Awe—an essential of worship/see page 13
LETTERS

Clothing and the inner man

Your article "Clothing Men of the Cloth" (July, 1980) let me realize one thing: you are more concerned with the physical man than you are with the inner man. If you were as meticulous in dressing up the inward (heart, mind, and soul) as you are the outward, you would be further advanced today in spirituality.

John the Baptist wouldn't fit into your dress code with his camel's-hair outfit, nor would Isaiah when he stripped naked and prophesied the word of the Lord.

Joseph would be reprimanded today because of his coat of many colors not blending in properly. Let's quit judging appearance hardly supports the idea that he would have appeared at least as bizarre traveling about first-century Palestine in a dark-blue, conservatively cut suit with white shirt and black leather shoes as would a pastor today who dons a robe and sandals. The principle: follow currently accepted standards of good taste.—Editors.

Try, if you will, to imagine John the Baptist or St. Paul trying to accomplish the equivalent of shopping for exactly the right color and pattern of conservative cravat and measuring it to determine that it will, knot and all, circumnavigate the neck and terminate precisely at the correct position. What would these men of God think of any spiritual heirs who would take to heart the advice of your July cover article? What would they think of the spiritual level of religious periodical that gives prominence to such sartorial inanity?

Jewish rabbi

Massachusetts

One article dealing with external appearance hardly supports the idea that we are overly concerned with dress to the exclusion of spiritual grooming; however, we are willing to go on record that we believe the inner man to be much more important than the outer. The article tried to point out a relationship between dress and effectiveness, not spirituality. Yes, there might be a pastor somewhere who could be effective dressed in camel's hair or adopting nudity, but even he might find it helpful to put on a conservative suit when approaching his banker for a loan! Joseph's multihued coat seems to be an argument for our point of view—the negative impressions of his coat and what it represented grated on his brothers so much that they were moved to murder and compromised on slavery.

As far as Jesus is concerned, it seems to us that He would have appeared at least as bizarre traveling about first-century Palestine in a dark-blue, conservatively cut suit with white shirt and black leather shoes as would a pastor today who dons a robe and sandals. The principle: follow currently accepted standards of good taste.—Editors.

Dress makes success?

I want to thank you for the outstanding article "Clothing Men of the Cloth," appearing in the July issue. I am not a minister, but I received the article from my pastor, who said it was pure commercialism. I happen to be a used-car salesman, and since I have started dressing in dark suits and conservative clothing I have found my sales doubling. I also have been selling some old clunkers that have been on my lot for six and eight months, no questions asked! Talk about success!

By the way, my minister has started wearing dark suits, but I still don't trust him!

A reader

Georgia

We thought the above letter was too good not to share with our readers, although we suspected some good pastor with a sense of humor was trying to pull our leg a bit. Our suspicions were heightened when we noticed that the letter writer gave his last name as "Bluff," and that he resided on "Bluff Road." We decided to "call his bluff" by checking with the telephone company information service. Our suspicions were confirmed when directory information could find no such individual in that city. We are pleased, however, that he caught the fact that the article was concerned with the link between a person's effectiveness and his clothing—not his spirituality—as a number of readers apparently felt was the case.—Editors.

Women too

Are you really serious regarding your article "Clothing Men of the Cloth"? What about women of the cloth?

A reader

Maryland

Dark suits? Not always!

Re "Clothing Men of the Cloth" (July, 1980), what the article ignores is the fact that being perceived as the stereotype of the clergy is exactly what one doesn't want at times. There are occasions when conservative suits, white shirts, and ties are appropriate; there are other times

(Continued on page 29.)

An outstretched hand

If you are receiving MINISTRY bimonthly without having paid for a subscription (perhaps this is your first copy), it is not a mistake.

We believe the time has come for clergy everywhere to experience a resurgence of faith in the authority of Scripture and in the great truths that reveal the gospel of our salvation by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ. Since 1928 Ministry has been designed to meet the needs of Seventh-day Adventist ministers. However, we believe that we have much in common with the entire religious community and want to share with you, therefore, our aspirations and faith in a way that we trust will provide inspiration and help for you too.

We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. We'd like to send you, without charge, a number of issues on a bimonthly basis. Look over our shoulders, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you cannot use.

This offer is extended to all licensed and/or ordained clergy. We ask only that each request be on your letterhead (if possible), and that you include your name, address, denominational affiliation, and your position. Clergy outside the United States and Canada please remit $2.00 postage. If you have ministerial colleagues who would also enjoy this outreach, we are prepared to include them upon their request.
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Putting conversion into focus

The goal of Christian preaching and teaching should not be an experience with God, but God Himself, however He chooses to reveal Himself.

A series of ecstatic encounters with God is not particularly characteristic of new life in Christ.

by G. R. Sattler
In 1687 a young Lutheran theologian, August Hermann Francke, found his academic career interrupted by financial concerns. A brilliant scholar, he had been able to study through the beneficence of a stipend supervised by his cousin, Dr. David Gloxin. Thus, when Gloxin unexpectedly instructed him to leave Leipzig for Lueneburg, Francke had no choice but to interrupt his studies at the university and go.

This seemingly adverse turn of events, however, came to be the most auspicious journey of Francke’s life, for it was in Lueneburg that he experienced *wiederkehr*, rebirth. Undaunted by the interruption of his academic career, Francke took advantage of his opportunity to pursue what had recently become his chief goal in life—to become a righteous Christian. In his own words, Francke had been seduced away from his pious childhood by the sirens of “the world and its vanity, so that I compared myself with other students with whom I conversed, and placed great advancement, regard for the world, temporal honor, high science, and easy living as my goal. Meanwhile I found in my soul little peace and joy because I well recognized that I had strayed far from the former good beginning of a true Christianity which I had in my childhood.”

While at the university, Francke had attended small group discussions for the more able students, sang, prayed, and, in keeping with the Lutheran custom of the period, attended confession and Communion regularly. He also enjoyed a serious discussion of the faith. Outwardly he appeared quite content, yet despite his keen intellect and self-insight, he still did not have the power to renounce his worldly desires and to live a virtuous life. “I grasped my theology in my head and not in my heart, and it was much more a dead science than a living understanding. I knew well what to say, what faith, rebirth, justification, renewal, etcetera, are; knew well, too, how to differentiate one from the other and how to prove it with texts from Scripture, but of it all I found nothing in my heart.”

In this frame of mind and heart August Hermann Francke arrived in Lueneburg with his goal firmly before him but unable to shake off the mantle of worldliness he had acquired. The scholar was now to try his hand as preacher. Invited to preach in the *Johanneskirche*, the attempt changed his life, set him firmly in the evangelical tradition, and subsequently touched the lives of thousands, perhaps millions, of people.

He intended to preach a sermon showing how a “true, living faith” may be differentiated from a “mere human and imagined faith.” His preparations only accentuated the disparity between his intellectual grasp of faith, and an inward assent to the living Christ; between his ability to proof text, and faith that manifests itself in love for God and one’s neighbor. In despair Francke fell to his knees time and time again while a powerful battle raged within him for several days. Finally, he experienced the living God in Jesus Christ. He reported: “I again fell on my knees on that Sunday eve and cried to God, whom I neither knew nor believed, for salvation from such a sorrowful condition, if there truly was a God. Then the Lord heard me, the living God from His holy throne, as I was still on my knees. So great was His fatherly love that little by little He would take away such doubt and restlessness of heart, not so that I would be very content, but rather so that I would be all the more convinced. . . . Then as one turns his hand, so all my doubts were gone. I was sure in my heart of the grace of God but rather as one called my Father. All sadness and unrest in my heart was taken away in a moment. . . . I had bent down with great sorrow and doubt, but arose again with inexpressible joy and great assurance. As I knelt I did not believe there was a God. As I arose I would have confirmed it without fear or doubt, even with the shedding of my blood.”

Like Luther, Francke’s later theology—indeed, his whole life—was firmly grounded in the living God encountered in his experience of conversion. “It seemed to prescribe for him the way in which men ordinarily enter upon a really meaningful relation to God, and it constituted for him the incontrovertible ground of personal religious certainty.”

For many Christians today, Francke’s experience is not unfamiliar. Some may have had less emotional encounters; others may have had even more exciting ones. As with Augustine, Luther, and other influential Christians, Francke’s Christian life did not begin or end with the experience itself. He stressed his experience as rebirth, not his rebirth as experience. Conversion, then, is not the end point, but rather the watershed experience of human life.

Francke had been fortunate to grow up in a pious home in the city of Gotha, where the spiritual and physical welfare of the citizenry was of great concern to the local ruler, Duke Ernst the Pious. In his conversion, these early Christian principles were rekindled, while less desirable facets fell away. His desire for honor in the academic community, the hope for recognition, the seeking for status among the nobility and striving for “the good life,” all became things of the past. In time, Francke certainly became famous for his scholarship; his name was recognized by church leaders from America to Asia, and he was held in high regard by kings and emperors, but this was not his expressed goal. It grew, rather, out of his sincere dedication to a new intent to “renounce ungodly ways and worldly desire and live in this world chaste, upright, and pious.”

This rather simplistic-sounding approach to life eventually resulted in a massive institution, the *Stiftungen*, which housed widows and orphans, educated wealthy and poor alike (including poor girls, a major innovation), established the first Bible institute, sent missionaries throughout the world, effected the humanizing of Prussian law, and touched on the spiritual and physical lives of people throughout Germany.

Just what happened in his conversion? Certainly Francke’s experience was little different from that of millions of Christians throughout history. Perhaps the answer lies in Francke’s *response* to his

Gary R. Sattler is a minister of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and is currently pursuing doctoral studies at the Philippus-Universitat, Marburg, West Germany.
Conversion signals the end of the old way of being and is a springboard to a new realm of existence.

correction and follows first this example, and conversion is necessary for the Christian life to happen. But let the prayer of the teacher, friend, preacher, missionary, be not that another may have an experience, but rather that the nonbeliever may encounter the living Christ at whatever point or whatever way He may choose. Then let us be ready to behave wisely in response to whatever experience may follow.

2 Ibid., p. 28.
7 Beyreuther, op. cit., p. 242.
The recent find of a hitherto unknown papyrus in the archives of an anonymous monastery seems destined to have a greater impact on contemporary attitudes toward ministry than upon New Testament scholarship.

The apostle Paul's unpublished letter

by J. M. Howard

Paul, called to be an apostle, to the mission board in Macedonia, greetings:

In regard to the invitation you extended to me to come over into Macedonia and help the people of that section, may I say that I am somewhat surprised that you should expect a man of my standing in the church to consider a call based on such meager information. (Pardon my frankness, but I believe in being straightforward and candid.) There are a number of things that I should like to learn before giving my decision, and I would appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience addressed to me here at Troas.

First of all, I should like to know whether Macedonia is a district or just one church. This is very important to me and my future. If I must spread myself over several small congregations, I might as well tell you I cannot consider accepting the call and will have to look elsewhere for a platform for my talents. You have told me nothing about Macedonia beyond the implication that the place needs help. What are the social advantages? What are the cultural advantages? Is the church well organized? (This question is very important to a man who feels the need of time for study and reflection.)

I have worked myself up to a rather good position here in the Asiatic field, and to take anything smaller or less important than my present situation would be a serious mistake, in my opinion. One has to consider one's example to younger ministers. Would they think it worthwhile to progress in their ministry or to push ahead with a degree program if a small district of peasants is all one has to look forward to?

I recently had a fine, appealing offer to return to Damascus, and I am told that I made a very favorable impression on the church at Jerusalem. If it will help any with the brethren at Macedonia, you might mention these facts. Also, some of the brethren in Judea have been heard to say that in a few years I might have any position the church can offer.

Now, I appreciate brevity, and your invitation was brief. So brief, in fact, that you overlooked mentioning the salary, travel budget, or subsidies I would receive. While it is true that I am not preaching for money, there are certain things that must be taken into account. I have been through a long and expensive course of training; in fact, I may say with pardonable pride that I am a Sanhedrin man—the only one in the ministry today. If I accept the call, I must stipulate two months' vacation and the privilege of taking an occasional lecture tour. My lecture "Over the Wall in a Basket" is worth a denarius of any man's money.

As to my social graces, perhaps I can simply refer to a number who have called me a first-class mixer. Others in a position to know have said I am especially strong on argumentative preaching.

For recommendations, write to Evangelist Simon Peter, D.D., lecturer and world traveler at Jerusalem.

Fraternally and sincerely yours,

Paul.

J. M. Howard is a retired minister living in England.
How do you say "Hello"?

An informative tabloid can introduce your church to people who might otherwise never think of you at all.

by Robert C. Screen

As the old saying goes, "You never have a second chance for a first impression." Here's a suggestion on how to introduce positively your church, its people, and its ministry to the unchurched people in your community. A good, upbeat, first-impression tabloid can help build a positive image in the minds of the people in your ministry area about your church. It won't change the experiences they have after they 'try' your church—you're responsible for living up to the first impression. Nevertheless, it can have an impact on how the people in your community perceive your church and whether or not they see something there they want.

Some observations

The congregation should take the initiative to tell people about the church and its activities. It's not good enough just to announce the sermon title and time of worship service, then wait (often in vain) for new people to come.

Mr. Screen is an active layman and professional consultant involved in assisting churches in the area of communication strategy.
All communication from your church to unchurched people should emphasize your desire to do something for them, not for them to do something for you.

