divine intervention in human affairs echoes throughout the New Testament:

2 Peter 3:10: "The day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. In that day the heavens will disappear in a tearing blast, the very elements will disintegrate in heat and the earth and all its works will disappear" (Phillips)." Revelation 21:1-3: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first Heaven and the first earth had disappeared and the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride dressed in beauty for her husband. Then I heard a great voice from the throne crying, 'See! The home of God is with men, and he will live among them'" (Phillips)."

Virtually all New Testament writers echo the apocalyptic theme. And in doing so they point up the ultimate impossibility of man's changing the system enough to warrant its continuance. Is it, then, futile for the Christian to choose option three?

**Three convictions**

Behind the choice of involvement generally are three convictions:

1. Though earthly governments are transitory, they are, nevertheless, established by God. "Everyone ought to obey the civil authorities, for all legitimate authority is derived from God's authority, and the existing authority is appointed under God" (Rom. 13:1, Phillips).

2. Earth's governments therefore have legitimate functions (Rom. 13:1-8).
port of a particular political position or candidate becomes more the litmus test of Christian authenticity than the Apostles’ Creed. Surely Jesus’ prayer for His disciples and for us that we might all be one did not necessarily mean pulling the same voting machine lever.

There is a subtle but real danger in this grasp for Christian power and influence, not only for those of us who are being pushed but also for those doing the pushing (and who, presumably, earn prestige credits and maybe more if their candidate wins). During Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness, the devil, playing kingmaker, offered “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.” I used to think this temptation to raw power left Jesus cold. But maybe not. Maybe He was tempted to rationalize a positive answer in the same way that some of His followers today can make it all sound so reasonable and right.

One difference between then and now is that Jesus recognized who the tempter was.

I am as scared of an evangelical power bloc as I am of any other. Worldly power in religious hands—Islamic or Christian—has hardened into more than one inquisition. That God has delivered us from the hands of zealous but misguided saints is all that has saved us at times.

Although it is not impossible to harmonize the two in some situations, there is actually a basic conflict between Christian commitment and political power. The strength of faith is in its avalanche of powerlessness, its tidal force of love. If politics is the art of achieving the possible, faith is the art of achieving the impossible. Politics says, “Destroy your enemies.” Christian faith says, “Love your enemies.” Politics says, “The end justifies the means.” Christian faith says, “The means validates the end.” Politics says, “The first shall be last.” Christian faith says, “The last shall be first.”

I plan to vote, and I hope you will. I will vote with care and a sense of responsibility, as I believe you will. That is all that either of us has the right, as Christians, to request of the other.

And when I get to church, I expect to be looking up at the pulpit for pastor, teacher, friend. Not for a ward heeler.

One is to preserve order: “The officer is God’s servant for your protection” (verse 4, Phillips). Civil government is empowered to use the “sword,” or, in modern terms, a .38 Magnum, to achieve that outward conformity with law that the gospel of Jesus Christ alone can produce through internal change.

A second function is to preserve a climate of tolerance in which the gospel can be freely preached. As no other nation, America has captured this concept, becoming a refuge for those of all faiths fleeing religious intolerance. Here religious liberty was no longer to be a “dia
dobolical doctrine,” as Beze called it, but the glory of the nation—“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Here was national recognition of a truth most eloquently stated by Thomas Jefferson: “Compulsion in religion is distinguished peculiarly from compulsion in every other thing. I may grow rich by art I am compelled to follow, I may recover health by medicines I am compelled to take against my own judgment; but I cannot be saved by a worship I disbelieve and abhor.”—Notes on Religion, 1776.

3. The third conviction grows logically from the first two. Since government is ordained by God to preserve order and religious liberty, the Christian citizen may—indeed, has the obligation to—work within the system to advance these legitimate functions. By vote, by participation in the processes of government, or by advocacy from outside of government the Christian may advance justice and mercy and the freedoms that have permitted the church to fulfill its God-given mandate to preach the gospel. To work through the democratic system to improve the system, without abandoning the priorities of men commissioned to herald the imminent establishment of God’s kingdom, is consistent with the instructions of Christ.

It is unfortunate, however, that an influential segment within evangelical Christian ranks seeks to equate “turning the nation around to Jesus” with votes against giving the Panama Canal to the Panamanians, busing, social welfare programs, and First Amendment protections against legislated religion. At least two evangelical organizations have published an index, in which the “right kind” of Christian politician is determined by his vote on such issues. The same organizations have committed themselves to making America “a Christian republic,” with all that would imply about Americans of other—and no—religious faiths. At the least such an approach to politics is divisive within Christian ranks; at the most it is a threat to treasured American—and, I believe, Biblical—concepts of church-state separation.

Writes Stan Mooneyham of World Vision International:

“I am as scared of an evangelical power bloc as I am of any other. Worldly power in religious hands—Islamic or Christian—has hardened into more than one inquisition. That God has delivered us from the hands of zealous but misguided saints is all that has saved us at times.

More Christians should share the sentiments of Ezra. Returning to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon, he said: “For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way” (Ezra 8:22). A tinge of shame should touch the cheeks of clerics and lay Christians alike who trot to the local legislature for “soldiers and horsemen” and money to support their institutions or fill their pews. Significant it is that the Lord did not instruct His disciples to curry in Jerusalem until they got power from the Sanhedrin; rather, He instructed them to “tarry . . . in . . . Jerusalem, until . . . [they received] power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Jesus did not tell them that without the laws of the state they could do nothing; but rather “Without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). Christians need not so much to pull legislative wires for the cause of God as to clear the channels to the throne of grace. Legislated religious conformity is legislated religious hypocrisy.

Not one government can set one soul free from the bondage of sin or plant renewing grace in one sinful heart. All the church organizations of the world, allied with all the kingdoms of this world, can never force faith into any man’s heart. It is when men forget the nature of Christ’s kingdom and lose their hold on the power of the living God that they turn to carnal weapons and seek to advance the cause of religion by human legislation.

Feed yourself first

Without devotional time for feeding his own soul, the preacher will soon be scraping the bottom of an empty barrel.

by John Osborn

In our last discussion (see Ministry, July, 1980) I contrasted preaching based on exposition of a Scripture portion with topical preaching in which one gathers the Bible evidences on a subject and pulls them all together. Some may have gotten the idea that I consider the expository method to be Biblical preaching and the other not, but that is not at all the case. Topical preaching can be very Biblical or it can be very un-Biblical. And expository preaching, likewise, can be Biblical or non-Biblical.

Yet it is easier for topical preaching to be non-Biblical than for expository preaching to be so. A man can take a topic, throw together an outline, undergird it with a few texts, and mold it and shape it as he likes. The result may be Biblical preaching, but in many cases it isn’t. In topical preaching you can preach your own philosophy and get the Bible to back you up. In expository preaching it is just the opposite—you have nothing to do with the outline and you have nothing to do with the context, since the scripture makes that decision for you. You are completely under the control of the Word of God.

What brought expository preaching into disrepute, however, was preachers who allowed it to degenerate into a running commentary. They would take a Scripture portion, quote one verse, and make a few comments on it. Then they would quote the next verse and comment on it. Nobody likes that, not even the one who is doing it. Dwight L. Moody once said of himself, “When I was a boy and my father would send me out to weed the garden, I would do such a poor job that I had to put a stick in the ground to know where to begin the next morning!” Some preachers start making comments on the Word of God the same way Moody pulled weeds—one here and one there. And when the time is up, they announce the study will continue next week. But you have to put a stick in the ground, as it were, because you know that what you are going to get next week will be just about as poor as what you got this time. Running commentary is not expository preaching.

The Word of God gives superb examples of both topical and expository preaching. In Luke 24 our Lord joins two disciples on the Emmaus road en route from Jerusalem to their homes, and discusses with them the events of the Crucifixion weekend that has just passed. After their sad remark, “We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel” (verse 21), Jesus turns to them and says, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ...
to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (verses 25-27). The issue was the cross. These disciples misunderstood it. So what did Jesus do? He began with Genesis and went through the whole Bible, unfolding the evidences concerning Himself. Now that is good topical preaching, commended by the Saviour’s own example. He used this methodology.

Look now at Acts 8, where we have another incident. Instead of two men walking, this time we have one man riding along in his chariot, going back home from a visit to Jerusalem. The Spirit of God tells Philip to join the chariot. The man is studying the Bible—Isaiah 53. What is the message of Isaiah 53? The message is: “He was mocked of others; he was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And we thought upon him, as upon a thing despised, and he hath borne the burden of our sins.”

Both are valid methods. Jesus used both. We’ve already seen an example of His topical sermon. Let’s look now at Stephen’s sermon in Acts 7. “Who is able among you to show me where I was born, or where my parents were?” Philip asks. “How can I, unless somebody tells me?” the man replies. “Is this man speaking about himself, or is he talking about somebody else?” Notice that “Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (verse 35). Now, I am sure that Philip branched out beyond Isaiah 53, but what was the eunuch’s primary interest? His interest was in this particular chapter. And so here we have Philip giving an exposition of Isaiah 53.

What a magnificent thing both these sermons must have been! “Did not our heart burn within us?” the disciples explained following Jesus’ topical sermon. (Luke 24:32). When we preach the Word of God, brethren, the hearts of our people, and our own, should burn! Of the Ethiopian, Acts 8:39 says, “He went on his way rejoicing.” Why? He had found the Messiah; Philip had revealed it to him out of that chapter.

