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"That Ye May Be Sincere"

By G. B. Williamson*

A PREACHER is probably the most tempted man in the world. This is contrary to the commonly accepted idea that he lives a protected life, removed from evil influences by the very nature of his vocation and environment. Temptation comes to him in a different guise. Satan seldom makes his attack upon a preacher as a "roaring lion." It is more likely to be as a carefully laid fowler's snare or as an angel of light. He knows how to make his subtle suggestions appear to be the most plausible procedure to gain a good and desired end. The serpent beguiled Eve with a practical application of the doctrine that evil is justified if a good end is achieved. He has preached that damnable lie ever since and has deceived many thereby. He tried it on the last Adam but failed to ensnare Him. Christ Jesus made a show of him openly. Therefore, He makes possible complete victory over the mortal enemy of all men and of preachers in particular.

Perhaps the most subtle and at the same time the most universal temptation to which men of the ministry are subjected is to be insincere. No group of men, except public servants, are so dependent upon the good will and voluntary support of other people. Hence, preachers must find ways to gain the favor of those they serve and others whom they seek to win. They are tempted to try showmanship, which had better be rejected uncompromisingly. They are tempt-

ed to be spectacular and sensational. This, too, is a perilous pitfall. Salesmanship on a high level is permissible. The study and use of practical psychology may yield some returns. To realize that one must win people to himself in order to win them to the Saviour is necessary. But the preacher of the gospel must always keep in mind that his sincerity is his greatest asset and that anything which causes it to be questioned is a discount too great to be allowed.

THE MEANING OF SINCERITY

The dictionary gives the following definitions: unmixed; unadulterated; perfect; being in reality what it appears to be; not falsely assumed; genuine; honest; free from hypocrisy; straightforward; unfeigned; unvarnished; unaffected.

The word sincere is derived from two Latin words: *sine*, meaning *without*; and *cera*, meaning *wax*. Therefore, it conveys the idea of unpretended integrity or honesty unassumed.

When Paul prayed for the Philippians, saying, "That ye may be sincere," he used a compound of two Greek words. Adam Clarke says those words are translated "the splendor of the sun" and "to judge." This suggests the thought of something—for instance, cloth—examined in the clearest and strongest light, without the possibility of detecting a single flaw or imperfection. It is a metaphor—pure as the sun. Or since the literal meaning of the word is *without*

*General Superintendent.

wax, it carries the idea of strained honey, from which every fragment of the comb has been removed. Sincerity is as strong as the word perfection itself.

Matthew Henry comments: "When the eye is single, when we are inward with God in what we do, are really what we appear to be, . . . then we are sincere."

All this can be summed up in the conclusion that a sincere person is one whose life is transparently pure and good. He is inwardly what he appears to be outwardly. He has no whitewash, varnish, or veneer. He is good and upright through and through and righteous altogether.

ON BEING SINCERE

This perfect moral soundness or Godlike goodness is not characteristic of unredeemed humanity. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" To possess spiritual soundness, or holiness, one must genuinely repent of his sins and believe on Christ as his Saviour. He must experience "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Furthermore, for the conscience to be fully awakened and sensitized, one must experience complete cleansing which purges as by fire the moral judgment and causes one quickly, if not automatically, to "abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." It takes a much more alert conscience to condemn wrong deeds, words, attitudes, and thoughts in one's own heart than in others. Everyone has a shield with which to ward off any condemnation of himself. His defense mechanism operates with little voluntary effort whereas self-condemnation takes honesty and courage.

For a preacher of holiness, the doctrine he proclaims with its far-

reaching implications and its practical applications to his own character and conduct should be a searchlight to his soul and a safeguard to a dependable conscience. The moral and ethical standards which he on the authority of God's Word requires of those to whom he ministers should probe his inner self to the depths. Even his professional standing as a spiritual leader should heighten his feeling of responsibility for being an example of righteousness. The formal vestments of his office as a prophet, a priest, and a teacher sent of God to call everyone to repentance and holiness should be a constant reminder of his solemn duty to be the personification of goodness and virtue.

But none of these things alone or combined are sufficient to keep a conscience that will guide the man of God through all the temptations which beset him in a sinful world. In addition he will need daily to read and meditate on the Word of God, not only to prepare sermons to preach to others, but that by it his own soul may be searched and illuminated until no thought or intent of the heart is unexposed to the light of God's Word. The sincere Christian, preacher, or layman must always make his decisions in harmony with the immutable standards of God's precepts. In so doing he may keep the peace of God undisturbed in his heart as the dependable arbiter or umpire of the soul of man.

The Holy Spirit of Truth to serve as Teacher, Guide, and Monitor within must also be consulted and obeyed with serious but cheerful readiness. His voice must not be stifled by neglect or reluctance. There must be quick response to His checks and promptings. When He is grieved, it is easy to practice insincerity, and hypocrisy can be indulged with progressive ease and frequency. A

preacher once started on that road may soon find himself rushing headlong past all the warnings of which he should be so aware.

Along with all these safeguards to sincerity, one's vigilance can never be relaxed. No self-confidence can be safely indulged. Men all too often go down at what they assumed to be their strongest point, rather than at their recognized weak spot.

All of these sources of light and strength should afford the preacher a clear sense of discernment between right and wrong and between the good and the best in moral values. This should mean that his honor is bright, his sincerity unquestioned.

INDICATIONS OF INSINCERITY

That some allowance for jocular and facetious remarks should be made goes without saying. Fitness in place and timing should always be observed. For most of us lightness should be indulged with moderation. In the pulpit a proper regard should always be had for the occasion as well as the quality of humor which is permitted. Paul's wise warning should be remembered. He said, "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt" (Col. 4:6).

Insincerity probably is more often detected in the content and manner of our speech than in any other way. Even one's inflections may betray his lack of earnestness. A "ministerial tune" is sometimes due to absence of depth of conviction. Flattery of others is often hypocritical for the sake of making an impression favorable to the one who uses the blarney. And flattery is a snare to him who accepts it. It weakens him with overmuch self-esteem.

To camouflage one's true purpose with many smooth words or to cover self-seeking with a smoke screen of loquacity is to forfeit one's integrity.

Voluntary humility not infrequently is a mockery which may soon be revealed by the ease with which such a one can excuse his sins and faults while he condemns others for lesser evils.

Speaking out of both sides of the mouth, using words of double meaning to convey the wrong impression, exaggeration, hedging to avoid taking

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A man's work is better proved by the character it builds in himself than by any outward form it may finally assume.

—J. B. Chapman

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a stand on an issue lead to the conclusion that even a preacher can be two-faced and double-tongued. Tears of sympathy and compassion, sorrow or joy, are even in order; but crocodile tears voluntarily produced in either the voice or the eyes will soon cause negative reactions in others and jeopardy to one's own sense of honesty.

In conduct let no preacher indulge what he condemns in others or allow any practice which if discovered would discredit him.

For a man engaged constantly in doing religious work and dealing with sacred things, only a deep, whole-souled sincerity will save him from the blight of professionalism and the mechanical performance of the duties of his holy calling. The motives of his life must be constantly subject to careful scrutiny, lest Satan gain a beachhead in his soul from which to carry on his nefarious work. "Little foxes . . . spoil the vines." Insincerity is insipient hypocrisy and presages further spiritual and moral decay until total collapse is inescapable.

Improving Those Sermon Titles

ARE MINISTERS losing the art of creating significant titles for their sermons? That would be a good question to debate. At the moment I would be inclined to take the side of the affirmative. It seems to me that by and large the titles to our sermons are very, very weak and not at all representative of the worth of the gospel that we preach. Perhaps it is simply a reflection of the day and age in which we live. Perhaps the public does not demand what it once did from the title of the sermon. Perhaps there are good reasons why titles should be given little thought.

I have watched the church page in the *Kansas City Star* regularly for a number of years. Very few of the sermon subjects listed in a page and a half of church announcements from more than two hundred Protestant churches impress me too greatly. Too many of these are trite and all but meaningless. And this is not an indictment of Kansas City preachers. It seems to me that a similar weakness would be revealed with a wider sampling.

If this is an accurate analysis, then what should we do about it? Can anything be done? Should anything be done? I am directing these questions to you and me. I do not purpose to reach out any farther than that. Is it important that our titles be overhauled? Should they be stronger than they are? It is my feeling that they should be and can be.

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD TITLES

The titles we put on our sermons or the subjects we announce are far more important than we commonly think. True, sometimes we start a message from a significant title and sometimes the title is the biggest thing about our message. But all too often, especially when we are working from a text or a passage of scripture, our title is hurriedly tacked on early Thursday morning before the message is completed as we are sending our announcements to the paper, or late Saturday night as we finish our notes. We should give our titles more thought than this.

1. The title represents the message. In a sense it is the symbol of that which is to come. To many the worth of the title is indicative of the worth of the sermon itself. Let us build strong sermons, yes, but let us work also to put strong titles on them.

2. The title does have advertising value. If our announcements in the newspaper and church bulletin are meaningful at all and worth the time it takes to prepare them, then the subjects we print are important. I believe that laymen watch these titles more than we think. I believe they are impressed or not impressed far more than we would like to admit as we carelessly slap meaningless titles on our sermons.

3. The title is also a means of self-realization. Do we have that sense of achievement when we have finished a message to the point of a

striking and satisfactory title? It is a source of ministerial discouragement to come out week after week with half-baked messages, few of which are ever finished. Can we feel that across the years we have built messages that stand as monuments to our thorough work week by week?

WHAT KIND OF TITLES?

Of course the question is immediately asked, "What are good titles?"

1. A good title should properly represent the message. It should point the mind in the exact direction the sermon will eventually go. It should be strong as the sermon is strong, inspirational or worshipful, whatever the body of the message will reflect. It should catch up the mood of the message and properly set the stage for that mood.

2. A good title is captivating and interesting but not spectacular. Only rarely should a sermon title be lurid and sensational. Whatever justification there is for evangelists to create "advertising titles," the pastor cannot follow suit. A week-after-week diet of such will become distasteful. And yet the title should be made as interesting as possible. There can be a way found to avoid the dangers here and yet capture the values.

3. A good title is not misleading. Putting this in the negative form highlights the common error. How much of the time do our people feel that the title and the message go in opposite directions? How many have felt that their pastor actually betrayed them when he announced one title and preached an entirely different message? True, not too often is there such a major consequence. But sometimes there is. In any event, it shows poor thinking to have divergence between the two.

How Do I Do It?

Let's see if we can pick up a few ideas which will help us in improving the titles of our sermons.

1. Seek first of all to determine just what you want your sermon to do. It is good to write out in a sentence or two before you ever start an outline just what you expect to accomplish by a particular message. The title is half discovered once your purpose is firmly established.

2. Check the scripture you are using with a version other than the King James. Frequently the verse itself as stated by another translator will give an idea for the title.

3. Seek to find synonyms for key words in your text. A combination of these will strengthen the title and keep you from too much repetition.

4. Now and then seek for alliteration in the title. Find a combination of words which have similar sounds or similar rhythm.

5. Look for a way to create a contrast in your title. Particularly if your message will contain opposite ideas, capture this in the title.

6. Look for catchy phrases which have caught the imagination of the general public in political, commercial, or social events which, in good taste, could be duplicated (or nearly so) to fit your need.

7. A good title carries with it a strong message of redemption. Plan the titles so that if your hearers get nothing but the title they will get some gospel.

8. Seek to find "picture" words or "action" words. Use those words which will speak the most in the minds of the listener or the reader. Some words are lifeless; some are vibrant with life and action and imagery. Take some time to find the best words.

SOME WORDS OF CAUTION

No sooner have we mentioned ways to improve our titles than we want to qualify some of the suggestions. As is usually the case, any one suggestion can be overdone and some actually can be abused.

1. Watch for words which have double meanings, which may have been misused in colloquial speech or which may have wrong connotations. In seeking to be clever let us be sure we are not crude.

2. Be on guard against using words or phrases which have a definite "worldly" meaning or usage. We cannot sanctify words that are in bad company all week simply by attaching them to a gospel message on Sunday. Such words will strike up the wrong set of thoughts in the minds of the congregation.

3. Keep away from the trite or humdrum phrases which have been used again and again. Discipline yourself to state common truths in a new way, in a manner different from what folks would expect you to say it. A trite title is almost worse than none at all.

4. Watch that you do not "overdo" your titles. Do not be "wordy." Say what you mean in the fewest possible choice words.

5. Watch out for a sameness in your titles. Vary your method of building titles; keep variety in the type of titles you use. Make a conscious effort to shift gears at regular intervals.

How Do I Go ABOUT It?

If titles are important they are worth some time and effort to improve them.

1. Study titles on articles, books, and advertising. See how they are made up. If they interest you, ask why. Seek to incorporate some of the answers you get as you make your own titles.