The piece should be designed for use in a variety of ways—direct mailing to homes, handouts at church services, distribution through local businesses, presentation by church members to friends.

Say Hello more than once. The church needs a continuing program of sharing information with the people in the community.

All communication from your church to unchurched people should emphasize your desire to do something for them, not for them to do something for you.

The more you know about the needs and concerns of people in your community, the more effective you will be in describing your services in a way that will generate interest and meet needs.

Be careful to use language and graphic illustrations that are familiar to the unchurched. In particular, use a title that the unchurched will understand. Don’t shy away from dealing with religious concerns or values, but discuss them in ways and words the unchurched will comprehend.

The spiritual commitment and motivation of the church, and its members, should be clearly demonstrated by the nature of the activities described. Likewise, comments of members quoted in articles should relate the meaning and the reality of their Christian faith to everyday life.

Format

Here’s a format suggestion chosen for its economy, readability, use of photographs, and flexibility in handling a variety of information.

I suggest a tabloid format, approximately 11 by 17 inches (page size), with 4 to 12 pages. About 40 percent of the space should be used for lots of good-quality photos of people of all ages, enjoying various church activities. Each photo should be captioned, noting who it is and what’s going on, why it’s an enjoyable or beneficial activity to those involved, and when and where someone who was interested could get involved.

Articles should be short (300 words or less), with a good headline that tells, in a few words, something about the most compelling asset of the subject discussed.

The brochure can be reprinted once a year with updated copy and photos. Mail each issue to every home in the community, using a nonprofit bulk rate postal permit. Print enough extra copies to give to visitors throughout the year and leave them in offices, stores, and shops in your community. Give a copy to every adult and young person in your church. (You may be surprised by what your own members don’t know about their church.) Encourage members to give copies personally to friends and acquaintances throughout the year.

Items that should be included

- A simple map showing the church location. Also a map of the church facilities, accompanied by a list of regular events and meeting places.
- Address and phone number of the church.
- A warm, friendly welcome by the pastor that expresses his sincere interest in the reader, and the desire of the church to be a loving, caring, supportive community of faith.
- Staff photos and descriptions of their responsibilities.
- Descriptions of programs and activities for each age and interest group.
- First-person stories of what people are finding meaningful about the church and their faith.
- Photo of your sanctuary full of people participating in the worship service. Photos and descriptions of the church’s services to the community, such as child care, schools, meals on wheels, day care, transportation services, counseling, et cetera.
- A short article titled “Here’s How to Get Involved,” with specific suggestions on who to contact or what to do for different age groups, families, singles, et cetera.
- A schedule of Sunday-morning and other weekly activities.
- An invitation to join in any of the church’s activities that are of interest, along with an offer of personal help and assistance from the church staff whenever desired.

Production and mailing

Form a communications task force from people in the church with the following skills: editor, writer, artist for design and layout, photographer, and someone with good administrative ability. If all the right people aren’t available in your church fellowship, try to hire needed help on a project basis for a prerranged fee. Don’t stop just because volunteers are not available. The story needs to be told. Often the first issue is the most difficult, and more people will be found to help on subsequent issues. Get hold of as many samples as possible of what other churches have done and discuss what’s most appropriate for your own publication.

Look for a printer that does this type and size of publication regularly on high-durability newsprint or offset paper. Check with the publisher of your local community paper. He may be able to print it for you, or give you leads on who could. It’s a good idea to get two or more prices to find out who can print it most economically.

It’s best to print your nonprofit permit on the brochure and leave room for a mailing label. This will save the expense of a mailing envelope. Be sure to check with a knowledgeable person about the size and location of the label area and the meeting of postal requirements.

Check with a local lettershop or mailing service for the best local source of a mailing list to residents of houses and apartments in your area. An occupant list is fine for a mailing like this. Rent the address list for one-time use, and the addresses will be supplied on mailing labels.

Summary

Don’t hide your light under a bushel. Tell all the people in your community what’s happening in your church for them. Show what it means to the people who are involved and tell them in a compelling way, so that they too might discover the meaning of Christian fellowship and faith in God.

Used by permission of Church Growth: America magazine. An example of one church’s publication that highlights many of the areas mentioned in this article is available from Church Growth: America. Send $1 for postage and handling to 150 S. Los Robles, Suite #600, Pasadena, California 91101.
What’s the big idea?

There are only two ways—Biblical and extra-Biblical—that you can get an idea for a sermon. You will be reading the Bible, and an idea will pop up that will lead you into a sermon. Or you may see another preacher’s bulletin board or read a book or hear somebody make a statement and all of a sudden get an idea.

Ideas must be Bible-based

If you get your idea directly from the Bible and apply that truth to life, then you have a Biblical sermon. But suppose you’re riding along and you see a church sign that gives you a good idea. I did that one time; I saw a sign on a bulletin board—“The High Cost of Low Living.” (You know how we steal titles from one another!) That was a good title. But I couldn’t have preached on that title and had a Biblical sermon. I had to go to the Bible and find a Bible truth that illustrated what I meant by “The High Cost of Low Living.” So, if you get an idea from outside the Bible, you are not to preach on that idea as a Biblical sermon unless it can be found in the Word of God. That is a basic, fundamental concept. When you get an idea, you must go to the Scriptures and find a preaching portion that covers it.

A sermon idea, then, is of no value unless it can be Biblically oriented. A Biblical preacher will keep in mind, first of all, that the only truth he can or will preach is Bible truth. Every idea that you use must have a solid foundation in the Word of God. There is no exception. If you cannot find a scripture that will match the idea, you can, perhaps, give a good talk, but you can’t preach a Biblical sermon, because sermons are based only on the Word of God. (A tool that will be helpful to you in matching ideas to texts is Nave’s Topical Bible. It is a Bible with the verses arranged topically, with the subjects in alphabetical order.) And once the idea is swallowed up in the text, the important thing thereafter is not the idea, but the text.

Number two, the idea must be a big idea, something that will develop into a strong sermon. The sermon originates at the exact point at which the idea first occurs. If the idea is weak, the sermon will be weak. If the idea has strength, the sermon is likely to be strong.

Number three, the idea must be relevant to the needs of the hearers. Biblical preaching is more than talking about the love life of the Jebusites (as “Biblical” as that topic might be)! The saint in the pew will want to know, “What has that to do with my love life?” Truth from the Bible must always be applied and made relevant to those who hear. What have you accomplished, even if you preach the Bible, if the people go out saying, “So what?” Here’s an algebraic formula for Biblical preaching: exegesis (what the Word means) plus application (what that meaning has to do with me) equals Biblical preaching.

Where do these extra-Biblical ideas come from? A preacher has to develop a homiletical mind that is in such constant operation that it becomes second nature to him. He always has to be thinking, “How can this develop into a sermon? What can I do with this?” As you cultivate this homiletical mind, you will become...
Logical units

Now, in developing Biblical ideas into sermons and in matching extra-Biblical ideas to a scripture, a basic principle is that we always deal with a logical unit. A logical unit may be a whole book of the Bible. For example, you can preach on the book of Philippians. The basic theme of that book is joy, and you can run that theme right through the book and preach on joy from Philippians.

A chapter of a book may be a logical unit. That isn’t always the case, of course. First Corinthians 13 is not a logical unit; it begins logically with 1 Corinthians 12. The last verse of 1 Corinthians 12 says, “I will show you a still more excellent way” (R.S.V.), and then chapter 13 goes on to tell what that excellent way is. The chapters have not been divided properly. Chapter division is not inspired, nor are paragraphs and punctuation.

A logical unit can be a section of a book. The Sermon on the Mount begins with Matthew 5 and ends with Matthew 7. It is a unit of three chapters.

A paragraph is a basic logical unit. The King James Version is usually arranged verse by verse, and you never know where a paragraph ends and another begins. I’d like to recommend to you that you add to your list of Bibles the Harper Study Bible, Revised Standard Version. It’s beautifully paragraphed. It’s hard to find a good paragraphed Bible in the King James Version. The best that I have found is The New Scofield Reference Bible. I’m not recommending the notes, but its paragraphs. Don’t get an old one. Get a new one with good paragraph divisions. You can’t preach on half a paragraph, because a paragraph is a logical unit. The Scripture was written grammatically, and you must take into consideration grammatical structure, because that is the basis of understanding. The Bible isn’t just a hodgepodge of words. The words are all put together into syntactical relationships that give thoughts and ideas.

I know one can preach on phrases. But I’m talking about expository preaching, and expository preaching is based on a logical unit of Scripture—a book, a section of a book, a chapter, a cluster of paragraphs that fit together, or a verse.

So, once you have your idea, you must match that idea with a unit of Scripture. Then your entire sermon—whatever it is—is going to come out of this unit, this preaching portion. Expository preaching lays your sermon at full length upon the text.

As you learn expository preaching, it is much better that initially you choose large units. The reason is that the larger the unit, the easier it is to get your outline from it. As you become more familiar with preparing expository sermons, you can select smaller portions and get greater amounts of truth from them.

What does it say?

Once you settle on your preaching unit, you must determine the basic content of every paragraph in that unit. If your Scripture unit is only one paragraph, all you have to discover is the subject of that paragraph. But if there is a cluster of paragraphs, you have to decide what each paragraph is talking about and what the overall subject is that ties them together. How do you find that out?

First of all, read the Scripture portion over in several different versions to get different viewpoints. (Every preacher ought to make a collection of Bible versions. You can pick them up in second-hand bookstores everywhere.) If you have not forgotten your Greek or your Hebrew, read it in the original. Look at your Scripture portion without preconceived ideas of its content. Ask yourself: What actually does this paragraph say? What is its basic content?

Let me give you a little tip. A very important part of sermon preparation is the half sheet of paper. Use the backs of form letters or spoiled mimeographed paper. Tear the sheets in half and put them on a clipboard. Use the good side, and every time you get an idea, no matter how random or how wild, how short or how long, put it down—one idea on one sheet. (I used to list them all on a single sheet, and then I would have to copy them all over again to separate them.) As you read the Scripture portion in various versions, write down any ideas that come to you. You will discover that these ideas will begin to pile up and you’ll have quite a large number of half sheets. Now when you actually come to putting together the sermon, a lot of these will have no value at all, but you won’t know which ones until later. So write them all down.

Determining context

In analyzing the Scripture portion, ask: What is its relationship to the entire book? You must know the background of the book, for how can you actually know the significance of the text without knowing its context? Add to your library, then, a few good introductions to the Old Testaments. Halley’s Bible Handbook is a very common one. Unger’s Bible Handbook is another. These give you the who, when, where, and why of the books of the Bible.

If you can’t find a scripture to match your idea, you can, perhaps, give a good talk, but you can’t preach a Biblical sermon.
Once you have chosen a Scripture portion, lay aside every preconceived idea and try to look at it as if you had never seen it before.

You’ve heard that a text without context is a pretext. You must preach contextually. Your scripture is part of a whole, and you must know the relationship of the fraction to the total. You have no right to lift a scripture out of its setting independently and say it says a certain thing any more than you have a right to lift a paragraph out of a letter and quote it as the contents of the letter. The paragraph may have a different meaning in the context of the letter than it does when you lift it out. So it is important first that you know the broad outlines of the book.

Ask such questions as: Who wrote this book? What is its main theme? Where was it written? When? To whom? What prompted the original writing? Are any particular terms repeated over and over? What does it teach about God? Is the general tone argumentative? Hortatory? Instructive? Prepare a broad general outline of the book. Give special attention to changes in subject matter. Why is this important to know? You will discover that as you preach from your text, the setting will also project itself into your sermon, and a lot of the elements that deal with the book at large are relevant to the specific text you are using.

Such an overview of each Bible book can be a delightful thing to work on, and once you have it, you have it forever. If you’re going to become a Biblical preacher, may I suggest that you set up a file with a folder for every book of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. When you complete your survey of the background of a particular book, put it in that folder. Add any material you come across from time to time, and you’ll have it all there for review the next time you preach from that book.

In addition, some books of the Bible are parts of a cluster of books, and you can understand them better when you see them in light of the cluster. The Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—are such a cluster. The Pentateuch, the major prophets, the minor prophets, and the Pauline epistles are some other examples.

The next thing you want to know is how does the preaching portion fit in with the material that goes before and after—the immediate context? The speaker of the immediate context may be someone other than the speaker of the book itself. For instance, Luke wrote the book of Acts, but who is the speaker in Acts 26? Paul. So you want to know, What kind of person is he? What is his character? His age? His background? His training? Who is he talking to? When did this take place? Where? Why? As you ask these questions of your preaching portion, you are getting answers and writing them down. As yet you don’t know what the subject is. You’re trying to find out, under the guidance of the Spirit of the living God, What is the passage actually saying?

Don’t indulge in eisegesis—what you think it says. Do exegesis—what it actually says. Here is one of the biggest problems when it comes to preaching. It’s amazing how many times we will read into a text something that we think it says, and it doesn’t say that at all. Once you have chosen a Scripture portion, lay aside every preconceived idea, every personal prejudice, and try to look at the text as if you had never seen it before. It’s hard to do! Only the Holy Spirit can help you to do it. But if you don’t approach the Scriptures with a prayer for the Holy Spirit to illuminate your heart to know the text’s true meaning, you can get all kinds of things out of the Word of God.