So both topical preaching and expository preaching can be Biblical preaching. Both are valid methods. Jesus used both. We’ve already seen an example of His topical preaching, but He was also an expository preacher. If you don’t think so, read the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 6, and 7, and see His exposition of fundamental truths from the Old Testament. It’s a tremendous sermon. I’m not saying, then, that you must shift from topical to expository preaching. But I am saying, Learn this new dimension of Biblical exposition and introduce it to your people. You may discover that you want to shift.

Certain texts in our study should so grip us that we can hardly wait until the next opportunity to present them to our people.

Another consideration is that an expository sermon is not something that you can prepare on Friday (or Saturday) night for delivery the next day. The same is true of a good topical sermon, as well, but it is much easier at the last minute to put something together topically to preach. I’ve done that; I’ve gotten caught. I’ve been busy all week and sat down on Friday night to prepare a sermon for Sabbath morning. If you don’t confess to having done the same, it’s because I’m more honest than you are! Then Sabbath morning I stand at the door following the service and say to myself, “I hate to meet these people!” Of course some dear soul will always come along and tell me that I preached the most wonderful sermon he (or she) ever heard, but I’m not deceived at all about what took place. The Scriptures promise that God’s Word will not return unto Him void. Even though it was poorly presented, God has a way of getting His truth into the hearts of people and helping them. But that is no excuse for not spending ample time in our sermon preparation, and expository preaching will force us to spend that time.

You probably remember the legend about Sisyphus, a Greek king, who was compelled to roll a huge boulder laboriously up a hill, only to have it come crashing back down the moment he got it to the top. Then he had to begin again to roll it back up. Some preachers experience this same frustrating round. Every single week they have to start rolling that sermon up to eleven-thirty the next Sabbath morning. If you don’t feed yourself, you’re not going to be able to feed them. You’ll be scraping the bottom of an empty barrel. Every man ought to have a devotional period—which it’s only a half-hour or three quarters of an hour.

How can we become real students of the Word? First of all, the basic approach for the preacher is the devotional study of the Bible when he studies it for his own personal benefit. I assume that you have devotional time in your day when you feed your own soul without thinking specifically of the needs of the congregation. If you don’t feed yourself, you’re not going to be able to feed them.

Second, the Bible must be studied exegetically. Its sentences, words, and phrases must be searched carefully for their exact meaning. “There is but little benefit derived from a hasty reading of the Scriptures. . . . One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained.”—Steps to Christ, p. 90.

I’d like to recommend a plan of Bible study. First, we should have a daily devotional period a half-hour or three quarters of an hour. Second, we should study each chapter of the Bible, devoting a definite amount of time to each chapter. The Bible must be divided into chapters for the very purpose of study and emphasis. It’s a tremendous book. It’s a magnificent book. It’s our Book. We must study it. We cannot understand it without study.

Adequate sermon preparation demands a deep and continuing study of the Bible. Before we can become a preacher of the Word, we must become students of the Word, and I’m not so sure that many of us can lay claim to being really good Bible students. With some exceptions, we are no longer really immersing ourselves in Scripture, either as preachers or as laymen.

I heard Anglican John Stott talk to theological students at Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, on 1 Timothy 2. He stood without notes and drew from that chapter some of the most magnificent material I had ever heard. He did such a fine expository job, I said to myself, “I know why this man is considered one of the great preachers of our time. He knows the Bible.” Later I heard him in Pasadena, California, and bought every book he ever wrote that was on sale at the bookstore there. I read them all. I didn’t accept all his exegesis in every respect, of course, but I was amazed to discover how similar his basic teaching is to my own understandings.

The reason is simple—when any of us, regardless of our denominational background, come close to the Word of God, our theology and religious concepts come close to one another.
study that I have followed for a good many years and have found highly profitable. I want to recommend it especially to those of you who are just starting out in your ministry. If you were to spend an hour a day for ninety days with one book of the Bible, you would be able, in a little more than sixteen years, to have spent three months with every single book of the Bible! And when you’re in the ministry sixteen years, you are just coming into your prime. From that time on, your preaching will grow with greater and greater power.

You know, there’s no such thing as a preacher retiring and becoming a real estate agent. If he knows the Word, the people will want to hear him as long as he has the strength to present it. Your preaching doesn’t go bad at 70. It goes bad only when your body and your mind go bad. Your preaching can go on as long as you have a good mind.

So, how do you go about following this plan of studying the Bible? First of all, choose a small book of the Bible. There are many of them—Philémon, Timothy, Titus, Jonah. These books have only three or four chapters. Then say, “For my own personal benefit I’m going to live with this book for ninety days.”

I learned something from G. Campbell Morgan. Before he began to prepare studies on a book, he read it through fifty times. One day I said to myself, “I’ve never read a book fifty times. What would happen if I did?” Well, it took me eight minutes to read Philippians. And I made out a 3-by-5 bibliography card for every verse there are in Philippians, but I set up a page for chapter 1 itself, and then a page for each verse in chapter 1. And I did the same for the entire book. Then at the front of the notebook I left a space for the book itself, and I asked myself, “Can I find anything about this book of why it should have been written or who wrote it or when it was written?” I approached Philippians as though I had never seen it before. Brethren, when you approach the Scriptures, lay aside every preconceived opinion and personal prejudice. Don’t merely accept other men’s thoughts. Learn for yourself what God is saying.

I had a blank notebook, with a page for “Who wrote it?” another page for “Where was it written?” and a page for “Why was it written?” Those are in the front, followed by a page for every verse. When you get into this kind of a study program, brethren, let me tell you what happens when morning comes. You’re anxious to get out of bed early before the wife gets up, before the children get up. You want to get off there by yourself and say, “Lord, I’ve got to feed my soul.” Remember in the Garden of Gethsemane, when our Lord was praying? For whom was He praying? Basically He was praying only for Himself. He was making the final great decision for the universe all on His own. His disciples were sleeping, snoring out loud, and He was all alone, clinging to God. And we need to have the same experience. “Lord, help me to fill my own soul.

The hearts of our people will burn only if our own hearts have first felt the flame in the solitude of our study.

Never mind what my people need. Help me this morning to find what my own soul needs.”

So, I’d sit down with God’s Word and my notebook. I always prayed first, and then I began to read. Whenever some comment or idea would come to me, I would turn to that blank page and write it down. In the margin I’d put JWO, which happen to be my initials. You’ll see why in a few minutes.

Brethren, God speaks to your minds just as well as He does to the mind of anyone else, and when the Spirit of God gives you beautiful thoughts regarding His Word, grab them, for they may fleet away and never come back to you again. Write them down.

I decided to live for ninety days with Philippians, and when I got through, I said, “This is just a start. I’m not going to have time, after all, to get through all sixty-six books before retirement.” I was enjoying my study so much that I just kept on.

And then I thought, What do the experts say, who have spent years and years studying the Bible? I wanted to find every book I possibly could that had been written on the book of Philippians, and I made out a 3-by-5 bibliography card for every one. I’d ask some of my friends on the staff of the Seminary, “Do you have any good books to recommend on Philippians?” I’d write them down. Some of these books would have a bibliography in the back. I’d write down these additional books.

In this way I gathered the biggest bibliography I possibly could on the book of Philippians. By study and by contact with certain men whom I knew and by looking over certain books, I chose some of the best and bought them. Then in my personal study every morning I would divide the time between devotional and exegetical reading on Philippians. I’d spend a few minutes reading Philippians itself from beginning to end, just to retain the overall view.

Now remember, this study program is not taking time out of your day’s work. This is taking the devotional time that you should spend alone and using it in the most profitable fashion. I’m not say-

(Continued on page 23.)
At a tale of two churches

A pastor sits in a pew at two different churches on one Sunday morning and comes away with some things to think about.

by Edward Motschiedler

While in California attending church-growth meetings, I decided one Sunday morning to visit two of the fastest-growing churches in the Los Angeles area. Armed with maps, directions, and church schedules, a friend and I ventured into the maddening maze of the Los Angeles freeway system. The visits to these two rather dissimilar churches led me to do a great deal of reflecting.

It's not often that a person needs to arrive forty-five minutes early if he wants a seat for church. Yet such is the case at the Garden Grove Community Church. At 8:45 A.M. we joined others in line waiting to be seated for the nine-thirty service. It was worth the wait. The grounds and sanctuary were beautiful and immaculate, the music was varied and excellent, the program was polished, organized, and quick-moving, the ser-

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The greatest potential source of people to do the work of the ministry is in the pews of my church.

Sunday morning, knowing that the main feature would be a long expository sermon.

Through-the-Bible expository preaching is the thing at Calvary Chapel. Beginning at Genesis 1, the pastor preaches (Sunday morning and evening) right on through to the end of Revelation. Then he starts again. The cycle takes about two and a half years. At Calvary Chapel, people don’t refer to the time they joined the church in terms of the month and year. “I joined in First Chronicles,” they say. Or “I joined in Matthew.”

Is through-the-Bible expository preaching meeting a need? Every Sunday, 7,000 people, most of them 18 to 40 years of age, attend worship services at Calvary Chapel. Eighteen hundred attend the Bible study on Sunday night! Twenty-four hundred attend the mid-week meeting, in which they study a Biblical book verse by verse! It took this study group two years to go through the book of Acts, eighteen months to go through Revelation.

As Pastor Smith preached, I thought of how long it had been since my church had had a sermon on 1 Kings 9, or Habakkuk, or Philo. I thought of what they had been missing, for “all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” (2 Tim. 3:16). Many congregations undoubtedly suffer from an unbalanced sermon diet. Many fine passages are never preached upon or studied simply because there is no plan to do so.