2. Watch the sermon subjects in the weekly issue of a big city newspaper. Clip titles which interest you. See how interesting titles are put together.

3. Spend some time and work your titles over. Do not stop with the first idea which strikes you. It may or may not be the best. Keep working on it until you are satisfied.

4. Talk over sermon subjects with your preacher friends. Maybe the discussion of sermon subjects is more important than some of the other topics with which you fill your conversation when you meet.

5. Jot down themes or subjects which come to your mind while reading, visiting, or preparing other messages. Guard lest good ideas get away from you.

6. Keep a file of these sermon subjects by topic and by scripture reference.

7. Practice preparing subjects. Follow the pattern of the "Sermon Subjects" in this magazine. Pick a short passage and break it down into subjects. Keep at it. You will see improvement in your ability to create good titles.

8. Study words and the meaning of words. Read such columns as "Picturesque Speech" and "Improving Your Word Power" in the *Reader's Digest*. Words are the preacher's tool; do your best to master them.

Brevity

The way to say it simply is to simply say it.

—HOWARD W. NEWTON

The Preaching of Ulrich Zwingli

By James McGraw *

FRIEND ZWINGLI, thou shalt make the lad a priest."

So said the neighbors of the wealthy farmer and stockman who served as their chief magistrate, and whose son, Ulrich, had demonstrated his ability as a debater, especially on matters of religion.

"Yes," said the thoughtful father. "I have already decided him for the schools."

The mountain-born farmer's son from the village of Wildhaus in the beautiful Toggenburg Valley of Switzerland was on his way to becoming one of the most influential figures among those who brought about the Reformation, for in his forty-eight years of life he accomplished as much for the Protestant movement as did any man who ever lived.

Ulrich Zwingli was a born controversialist. He took an early interest in contests of all sorts, and he increasingly devoted himself to a search for truth. As a lad, he was remembered for his common sense, his quick wit, and his brilliant mind. He was a precocious boy, but he was also a boy who loved fun. He loved a wordy war and enjoyed debate, but he also thrilled to the challenge of physical exercise and athletic contests.

At the age of ten Ulrich Zwingli displayed marks of scholarship far beyond his years, and by the time he had reached the age of twenty he had graduated from the University

at Bern. He received his master's degree two years later, and as a young priest he labored enthusiastically and tirelessly.

Like Luther, Zwingli was a good Catholic, and had no intention of beginning a reform movement which would result in his withdrawal from the Roman church. He did not question the pope's authority, but he did exalt the Word of God above the traditions of the Church. The reactions, of course, came soon enough. He found himself under attack, and he faced the decision which made his ministry what it was. If Rome was to be pagan, then Zwingli and Rome must part company! Amid the jeers of some who said, "This priest of mountain rustics setting himself against popes and cardinals at whose feet emperors have bowed," he stood his ground.

A POSITIVE APPROACH

Ulrich Zwingli will be remembered in history as that figure of Reformation courage whose messages were not merely a protest against something, but were rather a positive declaration in favor of something.

He was not so much occupied with error, of which doubtless there was an abundance in his day, but he concerned himself with truth. He fought against darkness, but he did it by means of spreading light. He did not bother to stop and denounce Rome, for he was busy exalting the doctrines of the apostolic Church. Rather than making a business of opposing the

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sins which prevailed and the corruptions which appeared in the church, he pointed toward the heights of purity which were attainable by all.

His associations with the saintly old Erasmus during the early days of his ministry helped him strengthen his faith and set his course. There is no doubt that he possessed the experience of full salvation as a result of his study of the Scriptures, his complete devotion to Christ, and his unswerving faithfulness in performing his task. As he grew in his knowledge of the Scriptures—a knowledge unequaled by others of his time—he grew also in a love of the truth and in a greatness of soul. He often proclaimed such watchwords as: “Christ is our Sacrifice; we need no other!” and, “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

A CHANGE IN EMPHASIS

While the cathedral preacher at Zurich, Zwingli boldly set his course toward truth and steadily contended for his faith. He was bold and courageous, as would be expected of a reformer. He introduced changes which brought criticism and opposition upon him, but hailed him as God's man with those who saw the wisdom of his course.

From the days of Charlemagne, only fragmentary portions of the Scriptures were used in connection with the public worship services, and the comments of the priests were greatly lacking in spiritual force and power. Zwingli changed this at Zurich. He hated superficiality, and his soul craved to get at the heart of things. The cathedral at Zurich heard preaching never heard before in that place, and the results were significant. Zwingli was in the Church of Rome, but not of it. He was a

Protestant long before he himself knew it.

Although Zwingli and Luther, these two remarkable men raised up by a gracious and merciful God to light the light that was to dispel the darkness of paganism, preached the same doctrines and fought the same battles, they did not meet personally until the work of each was far advanced. Zwingli often said, “If Luther preaches in Wittenberg the same gospel I preach in Zurich, then I am a Lutheran; if otherwise, I am not.”

A CLEAR STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE

Zwingli rested his faith on the Word of God. His system of doctrine was substantially that of Augustine. His creed was a simple one. He believed that man was holy, but had fallen. Recovery was not his work, but God's. “Christ, very man and very God,” he said, “has purchased for us a never ending redemption. His suffering satisfies the divine justice forever in behalf of those who by an unshaken faith rely upon it. If we could have been saved by our works, it would not have been necessary for Christ to die.”

He believed in the doctrine of personal election, but unlike some present-day followers of Augustine and Calvin, he did not understand it as being in conflict with man's free agency and accountability to God.

Zwingli rejected appeals to sentimentality. Worship, under his direction, became less aesthetic but more spiritual. He sought for his hearers a more direct contact with God than had been available to them under Roman supervision. Crucifixes and pictures were removed from the walls of the cathedral where he was the priest. The church was led to higher plains of spiritual understanding and insight under his ministry.

A CLEAR AND FORTHRIGHT STYLE

Ulrich Zwingli was not an orator. He did not possess the impetuous enthusiasm which characterized the preaching of Martin Luther, and he did not reach that moral grandeur which immortalized the Eislebenian monk in his impassioned appeal at the Diet of Worms. He did not move audiences as Luther did, but he might well have been a safer guide.

His personal appearance was in his favor, for there was not a more handsome man in Zurich than Zwingli. Tall and strong of body, he spoke with a tone of authority combined with a note of kindness. His voice was clear and sympathetic, and it carried to every corner of the sanctuary when he spoke. Those who approved and those who disapproved agreed that he was a man of power in the pulpit. His power was born, not of eloquence, but of logic, common sense, keen thinking, and a burning heart.

Zwingli was a sympathetic pastor, and he enjoyed mingling with the people. Like Paul in Ephesus, he often reasoned with them in the markets of trade; and like the early Christian evangelists, he preached from house to house. The humble recognized in Ulrich Zwingli their friend, and the noble respected him as their sympathetic peer.

Zwingli carefully observed his hours of study, guarding them from all unnecessary intrusions. He never went into his pulpit poorly prepared, and his study habits were reflected in a rich, Biblical content of sermons. His own words, concerning his expository style of preaching, were:

"The life of Christ has too long been hidden from the people; I shall preach upon the whole of St. Matthew's Gospel, chapter by chapter, according to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, without human com-

mentaries, drawing solely from the fountain of Scripture, sounding its depths, comparing one passage with another and seeking for understanding by constant and earnest prayer. It is to God's glory, to the praise of His only Son, to the real salvation of souls and to their edification in the true faith, that I shall consecrate my ministry!"

A typical sermon of Ulrich Zwingli was the one entitled "The Clarity and Certainty of the Word of God." The principal criticism of this, and most of his sermons, is that it is somewhat formless in its composition. The scriptural examples are unnecessarily numerous, and there are in it many exegeses of passages which are not directly related to the main theme. In spite of these homiletical weaknesses, there is undoubtedly a fine quality of power and freedom in his development of the subject. There are a vitality of thought and a freshness of expression that were ahead of his day.

A man of learning, a man to be depended upon as a friend, a man of unlimited courage, Ulrich Zwingli met his death at the youthful age of forty-eight. He had been faithful to his convictions, faithful to the interests of his country, and faithful to the preaching of the Word of God, which he loved so well.

When Ulrich Zwingli died, a great light went out in the Church of God. Other reformers were more mighty than he by their words, but none were as mighty as he by their actions. But with the passing of the years and the dawn of better times, the Church of Jesus Christ has looked back upon his faith and works with utmost favor, for his contribution to the Kingdom will not be measured until the Judge sits upon His great white throne and the books are opened.

SERMON OF THE MONTH

Jesus Changes His Home Town

By Howard S. Sylvia*

SCRIPTURE: Luke 4:16-30

TEXT: *They . . . were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city* (Luke 4:28-29).

INTRODUCTION:

Christ had performed many miracles in other cities. Word, no doubt, had reached Nazareth, his home town. Almost unbelievable reports had drifted back. Every day the gossips of the village stopped to see the mother of Jesus and asked whether a message had come. His fame lifted the village out of obscurity. Finally the rumor spread that He was coming home.

After arriving home He made His first public appearance at the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He pushed His way through the crowd, and amidst much craning of necks, and whispering, He made His way to the front. He turned toward them and began to read from the roll of Isaiah. However, instead of sympathetic understanding there was only cynicism on their faces. They seemed to dare Him to try His tricks on them.

Some no doubt said within: You may have caused a stir in Capernaum, but you can't fool us. We know you. You are no prophet but just a son of Joseph, the carpenter.

But as He began to read, His tones stirred them in spite of themselves. After finishing the passage, He closed

the book and handed it back to the attendant and began to speak. "This day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears." He knew what they were thinking. They wanted Him to do some mighty work such as He had done in Capernaum. But He knew the uselessness of trying. He knew they would never receive Him but merely wanted Him to exhibit himself. "No prophet is acceptable in His own country," He continued. Let us look at the people as He spoke to them.

I. THE RAPT ATTENTION

The eyes of all . . . were fastened on Him (v. 20). And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth (v. 22).

What was it they admired? "Gracious words." Words of grace. Christ's name was Wonderful, and in nothing was He more so than in His grace. In spite of their unbelief they were conscious that there was something different in His words. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword" (Heb. 4:12).

What was their real motive? They were pleased with His gracious words only because they hoped they were but an introduction to some wondrous works of His. They wanted their lame, blind, sick, and lepers healed and helped, so that they would no

*Pastor, Van Wert, Ohio.

longer be bothered with such. They wanted Him for what they might get out of Him and not because they sincerely believed in Him.

We may well wonder that He should speak such words of grace to such graceless wretches. But Jesus knew what His grace was able to do for them if they would let Him. A gardener with a spade dug around a brier, growing in a ditch, and lifted it out. The brier seemed to say: "What are you doing that for? Don't you know that I am only an old worthless brier?" But the gardener planted it amid flowers. "What a mistake He is making," the brier continued, "planting an old brier like myself among such roses as these!" But later the gardener came with a keen-edged knife and made a split and budded it with a rose. When the summer came, there were lovely roses on the brier. "Your beauty," said the gardener, "is not due to that which came out of you, but to that which I put into you." God is still able today by His power to make new creatures in Christ Jesus.

II. THE AROUSED ANGER

When they heard these things, [they] were filled with wrath (v. 28).

The thing which provoked them was that He took notice of the favor which God by Elijah and Elisha showed to the Gentiles. He reminded them that during the great famine there were many widows in Israel, but Elijah was sent to a foreign city to supply the needs of a woman in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel, but none of them were cleansed. Instead the lone healing came to a Syrian named Naaman. Christ therefore intimated that God was reserving some blessings for the Gentiles, which the Jews could by no means bear the thoughts of. They had forfeited the covenant themselves

and hated to think that any others should be taken in. May we not take the wrong spirit when God's blessings fall upon others.

Their wonder was turned into hatred when the searchlight of truth was turned in upon their own hearts. These synagogue members, like many modern gospel hearers, were quite pleased to hear beautiful words of grace as long as their own personal sins remained hidden and untouched. This is a great change since verse 22—"gracious words" and "wrath." Men admire words of grace until their own sins are exposed.

III. THE UNWARRANTED ACTIONS

And rose up, and thrust him out of the city (v. 29).

They wanted to get rid of Him in spite of the great works that He had done in other places and the gracious words He had spoken to them. Men today want the blessings of Christianity but do not want the Christ of Christianity. Like Nazareth, cities today are pushing Him out by bringing in and allowing all damnable and destructive sins. They want His blessings, but not His message of truth.

How justly Christ might have called for fire from heaven to fall upon them! They thrust Him out, but, if He had chosen, He could have destroyed them with His little finger. Today is a day of mercy, but the day of judgment is coming, when our power will be as nothing.

He whom they chased out has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Oh, the riches of His grace!

