

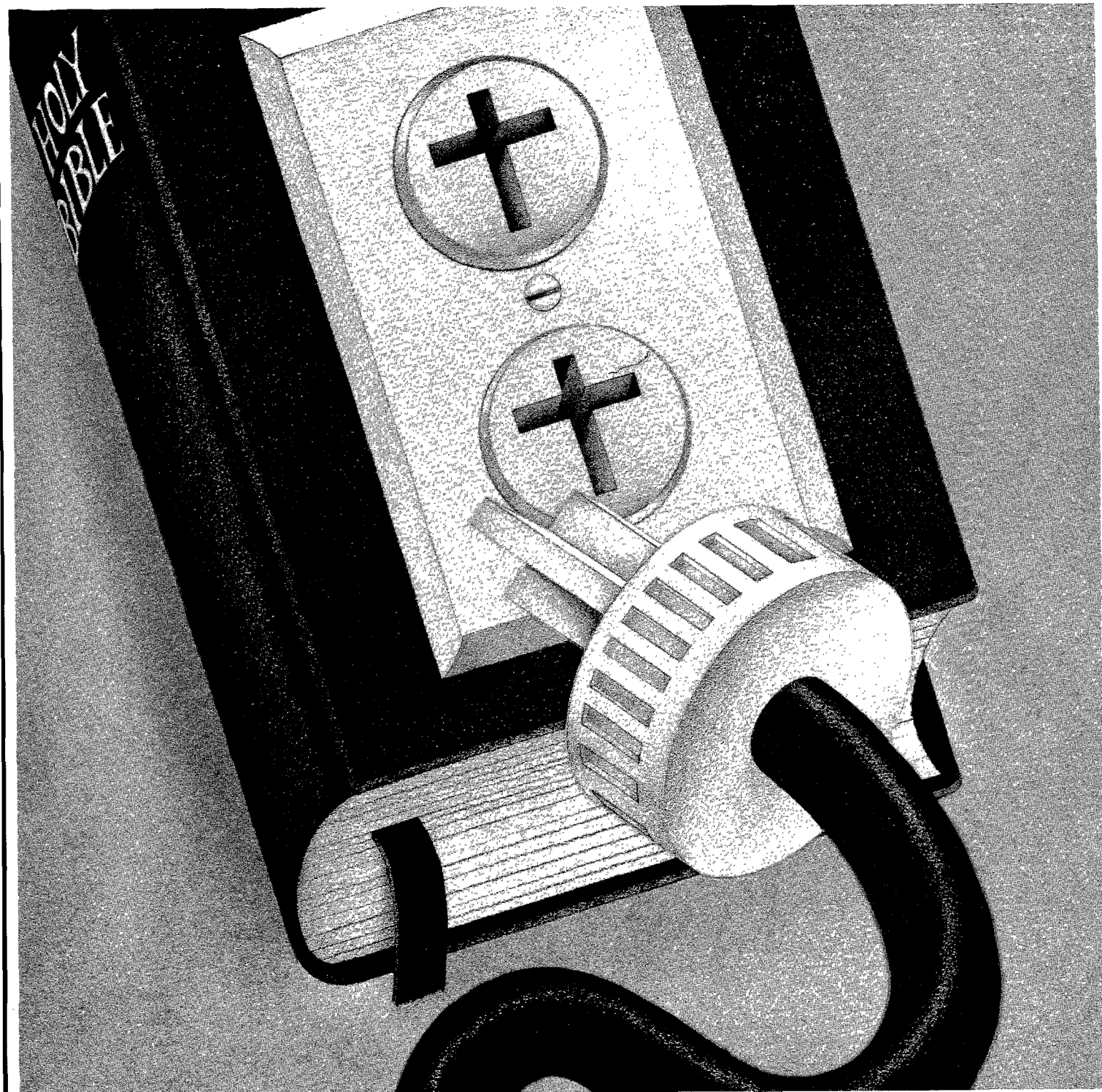
# MINISTRY

A MAGAZINE FOR CLERGY



JANUARY 1981

Pastor power?



The saving knowledge of the truth/see page 14

# LETTERS

## Washington for Jesus pro and con

Please do not send *MINISTRY* to me anymore. I was very disgusted with your article on the Washington for Jesus rally. As Christians, we should be the salt of the earth. If anyone should be involved in politics it is Christians.

Christian minister  
California

Especially helpful was your article warning us as evangelicals against throwing our political weight behind a candidate simply because he seems to be "God fearing." Any man or woman who wants our vote must be prepared to stand on more than a mouthful of religious words and clichés. Men and women of God who lead in congregations should be careful lest they find that as a result of naiveté they publicly support a candidate who embarrasses and damages their ability to represent God.

Baptist minister  
Maryland

As you might expect, there have been times when I have scratched my head and wondered what *MINISTRY* was all about. But the article "Washington for Jesus—Really?" was great! I was beginning to wonder if anyone felt the way I do about it.

Baptist minister  
Pennsylvania

I was extremely upset by the Washington for Jesus article and the spirit of antichrist and humanism that oozed from it. Here is a group of Christians trying to salt the earth and be the light set on a lampstand, and the best you can come up with is insults! The article makes a show of verbose intellectualism, but in reality it denies the blood of the One who died for the world. Your joining the liberal, anti-God, agnostic crowd of rock

throwers while hiding behind a phony veneer of pure Christianity is diabolical.

Nondenominational minister  
Kansas

No doubt your insightful article concerning Christians in politics has gotten you into trouble. Anytime one begins to question the activities of any well-meaning group the cries of unchristian and misguided intellectualism rend the air. I hope your readership doesn't suffer too much because some folks don't like constructive criticism. The great and difficult question remains: At what point do my wishes and perspectives begin to infringe on and negate the wishes and perspective of others? Do I, or any group however well-meaning, have the right to such power? Please continue such thought-provoking articles.

Presbyterian minister  
Georgia

I appreciated the excellent articles in September's issue. "China Report" was informative and encouraging. "Washington for Jesus—Really?" was admirably fair in analyzing the mind of the radical right in religion.

United Methodist minister  
Illinois

I was there on April 29 for the Washington for Jesus march. Never have I been in a more unified and holy convocation. Hegstad's article paints a very dim picture of the church, the power of prayer, the sharpness of the sword of the Spirit, and the endeavor of Christian Americans to turn their country back to God. Such a defeatist attitude! Mr. Hegstad's position "the church . . . can never force faith into any . . . heart" is granted. But in the meantime evangelicals are not going to sit around while crime, filth, abortion, prayerless

schools, dope peddling, rampant humanism, pornography, and mutilation of the American family and flag destroy our whole way of life!

Assembly of God minister  
Massachusetts

Special thanks for Roland Hegstad's "Washington for Jesus—Really?" The evangelical power bloc is religious bigotry in thin disguise. In the name of "salvation" these crusaders would oppress. I have many times witnessed their efforts to take from others the freedom to live by convictions different from their own. Given the chance, they would legislate their "morality" on all, with punishment for violations. Others who have punished in order to "liberate" have been rightly called persecutors; these we are supposed to admire? There is no resemblance here to Christian witness.

Episcopal minister  
California

I am disturbed in your recent article, "Washington for Jesus—Really?" at your lack of basic insight into common goals. Are we so apart from one another that we cannot join with one purpose in the advancement of the kingdom of God, even if it is through one group or another? I am sure that the leaders in Washington could care less about the Jesus march last April. This viewpoint will probably persist until we come to grips with the fact that our God is not on the throne in Washington, and never will be until each of us Christians carry the banner of truth, justice, morality, and all Christian ideals. It matters not at all to me who gets through to Washington first with these ideas. My prayer is: Please, Lord, send the message to those who can change the way this nation is presently

(Continued on page 19.)

## An outstretched hand

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

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

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

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

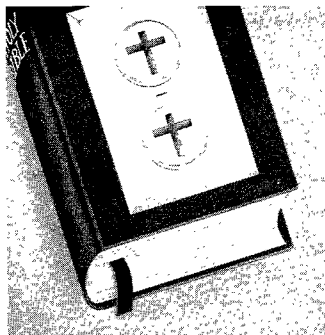
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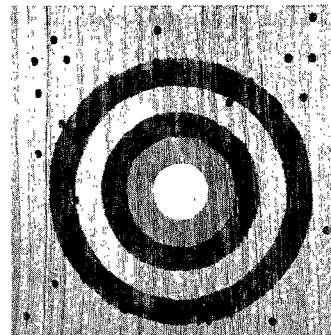
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- 9 Finding the Right Pastor Isn't Easy!** Jean Shaw. Would you rather have the Princeton #467, with Ph.D. and AKC papers at \$16,000 a year plus house, or settle for the used model at a reduced price (all he needs is a fresh suit!)? You just may not find a pastor with all the requirements on the committee's list.
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- 14 The Saving Knowledge of the Truth.** Daniel Bazikian. "We Evangelicals," says the author, "often fail listeners in our presentation of the gospel. By neglecting the teaching of sound spiritual truth and by concentrating on the realm of personal experience, we have not provided people with the necessary elements for proper Christian experience and nurture."
- 16 Putting Your Sermon on Target.** In this fifth article in his series on expository preaching, John Osborn gives preachers some definite methods of so limiting and defining their topic that their hearers will be able to remember and state clearly its specific aim.
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# The Elijah to come— man or message?

A remarkable Old Testament prophecy points to a renewed preaching of the everlasting gospel in the days just before the second coming of Christ.

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by Hans K. LaRondelle



**T**he last chapter of the Old Testament contains a remarkable prophecy. It is remarkable not only because it is God's final warning message to His ancient covenant people but because it contains the basic elements of a last warning message sent also to us, His new-covenant people. Thus we may read it and study it with solemn regard for our own fate:

"For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go forth leaping like calves from the stall. And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts.

"Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse'" (Mal. 4).\*

Little wonder that the reading of these verses can bring a solemn hush to a congregation, for they contain the elements of high drama, beginning with a crisis for the people of God that comes just before the "great and terrible day of the Lord." A messenger is sent to save God's people from that day in which the wicked will be burned up in a destruction so complete that neither "root nor branch" shall be left (verse 1). Reception of the message is critical: If it is rejected God will "smite the land with a curse." If it is received families will be united with God in a covenant that brings blessings to their land.

If the message points to the second advent of Jesus Christ and the final judgment of all mankind—as the Protestant Reformers understood—then it would seem imperative that we understand it. What does it say to us? Who is this Elijah to whom it is entrusted? Is he the same prophet who addressed Israel during the crisis of Baal apostasy? Does the message appear in this or some other

**If the message points to the second advent of Jesus Christ and the final judgment of all mankind—as the Protestant Reformers understood—then it would seem imperative that we understand it.**

form in the Apocalypse, that book that seems to major in persecution and apostasy?

#### **Elijah—man or message?**

Throughout history a number of messengers have claimed to be Elijah, as do some in our day. For this reason, as well, it is important that we understand the meaning of this remarkable and intriguing prophecy of Elijah's return. Unless we do we shall not be able to distinguish between the true and the false Elijah.

To Malachi and his contemporaries, the historic Elijah the Tishbite (1 Kings 17:1) was an "ancient" prophet. He lived more than four centuries before Malachi, and some eight or nine hundred years before Christ. The book of Kings reveals that Elijah was called to be a prophet to Israel in a time of great apostasy. Israel had fallen into Baal worship, and Elijah's message called God's covenant people to revival and reform.

Thus, when God says to Malachi, "I will send Elijah again," we may assume that God's people again have apostatized. And Yahweh, the covenant God who chose Israel and disclosed Himself to them, may be assumed to be sending, again, a saving message.

On superficial reading, the promise would seem to indicate that the prophet himself would return. I believe, however, that the prophecy points us to a two-fold repetition of the *message* of Elijah rather than to the return of the actual prophet. First, we may look for a message of revival and reformation similar in spirit and nature to that of Elijah, designed to prepare the way for the first advent of Jesus. Second, we may look for a further message, similar in spirit and nature to that given by the ancient prophet, the purpose of which is to prepare the way for the second advent of Jesus. The Elijah message, then, does not point to the reincarnation or reappearance of the literal prophet, but rather is a call to prepare for the advent of Jesus.

My conclusion is based on a conver-

sation between Jesus and His disciples found in Matthew 17:10-13. The disciples and the rabbis apparently were disputing over the identity of Jesus. The rabbis argued that Jesus could not be the Messiah, because Elijah must come before Messiah appears. The disciples evidently had no ready answer, so they did the right thing: They went to Jesus and asked Him, What about it, Lord?

Jesus replied, "'Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of man will suffer at their hands.' Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist" (verses 11-13).

To say, then, that Elijah is not to return in person, is simply to follow the interpretation that Christ Himself gave us. He interprets Malachi 4 this way. And Christ is, to me, the key to all interpretation. Jesus makes it clear that the prediction of Elijah in Malachi 4 is the prediction of a message, a message carried before the first advent of Jesus by John the Baptist.

When asked whether he was Elijah, John replied "I am not" (John 1:21). John here rejects the reincarnation idea that had permeated rabbinical theology from Greek Hellenism. His response further strengthens our understanding that we must look for a message rather than a man. Again John emphasized: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said" (verse 23). He turns to another prophecy and declares "'I am the voice.'" The voice is not the person; it is simply the message.

To put the final stamp on this conclusion we may turn to the explanation of John's mission given by the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:17. There the angel explains to John's parents what his mission is to be: "'He will go before him'—that is, be sent by the God of Israel—in the spirit and power of Elijah, to

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## The Elijah message does not point to the reincarnation or reappearance of the literal prophet, but rather is a call to prepare for the advent of Jesus.

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turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

Here the very words of Malachi 4 are quoted by Gabriel and applied to John's mission. So in saying that the Elijah message is a message of preparation for Christ's advent Gabriel interpreted the Old Testament christologically.