After the service was over at Calvary, I talked to one of the pastors. He told me that the church had started in the 1960’s and that after a few years it was discovered by the “Jesus people.” They found that they were welcomed, accepted, and loved at Calvary, which was a different reaction than they had received at most other organized churches in the Los Angeles area. The church grew so large it had to spawn. By 1976 there were twelve Calvary Chapels, and today more than 140 are scattered all across the country. I asked the pastor how they staffed the new churches. He explained that the new ministers came from the laity of the present congregations. There is no great concern that they have a college education or seminary training. Being an active member of Calvary Chapel is training enough, they feel. They have been through intensive expository Bible study, they have been a part of the church’s evangelistic outreach, they have caught the Christian zeal that flows through Calvary’s active church program. What more is really needed?

I had to wonder how many of the members of my church could step into a pastor’s role simply because of the church’s Bible-study program, evangelism training classes, and Christian zeal. Just think what would happen if the program of every church was so strong that members were constantly being developed who were properly equipped for ministry and evangelism!

This, of course, was the way that the Seventh-day Adventist Church began—church members studying and praying together, laymen studying with their neighbors and friends, laymen starting churches in new areas, laymen assuming the roles of pastor and evangelist. When the churches met together, emphasis was placed on Bible study, and knowledge of the Scriptures. Zeal for witnessing and evangelism was great, and the growth of the church was extraordinary.

My visits to two very different and growing churches that Sunday morning made me examine again my ministry and priorities. I see the need for positive, encouraging, Bible-centered preaching. I see the need for through-the-Bible expository study. I see the need for church programs so active and zealous that they produce laity with skills for ministry and evangelism.

I came away from my visits to Garden Grove Community Church and Calvary Chapel with a belief that laymen of the church can make great things happen if challenged by their pastor. I came away with an understanding that the greatest potential source of people to do the work of the ministry is not necessarily the seminary, but the pews of my church. I’m convinced that people are willing and eager to see their church grow through evangelism. They are waiting for the challenge and example of their pastor.
Three Angels of the Apocalypse – 4

All true worship is based on loyalty to God’s commands, and nothing can take the place of absolute obedience to His will.

Since the articles in this series build closely upon one another, we would suggest that readers refer to the first three (March, May, and July, 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 cost of copying and postage.—Editors.

In our last installment we pointed out that the concept of antichrist, portrayed by various symbols in the books of both Daniel and Revelation, is not merely some past, present, or future personage but rather a system that deceives and destroys God’s truth and people. Of course, systems and organizations do not exist apart from individuals. Nazism, for example, cannot be separated from Hitler. And just as Hitler and his system collapsed after a short, horrible period, so, too, will the beast-antichrist confederacy collapse when the great controversy between Christ and Satan culminates in victory for Christ at His second coming.

Blasphemy—contempt for God, His character, His will, His laws— is a major hallmark of this system (see Rev. 13:1, 5, 6). This contempt for God and all He represents is characterized by the worship, not of the true God, but of the man-made beast system. One of the parallels between the beast system and God’s last message for earth (symbolized by the three angels’ messages) is that both require man’s worship. In fact, according to Revelation, chapters 12 to 14, the final struggle between Christ and Satan is over this feature of worship. Man was created to worship God, and even fallen man will worship some thing, system, or person.

Thus the world will be divided into two camps—those who worship the beast, or antichrist, system and those who worship the Creator God.

In light of these thoughts, note that the blasphemous antichrist system so vividly described in Revelation 13:1-10 is not necessarily an avowed atheistic power. Atheism, by its very nature, is part of this worldwide system opposed to God, but the worst blasphemy is that of an atheist who shakes his fist in God’s face. Far more reprehensible and insidious (and therefore more dangerous) is the professed Christian who, despite his outward appearance, is a stranger to the actual character of Christ and who allows himself to be used as Satan’s agent within the church itself. The re-buke of Christ to the Laodicean church (Rev. 3:14-22), which is symbolic of the condition of His followers in these last days, is significant: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou werst cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (verses 15, 16).

The open rebellion of the avowed non-Christian is a far less threat to Christ and His church than the lukewarm professed Christian who worships God only on his own terms. Thus the word lukewarm describes far more than sitting in the pew only at Easter and Christmas accompanied by spasmodic financial support. Lukewarmness includes failure to ascertain God’s will through carelessness in serious study of the Scriptures; parroting of error because the majority would have it so; loyalty to a religious system merely because of family tradition; rationalizing disobedience to specific commands of God for the sake of unity and peace; acceptance of false principles in order to satisfy self-indulgent desires; and attempting to control men’s minds through illicit use of religion. Numerous illustrations of these and other blasphemous characteristics of lukewarmness are to be found in history and current events. The point is that blasphemy in one of its ugliest forms rears its head within the church itself in the person of those who claim God’s name but reject His authority over their lives. These may appear to be worshippers of God, but in essence they worship other gods.

Too often we preach on Jesus’ parable (Matt. 7:21-23) of the home built on foundations of sand and forget the pre-ambles as well as the point of the parable itself. The introduction reveals that not all professed Christians will enter the kingdom. The Saviour here is not speaking to atheists or to a non-Christian society, but to those who have prophesied, cast out devils, and performed many wonderful things—all in the name of Christ. Why is it that many of these will hear the words “depart from me, ye that work iniquity”? The answer is plain. They have failed to conform their lives to God’s will and to operate on the principles of His kingdom. They have created their own religious system and labeled it Christianity. Revelation 14:12 indicates that obedience is the foundation of true worship. Anything less is iniquitous. What could be more blasphemous than a self-proclaimed Christian who is actually working at cross purposes to God? Such are “workers of iniquity.”

Returning to the parable, we find two homes on two different foundations—sand and stone. Note that the common denominator is that both builders erect homes and both builders are aware of how to build safely and correctly. The variable is that one obediently built on the bedrock according to the instructions of the Master Designer while the other contemptuously, blasphemously, built in his own way on the flimsy sand. Here again we see the element of true worship versus false worship.

Obviously, the rock foundation represents Christ. Building on Him represents those who base their lives on Him. Connecting this parable with the prophet Isaiah’s words gives a more complete picture. “Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a founda-
tion a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste” (Isa. 28:16).

All true worship is based on loyalty to God's commands, and nothing can take the place of absolute obedience to His will. King Saul at Gilgal appeared to be quite conscientious as he stood before Israel’s army and offered a sacrifice to God, but his piety was hypocritical (see 1 Sam. 15). The king of Israel performed a religious worship service in direct opposition to the explicit commands of God! This was not the first time Saul had set aside God’s commands to follow the way that seemed right to him. Like many today, Saul was accustomed to making decisions on the basis of political, economic, or special expediency rather than on the basis of strict fidelity to God. Thus God gave him his final opportunity to demonstrate his loyalty by commanding him to utterly destroy the Amalekites, including their livestock.

Despite God’s careful instructions, presumption led Saul to follow his own inclination. On his way home from the most brilliant victory that he had ever gained, Saul met the prophet Samuel, who had been sent to him by God. Debased by his disobedience, Saul greeted Samuel with lying lips: “Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” (1 Sam. 15:13, 14).

Saul began to excuse his disobedience by explaining that he had spared the best animals for sacrifices to God. When Samuel began to relate God’s message of rebuke, Saul defiantly protested that he had done God’s will. Samuel replied, “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king” (1 Sam. 15:22, 23).

This story perhaps best describes the issues at stake in the conflict between Satan and Christ as carried out by their followers—the beast worshipers of Revelation 13 and God’s remnant of Revelation 14:12 “that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” This latter group build on Christ the sure foundation, not on some man-made sand foundation that cannot stand the test. Those who build on Him learn that worshiping the true God requires careful obedience to His building instructions.

It should be emphasized repeatedly that the only truly important thing in life is our eternal salvation. “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mark 8:36, 37). The incomparable value of our salvation is best seen in the cost of the cross. In the light of the pricelessless of salvation, any attempt to change, ignore, or reject God’s plan to save man is blasphemy! Any attempt to divert men’s minds from Christ to an organization, a theory, or a person is blasphemy. Any substitution or counterfeit for the true gospel is blasphemy!

Thus, the Lord’s ultimate concern for humanity is salvation—nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. The ultimate concern of the prince of evil is to destroy humanity, and his most insidious way of destruction is to entice man with a counterfeit gospel. No wonder Jesus describes Satan as a murderer and such a liar that there is no truth in him (John 8:44; 10:10). The beast described in Revelation 13:2 receives his power, throne, and great authority from Satan the dragon (see Rev. 12:9), and thus has similar characteristics. It is this beast, antichrist conglomerate, that is the object of the most fearful threats Christians ever addressed to mortals: “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the cup of his indignation” (Rev. 14:9, 10). Only those whose names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life will be spared (see Rev. 13:8).

What is the basic difference between those who worship the beast and his image and those who worship the Lamb, Christ Jesus? It is the same difference found between those who build on the Rock and those who build on the sand. As previously noted in other articles, that difference is found in two methods of salvation that can be traced from Genesis to Revelation. One is salvation by man’s own methods and works, the other is salvation through grace by faith in Jesus Christ.

In recapitulation, consider the following salient points made in this brief exposition of chapters 13 and 14 of Revelation.

1. The three angels’ messages of Revelation 14, although mysteriously symbolic, should be carefully studied and understood, for their messages constitute God’s last invitation to mankind and culminate in the second coming of Christ.