IV. THE UNSUCCESSFUL OVERTHROW

Led him unto the brow of the hill . . . that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way (vv. 29-30).

They wanted to get rid of Him permanently. If they merely threw Him out of the city, He might return. So bent were they on keeping Him away that they took Him to the brow of a hill, determined to throw Him over the cliff and kill Him. But it is impossible to get rid of Christ completely. He will still be on the throne after the nations of earth have crumbled and the earth itself has melted with fervent heat.

Their efforts met with failure. "But he passing through the midst of them went his way" (v. 30). Either their eyes were blinded so that they did not realize what they were doing until He had gone, or their arms were made helpless to do anything. But Christ cannot be hindered by the wrath of man any more than the clouds of the sky can impede the progress of the sun in the heavens. Sin-blinded man may thrust the Christ of God out of his life, but His eternal purpose will still go on its way.

Men may try to throw Christ out of their lives here, but before them looms the day of judgment when they will pay the just penalty for their actions. "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God" (Rom. 14:11).

CONCLUSION:

In the ears of Christ sounded the buzz of malicious comment, but He was too heartsick to look back. From henceforth Capernaum was to become His own city. Nazareth, the home of His youth, the dwelling place of His boyhood friends and neighbors, had given its verdict.

An Illinois bank staged a stunt as a feature of its silver jubilee celebration. They gave a radio announcer, forty silver dollars and he was authorized to sell them for fifty cents each. Equipped with a portable microphone, he roamed the block in front of the bank for thirty minutes. With outstretched hand, he offered the silver dollars for half price. The first potent customer, an elderly retired farmer, examined the coin gingerly, scrutinized the date, then handed it back with a baleful glare, "I think you're a racketeer from St. Louis," and hurried away. The next man recoiled with a threat to summon the policeman. After the program, the announcer turned back thirty-six unused out of the original forty.

More foolish were the people of Nazareth in refusing to accept the Saviour of the world. But those today who refuse Christ are rejecting the greatest bargain known to men—eternal life for a short life lived for Christ here.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Where do I get my illustrative material? Everywhere, except in books of illustrations. I find illustrations in biography, in history, in fiction, in scientific works, in newspapers, in magazines, on the radio, in God's great out-of-doors, on streetcars, in trains, in hotels, offices, shops, stores, schoolrooms, college campuses, baseball parks and churches; and also from men, women, little children, babies and the Bible. Why, "Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God."

—EDGAR DEWITT JONES, *Preparing to Preach*

Victory over Death

(Funeral Message)

By Jack Lee*

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it (Isa. 25:8).

Christianity rests on a fact: Christ did arise. It is this fact that gives the Christian victory.

THERE IS VICTORY OVER THE FEAR OF DEATH.

In the cold, comfortless winter a flower bulb is buried in the earth. If that bulb were capable of feeling, there might be fear. But if it were capable of feeling and also had the knowledge of life, there would be no fear. For though it is covered by the earth and seemingly dead, it would know that in the Spring God's sunshine would cause it to come forth in beauty, fragrance, and new life to bless others.

It is the knowledge of the resurrected Christ that gives victory over the fear of death.

A seed does not germinate without dying itself. When you sow a seed you do not sow the body of the grain that shall be produced. You sow one bare seed. God gives to each grain from that bare seed a different body. These "bodies" or grains are filled with life also. So there is a different "body" to each kind of seed.

The same is true of flesh. All flesh

is not identical. The flesh of human beings, animals, fish, and birds is different in each case.

There are bodies which exist in this world and bodies which exist in heaven. They are not in competition. The splendor of an earthly body is quite a different thing from the splendor of a heavenly body.

The body of flesh is buried with earthly splendor, but on the resurrection morning it shall be lifted in heavenly splendor. It is sown in weakness, but it shall be raised in power. It is sown a natural body, but it shall be raised a spiritual body.

This is the assurance of the resurrection. This hope can be only for Christians. It is necessary to know Jesus as personal Saviour. A Saviour who died and rose again can take away the fear of death.

Because of the living Christ there is victory over the fear of death.

THERE IS VICTORY OVER THE SORROW OF DEATH.

It is natural and human to feel the heaviness of sorrow. This is something that comes to all, but the Christian has Christ with him in the midst of his sorrow. Because of his faith in a resurrected Christ the Christian gains victory over sorrow.

Christ comes to the Christian in time of trouble.

Christ is with you in every tribulation and sorrow if you are a Christian.

*Pastor, St. Paul's Church, Kansas City, Missouri.

Sorrow is man's common lot; none are exempt. But the Holy Spirit comes to smooth the way before the Christian and enables him to sense the presence of Christ.

As your heart longs for comfort, the Holy Spirit comes as Comforter. God will not withhold comfort from those in sorrow. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

As your mind longs for peace, the Holy Spirit comes reminding you of the peace that comes in thinking on Christ. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."

If you are reaching out today for assurance, all you need to do is to read John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Because of the resurrection, Christ can come in time of sorrow, giving comfort, peace, and assurance. He may not take you out of trouble or out of sorrow, but He comes to be with you in it and to give victory over it.

I heard a striking illustration recently. A man said he thought that grandfathers understand children better than anyone. He had gone to his son's home and when he entered the house the year-old grandson pulled himself up by the side of the play pen, lifted his little hands, and said, "Out, out." He wanted Grandfather to take him. The grandfather wanted to so badly, but the mother standing

nearby spoke to the baby and said, "Don't you get out of that pen." The grandfather hesitated for a moment and then decided that if he could not lift the baby out of the pen he would do the next best thing, so he climbed down into the pen with the baby.

We are as children sometimes in our trouble and sorrow. There are walls of circumstances that keep us in. However, God does not leave us there without help. He sends the Comforter down to give comfort, peace, and assurance amidst sorrow.

Yes, because Christ lives, He gives victory over sorrow. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; . . . for the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 25:8).

No matter how deep the waters of sorrow, they shall not overflow the Christian—

*Is there any heart discouraged as it
journeys on its way?*

*Does there seem to be more dark-
ness than there is of sunny day?*

*Oh, it's hard to learn the lesson, as
we pass beneath the rod,*

*That the sunshine and the shadow
serve alike the will of God;*

*But there comes a word of promise,
like the promise in the bow,*

*That, however deep the waters,
they shall never overflow.*

*When the flesh is worn and weary,
and the spirit is depressed,*

*And temptations sweep upon it like
a storm on ocean's breast,*

*There's a haven ever open for the
tempest-driven bird,*

*There's shelter for the tempted in
the promise of the Word;*

*For the standard of the Spirit shall be
raised against the foe,*

*And, however deep the waters,
they shall never overflow.*

When a sorrow comes upon you that
no other soul can share,
And the burden seems too heavy for
the human heart to bear,
There's a Burden-Bearer ready, if
you'll trust Him with your load;
For the precious promise reaches
to the depths of human woe,
That, however deep the waters, they
shall never overflow.

When the sands of life are ebbing,
and I near the golden shore,
When I see its waters rising and I
hear its billows roar,
I will reach my hand to Jesus, in His
bosom I shall hide,
And 'twill only be a moment till
I reach the other side:
It is then the fullest meaning of the
promise I shall know—
"When thou passest through the wa-
ters, they shall never overflow."

THERE IS VICTORY OVER DEATH ITSELF.

Christ was buried, and He rose again on the third day. He was seen by Cephas, by the disciples, and later by five hundred Christians.

Death could not hold Him. And the death of sin cannot hold you if you will confess your sins to the living Christ. Because of the death and resurrection of Christ we may have victory over the death of sin.

Because He arose, we too can have victory over death itself. Christ hath

put all things in subjection under His feet.

We shall not all die, but suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, everyone who knows Christ will be changed as the trumpet sounds. Those who have died in Christ shall be raised beyond the reach of corruption, and we who are alive shall suddenly be changed.

This perishable nature shall be wrapped in imperishability; these bodies which are mortal must be wrapped in immortality. It is then that death is swallowed up in victory.

Where now, O Death, is your power to hurt us? Where now, O Grave, is the victory you hoped to win?

God has given victory over death through our Lord; for He has delivered us from the power of sin, the fear of death, the sorrow of death, and, yes, even death itself.

Christ was seen after death. We shall be seen also.

Abraham Lincoln lost a son while serving as president of the United States. He could not seem to be comforted until the minister said, "But, Mr. Lincoln, your son shall live again."

And Lincoln replied, "Yes, yes, that's true, my son shall live again." Your husband, your son, your brother, your relative, your friend shall live again.

Christ gives victory over death.

Did You Forget?

—To send in your entry for the 1955 Sermon Outline Contest? Remember, the outlines are for a series of prayer meeting messages. See June or July issue of the **PREACHER'S MAGAZINE** for details. Get your outlines in soon, as the September 30 deadline will overtake your good intentions.

CRUSADE FOR SOULS

Supplied by Alpin Bowes*

The Pastor's Meditation

At a meeting of denominational secretaries of evangelism, one of the secretaries said that 50 per cent of the pastors in his church do not know how to lead a person to Christ, and 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the laymen of his church do not know what they believe. It is not enough for us to glory in the fact that this is not true of the Church of the Nazarene. We must be sure that the day will never come that this is true of our church, by full participation in the Crusade for Souls Now. Incidentally, we might be surprised at how many of our laymen are unable to tell someone else what they believe. We should begin now to correct this situation.

A PASTOR ASKS

QUESTION: *How can I plan the Crusade of Souls program in my church for a year?*

ANSWER: A principal factor emphasized in the Crusade for Souls Conferences that have been held on most districts is that there is a place for everyone in the Crusade for Souls Now. Some pastors have started one phase of visitation evangelism, and when the original enthusiasm of this drive has waned, they have been at a loss to know where to take hold

and continue the Crusade for Souls in their churches. They have usually developed first some kind of calling program, and certainly systematic lay visitation is a keystone of the Crusade for Souls plan.

The Crusade for Souls actually involves the entire evangelistic outreach of the church. There are many different approaches to the matter of encouraging our laymen to interest new people in Christ and the church. Rev. Robert I. Goslaw, superintendent of the New York District, has suggested a Crusade for Souls calendar which has been distributed in a number of the Crusade for Souls conferences. Thirty-five different possibilities for month-by-month emphasis are suggested in this calendar. The pastor can take a large sheet of paper and list the twelve months of the year and then in each month set down specific phases of evangelism that will be emphasized. Of course he will probably not be able to use all thirty-five suggestions, but this method will insure a well-rounded Crusade for Souls program over the entire year.

August is an excellent month for the pastor to prepare such a calendar, for September will begin the fall push and in many areas actually seems the beginning of the year for the church's activities.

1. Friendship band for weekly visitation
2. Program for winning the lost already enrolled in Sunday school.

*Secretary, Crusade for Souls Commission.

3. Visitation program to reach non-churchgoers for the Sunday school, N.Y.P.S., and church

4. Telephone brigade

5. Transportation committee

6. Letters to all servicemen regularly

7. Distribution of evangelistic tracts

8. Distribution of "friendship literature," i.e., *Herald of Holiness*, *Other Sheep*, *Conquest*, or other literature about our church

9. Program to enlarge the Sunday night evangelistic service

10. "Church Attendance Crusade" to enlarge the Sunday morning preaching service

11. Program to enlarge the prayer meeting

12. A month's preparation for revival campaign

13. Revival meetings

14. Conservation of new converts

15. Enlisting new converts and others into church membership

16. Community enrollment to locate church responsibility list and friendly call list

17. Follow-up on "prospects" at regular intervals (Friendship Visitation)

18. Area home visitors

19. Lamplighters' League in the N.Y.P.S.

20. Prayer groups formed

21. A youth revival or Lamplighters' revival

22. Soul-winning plans during Easter season

23. Pastor's membership class to meet once a week for instruction in church membership

24. Pastor's class to prepare children for church membership

25. Program for a "Home Crusade" to rebuild family altars and refill family pews

26. Invitations for special services to friendly call list

27. Holiness evangelism, particularly leading up to Pentecost Sunday

28. Vacation Bible school with soul-winning plans for older pupils

29. Evangelism outside the church, either a downtown witnessing campaign, tract distribution, street meetings, mission services, rescue work, tent or brush-arbor meetings, or the establishing of a home-mission work or branch Sunday school

30. Organization of the pastor's soul-winning group who meet the pastor once a week for prayer, reports, assignments in soul winning

31. Study courses in soul winning; Christian Service Training

32. Course for altar workers, *We Have an Altar*

33. Program for individual soul winning; "Each one win one"

34. Program for reaching inactive church members

35. Soul-winning plans during the Christmas season

HOW WE DID IT

At the Westside Church in San Jose, our calling program is organized in what we call MOVE or "Ministry of Visitation Evangelism." The MOVE secretary keeps up to date a file of 5 x 8 cards that help us to maintain our contacts with those we are trying to win. There is a card for each family with space for information including occupation, employer, Sunday-school teachers, quarterly attendance evaluation by code, and calling record. This has helped me as pastor to be personally alerted to calls that need to be made, and the cards are used in assignments for lay visitation.—REV. KENNETH VOGT, *San Jose, California.*

Financing Our Denominational Program

By H. B. Garvin*

THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE provides a wise and workable denominational financial policy, which can be successfully followed by all of our local churches, large or small. No part of our world-wide denominational program need ever to suffer handicap if each church will loyally follow this policy, and each bear its rightful responsibility. From any local church to the general leadership, there are a *single purpose*, a *central aim*, and a *well-defined plan of action* that enable us all to work toward one glorious end, namely, the salvation of a lost world.