Thus the New Testament itself provides the key to understanding the original prophecy also in relation to the second advent of Christ. It is to this event that the ancient prophecy most directly points, as we may note by its emphasis on the “great and terrible” day of judgment. The Old Testament prophets used this phrase to focus on the final day of ultimate judgment, which in the New Testament is said to occur in connection with the second advent of Jesus. The apostles call the day of judgment the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (See 1 Cor. 1:7, 8; 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14.)

### John's message

The Elijah message is to be repeated, then, before the second coming of Jesus Christ. It will prepare a people to meet God in judgment. We may understand better the purpose of the last Elijah message by noting what John the Baptist did to prepare people for the first advent. The Scripture says that he was to “restore all things” (Matt. 17:11). He was doing what Elijah had done, calling the people to revival and reformation. The message was ill-received, for the people saw themselves as righteous. Imagine their reaction when John told them, “You have to repent and be baptized with the baptism of repentance to wash away your sins.” In the truest sense, this call was to restore the covenant relationship, to walk in repentance, sensing anew the sinfulness of human nature and our dependence upon God.

He presented the message in its unadorned candor to King Herod, pointing out without a stutter the king's illicit relationship with his brother's wife. John stood before one who had the power to kill him and said, “The Lord forbids you

to continue to violate the holy covenant of God, the seventh commandment” (see Luke 3:19). This faithful presentation of his message cost John his life. Herod's wife, Herodias, became angry; John was put in prison, and finally beheaded because he had the courage to stand for God's commandments. He sacrificed himself for the Heaven-born message, for the restoration of God's covenant of grace, of law and gospel (see John 1:29).

Is such a courageous message needed today? Never have men trampled more insolently on God's commandments. Never has sin spoken more permissively nor pervasively. Never has God been more widely rejected, never His Word more disregarded. Never, we may conclude, has the Elijah message been more needed. That's why God calls us to understand the message and to sound it again in “all power” from one end of the earth to the other. God is sovereign over this world, and He cannot tolerate sin forever.

Many signs—as, for example, in Matthew 24—indicate that judgment is at hand. The Elijah message itself is the seal on this understanding, for it witnesses that Christ is coming back soon. No man knows the hour or the day (see Matt. 24:36), but in the same discourse Jesus cautioned us to learn a lesson: “As soon as its [the fig tree's] branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates” (verses 32, 33).

The Elijah message adds to our sense of Christ's imminent return, because the message must come at the right time. John the Baptist did not come ages before the first advent; he introduced it. Likewise, the proclamation of the Elijah message introduces the Second Advent. It is a message of worldwide impact, calling God's people, wherever they are, out of apostasy and back to the right covenant relationship with God.

To understand the meaning of the message for our day we must examine more closely the essentials of the mes-

sage as first given by Elijah. By doing this, we will be safeguarded from basic misinterpretation.

### Elijah's message

In 1 Kings 16:30-33 we read of the marriage of King Ahab and “Jezebel the daughter of Eth-baal king of the Sidonians.” Marriage to a pagan was forbidden Israel's kings because with the marriage partner often came a pagan religion. And so it was. Baal worship was introduced, amalgamated with the true worship of Yahweh, and imposed upon the people.

Baal worship is explained more fully in 2 Kings 23, where it is revealed as a form of sun worship. Under this system, the people worshiped “all the host of heaven,” burning “incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven” (verse 5). Baal worship in Israel, however, was an amalgamation, blending tenets of the Hebrew faith and Baalism into one system. The result was that the ten northern tribes “left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal” (chap. 17:16).

Elijah's mission was to call Israel out of apostasy, back to God and His commandments. God cannot be separated from His commandments; it is through them that He expresses His will. Thus to reject God's will is to reject God Himself.

As the sign of Israel's apostasy, God withheld the rain (see Deuteronomy 11). For three and one-half years, a disastrous period for the nation, no rain fell. One might expect that after a year the Israelites would go to their knees to discover what was wrong with them religiously. Instead, Ahab and Jezebel hardened their hearts and the people suffered terribly. At the end of the three and one-half years God sent Elijah back to the apostate leaders with a final appeal.

As a boy, I always trembled when the preacher read of Elijah's appeal on Mount Carmel. In the best sense of the word, I felt “fear” of the Lord, which, of course, means far more than to be frightened of God. It is, on the one hand, to sense the infinite distance between the holy God and sinful man, and on the other, the infinite closeness of One who offers love and salvation. Fear of the Lord in all the Old Testament is intimately connected with heartfelt obedi-



# It is a message of worldwide impact, calling God's people, wherever they are, out of apostasy and back to the right covenant relationship with God.

ence to God's commandments. And it is to obedience that Elijah calls the Israelites in the dramatic Mount Carmel appeal.

## Obedience is not legalism

God never brings a curse or a judgment to wound only; His purpose is to heal. He appeals to Israel not with an admonishing finger wag that says, *You are wrong. Rather in love He pleads with them to find, through repentance, a saving relationship with Him, their true and only Saviour and Redeemer, the Creator, the covenant God.* Here is not the legalism some attach to appeals to keep God's commandments, but rather a love relationship that produces loving obedience. The New Testament pleads—"If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (1 John 14:15); and "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3)—are but an echo of Elijah's loving plea to his countrymen. Legalism is reliance for salvation on one's own obedience, on one's own works of righteousness. Legalism misuses the law by the endeavor to establish righteousness by works. It is a distortion of a proper relationship with God and His law.

There is a tendency today among some to identify legalism with the religion of the Old Testament. But the Old Testament too was trying to bring God's children to the covenant of grace. While we rightly condemn Phariseism, we must not identify it with the Old Testament as if the two are one and the same. To do so is to devalue and to debase the basic text of Christianity. There would be no Christianity today, but rather some form of gnosticism, had not the church attested to the Old Testament's status as the source book for Christians.

The New Testament cannot be understood without the Old. And the Old cannot be unlocked without the New. Consider the Elijah message. We could not understand it without the Old Testament. We would not even understand how to prepare a people for the Second Advent if it were not for this message of

revival and reformation that called God's people to prepare for His first advent.

How was the message received in Elijah's day? The record of a meeting between Elijah and Ahab, king of Israel, reveals the answer. When Ahab saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" (1 Kings 18:17).

Elijah answered: "I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father's house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals" (verse 18).

Here we see that true worship centers in divine revelation. Worship is obedience, never disobedience. It is to this decision that Elijah wishes to lead God's people. The Elijah message, then, brings to God's people the hour of decision:

"And Elijah came near to all the people, and said, 'How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him'" (verse 21).

What a dramatic hour! And what a sad result. The people, says the Scripture, "did not answer him a word." But Elijah presses ahead. As the Scripture says, he is to "restore all things" (Matt. 17:11). The true religion of Israel must be restored according to the original pattern. So we read, "And he repaired the altar of the Lord that had been thrown down" (1 Kings 18:30).

Here we get a glimpse of what Baal worship had done. It had distorted and rejected the worship of Yahweh and the way of salvation. Elijah takes twelve stones and builds an altar. By so doing he revives salvation by grace (see Lev. 17:11), and emphasizes the unity of the twelve tribes, making no concession to their division into ten northern tribes and two southern tribes. Surely here is a message of unity and of the restoration of law and gospel.

John the Baptist's message, as we might expect, contained the essentials of the Elijah message. He called the people back to God's commandments and to true repentance by faith in the Lamb of God (see John 1:29). They signified their acceptance of the message by their bap-

tism for the forgiveness of sins (see Luke 3:3). So it was that John fulfilled his commission to prepare the way for the first advent of Jesus.

And so it must be in our day. As disciples of Jesus we must call modern man back from apostasy, back from whatever sophisticated form such "idol worship" may take today: from the Baals of materialism, the occult, false concepts of the gospel of God. Elijah's message is a call to come back from legalism on the one hand and permissiveness on the other, back to the true worship of Yahweh, back to the original pattern of law and gospel. That has been the purpose of God in all ages: to bring mankind back to His covenant. And so God sent the embodiment of His law and gospel in the Messiah, Jesus, to walk among us, that we might know what God is like, and seek to walk with God.

## The message for our day

The Elijah message for our day is found in Revelation 14:14-20. The setting, as in Elijah's time, is judgment. John sees a "white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand." An angel calls to the One on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." So he who sat upon the cloud swung his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped."

The verses themselves should impress us that here is a symbolic portrayal of the second advent of Christ. He comes with a crown—as King of kings—and with a sickle—as judge. The final hour of judgment pointed to by all the prophets is now at hand. The imagery of these verses comes from Joel, which is, as it were, a capsule apocalypse of the Old Testament. Joel pictures Yahweh standing in the valley of Jehoshaphat judging the nations that have persecuted His covenant people. In Joel 3:13 appears the phrase, "Put in the sickle." Here is our bridge from the book of Joel to Revelation 14:14-20. John the Revelator takes his imagery from the book of Joel. We must conclude, then, that John interprets Joel's ancient apocalypse of Yahweh as the day of Christ's judgment. And Christ Himself declares in John 5:22 that His Father "has given all judgment to the Son." Christ returns not only as Saviour but as judge of the world.

But as in Elijah's day, and as in John the Baptist's day, He will not come without first providing a call for repent-

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## If a church is not preaching the basic message of the saving gospel of God's free, sovereign grace, it is not fulfilling the mission it professes.

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ance, a call to return to true worship, a call to preparation for judgment. And just such a call appears in Revelation 14, where three angels sound an apocalyptic message.

Do the messages sound mysterious? Indecipherable? They are not, though much of the Christian world seems to think so. Such a conclusion is denied by the very term *apocalypse*, which means "unveiling." The angel at the end of the book says, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book" (Rev. 22:10). The book of Daniel was sealed (see Dan. 12:4). Until the "time of the end" it was to be a closed book. But the Apocalypse was never sealed. Its imagery of blood and horns and beasts is intended to convey a last-day message to mankind. We must never get so bogged down in the imagery that we fail to see the finger of God painting a rainbow of promise for His church.

The messages of the three angels of Revelation 14 are given to be understood. They are the Elijah message for our day, calling God's people, wherever they are, whatever they are called—Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Nazarene, Seventh-day Adventist, Baptist—back to total commitment to God's revealed will, back to true worship, back to the footsteps of Jesus.

The name of the church we profess to follow is not really so very important, because a church does not save. And if a church does not save, then surely its name cannot save. What is most important is whether a church hears and is responding to the Elijah message, a message that as in the day of Ahab's apostasy and in the day of John the Baptist calls men to return to "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (verse 12).

As in former times, the Elijah message for today calls men back from the worship of creation itself to Creator worship—"worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water" (verse 7). This places the meaning of the fourth commandment in the focal center. A terrible warning of judgment is sent to those who instead

worship "the beast and its image," which Protestant commentators have identified with apostate religion, the systematic deviation from God's holy law and gospel. An angel messenger solemnly declares that Babylon—the apostate religious system—is "fallen, fallen." It is judged by God (verse 8).

It is significant that God's people are called back to the "endurance" or "patience" of the saints (verse 12). Endurance is perseverance. Here is an appeal not only to *become* Christians but to *remain* Christians, even in the face of persecution, which is often the lot of those who sincerely follow the commandments of God. Thus we see that, as in Elijah's day, commandmentkeeping is one of the marks identifying true worshipers of God. And, again, a terrible curse is to rest upon those who defy God and His will (see verses 9-11).

Finally, it is to the "faith of Jesus" that mankind here is called (verse 12). So compelling is this faith that those who have it are willing to follow Jesus all the way, wherever He goes. In some cases that may even require following Him right out of the church we profess. As we have noted, the name of the church is not so significant as its message. Is it preaching the commandments of Jesus? Is it calling mankind back to true covenant relationship with God? Is it reflecting the faith of Jesus in its world mission? Is it reflecting the faith of Jesus in its preaching of, and response to, the Elijah message, which is a call to revival and reformation?

### The everlasting gospel

The kernel of the three angels' messages is found in verse 6: "Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people." All the messages can be summed up in this one comprehensive term: *eternal gospel*. If it is not the gospel, the ancient, unchanged gospel, that is being preached, the preacher cannot rightfully call himself Elijah. He is not preaching in the spirit and power and truth of Elijah. If a

church is not preaching the basic message of the saving gospel of God's free sovereign grace, if it does not preach righteousness by faith alone without works of law, then it is not fulfilling the mission it professes: it is not preaching the one and only gospel of God.

It is significant that the word *gospel* is here used in connection with the word *everlasting* or *eternal*. In no other place in the Bible is gospel thus qualified. I think the qualification is added here because those who preach the message of the three angels are in danger of preaching a different gospel. A gospel that focuses so much on the warnings against Babylon and the beast and the mark of the beast that it condemns rather than saves.

The eternal gospel saves. It is the only way from paradise lost to paradise restored. It spans all dispensations. It is the same gospel message that Isaiah preached. The same message that John the Baptist preached. The same gospel that Jesus preached. The same gospel that Paul preached. The same gospel that also the last generation must proclaim.

The essence of this gospel is, as Paul, the masterful theologian, presents it in Romans 3:28: "We hold that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of law." The Greek reads "without works of law." This safeguards salvation by divine grace, by the undeserved favor of God. Faith in such grace brings rebirth and love for God. The person who loves God *loves* to keep His commandments. Love produces obedience. Works of love follow the wholehearted reception of the eternal gospel.

The Elijah message—whether in the day of Israel's apostasy or just preceding Christ's first advent or today—calls us back to true worship, a worship that radiates divine love. While the gospel proclamation calls us to be obedient to God's commandments, it is the very antithesis of legalism, for it points us from dependence on works to total dependence on Christ and His works on our behalf. It is this message, preached now, that prepares mankind to stand in judgment, face to face with One who comes with both crown and sickle, as King of kings and righteous Judge.

Now, while He still freely offers His saving grace, the Elijah message calls for our decision: "'How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him'" (1 Kings 18:21).