Let’s review. You get an idea, either from Scripture or outside. Your idea leads you to a Scripture portion. That Scripture portion must be a unit—it may be a paragraph, several paragraphs, a chapter, or more. But it must be a logical unit. Then you analyze the preaching portion according to these steps that I have given, and at last you learn what is its subject, its basic teaching. You have moved from the idea to the text to the great broad truth, the subject.

The broad truth

Now, let’s learn something about the subject. The subject is the main thrust of the sermon, the summarizing core. It covers the passage like a tent. Don’t forget that. When you are looking at a paragraph or a chapter, invariably your eyes will light on one scripture and you’ll say, “That’s the subject.” It isn’t the subject; it’s the text that impresses you the most. The subject is the broad truth that covers the entire passage.

Let’s use John 17 as an example of a preaching portion. As we look over these verses, we want to find out, “What is he talking about?” And by the way, when you study John 17, you need to study it in the light of John 13-16, for chapter 17 is the climax to the passion weekend that begins in the upper room with the foot washing and the communion service followed by Jesus’ conversation with His disciples, the lessons He drew, and His farewell speech. Then He walks with the disciples toward Gethsemane, and He stops by a grapevine and talks to them about the vine and branches. He talks to them all through chapter 16, and then He begins to pray in chapter 17.

You cannot present John 17 without an understanding of the circumstances. Jesus knows that this is His last opportunity to pray with the disciples, because from here on it is downhill to the cross. So this prayer is an important one. It must cover those things He considered most important.

What’s the subject matter? What are these important things? He’s talking to His Father about His disciples and their relationship to the world. What did He say that relationship was? Can you see it? “Out of it.” “In it.” “Not of it.” “Into it.”

Basically, He is giving guidelines to the disciples and the coming church of how they are to relate to the world. They come out of it. They are totally apart from it, but right in the middle of it, as Christ Himself was. He was right in the midst of the world and its activities, but not of it. He had no connection with the sins of the world even as He mingled with sinners. And He said, “As I have gone into the world, so I send you.”

Now, what is the subject of these verses as we read them over and over? He keeps mentioning the world, but He’s praying for His disciples. He’s praying for them in their relationship to the world. It’s a church-world relationship. That’s the point, the subject of the passage.

Now we have a subject. The subject is in the preaching portion we have chosen. The preaching portion is a logical unit. But we can’t preach on the subject, and you will see why in the next article.
A friend told me that in a certain church he visited, the person offering the morning prayer began by saying, "Good morning, Dad."

This casual approach to God shocked me, because I have always felt that if a person understands the Biblical picture of God and the Creator-creature relationship, he will approach God with a feeling of awe. Awe, it seems to me, is an essential element of worship.

In the October, 1978, issue of Eternity, Deborah Barackman penned a short editorial titled "Idol Talk," dealing with the second commandment of the Decalogue. "Idols are too small to contain their subject," she wrote. "Indeed, how can the God who fills the universe fill the eye? But we who scorn lawn shrines, medallions and the like have been just as guilty of breaking the second commandment. We've cast a limited image of God as surely as if it were plaster. The new relationship of Abba, Father, was not license to create a 'Good Buddy' God. Though as believers we truly are no longer just servants but friends, to capture God in only this dimension lessens Him. This is an evangelical version of the liberals' benign grandfather God. Our God hates sin and will punish sinners but casts an indulgent eye on His chosen ones. Like a good friend He's available to be tapped for any emergencies, lavishes good gifts upon us, favors our church baseball leagues, but doesn't bring up such touchy subjects as discipleship lest it ruffle the relationship."

Miss Barackman says that "a lot of false familiarity swirls about this god. The scribes who washed their hands before they copied God's name would blanch at many current book titles. The God whose train filled the Temple has been shrunk to a T-shirt slogan. . . . Reverencing the Lord, acknowledging His otherness—paradoxically brings Him near. We need a greater sense of being on holy ground. Better to take off our shoes and fall on our faces than to try to go running with Him."

Some evangelicals are concerned that God has been captured, diminished, and cheapened, and that awe—one essential of true worship—has been lost. The contemporary picture of God is very different from the one set forth in the Bible. When Nehemiah approached God, for example, he addressed Him as "the great and terrible God" (Neh. 1:5:

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The scribes who washed their hands before they copied God’s name would blanch at many current book titles.

see also chap. 9:32). Moses spoke of God as the “God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible [God]” (Deut. 10:17). In similar words Daniel began his magnificent prayer of intercession, “O Lord, the great and dreadful God!” (Dan. 9:4). These inspired ancients approached God with a sense of reverence that is rare today. They approached Him with awe.

Clearly, awe is a very high emotion. It is one of the emotions that distinguishes humanity from the animal creation. No animal ever looks off into the sunset with wonder and awe in its eyes. Only people do that. I have seen people filled with awe in the presence of a great piece of art, speechless at the skill and the beauty involved in it. I have seen people stand in silence at the edge of the Grand Canyon, awed by the beauty, the enormity, and the impressiveness of the panorama. I have seen people gasping with awe and wonder as they have viewed nature’s autumn spectacular of brilliantly colored trees in the New England States. It seems to me that when human beings no longer have a sense of awe in the presence of God, when awe no longer fills their souls as they worship Him, they have lost both the Biblical picture of God and an essential element of the worship experience.

How is awe produced? In his book The Sacred and the Profane, Mircea Eliade used a term that says a lot just by its sound—mysterium tremendum, the awe-inspiring mystery. Eliade referred to Rudolf Otto’s book Das Heilige (“The Sacred”), published in 1917, and pointed out that Otto had analyzed religion from the side of experience rather than intellectual content. Otto had read Martin Luther and had understood what the “living God” meant to a believer. The “living God” was not the god of philosophers such as Erasmus. “It was not an idea, an abstract notion, a mere moral allegory. It was a terrible power, manifested in the divine wrath.”—The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 8, 9.

Eliade points out that ordinarily this feeling of awe is produced by hierarchies. These manifestations of sacred realities take many forms. Genesis 28 provides one example. Jacob had left home and was fleeing from his brother Esau. One night as he slept with his head on a stone for a pillow, he had a dream of a ladder extending all the way from earth to heaven, with angels of God ascending and descending upon it. When he awoke the next morning, he had a very special feeling about the place where he had had this dream. “Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (verses 16, 17). Those accorded the privilege of a revelation of God find in their hearts a sense of profound awe.

Later, when Jacob was fleeing from Laban, he used a very interesting expression—“the fear of Isaac.” “Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me,” he said, “surely thou hadst sent me away now empty” (chap. 31:42); “The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swear by the fear of his father Isaac” (verse 53).

I used to wonder what is meant by “fear” (pachad), and I’m not sure I can make a coercive case even now, but Smith and Goodspeed translate it “the Awe of his father Isaac” (verse 54),* and The Anchor Bible translates it “the Awesome One” (verse 53).† I am sure that these translations do not do violence to the text. God is a God of awe, and awe is essential to true worship. Jacob looked upon God with awe, for he understood His greatness and majesty.

In today’s secular world we need to recapture the Biblical view of God in order that we may worship Him with awe. Moses’ experience at the burning bush says much to us about how we should approach God (see Ex. 3:1-6). Having removed his shoes in reverence Moses “hid his face: for he was afraid to look upon God” (verse 6). Undoubtedly he had seen this bush many times before, but now, because God was present, the bush was no longer just a bush, and the ground around it was holy.

The experience of Israel at Sinai also shows how we should feel as we come into God’s presence. Exodus 19:16-18 says: “There were thunders and lightnings... so that all the people that was in the camp trembled... And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.”

This was a sobering experience for God’s people. It would have been sobering to any of us, for the thunder, lightning, and earthquake created a sense of awe, a sense of humility. It helped the people realize how small they were in relation to God and the elements He controls.

“And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not” (chap. 20:18-20). In these manifestations of sacred realities, God designed to impress His people with the mysterium tremendum, with His awful mystery and power.

The effect on the people at Sinai was repeated on Isaacah when the prophet had a vision of God’s majesty. As the pillars of the Temple trembled, the house was filled with smoke, and the shining angels sang, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts” (Isa. 6:3). Isaiah exclaimed, “Woe are me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (verse 5). A view of God’s greatness is a perfect corrective to man’s tendency to exaggerate his own importance and feel spiritually in “need of nothing” (Rev. 3:17). When one gets an understanding of God as the mysterium tremendum, he sees himself as undone and desperately in need of mercy from God.

The seraphim around the throne are so filled with reverential awe as they behold the glory of God, that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with admiration. Their praise is for the Lord of hosts... As the prophet listened, the (Continued on page 21.)
The Sabbath, as a sign of the creation of the world, can have meaning for us only if it is first of all a sign of our "new creation." It then becomes an acknowledgment of our redemption and of God's sovereign power over us.

by Sakae Kubo

Man's first full day

What does the Sabbath have to do with justification? Nothing, absolutely nothing. Just as every other commandment has nothing to do with justification. That is, keeping the Sabbath will not justify you any more than will keeping any other commandment. Therefore no one should or can keep the Sabbath in order to be saved. The Sabbath was not given that through it we might find salvation. The Sabbath was given as a gift, a day of rest and worship. And it can be meaningfully appreciated only by those who are already saved. It is God's invitation to join in fellowship with Him.

Before sin entered the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve celebrated the Sabbath with God. It was the seventh day that was celebrated as the Sabbath. It could have been no other day, because no human had previously existed to celebrate any other day as the Sabbath. Since God created man on the sixth day, the Sabbath was the first day for him. Adam and Eve did not rest because they were tired and exhausted from a week's labor; they rested because God rested. That is, they observed the Sabbath in order to fellowship with God and to enjoy His creation. The Sabbath is the seventh day of Creation, but humanity's first day. Before we begin any activity of our own, we need to meet with God. We need to have our values and priorities, our spirit and vision, adjusted to God's. That is why we need to hallow that first full day of human life, which is the seventh day of the week.

As Abraham Heschel so aptly puts it:
"The Sabbath as a day of rest, as a day of abstaining from toil, is not for the purpose of recovering one's lost strength and becoming fit for the forthcoming labor. The Sabbath is a day for the sake of life. Man is not a beast of burden, and the Sabbath is not for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of his work. 'Last in creation, first in intention,' the Sabbath is 'the end of the creation of

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The Christian proclaims his freedom from the dominance of evil when he keeps the Sabbath.

The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of the Sabbath. It is not an interlude but the climax of living."—The Sabbath, p. 14.

When we forsake God, the Sabbath can hold no meaning for us. The Sabbath is meaningless to one who does not acknowledge God as his Lord. It is of interest to note, therefore, that in Deuteronomy 5:12-15 the Sabbath commandment is connected with Israel’s deliverance from Egypt: "...You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day..." (verse 15). In Exodus 20 the Decalogue is prefaced with the statement "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage..." (verse 2).

In these passages the Sabbath, while still connected with Creation, is more immediately connected with the children of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt. And these two activities of God are not unconnected. As with the Israelites, the person who finds deliverance from bondage and affliction feels instinctively that the Deliverer must be a transcendent being who can subdue world powers, who uses the forces of nature for the accomplishment of His own purposes. This means that He is a cosmic power, and such a being is inevitably conceived as Creator. In other words, the person of the Deliverer and the person of the Creator are identified.

It is not difficult to understand, therefore, that the Creation and the deliverance from Egypt are both given as reasons for their keeping of the Sabbath. The Sabbath, then, is conceived of not only as a sign of Creation but also as a sign of deliverance, a sign of freedom from bondage and oppression. But because only the one who is delivered can understand God as Deliverer and Creator, this means that the Sabbath is not an instrument of salvation but purely and simply a gift. In the context of our sinful world the Sabbath can be properly observed only by one who has been delivered and redeemed.

The New Testament closely connects Christ’s redeeming activity with His creative activity. Hebrews 1:1-3 describes Him as the one "through whom also he [God] created the world" (verse 2) and the one who upholds "the universe by his word of power" (verse 3). But immediately after this it also describes Him as the one who "made purification for sins" (verse 3). In Colossians 1:15-20 we see this same connection: "All things were created through him and for him" (verse 16), and through Him God reconciles all things to Himself, "whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross" (verse 20). And 2 Corinthians 5:17 calls the Christian "a new creation." Redemption is truly a creative act.

Redemption from the bondage of sin is a cosmic act, an act like the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of slavery. Therefore, it is inevitable that the New Testament should connect the ideas of redemption and creation. It is inevitable that it should also consider Christ as Redeemer and Creator, for one who can redeem must himself be the Creator.

Therefore, if Christ can redeem us, can deliver us from this present evil age (Gal. 1:4), can forgive sins (Matt. 9:2), can release us from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2), can make us qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1:12), can deliver us from the dominion of darkness and transfer us to the kingdom of light (verse 13), can destroy him who has the power of death—that is, the devil—and can deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage (Heb. 2:14, 15), then redemption indeed has cosmic implications.

These actions by Christ cannot be done by just anyone. As the Jews so well recognized, it was blasphemy for anyone but God to claim the power to forgive sins. The power to forgive implies one’s transcendence over the law, which further implies Christ’s authority over the earth and His status as Creator.

To accept Christ as Creator and Redeemer has great meaning for our personal lives. For one thing it means that He has "the whole wide world in His hands," and we can rest secure in His sovereignty over the universe. He is in control. The chaos can never overcome us. The irrational forces of nature have limits that they cannot transcend. It means also that life has meaning and goal. We have not only to do with an almighty Creator but a loving Redeemer. "The hand that sustains the worlds in space, the hand that holds in their orderly arrangement and tireless activity all things throughout the universe of God, is the hand that was nailed to the cross for us."—Education, p. 132.