2. The first angel’s message (verses 6, 7) is a combined command and announcement. The command to fear, or honor, God and worship Him as the Creator implies the doctrine of creation, which is the indispensable foundation for life now and for eternity. It is a vitally appropriate command in these last hours of earth’s history when the inroads of evolutionary concepts have largely obliterated from men’s minds the creative power and acts of God.

3. All three messages are in the setting of the “everlasting gospel,” which is to be preached to “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (verse 6). The word everlasting, when used in connection with the gospel, indicates its basic continuity from Eden lost to Eden restored.

4. The second angel’s message reveals a new aspect of the everlasting gospel. It is a call to come out of the religious confusion existing in these last days and yield allegiance to “God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:3, 4).

5. The third message (Rev. 14:9-12) constitutes the most vehement and fearful condemnation to be found in Scripture. This beast—its image and mark—portrays a worldwide antichrist system that has as its focal point a false system of worship and salvation in contrast to God’s one and only plan of salvation. In the setting of the three angels’ messages, these two opposing systems represent the final phase of the bitter controversy between Christ and Satan.

6. From the New Testament standpoint, this antichrist system applies first to pagan Rome, second to the medieval abortion of the faith with its persecution by a state-church system, and last to its revival in a world-encompassing, religious-political conglomerate that will pose a threat to the very existence of God’s faithful remnant, who steadfastly worship God according to His commands.

7. Central in this life-and-death struggle over the true gospel is the valid relationship of law and grace (see Rev. 14:12).

8. Finally, ultimate victory in the great struggle is assured to Christ and His followers, who, by His grace, have resisted the beast and his mark (see Rev. 15:2-4).
HEALTH AND RELIGION

SHEPHERDS OF THE MIND

The minister, backed by the gospel's power and warmth, is a part of the healing process for emotional and mental problems.

by Gordon G. Creighton

In our unprecedentedly complex and hectic world today, the minister has to have more than his feet on the ground and his mind on his work to be able to help people through the maze that confronts them. Knowledge mushrooms on all sides until even the experts in any given field are unable to comprehend all the burgeoning material in their specialty. Many people today are confused because standards that past generations have taken for granted are being replaced by a multiplicity of mores they neither accept nor even understand. Therefore, the pastor needs not only to be familiar with the run-of-the-mill troubles people have but also to recognize and deal with the characteristic mental-health problems of today.

What problems is he likely to encounter? In almost any random group of people, in or out of a church congregation, will be found the antireligious, the pseudoreligious, the angry, the guilt-ridden, the frustrated, the depressed, the judgmental, and the unloved.

The antireligious are usually responding to the introduction they have had to religion. They may have received too intense or too severe a picture of God's expectations, or they may have been repulsed by the insincere or the overzealous.

The pseudoreligious are not hypocritical. They are people with a distorted picture of religion and how it can work for them. Individuals may, for instance, expect miracles from prayer while ignoring the part they or professionals might play in dealing with their own problems.

Some in your church may consider anger to be inherently evil. They repress it only to find it manifesting itself in such disguises as an ulcerated stomach, feelings of anxiety acted out in harmful ways, or depression. The person who goes about with a perpetual smile on his face in spite of the way he is being treated is not necessarily a happy, emotionally well-balanced person. He may be dedicated and religious, but he isn't necessarily happy or satisfied with life. This person needs to know that anger is a symptom of things out of line and that it needs to be dealt with openly in ways that are not violent or destructive.

Guilt is a necessary experience in the religious life, yet it can destroy happiness if it is allowed to become neurotic. Karl Menninger, noted psychiatrist, said, "We need to differentiate between sin and symptoms." The goal, according to Menninger, is not just to remove guilt and its effects from a person, but rather to help him understand a misplaced sense of guilt.

The frustrated, the depressed, the judgmental, and the unloved are all too frequently encountered in every congregation. The National Association of Mental Health reported in its pamphlet "The Clergy and Mental Health" what one pastor found in his congregation of less than 100 people: "A boy on parole from a state penitentiary who was striving to remain within the law; another on probation with the local police; a third who was flirting with a way of life that could only lead to unhappiness and ruin; a young woman confused by grave doubts; a girl despondent over a broken love affair; a young couple who had just buried their small child; a family but recently bereft of its mother; a woman struggling with morbid fears; a man desperately battling the temptations of alcohol; a middle-aged couple whose home was on the verge of break-up; another couple worried over their child's misconduct; a young man confronted by a critical operation within the month."

The pamphlet continues: "Tension, strain, anxiety and fear are products of our time and culture. Our divorce rate is one indication. The growth of juvenile delinquency is another. Depression is another. Each tells its stark story of frustration, sorrow, disappointment and tragedy." Speaking of those who struggle to cope with the pressures of their lives, this booklet says: "Sick, angry, prejudiced, sorrowful, incompetent or dissatisfied, they lead lives of boredom, devoid of ambition or interest. They carry heavy burdens of failure or guilt, a grinding weight of futility and inadequacy. Some are not yet mentally ill, but they need the help the pastor, among others, can give to save them from more serious trouble."

What can the pastor do? As an initial step, he must learn to recognize such situations and something of why they occur. He can gain much training by attending seminars or short university courses, reading extensively, and comparing ideas with colleagues. Of course, in all these he will rely on divine enlightenment to be able to deal effectively with people's problems.

Christ accepted people where they were and helped them with their current problems. This is where the pastor too needs to start. Not until people's immediate needs are met will they be ready to grow in a positive way.

The pastor is often the first resource that people turn to when they need counsel. If he is someone who is known as a warm, concerned person, able to keep a confidence, they will feel free to seek him out when confronted with a problem. A counselor should know that he must listen more than give advice. Many a person needs no more than a sounding board to solve his problem. He needs someone to hear him out and see the whole picture. Sometimes the pastor needs to hear the other side of the story, as well, but he should avoid showing prejudice or rejection. No matter how black the sin, the pastor should be perceived as a representative of the Saviour, who accepted the sinner without reservation while at the same time condemning sin without equivocation.

A counselor-pastor should not become involved emotionally with his client, nor be flattered by the overly dependent. A counselor, like a parent, should make himself needed less and less.

In addition to personal work, the pastor can give his people sermons that build and encourage. There is a balance to be maintained between Mount Sinai and the Mount of Blessing. Both should be emphasized to give balance. Too much rigidity can push a compulsive person off the deep end; its neglect can encourage a hedonistic person into trouble. Preaching needs to be therapeutic. It needs to emphasize the ever-present God of Psalm 139, the aware Father of Matthew 6:32, the personal Shepherd of Psalm 23, the accepting, loving God, who is bigger than man can ever know. Those who are under great mental stress

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need to have their spiritual batteries charged when they hear the Word.

As a counselor, the pastor is in the unique position of knowing his parishioners and their families through his visiting program and is often the one best able to note changes in their thinking or behavior. This is not to suggest that the clergyman has the right to determine whether a person is mentally ill, but he can detect symptoms of serious mental illness and help the person get qualified psychiatric care.

The National Association of Mental Health gives these signs of psychosis: major changes in behavior; strange periods of confusion or loss of memory; grandiose thoughts about oneself; experiencing visions, strange odors, or peculiar tastes; the idea that people are plotting, talking about, or watching oneself; complaints of impossible bodily changes; the need to perform repetitive acts; talking to oneself or hearing voices; marked depression.

Rarely does the pastor need either to agree with or dispute the distortions of reality presented by one who is disturbed. When a person loses contact with reality, skilled psychiatric help beyond the abilities of most pastors is needed, and referral to professional treatment should be made. How long should the pastor continue if a person’s problem seems to be stagnant? Five to ten visits should usually be enough to assess the situation. When a person is overly dependent or obviously very sick, referrals are in order.

To whom should you refer one who needs additional care? Dr. J. A. Wieden, in a booklet prepared for the Harding Hospital Institute on Mental Health, recommends a psychiatrist who is well trained and who has the confidence of several of his fellow physicians, or a practicing clinical psychologist with adequate training and clinical experience who is recognized as professionally competent. You should make referrals in collaboration with the person’s family physician, to provide medical responsibility as well as continuing attention to parallel medical problems.

The timing of referrals is also important, says Dr. Wieden. The referral must not be seen as a rejection, and therefore both patient and relatives should be prepared. Always let the patient and close relatives ventilate feelings about the referral. When the decision has been reached, call the psychiatrist or psychologist and make the referral in the client’s presence. Indicate to the patient your willingness to maintain follow-up with him.

If hospitalization for mental problems is needed, the church should be especially alert to the person’s return to the community. At that time the warmth and love of the congregation is most needed to reestablish his feelings of being needed and wanted.

The pastor can be thankful that in this complicated world he has the resources of the healing arts and trained professionals. But he must never forget that the ministry, with the power of the gospel and the warmth of the Christian, is definitely a part of the healing team.

Roy L. Smith, in his book The Lord Is My Shepherd, points out that Professor Jung, the world-famous psychologist, who did not profess to be a Christian or even to be religious, considered a stable religious conviction and a definite faith to have more bearing on mental efficiency than any other single factor. According to Jung, most of those who came to him for professional advice were those whose mental distress and rearrangements were a direct result of a loss of religious faith.

We live in a world in which help from the professions is needed; pastors must understand how to deal with unresolved conflicts. But the individual struggling to maintain emotional balance in our time still must hear, “He restoreth my soul.”

Feed Yourself First
(Continued from page 17.)

ing, “Add this to what you’re already doing,” I’m saying, “Do this instead of reading randomly in the Word.”