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\* All Scripture references are taken from the Revised Standard Version.



# Finding the right pastor isn't easy!

Shopping for a new pastor is not exactly the same as buying a new car, even though pastors, like automobiles, come in a variety of models and styles.

by Jean Shaw

Good morning, madam. May I help you?

Yes, please, I'd like to buy a minister. For yourself or your church?

Oh, for my church, of course. I'm already married.

Uh, yes. Did you have a particular model in mind?

I've got a description from the Candidate Committee right here. We want a man about 30, well educated, with some

experience. Good preacher and teacher. Balanced personality. Serious, but with a sense of humor. Efficient, but not rigid. Good health. Able to identify with all age groups. And, if possible, sings tenor.

Sings tenor?

We're short of tenors in the choir.

I see. Well, that's quite a list. How much money did you want to spend?

The committee says \$9,000, \$9,500 tops.

H'mmm. Well, perhaps we'd better start in the bargain department.

Tell me, how much is that model in the window?

You mean the one in the Pendleton plaid suit and the gray suede dune boots?

Yes, that one. He's a real dream.

That's our Princeton #467. Has a Ph.D. and AKC papers.

AKC?

American Koinonia Council. He sells for \$16,000 plus house.

Wow! That's too rich for our blood. What about that model over there?

Ah, yes. An exceptional buy. Faith #502. He's a little older than 30, but has excellent experience. Aggressive. Good heart. Has a backing of sermons, two of which have been printed in *Christian Leaders*.

He's not too bad. Can you do something about his bald head? Mrs. Penner especially insists that our minister have some hair.

Madam, all our ministers come in a variety of hairstyles.

I'll keep him in mind.

Now let me show you Olympia #222. Four years of varsity sports at Brass Ring College, Plays football, basketball, volleyball, and ping-pong. Comes complete with sports equipment.

What a physique! He must weigh 200 pounds!

Yes, indeed. You get a lot for your money with this one. And think what he can do for your young people.

Great. But how is he at preaching?

I must admit he's not St. Peter. But you can't expect good sermons and a churchwide athletic program too!

I suppose not. Still . . .

Let me show you our Fresno #801. Now here's a preacher. All his sermons are superb—well researched, copious anecdotes, and they always have three points. And—he comes with a full set of the *Religious Encyclopedia* at no extra charge! You get the whole package for \$8,300.

He's wearing awfully thick glasses.

For \$220 more we put in contact lenses.

I don't know. He might study too much. We don't want a man who's in his office all the time.

Of course. How about this minister over here? Comes from a management background. Trained in business operations at Beatitude College. Adept with committees. Gets his work done by 11:30 every morning.

His tag says he's an IBM 400.

Madam, you have a discerning eye. Innovative Biblical Methods. This man will positively revitalize your church.

I'm not sure our church wants to be revitalized. Haven't you got something less revolutionary?

Well, would you like someone of the social-worker type? We have this Ghetto #130.

The man with the beard? Good gracious, no. Mrs. Penner would never go for that.

How about our Empathy #41C? His forte is counseling. Very sympathetic. Patient. Good with people who have problems.

Everyone in our church has problems. But he might not get out and visit new people. We really need a man who does a lot of visitation. You see, all our people are very busy and . . .

Yes, yes, I understand. You want a minister who can do everything well.

That's it! Haven't you got somebody like that?

I'm thinking. In our back room we have a minister who was traded in last week. Excellent man, but he broke down after three years. If you don't mind a used model, we can sell him at a reduced price.

Well, we had hoped for someone brand-new. We just redecorated the sanctuary, and we wanted a new minister to go with it.

Of course. But with a little exterior work, and a fresh suit, this man will look like he just came out of the box. No one will ever know. Let me bring him out and you can look him over.

All right. Honestly, this minister-shopping is exhausting. It's so hard to get your money's worth. Tell me, do you also give Green Stamps with the contract?

Uh-no. But if there's any dissatisfaction after six months, we send a new congregation for the balance of the year. That usually takes care of most problems.

From *Please Don't Stand Up in My Canoe*, by Jean Shaw © 1975 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission.

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Although the pastor  
might like to think  
that his role is  
beyond such mundane  
and grubby pursuits,  
the church, no less  
than the world,  
must be concerned  
with power.  
The difference lies in  
the model one takes.

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by Gordon Bietz



# Pastor power?

**P**ower has become a catchword for phrases around which the disenfranchised can gather. There is black power, white power, woman power, and a hundred others. Possibly, like Walter Mitty, you have fantasized being in a very powerful position, maybe immediately after being put down in the board meeting by that troublesome church member who seems to have more power than you do!

What is power? Power is simply "the capacity to act or to get things done, or the ability to execute change." It is similar to leadership, since through the use of power a person is able to control people or events. If you have no power you are not a leader, and you are not effective in your congregation.

You may be getting uneasy at this point and thinking, "It is the Holy Spirit that has all the power; He gets things done through people." That is axiomatic; it is also a way to avoid responsibility. Are there not ways by which we can become more effective channels for the power of the Holy Spirit?

Some pastors effect a great deal of change in a church, and some pastors accomplish very little. The problem is not always with the congregation. Frequently it is the fault of the pastor and his abuse of power as a result of an improper theology of power, or simply a denial of it, for to deny power is to misuse it.

The model of power that many pastors use naturally is the one that is the world's standard—the dominance-submissive scale. In this scheme, each person places himself, or is placed, somewhere along a line between dominance and submissiveness. Those more domi-

nant than him have power over him, and those more submissive are those he has power over. This results in each person scrambling competitively over others to gain more dominance. If your personality does not lend itself to being dominant, you can take assertiveness training.

The most frequently used tools used in the dominance-submissive model of power are money and position. If you have money, you are less dependent on others; you can do what you wish. Any pastor knows that heavy givers to the church have power in the church board. Likewise, when someone is placed over us as our boss, he has power of position. His voice is one of authority. Most of us, by virtue of our position as pastor, find ourselves in a position of power or dominance in the society of the church.

I would like to suggest that the Christian should not use the same model of power that the world uses, but that he should develop a Christian theology of power. The world's model is not safe, because of the nature of man. It is inadequate in a Christian framework because it places people in opposition to and in competition with one another. It assumes antagonistic relationships between groups and individuals. As a result, one can settle for only a *balance* of power. Christian organizations must go beyond such precarious relationships, and demonstrate to the world the principles of the kingdom of heaven.

Church organizations, including our own, are not immune to power struggles, and for that reason a purely Christian model is needed that is adequate for the stress of the church board meeting as well as in the church's contact with the world. Fortunately Jesus gives us just such a model. Jesus responded to the disciples and their struggle for position in His new kingdom by saying, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles

exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them" (Matt. 20:25). He described the coercive power of the world and then He gave the disciples a model of Christian power. "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (verses 26, 27). Who exemplifies that kind of power for us? Jesus Himself. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (verse 28).

## The source of power

Paul says, "There is no power but of God" (Rom. 13:1). God is sovereign, and there is no Christian power outside of Him. That seems obvious, but is it demonstrated in the lives of pastors?

Position alone, whether pastor or conference president, does not necessarily give one power with the people in that organization. Leadership gets its authority and its power from those it leads; they are not simply granted from the top. Power to change people is granted by the people to be changed. One third of the angels in heaven, though in a position that was obviously under the authority of God, did not grant God power in their lives.

Jesus: "*Father, the angel of light says that he will give Me all the kingdoms of the world, that I don't need to suffer for them. . . . I will not accept power at the price of denying My dependence on You as the source of My power.*"

Pastor: "*My rich church member will give me his backing if I support him for church office. . . . I will not accept power at the price of denying my dependence on God.*"

## The base of power

The world considers that the best power over others is obtained by reward (a raise in pay) or coercion (showing who is in charge). That is not the kind of power Jesus exercised. What was His power base? It was His gentleness, His unassuming manners, and His strength of character. It was not based on coercion or reward. His power base was so strong, and the religious leaders were so threatened by it, that they had to kill Him. Pride and self-importance are weakness when compared with lowliness and humility.

The powerful Christian leads people to commitment by calling them to something beyond themselves. The weak per-

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## The person who seeks to build a power base by using others is weak, for he builds on the broken bodies of his competitors.

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son, like a leech, draws from others to build himself. He seeks to use others to build a power base. The Christian gains power, not through using others, but by leading them to visualize their own potential through the development of their Christian character.

E. L. Becker said, "Within religious organizations the ability of an individual to wield influence is related closely to his embodiment in his own person of the beliefs and values of the group."—"Church and Power Conflicts," *Christianity and Crises*, March 22, 1965, pp. 26-36. When the pastor lives the ideals that the group seeks for itself, then that pastor will have character power with those people.

The person who seeks to build a power base by using others and conquering them is weak, for he builds on the broken bodies of his competitors. This unstable base will move as soon as the coercion weakens or the reward is too small. Dissatisfaction and the resulting dislocation will bring the power structure to a grinding halt. A leader who builds power through playing favorites, coercion, or reward is not a strong leader but a weak dictator. He is always suspicious of others, afraid that they may be seeking to build their own power base at his expense. Such a pastor will lose all creativity; he will be an obstructionist seeking to preserve his tenuous position in the bureaucracy.

On the other hand, a leader who has built a power base on character can be open and unthreatened. He knows that as people identify with him and his own struggles, they will be more willing to follow his direction. He is willing to have another take his place in leadership if that person can do a better job. His interest is in organizational goals, not power struggles. His security is based not on his position but on his character. Instead of keeping others down so he looks tall, he will call people beyond themselves to their best.

*Jesus: "Father, I am a threat to the corrupt institutions that they have here. They plan to kill Me. Shall I call the legions and fight? I am in the right! . . .*

*No, I will die so that they might live."*

*Pastor: "My president is threatened by me and plans to transfer me to another conference. Shall I rally my members? I am in the right! . . . No, I will suffer, that he may be made whole."*

### The action of power

What does power do? "'Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all'" (Mark 10:43, 44, R.S.V.). Christian power manifests itself in servanthood. Service is the expression of one who is free from self and who does not need to struggle in competition with others for an ever-dwindling supply of power and influence. Character power, expressed in servanthood, is found in the person who is influenced and does not need dominion over others to assure himself of his self-esteem. Jesus is the perfect example. He came from heaven not to enrich Himself at our expense, but to impoverish Himself so that we could be rich. The Christian servant is free to use his character power to feed others so that they can reach *their* goals, rather than feeding on others so that he can reach his goals.

If ministry is anything, it is service. Coercion is not God's way; it does not represent His kingdom. If God had allowed coercion, there would never have been sin. Those whose frame of reference is the worldly model of power would have fired God at the beginning of the great controversy because of indecisiveness. The Christian leader is never allowed to use coercive power. He is enjoined to suffer first. Renunciation of force and passive suffering of violence are imposed as an obligation on His disciples by Jesus' teaching and example.

*Jesus: "Father, Satan wants to take over Your government. He is jealous of Me. Shall We get rid of him? . . . No, he must be free to choose; We will let him have his way for a time."*

*Conference president: "My most talented and organized pastor is threatening me. I think he wants my job and could probably do it better than I could. . . . I am his servant. I will give my job to anyone who could do it better."*

### The goal of power

All power is to re-create the image of God in man. When people sense that a leader's use of power is for the single purpose of helping them to be more like God, they will become committed followers, for they see that the leader is their servant and that he is interested in their good and not simply seeking to extend his own power. Jesus exercised power over people because He led them to visualize their potential as children of God. He saw in them not what they could do for Him, but what they could become for God.

The Christian leader is not jealous of others' power. In fact, he freely seeks to give power to others by helping them develop. The goal, then, is the building of the image of God in those we serve by sharing power and teaching how to use it in God's plan.

*Jesus: "Father, I have a disciple here who is a traitor and who intends to betray Me. The other disciples will abandon Me. . . . I will forgive them to build Our image in them."*

*Pastor: "My staff is rebellious. I have an associate who is not loyal. In a showdown, the others would not support me. . . . I will forgive them so that they might see God's image in me and that it might be developed in them."*

### The motive of power

Power's motive is love as described in Paul's letter to the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 13). Oratory, prophecy, knowledge, faith, benevolence, and martyrdom are worth nothing without love as the motivating factor. Any other motivation tends toward self-aggrandizement and the corruption of power. This love that motivates Christian power creates value in people. People are not to be valued only because they can be used; they have value because they are loved.

*Jesus: "Father, Adam and Eve disobeyed; they didn't trust Me. . . . I will die for them."*

*Pastor: "The member who has opposed my ministry here ever since I came is having problems in his marriage. . . . I will show my love for him."*

Power, real power as it exists in God's kingdom, is the most powerful leadership force in the world. The world's concept of power is only disguised weakness. God's model takes time and patience. It has taken Him more than 6,000 years, but it is the only model that provides permanent results and gives power to the pastor's leadership.

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As you take inventory of gains and losses in your ministry during 1980 you will no doubt have several entries on the debit side of the balance sheet. But you don't have to carry them over into the new year.

# New methods for a new journey

by Enoch Oliveira

**B**y the time this issue of MINISTRY is in circulation we will be on the threshold of a new year with all its surprises, expectations, and opportunities. No doubt you will have already made up your list of resolutions and outlined your plans for a new journey in time, so these reflections may seem redundant and unnecessary. Nevertheless, let us ask ourselves a few questions: What gains and losses have we experienced as co-workers with God during 1980, a year so full of apprehensions and perplexities at the beginning and which has now disappeared into the shadows of the past? How many sin-sick, contrite souls have been led to the cross of Christ through our work or as a result of the testimony of our example? How many of our church members who were weak and wavering in their religious experience have received from us the inspiration they needed and are now traveling the road of life with greater courage? How many hearts, broken by pain—physical or moral—have received the healing balm of Gilead through our ministry?