But we all know that the best of plans and methods will fail without the heartthrob of living, active human beings. There must be loyal and devoted leadership if the church is to achieve its goal. Hence, the pastor is a key man in our structure. Therefore, the pastor must not only be a holy man, and a living witness, but he must be a leader and a promoter of the church in guidance in the financing of the church. The pastor should not only do well in handling his own finances, but he should surely learn how to finance the Church of God.

Fortunately for the Nazarene pastor in this second generation of Nazarenes, the pattern has been fairly well set for his church, both by our statement of belief and by church practice. Also, in the light of the past achievements, in view of our church in its world-wide program, and in the face of the greater challenge

which confronts us today, the single aim and purpose of our church is clearly comprehended by both the average minister and the average layman.

But there should be some general rules to guide us, for certain things are essential in an effective financial plan in the church.

1. **TITHING:** There should be sufficient instruction through teaching and preaching on the Bible plan of "storehouse" tithing until the people are awakened to this plain Bible truth.

Not only should tithing be a vital and constant teaching of the church, but the people should be encouraged to put this teaching into practice. The pastor, members of the Church Board, and other leaders of the church should set the pace in regular systematic tithing.

2. **TEACH RESPONSIBILITY:** The pastor should take pains to fully acquaint his people with their responsibility to the local, district, and general interests of the church. He must not take too much for granted with his people, but he should fully inform them of the church's needs, and if necessary he should sell them on the program until they see their denominational responsibility. The pastor instructs and leads his people in spiritual matters. Why not direct them into sound and businesslike practices in the work of the Lord? The pastor cannot escape this responsibility.

3. **AUXILIARIES:** It is good to train each auxiliary of the church to feel some responsibility in budget-

*Pastor, Erlanger, Kentucky.

raising. Definite amounts may be assigned to each auxiliary to be raised during the year. Even the boys and girls should feel their responsibility. This will give them goals to work toward which will furnish valuable inspiration in their activities, as well as build a sense of loyalty. Also, auxiliary assignments can be carried out in connection with the local church's special offerings at Easter and Thanksgiving time. These special offerings will give the whole church an excellent opportunity to co-operate with the general church in its goals for world-wide evangelism.

4. **BALANCED GIVING:** But, it is necessary that the church should also be trained to support a well-balanced, church-wide budget which will set forth these various budgets in the right proportions. No one of these interests of our great church should be allowed to become top-heavy, or magnified to the neglect of the other interests. The budgets for churches should be set in the light of ability to pay. Each interest should be to "live and let live," and the pastor should work for a well-rounded development of the church's economy, in order that every interest of the church may go forward. For example: if the local church engages in a building campaign beyond its ability, or is too rapid in expansion, the district and general interests of the church may suffer from neglect. It is safe to say that when the building program of any church is so big as to interfere with the church's ability to pay either its District Budget or its General Budget, then its building program is too big. On the other hand, the local church should not be top-heavy on general or district budgets to the neglect of the proper support or functioning of the local church. Such may cause a setback in the progress of the

local church, and eventually deplete its support of the district and general interests. The possibility of either mistake should be well guarded, that the church's economy be kept in balance.

5. **TOTAL RESPONSIBILITY:** All churches, however small, should be assigned district and general budgets, and encouraged to pay such budgets. This is their tie to the district and general interests of the denomination. This is good training for the beginning church, even while it is a home-mission project. Personally I could not feel happy to receive a full salary check each week from my church treasurer, and know that the district and general budgets were not being paid.

6. **REGULAR GIVING:** Pastors will find that it is a good plan to start paying the district and general budgets from the very first of the assembly year, and to pay these budgets promptly and systematically each month. The church treasurer and people will work with a pastor in this plan if there is a definite understanding about it, and if there has been a sufficient build-up of interest in the denominational program.

7. **PRAYER:** As pastors we must take the task of financing the whole church program seriously, and be religious about it. Not only must we make it a subject of prayer in the pastor's study, but we should teach our people to seriously pray about the financial needs of the church. They should be made to feel that it is their problem as well as the pastor's problem. If the pastor can accomplish co-operation in praying, doubtless there will be co-operation in paying.

8. **TRAINING:** In the smaller, or at least in the beginning, church the people will need to be taught and trained in regular, systematic giving.

This denominational training should not only proceed from the pulpit, but the pastor may find occasion to talk privately with his people about their responsibility in the support of the church program. The pastor can be pleasant, but also earnest and persistent about it. The pastor need not expect that the task of financing the denominational program will always be easy. It will take organization, promotion, and even perseverance on the part of the pastor to keep the money coming in during times of depression, or in times of a local, temporary financial slump. It is the local church, which is the pastor's responsibility, that is the fountainhead of financial support for the whole church. The pastor must succeed in his task, and God will help him to do it. I should say, let the pastor fully meet the situation, for, as our former General Superintendent Dr. R. T. Williams used to say, "There are at least one hundred ways of doing a thing." Rest assured that the habit of paying church budgets will prove a real satisfaction to any good pastor, and it will be a source of challenge and inspiration to his church.

9. LOVE AND DEVOTION: Finally, genuine love and loyalty for Christ and His Church will prove a great factor in helping a pastor and his

people to properly support the denominational program. When any pastor has succeeded in creating a true sense of loyalty toward the whole church and its leadership, financing will be like tapping an artesian well. God's true people always support what they love and hold in confidence. Therefore, the wise and successful pastor will patiently and faithfully labor to build up a church-wide spirit of loyalty in his local church. Then this sense of loyalty and love in his people will evolve a rising tide of holy enthusiasm which will gather momentum in every department of the church until the people will ask for new and greater challenges in God's kingdom. Such an increased vision on God's people will take the church past the set bounds of budgets, and create new goals in the work of the church. In closing, listen to this, and let it be the watchword of all of us, for we are likely to limit God by our "little faith."

Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited (Isa. 54:2-3).

Foot in Mouth—

Then there is the story about one of our prominent pastors who on the first Sunday after the assembly planned to preach on the subject "Let Us All Stand Together." He preached about ten or fifteen minutes and then suddenly gave his subject with a good deal of enthusiasm, "Let us all stand together." The people all got to their feet. He was so startled, he looked around, pronounced the benediction, slipped out the side door, and went home. That night he got up his courage and told them, "The next time don't leave when I announce my subject."

—B. V. Seals

Why the Church of the Nazarene?

By Raymond Kratzer*

1. A Distinctive Voice

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear (I Pet. 3:15).

As Nazarene ministers, if we are sincere and happy in the church of our choice, we must know the reason why we are Nazarenes and must feel so strongly in favor of our choice that we will be able to attract others to our Zion for our mutual good. For an organization to grow from a small beginning of a few thousand to one quarter of a million members in less than fifty years, there must be some basic reasons. A work of this proportion and strength could not have been built upon mere sentiment, nor could it have come about as a chance of circumstances, but rather there is a solid and substantial answer to the question of *Why Is There a Church of the Nazarene?* In this and future issues we shall consider three basic reasons of our existence. We have (1) a distinctive voice, (2) a disciplined Christianity, and (3) a disturbing message.

In the first place, in the divine economy, there was a sense of urgency of the need of the message of holiness which had long been obscured beneath the platitudes of the clergy and laity alike. God had never been without a holy people, but near the turn of the twentieth century,

their ranks had been so broken up that their strength was nullified on almost every hand. Mingled with the jangling, discordant notes from a polluted and diluted Christendom, the message of holiness only added to the discord; or rather, its beauty was lost in the minor refrain of cold, dead formalism. But when it is separated, it has a clarion note that is clear and distinct, which sounds like a lost chord long forgotten, yet beautiful beyond description, which has been lifted again from God's Holy Word to bless a melancholy world.

It was the fact on this message of holiness and the urgency of its propagation to all the world that caused our early leaders to walk out under the stars without support, with only a meager following, but with a burning message to deliver to all who would listen. It was through their sacrifices, their heroism, their willingness to be thought peculiar, and their consecration to the task with God's blessing upon them, that we have a Church of the Nazarene today. We are not the result of an endowment from some lush depository of humankind, but we are a kingdom hewn out from the hills of persecution and misunderstanding, which has been polished by years of arduous labor and toil until today our Zion shines forth in the midst of denominations as a jewel rare and significant in God's economy.

Our early church fathers sensed the voice of God speaking through His Word to "come out from among them, and be ye separate," and they

*Pastor, First Church, Nampa, Idaho.

early set a pattern of rugged individualism for our church which makes it distinctive in any community, with a voice that is noted for its sincerity, earnestness, and devotedness to God's whole program.

A CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE

Naturally, with an emphasis away from union in the total program of modern Christendom, and with an emphasis all of our own, we have been subject to ridicule at times by our sister denominations. However, their first impression of us has subsequently changed to one of silent observance, and then to one of amazement as they have watched our progress in spite of our seemingly strict and constricted life. But if we have any justification for existence at all to add to the already overpopulated field of denominations, then we must have a *distinctive voice*. It must be so characteristic of our ministry that churchmen everywhere will realize we have a place to fill because no one else is occupying it. I read one time of a man who on visiting Norway was impressed with the unpretentiousness and democratic conduct of members of the royal family.

When he saw the king carrying his suitcase to the train while the adjutant who followed him carried nothing, he remarked to a Norwegian, "Can you imagine! The king even carries his suitcase himself." "So what?" replied the Norwegian. "It's his, isn't it?" Yes, we have a message to preach, a trumpet to sound, a voice to be heard. It is ours, it belongs to us. We must speak loud and clear until the pleading eyes of a lost and hungry world will meet our eyes as if by appointment. We dare not feel that we are "just like other churches," for we are not. We have come to the Kingdom for "such a time as this" and we must not let our

purpose be blurred by too much intertwining of our program with others.

The major doctrines of the church should be lifted up so positively that there will be no confusing of issues as to eternal verities. We should preach the new birth until people will know that they "must be born again" if they would make it through to heaven. We should herald forth the glorious doctrine of second-blessing holiness so often that we will be called the "sanctified folk." We should elucidate upon the second coming of Christ so earnestly that there shall be no doubt in the minds of our hearers that we believe in the literal return of our Lord. Let us be so positive about the rewards of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked that our convictions will carry over into the hearts and minds of others until the old fundamentals of the gospel shall again be lifted to a place of prominence in the world. God will bless us if we continue to be a distinctive church.

A WORD OF CAUTION

In this regard, however, we need to exercise a bit of caution lest our feeling of denominational pride lead to our downfall. We read in God's Word that He "resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." Some years ago a prominent Southern pastor by the name of Smith was seriously ill for a long time, and many of his friends and parishioners called continually to ask about his condition. The day he took a decided turn for the better, the old church janitor thought that the people of the town would like to know the glad news. Consequently, he took out the box of letters to the bulletin board on the church lawn, and after much laborious effort stood back to admire his announcement which read: "God is

good—Smith is better!” There have been times when we have spoken of Nazarenism in such a fashion that to the outsider it would appear that it was just one step above Christianity. We may be justly proud of our wholesome people, our beautiful churches, our excellent leadership, our per capita giving, and our herculean strength, which is a way out of relative proportion to our denominational size. However, we must ever keep in mind that the Church Militant always supersedes and overshadows each and all denominations. We must remember that it is our task to preach

Christ and Him crucified, and all other considerations should be secondary and subservient to Him. If we exalt Him, we shall be lifted. If we praise Him, we shall be honored. If we adore Him, we shall be loved. Let us therefore with humility of soul and with eagerness of purpose pursue the cause for which we were sired, and lift high our banner of “Holiness unto the Lord,” that all the earth may know that man can be cleansed from all sin and that his “whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Keep the Keen Edge

By Fletcher Spruce*

I PLUGGED in my razor this morning and went through the motions, but nothing happened. The motor was purring, and the vibration was there, and I was going through the usual procedure, but no whiskers disappeared. Perplexed, I shook the thing, and tapped it on the wall, and listened to it, but results were not forthcoming. Being a practical man, I was not content with the feeling and the noise and the machinery and the human effort. I wanted results! But I got none.