The Christian therefore can face the world with all its attendant evils and mysteries, history with its ambiguities, convinced, nevertheless, that at the heart of the universe is a power controlled by love. To know a powerful Creator is not enough; it may be terrifying. But Jesus Christ revealed that the Creator is directed by the power of love. The ground of all existence reveals its immost nature to love. The goodness, the meaning, the goal, and now the relation of creation itself are to be understood only through the revelation of God that we have in the gospel of Christ.

Evil, then, is seen as an extraneous, intruding force, since God created all things good. Suffering becomes bearable, since there is a final and ultimate meaning in life created by a beneficient God.

As the Israelites in the Old Testament were motivated to keep the Sabbath because of their deliverance from Egypt, the immediate motivation for the Christian to keep the Sabbath should be his deliverance and redemption from the powers of evil. The Sabbath becomes a symbol of freedom from bondage, a sign that he is a "new creation." As God’s creative power is seen in the Sabbath as a sign of His original creation of the earth, that same power must be manifested in the Christian as a "new creation." For us the Sabbath has no meaning at all unless there is a conjunction of God’s creative power and its accomplished result in the life of the one who keeps the Sabbath. Holiness of time must be matched by holiness of being.

If this is true, then Sabbathkeeping can never become a legalistic or nominal act. Truly the symbol participates in the reality of that for which it stands. The Sabbath does not become an abstract
entity, a mere external sign for the Christian, for he participates by the keeping of the Sabbath with the reality of the “new creation” that it symbolizes. The Sabbath as a sign of the creation of the world can become meaningful only if the Sabbath is first of all a sign of our “new creation.” But if it is that, it becomes an acknowledgment of our redemption and of our creaturely dependence on God and God’s sovereign power over us.

The Sabbath, then, is an island of time where God’s sovereignty is openly proclaimed amid the apparent power and dominance of evil and chaos. The Christian proclaims his freedom from the dominance of evil when he keeps the Sabbath. He confesses that Christ is the Creator-Redeemer and thus also witnesses to the fact that at the heart of the universe is a God of love, who leads all life to a meaningful goal.

The Sabbath is a universal sign, since it deals with holiness of time and holiness of being, rather than of place. God does not call us to worship in some special holy mountain or sanctuary. He calls us to worship in spirit and truth. “‘God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth’” (John 4:24). This means that men everywhere can worship Him without making any pilgrimages.

Not only does the Sabbath point to spiritual worship without sanctuary or holy mountain, it points also to spiritual worship without material symbols or idols. It is time that is set aside for worship. And because the Sabbath calls for worship in time, in specific time, it breaks the succession of time in which man is involved with the material things, spatial things, and calls him forth ever and again to the things of the Spirit, to the things that are eternal. We can become so preoccupied with the things of space, with the things we touch and see, that we lose sight of the things of the Spirit. As Paul says, “We look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:18). The Sabbath calls us away from material things to spiritual things.

There are several Christian memorials or symbols that help us to understand the meaning of the Christian life. The first of these is baptism. It is a symbol of purification and entrance into a new life in Christ. Paul connected baptism with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6). Baptism, however, is not viewed as a symbol of what Christ did. That is presupposed. Baptism instead is a symbol of what happened to us. It is our death, burial, and resurrection that is symbolized. As in the case of Christ, so in our case it is a once-and-for-all event.

The service of the Lord’s Supper is a memorial of the death of Christ. The bread and the wine represent His broken body and spilled blood. As we partake of the Lord’s Supper, we confess and appropriate anew Christ’s benefits for us. Some churches observe this weekly and others quarterly.

So the Sabbath, too, is a memorial. It memorializes the creation of the world and the “new creation” of human lives. The Sabbath as a memorial of Creation is significant to us only after we see it as a memorial of our “new creation.” We can see God as Creator of the world only if we have first acknowledged Him as Creator of our new life in Christ.

The Sabbath for the Christian becomes a sign of what God has done in him. As the Creation is the completed activity that the Sabbath memorializes, so the new creation is the finished redemptive activity of Christ that the Sabbath now also memorializes. The Christian as he celebrates the Sabbath rejoices not only in God’s natural creation but also in God’s spiritual creation. He celebrates God’s creative activity in his life for making him a new creation. The Sabbath then recalls to his mind the time when this re-creation took place—that is, baptism, which memorializes this once-and-for-all event. The Sabbath is a weekly reminder of the once-and-for-all, completed Creation event. It is also a weekly reminder of the once-and-for-all, completed new creation.

Many feel that Christians should celebrate the Sabbath on the weekly day of Christ’s resurrection, the first day of the week, or Sunday. Is not the day of the resurrection a fitting day for the celebration of our new creation? When Christ died on the cross on Friday, the sixth day of the week, He cried out, “It is finished,” and the veil of the Temple was rent in two, signifying that the veil, the barrier between God and the fallen human race, was removed in the reconciling act of Christ. The work of redemption was completed—finished. The resurrection, then, is not part of the sacrificial activity of Christ. It is, rather, the result of that activity. Christ rises to apply the results of His redemption to human beings. The effectiveness of Christ’s act of redemption on the cross leads to our resurrection in Him. Therefore, as Christ rested on the Sabbath day after having completed His creative activity at Creation, He also rested on the Sabbath day after having completed His redemptive activity for us on the cross. This resting becomes for us a sign of our own redemption, of our re-creation. What Christ did for all and what happens to us as individuals are memorialized by the Sabbath. Therefore, the Sabbath as a memorial does not deal merely with the subjective matter of our redemption but also with the redemptive activity of Christ Himself.

The Sabbath commandment not only commands the keeping of the Sabbath, it also specifies what day this should be. The seventh day is not connected with any natural phenomena in the heavens or on the earth. It is not a natural day of worship connected with sowing or reaping, or with the revolution of the moon around the earth or the earth around the sun. It can be understood Biblically only as the day that memorializes Creation. In this sense it is an arbitrarily chosen day. But it was God who did the choosing. In this it is seen that ultimately the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day is an act of obedient faith through our recognition of God’s sovereignty over us.

The Sabbath truly kept has many blessings for God’s people. Understood rightly, it maintains the infinite distinction between Creator and creature, thus keeping us from false, idolatrous worship. And in recognizing the Creator also as Redeemer, we are kept from viewing the world as purposeless and accidental. Evolutionary views are set aside. If we truly see Christ as Creator and Redeemer, as the Sabbath teaches us, we can never come to see Christ as a mere human being. He remains for us Messiah, Son of God, Saviour, and Redeemer.

The Sabbath truly kept and understood as a sign of redemption will have real meaning only as we have been redeemed. The true Christian enters into the Sabbath as a sign of his accomplished redemption. Understood in this way, it will preserve us from legalism. And because the Sabbath is our confession of God’s sovereignty and because faith is manifested in loving obedience, it will also preserve us against the erroneous idea that grace allows lawless behavior.

* All Bible texts in this article are taken from the Revised Standard Version.

We teen-agers really get the brunt of criticism these days. If a teen-age girl gets pregnant, she’s the talk of the town. If an unmarried adult gets pregnant, no one except close friends hears about it. If one of us shoots an innocent person, the public can’t forget his name. But an adult who does that is forgotten the next day. Our dress, our diet, and our music are criticized. Teenagers who take drugs are looked at with suspicion and fear, even though many adults are addicted to valium.

A lot of teen-agers are a pain in the neck because a lot of us haven’t gotten the direction we needed in life, especially in our early years. We need help in growing up from our parents, our teachers, and our pastors.

We need, and look for, three major things from our pastors—friendship, guidance, and example.

Participate in our activities, pastors. Be part of our lives. But please don’t compromise your principles and approve what you know is detrimental to us in order to “buddy up.” If what we want is wrong, tell us so! Don’t be afraid you’ll hurt our feelings. Sure, we may look hurt at the time, but we’ll think about what you say. Remember, teen-agers, like adults, don’t respect anyone who can’t stand for what he knows is right. If you know that rock music is bad and that today’s dances are immoral, then tell us so. If you’re asked by some of your youth to chaperone a party and you suspect that alcoholic beverages will be served, decline the invitation.

We teen-agers need a pastor who, as our friend, will draw the line in today’s permissive society. If you stand for what’s right and don’t compromise with us, we’ll respect your advice. But please do participate in our activities when they are good.

Be interested in us. Of course we aren’t the mature, experienced people your adult colleagues are, but we don’t want someone who enters our lives when we need correcting or when he has a sermon on his tongue. We need for our pastors to take time for a rapport session with us or just to call us on the phone and chat for a while. There are some things we can tell you that we couldn’t tell anyone else. Ask about our schoolwork, our dates, our plans for the weekend. We need to know that you care.

If you expect us to open to you, you’ll need to have an open attitude—an attitude that tells us you don’t think of us as pests or inferiors, but as regular people needing to talk with someone. We’re still close enough to childhood to notice instinctively how you feel toward us by the look in your eyes, your facial expressions, your tone of voice. We don’t talk to uninterested strangers.

We want our pastors to guide our feet with Biblical truth—not traditions, not philosophies, but something we can be sure of. Moonies, People’s Temple, and Hare Krishnas are the result, in part at least, of giving teen-agers anything and everything except the Bible.

Don’t cram religion down our throats, though. We’ve heard “Don’t do that; the Bible says not to!” until a lot of us tend to think of God as a mean, fun-avoiding tyrant who brings us nothing but misery. We don’t read the Bible because it’s presented as always telling us not to do this or that. We might listen if we were shown from the Bible a legitimate reason for abiding by its principles.

Probably even more important than teaching us spiritual things in a pleasant manner and giving us Biblical principles instead of men’s is helping us make decisions in everyday life. Pastors talk about being a constant controversy between good and bad, and no one knows that more than teen-agers. We may be immature, but we are at the point of making decisions about how we want to live and what our values will be. Adults, who are supposedly mature and able to handle temptation, can give us direction. As pastors, you can be a great source of help and strength by pointing out potential problems, so that we can make intelligent decisions between the right and the wrong ways. Don’t misunderstand! We don’t want you to make our decisions for us. We just want you to give us something to think about while we make our own decisions.

We can’t stand pastors who are hypocrites. We’re very observant, and we know when you preach one thing and live to the contrary. If you live what you tell us to do, we’ll be much more likely to follow your example. I know we are to follow Christ’s example and not man’s, but it does help us to have a tangible illustration of what we should do or be like. Too many of us excuse ourselves by saying, “Well, my pastor does it, so it must be all right.” We don’t expect you to be perfect, of course, but we do expect consistency and sincerity.

I guess what I’m trying to say is just be there when we need you, correct us gently but firmly, and live by the standards you proclaim. We teen-agers will respect and love you, and things ought to get better for both of us.

An open letter from a 16-year-old to pastors.

What teen-agers want from their pastor

by Keith Hardy

Keith Hardy is a 16-year-old high school student writing from Seneca, South Carolina.
HOW TO STOP BELIEVING IN A FAIRY-TALE MINISTRY

A couple discover that happiness can be found in facing the here and now, rather than hoping for a happily-ever-after someday.

by Denise D. Turner

Once upon a time there was a minister who thought he could have it all. He believed that he could be all things to all people—if he could only work hard enough. He also believed that a fairy godmother would eventually reward him for his efforts by whisking him away to the perfect (multistaff) church, where he could live happily ever after. It was, of course, a fairy tale.

I have never been impressed by “workaholic” ministers, possibly because I have known what it is like to be married to one. And yet, at the same time—and possibly for the same reason—I can sympathize with a minister’s task of time management. Although my husband is now a recovered “workaholic,” he certainly did not get there overnight.

From the beginning of our marriage we were on the wrong track. We were both programmed to expect ministers to be computerized, walking machines, who wore white suits and shoes and carried autographed Bibles in their left hands. Time was never a problem, we thought. They preached, visited, counseled, studied, wrote books, attended seminars, did a little marrying and burying on the side—and had enough spare time to lead the youth groups. They were securely perched on their pedestals.

Believing in this kind of fantasy world, we plunged into marriage with a whirlwind of activity. We juggled part-time and full-time jobs with college, graduate school, and seminary, and we acted as if we knew what we were doing. Not once during those years did we slow down long enough to ask why we did not know each other. It was not until we had gotten settled into our first church that we began to realize that something was wrong.

I should have been able to define some of our problems long before then. After all, my mother had warned me. “You can marry him,” she said, “but don’t ever ride in the car with him.” She went on to explain that ministers are the world’s worst drivers because they think that some sort of clerical guardian angel protects them from all harm.

Several years after that I finally stopped believing in clerical guardian angels and became convinced that ministers are ordinary mortal beings. When they work too hard they become exhausted, inefficient, or sick. They are allowed to bring such things on themselves just like everyone else.

“Oh, no! The charity-fund raisers, the youth fellowship, and the women’s circle are all meeting on the same night next month,” my husband moaned one night as he was grabbing dinner on the run. “So what?” I replied.

“They all want me to speak!”

I failed to grasp the full impact of the problem. I figured that, since a person cannot be in three places at once, my husband (being well-bred, intelligent, and college-educated) would simply choose one meeting and explain the situation to the other two groups. I should have known better. Fairy-tale ministers never say no.