As we take this inventory of our gains and losses, we may very possibly recognize that we have made mistakes—some of commission, others of omission. Shall we allow this to discourage us? By no means! Learning from the failures and

mistakes of the past, let us formulate new methods of work and bolder plans for 1981.

During the first months of World War II many British generals insisted on repeating, without any modification whatsoever, the logistics used in the first world war. Because of this they suffered successive defeats and humiliating reverses from an enemy that had adopted completely new methods and revolutionary strategies. Later other generals joined the allied high command who adopted the modern tactics of the enemy and succeeded in changing the course of history.

Many times in our evangelistic work we are tempted to continue using obsolete, routine methods, without stopping to consider why we are not producing the results we desire so greatly. When this happens remember these words:

"New methods must be introduced. God's people must awake to the necessities of the time in which they are living. God has men whom He will call into His service—men who will not carry forward the work in the lifeless way in which it has been carried forward in the past."—Ellen G. White, in *Review and Herald*, Sept. 30, 1902.

There are workers who served in the Lord's vineyard during 1980 who had no carefully organized plan of action. We cannot label them as lazy ministers, for they were always busy, but their results were scarce and limited. In fact, one of

the major reasons for failure in ministerial work is not having a clear and specific plan of action or an intelligent method of accomplishing it.

"By dallying over the less important matters, they find themselves hurried, perplexed, and confused when they are called upon to do those duties that are more essential. They are always doing, and, they think, working very hard; and yet there is little to show for their efforts."—*Evangelism*, p. 649.

Never has there been a year that offers greater possibilities for evangelism than the one that is dawning. Let us maintain the initiative as we enter into it with our spiritual weapons and evangelistic equipment always ready to confront the new logistics of the enemy. Let us re-examine our methods, discarding that which has lost its effectiveness and utilizing that which is more efficacious.

The demands of this new year require us to work at a more rapid pace, to have more of the spirit of prayer and a greater dedication to the work of evangelism. The rougher the way and the greater the obstacles raised by the adversary, the more our need of deeper personal consecration and greater dedication in working for those who are caught in the maze of life without Christ and without hope.

Yes, 1981 offers the brightest prospects for victorious evangelism. Should we not set our goals to do greater things for Christ than ever before?

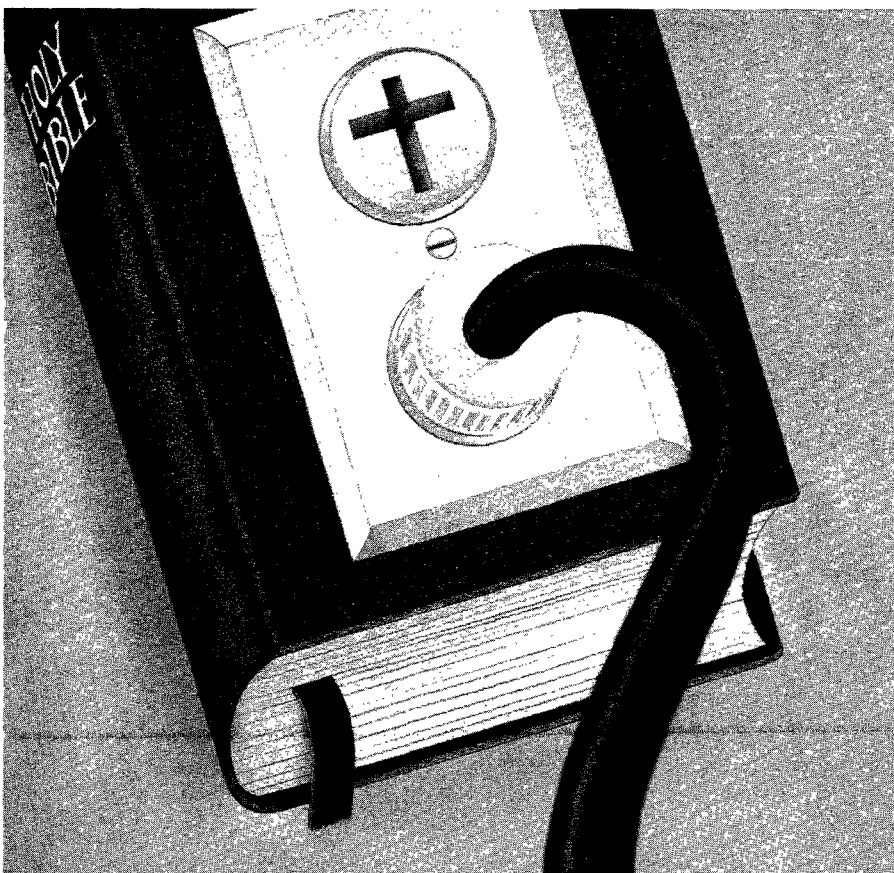
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Has the tendency of many evangelical pulpits to concentrate on personal experience rather than on the teaching of sound spiritual truth resulted in a shallow spirituality among professed Christians?

# The saving knowledge of the truth

by Daniel Bazikian



Some time ago I was browsing through an old religious reference work. At the end of one of the biographical sketches I noticed an interesting statement regarding an evangelical minister of the nineteenth century. The subject had as "his constant and controlling aim" in preaching "to bring men to, and build them up in, the saving knowledge of the truth."

*The saving knowledge of truth.* There was something appealing and intriguing about the phrase which caused it to stick in my mind. As I came to think about it more, I realized that the writer of this old article was on to something important. He had an insight into the nature of the evangelical message which deserves serious consideration from Christians today.

What did I find so special about this concept? It is this: in preaching or in other ways proclaiming the good news to people, we need to keep in mind that we are presenting them with a *system of truth*, a body of divinely revealed knowledge which delineates the way of life God has established for us. Moreover, this knowledge is, at its core, a

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"saving knowledge," for when it is acted upon by the listener it will result in the salvation of his or her soul. Preaching the saving knowledge of the truth, then, involves the presentation of gospel truth in such a way that its hearers will be prompted to make a personal commitment to that truth.

This concept of the gospel message as comprising the presentation of truth is as old as the Christian church itself. Jesus Himself declared that a person's knowledge of the truth would set him or her free. The apostle Paul wrote his scintillating letter to the beguiled church at Galatia to reemphasize the liberating truths of the gospel, which that church was deceived into discarding. The Protestant Reformation consisted very largely of the promulgation of Christian teachings or truths which the institutional church had too long neglected. Whenever these truths of the gospel have been thus delineated and proclaimed (together, of course, with the accompanying work of the Holy Spirit), there have been abiding spiritual results. Conversely, when this emphasis has been lacking, the teaching and preaching mission of the church—not to mention its spiritual life—has suffered.

I believe that the churches in our country today, despite what certain statistics might indicate, are giving evidence of such a deficiency in the messages they preach. The present emphasis from our pulpits deals not so much with gospel truth as with gospel experience. We talk much about being born again, of experiencing Christ, of coming into a personal relationship with Christ, et cetera. This emphasis is, of course, good and absolutely necessary in its correct Biblical context. By itself, however, this is not enough, because it is not the whole counsel of God. Rather, listeners should be provided with a thorough knowledge of those saving truths which furnish the *groundwork* for such spiritual experience.

Let me illustrate what I have in mind. Suppose I could not swim and, wanting to learn, decided to take some swimming lessons. If I was to be properly taught, I would expect my instructor to teach me the basic principles of moving myself through the water. If she were teaching me the front crawl, for example, she might say, in so many words, that by kicking my legs I would help keep my body up in the water; that by stroking the water with my arms I would give myself forward propulsion; that by turning my head back and forth I would be able to

breathe systematically and thereby sustain my motion through the water. My instructor would, in effect, be providing me with a "saving knowledge" of swimming, the knowledge of this form of exercise that would enable me to save myself under normal conditions if I was in water above my head. Her instruction would thus furnish me with a sound, proper basis for my own experience and enjoyment of swimming.

Suppose, however, rather than providing me with such sound instruction, she gave me lessons that had a strong experiential content to them, consisting, for example, of reminiscences about her or others' swimming experiences or about the pleasures to be derived from swimming. The instructor's lessons might prove inspirational and interesting, but they probably would not achieve their intended purpose: to teach me how to swim properly and safely. The instructor, in fact, might well be considered criminally negligent in regard to her responsibilities.

In a similar way, we Evangelicals often fail listeners in our presentation of the gospel. By neglecting the teaching of sound spiritual truth and by concentrating on the realm of personal experience, we have not provided people with the necessary elements for proper Christian experience and nurture. This has resulted in a shallow spirituality, a spiritual ignorance, among many professing Christians that has left them vulnerable to the influence of false and misleading teachings.

This failure in spiritual instruction can in part be explained by a lack of emphasis on the fundamental teachings of the faith. More basically, however, our failure seems to rest on an inadequate understanding or consideration of man's constituted nature. We modern Evangelicals have forgotten to a large extent what our counterparts of a century ago more clearly recognized: that the Lord God made us with *mental* and emotional capacities; we were made to *think* as well as to feel. God gave us our minds and He revealed to us scriptural truths whereby our minds could be satisfied.

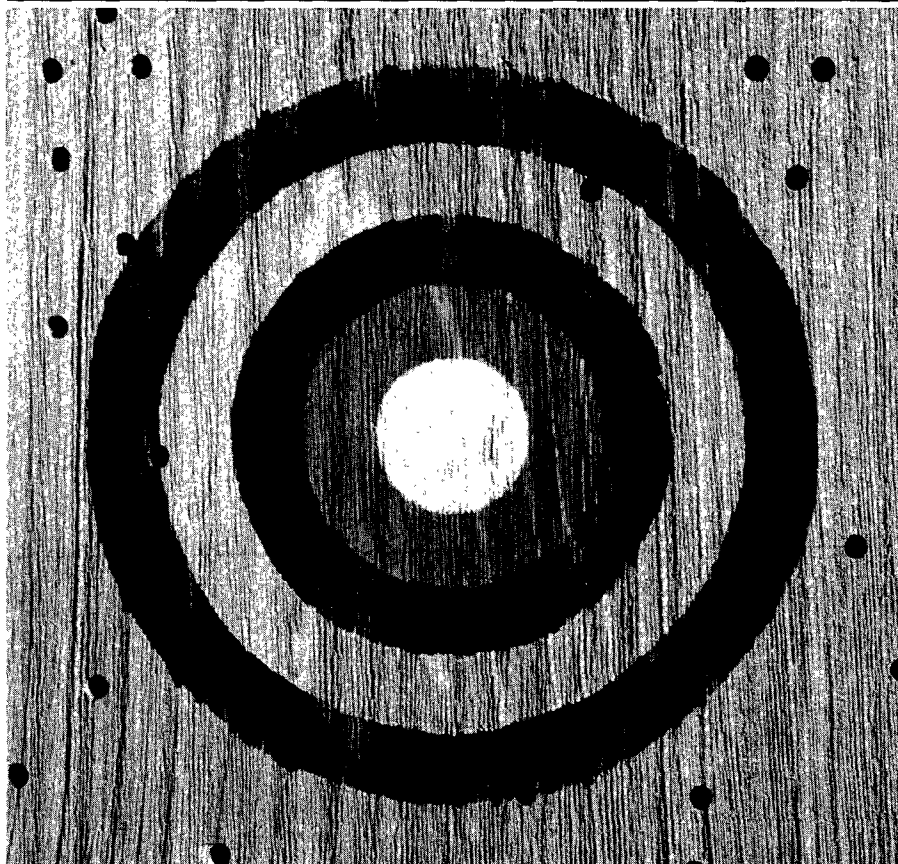
The preaching of saving truth will not only provide listeners with the basis for proper spiritual experience and growth, it will, furthermore, provide them with a deeper basis for individual spiritual motivation. Proclaiming to hearers the sure promises of God will help them realize that they have firm grounds on which they can make a commitment to Jesus Christ, that they are not just responding to an appeal based on some emotional frenzy. For example, when urging listeners to put their trust in the Lord, it would be quite helpful if they were told that this appeal rested on the doctrine of a sovereign God, who looks after and controls the affairs of His children. Similarly, when we entreat people to be saved, it would be conducive to explain to them the many glorious things entailed in being a new creation in Christ Jesus. Or, when we tell them that Christ died for sinners and implore them to accept Him as their personal Saviour, we should take the trouble to let them know the profound significance of the redemptive work of Christ and their personal spiritual standing that has resulted from this. Explaining such deep, abiding truths engenders orthodox Christian thought and living.

Whatever extra effort it may require to present the spiritual truths in this way would prove fruitful; our goal in proclaiming the gospel is, after all, to produce not mere spiritual ecstasy, but spiritual and moral excellence. We must seek to have every believer, as a temple of the Holy Spirit, build an individual spiritual edifice for himself or herself of *lasting* beauty, not mere stunning outward appeal. To do this calls for a wisdom or prudence such as that possessed by the wise man in Jesus' parable of the two builders. This would demand, of course, the use of the right building materials, the sturdy blocks of spiritual truth that are possessed of the sureness and enduring strength of the sovereign God who revealed them.

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**I believe that the churches in our country today, despite what certain statistics might indicate, are giving evidence of a deficiency in the messages they preach.**



## PREACHING THE WORD-5

# Putting your sermon on target

by John Osborn

**T**he preceding article in this series (November, 1980) pointed out that by analyzing a preaching portion of Scripture we discover what is its subject, the basic teaching that covers it like a tent. This subject, then, becomes the main thrust of the sermon, the summarizing core. But we can't preach on the subject, and we'll see why in this article.

First, let's clarify several terms that we often confuse in connection with homiletics. We talk about title, topic, subject, and theme as if they each mean the same thing. Actually, they are very different. The title of a sermon is simply the words we use to identify it and to persuade people to come and listen to it. Of course, it ought to be connected to the sermon content closely enough that people can see the reason for it. If you use a title to draw a crowd and then disappoint them because your sermon doesn't deliver what the title promised,

The late John Osborn was Ministerial director of the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and was active in conducting seminars on effective preaching.

you may deceive people once, but not twice.