As I read a book, I would give each one a code designation. For instance, there was one by Roy Lorne, Life Begins. I would make up the bibliography card and put in the upper-right-hand corner LB for Life Begins. Now, why did I do that when I had the bibliography there? As I was reading in Roy Lorne’s book, I would write down anything significant that interested me on the proper page for that text in my notebook. Then I would put LB and the page number in the margin. I didn’t want to write out all that bibliography each time. If in the future I forget what LB is, all I have to do is go to my bibliography card and see that it’s Roy Lorne’s Life Begins.

How much time did I spend accumulating this material? I spent about one year with the book of Philippians. Not only was my own soul blessed but two basic results came out of that study. Number one, I had a prayer meeting series for weeks and weeks. When you have lived with a book of the Bible that long and you take it chapter by chapter on Wednesday night, I can assure you that people will come out to hear the Word of God explained so well. Our people love to hear the Word of God from a man who knows what he’s talking about. And when you have lived with a book for ninety days, you know what it’s saying, and you have something to say.

The other byproduct of studying this way is that you will find in the book of Philippians an endless number of sermons to preach. The outlines will just begin to surface everywhere. I have more outlines on Philippians than I would dare preach at one time, because no matter how good you are, if you preach too long on anything, your people won’t like it. They like series, but they like an end to the series. Unless you are really extraordinary, a series of six to eight sermons is long enough. So you will have an enormous amount of material for preaching. Your problem will not be “What in the world will I preach on next week?” You will be frustrated with a far different problem: “What will I choose from all these sermon possibilities?” And that’s a much nicer frustration to have.

Brethren, when you start piling up books on your shelf and concentrating your study on a particular book of the Bible, you’ll discover that once you have preached part of this material, you’ll want to turn to something else. You shouldn’t spend the whole next year preaching on the book of Philippians fifty-two times. You may preach six or eight sermons from your study. But the expository approach to Bible study gives you an enormous amount of material to preach from and to enrich your preaching, no matter what Scripture portion you expound.

Our goal should be preaching that causes hearts to burn. “Did not our heart burn within us . . . while he opened to us the scriptures?” (Luke 24:32). The hearts of our people will burn only if our own hearts have first felt the flame in the solitude of our study.
JERUSALEM WATER SYSTEMS

MINISTRY notes the one-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of Hezekiah’s water-tunnel inscription.

by Lawrence T. Geraty

Exactly one hundred years ago, in 1880, some Jewish boys were playing in the vicinity of Jerusalem’s Pool of Siloam, near the southern end of the hill called Ophel. One of their number—reportedly named Jacob—accidentally fell into the water. Once there, his curiosity led him to explore the mouth of an aqueduct that led into the pool. On its eastern wall, about fifteen feet from the pool, and three feet up, Jacob discovered an inscription in a peculiar script. He reported his find to his teacher, Conrad Schick. Schick called it to the attention of Professor Sayce, of Oxford, who published it with a hand copy and translation.

Soon after its discovery, a Greek who thought he could make some money wantonly cut the inscription out of the rock wall, breaking it up into six or seven pieces in the process. He was apprehended and punished by the Turkish authorities, who cemented together the broken inscription and shipped it to the Imperial Ottoman Museum in Istanbul, where it may still be seen. It is the only relatively-complete monumental Hebrew inscription found from the period of the Judean monarch.

What does it say? W. F. Albright translated the inscription as follows: “[. . . when] (the tunnel) was driven through. And this was the way in which it was cut through:—While [. . .] (were) still [. . .] axe(s), each man toward his fellow, and while there were still three cubits to be cut through, [there was heard] the voice of a man calling to his fellow, for there was an overlap in the rock on the right [and on the left]. And when the tunnel was driven through, the quarrymen hewed (the rock), each man toward his fellow, axe against axe; and the water flowed from the spring toward the reservoir for 1,200 cubits, and the height of the rock above the head(s) of the quarrymen was 100 cubits” (ANET 321).

The Siloam tunnel inscription, as it is usually referred to, contains no direct evidence for a date, though a study of the form of the Hebrew letters establishes a general date about 700 B.C. Nevertheless, scholars are virtually certain that the dramatic project was accomplished in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, sometime between 715 and 686 B.C. This is also the period of the prophetic ministry of Isaiah, Hezekiah’s contemporary. The assumption that Hezekiah constructed the tunnel commemorated by the inscription is based on Biblical references in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah, as well as in the apocryphal work of Ben Sira (Eccles. 48:17).

The Biblical record states: “The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?” (2 Kings 20:20, R.S.V.). Unfortunately, that work is no longer extant. A detail or two is added in 2 Chronicles 32:30 (R.S.V.). “This same Hezekiah closed the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them down to the west side of the city of David.” Isaiah 22:8-11 probably alludes to the same accomplishment: “In that day you looked to the weapons of the house of the forest, and you saw that the breaches of the city of David were many, and you collected the waters of the lower pool, and you counted the houses of Jerusalem, and you broke down the houses to fortify the wall. You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool” (R.S.V.).

The historical setting for this occasion cannot be established with certainty, but the making of “a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool” is suggestive of the purpose mentioned in the inscription. Isaiah’s oracle contains obvious allusions to preparation for war. This may refer to some specific danger such as Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah in 701 B.C. (implied perhaps by Ben Sira) or to the earlier campaign of Sargon to quell the revolt of Ashdod in 712 B.C.—a rebellion in which Judah played a role (the context of Isaiah 22).

Or the construction of the tunnel may have been earlier in Hezekiah’s reign—a part of an overall plan to strengthen his defenses against Assyria whose attack was sure to come when he reversed the pro-Assyrian policies of his predecessor and father, Ahaz. Since he was familiar with the history of Assyria’s relationship with Israel and Judah in the eighth century B.C., Hezekiah would have seen “the handwriting on the wall.”

Whatever the immediate cause for the tunnel’s construction, the goal was clearly to secure Jerusalem’s water supply in time of siege. The only spring in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem is En-Gihon, which flows forth in the Kidron bed at the foot of the southeastern spur of the city. The Gihon is a typical karst spring, and its waters gush intermittently, like Yellowstone Park’s Old Faithful, albeit on a less spectacular scale!

It was undoubtedly this spring that led to the founding of the earliest settlement of Jerusalem, on the ridge above it known in ancient times as Ophel or Mount Zion. This Gihon spring served as the sole source of water for the population of Jerusalem for many generations—at least until means were devised to divert rainfall to open reservoirs and rock hewn cisterns.

For this reason, successive generations of Jerusalemites exerted themselves to ensure the spring’s safe use, even in time of war and siege, as well as to convey its stream to places where it could most easily and effectively be exploited. The result was that in and around the spring cave a complicated system of waterworks gradually developed. Since 1867 these have been rediscovered and explored.

There appear to be at least four main systems connected with the Gihon spring.

1. The oldest may well be the shaft and tunnel discovered by Sir Charles Warren in 1867—the tunnel is entered from above the spring about halfway up the slope in what must have been a region of public buildings within the ancient city walls. The shaft comprises three elements: a stepped tunnel hewn into the rock 39 meters long and descending 12.7 meters deep, a vertical shaft some 11 meters deep, and a horizontal channel 20 meters long leading the spring waters into the interior of the hill to the base of the vertical shaft. So water was drawn from the horizontal channel up the vertical shaft by means of buckets and from there carried up the stepped tunnel into the walled city.
2. Two canals lead from the spring straight to the south. The more easterly canal is partly cut out in the rock and partly built of masonry. After beginning in a southerly direction, it rapidly descends toward the valley bottom but its course is not well known. Its purpose was probably to channel the runoff to irrigate gardens in the valley. Its date is unknown, though it could be very early and almost certainly predates the second of the two canals.

3. The second canal (named the Second Aqueduct by Wilson) begins two meters west of the preceding one, but in contrast with it at a level of several meters above the mouth of the spring. At least one of the purposes of this canal was also the irrigation of the western Kidron slope, with its cultivated terraces. For this reason it was planned as an open-air channel, although some parts were covered with flat stones and others had to pass beneath the surface through a tunnel because of high rock levels. The irrigation of the terraces was effected through a number of apertures in the eastern wall of the channel. Water could be drawn from the canal through these “windows,” sometimes also from a small basin in front, and it could be made to flow over the sill of the “windows” by damming up the channel at any given point. When we are told that at the approach of the enemy Hezekiah “stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land” (2 Chron. 32:4) we feel justified in recognizing in “all the fountains” besides the exit from Gihon itself the “windows” of this canal, and in “the brook that ran through the midst of the land” the little stream at the bottom of Kidron made up of all the rivulets that descended from the slope.

4. And now we come to perhaps the most famous of the four water systems connected with Gihon—the 533-meter-long tunnel associated with the name of Hezekiah. As early as the seventeenth century we have accounts of its existence from European travelers, but the first person in modern times to traverse the tunnel was the American Orientalist Edward Robinson. We can thank an imaginative and eccentric Finn named Walter Juvelius for the fact that the tunnel is due to the desire of the builders to avoid the royal necropolis in the City of David. This view hasn’t met with too much support since the tombs of the kings have not been certainly identified in this location; furthermore, the course of the tunnel is far below them if the tombs are there.

5. Conder suggested that hard rock forced the excavators to alter their route—though geological observations do not appear to bear this out.

6. Conder suggested that hard rock forced the excavators to alter their route—though geological observations do not appear to bear this out.

7. Another variation would be the view of Hecker who believes that the engineers and hewers followed a stratum in the rock which was of medium hardness, known as melke. Again, however, there does not appear to be a consistent stratum of rock through which they dug.