“I’ve got it.” My spouse brightened up. “I think I can talk the youth group into changing their night. Then I could have dinner with the fund raisers, give a short talk there, and get to the circle meeting in time to be their last speaker.”

He strolled off looking relieved.

I kept quiet, but I knew he already had another problem. No minister has ever been able to come up with a working definition of the term short talk.

That is just one example of the kind of life we were living when we were trying to do it all, and I was just as bad as my husband. One meeting after another was checked off my calendar as I pretended to be a fairy-tale minister’s wife. Gradually, though, we began to see that relentless schedules and divided interests were not really helping our church. For it is possible to stretch your time so far that your inner resources become depleted. It is possible to neglect your family long enough to force them to leave you (maybe physically, maybe emotionally). It is possible to spend every day leading buswork meetings and never get around to doing the task that Jesus calls us to do, the task of building quality relationships with people.

When we began to look around us we saw that other ministers were caught in similar binds. Some of the retired ones told us that their concepts of ministry had been off base—that after they were gone, no one remembered they had worked 22 1/2 hours a day. What the people remembered were the few times their minister had taken a minute to replace light bulbs with them or wash dishes with them... and laugh with them.

We talked to some ministers’ wives and heard about how lonely it can be to watch their husbands out front getting all the strokes or how resentful they could feel when their husbands spent more time with the trustees than they did with their own kids. Mostly though, we heard about husbands who didn’t stand still long enough to see their wives hurting—and about wives who were afraid to tell them.

It was obvious that many of our peers were having trouble organizing and managing their time, just like us. We could see that. But it was not until our daughter was born that we really began to search for some solutions.

In the labor room my husband had kept a forty-eight-hour vigil, and he couldn’t understand why it was taking so long. He had forgotten that preachers’ kids are always born on Sunday. And, sure enough, in the wee hours of Sunday morning our Becky was being welcomed into her new world. My husband was elated. He had just enough time to shower, grab some breakfast, and make it to church.

We were always thankful for our healthy, happy, beautiful child, and we were thrilled with each new task Becky mastered. Her first step was praised to church.

SHEPHERDESS

Denise Turner is a pastor’s wife whose byline frequently appears in various Christian publications. This article has been reprinted by permission from the March/April 1980 issue of Your Church.

Ministry, November 1980
spend more time together than other average American families," my husband informed me at breakfast one morning. "You didn’t read the fine print," I said. "Church dinners and committee meetings don’t count."

“How about you, Becky?” he continued. “Do you think Daddy spends enough time with you?”

“Who’s Daddy?” she replied.

She may have been kidding, but that is when it finally dawned on us. We were not giving the world something it desperately needs, something that we could, in fact, be giving. We were not giving it a good model for a Christian home. From that day on we began to work at solving our time-management problems.

First, we tried to analyze why so many ministers feel so driven. Is it because they think they must change the world singlehandedly? Or do they love their jobs too much to venture out into the other challenges and adventures that life has to offer?

Could a minister’s drive have anything to do with an inflated ego? Or do some ministers work long hours because they don’t really like (or know) their families or even themselves? Are some of them victims of environmental pressure—pawns of the people who say that preachers work one day a week and play golf the other six?

In our case, my husband and I decided that our ridiculously schedules had a lot to do with habit and environmental conditioning. And, although the reasons for “workaholic” behavior are probably as diverse as the people involved, I suspect that we are not unusual. There was nothing magical about our solutions, either. They just happen to work for us. I think they work mostly because we finally learned to appreciate other things, too—like the restorative power of rest and sleep. Sounds so simple, doesn’t it? After all, even God rested one day of the week. But it was a new revelation for us, because ministers don’t live that way. Even if they do get tired enough to agree (begrudgingly) to take a Monday off, they usually end up sneaking over to the church to “check their mail.” We decided it was time to change all that. And when we began to limber up and take time for each other and set our priorities straight, we found every phase of our lives improving (including our ministries).

Managing our time more wisely has not solved all our problems, of course. The pastorate still has its ups and downs, inflation still eats away at the paycheck, and we are still busier than most of our friends down the street. And yet there have been so many positive changes in our lives.

Now my husband finds time to jog several times a week just because he wants to. He has also been known to turn down speaking engagements because he had promised his family a bike ride to the park to see a puppet show. I say No more easily these days too, and I weigh my activities as carefully as I weigh myself. Well, almost as carefully.

The time we used to spend dreaming about a fairy-tale ministry is now spent reading to our daughter. That is the way it should be, for there was no fairy godmother all along. There was, instead, a God—a God who was calling us to be someone other than perfect people. He was calling us to be genuine, open, and honest so that He could add all the other things as He saw fit.

Yesterday I was reading to Becky. "You know," I said to my husband when I finished the book. "I guess we have finally found something better than the elusive search for 'happily ever after.'"

"I think so," he said, tickling his daughter mercilessly. "It’s much better to be happy now."
Prayers from the parsonage

by Cherry B. Habenicht

Here is a note from a society suggesting I sacrifice for the poor in Appalachia. Another letter asks me to sponsor a needy child each month. A third request is for funds for Somalian refugees.

Lord, how should I respond to the steady stream of appeals flooding my mailbox? Should I toss the envelopes into the wastebasket without a second thought? Should I open them and read with skepticism, rationalizing that administrative costs and postage gobble up most contributions? Should I close my eyes to the pictures of a small girl showing her empty cup and a worn mother holding her baby?

I wish, Jesus, I knew how to interpret the blessings and curses of Matthew 25. Am I to see You in these strangers? Am I to fill these stomachs and clothe these bodies? Is it up to me to restore the delinquent and to bring health to the diseased?

Bless, I pray, each organization that helps the needy. There is food to distribute, medicine to dispense, material to provide. There are schools to build, tools to share, fields to cultivate. I thank You for men and women with courage to envision improved standards of living.

Please give me the right perspective. I know I need a world view, a concern for unfamiliar countries and people.

First I want to work through my church. But does it hold a monopoly on all worthy causes? Impress my judgment so I give wisely and without bias.

If even my selfish heart is touched by famine, ignorance, and pain, Your loving heart must break under the weight of a desperate world. Let me not forget that no government, no agency, no work corps, can offer a complete solution. You alone are the Bread of Life and “water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

Awe—an essential

(Continued from page 14.)

...glory, the power, and the majesty of the Lord was opened to his vision; and in the light of this revelation his own inward defilement appeared with startling clearness.'—Ellen G. White, Gospel Workers, p. 21.

When Ezekiel saw “the likeness of the glory of the Lord,” he fell upon his face (Eze. 1:28). When John the revelator beheld a representation of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, he fell as one dead (Rev. 1:17). Neither felt like calling God’s attention to his importance or greatness. No, the effect of these hierophanies and the awe that accompanied them was to put mankind and life in proper perspective.

To Moses, the burning bush was never again the same, though doubtless he saw it many times afterward. The stones that Jacob slept on that night became more than stones (although they were only stones), because God had revealed Himself there. So, we should open God’s Word and enter His presence with holy awe. “When we come to the Bible, reason must acknowledge an authority superior to itself, and heart and intellect must bow to the great I AM.”—Ellen G. White, Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 704.

It is not enough that the heart alone bow; intellect—a source of great pride to man—must bow too. Not by chance has God presented in the Bible a view of Himself that is designed to reveal Him as an “awe-full” God. That view is depicted not to frighten us away, but to help us understand better how much we need Him. Surely this is true in Daniel 7:9 and 10, where the judgment scene is presented. How sorely we need a Mediator, an Advocate, as we appear in God’s presence!

We must, of course, keep the picture of God in balance. God is not merely “awe-full.” He is loving and kind. When God presented Himself to Moses in the cleft of the rock on Sinai, He emphasized some of His milder, tender attributes (see Ex. 34:6, 7). David prayed, “Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy” (Ps. 86:5). Again, he said, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust” (Ps. 103:13, 14). To me, this makes more clear why we should enter God’s presence with awe. God isn’t merely a mysterium tremendum, One who seeks to frighten us; His character encompasses the full range of qualities and virtues, from all-power to ultimate tenderness. He is the God who sees and notes even the sparrow that falls.

So, although God is “awe-full” and we must come into His presence with the right perspective of our own nothingness, we must not hesitate to come. We must come, not in our own name, but through Jesus, our Mediator. “There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5). The writer of Hebrews calls our attention to this. “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (chap. 4:14-16). Jesus is our only hope of acceptance with God. In His name we must come.

Truly, the Bible reveals that awe is an essential of true worship. Soon this will be understood more fully by all who are privileged to gather around God’s throne in heaven. With the redeemed of all ages they will declare, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. . . Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” (Rev. 15:12, 13).

* From Smith and Goodspeed, The Complete Bible: An American Translation, copyright 1959 by the University of Chicago.

* From Genesis (The Anchor Bible), translated and edited by E. A. Speiser. Copyright © 1964 by Doubleday & Company, Inc.
Even churches seem to have been infected with the spreading disease of gambling. The implications should be unsettling to Christians.

Not too long ago a new church was erected along the route I take to the office. It’s a beautiful little church, and I’m sure it has a lovely congregation. On Tuesday evening the parking lot is jammed. On Sunday morning not nearly so many cars are evident. It isn’t a case of the midweek prayer meeting outdrawing the Sunday worship service, for this church doesn’t hold prayer meeting on Tuesday night. The center of attraction, according to a sign outside, is bingo.

Gambling is a disease that is spreading around the world. For years it seemed to be confined to a few spots such as Portuguese Macao, Las Vegas, and Monte Carlo. Recently, Atlantic City was added, along with various State lotteries. And, as the church on my daily route indicates, gambling is even securely installed in some churches!

Six years ago it was reported that betting on commercial games exceeded $22 billion in the United States alone. Who knows what the figure is today? It’s safe to say that gambling is one of the largest businesses going. The concept of trying to get something for nothing is permeating our society. Of course, not everyone gambles. Maureen Kallick Kaufman’s study indicated the following percentages of people who never bet: **male (25%); female (39%); white (31%); non-white (39%); 18-24 years (25%); 65+ years (65%); income under $5,000 (66%); income $15,000+ (21%); married (31%); divorced/separated (23%); Catholic (17%); Presbyterian/Lutheran/Congregational/Episcopal (20%); Bible oriented sects (57%); Methodist (30%); Baptist (47%); Jewish (23%); atheist/no preference (47%); Northeast (17%); South (52%).** The total sample showed that 32 percent “never bet.”

But if 32 percent never bet, apparently 68 percent do so at least occasionally, and indications are that gambling is increasing. There is something sick about a society that delights in trying to secure money or possessions without giving value in return. (The TV quiz show, of course, is practically a national institution, and have you noticed all those sweepstake offers that keep coming in the mail?) The same commandment that requires us to rest one day in seven also specifies that the other six are for working. The principle, as it relates to our discussion of gambling, is that wealth gained by chance tends to have a demoralizing influence on the character. The overall impact on society of all forms of gambling does not lead to higher standards of honesty, purity, and Christlike character development. It would be difficult to argue that gambling does not make a substantial contribution to the overall corruption that prevails today. Gambling is a cousin to bribery and fraud. The whirlwind of excitement and pleasure connected with gambling makes the sober duties of life galling. The thoughtless mirth and the social gaiety on the part of millions who participate in gambling activities create an insensitivity to the claims of the gospel and open the door to a thousand evils. The intense passion for money-getting, the hope of securing something for nothing, makes a forceful impact upon minds, which turns one from life’s true purpose.

T. E. Dielman describes some “social correlates of gambling behavior” in his book Gambling: A Social Problem? He admits it is impossible to determine whether gambling is a cause or a result of these related conditions, yet he notes that as the level of gambling activity increases so do the number of divorces or separations, the disagreements about money matters with one’s spouse, and the instances of misunderstanding between marital partners. Absenteeism and tardiness, problems with children, and days in which alcohol is consumed are all more prevalent among bettors than among nonbettors.

To the thoughtful Christian, these conclusions should not be startling. Perhaps the words of the prophet Isaiah need to be heard loud and clear in our world today: “So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter. Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey” (Isa. 59:14, 15, N.I.V.).

—J.R.S.

**LOVE IS NOT APATHETIC**

My wife, a labor and delivery nurse in a local hospital, tells me that in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, where Ministry is published, abortions routinely outnumber live births each year. (The score for 1977 was 12,718 to 9,885 within the District itself for District residents. Maryland and Virginia residents who came into the District for an abortion added 16,827 cases for a total of 29,545.) By the time a patient comes under my wife’s care it’s obviously too late for an abortion, but the medical records accompanying the women quite often indicate one or more previous abortions. For practical purposes, abortion has become simply a means of birth control.

I don’t intend to become involved in a discussion of the rightness or wrongness of abortions, although I have some rather strong convictions on the subject. I use it merely as an illustration in order to focus on the underlying attitudes that make such disproportionate numbers possible. As I see it, there are two, and they are related—selfishness and a refusal to accept personal responsibility for one’s actions. These attitudes, in turn, spring from an increasing disenchantment with the idea of moral absolutes. A great many people in our world have very blurred concepts of what is right or wrong—indeed, they are not at all sure that such categories are legitimate. (I suppose if we wanted to trace the philosophical underpinnings far enough we could indict the prevalence of evolutionary concepts. After all, if we are little more than precocious animals, why not act the part? But I’m digressing rather far afield.)