*Topic* and *subject* can be used interchangeably; they mean basically the same thing—a broad area of truth that arises from the Scripture portion. Examples are "prayer," "sanctification," "faith," "hell," et cetera. From this definition, we can see why it is impossible to preach on a subject: it is too broad for a single sermon, or even many sermons, to encompass.

Suppose someone says to you, "What are you preaching on next week?" You reply, "Prayer." The next question will invariably be: "What about prayer?" You can't preach on prayer in *fifty* sermons. And that is why you can't preach on a subject. A subject is a broad area of truth far beyond the time limits of a sermon. If you try to preach on prayer in one sermon and attempt to cover when to pray, how to pray, why pray, and what to pray for, you aren't going to say anything of real value. You have to narrow your subject and cut it up into bite-sized pieces so that people can be nourished. In other words, you have to develop only a small portion—a theme. A theme is an aspect of truth, a tiny corner of a subject. You can preach on a theme.

One common fault, especially of young preachers, is trying to use too much material and cover too large an area. They are afraid they will run out of something to say before the time is up. But when they stand to preach they discover they are a bit more relaxed than they had anticipated, and when twelve o'clock nears they aren't half through their material. They have to begin chopping and chopping to be finished by noon (because, as you know, the angels leave the sanctuary at twelve o'clock and the saints follow them). By trying to exhaust the material, such preachers merely exhaust themselves and their congregation.

Not only does time limit the amount of material you can adequately deal with in a sermon, so also does the human mind's ability to remember. One homiletics professor said, "You preachers spend all week studying and preparing a sermon. Then when you get up on Sunday morning to preach it you have to have notes in order to remember what to say! But you expect the people, who haven't had the opportunity for all that prior study and who have no notes at all, to go home and remember the entire sermon." The point is that you must limit the truth you want to present until it is so succinct that you can deal with it adequately in your ser-

mon and so clear that your people can carry away with them a sharp image of what you have said.

### Choose a theme

The theme, then, is that part of the sermon which establishes its boundaries both by inclusion and exclusion. And its purpose is to narrow the subject into manageable limits. Before he paints a picture, an artist must decide what he will include and what he will exclude. If he is going to paint a bowl of fruit, he won't portray the whole orchard nor the picking, packing, shipping, and merchandising of the fruit. Neither will the preacher try to include everything about his subject in his sermon.

As a limiting device, the theme has certain characteristics: it is brief, it is clear, and it is a phrase. The reason the theme must be a phrase is that it is limiting the subject, and the subject is normally a single word such as *faith* or *prayer*. (The subject *can* be more than one word as illustrated by the example given in the preceding article in this series. The subject of the preaching portion considered there was "church-world relationships.") The theme becomes a phrase because it limits the subject by adding words that modify it. If the subject is "prayer," the theme might become "the benefits of prayer," or "the attitude of prayer," or "the conditions of prayer." In each case the subject is limited. You can't preach about "attitudes in prayer," if your theme is "the benefits of prayer."

Whatever your theme becomes, however, it must come from the Scripture portion you have selected. The subject—prayer, for example—is the broad truth of your Scripture portion. You can't determine the theme of the Scripture portion to be "the conditions of prayer" and then preach on "the benefits of prayer." The Scripture must determine the subject and theme of your sermon.

### Define the proposition

Once you have studied the Scripture portion and have determined its subject and theme, you are ready to go to the next step of sermon preparation. This step is so important that even if you never put into practice anything else in these articles, pay attention to this point. Simply put, it is this: Every sermon must have a target, and that target is expressed in the proposition.

The major problem with most sermons is that they are not on target. The

preacher splatters the congregation with homiletical buckshot in a shotgun approach rather than aiming his sermon right at the heart. The suggestions in this series of articles are designed to help you clarify and define your sermons so that you can use a rifle instead of a shotgun when you preach.

At a church convention several years ago I said to my wife before we went into the hall, "I want you to listen to a certain individual's sermon. I've heard him preach before, and I want your opinion of what he says." So he preached, and we listened. He was a very interesting speaker. He held my interest all the way through and my wife's too. Afterwards, I said, "What did you think?"

"It was a good sermon," she answered. "I enjoyed it."

"What was his point?"

"He didn't have a point," she said. "Do you know how he prepared that sermon?"

"No," I replied. "Do you?"

"Yes. When I was a teen-ager and was asked to speak at a youth meeting, I would look up in a concordance what the Bible said about a certain subject. Then I would make an outline and try to find a text to go with each main division. It didn't always have any point. That is how he prepared his sermon."

It was even worse when the sermon was printed later. The thing that made it interesting was the charisma and dynamics of the speaker himself. In print, its scrapbook organization was evident. Far too often our congregations listen to a miscellany of sacred odds and ends strung together like beads. We may hold the people's interest, but there is no point. They may leave thinking, "That was good; I really enjoyed that," but they forget it almost immediately because there was no point to drive home.

When you have finished preaching, the members of your congregation should be able to state very concisely the point you were trying to get across. If they are to do so, your sermon must have a definite aim, a clearly stated proposition.

### Put it in one sentence

What is a proposition in homiletical terms? It is a complete sentence that embraces and pulls together the subject and the theme. It is the sermon reduced to a single sentence.

Remember, the subject is usually a single word; the theme is a phrase that limits the subject; and the proposition is a complete sentence that states clearly what you intend to say about the subject.

When an individual writes a dissertation for an academic degree, he must first give his professor and the committee a thesis that states what he intends to prove or accomplish. This is so they will have a criterion by which to evaluate his dissertation. He can't begin writing and when finished draw up a summary stating, "Here is what I have done." He must know before he begins what he plans to do. If he didn't he would be wandering about in his research, gathering material everywhere, much of which would be useless.

A sermon must be built the same way. There should be a clear statement of the specific truth that you intend to get across. You must know what your target is. Homiletics is a science, and in expository preaching there are certain steps that you must follow once you sit down before your text. You need to ask: "What does this text say? (What is its subject?)" "How much of that subject will I preach on? (What is its theme?)" "What is my purpose; what am I aiming at? (What is the proposition?)"

All this you must answer before you start building the sermon. If you don't, not only will you spend a lot of time on random subject materials that are not relevant to the purpose of your sermon but you will never have a clear idea of why you are telling your people what you plan to tell them. And if you don't have a clear idea of the purpose of your sermon, you can be sure that your people will have an even less clear picture when you have finished.

Your congregation has a right to expect a clearly stated purpose for your sermon, one that is not lost sight of from beginning to end, and that carries them step by step to a definite conclusion, packaged for remembering and carrying away with them. The most important thing about your sermon is not the impression that you make on the minds of the people at the moment you are speaking. The important thing is: What can they take home with them and remember that week? When Mr. Jones goes home from church to his wife who had to stay with their sick son, he should be able to tell her, clearly and concisely, what you talked about.

One master pulpiteer said of the proposition: "I find the getting of that sentence the hardest, most exacting, and the most fruitful labor in my study. To compel oneself to fashion that sentence, to dismiss every word that is vague, ragged, or ambiguous, to think oneself through to a form of words that defines a

proposition with scrupulous exactness—this is surely one of the most vital and essential factors in the making of a sermon. And I do not think any sermon ought to be preached or even written until this sentence has emerged clear and lucid as a cloudless moon.”

#### **A timeless truth**

As you formulate the proposition, keep in mind that it should reflect a timeless truth and that it should be stated in the present tense. People are not nearly so interested in the past, or even the future, as they are in the present. The proposition should be relevant to human experience. It should not be too long. The clearer and more concise it is, the easier both for you and your hearers to remember it. Like the subject and the theme, the proposition must also arise from the Scripture portion. You should be able to demonstrate its validity from the text itself.

If we compare a sermon to a tree the sermon idea is the seed that germinates. The text is the root structure, bearing up the tree and nourishing it. Above ground is the trunk, and from the trunk come branches. The proposition is to the main divisions of the sermon what the trunk is to the branches.

Let's look at all these pieces of the sermon now in an illustration. In the preceding article of this series, we used John 17:6-19 as an example of a Scripture portion. We defined the subject as “church-world relationships,” and the theme that limits the subject as “effective church-world relationships.” Now the proposition must embody both the subject and the theme in a single, simple sentence that will find its roots in the text. “The church can have an effective relationship with the world.” That is the proposition, and once I determine that, it becomes my target, the thing I am going to try to prove in my sermon.

Thus, the main divisions or heads of my sermon, like the branches coming out of a tree, must come out of the preaching portion to prove that proposition. That is their function. They are not simply there to give the preacher something to say in order. They do that, but they accomplish much more. They amplify the proposition. The proposition, then, is the sermon condensed into a single sentence; the main divisions of the body are the proposition expanded into the sermon.

Now we can see the flow of a well-constructed sermon. You go to the preaching portion; determine its broad subject and limit that subject with a

theme. Then, you combine the subject and the theme in sentence form to formulate the proposition. This gives you a target, and now the main divisions and everything you say in that sermon come flowing out of the preaching portion of Scripture and lead you and your hearers right down the road to your target.

Some preachers wonder whether they should actually state their proposition. Not always, but sometimes you may. If it is constructed so succinctly and concisely that you can use it following your introduction, that is excellent. Even when you do not state it in exact words, it should be so implied that your people are able to recognize it easily because every move you make is going in a certain direction. Unfortunately, we sometimes feel that we must keep the truth we are driving at concealed until near the end of the sermon and then spring it on the people as a grand climax and surprise. They are surprised, but in the wrong way. They never really get it, because they never knew where they were going in the beginning.

When you turn to developing the main body of your sermon you will find that the really difficult part of the sermon preparation has already been done. The main divisions are right there in the Scripture to amplify the proposition, and you simply have to develop them according to the originality that God has given you. Because we are each unique individuals with differing backgrounds, education, and experiences, we will approach the same passage differently. Two preachers can take the very same Scripture portion and come out with entirely different sermons and each be true to the text. There is that much truth in the Word of God. It's inexhaustible.

In developing the body of the sermon we don't pick our main divisions at random; they are found in the Scripture text. The Word decides what they are. Notice these characteristics of the sermon's main divisions or points: (1) they must accurately mirror the Scripture portion without being artificially imposed upon it; (2) their number is determined by the text; (3) they must be explicit in the scripture rather than implied.

#### **Illustration**

Now, using our example passage, John 17:6-19, let's see if we can obtain an outline that will amplify our proposition and be faithful to our text. The proposition states: “The church can have an effective relationship with the

world.” Every proposition will raise a question in the minds of your hearers. The natural question in this case is How? How can the church have an effective relationship with the world? Your scripture and your sermon must answer that question. Can we find an answer to that question in these verses?

Looking through the passage, we find four basic statements in which Christ relates the church (in the person of the apostles) to the world. In verses 6 to 9 He says they *came out of* the world. In verses 11 to 13 He says that they *are in* the world. In verses 14 to 17 He says they *are not of* the world. And in verses 18 and 19 He says that He has sent them *back into* the world. These, then, are the main divisions that amplify the proposition.

How can the church have an effective relationship with the world? It can do so by first getting out of it totally and breaking completely with its sin. Then it must go right back into the world and live and identify with it. But while the church is in the world it must not be of it. The church is in the world because its Master has sent it into the world on a mission comparable to His own. “Out of it,” yet “in it.” “Not of it,” yet “sent into it.” This is how the church can have an effective relationship with the world. A sermon built on this outline will be one that rises naturally from the passage and that leads to a clear target.

In outlining your sermon, keep it simple. You may have an extremely full outline in preparing your sermon, but when you go into the pulpit you need a very simple outline or all that material can become confusing to you. I started out preaching with four pages of outline. The longer I was in the ministry the more pages I used, until I was preaching from twelve pages of outline! I put some sections in green and some in red. Some I put in brackets and some I underlined, until I couldn't see what I was preaching when I looked at all that mass of material.

In your outline, then, keep it simple. People don't think in terms of A's and B's and C's. They think first, second, third. So in your outline make your main divisions Roman numerals and your subheads Arabic numerals. Since your main heads are to arise from your Scripture portion, be sure that you have an undergirding text for each main division.

If you build your sermons in this way from Scripture, with a clear target and a simple outline, you will be well on your way to Biblical preaching without notes.

going. We have tried to make changes sitting at home. If we have to march on Washington, then let us do so, but with unity.

Independent minister  
California

*We value this wide spectrum of response to Mr. Hegstad's article. For an extended editorial treatment of some of the issues raised by readers see page 18.—Editors.*

#### Israel and prophecy

Modern Christians, especially Seventh-day Adventists whose roots in Scripture are deep, must exult in realizing that modern Israel is a distinct link with religious tradition and Biblical prophecy. Indeed, in all the world Israel is the only country that has the same language, religion, and capital city as it did 3,000 years ago. Any person who thinks such achievements are only chance and have no basis in prophecy or in the way Providence works, might agree with Ernest W. Marter's article in the July MINISTRY.

However, I suspect that anyone who goes to Israel and stands at the wailing wall or who gazes down from the Mount of Olives on contemporary Jerusalem built despite war and terror, will have to recognize that the words of Amos are fulfilled—"And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them. . . . I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."

Jewish rabbi  
New Jersey

The idea that the Jews are returning to Palestine according to prophecy has been swallowed completely by a large number of the clergy in America. Religious programming via radio and television is almost totally in agreement with this concept. Your article should do much to help those who thought there was no alternative.

United Church of Christ minister  
Maryland

#### Sure of salvation?

A statement on page 11 of the July issue reveals the Seventh-day Adventist view that one is never really sure of heaven until he arrives there. It says, "Biblical preaching will win more souls to Christ and give the assurance that a larger portion of them will stay saved."

Such a view reveals faulty concepts of salvation, regeneration, justification, and the grace of God. The saved, lost, and saved again doctrine is just not Biblical.