Finally in despair I took the cutting head off the razor and discovered that the cutting blade was out of place. Quick as a flash I had it going and finished my chore.

But while I shaved, my mind wandered. There were other mornings, Sunday mornings like this one, when

at God's house we all went through the motions. We sang our songs and prayed our prayers and taught our classes and gave our tithes and preached our sermons. But nothing happened!

Then I started asking questions. Why? Why no results? Why did we go through all our procedure and operate all our machinery and do all our religious chores, and get no results?

Then I found the answer. We lost the cutting edge—the unction—from our service. We had everything, but the main thing—God. And to the closet we fled and fell on our faces and prayed. Then results came. Things were different. God made the difference! It's results we are after. And it's results God longs to give us. Let's keep the keen edge!

*Pastor, Texarkana, Texas.

Pastor! Is _____

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"QUEEN OF THE PARSONAGE"

Enjoy Your Children

By Mrs. Deal Van De Grift*

ONE OF THE GREATEST problems of any parsonage home is that of striking a balance between duty and pleasure, between the work of the church and the needs of the home, between one's responsibilities to the work to which he is called and for which he is paid and the responsibilities one has to the home and children. At times it seems necessary to us to expect our children to make every adjustment to the demands of the church and congregation. We expect them to be good simply because of the demands upon them.

Dr. Williamson, in his book *Overseers of the Flock*, said: "Preachers' children are not naturally good or automatically successful. They take time, patience, discipline, love, and prayer the same as any others. Probably parsonage children have been lost more for lack of attention than because they were inherently bad. While preachers are saving others they may lose their own. It is doubtful if God ever required any man (or woman) to do God's work to the ruin of his family. Regularity at mealtime, faithfulness to a family altar, fairness in all decisions, firmness always with love, and with discipline when needed, are parental duties not to be superseded by any routine demands of a day." Did we take in every word of that? Our problems

are largely the product of unintentional neglect. Let's check up on ourselves a little. Do we become so busy that we allow our children to be out playing two or three hours at a time without our knowing where they are and what they're doing?

We must take time with our children, not only to discipline them, but to have fun with them. We should make definite plans for the social life of the family as a group. Of course there are interruptions, but make the plans just the same and carry them out, except in an emergency. We should plan to spend one evening a week, or at least one evening out of every two weeks, with the children. One nice way to plan what the family will do on such occasions is to let each member of the family take a turn in choosing what to do. They may want to pop corn, play games, have a wiener roast, take a ride in the car; whatever it may be, each one will look forward to the time when he will decide what the family will do.

So, let us make a career of raising our children. All is not bane. There is much blessing. Will you permit me to use just one little illustration of the many ways in which my children have been a blessing to me personally? It is such a simple thing, and yet the thing I will treasure the longest when the children are grown. When it seems that the burdens have been so heavy, tasks so strenuous,

*Pastor's Wife, The Dalles, Oregon.

From paper read at Preachers' and Wives' Conference, Oregon Pacific District.

nights have been taken out for a revival, or other meetings, and I am tired, discouraged, and frayed of nerve, the first night available I mention to the children during the evening meal that, although Daddy will have to be away, I will be able to stay home with them that evening, and we three know immediately what we will do. I hurry through the dishes, turn out the lights in the front part of the house, go to my bedroom, climb into bed with a child on each side, and read to them for an hour or so. What we read is always of their choosing. Sometimes it is even Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck, but usually it is the *Children's Digest*, *Jack and Jill Magazine*, or one of

their Junior missionary books. Whatever it is, sometime during the evening we have a good laugh over various things; and when it comes time for them to be tucked in, on this night, the order is reversed. They say their prayers in my room and tuck me in and then hop off to bed. Feel like a queen? Of course I do, and, in addition, feel ready to face the problems that just a short while before seemed so impossible. The children feel that I'm doing them a favor by reading to them, but it is actually my way of relaxing completely, and I sleep like a top that night. But each mother must find her own way of enjoying her children.

My Prayer for You

Dear Father, we come to Thee in deep humility and with grateful thanks in our hearts for all Thy goodness and mercy to us. Our hearts are full of joy and praise to Thee for Thy mighty works and Thy saving power and grace.

Help us to realize our responsibility to Thee and to those with whom we are associated. Help us to be kind and that love may govern our every thought and act.

May we be persistent, but flexible and alert for opportunity. Help us to see that we cannot control opportunity nor accident, but that we can, with Thy help, control the effort we put forth to serve Thee in every situation of life. May we realize that one of the finest services we can render is to keep an eye open for talent in others, the service of helping others uncover the pool of their resources and talents and the powers that lie deep within them like hidden springs of water.

Help us, O Lord, to welcome criticism—even the unkind and cutting criticism—that we may get an honest picture of ourselves. We are so smug in our self-esteem, give us the grace to discover our true selves and to uncover any affectation we may assume. Keep us from "playing to the galleries"—help us to be honest before Thee. Give us the power to overcome all these human frailties. May we look to Thee in faith and with courage to bring us through even the fires of grief and sorrow and trouble of any kind, that we may walk with Thee in full fellowship, daily doing Thy sweet will. This we humbly ask, in Christ, our Redeemer's name. Amen.

—Mrs. R. T. Williams, Sr.
Bethany, Oklahoma

Our Concern Is God's Concern

By Katherine Bevis*

WHAT ISSUE of our lives can suitably be brought to God in prayer? Is God concerned about the many trivialities of my everyday living? Is He interested in my health, my business, my housework, or my studies?

There are many who believe that they should not trouble God with the little things, the mundane run of everyday affairs. But this was not so of the ancient Psalmist. Listen to the words of David: "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me" (Ps. 138:8).

David believed that, regardless of how trivial a matter might be, God was concerned about it—and because God *was* concerned, everything would reach its proper fulfillment. David analyzed it in this simple way: If God was concerned, and he believed He was, then God would see that it worked out, for "the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."

A friend, calling on Dr. Payson during his last illness, remarked sympathetically, "Well, Doctor, I'm sorry to see you here on your back."

"Do you know why God puts us on our backs at times?" asked the doctor with a contented smile.

"No," was the quick answer.

"In order that we may look upward."

Yes, God is even concerned about us when we are ill. One thing that gives us joy as Christians is to know that the presence of the Lord is with

us all the time. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

Life is made up of "little" things, and let us remember as we go about our daily tasks, and as we travel the busy highways, He is there to protect us and guide us. When we grieve Him by not obeying Him as we should, He is concerned so much that He is right there, waiting, ready to forgive. When we study His Word, He is there to teach us.

This rule about God's concern for us may be applied to every phase of our lives, no matter what our occupation or habitat may be. It is true we are living in the midst of a confused world, upset, on the brink of destruction—a world that is beset by war on every side. One may ask, "But is God concerned about all these happenings in the world?" The answer is still the same, "If these world conditions affect us, if our welfare is disturbed because of them, then we may expect God to be concerned."

"But," one may ask, "how does God go about perfecting the issues of our lives? Sometimes it seems that those who rely on God most have more than their share of difficulties and problems in life; then how can it be true that God is perfecting their paths?"

Many times the ways of God are past our understanding, at least temporarily, and like Moses we forget that God is so much greater than people and so much stronger than difficulties and problems. We forget that God not only controls the physical world around us, but He has

*Houston, Texas.

control of the thought and actions of people also. Moses learned something about God's concern for His people when he stood before the Red Sea. God was concerned about these helpless people, and He did something about it.

God is concerned about His people!

Keeping our eyes on Jesus will help us to feel His ever-nearness and to realize that our Heavenly Father knows when even the tiny sparrow falls to the ground, and is also aware of the smallest need of our lives, and "will perfect that which concerneth me."

III. The Pastor and the People

By G. H. Boffey*

JESUS INTRODUCED a new note into religion. The hallmark of the prophets had been austerity, but Jesus came with geniality. "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Jesus got near to men, and that is what the pastor has to do.

Men were astounded, after Jesus came, that they could get so near to God. Reserve, mystery, and fear had hitherto been associated with God's presence, but Jesus changed it all. As He went about doing good, little children sat upon His lap, sick people felt His touch, and inquiring disciples were told, in effect, that to look into the eyes of Jesus was to look into the face of God. The servant of God has not so much to devote himself to proving that there is a God, but to bring Him to the people in living reality. That is the supreme mission of a minister.

HIS POPULARITY

It is surprising how many ministers have built up a wall of reserve about themselves; either a social, educa-

tional, or factual gulf dividing them from the lives of the people. Even devout servants of the Lord have been unconsciously guilty of building up such barriers. It is all wrong.

The most popular man in the whole community should be the minister. There is no need for fear of the term "popular" in its proper meaning. The pastor needs the same popularity as Jesus had when "the common people heard him gladly" and He ate "with publicans and sinners."

HIS PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS

A minister must be fully alive to his public relationships, for it is his privilege to contact every phase of society in the community. He must know how to open the doors of the heart and thus enter into the lives of people. It is usually hopeless to try to help people, young people in particular, until their confidence has been won. The golden keys of love and laughter, however, will usually swing wide open their hearts' doors.

The God who made the depth of the rolling ocean also made the shallows where children can paddle and

*Northfleet, Kent, England.

swim; so the pastor, as well as being a profound student, can afford to be simple, homey, happy, and interested in details in the lives of others. Men will be attracted to the minister first, then to the meeting, and finally to the Master. The pastor has to be both the bait and the hook; therefore it behooves him to give thought to his presence, and note the atmosphere he creates and the impressions he leaves behind.

HIS PERSONAL RELATIONS

It is wonderful to see how in the gospel the Creator of the universe stopped and stooped to bless just one lonely leper or harassed soul. God's world is made up of individuals—just me's. Happy is the leader who learns this.

For example, some old soul may meet the pastor in the doorway, as he is hurrying to the church with his mind full of the message to be delivered, and details of the service. But if he stops and with a large-hearted smile and warm handshake pays attention to this one, it will mean much. The lonely soul with her failing faculties returning to her dreary room may not remember the message, but she will remember the handshake and the smile which was all her own; and in all probability, at night, she will whisper thanks to God for smiling at her through the kind thoughts of His servant.

Individual attention is more easily given to some than to others. Some people have pleasing personalities, they are ready learners and willing workers; but all are not so. Personal attention involves listening to rambling stories of trouble, and sharing sorrows that are no sorrows at all. Lax of Poplar, visiting an old soul, asked, "Why are you crying, my good woman?" "Ah," she replied, "I've

been crying all day and when I've had a cup of tea I'm going to start again." Alas, such simple souls do not all live in Poplar.

Visiting is an important part of the ministry. Meeting the people in their homes was a distinct feature of Paul's evangelism. Those in need, sick, or slack in attendance should be visited as quickly and regularly as a keen businessman would attend to his business. On the other hand, too much visiting is to be avoided. Many a pastor has been known to live so in other people's houses that his successor, who may have wider interests and more balanced activities, is criticized and penalized because he does not find time to maintain such fawning.

Individual work counts very high in the order of God. Jesus laid the foundation work of His Church in the lives of His disciples, not when He was preaching to vast multitudes, but when He was moving with them about the dusty lanes of Palestine, when He was weary by the well, praying alone in the early morning, or forsaken by the crowds. It is often when one is alone with the people that their unconscious actions or unpremeditated words leave the deepest mark upon their lives.

The pastor is in for a thrill when he captures the admiration of young people, and once having gained their confidence, is privileged to help launch them out onto the open seas of life with success. It is one of the sweet rewards of individual interest.

It is necessary for the pastor to live in a realm which embraces more than just those of his flock. His interest must first of all touch the unsaved members of the families represented in the church. Often there are barriers to be broken down. These people naturally expect to be

cornered in argument or pressed to attend meetings. But there is a golden road through all prejudices; it is real heart interest in the people.

He needs to enter into the public life of the city, yet not be drawn into whittling away his time and energy on fleeting concerns. He stands as a representative of the people of God, indeed, of the Lord himself. His character should be of such an order

that he commands respect and a leading position in all right society.

As an ambassador of God the pastor is called to move among the people, sharing their sorrows and their joys, carrying other men's burdens upon his heart, playing with the children, venturing with youth, sharing the toil of the day with the mature, watching over the aged, and shepherding men into the arms of Jesus.

The Trials of Brother Mud

Brother Mud Has a Faraway Look in His Eyes

AT THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLY, O. O. was slowly walking from the Sir Francis Drake's writing room to his room at the Hole-in-the-Wall Hotel and Weekly Rooms. He was church-dreaming. Where do you suppose he would be called to next? Every pastorate he serves is a steppingstone to a better and bigger charge. He not only feels that, but the good folk at Twenty-third Street feel that too. They do not express it, and they may not even know just why they feel uncertain about his work. For him the assembly is a period of "highs and lows," wishful thinking, depression, and gloom. For when he heard reports of good churches, he sighed a gentle sigh. And when a brother tells of real success, he dies—but not so gently. Yes, he has a faraway look in his eyes—he could do the job at Wuthering Heights so much better.