8. In 1929, Sulley suggested that the curved course of the tunnel indicates the former existence of a natural subterranean stream, which ran from the spring of Gihon through the Ophel Hill, emerging at the bottom of the valley on the west of the Mount Zion spur. Ruth Amiran defends this view because it solves what she considers to have been the major problem in building the tunnel: ventilation. If the engineers actually followed such a stream, they were, of course, sure of success, for the two ends of the stream were known to meet (the source’s gushing character would have helped) and all the hewers had to do was follow them. Such a suggestion would explain the use of the terms “Upper Gihon” and “Lower Gihon.” But there are again geological objections to a natural circuitous route for the stream.

9. Naseeb Shaheen has lately offered yet another suggestion: The engineers directed the tunnel beneath one or more sites in the city so that shafts could be sunk to the tunnel from those sites should it be necessary. Once those points were reached in the northern curve especially, but perhaps in the south, too, the tunnel was routed to an area outside the eastern wall, where it was possible for surface crews to guide them since the rock there was not so thick. Though this newest view is thoughtful and avoids the disadvantages of some of the earlier suggestions—it is hard to test since, for instance, only one shaft was dug down to the tunnel.

10. There is always Conder’s view that the engineers lost their way and just wandered around a bit! But perhaps it would be wiser to admit our own ignorance at this point, rather than putting the blame on Hezekiah’s engineers!

Bibliography


PREPARING FOR WIDOWHOOD

Apart from the personal tragedy, widowhood means facing immediate, complicated decisions that will affect you for years to come.

Beverly Lauderdale was born and reared in the Midwest. She was graduated from Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa, with a B.A. degree. After teaching at the junior high school level in Pittsburg, California, she turned to free-lance writing and has had articles published in several magazines.

If you are a married woman in the United States today, you can expect to outlive your husband by nearly ten years, according to recent figures that indicate that approximately two thirds of the older female population live without a spouse.

Although widowhood may be considered the special domain of “senior” women, 10 percent of today’s widows have families, bearing responsibility for more than a million children. What then can you—whether young, middle-aged, or elderly—do to prepare yourself for the responsibility of life without your husband?

“Widowhood is a rip-off,” Actress Nanette Fabray pointed out in a newspaper interview. “Instantly after a husband’s death the wife is forced to make decisions that will affect her the rest of her life. Decisions about burial, property taxes, bank accounts, a career.

“She immediately loses her charge accounts. She cannot make loans. . . No one tells her she can’t open their safe-deposit box after her husband’s death without an official present. Even checks written by the husband, which haven’t cleared the bank, are invalid.

“All debts are immediately due, including house mortgages. Any cash in the bank goes first to pay debts. One out of five survivors ends up flat broke. That’s a hard fact.”

Much of this can be prevented by working out practical details in advance, in the following areas.

1. Funeral. What type of arrangements does her husband prefer? Put his wishes in writing, listing the plan he outlines. If he prefers a conventional service, record names of pallbearers. Compile a list of addresses or phone numbers to simplify the task of notifying special friends.

2. Burial. If your husband owns a cemetery lot, specify its location and where documents certifying ownership are placed. If your husband desires other

3. Obituary. A brief biography attached to the list of instructions eliminates one more problem for you or other family members when you need to provide information for the newspaper notice.

The above-mentioned directions must be accessible—not attached to the will and locked securely in a safe-deposit box. Inform the family or close friends where they are kept.

4. Will. “Make a will, make a will, make a will,” so often repeated that it should be drummed into America’s consciousness, more often than not is ignored—for less than three out of ten husbands leave wills.

A simple investment of time plus a lawyer’s fee can prevent many problems, heartaches, and hardships. A will can be altered when necessary. In fact, lawyers advocate a periodical revision of provisions as economic situations change or as children mature. Even a handwritten will, signed in the presence of two witnesses, may be regarded as a legal document, assuring a modicum of protection for the survivors. However, seemingly insignificant things can cause such a will to be declared invalid, so one runs a risk in making this kind of will.

Beverly Lauderdale was born and reared in the Midwest. She was graduated from Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa, with a B.A. degree. After teaching at the junior high school level in Pittsburg, California, she turned to free-lance writing and has had articles published in several magazines.

5. Assets. An informal list of insurance policies, bank accounts, stocks and bonds, real estate, and any other property investments belong with a will or with funeral-arrangement directions. You should also itemize debts (such as house payments), location of safety-deposit boxes, and name of the family lawyer and/or accountant.

6. Money. Do you now have a special cash account—either savings or personal checking—solely in your name, adequate to cover normal household expenses for up to a month? Most States freeze bank accounts of the deceased for this length of time. Even a joint account, along with all other assets (including paychecks due), generally cannot be touched for a specific period, depending upon State law. Don’t count on ready cash from Social Security, because approximately four months will elapse before the first check arrives. Because of this, widows must often approach friends and relatives for money.

What of your husband’s pension? Does it include survivor’s benefits? Is your State one in which a husband’s pension is canceled? Fewer than 3 percent of the nation’s widows receive any money from private-industry plans, because their husbands failed to apply for survivor’s benefits.

Even more graphic figures have been released by the Life Insurance Agency Management Association and Life Underwriter Training Council. The council’s study of 1,744 widows (whose husbands died before age 65) revealed that only 8 percent collected as much as $25,000 from life insurance; the average amounted to $9,150. For every three widows interviewed, one stated that the family had no financial assets, while half the group had been left with less than $1,000.

Lynn Cain, author of Widow, advocates a “contingency day” in which a husband and wife should review the family financial status. Not only does this help a couple confront the reality that “they won’t have each other forever,” but such awareness, she maintains, heightens the now, “reinforcing vows of loving and cherishing.”

But whenever you discuss wills and funeral considerations (yours as well as his), evaluate holdings, or decide to es-
tablish that single bank account, allow
yourself time to think through additional
concerns of your particular situation.
Example: If you own a home, what, if
anything should be done with the prop-
erty? Do you have a lawyer, one you
personally like? Are you satisfied with
the treatment and advice you’ve re-
ceived at your bank? Are you familiar
with all its functions? Become aware of
those banks that are instituting women’s
departments that specialize in explaining
money matters to those requiring that
service.

More and more women are enrolling in
money management or investment
courses at colleges or adult night
schools, or attending free lectures spon-
sored in some communities by brokerage
firms. By these or other means, do ac-
quire a fundamental knowledge con-
cerning income and financial options.
Crass and material though it may seem,
the dollars-and-cents world is of critical
importance to the majority of new
widows. Financially solvent women are
often overwhelmed by insecurity and
uncertainty. Some grow distressed at the
thought of any expenditure; others
lavishly spend all their capital.

Although it is impossible to foresee
how one will function with the shock of a
loss, those tomorrows can be faced. By
building toward emotional preparedness
today, the future doesn’t have to remain
forever bleak. Discover who you are; get
to know yourself as a unique individ-
ual—a complete entity, who must assess
and then develop her own potentiality.

Through class study now, through ex-
ploring hobbies now, through the making
of friends (not “couple friends” exclu-
sively, but acquaintances valuable to
you), a woman takes steps toward
standing alone, if the time comes when
she has to.

For that woman who has never been
employed outside the home, a full- or
part-time job when she’s left alone may
save her sanity. She may find, however,
that she isn’t qualified to hold a job.
What can she do then?
The U.S. Department of Education
publishes a directory—available in local
libraries—of postsecondary schools with
occupational programs. The National
Association of Trade and Technical
Schools publishes a directory of accred-
ited vocational schools, which can be
obtained without charge from NATTS,
2021 L Street NW., Washington, D.C.
20036.

Also, from the Superintendent of
Documents, U.S. Government Printing
Discover who you are; get to know yourself as a unique individual—a complete entity who must assess and then develop her own potentiality.

of total confusion, forgetfulness, physical uncoordination, and crying jags. Accordingly, take this advice: Don’t make any major decisions for the first six months of widowhood—a time of emotional instability.

This is also a time when one can be extra vulnerable to physical illness. From slight to serious health problems plague a large percentage of new widows. With emotional and physical health so interrelated, it is common for an emotionally stressed organism to develop physical problems. If you don’t have a good doctor, locate one with whom you share rapport and make an appointment for a complete physical examination. Because many widows find food unappealing or fall into bad habits when eating singly, you should keep in mind nutritional guidelines and be sure to consume a well-balanced diet.

Cruel as it sounds, widows generally encounter estrangement from other women for a variety of reasons. Death is frightening. People tend to avoid whatever reminds them of human mortality. Also, fearing their husbands will interest you or vice versa, some wives view widows as threats. Envy characterizes those who admire your sudden freedom. And, frankly, in our couple-oriented society, a widow presents an uncomfortable commodity.

Does it sound like a nightmare? Money matters and near insanity, loss of old friends and untold decisions? Despite all of this, be assured that hope is the last stage, as exemplified by the comments of Rachel Robinson, widow of Jackie: “I survived some of the worst things that can happen to people.” Within three years she suffered the deaths of her mother, her son, and her husband.

Countless people, having traveled the journey of bereavement, attest, “Healing comes.” There’ll be a day when you’re aware of the gentle breeze, when you notice others, when you start answering a nudge of curiosity. At that moment you’re heading toward a new level. Whether that emerging woman is a stronger, deeper individual depends on you. But having embarked on this lonely journey with some guidelines for managing and understanding exterior and interior conditions, the chances of ending grief more rapidly and entering upon a beautiful second chapter of life are excellent.