Baptist minister  
Virginia

*While we recognize that there are differences among Christians regarding whether one who has experienced salvation can ever repudiate that experience and be lost, we do feel that there is Biblical support for such a view (see Hebrews 3:12-14; 6:4-6; 10:23-27, 38, 39; Matt. 24:12, 13, etc.). Seventh-day Adventists, along with other Christians who believe that one may "fall from grace," most assuredly do rejoice in the certainty of their salvation. Our assurance is based on a daily, continuing acceptance of the righteousness of Jesus rather than on a conviction that having once been accepted by Him, we cannot be lost.—Editors.*

#### The Ministry of Healing

I have just finished reading MINISTRY, May, 1980. Several times the book *The Ministry of Healing* was mentioned. However, I did not find any place where the author or publisher was mentioned.

Baptist minister  
Georgia

*The book is by Ellen G. White and is published by the same house that publishes MINISTRY. If you will send \$1.00, we will be happy to furnish you with a copy of this 540-page book outlining the relationship between spiritual, physical, and mental health.—Editors.*

#### Stop flogging a dead horse

Along with its many good features, why does MINISTRY keep flogging a dead horse—the supposed controversy between the scientific and religious views of Creation? "The Flood and the Ice Age" (May, 1980) begins with several inaccurate assumptions of the scientific viewpoint. In fact, there are many competent Christian scientists who see evidence pointing toward the evolutionary process (granting that evolution is still a theory with some missing links), but who also understand the process as being continually under the creative guidance and power of God at every moment.

Can we not understand the inspired writer of Genesis as someone—not an expert in either geology or biology—more interested in showing us God's relationship with His creation and with the

human race than in giving us a scientific outline of Creation? It seems that the real difficulty lies in insisting on a *literal* reading of the time sequence of the Creation story; I don't see that anything essential to the Christian faith is lost in understanding the six "days" to Creation as eons of indeterminate length.

As to the objection of life's "evolving in a general trend toward higher levels of complexity and organization"—what is wrong with this idea from the Christian viewpoint? After all, by His transforming grace and power God is finishing His new creation by bringing weak, sinful human beings into sonship through Jesus Christ. Thus sanctification can be thought of as a spiritual evolution involving the whole of man's being, and indeed the whole created universe—all under the recreative power of God in Christ.

Episcopal minister  
California

*We feel that such an interpretation of Scripture, in order to accommodate it to evolutionary theory, removes much from Christian faith that is essential. In a future article MINISTRY plans to examine this very topic—the validity of trying to harmonize Scripture with evolution concepts.—The Editors.*

#### Back to God's Word

I appreciated John Osborn's article "Feed Yourself First" (September, 1980), very much. I have been preaching the gospel for more than 39 years, and I am aware of how desperately we in the ministry need to get back to God's Word and preach His message today.

Independent minister  
West Virginia

#### Introduce MINISTRY

Our Ministers' Alliance will soon be holding a one-day educational retreat. Since I have always found MINISTRY to be most useful, I would like to introduce it to the other ministers in our association at the retreat. If possible, could I receive copies for distribution?

Baptist minister  
Georgia

*MINISTRY is currently going to approximately 290,000 ministers of all faiths. If you have found it helpful and would like to extend its outreach to your colleagues, we are pleased to make introductory copies available or help in other ways. See the notice on the bottom of page 2 for details regarding bimonthly subscriptions without charge.—Editors.*

# LEGISLATED MORALITY

## Christian political action groups are largely right in what they are trying to do but quite wrong in how they are doing it.

One of the most significant issues to come out of the recent national elections in the United States (and one that, in our opinion, will not rapidly fade away) is the proper role of political-action groups composed of evangelical Christians. Other concerns may have received more attention by voters, but we believe that in the final analysis the questions raised by the activities of religious lobbyists will overshadow even such immediate and perennial interests as the economy, national defense, and energy.

As revealed by the sampling of letters in response to Roland Hegstad's September article, "Washington for Jesus—Really?" (see pp. 2, 19), religious leaders are sharply divided over the proper function of such Christian lobbying groups. At *MINISTRY* we find ourselves somewhat divided as well. We share strongly the alarm and dismay of those who decry the moral decline of America. We stand with those who affirm the sanctity of the family; who oppose pornography and the ever-increasing violence and sexuality of broadcasting and film; who refuse to affirm that homosexuality is an acceptable life style; and who equate abortion with the taking of life. Thus, we are in harmony with many (but by no means all) of the goals of conservative Christian lobbyists.

At the same time, however, we unhesitatingly disagree with the method—political activism—by which such groups seek to achieve these commonly shared goals. We do so, because as Mr. Hegstad points out in his article, the Scriptures give precious little support for using politics as a substitute for evangelism. A Christianity that is not able to inculcate its ideals through the spiritual means entrusted to her by her Master has no right to turn to the strong arm of the state to prop her up. When the Lord advised to "render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's," He also added, "and unto God the things which be God's" (Luke 20:25). Legislated morality is a hollow victory at best, as demonstrated by America's brief experiment with the national prohibition of alcohol. A legislated morality operates on principles precisely the opposite of those utilized by evangelism. Legislated morality attempts to produce an external conformity while leaving the heart untouched. Evangelism seeks to change the

heart, knowing that by so doing there will be a change in the outward life, as well.

The September article makes a distinction that we feel is important in this context. The committed Christian has a responsibility to use the individual vote and other influence he may have as a tool for shaping the moral posture of society. After a careful study of candidates and issues, he may cast his vote for those people and concepts that, in his opinion, are most compatible with Christian ideals of justice and virtue. However, this is a matter quite different from organized efforts to establish the kingdom of God on earth by political action.

There is yet another reason why we feel it necessary to part company with the methods of our evangelical lobbyist friends. As much as we would like to see certain moral values become an established part of society, we share the concern expressed by some readers that the same religious group that can exert political leverage to legislate spiritual values with which we agree, can do likewise to establish religious practices and ideas with which we disagree. Such groups have great potential for religious persecution. Indeed, the lesson of history is that religion, when it turns to politicians for support, inevitably degenerates into

intolerance and persecution of those who fail to conform to the prescribed practices or beliefs.

As one letter writer makes clear: criticism and misunderstanding are to be expected by those who attempt to make distinctions between laudable, worthy goals and inappropriate methods of achieving them. In the minds of some, to oppose evangelical Christian political activists, for whatever reason, is to put oneself in the camp of the "atheists," "liberals," "agnostics," "fascists," "antichrists," and assorted "diabolical riff-raff," who are dragging society to ruin. We are willing to risk being unfairly tarred with that brush if necessary in order to raise our voices against the dangers we see in organized religious lobbyists for political action.

We believe the founding fathers of the United States did well to separate the church from the state. We are most reluctant to begin dismantling the wall they built, no matter how worthy the objective. We believe the moral goals we all want to achieve can best be brought about by the method Jesus advocated—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19, 20).—B.R.H.

## DISAPPEARING WALLS

"Fantastic!" was the way a certain pastor described one of the most unusual outreach programs ever to be conceived by a church group! He was referring to *MINISTRY*'s current two-phase program of (1) sharing the magazine with more than 271,000 ministers in North America (and the world) on a complimentary basis, and (2) conducting one-day professional-growth seminars for clergy of all faiths.

And as editors, we too feel that the program has resulted in "fantastic" rewards, both to us of the magazine's staff and to thousands of fellow church professionals. Some think that the walls

that separate the body of Christ are gigantic, but we have found that when provisions are made for interfaith fellowship and exchange those walls disappear! About 16,500 ministers have written us of their response either to the magazine or to the seminars. More than 80 percent of those commenting on the magazine have kind words of praise for the program, and incredibly enough, *all* of those responding to their experience at a seminar have expressed appreciation!

*MINISTRY* has been published since 1928 as the official organ of the Ministerial Association of Seventh-day Advent-



ists, but some years ago the editors began to feel, since so much material was crossing their desks of a helpful nature to church professionals of any faith, that an every-other-month issue could be sent that would benefit the entire body of Christ. Editor J. R. Spangler was one of the human agents who conceived the idea of making *MINISTRY* available in this way, but we believe the program was inspired of God. After piloting the plan in several States, the decision was made to send out the magazine to ministers of all faiths across North America. This was, indeed, an innovative and somewhat daring concept. Interestingly enough, several hundred recipients of the magazine on a bimonthly basis noticed that it is actually a *monthly* publication and that they were receiving only every other issue. Even though their bimonthly subscription was free, they promptly sent in the standard charge (\$12.50 at present) requesting the complete, twelve-month subscription! Apparently they found enough benefit in the issues they were receiving to want to have the magazine every month. (As a note on page 2 of each bimonthly copy points out, we try to put as much as possible of the material that would be of interest mainly to Seventh-day Adventist pastors in the alternate issues.)

Some have asked, "Why are you sending *MINISTRY* to ministers of all faiths? And why are you conducting seminars? Surely this is expensive!" The answer to this question appears in that same note on page 2. We have offered this "outstretched hand in fellowship" to our fellow ministers of all faiths. The two programs constitute our initiative to fellowship freely in those things we hold in common. Our mail indicates that few readers of the magazines, and none who have attended a seminar, have ever gone away feeling that those programs were anything but helpful, and rich in good interfaith fellowship. We find that a great hunger for this kind of fellowship exists in most church leaders. We all need to be understood, and to understand our brethren. We believe that the separation of the church into miscellaneous denominations must be one of Satan's victories, and our mutual embarrassment. In the articles of faith found in most churches, it can be discovered that the things we have in common are far more numerous than the things in which we differ. The rewards of these two programs have been gratifying, and we hope that funding can be found to continue them and see them grow.

The seminars not only provide interfaith fellowship but also take-home benefits for the busy pastor. Pastors have indicated that they most appreciate the practical subjects and materials, so we have majored in such topics as preaching, crisis ministry, archeology, the minister's health and well-being, science and the Bible, Biblical studies, eschatology, case studies in Biblical preaching, et cetera. Resource persons come from varied backgrounds and scholarship areas, depending upon the location of the seminar and the host's desires in programming, but in every case they have been people of great ability.

Since September, 1978, we have conducted 105 seminars, and during the early part of 1981 there will be 25 more. While *MINISTRY* develops the programs, the field to which we are invited sends the invitations and provides for the operational details. Heretofore, local conferences of churches have invited us, but we are responsive, as well, to the invita-

tions of local ministerial associations or other ministerial groups. Our work, of necessity, must be limited to full-time church professionals. Recently we wrote to approximately 300 divinity schools in the United States and Canada, offering the magazine to students and faculty, and many have already responded. There is now a move to conduct jointly sponsored seminars on seminary campuses, and these have been held or are being planned on the campuses of several leading seminaries.

Following is a list of the areas where seminars are now scheduled. If you receive *MINISTRY* and live within driving distance of a listed location, you should automatically receive an invitation in the mail. If for some reason you do not receive an invitation two weeks prior to the seminar date, you may call (202) 723-0800, extension 291, for information. All ministers are invited to attend the seminar nearest their location.—W.B.Q.

## Seminars for January and February

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

January 5 Princeton Theological Seminary, Trenton, New Jersey Robert Bogess (609) 392-7131	Loma Linda, California John Rhodes (714) 689-1350	February 9 Walla Walla, Washington David Parks (509) 838-2761
January 12 Fresno, California Harold West (408) 297-1584	January 27 San Diego, California John Rhodes (714) 689-1350	February 10 Richland, Washington David Parks (509) 838-2761
January 13 San Jose, California Harold West (408) 297-1584	February 2 Medford, Oregon Herman Bauman (503) 233-6371	February 12 Seattle, Washington Lenard Jaacks (206) 485-9576
January 15 Honolulu, Hawaii Shigenobu Arakaki (808) 524-3160	February 3 Portland, Oregon Herman Bauman (503) 233-6371	February 16 Norfolk, Virginia John Loor (301) 439-8000
January 26 Loma Linda University,	February 5 Spokane, Washington David Parks (509) 838-2761	February 17 Lynchburg, Virginia John Loor (301) 439-8000

# JESUS' OWN CITY

Jesus spent much time in Capernaum and also reproved it harshly.  
Recent excavations reveal much about the city's ongoing role.

by Herold Weiss

The results of this past summer's renewed archeological excavations at Capernaum are of interest to Bible students because the synoptic Gospels quite clearly center Jesus' ministry in that small town on the northwest shore of the Lake of Galilee.

Located just north of the fertile Genesareth valley, Capernaum was strategically located for natural resources. The lake provided abundant fish, and the valley produced agricultural products of high quality.<sup>1</sup> Capernaum also enjoyed the benefits of being located at the frontier between the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas, who ruled Galilee from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39, and that of Herod Philip (4 B.C. to A.D. 34), whose capital was to the north at Caesarea Philippi. Both Herods were sons of Herod the Great, who died in 4 B.C., shortly after the birth of Jesus.

Capernaum's location at the border may explain the New Testament's reference to custom officials in the town, as well as the mention of a centurion with his men living there (Matt. 9:9; 17:24-27; 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10). Capernaum also lay on the major route linking the Mediterranean ports of Caesarea Maritima and Acco-Ptolomais with the interior capital of Damascus. This meant that caravans could supply themselves with vegetables and dried fish in abundance here before venturing into the rather arid countryside between Gaulanitis (the modern Golan Heights) and Damascus. Quite probably the customs officials at Capernaum also regulated the consignments of grain sent from Gaulanitis for shipment to Rome.

Matthew's Gospel begins the account of Jesus' ministry with the short report "and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali" (chap. 4:13, R.S.V.). This identification of Jesus with Capernaum is completed later in that Gospel when Jesus' coming to this city after a short stay on the other side of the lake is reported as a return to "his own city" (chap. 9:1). Mark identifies Capernaum as the setting for the exorcism Jesus performed while teaching at the synagogue on a Sabbath day

(Mark 1:21-28), and for His healing of Peter's mother-in-law (verse 30), besides many other miracles. But Capernaum, like the neighboring towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida, also received harsh words of reproof from Jesus: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day" (Matt. 11:23). Because of these words, no doubt, Christian pilgrims going to the Holy Land in modern times have not been surprised to find Capernaum an abandoned mound.