This look is noticeable too as he shakes your hand. For he cannot look you in the eyes, for someone important may go by and he would miss him.

On the mythical ladder of success

^o Evangelist.

By Paul Martin*

he never sees those under him—he almost climbs over the chap just above him. About all he sees of those above him is their heels. And life looks pretty gloomy if all you see is heels.

I'm sure Brother Mud is not willful in this dreaming of grandeur; he just has the wrong idea. It is still possible to make the church you are serving, the church you would like to serve. A faraway look in your eyes is apt to make you stumble. For while looking to the green fields over there, you may trip over a nugget here. And when you trip, beware lest your name is Mud—in blaming district leadership, general supervision, or someone else, rather than just "poor focus."

The disease of the faraway look keeps Brother Mud at the back seat during the assembly, keeps him from attending lesser conventions, makes him a rather unattached, restless fellow. He may not stay through this year, nor return next year—it all depends upon what seems to appear.

ONE MAN'S METHOD

An Ideal Sunday Night Service

By Fletcher Galloway*

THE GREAT COMMISSION echoes across the centuries, the challenge of the One who invested His blood for the salvation of a prodigal world, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The task of the Church is evangelism. In most evangelical churches the Sunday night service has played a key role. As good as personal evangelism is, it can never take the place of a public service in which a group of people unite in a co-operative purpose of creating conviction and bringing souls to decision. So what the harvest-time is to the farmer, and the end of the assembly line is to the factory, and the oven is to the pastry cook, the Sunday night service is to the Church of the Nazarene.

I have been a pastor in the Church of the Nazarene now for thirty-three years without a break and I had the unique privilege of serving one church for a period of twenty years. God has been pleased to honor my efforts to proclaim the glorious gospel by giving me souls at the altar in a large majority of the Sunday night services during that entire time. I think perhaps one secret of this has been the advice given to me by Dr. A. M. Hills in a homiletics class years ago. He said the purpose of every sermon should be so well defined that if an angel with a drawn sword

should challenge you as you started to ascend the pulpit stairs and say, "State your purpose or you may not enter," you could answer without a moment's hesitation. Almost without exception my purpose in every Sunday night service was to create an atmosphere, clarify motives, and strengthen individual resolve to be right with God, and to be right with God now.

TO HAVE AN IDEAL SUNDAY NIGHT SERVICE WE MUST HAVE:

1. *People.* The auditorium or sanctuary should be fairly well filled and at least one-third of these people should be "prospects" for the altar. You cannot make sales without prospects.

2. *Atmosphere.* The audience must be brought into a spirit of friendly co-operation. We Nazarenes like a free, spontaneous type of service, but we should never lose sight of our objective. The whole purpose of the song service, the special music, and testimonies, is to create good will, and to integrate the audience to the point where the gospel message will have its greatest possible opportunity of success.

3. *A gospel message.* The gospel is "good news." There is a way out of sin, of frustration, of doubt, of guilt, of weakness, and of despair. The message should be plain and factual and full of scripture. It

*Pastor, First Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
Paper given at Michigan Preachers' Meeting.

should burn in the heart of the preacher because the Holy Spirit has full control of him.

4. *An altar service.* The way we Nazarenes preach we either get people to the altar or develop a hotbox. The Crusade for Souls, with its emphasis on personal evangelism and the organization of new churches, is a godsend. It has helped us to reach out for new material.

5. *The time.* In my judgment an average Sunday night service should not run longer than one hour and a half, divided about as follows: thirty minutes for creating audience-atmosphere, ten minutes for promotion (if the "commercials" are too long, the audience turns off its dial), thirty minutes for the sermon, and twenty to twenty-five minutes for the altar call. Dr. C. E. Cornell, one of the early leaders of our church, was eminently successful as a soul winner. While in those days it was not unusual to hear sermons from one to two hours in length, he seldom preached more than thirty minutes, but he took about that same length of time for his altar calls. Dr. Jarrette Aycock tells us that in his evangelistic experience he has found that it was much easier to get people to the altar before nine o'clock than after nine o'clock.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO HAVE A FULL HOUSE ON SUNDAY NIGHTS?

We will have to create a Sunday night conscience in Nazarenes. Many of the church people of our generation never think of going to church more than once on Sunday. Too many Nazarenes are falling into this same habit.

Our church will have to have "pulling power" which will pull the unsaved people away from the TV sets, their worldly amusements, Sunday and week-end vacations, and

general preoccupation with other things. Every legitimate means must be used to let the city or community know that there is something worthwhile happening in the Church of the Nazarene on Sunday night. Most of our preachers have to be their own publicity agents. The newspaper is the best medium. Learn to use it if you do not know how. The radio is good, and TV where it is within your reach financially. Of course, nothing can take the place of the personal contacts of your people. Stir up their enthusiasm to be your chief medium of promotion.

If we are to have a growing Sunday night attendance, visitors will have to be turned into repeaters. A good test to keep constantly before us in this, "How would a total stranger feel about that service? How would he react?" I was made keenly aware of this twice while I was pastor in Portland, Oregon, First Church. We were struggling under a very difficult financial load back there in the depression days. One day the president of one of the banks called me in for a personal interview and told me there was someone who was interested in making some anonymous gifts. He said we stood a good chance of receiving at least \$10,000.00. You can imagine my elation. But, five or six weeks passed and nothing happened. Every service I had a strange feeling that possibly this unknown benefactor might be present, looking us over to see whether or not he would go through with the gift. (Incidentally, we finally got the money.)

On another occasion a reporter started a series of stories in the magazine section of the *Oregonian* on "How Would a Stranger Feel Who Dropped into This Church?" The articles were illustrated in color and were circulated all over the North-

west. Twelve or fifteen of the four hundred churches of the city were covered. Of course we had no way of knowing whether or not our church would be one of those visited but we did try to be on our toes. As it turned out, the writer of the series had already visited our church before the first article was printed. Was I ever surprised to see a commercial artist's picture of myself standing in my pulpit, and to read the reporter's account of my sermon and altar call and her impression when a young married couple walked down the aisle and knelt at the altar, and of how pleased she was when a dear old lady in the church insisted that she have one of the two big chrysanthemums from the pulpit bouquet. We fared wonderfully well.

In these two instances we tried to be "on our toes" because of a possible gift of \$10,000.00, and about a thousand dollars' worth of free publicity. But when I considered it I said to myself, Every single stranger actually represents more than that. The impression of a service may be the final deciding factor as to whether he spends eternity in heaven or in hell.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO PREACH?

There are many ways Sunday night attendance may be promoted if the pastor will take time to plan for it. However, all of them will eventually run out unless something happens when the preacher comes up to bat. Nothing will fill the bleacher seats like a few home runs. Probably the most of us will never be considered great preachers, but I fear that part of the declining interest in Sunday night services is due to the lack of careful sermon preparation. We must not get so bogged down with detail work that we do not prepare for our Sunday evening messages. I like to preach sermon series. I

preached a morning sermon series once which covered the Minor Prophets, with the evening sermon out of the same book. It was thrilling to see the growing interest and attendance. Many of my people read these books as we went along in this series.

I used old hymns as sermon topics on one occasion. A hymn-popularity poll was conducted at the same time and this was used as newspaper story material.

The church in Portland gave me a trip to Palestine and I used the 500 pictures that I secured on the trip as "bait" for sixteen Sunday night services. The group of pictures in each instance became the introduction for my evangelistic message. We had seekers in almost every service and hundreds of new people attracted to the services.

The Crusade for Souls Now is a "natural" for promoting your Sunday night service if you use it. What better way to win men than to team up with your laymen? "You go out this afternoon and try to bring that friend to church, and then you and I will join forces with the Holy Spirit and try to get him saved tonight." Many times my heart has been thrilled and I have received new preaching inspiration when a layman has come to me before the service and said: "I have —— with me tonight. You know, the one I have been talking to you about. I believe he is ready to get saved. You preach and I will pray, and when you give the altar call I believe he will come down with me." A preacher who could not preach under those circumstances ought to quit trying.

DRAWING THE NET

No part of the service is more important than the altar call, and yet how often we give this no previous thought or plan! When bringing the

message to a close, have the organist or pianist start playing without a moment's delay. Use an old, familiar invitation hymn. Take plenty of time for your invitation, but change the appeal often enough that it does not seem long. It takes time for people to make up their minds and come to a definite decision. Stop frequently for a short prayer. Ask your people to join you in silent prayer. Keep pressing the claims of Calvary, but try to keep the door open, so that if they do not move to the altar they

will come again next Sunday night. I remember once I came into a service after twenty-four hours of weeping and praying. It was do or die. But as a rule, pressure like that would kill the service and probably kill the preacher. Do not let things get tied up. End the service on a note of victory no matter what happens.

But we must have souls if we are to have successful Sunday night services. Nothing will keep them fresh and attractive like heaven's dew on the lashes of newborn Christians.

Sermon Subjects for August

From the Editor

II Peter 3:9-14

Subjects

1. A GOD WHO KEEPS HIS WORD
2. A SUFFERING SAVIOUR FOR PERISHING MEN
3. GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE
4. THE COMING DAY
5. IT WILL NOT LAST!
6. THE LAST ATOMIC BLAST
7. CINDERS IN THE SUN!
8. THE PERMANENCY OF HOLINESS
9. THE EXPECTANT HOPE OF CHRIST'S RETURN
10. A NEW WORLD FOR GOD'S PEOPLE
11. WIDE-AWAKE IN PERILOUS DAYS
12. QUALITIES OF ENDURING RIGHTEOUSNESS

Scriptures

1. v. 9, *The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men . . .*
2. v. 9, *The Lord . . . is longsuffering . . . not willing that any should perish.*
3. v. 9, *The Lord . . . [willing] that all should come to repentance.*
4. v. 10, *The day of the Lord will come as a thief . . .*
5. v. 10, *. . . the heavens shall pass away. (See Phillips.)*
6. v. 10, *The elements shall melt with a fervent heat.*
7. v. 10, *The earth . . . shall be burned up.*
8. v. 11, *What . . . ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?*
9. v. 12, *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God . . .*
10. v. 13, *We . . . look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*
11. v. 14, *Wherefore . . . be diligent.*
12. v. 14, *. . . that ye may be found . . . in peace . . . without spot . . . blameless.*

SERMON WORKSHOP

Contributed By Nelson Mink*

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

"At the cross, we see sin at its vilest, and love at its best."

"The modern home is one in which a switch regulates everything but the children."

"The business of the Christian is not to get a following, but to set a standard."

"Jesus never slept for an hour while one of His disciples watched and prayed."

"The most pitiable of all wrecks are those inside the harbor."

"It is not enough for the gardener to love flowers; he must also hate weeds."

—SELECTED

THINGS YOU CANNOT DO WITHOUT

1. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

2. "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]" (Heb. 11:6).

3. Without holiness "no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).

4. Without works, "faith is dead" (Jas. 2:26).

5. Without love, you are nothing (I Cor. 13:1-3).

GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY SAYS: "We have too many men of science, too few men of God. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more of war than of peace. More about killing than we know about living."

—SELECTED

*Pastor, Oxford, Pennsylvania.

PRAYER IS LIKE:

The Porter—to watch the door of our lips.

The Guard—to keep the fort of our hearts.

The Hilt of the Sword—to defend our hands.

A Barometer—to show our spiritual condition.

—SOURCE UNKNOWN

SO HE COULDN'T GO

It was prayer meeting night, and two members of the church had gone off on a fishing trip. Presently one of them said to the other. "We should not be here fishing. Our pastor is at home working for a good prayer meeting tonight. We should be there helping him."

The other replied, "Well, even if I were at home, I couldn't go."

"Why so?" inquired the other.

The first replied, "Well, you see my wife is sick."

—Wellsboro, Pa., *Wesleyan Methodist Bulletin*

GYPSY SMITH AND THE PUBLICANS

Two saloonkeepers came into a train where Gypsy Smith, the evangelist, was sitting, waiting for the train to start. Observing the gypsy, one of the men said: "Mr. Smith, we know you, and we want to say to you that unless you evangelists and ministers stop knocking the liquor business we men will have to go to the poorhouse." "All right," said the Gypsy, "when you go in, all the rest of the inmates can come out."