In the context of abortions, selfishness—a preoccupation with self—says, “Since I am the most important person to my self, I will decide what is and isn’t right for me. No one (not even God) will dictate to me what I do with ‘my own
SPECTATOR OR PARTICIPATOR?

Last summer I had the opportunity of conducting a series of public evangelistic meetings in the large black township of Soweto near Johannesburg, South Africa. I learned that these fine people can teach us much about worshiping God. At the eleven o’clock worship service I experienced a very moving program. Limited finances may have prevented them from owning a piano or organ, but this in no way stopped them from worshiping in song by singing. Not only did they sing hymns at the appointed times but they filled in by singing during the vacant spaces of the service. For instance, during the intermission they lifted their voices to God in song. As the ministers entered, the congregation’s voices became the organ and piano softly singing an appropriate hymn. While the offering was being received, again a hymn was sung expressing in melody their praise and gratitude for God’s material and spiritual blessings. Following the benediction, the congregation broke out anew in a joyous rendition of “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” as the ministers went to the rear to greet the parishioners. All this singing was in addition to the regular songs at the appointed times and the special music that was given by a choir. This worship service was not only memorable but deeply moving to our own soul. I left with a warm glow in my heart, because I had actively participated in worshiping my God in a very special way through singing.

But in most of the churches I visit today, I find that more and more the members are becoming spectators. The church is rapidly becoming a theater in which the performers do their part. Even when a congregational hymn is sung it is often limited to only one. Any other music is produced by performers, not by the congregation. I have the feeling that if properly organized and if the hymns and songs are well selected, more singing and participation in worship would greatly bless our members and lift their hearts to God through songs of praise.

The human voice, singing from a heart made full by gratitude and thanksgiving to God, is more pleasing to Him, doubtless, than all the melody of all the musical instruments ever invented. Music forms an important part of the worship of God by the hosts of heaven; it will be a part of the praise expressed by those who cast their crowns before the feet of their Saviour as they sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb, described by the apostle John. Why, then, should we not accustom ourselves here to approach as nearly as possible to the heavenly harmony? As a part of religious worship, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer. Song is one of God’s most effective methods of impressing the heart with spiritual thoughts and truth. Rightly employed it is one of God’s most precious gifts, designed to lift the thoughts to noble themes, to inspire and elevate the soul. (See Education, pp. 167, 168.)

I challenge pastors everywhere to re-vitalize the music and congregational singing in their church services and see whether members won’t experience the rewards that come from enriched worship.—J.R.S.

TROUBLING TEXTS

Mark Twain once said, “Most people are bothered by those passages in Scripture which they cannot understand; but as for me, I always noticed that the passages in Scripture which troubled me most are those which I do understand.”

Irreligious skeptic though he may have been, Twain seems to be saying something important to Christians. What a disproportionate amount of time we spend analyzing difficult scriptures that Biblical scholars through the centuries have found impossible to fathom! How eagerly we develop (and amanently defend) intricate explanations for some (Continued on page 28.)
The development of the physical and life sciences in the eighteenth century was accompanied by a widespread acceptance of viewpoints concerning the origin and history of life on our planet that were diametrically contrary to the straightforward grammatical-historical interpretation of the Bible that had previously characterized virtually all Christians and Jews. The influence of respected scientists and the appeal of scientific evidence marshaled in support of the increasingly popular evolutionary viewpoints produced stress for individuals who were reluctant to abandon confidence in the Bible as the trustworthy, authoritative word of God to men of all generations. Faced with denying either the ability of scientists to interpret correctly the data available to them or denying the Bible as a reliable witness to earth history, many Christians and Jews sought a compromise that would retain the essential features of both the modern scientific viewpoint and traditional Biblical concepts.

The resultant compromise, widely accepted today among Christians and Jews, is known as theistic evolution. It accepts the popular scientific hypotheses concerning geologic time and evolutionary processes, while at the same time recognizing the God of the Bible as the originator and director of these processes. According to this view, the Bible reveals who made the universe, and why, but insight regarding how and when must be obtained from modern scientific investigation. According to the basic theistic evolution model, evolutionary processes occur so slowly and imperceptibly that the Creator's activity in introducing a higher order of complexity must be obtained from modern scientific evidence marshaled in support of the theistic-evolution viewpoint. Basic theistic evolution is an accommodation of the Scriptures to the Darwinian concept of gradual evolution. Progressive Creation, however, is readily compatible with newer theories that conceive of organisms as evolving by rapid change during a series of brief intermediates, or saltations, separated by long ages of comparatively indistinguishable change.

Any variety of theistic evolution requires the first chapters of Genesis to be interpreted as allegory or metaphor and raises serious questions concerning the manner in which these chapters are referred to by subsequent Bible writers. Since theistic evolution accepts the evolutionary scenario as advocated in scientific circles, this scenario should be critically analyzed against the Biblical specifications.

For the following tabulation I am indebted to a presentation by Richard Niessen, of Christian Heritage College, El Cajon, California, that appeared in the Creation Research Society Quarterly, volume 16, for March, 1980, under the title “Several Significant Discrepancies Between Theistic Evolution and the Biblical Account.” I have taken the liberty to adapt and abbreviate Professor Niessen's tabulation slightly.

1. Evolutionary scenario: Space, matter, and time are eternal.

2. Evolutionary scenario: The original atmosphere was reducing (methane, ammonia, and other poisonous gases) and gradually changed into the oxidizing (oxygen and nitrogen) type that we know today.

3. Evolutionary scenario: Plant life produced the atmosphere as we know it today.

4. Evolutionary scenario: The first life evolved in the sea, then moved to the land.

5. Evolutionary scenario: There is, or at least there should be, a continuous transition between the varieties of plant life.

6. Evolutionary scenario: Plants evolved over a long time period.

7. Evolutionary scenario: Life began with simple creatures and progressed to more complex animals.
among the animal species. Biblical specification: Birds were created before “creeping things.” (See Gen. 1:20-24.)

9. Evolutionary scenario: There is, or should be, a continuous transition among the animal species.

Biblical specification: Animals were created in distinct species, each “after his kind.” (See Gen. 1:21.)

10. Evolutionary scenario: There is, or should be, little difference between the higher animals (apes) and man.

Biblical specification: Animals and man are referred to as distinct kinds. (See Gen. 1:24-27.)

11. Evolutionary scenario: The fossil record speaks of death and destruction from the very beginning.

Biblical specification: God created everything so that “it was very good.” Death did not come into the universe until after the Fall. (See Gen. 1:31; Rom. 5:12.)

12. Evolutionary scenario: Man developed in the image of apes.

Biblical specification: Man was created in the image of God. (See Gen. 1:26, 27.)

13. Evolutionary scenario: Evolution took place over billions of years.

Biblical specification: Creation took place in six literal days of twenty-four hours each. (See Genesis 1.)

14. Evolutionary scenario: Evolution is a continuous process.

Biblical specification: God finished His creative activity on the sixth day and is no longer involved in completing the created order. (See Gen. 2:1-3.)

15. Evolutionary scenario: The present is the key to the past. Evolution is based on the idea of uniformitarianism.

Biblical specification: God works suddenly and completely, and sometimes uses major and catastrophic events. (See Genesis 1, 2, 6-8, 11.)

16. Evolutionary scenario: Early animals were carnivorous.

Biblical specification: Early animals were herbivorous and did not become carnivorous until after either the Fall or the Flood. (See Gen. 1:29, 30.)

17. Evolutionary scenario: It has always rained upon the earth.

Biblical specification: Prior to the Flood there was no rain. (See Gen. 2:5, 6.)

18. Evolutionary scenario: Man was formed from one of the lower animals.

Biblical specification: Man was formed from dust. (See Gen. 2:7.)

19. Evolutionary scenario: One of the lower animals was already alive when it became a man, and God merely added a soul.

Biblical specification: God breathed the “breath of life” into the nostrils of a dead object and it became alive. (See Gen. 2:7.)

20. Evolutionary scenario: There really was no one individual we can call Adam; the term refers to a race of early-evolved men.

Biblical specification: The inspired writers of both Testaments clearly speak of Adam as an individual, not as a race of people. (See 1 Chron. 1:1; Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21.)

21. Evolutionary scenario: Agriculture was developed late in the evolutionary history of man.

Biblical specification: The first responsibility of Adam was to tend the Garden of Eden. (See Gen. 2:9, 15, 16.) Cain, his son, was a farmer by occupation. (See Gen. 4:2.)

22. Evolutionary scenario: Language took a long time to develop in man.

Biblical specification: Man was created with an enormous vocabulary and grammar and conducted intelligent conversations from the beginning. (See Gen. 2:18-24.)

23. Evolutionary scenario: Since Adam evolved from one of the animals, there is very little difference in the psychological makeup of animals and man. (This is a fundamental premise of modern psychology.)

Biblical specification: Man was created so distinct from the animals that he was unable to find one physically and emotionally compatible with him. (See Gen. 2:20.)

24. Evolutionary scenario: Woman, like man, evolved from an animal.

Biblical specification: Eve was a direct act of special creation, taken from the side of Adam, not another animal. (See Gen. 2:21-23.)

25. Evolutionary scenario: Marriage is a developed, cultural institution.

Biblical specification: Marriage was instituted by God for the first couple. (See Gen. 2:24.)

26. Evolutionary scenario: Man has existed in existence only the last 1/200th of the time complex in which animals have existed on earth.

Biblical specification: Man has existed, except for three literal days, from the beginning of organic life on earth. (See Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6.)

27. Evolutionary scenario: The Garden of Eden is a myth.

Biblical specification: All inspired Biblical writers understood Eden to be a literal place. (See Eze. 28:13; 36:35; Joel 2:3; Amos 1:5.)

28. Evolutionary scenario: The Cain and Abel incident is a myth; we cannot ascribe those events to any known individuals.

Biblical specification: Hebrews 11 lists Old Testament persons who are cited as examples of faith. One of these is Abel, who is contrasted with Cain. (See Heb. 11:4.) Jesus verified the historicity of the death of Abel. (See Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:51; cf. 1 John 3:12.)

29. Evolutionary scenario: Early man was quite primitive and technologically immature.

Biblical specification: Early civilizations, within only a few hundred years of man’s creation, were already building sophisticated musical instruments and refining alloys in blast furnaces. (See Gen. 4:21, 22.) Consider also the technology involved in building Noah’s ark and the Tower of Babel. (See Gen. 6:14-16; 11:3-6.)

3 Seven of the eight New Testament writers (all but James) refer affirmatively to Genesis 1-11 in 14 books, 19 chapters, and 31 verses: Matt. 19:4, 5; 24:37-39; Mark 10:6; Luke 3:38; 17:26, 27; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 6:16; 11:8, 9, 12, 15:21, 22, 45; 2 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:31; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14; Heb. 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:4-6; 1 John 3:12; Jude 11, 14; Rev. 14:7.
4 Creation Research Society, 2717 Cranbrook Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104.
YOU CAN HAVE A HEALTHY HEART

Life-style centers across the country are engaging in a new dimension of treatment for heart disease that is of vital importance.

A 74-year-old retired minister, with a long history of high blood pressure, for several years had increasing episodes of angina chest pains. He was treated at a large medical center and subsequently had heart surgery with four coronary-artery bypasses. After some initial improvement, he developed increasingly severe chest pain and was put on a number of medications. A second angio-gram (heart blood-vessel X-ray) showed more blockage of heart vessels. The doctors told him that nothing more could be done, and gave him narcotics to control the pain. As a last resort, he went on his own initiative to a live-in health-enhancement program that emphasized life-style change. Upon arriving, he had to be assisted to his bed and had to use intermittent oxygen.

A change in diet was prescribed, and in a few days he was able to get out of bed. After four weeks, he was walking eight miles a day and had discontinued his medications and use of oxygen. Currently, he is more active than he has been in years. His blood pressure is normal, and he continues without medication.

This dramatic experience illustrates a new dimension in the treatment of heart disease that medical science is now exploring. The information accumulating is of vital importance to every person in North America.

Good News

Heart disease (coronary artery disease) is the leading cause of death in the United States, with a total of about 750,000 deaths per year. Twice as many people die from heart disease as from cancer. Significant symptomatic heart disease occurs in about 20 percent of all men before the age of 60. About one fourth die within the first three hours of the first symptom, and many never reach the hospital! Another fourth die in the first few weeks after a heart attack. It seems unlikely that advances in emergency care will significantly reduce sudden deaths from heart attacks.

During the past thirty years, however, there has been a 30 percent decrease in deaths from heart disease and stroke changes in life style, including diet. This does not imply that medical and surgical advances in the treatment of heart disease should be ignored, but it does indicate that all approaches to the treatment of heart disease must take into account the need for changing one’s life style. Experience has shown that supervised exercise and carefully planned dietary changes may have marked benefit for heart-disease victims. Chest pain is reduced, exercise tolerance increased, and recovery from heart surgery enhanced.

Persons with heart disease who are not taking advantage of the benefits of life-style change may be overlooking the most important aspect of their problems. Centers are now available in the United States for the life-style approach to heart disease and related problems, yet few take advantage of this help.

Evidence of Reversibility

One of the most remarkable findings of the century could well be that the process of artery hardening (atherosclerosis) may be reversible. Since scientists differ on whether hardening of the arteries is reversible, a brief review of the reasons leading to such a conclusion is in order.