## Early explorations

Explorations of Capernaum and the identification of its site began in 1857 with the survey of Prof. E. Robinson and the visit of Capt. C. Wilson in 1866. They were able to identify the remains of a monumental building on the surface of the ground. In 1890 the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem purchased the mound with the visible remains of the ancient building lying on the Franciscan portion of the property, but the highest point in the mound being on Greek Orthodox property.

Systematic excavation of the remains of the building (subsequently identified as a monumental synagogue) was begun by H. Kohl and C. Watzinger in 1905, and the synagogue was fully excavated and somewhat reconstructed by G. Orfali during the years 1905-1925. More recently, between 1968 and 1977, V. Corbo and S. Loffreda have conducted excavations under the floor of the synagogue and also to the west and south of the building. South of the synagogue they have located an octagonal Christian church, which they claim was built on top of a house that served as a church to the local Christians (a *domus ecclesiae*). According to the excavators, this house, in turn, had been built on top of St. Peter's house in Capernaum. Their identification is made on the basis of graffiti that represent prayers to Peter.

Even though early rabbinic sources and the Talmud seem to refer to *minum* (the usual designation given to Judeo-Christians by the Jews)<sup>2</sup> living in the area

during the second and third centuries, Capernaum has been considered to have been basically a Jewish town. The presence of the monumental Jewish synagogue<sup>3</sup> and the literary sources gave that general impression. Since the city of Tiberias was considered unclean at the time and Jews refused to live there, Capernaum was seen as the Jewish center on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. On the basis of their excavations Corbo and Loffreda reported that Capernaum had been abandoned at the beginning of the Islamic conquest of the Holy Land in the seventh century.<sup>4</sup> This seemed to agree with the fact that in the eighth and ninth centuries Tiberias became one of the best-known centers of Jewish learning in the whole world, a place where ancient scrolls were copied.

But the reports of Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land after the Arab takeover did not quite agree with this historical reconstruction. From the vantage point of a nearby hill, Bishop Arculpus in A.D. 670 gained a view of Capernaum which he described as extending over a rather large area from the lakeshore to the foot of the hills, and lacking an outside wall. A few years later the pilgrim Willibald visited Capernaum. But he seems either not to have been too familiar with what to look for or trusted too much his own faulty memory, a not uncommon sin among tourists. He apparently confused Capernaum with Bethsaida and reported visiting a church built on the site of the house of Peter in Bethsaida. Of Capernaum, he reports that the city had at the time of his visit, A.D. 726, a strong outside wall.

A century later, in A.D. 820, the Greek monk Epiphanius came to Capernaum, which he described as a village and reported that he had there visited the house of John the Theologian, where the miracles of the centurion's servant and the paralytic brought to Jesus through the roof had been performed (Matt. 8:5-13; Mark 2:1-12). The existence of Capernaum, the locating there of the house of John the Theologian, as well as the identification of the miracles performed there, are also reported in *S. Helenae et Constantini Vitae*, a document of the tenth or the eleventh century and in the diaries of the following pilgrims who traveled in Palestine during the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: the Russian

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Abbot Daniel (A.D. 1105), Petrus Diaconos (1137), Fretellus (1147), John of Warszburg (1165), Theodorich (1172) and Ernoiu (1231). All of them report on the town itself and, significantly, fail to mention the prophecy of its impending doom.<sup>5</sup> It is only in the thirteenth century that the Dominican Father Burckhardt laments, "Capernaum, once a noble and glorious city has become now a miserable one, hardly containing seven shacks of poor fishermen."<sup>6</sup> The final demise of the town is reported in the itineraries of Francesco Suriano and Nicolo of Poggi, who came to Capernaum in 1347, and by Rabbi Isaac Chillo from Aragon, who visited Palestine in 1433.<sup>7</sup>

In October of 1978 and during May and June of 1979, Dr. Vassilios Tzaferis, of the Department of Antiquities of the State of Israel and professor of archeology at the University of Haifa, performed a number of archeological soundings in that area of the ancient city which is now the property of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The evidence suggested that the site had been occupied uninterruptedly for at least 400 years after the Arab Conquest in A.D. 614. Among the most interesting finds uncovered by these soundings was a fishery close to the lakeshore, where the fishermen's catches were kept for sale. This well-built structure measured 2 meters in width and 5 meters in length and contained two large, rather shallow, semicircular pools, one at each end, with a rectangular platform in the middle on which, presumably, the fish were cleaned and sold to the townsfolk. The two pools had a thick coat of watertight plaster. The ceramic remains found in this fishery indicate that it may have been in use as late as the tenth century.

#### 1980 campaign

Encouraged by these results, Dr. Tzaferis contacted Dr. Joseph Blenkinsopp, of the University of Notre Dame, in order to organize a volunteer program for the complete excavation of the ancient city in a systematic way within a reasonable length of time. Dr. Blenkinsopp, in turn, contacted me, and thus the University of Notre Dame-Saint Mary's College Capernaum Volunteer Program came into being. In May and June of 1980 a regular archeological campaign was conducted on the highest point of the ancient mound covering the city of Capernaum. With the help of twelve volunteers and the regular professional staff, fourteen squares were opened adjacent to one of the soundings under-

taken the previous summer. This made accessible for study about seventy square meters on the southern face of the summit of the mound. The results were quite rewarding and promise even greater things in future seasons.

Not more than two inches below the present surface the excavators found remains of the latest buildings. Some units and rooms were successfully traced and, although their preservation is poor, enough was uncovered to give an idea of the social life of the village in the eighth and ninth centuries. These structures indicate that the village was poor; both the ceramic and the numismatic evidence for this period is scarce. The walls were of poor quality. Even if one takes into account the results of natural damage with the passage of centuries, the evidence still indicates a rather poor standard of living. It is significant, however, that the archeological findings indicate that life in Capernaum continued uninterruptedly at least up to the ninth century A.D.

Beneath the surface walls a second line of walls was found. The pottery of this second level dates these walls to the seventh and eighth centuries. They represent the Capernaum of the period immediately following the Arab conquest in Galilee.

Systematic excavation of this monumental second-century synagogue in Capernaum was begun by H. Kohl and C. Watzinger in 1905. The synagogue was fully excavated and somewhat reconstructed by G. Orfali during the years 1905-1925, and between 1968 and 1977 V. Corbo and S. Loffreda have conducted excavations under the floor and to the west and south of the building.

In general these second-level walls were well constructed, making it relatively easy to reconstruct large living units with three or four rooms. This level also had well-constructed stone pavements and beaten-earth floors. Thus although the area excavated is rather small in relation to the whole mound, enough was uncovered to reconstruct the basic type of living unit and the social life of the village at this time. The village consisted of narrow lanes between living units, and common paved courts giving access to the living areas. The pottery finds point to a slightly higher material culture than that encountered in Level I. Probably the most important small find consisted of several fragments of two glass oil lamps that were held together by some kind of metal candlestand. These were in a fairly good state of preservation.

Thus the Arab period is to be divided into two levels of habitation. Even if Level II represents a higher material standard than Level I, it is clear that Capernaum's best days were already in the past when Islam arrived. Capernaum may not be called a prosperous town at this time, but it was continuously occupied without major destructions or abrupt interruptions.

Under the Arab stratum were found buildings of the late Byzantine period, that is, the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Unlike the structures discovered by the Franciscan fathers between the synagogue and the site of "St. Peter's

*(Continued on page 25.)*



# TRIBUTE TO A PASTOR'S WIFE

## How could a private person like me lay bare her heart to a stranger? Why should you care what happened to me?

by Sara Bensen-Haile

I called your husband that day just to ask a question. All I wanted was a simple Yes or No. He didn't know me, and I didn't know him, so I felt very safe. Just two strangers on the telephone. He didn't even ask my name, and I inwardly breathed a sigh of relief. Still safe!

I don't remember exactly what I said, but he must have sensed my despair, because suddenly I heard him saying his wife did counseling and would I like to talk with her? To my surprise I heard a familiar voice reply, "Yes, I would."

As I waited, my fingers moved idly over the telephone. One quick tap, and the connection would be broken; one quick tap, and the pounding of my heart could subside. Then you picked up the receiver, and while I held my breath, you said you would see me that evening, gave me directions, and told me what time. I was still safe; you didn't ask any questions and hung up not knowing my name.

I never really expected to go through with it. It was just a little game to help pass the time. I wasn't actually going to see you, but I spent the next few hours imagining. What would you say? What would I say? I pictured myself confronting you in absolute silence and then dejectedly going home with a new emotional "low" after our encounter.

I drove as slowly as I dared without causing a traffic jam. The noise of tires on asphalt kept repeating "go home," "go home," "go home." What if you had forgotten the appointment and weren't expecting me? Could I be sure to find the right house? I had never even seen you before; how could a private person like me lay bare her heart to a stranger?

I had to drive past twice before I could turn into your drive. A sinking feeling struck the pit of my stomach when I saw your name on the mailbox and knew I had the right house. That excuse was gone!

I rang the bell, hoping fervently you were not at home. But the door opened, and you drew me inside with a warm greeting. Did I look as frightened as I felt? I wanted to turn and run, to leave as fast as possible. (You probably never

realized that a "quick getaway" had been on my mind when I finally did depart much later!)

You made small talk for a while, and though guarded, I began to relax slightly. You prayed, and I actually told you my name! Even when you began gently to draw out my reasons for being there, I felt comfortable. Your sweet Christian attitude let me know you were concerned, not merely curious. It was like nothing I had imagined; it was amazing!

I'm not sure what I expected from our meeting, and I left not knowing just what I had accomplished. I had arrived filled with desperation, and I was leaving filled with confusion. If only I could remember everything you had said. You hadn't condemned me; but neither had you condoned my anger and bitterness. I was looking for justification for my feelings, and you were offering solutions. Self-pity was comfortable, and I wasn't sure I wanted to be rid of my hatred and bitterness. It would be like losing an old and dear friend.

"Happiness can come only after forgiveness. Whatever decision you make, you won't be happy or free until you forgive." Your words came back.

"But don't you understand? I have a right to be bitter and angry!" Why couldn't you just acknowledge that; pity me a little; and let me go home justified!

You said you would be praying for me, and I knew you were. I believe you prayed earnestly that the Lord would not give me a moment's peace until I turned my tangled life over to Him. At any rate, one sleepless night followed another until in physical and spiritual agony I pleaded with God for peace. I submitted myself to Him.

*Submission.* That was a word we had discussed. I still didn't know its true meaning, but you had pointed me in the right direction. Now if you could just keep me headed that way. I began to follow the advice you had given, forcing my thoughts out of the rut they had been wearing deeper for so many years. I searched my mind frantically for some positive memory, some happy time from the past. Had I always been this unhappy? Finally one scene came to mind, one pleasant happening in all those years. I relived that scene literally

hundreds of times throughout the next few weeks.

I thought positive thoughts and followed your personal system of Bible reading. It worked! I tried it when I was faced with a crisis so overwhelming I could not bear it. But God saw me through, and I was closer to Him than ever before in my life. I was actually feeling a change! God was working a miracle in me!

You were still praying, weren't you? I wasn't really resisting Jesus, yet I felt drawn almost against my will. I wanted to be with Him, but I had wanted the same in the past to no avail. What was happening? How long would it last? Does submission break down barriers and allow us to be drawn by the magnetic power of our Saviour? So many new thoughts to assimilate!

I reached for the telephone many times during the next weeks, only to draw back at the last moment. I just couldn't bother you again; I felt guilty for taking up your time. But the day came when, reluctantly but hungrily, I called and asked to see you again. How could you agree so cheerfully? After that first session, I expected you to breathe a sigh and refuse.

Something kept telling me I was imposing on you. I went through the uncertainty again of wondering whether I should really keep the appointment. I went through that anguish each time I called. I was being a pest. Why should you care what happened to me? But you never made me feel as though you didn't want to see me, and that became very important. You made me feel that I was a worthwhile person, and that you were interested in me as an individual. You accepted me "as is." Could it be true that I didn't have to "clean up my act" before going to Him, too?

Week after week your husband's ministry was also tugging at my heart. I sat in church and wondered whether everyone knew he was talking to me. Every week he stepped on my toes unmercifully, and then gently bound the wounds with God's healing love. It was wonderful! Step by step you led me to Christ together.

During all the years I had spent in church and church-related schools I had never known Him, never seen Him in another person's life as I did in yours.

The author of this article, who writes under the pen name Sara Bensen-Haile, lives in the southwestern United States.

Your prayers were like beautiful music. You knew Him so personally, talked to Him like a friend. You inspired me to know Him that way, too, and gave me the hope that I could. You didn't point me to Christ as others had done; you took me by the hand, and introduced me to Him.

I tried to express my appreciation, but you insisted you hadn't done anything. You gave God all the glory, and while I too glorify Him, I find it wonderful that you are so willing to let Him use you.

I wonder at times whether you are aware of the impact you have had on my life. I am not a demonstrative person outwardly, but on the inside I am shout-

**A sinking feeling struck the pit of my stomach when I saw your name on the mailbox and knew I had the right house.**

ing and praising God at the top of my lungs! And you are responsible. I thank God for you daily and ask that He will give you wisdom with others as He gave you wisdom in dealing with me.

A pastor's wife is always there, the silent partner. She shares her husband's disappointments and joys, knows the

apparent failures and feels the happiness, too. And steps quietly into the background as men applaud his success. But I can attest to the fact that pastors' wives have their own successes for Christ that often are never told.

I hope there's room on your crown for my star.