—SOURCE UNKNOWN

August 7, 1955

Morning Subject: "WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

SCRIPTURE: Acts 9:1-16; **TEXT:** verse 6

INTRODUCTION:

- A. A question asked under strange circumstances.
- B. Asked by a self-sufficient man who usually issued orders.
- I. **THE QUESTION PROMPTED BY A REVELATION OF JESUS.**
 - A. A revelation possible to every man, though not under same circumstances.
 - B. A necessary revelation in order to transform.
 - 1. The old life lost its appeal.
 - 2. He was changed from persecutor to preacher.
 - 3. His letters of authority lost their power.
 - C. A revelation of Jesus Christ will establish His divine authority over a man.
- II. **THIS QUESTION BECAME THE FIXED ATTITUDE OF PAUL'S LIFE.**
 - A. "It shall be told thee what thou must do"
 - B. Paul remained amenable to "come over into Macedonia, and help us."
- III. **WHEN THIS QUESTION IS THE THEME OF ANY LIFE:**
 - A. Eternal resources are unlocked.
 - B. No other question goes unanswered.
 - C. Persecutions and imprisonments are endured.

FRED REEDY

Evening Subject: THE WISEST FOOL THAT EVER LIVED

SCRIPTURE: I Kings 3:5-14; I Kings 9:2-9; I Kings 11:1-11

INTRODUCTION: When King James I of England broke with France and made an alliance with Spain, Henry IV of France described him as the wisest fool that ever lived. Solomon may well be described as the wisest fool in all the Bible.

Three periods in the life of Solomon:

- I. **THE PERIOD OF HUMILITY AND BLESSING**
 - A. "I am but a little child" (I Kings 3:7)
 - B. "Give thy servant an understanding heart" (I Kings 3:9-12)
- II. **THE PERIOD OF PROSPERITY AND WARNING (9:2-8)**
 - A. Warning given before backsliding began.
 - B. Promise of blessing—a light to shine upon the danger signs.
- III. **THE PERIOD OF PRIDE, DECAY, AND JUDGMENT (11:1-11)**
 - A. Character decay, then kingdom decay—the inevitable order.
 - B. A man chosen and ordained of God to build a righteous nation.
 - C. Any man may bless or blight his nation, his generation, his family, and history.

FRED REEDY

August 14, 1955

Morning Subject: RELIGIOUS CERTAINTY

SCRIPTURE: II Timothy 1:1-4; TEXT: verse 12

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Can man have personal, present, preserving assurance?
Is it promised in the Bible? (John 7:17.) Does the testimony of history confirm our hope for assurance? (The text.)
- B. What do we need to know?
- I. THAT THERE IS A PERSONAL GOD (Heb. 1:6)
 - A. Whom we can know personally.
 - B. How obtain this knowledge?
 - 1. Not by natural means (I Cor. 2:14).
 - 2. By obedience (John 7:17).
 - 3. By faith and diligent seeking (Heb. 1:6)
- II. THAT OUR CLAIM TO KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS VALID
 - A. An inner consciousness (I John 5:10)
 - B. By the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the active ministry of the Spirit in our lives (Rom. 8:14-16)
- III. THAT THE WORLD ACCEPTS OUR TESTIMONY (John 13:35)
 - A. The testimony of the Christian validated by inner assurance and outward evidences encourages others in their quest for personal assurance.
 - B. St. Paul's testimony before Agrippa awakened latent desires in the heart of the heathen king to know God.

FRED REEDY

Evening Subject: THE SET OF THE SOUL

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3:1-6; TEXT: I John 2:15

INTRODUCTION:

In this scripture the sources both of sin and of true righteousness are discovered (Matt. 5:21-23).

- I. THE AFFECTIONS ARE AMENABLE TO THE WILL.
 - A. We are here commanded to "set our affections."
 - B. Thus we must choose the object of our affection.
- II. THE TEXT SETS FORTH THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF TRUE LOVE.
 - A. Any love less than supreme love to God is no love at all.
 - B. It describes the negative things we should not love.
- III. AFFECTIONS CONTROLLED ENABLE US TO OVERCOME TEMPTATION.
 - A. All temptation is an appeal to the affections.
 - B. A suggestion that the will respond to the appeal.
 - C. The set of the affections the ground of satisfactory relationship with God, and the criterion of personal experience.

FRED REEDY

August 21, 1955

Morning Subject: STABILITY IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD

SCRIPTURE: Psalms 125; TEXT: verse 1

INTRODUCTION:

The quest for security is as old as the race. Social Security, job security, etc., are not of modern origin.

- I. THE WORLD WILL ALWAYS BE UNSTABLE: GOD INTENDED IT SO.
 - A. The instability of our world is universally accepted.
 - B. Social, political, and financial instability dogged the steps of the saints of all ages (Heb. 11:9-15).
- II. GOD HAS ALWAYS CUT LOOSE HIS SAINTS FROM WORLDLY SECURITY.
 - A. To build their faith
 - B. To guard their motives.
 - C. To provide enduring incentive.
- III. HOW FIND STABILITY IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD?
 - A. Keep the other-world view.
 - B. Believe implicitly in the worth-whileness of doing right.
 - C. Keep a right standard of values.
 1. "A glass of cold water" philosophy.
 2. The servant complex.
 3. "He that loseth his life . . . shall save it" philosophy.

FRED REEDY

Evening Subject: THE LOVE OF GOD

SCRIPTURE: John 3:1-17; TEXTS: John 3:16; I John 3:16

INTRODUCTION:

- A. That John 3:16 is the golden text of the Bible is no accident. Jesus sets forth the Christian philosophy of revelation and redemption.
- B. This cannot be fully understood until I John 3:16 is set along side of John 3:16.
- I. THE TEXT REVEALS THE NATURE OF GOD IN ITS HIGHEST EXPRESSION.
 - A. The Bible records (1) His creative expressions, (2) His providential expression.
 - B. The highest expression of the nature of God is redemptive.
 - C. This superlative expression of the nature of God is seen in:
 1. The object of His love, sinful man.
 2. The degree of His love, "so loved . . . that he gave"
 3. The universal scope of His love, "Whosoever will"
- II. THE NATURE OF GOD DECLARED UNTO SINFUL MAN DEMANDS A RESPONSE.
 - A. No compulsion like the compulsion of love.
 - B. Love's *vicarious provision* demands a hell for all who refuse.
 1. It is rejection and disobedience that creates hell, not God.
- III. THE LOVE OF GOD REVEALED IN THE CROSS ESTABLISHES THE STANDARD FOR ALL WHO PROFESS TO HAVE PARTAKEN OF THE DIVINE NATURE (I John 3:16).

FRED REEDY

August 28, 1955

Morning Subject: "SEEK YE MY FACE"

SCRIPTURE: Psalms 27; TEXT: verses 7 and 8

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The words of the subject are the reply of God to earnest prayer.
- B. When David made request, God said in effect, "Come closer, let us talk it over face to face" (Exod. 33:11).
- I. GOD DESIRES AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH MAN.
 - A. It was the joy of God to commune with Adam and Eve.
 - B. Here the divine purpose in creation is accomplished.
- II. INTIMACY WITH GOD DEVELOPES GODLIKENESS.
 - A. In attitudes.
 - B. Purposes.
 - C. Nature.
- III. INTIMACY WITH GOD SOLVES THE PROBLEM OF LOOSE LIVING.
 - A. A sound basis for ethical convictions—"Will it contribute to closer fellowship with God, and increased knowledge of Him?"
 - B. An ethical standard which the world respects. The worldling admires the man of sound conviction based upon personal intimacy with God.

FRED REEDY

Evening Subject: "THY FIRST LOVE"

SCRIPTURES: Revelation 2:1-7; 2:18-21; 3:14-19

INTRODUCTION:

- A. To deny the possibility of backsliding is to contradict the plain statements and the logic of the Bible.
- B. These four passages describe four stages of backsliding.
- I. SPIRITUAL BACKSLIDING (Rev. 2:1-7)
 - A. Not a serious departure from the standards of outward righteousness, but "thou hast left thy first love"
- II. ETHICAL BACKSLIDING (Rev. 2:12-17, especially verse 14)
 - A. Spiritual backsliding will soon affect the ethical life so as to make the outward action conform to inner state.
- III. DOCTRINAL BACKSLIDING (verses 18-21)
 - A. After the ethical bulwarks have been penetrated, the next logical step is the collapse of the doctrinal cornerstones which support the ethical bulwarks.
 - B. History testifies consistently to this truth.
- IV. COMPLETE BACKSLIDING
 - A. A fixed attitude of rebellion couched in sophisticated profession (3:14-19) and a false sense of well-being through wrecked standards of value.

FRED REEDY

Morning Meditations from Malachi

By Thomas C. Mangrum*

(A series of five sermons)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

- A. Malachi means "my messenger."
- B. 1:1, "the burden of the word of the Lord"—God's message for His people.
- C. "The moral and religious condition of Israel was at a low ebb. They were the slaves of formalism and self-righteousness; satisfied with themselves, and not hesitating to blaspheme God's name. Therefore instead of the language of promise and encouragement used by Haggai and Zechariah, there was need to substitute the reproofs and warnings of this last of the prophets . . ."—*F. B. Meyer*.
- D. Although written long ago, these messages are very timely for our day, because of the close parallel between the moral and spiritual conditions of Israel and our own times.

I. "WHEREIN HAST THOU LOVED US?"

SCRIPTURE: Malachi 1:1-5

TEXT: *I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast . . . thou loved us?* (Mal. 1:2.)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. "God's love is simply His taking delight in His creatures and prompts Him to give Himself to them in order to promote their highest good."—*S. J. Gamertsfelder*.
- B. He has loved through a love that is:

I. SPONTANEOUS

- A. Love is the ethical nature of God.
 - 1. Like a spring of water.
 - 2. It is His nature to love constantly.
 - 3. God is love (I John 4:8).
- B. God's love expands us.
 - 1. By responding to God's love.
 - 2. Man may increase his consciousness of that love.
 - 3. He may find greater manifestations of that love.
- C. God's love is the example of our love.
 - (1) John 13:34; (2) I John 4:11; (3) I John 4:7, 12, 16

II. SACRIFICIAL

- A. God's love is expressed in the Bible.

Garden of Eden, call to Adam, first Gospel promise, covenant with Noah, covenant with Abraham, deliverance from Egypt, victory in Canaan, constant call to serve Him by prophets, finally the coming of Jesus.

*Pastor, Friends Church, Saxapahaw, North Carolina.
Third-Place Winner, Sermon Series for Sunday Morning Contest, 1954

- B. God's love is essence of the gospel.
(1) I John 4:8, 16; (2) John 15:13; (3) John 3:17; (4) I John 3:1
- C. God's love effected our salvation.
(1) John 3:16; (2) Rom. 5:8; (3) Eph. 2:4, 5; (4) I John 4:9-10; (5) Isa. 63:9

III. SATISFYING

- A. Because it endures forever.
(1) Jer. 31:3; (2) Rom. 8:39
- B. Because it extends to all mankind.
(1) John 3:15-16; (2) Rom. 10:13
- C. Because it exceeds human comprehension. Quote third stanza of "The Love of God," by F. M. Lehman.

CONCLUSION: God's love for mankind does not need to be proven—needs only to be accepted and to become operative in man's life.

C. THOMAS MANGRUM

II. "WHEREIN HAVE WE DESPISED THY NAME?"

SCRIPTURE: Malachi 1:6-14

TEXT: . . . *And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?* (Mal. 1:6.)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Despise—means to regard lightly; to disregard; to insult after enjoying blessing; to scorn.
- B. They despised His name by:

I. POLLUTING HIS ALTAR (Communion)

- A. Their worship was impure.
- B. Their worship had become irksome. "A weariness" (13), "contemptible" (7, 12).
- C. Their worship was insincere. This is an insult to God.
- D. Their worship was improperly engaged in. Their lives did not coincide with their profession.

II. PRESENTING UNACCEPTABLE OFFERINGS (Consecration)

- A. God demanded a perfect sacrifice.
- B. God deserved a perfect sacrifice.
- C. God desired a perfect sacrifice.
- D. God declined imperfect sacrifice.

III. PROFANING HIS NAME (Compromise)

- A. Compromised in creed.
- B. Compromised in conduct.
- C. Compromised in convictions.
- D. Compromised in company.

IV. PENALTY (Consequences)

- A. Fault indicated (9). Through their question (6) we see that they consider themselves innocent and blameless.
- B. Curse involved (14).
- C. Displeasure incurred (10).
- D. Punishment implied (2:3).

C. THOMAS MANGRUM

III. "WHEREIN HAVE WE WEARIED THEE?"

SCRIPTURE: Malachi 2:5-17

TEXT: Malachi 2:17

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Note word "weary."
- B. This idea occurs elsewhere. See Isa. 1:14; Isa. 43:24; Eph. 4:30.
- C. They wearied God because they:
 - I. DEPARTED OUT OF THE WAY (v. 8).
 - A. Feared God (vv. 5-6).
 - B. Failed to abide by revealed truth (v. 8).
 - C. Forfeited the covenant of Levi (v. 4).
 - D. Fault of many stumbling at the law (v. 8).
 - II. DIVORCED FROM HOLY INTEREST (v. 11).