Early research on arteriosclerosis demonstrated that the diseased arteries (atherosclerotic plaques) contained a high amount of cholesterol and that when various animals were fed a high-fat diet, their arteries would accumulate cholesterol and become diseased. Subsequent studies have expanded this observation.

Early studies of persons on severely restricted diets gave the first clues that hardening of the arteries may be reversible. Prisoners of war in concentration camps, scientists observed, had little or no atherosclerosis, while age mates not interned showed a high prevalence of the disease process.

A number of studies comparing groups of people in different countries have shown a relationship between diet and heart disease. Data from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) has shown that the intake of saturated fat, cholesterol, and excess calories is related to an increased prevalence of coronary heart disease. Autopsy studies from various countries indicate a low
prevalence of coronary-artery disease in those populations on a low-fat intake. One of the best known population studies is "The Seven-Country Study." Eighteen populations in seven different countries showed that coronary heart disease was associated with a high intake of saturated fat and elevated cholesterol levels.

Also, there are studies showing that people who moved from a less affluent to a more affluent country increased their rate of heart disease, thus discrediting the concept that elevated cholesterol levels and subsequent heart disease may be the result of a "normal aging process." For example, coronary artery disease in the United States is ten times that of Japan, which enjoys the lowest rates in the modern, industrialized world. Yet, when Japanese migrate to the United States, their death rate from heart disease increases significantly, indicating that life style may be a major factor for the observed differences in various population groups. Similar studies have been done on Jews migrating to Israel and certain European groups migrating to the United States.

A number of studies within the United States have shown the relationship of diet and cholesterol blood levels to heart disease. Those people with elevated cholesterol and those who have a high intake of fat have a higher prevalence of heart disease.

Evidence of regression

The most encouraging evidence for substantial regression of advanced atherosclerosis comes from laboratory work with monkeys. Over a period of time, marked narrowing of coronary arteries can be produced in monkeys by adding fat and cholesterol to their diet. When these same monkeys are placed on low-fat diets, they show marked regression in the narrowing of the arteries and a corresponding decrease in the blood-cholesterol level.

Similar studies, done on dogs and other animals, have repeatedly shown that hardening of the arteries in animals can be reversed by changes in the diet, and, in some cases, by the administration of medication for lowering cholesterol.

The evidence is not so clear-cut in humans. Current X-ray techniques allow physicians to take X-rays of blood vessels following the injection of a special dye and to visualize the size of the arteries and the presence of narrowing. By using such X-rays, one can show that some human subjects do have a reduction of narrowing in response to various forms of treatment, including diet, exercise, medication, and special surgery to prevent absorption of fat (ilio-bypass).

However, scientists are not yet willing to state "unequivocal evidence" that a change in diet can benefit those with heart disease. The reasons are: the studies included insufficient numbers of subjects to make the conclusions reliable; the subjects were not followed for a sufficient amount of time; procedures were not employed in the studies to eliminate the possibility that changes were a result of other factors not recognized by the investigators; observed changes were not of sufficient magnitude to be significant; and observations were often analyzed improperly according to accepted statistical methods.

**WHERE TO GO FOR HELP**

The following centers offer health-enhancement programs. This listing is not a recommendation or endorsement. If interested, contact the center(s) for further information concerning the appropriateness of their program for your individual needs.

- **New England Memorial Hospital**
  5 Woodland Road
  Stoneham, Maine 02180
  Phone: (617) 665-1740

- **Great Lakes Adventist Health Services, Inc.**
  15 Creek Lane
  Hinsdale, Illinois 60521
  Phone: (312) 920-1100

- **Total Health Foundation, Northwest**
  P.O. Box 5
  Yakima, Washington 98907
  Phone: (509) 965-2555

- **St. Helena Hospital and Health Center**
  Deer Park, California 94576
  Phone: (707) 963-9455 or 963-3611

- **Smith Conditioning Center**
  Route 2, Box 135
  Springville, Utah 84663
  Phone: (801) 373-8660

- **Health Inn**
  Total Health Foundation, Inc.
  110 North Main Street
  Cortland, New York 13045
  Phone: (607) 753-6111

- **Weimar Institute**
  Box A
  Weimar, California 95736
  Phone: (916) 637-4111

- **Wildwood Sanitarium, Inc.**
  Wildwood, Georgia 30757
  Phone: (404) 820-0084

- **Yuchi Pines**
  Route 1, Box 273
  Seale, Alabama 36875
  Phone: (205) 855-3660

- **Brooke Grove Health Center**
  18201 Marden Lane
  Olney, Maryland 20832
  Phone: (301) 774-3575

- **Island Terrace**
  P.O. Box 232
  Lakeville, Maine 02346
  Phone: (617) 947-0151

- **Living Springs Retreat**
  Route 3, Bryant Pond Road
  Putnam Valley, New York 10579
  Phone: (914) 526-2800
showed a cholesterol drop to less than 200 (a low-risk range) in most of the individuals. Decreases in triglyceride, uric acid, and blood sugar were also noted. Of the smokers entering the program, 83 percent stopped smoking. Eighty-five percent of those coming to the center who were on medications for high blood pressure developed normal blood pressure and discontinued their medications. Fifty percent of the adult diabetics on insulin were able to discontinue insulin, and about 80 percent of those on oral drugs for lowering blood sugar were able to discontinue their medication. The long-term effect of these improvements is now in the process of being studied.

While scientists are interested in improvements that can be measured (for comparison and analysis), individual patients are primarily interested in how they feel and function. The stories told by individuals attending these centers frequently have been phenomenal. To the scientist, these testimonials offer clues but are not accepted as proof, since they are not measurable results nor specific in relating a known cause to the stated benefit. To the individual patient, the result of feeling better is more important than the "cause."

I have had opportunity to review the medical records of individuals who have attended some of these health-enhancement centers, and the documented benefit to individual patients demands the attention of any physician working with heart-disease patients. The account of the retired minister mentioned at the beginning of this article is a good example.

The single improvement mentioned most often by participants in these programs is increased endurance. Patients who because of anginal pain could walk only short distances are able to walk several miles without chest pain after participating in the center's program.

Early improvement in symptoms

Interestingly enough, the improvement experienced by these heart-disease patients often occurs before there would be time for reversal of the atherosclerotic process that has narrowed the arteries. It is expected that if reversal does occur, it would take months or perhaps years. One explanation for the rapid improvement is that the diet may cause changes in the blood that increase its ability to carry oxygen from the lungs to the body cells. Thus, even though the arteries are not yet opening, the same effect is achieved by more oxygen being carried in the blood that does get through.

The more we learn about the human organism, the more we become aware of its tremendous recuperative powers. An unwholesome life style, including poor eating habits, is taking its toll on modern man. It is now becoming evident that corrective measures can improve health. Patients with heart disease should rejoice in the tremendous advances that medical science can provide; nevertheless, it is now evident that modern science is incomplete without corrective changes in the life style.

Taking medications or undergoing heart surgery does not replace the need for change in our lives. The recipient of the first heart transplant died about a year after surgery. The physician who examined his "new" heart at the time of the transplant stated that it was free of atherosclerosis, as compared to the patient's own heart. A year later, the same physician examined the "second" heart after the patient died, and it was full of atherosclerosis. The patient had not changed his diet significantly.

Waiting for proof may be dangerous

The final proof that diet may reverse the atherosclerotic process in man may be slow in coming, for we lack some advantages of animal researchers. When a number of his sheep became very ill of an unknown malady, my father called the veterinarian. I vividly recall that the veterinarian did not survey the health of the flock and observe them for several years. He did not submit them to a battery of space-age probing and testing; he simply slaughtered one and examined it internally to see the cause of the illness. If we could select two groups of people, change the diet in one group, and then after a period of time "sacrifice" these people to see which group had more atherosclerosis, we could have proof. Since we cannot proceed in this manner, we must be satisfied with the evidence at hand, make our choices, and wait for the long-term results.

As a physician who has seen the results achieved by life-style change, I am convinced that such treatment has a decided place in modern therapeutics. The patient who does not seek or accept this form of treatment is a half-treated individual, like the poison victim taking an antidote but still drinking the poison.

To change one's diet in order to improve the symptoms of heart disease or for possible reversal of the atherosclerotic process is a simple concept, but it must be practiced with a degree of nutritional knowledge. Thus the advantage of participating in a professionally operated health-enhancement program becomes obvious. A second advantage is the benefit of supervised exercise.

The approach to heart disease in these centers is one of the most revolutionary approaches to health in the twentieth century.

Troubling texts

(Continued from page 23.)

obscure text! How easily we bypass the extensive body of Scripture that plainly delineates an unwelcome duty or rebukes a darling practice!

While there are unplumbed depths in even the most apparent Bible passage, and while we are to be serious students of the Word, delve ever deeper into the mysteries of revelation, shall we not admit that the majority of texts are not equivocal, and that we miserably fail to implement even a fraction of the truth we already know? Is our basic problem a lack of knowledge or is it a lack of faith and love?

The key to knowledge in spiritual things is a willingness to accept what the Spirit validates as truth (see 1 Cor. 2:11-14). The apostle Paul speaks of those who are "always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth" (2 Tim. 3:7, N.I.V.).* God forbid that such a description should ever characterize a Seventh-day Adventist minister!

If we were troubled more by the texts we already understand, and less by those we don't, perhaps we would even come to better understand the latter.—B.R.H.

when such attire causes instant tensions—in some areas it will get you identified as either a cult member or a government agent! How glad I was to be wearing a short-sleeved, open-necked shirt at my first counseling meeting with an unchurched, working-class individual in his home. He was in a T-shirt. Had I been wearing a coat and tie I probably would never have gotten to first base.

Nondenominational minister
New York

See! Someone liked the article!

I greatly appreciate MINISTRY and find it thought provoking. I have long looked for a practical Christian publication that presents such articles as Hedwig Jensen's "Clothing Men of the Cloth."

Baptist minister
New Jersey

Blessed are the humble

The humility of Ernest W. Marter (July, 1980) is astounding! He knows that only his interpretation of the prophets is valid and that "unchurched, working-class individuals of Israel are not Israel; only believers, whether Jewish or Gentile, belong to Israel," and that "the nation and people of Israel have not returned to Palestine in penitence and faith in order to fulfill God's purposes for them."

The fact is that the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others sustained the faith of the Jewish people in their ultimate return to Zion. This faith persisted miraculously despite vilification, humiliation, oppression, torture, and exile at the hands of those who profess to possess the only valid interpretation of the prophets. It was this faith in prophecies of God's ultimate restoration of Israel that made possible the return to Zion and the reclamation of the land despite incredible obstacles.

Jewish rabbi
Wisconsin

Your article "Modern Israel and Bible Prophecy" is supposed to be a serious interpretation of Romans 10, 11, and related passages? Your approach is outdated and worn out.

Christian minister
Colorado

The writings of the prophets regarding a future Israelite kingdom of glory were subject to conditions laid down by Jeremiah (18:7-10). When Israel and Judah did not fulfill these conditions, God introduced the covenant predicted by Jeremiah (31:31). From then on the terms "Israel," "inheritance," "king," "priest," and "temple" were given a new level of significance as taught in the New Testament. New Testament Israel is both the believing Jew and the believing Gentile. The inheritance is the new heavens and earth. There is one company of God's people, one kingdom, one church, one Shepherd.

Why, then, do Bible interpreters and teachers persist in leaving the New Testament and going back to the Old to decide the nature of prophetic fulfillment? The movement should be from the New Testament (God's latest revelation) to the Old, not vice versa. I don't mean to be unkind when I ask, Why do not presumed Bible believers believe their Bibles? It is the responsibility of Christian ministers to inform their people that the Christ of the New Testament has rendered the forms of kingdom in the Old Testament forever obsolete—and that at the cost of His blood. Mr. Marter's general position in his article is correct. The state of Israel is not a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

Baptist theological professor
Pennsylvania

The view of Ernest W. Marter in "Modern Israel and Bible Prophecy" (July, 1980) ought to receive more serious attention among Christian conservatives. As a somewhat frequent visitor to Israel, I observe that many Christians condone Israel's conduct as if it had the blessing of God. We must make a distinction between modern and ancient Israel. I appreciate the industry and inventiveness of the contemporary Israeli. However, I do not believe that he has the automatic approval of God upon his relations with his neighbors.

Professor of religion
New Mexico

I know you will get a lot of response concerning the article "Modern Israel and Bible Prophecy" (July, 1980), because it is a controversial subject. However, I would like to encourage you to put more of this type of article in your magazine. In my opinion, one of the most detrimental doctrines for the gospel message is the idea of a future glory for the present nation of Israel and a restoration of Biblical Judaism. You said it all when you state that the blessings to Israel were on condition of faith and obedience. As we study the Bible, nothing can be more simple than the fact that the body of Christ (the church) is God's Israel of today and the true seed of Abraham. Thank you for raising the window and letting in some fresh theological air that is much needed.

Baptist minister
Kentucky

Washington for Hindus

Although many of your articles reflect a much more conservative position than I hold, I want to commend you for the September issue and the critique of the "Washington for Jesus" movement. The points made were perceptive and sound. It is difficult to understand how quickly people can forget that a basic premise of our country was religious freedom. Washington is for Christians, Jews, Hindus, and those who profess no religious inclination.

Lutheran minister
New York

Satan and Congress

Just as I was about to decide MINISTRY was even better than my own denominational publication, you blew it with the piece "Voice backs Reagan" (July, World View, p. 30). Satan uses Congress to protect evildoers so that they can promote their filth and a sure ticket to hell for the whole nation. Why are the people not allowed to ask Congress to do their duty and protect them from this evil?