Prayers from the parsonage

by Cherry B. Habenicht

I started to say, “I haven’t a thing to wear,” but my full closet silenced that observation.

Department store mannequins and magazine features conspire to make me restless for something new and different. Even last year’s “classics” are now dated, for necklines, skirt lengths, and silhouettes have changed this fall.

What should I do? I can afford only one or two garments, yet I don’t have time for much window shopping or sewing.

Someplace a woman rises for the day. She doesn’t wonder what to wear, for she has only one dress, faded and threadbare. She needs to decide which pair of shoes will match her outfit, for she walks barefoot, her feet tough and calloused. To her, clothes are not expressions of her personality or “fashion statements.” They are protection, for which she is grateful.

Oh, God! forgive me for desiring more when I have enough. Help me to learn contentment without becoming dull or dowdy. When I need something in my wardrobe, may I find well-made apparel that is durable and becoming.

You who fashioned things more glorious than Solomon’s robes, who chose the peacock’s colors and the tiger’s design, must surely rejoice when women wear what makes them look and feel good. But You also said, “...I was ... naked and You did not clothe me...” (Matt. 25:43, R.S.V).

May my dress testify of concern for the needy, and witness to the world that I want to be clothed in Your righteousness more than in the latest fashion.
Ministry to various backgrounds

I have been receiving MINISTRY for a couple of years, and while I am not in complete agreement with its theological position, I have found it to be a thought-provoking and informative journal. I appreciate the ministry you are providing clergy of various church backgrounds through this journal. Please keep my name on the mailing list.

Christian and Missionary Alliance minister Minnesota

God's will and healing

In the article “When the Doctor Is Baffled” (May, 1980) the idea is expressed that in requesting healing from God, we should pray in accordance with His will, trusting that He knows best. If a person were in need of forgiveness for some sin, would we not be safe in telling that person that forgiveness has been provided through the redemptive plan of God in Christ Jesus? Also, that forgiveness is not based on an “If it be Thy will” concept, since forgiveness has already been provided? If a person needed forgiveness and did not in fact receive it, should we ascribe it to an unwillingness to forgive on God’s part? Is it not rather because of some unidentified reason? Likewise, if a person is in need of healing (not only those who are “incurable” but those in need of “average” healing), are we not safe in telling that person that healing has been provided through the redemptive plan of God in Christ Jesus? If that person does not receive healing, is it because of an unwillingness on God’s part or because of some unidentified reason?

The Greek word soζω, translated “save” in the New Testament, means “to heal, to preserve, to save, or to make whole.”

Nondenominational minister California

The author replies

One prayer that God guarantees to answer exactly when and how we ask is our turning to Him for salvation from sin. But I do not believe that we can carry this analogy over into healing from physical maladies, even though I agree with your understanding of the Greek word soζω, and have used it often to emphasize that health is wholistic, and that God’s desire is to restore us physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

I also agree that there is more to redemption than just forgiveness of sins. Here there may be a clear analogy. If we ask God to forgive our sins, does He do so if we intend to go on committing the same sins over and over again? I think not. Forgiveness includes a godly sorrow for sin and a willingness to turn from it. In the same way, can we expect God to heal us if we continue to violate the laws of health that He has given us? Would it be right to go on smoking (the major cause of lung cancer)? There is no question that God can heal and that He wants to do so. But I believe that He often does not do so because we really aren’t willing to give up those practices that have led to disease.—L. R. Van Dolson.

Helpful in many areas

I have enjoyed many articles in each issue. I am a Pentecostal pastor, Full Gospel, and am thanking God for it; however, I find that MINISTRY is helpful in many areas.

Church of God minister California

Pulpit time vital

John Osborn’s “Poverty in the Pulpit” (May, 1980) is one of the most timely and truthful thoughts I have read. As a pastor, my time in the pulpit is as vital and critical as the surgeon’s in the operating room.

Independent minister Texas

I was deeply stimulated by the article “Poverty in the Pulpit” (May, 1980). I wish more of us preachers realized the effect of our preaching upon others.

U.S. Army chaplain Kentucky

Forward-looking

I was delighted to find MINISTRY in my mailbox, and hope to continue to receive it. It is both Biblical and forward-looking. In short, it is a big help for a busy pastor.

United Church of Christ minister Ohio

Emphasis on central doctrines

I join my voice to those who thank you and commend you for keeping us on the mailing list of MINISTRY. It is always practical and refreshing. As an Anglican, involved in the movement to sustain orthodox belief and practice in our tradition, I find great comfort in the movement towards believing Christians on central doctrines and missionary concerns.

It is our goal to see a union of emphasis upon Holy Scripture and upon the sacraments, under the lordship of the risen Jesus. Perhaps in the future you will find a way to treat concerns of liturgy, sacraments, and tradition, continuing your valuable and positive work of reconciling and uniting in the best way—on the foundation of truly shared belief, commitment, and experience.

Anglican priest Arkansas

Articles on counseling and Daniel

I wish to thank you for providing ministers with a well-balanced publication. Your articles seem to stir my thinking and arouse interest where maybe I had none. I would also like to see some articles in the areas of counseling, and perhaps a study on the book of Daniel similar to your studies on Revelation.

Christian Church minister North Carolina

Spirit of unity

It was our privilege to be in your church as part of the group making up the professional-growth seminar. We were overwhelmed by your “Southern hospitality” way up north. You were so kind to extend this invitation even to us of a different faith. The spirit of the seminar was truly one of unity.

Nazarene minister Wisconsin

I want to express my appreciation for the very rewarding day I had at your seminar for ministers.

The lecture on theology was excellently done and inspirational. The speaker was vocalizing my thoughts many times.

Church of Christ minister Michigan

Although it has been a number of weeks since the interfaith clergy meeting was held at the New England Memorial Hospital in Stoneham, I do wish to express my sincere thanks in writing for allowing me to have been among the ministers in attendance.

Your program was excellent throughout. It was most practical for me in terms of dealing with specific counseling situations in my pastoral ministry. The Biblical background and references shared by each of the speakers were especially helpful. The food was of the best. The fellowship was delightful. The total program was a blessing to me. I also continue to receive food for the mind and soul in MINISTRY.

Baptist minister Massachusetts

See page 31 for a list of professional-growth seminars to be held during September and October.—Editors.
Energy-crisis Sunday law?

"The conservation of oil has religious connotations," President Carter told a group of religious leaders meeting at the White House. "We are stewards" of God's creation, the President explained. He spoke at a White House breakfast that opened a January 10 Capitol Hill consultation on energy organized by religious groups.

If the President proposes an energy-crisis Sunday law to conserve energy, as some evangelical spokesmen have done, he'll find there are more religious connotations than he suspected.

In a 1976 interview with Liberty magazine, Carter was asked how he would react to legislation calling for Sunday closing of "all businesses, including gas stations, restaurants, shopping centers, and factories as an economic, social, and energy-saving measure"—a proposal made by then editor of Christianity Today Harold Lindell. His response: "I would not favor it."

Further questioned, "If a bill were placed on your desk—passed by the House and Senate—to close all or even part of industry and business on Sunday, would you as President veto it or sign it?" he responded, "I can't imagine that occurring in our country, but I would probably veto it."

An adoption dilemma

One front on which ecumenism is not the wave of the future—or even the tide of the now—is the adoption agency. Many States require that a child be placed "when practicable" with an adoption agency "under control of persons of the same religious faith." (The wording is from New York City's Family Court Act.) When this procedure is not followed, the religious passions aroused may be considerable. An example is a recent New York City case, in which adoption of a handicapped Jewish baby by a Protestant family was stalled by a lawsuit brought by a young Hasidic couple who wanted to adopt the child.

The Hasidic couple, Reuven and Ye-hudis Resch, argued that the City Department of Social Services had violated the Family Court Act.

"There are more than enough Jewish families that want children like Todd," said Hyman Dechter, the couple's lawyer. "The child, 18-month-old Todd Posner, was born with brain damage and is partly blind. His parents, who have two other children, said they offered him for adoption because they were unable to care for a handicapped youngster. Todd had been given to the Lutheran agency, which sought to turn him over to a Lutheran minister and his wife. At prentime, Ministry does not know how the court will rule. It would like to know how you would settle the case. Please check the statements below that you agree with and, in no more than 300 words, explain your viewpoint further. Answers may be printed in a future MINISTRY.

1. The Lutheran agency should have sought adoptive parents of the Jewish faith.
2. The Lutheran agency was justified in seeking a good home with a Lutheran minister and his wife.
3. The wishes of the parents should prevail.
4. The Jewish couple shouldn't have interfered with placement in a Lutheran home.
5. The Jewish couple were only acting out their deeply held religious beliefs in opposing placement in a Lutheran home.
6. Adoption agencies of whatever faith should ignore the religious faith of adoptive parents.
7. The State should stay out of the matter, because religion is involved.

Mail your answer to: Adoption, MINISTRY, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

Overeaters Victorious

The slim woman with the Farrah Fawcett hairstyle steps up to the microphone and begins in a soft, breathy voice: "I would like to share with you the way the Lord has led me in regard to my eating."

The speaker, Linda Waisanen, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, tells how she weighed 275 pounds before she turned to the Bible for disciplined weight loss.

"In five months, I took the weight off and got down to 145," she says. "The Lord gives us the power to change, but we have to do the changing."

Mrs. Coyle founded Overeaters Victorious in 1977. Now there are more than 300 members in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and 400 outside Minnesota. Members attend a nine-week orientation series of seminars and then break up into small support groups of two, three, or four persons. It takes a year for most people to reach their weight-loss goals, Mrs. Coyle says.