This naturally follows departing out of the way.

 - A. Enticed by worldliness.
 - B. Engaged in worldliness
 - C. Entangled in worldliness.
 - D. Enthused over worldliness.
 - III. DESPISED HOLINESS (v. 11).

When other interests dominate, holiness will be despised.

 - A. Purpose of Israel's being chosen.
 - B. Person of God is holy.
 - C. Not professing sanctity.
 - D. Proper use of bodies.
 - IV. DECLARED TO BE GOOD (v. 17).

This is the usual way to cover up a disregard for holiness.

 - A. Misjudged the prosperity of the wicked.
 - B. Misrepresented evil.
 - C. Mistaken idea of God's justice.
 - D. Missed God's forgiveness and blessing.
 - V. DOUBTED GOD'S JUDGMENT (v. 17)

See how far they have now come.

 - A. Disbelief that judgment would come for their evil.
 - B. Deliberately misunderstanding the delay of judgment.
 - C. Divine judgment is sure to come.
 - D. Delay in judgment means salvation.

C. THOMAS MANGRUM

IV. "WHEREIN HAVE WE ROBBED THEE?"

SCRIPTURE: Malachi 3:8-12

TEXT: Malachi 3:8

INTRODUCTION:

- A. We can rob God in many ways.
- B. But this is about tithing; an important subject.
- I. THE CHARGE (v. 8), "Ye have robbed me."
 - A. Responsibility to do God's work.
 - B. Reason for tithing.
 - C. Robbing God, thus the church.

- II. THE CURSE (v. 9), "Ye are cursed with a curse."
 - A. God had demanded the tithe (Lev. 27:30-32).
 - B. The people defrauded God.
 - C. God had shown displeasure with them.
 - III. THE CHALLENGE (v. 10), "Prove me."
 - A. Pledge of God.
 - B. It pays to tithe.
 - C. Proper answers to common questions.
- CONCLUSION: Robbing God brings a curse. Giving to God brings a blessing. Curse or blessing? Which will be your lot?
- C. THOMAS MANGRUM

V. "WHEREIN SHALL WE RETURN?"

SCRIPTURE: Malachi 3:6-7

TEXT: Malachi 3:7

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Restate the four previous questions the people asked of God.
- B. Now, far from God, they ask in innocence, "How shall we return?"

I. WALKING

- A. Chosen people of God.
- B. Consecrated unto God.
- C. Conscious of God's blessing.

II. WANDERING

- A. Responsibility for wandering was upon man.
- B. Reasons why people begin to wander.
- C. Results of wandering.

III. WARNING

- A. Prepares us for return.
- B. Pleads for our return.
- C. Promises for our return.

IV. WAY OF RETURN

- A. Return as a duty.
- B. Return in same degree as have gone astray.
- C. Return in same direction as before.
- D. Return to deliverance by God.

CONCLUSION

In spite of God's love (regard), man has despised (rejected) Him, wearied Him, and robbed Him. Yet God continues to love and pleads, "Return."

C. THOMAS MANGRUM

Foot in Mouth—

I heard the other day of a pastor that had nine votes against him in his election. The next Sunday they claimed that he preached about the ten lepers that were healed and used for his text, "Where are the nine?"

—B. V. Seals

THE PROMISE OF HOLINESS

TEXT: *And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49).*

INTRODUCTION:

- A. It was promised in the Old Testament.
- B. Christ promised it to His disciples.

I. THE AUTHOR OF THE PROMISE

- A. His willingness to perform.
- B. His power to perform.

II. THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE

- A. The coming of the Holy Spirit.
- B. The signs and wonders at Pentecost.

III. THE RECIPIENTS OF THE PROMISE

- A. They were Christians.
- B. They were following Christ's command to tarry.

CONCLUSION: This promise was not for the disciples alone. It is still in effect today. The conditions are the same, and the experience can be obtained by all who will meet the conditions.

DARRELL MOORE, *Pastor*
Abilene, Texas

A VISION OF GOD

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 6

INTRODUCTION: Man needs a vision that will call him away from himself and focus his attention on God. Isaiah witnessed three things.

I. HE WITNESSED GOD'S PRESENCE.

- A. He saw Him as King, the Master of his life.
- B. His presence filled the Temple.
- C. He saw God's holiness.

II. HE WITNESSED HIS OWN POLLUTION (v. 5).

- A. God's presence will reveal one's real self.
- B. God's presence will reveal all existing sin.
- C. Isaiah saw the sin of his heart.

III. HE WITNESSED THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- A. He was touched by God. (It takes the Divine to sanctify.)
- B. His sin was purged. (Carnality removed.)
- C. His consecration was complete.

PAUL W. LEE, *Pastor*
Mt. Vernon, Illinois

Book Club Selection for August

PREACHING ON BIBLE CHARACTERS

By Faris D. Whitesell (Baker, \$2.50)

There is a double-pronged thesis back of the writing of this book. (1) There is a distinct upsurge of enthusiasm among the laity for preaching on Bible characters, stemming from the prominence given to the study of personality in our present day. (2) The man who can preach with interest from Bible characters will be bound to have a hearing.

This is not a series of sermons on Bible characters. This is a "know-how" book for the minister who would like to improve his preaching at this point, and who wouldn't? The author begins with a discussion on the advantages of Bible-character preaching. One point in this first chapter is blessedly true—people will remember longer that type of preaching. The second chapter discusses organization of Bible-character sermons. Then there follows a chapter dealing briefly with a number of noted preachers who majored on Bible-character preaching. The author also lists a great variety of possible series on Bible characters.

You can see that this is not a spring of inspiration that will make you pace the floor. It is a down-to-earth "know-how" book to lead you into the workshop of better preaching.

The author is professor of practical theology at Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EVANGELISM

By J. B. Lawrence (Zondervan, \$1.50)

Here is a book whose very title would lure any person who has a natural love for the work of the Holy Spirit. But, sad to say, the book falls far short of honoring the Holy Spirit as He would be honored. The writer moves steadily onward in his discussion of the work of the Holy Spirit. Just when you think he will announce the eradication of inner sin, he veers off to the side, detours, and so having said a lot of nice things about the work of the Holy Spirit, there is no final riddance in one grand act of faith, of the last remains of sin.

One of the best "almost holiness" books one might pick up.

REVIVAL SERMON OUTLINES

Compiled by Al Bryant (Zondervan, \$1.00)

Here is an old idea with a very new approach. The compiler has gathered well over one hundred very fine revival outlines and has them published in loose-leaf form. In a very simple way any leaf may be removed, used, and replaced again in the book. See what I mean by a novel idea?

Now as to the contents. These outlines are gleaned from a wide variety of preachers: Spurgeon is well represented, and so are our own Nazarene ministers. There are several outlines from our *PREACHER'S MAGAZINE*. Dr. L. Guy Nees is honored with one of his outlines having a place. There are no strongly Calvinistic outlines, and all are thoroughly evangelical, and all appear to be well adapted to effective evangelism.

BRANDS FROM THE BURNING

By Millard A. Jenkins (Broadman, \$1.50)

As its title implies, this is a book on soul winning. It is vigorous and carries quite a thrust. The writer made personal soul winning a "must" in his life, and most of the illustrations in the book are gleaned from his own experience. This will provide many fine illustrations for pulpit evangelism; also it will enrich the motives to soul winning wherever "burning brands" may be found.

The book is distinctly denominational but not spoiled for our use because of that. One suggestion of approval of lodges we would disown, but apart from that it is very acceptable as another companion to our personal evangelism books. Well worth the price.

HINGES OF DESTINY

By Ralph W. Loew (Muhlenberg, \$2.75)

This is a well-written sermon series, the first one giving the title to the book. The writer thinks very clearly and his style is as crisp as head lettuce. As you read, you will find yourself reaching for a pencil to jot down quotes and check illustrations. The march of truth in these messages is brightened by gleanings from the classics and from modern writers.

There is scarcely any doctrinal emphasis and what there is, is not Wesleyan. But what the book lacks in theological support it makes up in replenishing the minister's idea cupboard, providing sermon starters, and adding illustrations to his stock.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

By J. C. Macaulay (Eerdmans, \$1.50)

This is a study of the life in the Spirit as exemplified in the Acts of the Apostles. The book is stimulating and has a very fine emphasis. The chapter headings indicate the broad coverage of the study: The Promise of the Spirit, The Enlightenment of the Spirit, The Fellowship of the Spirit, The Leading of the Spirit, The Discipline of the Spirit, The Severity of the Spirit.

The author is not a second-crisis man and so with him the fullness of the Spirit is a gradual thing. This is a serious weakness of the book. He does not seem to be crystal-clear in his thinking relative to speaking in tongues as related to the coming of the Holy Spirit. So, while this would not be an eradication book, yet it is a valuable study of the work of the Holy Spirit as given in the Acts.

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JAMES

By Stephen W. Paine (Revell, \$2.75)

Not an exposition of the Epistle, but popular-type sermons based on the outstanding texts of the book. These are conservative and are built around some splendid illustrative material. The chapter on "The Hazard of the Heights" is excellent.

This will not doctrinally shout out the Wesleyan position, yet gives strong implication in that direction. Certainly it does not support the Calvinistic position in any way.

Rather expensive but would make a fine addition to the section in a library on the Epistle of James.

***THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST**

By Rene Pache (Moody, \$4.95)

This is definitely thorough. One is amazed at the number of scriptures that are rallied to substantiate the prophetic point of view. I have not read a book that I can remember that gives such a careful study of all the ramifications of the Lord's return. Biblical prophecy as such is carefully studied and becomes the introduction.

The writer's point of view is unmistakeably premillennial. Yet he avoids some obnoxious speculations that have soured some people on that prophetic view in years gone by. He espouses a gradualism relative to sanctification, which lessens the value to Wesleyan readers.

The distinct service is its complete coverage of all scriptures related to prophecy. One is immediately faced with the fact that the scriptures are not the familiar King James Version. And as no reference is given to tell which version is quoted we must assume that all the scriptures are taken from the French.

This will be a splendid reference work for students who desire a careful study of the premillennial return of Christ.

***THE GOSPEL IN LEVITICUS**

By J. A. Seiss (Zondervan, \$3.95)

This will be worth the price only to a preacher who likes preaching from the Pentateuch—and more should do so. It is a reprint of an old classic by the well-known Joseph Seiss.

This is Calvinistic in the interpretation of holiness, and the writer allows not for the life of victory. But having said this, there is a great wealth of splendid material supporting the conversion experience. And relative to sanctification any of our Wesleyan ministers can put the grist through his own mill and make his own flour. Seiss certainly provides the whole grain in abundance.

***TWENTY STEWARDSHIP SERMONS**

By Pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Augsburg, \$3.00)

This could be classified as one of the better books of stewardship sermons. It is forthright in its vigorous appeal for stewardship. These sermons have been culled from the cream of a denomination-wide search, so quite naturally these have polish and clarity. They are dotted with sparkling quotations, such as "No arrangement of dead branches can make an orchard." That is usable and pointed, wouldn't you say?

There are spots where sectarian leanings protrude, which is to be expected in a book thus prepared. But these do not spoil the book. In planning your stewardship preaching for 1956 this will be really helpful.

Listing of a book in BOOK BRIEFS does not constitute endorsement of that book. Our thought is to present such books as may be of interest to our pastors, suggesting their values, pointing out their appeals and frequently their weaknesses—and, occasionally, a book that our readers may know of its demerits.

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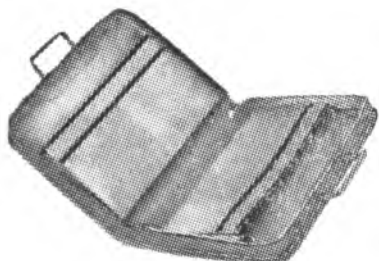
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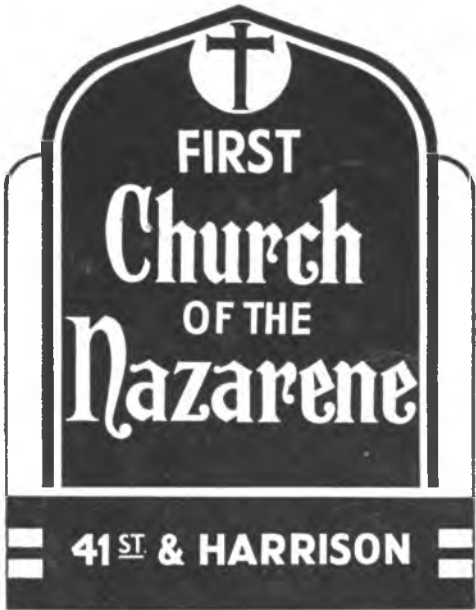
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Other in bottom panel

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- the N.Y.P. Society
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- some church family

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