Christian minister
Tennessee

Liturgy vs. preaching

I have appreciated your fair and accurate diagnosis of some of the weaknesses of the modern church. I particularly approved of your treatment of preaching in the series begun by "Poverty in the Pulpit." The "in thing" now is to downgrade the place of preaching and to insist that the important thing is to get people to participate (perhaps by laboriously reading from a mimeographed bulletin some "confessions," or "acts of worship"). The reasoning is that people don't really need the sermon and, therefore, some stilted liturgy invented to fill the empty spaces can be substituted to advantage. Thus the hour is consumed and the people go home with minimal inspiration. Granted, some preaching is less than excellent, and I suppose that I have done some of it. Nonetheless, the sermon should be the climactic part of worship. If a preacher cannot, by his preaching, lead his people to a worship experience, he is not a great preacher.

United Methodist minister
Kansas
The candidates and the First Amendment

If the presidential candidates were rated on their support of First Amendment rights, who would come out on top? Probably President Carter, with John Anderson in second place and Ronald Reagan a distant third, concludes Liberty magazine in its November-December issue.

The knock against Reagan is his support of state-enforced prayer in public schools, says Liberty, and his stated intention to sponsor an abortion amendment. Though not itself necessarily a religious issue, an abortion amendment likely would be presented as part of a pro-life, pro-prayer amendment, with broad backing from an Evangelical-Catholic coalition, says Liberty.

Anderson's positions may be as separationist as Carter's, but the President must be given the nod because of his demonstrated determination to stand up to pressure groups seeking to erode the First Amendment. Liberty cited the visit to his offices of an Evangelical delegation that sought the President's support for 'voluntary' prayer in public schools. The prayer was not 'voluntary' in the sense the Supreme Court approves, said the magazine.

Anderson's controversial support of a Christian Amendment as a freshman Congressman did not weigh heavily with the editors. He has repented, they said, and the amendment, which stated that "this nation devoutly recognizes the authority and law of Jesus Christ," had no chance of being enacted. Supported by 25 other Congressmen, the amendment was introduced in 1961, 1963, and 1965 before dying in committee.

Anderson, a member of the First Evangelical Free Church in Rockford, Illinois, says he was persuaded to introduce the bill by a clergyman who felt it would be good to reconfirm that "our nation was founded not by freebooters but rather by godly men and women." Anderson now says his support was "ill-advised."

Liberty reviewed Carter's performance against the positions he set forth in an interview with the magazine while a candidate for the presidency. "Fault him as you will for foreign policy, deplore his domestic programs, or whatever," said the editors, "but he must be given the highest marks for integrity in respect to his stated church-state views. In several cases he has chosen principle over political expediency."

Though it reviewed the candidates' views on church-state issues, Liberty made no endorsements. "We just point out the positions and let our readers decide whether the issues are of such importance as to outweigh other areas of presidential performance," they say. "And to be fair, candidates backing some wild-hair scheme or another often find it wise to declare their support for the Constitution after being elected."

Certificate of martyrdom

If they have had three tragic events in their lives, they're eligible for a "Certificate of Martyrdom" from the Church of World Peace in Denver, Colorado.

The martyrdom certificate contains these words: "The suffering you have had to endure at the hands of life has been almost more than any one person can bear. Rarely has such a noble soul been forced to put up with such undeserved agony. In recognition of your extraordinary plight, the Church of World Peace hereby awards this Certificate of Martyrdom. Your name shall remain in the Church Archives in perpetuity."

Yes, there is a $5 fee. One wonders whether parting with the sum will qualify as one of the tragic events—or only mark one as the proverbial fool soon parted from his money.

The Godspell what?

It's called the Godspell Mass, and it has been packing people in at Episcopal churches around Rhode Island.

There is a cabaret atmosphere to the service. High school boys and girls in derby hats, black shirts and trousers, and white gloves step forth from the sanctuary, jerking their bodies in mechanical movements, as robotlike voices intone the phrases:

"Do this in remembrance of Me... The Word became flesh... The Lord be with you."

As a voice cries out, "Pree-ee-pare ye-ee the way of the Lord," seven musicians pronounce the first strain of country music and a rhythmic "boom chicka boom."

Among other innovations the actors climb into the pews at the prayer of peace, "baptizing each parishioner on the cheek with a dab of red lipstick."

When they did this recently at St. Martin's church in Providence one man turned and said, "It's a good thing I live alone. How would I explain this to my wife?"

Perhaps the cast of 11 high school students and seven musicians pronounce judgment upon their own efforts in a vaudeville routine of sorts, as a radio commentator interviews each of the Ten Commandments:

"And who are you?"

"The second commandment, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.'"

"And what is that supposed to mean?"

"Well, it's like this: [pause] I have no idea."

Margin of error

Connecticut residents generally believe in God but aren't quite as sure of heaven and hell, according to a University of Connecticut poll.

Though 93 percent believe in God, only 69 percent believe in heaven and hell. Of the believers, 73 percent said they would go to heaven, 7 percent said they will go to hell, and 20 percent weren't sure.

The poll, said the university's Institute for Social Inquiry, has an estimated 5 percent margin of error. It is to be assumed that the judgment itself will contain no such margin, for what a man reaps, that shall he also sow, said One who probes the very intents of the heart.

Items in World View, unless otherwise credited, are from Religious News Service. Opinions, however, are the author's.
Ministering to the family, too

I have discovered that clergy and friends tend to focus their attention on the hospitalized person, leaving the family largely forgotten. This is unfortunate, because the family’s needs are just as great as the patient’s. The family of a hospitalized person undergoes stress and strain. Responsibilities are shifted; the normal pattern of decision making may become unbalanced. Children may feel lonely for or even abandoned by a parent who is in the hospital. Fears of an uncertain future and financial crisis are often present. Extra help may be needed to keep the family running smoothly. Even such daily tasks as preparing meals can become a tremendous burden. I have found it extremely helpful to go one step beyond the normal visiting of the patient. I make an accompanying visit to the patient’s family in their own home. Doing so helps me assess how they are coping and areas of need, as well as showing them that God and the church stand beside them in their crisis.—George R. Robie, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Filling communion cups

As one of the pastors helping to prepare for a four-congregation combined special communion service, I was given the task of filling trays of communion glasses with grape juice. It would have taken considerable time to fill all the glasses using the equipment that was on hand. Spilling, too, was easy without extreme concentration. Then my eyes fell on a thirty-cup coffee maker, and I got an idea. Putting the grape juice in the coffee maker, I had perfect finger-tip control as I filled each individual glass without having to remove it from the tray. I found it easy to fill the glasses uniformly—either one-half or three-quarters full, without spilling a single drop. In an amazingly short time the glasses were filled; I emptied the remaining juice, rinsed the coffee maker, and the job was done.—William More, Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

Professional growth aids

Ministry recently came across a service that offers thirteen cassette tape series designed for the pastor’s professional growth. Put out by Ministers Life Resources, 3100 West Lake Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416, the subjects include: pastoral administration, ministry to the dying and bereaved, preaching, marriage counseling, conflict management, and eight others. For a brochure and prices, write to the address above.

Gifts for the Christ child

Several years ago a woman surprised our church with a Christmas gift of a new piano for the sanctuary. It arrived the afternoon before the Christmas cantata, tuned in a different key than the organ. Shiny-new and ribbon-bedecked, it sat silent when most needed. Her well-intentioned but ill-timed gift (she hadn’t even told the pastor) caused me to realize that Christ usually takes a back seat to all our friends and relatives on His birthday!

As a result, each December we extend to members and friends of our congregation the opportunity to give “Gifts for the Christ Child” in the morning worship service before Christmas. In preparation for this event, I compile a list of needed items of equipment or furnishings and make it available to the congregation. These have ranged from new hymnals to new pews, from tape recorders to 16mm projectors. Donors give the money to the church and we purchase the gifts in order to save sales tax and provide for uniformity and direction. Every attempt is made to have the gifts on hand for the Christmas service. In total value we have received from several hundred dollars to more than $10,000 in special gifts each Christmas.

A woman in the congregation beautifully wraps and displays each package. We also print a special bulletin listing the “Gifts for the Christ Child” and the donors. Some of the gifts are memorials, some are in honor of loved ones still living, and others are not designated.

In addition, we provide Christmas gifts, food, and clothing for several needy families each year. Thus people can give “Gifts for the Christ Child” in a way that is most meaningful to them.—William L. Poteet, Melrose, Massachusetts

Seminars for November and December

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.

November 10
Hackettstown, New Jersey
Robert Boggess
(609) 392-7131

November 20
Charleston, West Virginia
Wayne Coulter
(304) 422-4581

December 1
Kettering, Ohio
John Fowler
(614) 397-4665

December 2
Toronto, Canada
W. R. Bornstein
(416) 571-1022

November 4
Syracuse, New York
C. W. Skantz
(315) 469-6921

November 8
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Elden Walter
(215) 374-8331

December 8
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Elden Walter
(215) 374-8331

December 10
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Elden Walter
(215) 374-8331
LISTENING TO THE GIANTS

This is a book about preachers, written for preachers and connoisseurs of good preaching. It is a delight to read, and cannot help stimulating any minister to become a better preacher. Wiersbe’s contributions lie in his fantastic grasp of bibliographical knowledge and in his recommendations for the busy preacher. They do not lie in his vignettes of thirteen nineteenth- and twentieth-century preachers that compose part one of this book. One gets the impression that after the author wrote Walking With the Giants in 1976, he was hard pressed to come up with a second string of “giants” to write about. Some of his choices in this volume might be easily contested. However, the current book is a compelling recommendation to buy Wiersbe’s first one! One’s appetite is whetted now to fellowship with the first-string giants.

Part two is so crucial to the work of a preaching pastor that it is worth the price of the book. Wiersbe’s thirty-eight-page chapter “A Basic Library” is a quality guide to equipping a library with the tools a preacher needs. Additional extensive bibliography is richly shared as he deals with the challenge of series preaching, emphasizing preaching on the parables, on the miracles of the Bible, and many other possibilities for series preaching that the average preacher never thought of! He then provides short chapters on books every preacher could use: books of quotations, anthologies, and Roget’s Thesaurus.

The author calls part three “Miscellania” and includes certain items that seem important to him, such as Moody’s theology, women in Moody’s ministry, Henry Varley, Samuel Johnson, and Bunhill Fields. But the final chapter of this book is again well worth its price: “Marks of Maturity of Ministry” obviously constitutes the cream of Wiersbe’s life convictions. It is a masterpiece of counsel for any growing minister, and provides a measuring stick to which any preacher might well take heed.

Warren Wiersbe served as a pastor for twenty-three years, the last seven of which were in the famous Moody church in Chicago. He is at present the associate speaker on the Back to the Bible hour radiobroadcast, and has written or edited more than thirty books.

W. B. Quigley

AND THEN COMES THE END

It’s refreshing to read a current book on eschatology that doesn’t (1) try to identify some prominent world figure as the anti-Christ; (2) use sensational predictions to lure readers; or (3) indulge in speculation where Scripture is silent.

Ewert, a professor of New Testament at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California, deals with the major eschatological themes of Jesus and the apostles in thirteen concise, yet thorough, chapters. While his main purpose is to analyze and understand the New Testament perspective of end-time, he is not loath to apply the results to today’s Christian nor to point out just where and why he must part company with those who construct precise chronologies of end-time events and who see in every current political situation a fulfillment of some prophetic detail.

And Then Comes the End is definitely outside the dispensationalist camp and therefore will be unacceptable to some; however, the book is characterized by an unusual fidelity to Scripture that is both lucid and compelling. That is not to say, of course, that even the nondispensationalist reader will agree with all of Ewert’s conclusions. For example, he correctly points out that the signs of the times given in such passages as Matthew 24, Luke 21, and others are “the kind of signs that make sense in any generation, in the first century as well as the last” (p. 31). However, he stresses this point in the next few pages to such an extent that Matthew 24:32, 33 is almost lost sight of and one wonders whether he would admit any sense in which these signs can indicate nearness.

From a Seventh-day Adventist perspective, it is disappointing that he repeats the long-discredited fable of William Miller’s followers wearing ascension robes and sitting on housetops to await the expected coming of the Lord in 1844.

Ewert’s treatment of death and its relationship to eschatology is interesting to the Seventh-day Adventist reader expecting the usual view of the immortality of man’s soul. Ewert emphatically rejects the Greek dualism behind this concept, arguing that “the Bible teaches the death and resurrection of the body, rather than the immortality of the soul.” Yet he stops short of seeing death as a state of unconsciousness until the resurrection, preferring the view that there is some kind of life with God for the Christian following death, although its exact nature cannot be determined.

An important concept of the book is the idea that the end-time is characterized by both a steady increase in evil and a corresponding growth in the sustaining power of God. Thus as the end draws ever nearer, Christians should not expect escape from tribulation, but strength to maintain lives of spiritual alertness and discipleship.

Its sound, conservative scholarship and strong Biblical orientation make this book unusual among the current offerings in the area of eschatology.

Russell Holt

RECOMMENDED READING

MINISTRY
Change of Address
If you’re moving, please let us know six weeks before changing your address. Print your new address at right, clip out this entire corner, including the label, and send it to us. If you have a question about your subscription, please clip this form to your letter.


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