Other OV graduates weigh in with testimonials:

Janine Olson, of Roseville, Minnesota: "When you are heavy, you go to food for everything. When you're bored, you eat; when someone says something cutting, you eat. Food is your refuge. But God wants to be that refuge for you. When you grow and mature in the Lord, you begin to know your own worth."

Jan Zollee, of Minneapolis: "I first thought God is too busy keeping catastrophe from happening to worry about how much I weigh... I feel God had to get through my skull that He does care about the little things, like an extra 80 pounds."

Martina Mendez, of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota: "The Lord loves us whether we are skinny or fat, but He wants me to be happy thin. I lost 16½ pounds in eight weeks."

And Mrs. Coyle again: "Jesus knows the deep inner hurts that make us eat, that drive us to food... If I think God's mad at me, I have to eat. I have to be careful not to use my guilt to indulge my flesh and finish off the lemon meringue."

Unity on way

Unity between the Greek Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church is on its way, according to Archbishop Methodios Fouyas, newly appointed Metropolitan of Thateira and Great Britain.

It will come, he said, in "roughly a thousand years."

Don't wait up.

Items in World View, unless otherwise credited, are from Religious News Service. Opinions, however, are the author's.
Home video units have pastoral potential

Already one million American homes are using video cassette recorders. Estimates point to 10 million of these being in use by 1985. Think of the opportunity this presents the pastor for communicating with those seldom touched by his ministry. Homes that already have this equipment would be open to a large variety of prerecorded cassettes. Visitors using church-owned recorders (or active laymen who purchase their own equipment for missionary purposes) could visit shut-ins, missing members, interests, andunchurched relatives of church members with prerecorded sermons, Bible studies, lay-training programs, reports on local, national, and worldwide church activities and meetings, stories designed to interest children, and an almost endless variety of inspirational programs and materials that could be plugged right into the home TV sets of those being contacted.

Then there is the potential for pastoral creativity in using this equipment. For instance, MINISTRY is considering the possibility of supplying a quarterly pastor’s video-letter service that might consist of prerecorded national and international church happenings, interviews with religious newsmakers, mission stories, health features, Bible studies, children’s corner, health hints, short devotionals, and lay-missionary training materials. If the pastor were to acquire his own video camera, he could add short sermons, reports on local church activities, and other materials that would personalize the video letter before it would be circulated to the members of his congregation. Participation in weekly prayer meetings could be extended by having small group meetings in homes throughout the community where video cassettes could be played back on television sets or even on five-foot projection-type TV screens.

The church could start a community video library, making health, hobby, Bible study, continuing education, and inspirational cassettes available to the community. A cassette-viewing facility might be set up at the church center where those interested could come any time of night or day to view materials.

MINISTRY also would be willing to develop ministerial continuing education materials that could be rented to ministers in what we are currently projecting as a pastor’s video-grow program. Syllabus materials accompanying the video cassettes, which would constitute the basic format of the video-grow ministry, would make it possible to offer fully accredited continuing education credit and curricula.

Because of our ability to obtain mass-purchase price breaks on cassettes and equipment, MINISTRY would be able to offer both equipment and prerecorded cassettes in a package deal that would sell for considerably less than any discounted price that the individual minister would be able to arrange.

Those desiring to set up church video libraries could purchase prerecorded cassettes outright, whereas, because of the current retail cost of about $22.50 per cassette, video-letter cassettes would be supplied on returnable tapes to keep the cost to the pastor at a reasonable level. Prices on the video-grow materials, continuing education courses, and seminars would vary with the amount of materials included in the courses and whether continuing education credit was desired.

MINISTRY sees video cassette outreach as the communication wave of the future. We would like to see our readers get in on the ground floor of this development. But because of the heavy investment involved in pioneering this outreach and producing quality materials, we dare not launch this innovative approach to assisting you in your ministry unless we can be assured that there will be enough demand for equipment and materials to justify our going into it.

We invite you to help us make this decision. Let us know of your interest in participating in such a project and your suggestions for developing the kinds of programs and materials that will be of the most use to you. Please take a moment or two now to send your response so that we may know how to proceed. In no way will you be committed to any purchase or financial obligation.

Seminars for September and October

MINISTRY magazine’s professional-growth seminars continue to meet with much excitement among clergy of all faiths. If you have not yet found one close enough to make attendance possible, try the following list. Clergy in the locale of the seminar should receive an invitation in the mail, but just in case you miss getting yours, we are listing upcoming seminars by city, together with a local phone contact for early registration or additional information. Remember, each seminar is absolutely without cost to you.

September 15
Richmond, Virginia
John Loor
(301) 439-8000
September 22
Washington, D.C.
John Loor
(301) 439-8000
September 24
Ukiah, California
Ralph Martin
(415) 687-1300
September 25
Sacramento, California
Ralph Martin
(415) 687-1300
September 29
Moncton, Nova Scotia
L. McDowell
(506) 855-8622
October 1
St. John’s, Newfoundland
G. Karst
(709) 576-4051
October 2
Edmonton, Alberta
D. D. Devnich
(403) 276-4491
October 6
Vancouver, British Columbia
Herbert Larsen
(604) 859-2566
October 21
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Arthur Carlson
(612) 545-8894
October 27
Lincoln, Nebraska
H. H. Voss
(402) 488-2323
October 28
Akron, Ohio
John Fowler
(614) 397-4665
October 29
Columbus, Ohio
(614) 397-4665
October 30
New York City
D. E. Kenyon
(516) 627-9350

MINISTRY also would be able to offer developing the kinds of project and your suggestions will be of the most use to you. Please take a moment or two now to send your response so that we may know how to proceed. In no way will you be committed to any purchase or financial obligation.
### OUT OF THE SALTSHAKER AND INTO THE WORLD: EVANGELISM AS A WAY OF LIFE

When Rebecca Pippert organized her first Bible study for non-Christians, only one person showed up. But that one seemingly hard-core agnostic became a devout Christian. This was the beginning of a revelation for Mrs. Pippert concerning evangelism.

*Out of the Saltshaker and Into the World* takes a fresh look at witnessing—not as a technique to be learned, but as a life style to be lived. One of Pippert’s chief concerns is that Christians should be natural around nonbelievers. “Our problem in evangelism is not that we don’t have enough information—it is that we don’t know how to be ourselves.” She allows leeway for the use and development of individual temperaments and spiritual gifts.

Although the book takes a practical approach rather than a deep theological one, it in no way sidesteps the importance of obedience, prayer, and making Jesus our Lord. In fact, the whole book centers on using Jesus as our pattern for evangelism and following His style.

Pippert is a national consultant in evangelism with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and a popular conference speaker.

**Cathy McBride**

### GROWTH IN MINISTRY

Noting that growth in ministry is not automatic, this book deals with areas where pastoral growth should be evident.

After the results of the Lutheran Growth in Ministry Project were published, there were a number of efforts to deal with the significant issues it raised. One of the results has been this book, in which various authorities were asked to contribute answers to problems faced by today’s minister. Some of the questions addressed in the book are: What are the basic roles and tasks in pastoring? How can shared ministry be achieved? How can conflicts between ministry and laity be resolved? How are pastors to find satisfaction in their role? How has the counseling role of the minister been modernized? What are the special needs of the pastor’s own family? The chapters are easy to read, filled with helpful ideas, as well as plenty of reassurance, and clearly addressed to a modern ministry.

**William Hessel**

### THE APOSTLE PAUL AND WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Those who are caught in the current tension over the role of women in the church (or those who are just curious) will benefit by Don Williams’ treatment of the Biblical issues.

The main body of the study consists of an examination of those statements in each of the Pauline letters that speak of sexual roles or concepts. His commentary is well done. Historical context is recognized. Word roots and grammatical structures are utilized. Williams is careful to distinguish between Paul’s theological pronouncements and his illustrative or cultural observations.

“For Paul, women have an essential place in God’s plan of salvation,” he says. Williams feels that for Paul the role of women must always be understood Christologically. One’s position (male or female) must be found in relation to Christ’s redemption. In the church, it is the Holy Spirit who assigns, by means of gifts, one’s place of responsibility. Biology and culture are not to be ignored, but Christians must unite in a common ministry where “division is transcended while distinctions are maintained.”

The book’s first part on survey of recent literature in the area seems extraneous to the theme. But the main part of the study can be very useful to those seeking a Biblical basis for a decision on sexual roles.

**Lester Bennett**

### THE CHALLENGE OF THE CONCORDANCE

This is a book for Bible students, as indicated by the subtitle—*Some New Testament Words Studied in Depth*.

Dr. Moulton notes that most people use a concordance to find a text and little more. Consequently they fail to understand its proper use and miss its true riches. He sees the concordance as a tool to “teach and instruct in the knowledge of God.” Because the words studied were not selected systematically, the emphasis has fallen upon practical Christianity broken down into eight categories—Jesus; Christian beliefs; the church; the Christian year; worship; the Christian life; Christian character; and the Scriptures. In all, 163 Greek words and their English equivalents are studied. No knowledge of Greek is required to benefit from the studies, but those who understand Greek will find even more to interest and instruct them.

The chief value of this book is that it requires the reader to study that Book, which above all others, challenges the intellect, inspires to right living, and leads to the knowledge of God.

Dr. Harold K. Moulton, a first-class scholar, served in the mission field in India for thirty years, and was New Testament professor at United Theological College, Bangalore. He has also edited the fourth edition of Moulton and Genden’s *Concordance to the Greek Testament.*

**Patrick Boyle**