## Prayers from the parsonage

by Cherry B. Habenicht

My soul is filled and my spirit refreshed, Father, from the special hours we've just spent together. Though it is late, I am wide awake, exhilarated by the insights gained from study and prayer.

Instead of reading a few texts for the day, I've had time to examine each verse in context. I've been able to follow every suggestion for additional reading, my search drawing me to other passages and commentaries.

Thank You for so many wonderful promises! Some I've copied to place around the house so I can memorize them. I've been underlining key points in

my Bible, jotting comments in the margin, and adding ideas to my notebook. What rich counsel uninterrupted research yields!

Prayer too has been deeply satisfying. Not a polite conversation, but a fervent discussion. Not the usual requests, but a probing of soul needs. My prayer list shows many blanks just waiting for a notation of progress. If I could consistently lose myself in prayer like this I know I'd see more of Your power in my life.

"With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me

thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word" (Ps. 119:10-16).

I wish I could forget about duties and schedules, dear God, and meet You like this each night. But I know there will often be days when I use Your Word as bread rather than as a banquet. I plan to speak with You daily, but it won't always be with such intensity. Until our next prolonged communion, then, may I dwell in the inspiration of this precious time and rejoice in Your love.

## Jesus' Own City

(Continued from page 23.)

house," these houses had well-constructed walls of cut stones mortared with cement, utilizing the black basalt stone typical of this region in Galilee. The buildings themselves are large, testifying to a higher standard of living in this sector of the ancient town than was later enjoyed. Two large houses, separated by what seems to be a street coming up from the lake, have been excavated. One of these had a large pit from which several small objects were uncovered, including segments of lamps with the Greek Christian cross clearly visible. Just north of this house was dis-

covered a small ringstone with the Constantinian monogram inscribed on it.

Final conclusions about the late period of Byzantine Capernaum are still premature, but the evidence thus far, though not abundant, allows one to say that late Byzantine Capernaum was a Christian rather than a Jewish town, and that it was a prosperous, elegant town with a well-organized civic life, inhabited by Christian families of the higher middle class. It will not surprise the excavators, therefore, if in future seasons a rather large Christian basilica comes to light.

It seems fitting that the town where Jesus concentrated part of His early ministry became a predominantly Christian city half a millennium later.

<sup>1</sup> The Jewish historian Josephus Flavius (*The Jewish War*, III. iii. 2, 3) has only words of praise for the fertility of this valley.

<sup>2</sup> See *Kohleth Rabba* 1.8.

<sup>3</sup> Today there is a rather bitter controversy being waged about the dating of the synagogue. Jewish scholars date the synagogue in the second century on the basis of architectural and ornamental considerations. Corbo and Loffreda date the synagogue in the fourth century on the basis of the discovery of more than 20,000 coins under the floor of the synagogue.

<sup>4</sup> V. Corbo, *Cafarnao I* (Jerusalem, 1975), p. 220, and S. Loffreda, *Cafarnao II* (Jerusalem, 1974), p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> See D. Baldi, *Enchiridion Locorum Sanctorum* (Jerusalem 1955), pp. 278-284.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> For the references to the visits of pilgrims to Capernaum I wish to thank my good friend the Reverend Archimandrite Kyprianos Melidonis, curator of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem.

# MARVELS IN MINIATURE

Scientists recognize that the insect wing is a superbly designed flying tool, although they don't agree on who designed it.

The flight of insects is a fascinating phenomenon that has inspired much study by scientists. Insects are the only invertebrates that possess this capability. This enables them to exist in great numbers of environmental situations, so they are much more diverse than other invertebrates, with approximately one million species described.

The typical insect wing is a superbly designed flying tool. It consists of a thin membrane reinforced throughout with numerous veins, which results in a highly functional compromise between weight and strength. The anterior portion of the wing is stiffened with a heavy costal vein, and the wing then becomes thinner and more flexible toward the trailing edge. This structure is capable of a strong sculling action. This sculling action can be analogized by fanning air into a fire.<sup>1</sup> If one selects a flat board for the task he will find it quite ineffective. A small piece of rug held stiff on one margin, or a moderately flexible piece of cardboard is much more effective.

Insects that have two pairs of wings frequently join the anterior and posterior wings by means of hooks and grooves to create a single sculling unit as in the case

by Stephen M. Butt

of the Hymenoptera and many Lepidoptera. Insects such as the Odonata, which do not have their wings joined, overcome the problem of air turbulence by beating the front and rear pairs alternately.

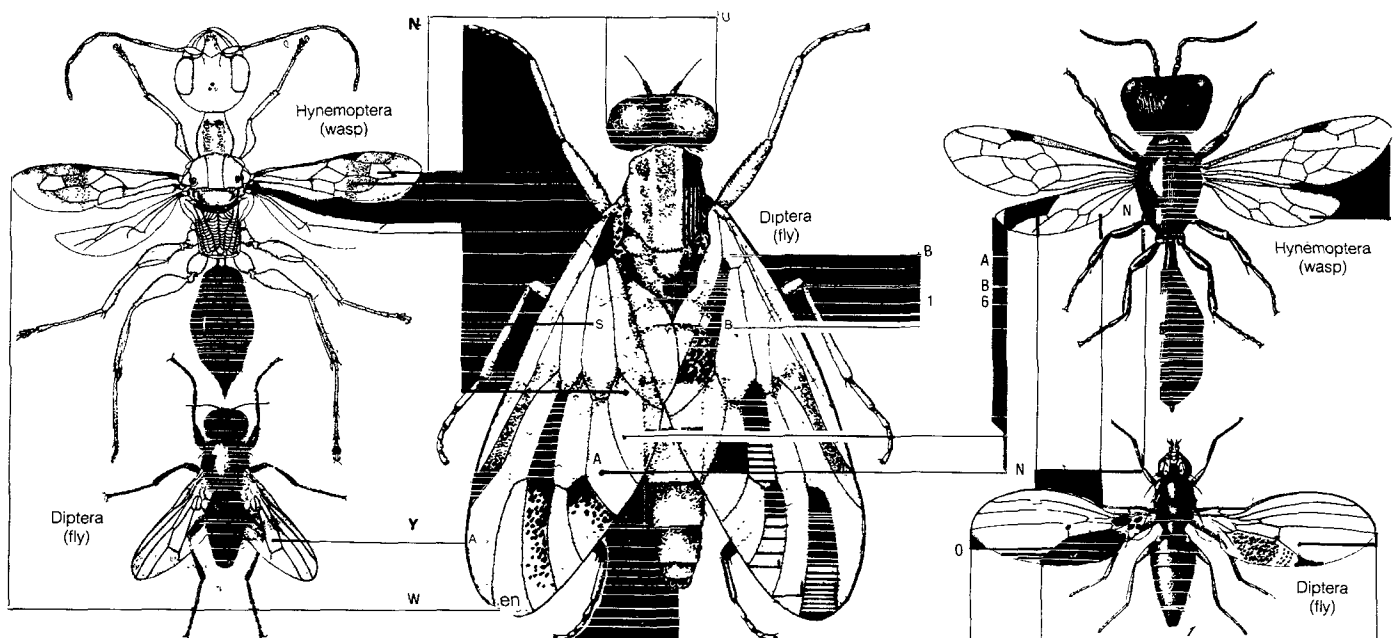
### Complex wing movement

Wing movement in insects is complex, and consists of elevation and depression, fore and aft movement, pronation and supination (twisting), and changes in shape by folding and buckling. The wingtips describe a figure-8 pattern. Many insects can hover or fly backward by changing the angle of the figure-8. Some of the very good fliers (Diptera, Hymenoptera, and some Lepidoptera) can fly sideways or rotate about the head or tail by employing unequal wing movement. Romoser points out that the wing movement of insects is so efficient that it produces a polarized flow of air from front to rear during 85 per cent of the wingbeat cycle.<sup>2</sup>

Insects with a large wing area and a slower, fluttering flight such as Isoptera, butterflies such as *Papilio*, and the Odonata, have the wing muscles attached directly to the wings. One nerve impulse creates one wing-muscle contraction. The Ephemeroptera utilize this

scheme. Their wings are constructed like corrugated sheets, which are very poor for a forward sculling action, but are admirably suited to the peculiar up and down flight they employ for the mating process. Since they do not feed while in the adult stage, they do not require efficient forward flight.<sup>3</sup>

The Hymenoptera and Diptera, and some Lepidoptera such as sphingid moths, must combine excellent flying ability with a small wing area. A honeybee, for example, could not function well in its hive if it had large wings that were bulky even when folded over the back, as in *Papilio* or the Dobson fly. Bees compensate for a reduced wing area with a very rapid wingbeat. Wingbeat frequencies vary from 55 per second for some beetles, to more than 200 per second for the honeybee, and an incredible 1,046 per second for a midge. . . . Clearly, nerve tissue is not capable of firing this many times a second. These insects move their wings by an indirect, asynchronous muscle scheme. Opposing pairs of muscles act to depress and elevate the top of the thorax, to which the wing bases are attached. [The thorax is the middle section of the tripartite body of an insect.] With a portion of the thorax as fulcrum, the wings are levered up and down. A single motor nerve stimulus begins a cycle in which the



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contraction of one member of a muscle pair stretches the opposing muscle and stimulates it to contract. This process can be repeated several times before another nerve stimulus becomes necessary to reinitiate the process, making possible high wingbeat frequencies. The natural elasticity of the thorax in the Diptera and some Coleoptera acts to enhance the activity by imparting a "click" action in which the wings are relaxed in the up and down positions. As they pass the center of the wingbeat pattern, they are driven swiftly to the extremes by this spring action.

The existence of such marvelous design corroborates the testimony of Scripture that God's eternal power and Godhead are revealed by the things that are made, so that man is without excuse if he rejects the truth. The existence of insect flight is a thorny problem for the evolution explanation of life. The fossil record helps very little, as the earliest [insect] fossil, believed to be of Devonian age, is a Collembolon, a wingless order well represented on the earth today; while the oldest fossils are fully winged, with no transitional forms.

#### Evolutionary theories

Alexander and Brown outline three principal theories for the origin of insect flight, then add a new one of their own.<sup>4</sup> The first theory, the "flying fish" hypothesis, was developed by Oken.<sup>5</sup> He believed that wings are homologues of nymphal gills of a primitive insect. Since abdominal gills are sometimes locomotory organs, it is postulated that these gills began to be used as gliding organs when insects leaped out of the water to escape predators. However, there are no gills on the back of the thorax in juveniles of modern insects, and tremendous difficulties are evident in transferring a juvenile apparatus constructed to function underwater to an adult device used for locomotion in the air. The flying fish analogy is not serviceable, because insects are too small to break through the surface film in a similar fashion.

Forbes points to the fact that the back of the thorax projects laterally in crevice dwellers such as cockroaches, millipedes, and silverfish.<sup>6</sup> He believes that these projections could have been enlarged sufficiently to serve as gliding planes, affording a selective advantage in providing more effective dispersal and escape, and that muscles were introduced first to steer, and later to power, these appendages. A major problem with this hypothesis is explaining how such

projections could afford a selective advantage before they were large enough to serve as gliding planes.

The third hypothesis introduced by Wigglesworth<sup>7</sup> states that wings arose in tiny, passively airborne species to increase buoyancy during wind-borne dispersal, muscles appearing later to provide control during takeoff and landing, and then flapping flight. An argument against this hypothesis is that small insects such as aphids have such a small mass that active control of flight is virtually impossible. Drastic changes in structure would be necessary to make flapping, controlled flight a possibility. Also, it is not explained by this idea why wings are restricted to adult forms.

Alexander and Brown hypothesize insect wings arose as mating display devices.<sup>8</sup> They mention among other things that wings of the flightless red katydid and many gryllids are used to generate sound, and also are lifted to expose thoracic glands from which the female feeds during copulation. They also point to the band-winged grasshoppers . . . which employ wing noises and display of brightly colored underwings as mating behavior. Wings would thus have originally arisen as mating display devices on the male, and later have evolved a flying function. They also point to Paleodictyopteran fossils, which have fleshy pronotal lobes in addition to large wings on the thorax. They believe that once the wings had evolved a locomotory function the function of mating display was taken over by the lobes. A problem with this hypothesis is explaining how the wings thus developed could be transferred to the female insect, and why the aforementioned tree katydids and gryllids remain flightless if flight affords a selective advantage. Fossil evidence for the hypothesis is also lacking.

#### An engineering marvel

The presence of such differing theories of insect flight gives testimony to the fact that biologists are reluctant to leave any of the pages of the evolutionary scheme blank even when faced with meager and conflicting evidence. The

fossil record lends so little support that entomologists are free to imagine anything about the origin of insect flight. The fossil record, with its numerous examples of fully developed flying insects and lack of transitional forms, testifies that God created the living things to reproduce their own kind. The engineering marvel of insect flight is one of God's many works that display His wisdom (Ps. 104:24).

Our understanding of God's role in Creation and especially His creation of us human beings is linked with our need of the gospel. Revelation 4:11 states that God is worthy to receive glory, honor, and power because He created all things and gives them their being. We are morally bound by God's creative ownership of us to bring Him glory and honor by obeying His law perfectly. In light of our rebellion against this imperative, how merciful it was of God to provide for our atonement (see Rom. 3:25) by the gift of His Son through whom He made the universe (see Heb. 1:2)! When we behold the marvel of insect flight we should rejoice that it displays God's handiwork and be humbly grateful that Christ the Creator (see Col. 1:16) stooped so low as to provide salvation for those men of His creation who will call on Him.

<sup>1</sup> G. R. Edmunds and J. R. Travers, "The Flight Mechanics and Evolution of the Wings of Ephemeroptera. With a Note on the Archetype Insect Wing," *Journal of the Washington Academy of Science*, 44:390-400 (1954).

<sup>2</sup> William S. Romoser, *The Science of Entomology* (New Port, N.Y.: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1973).

<sup>3</sup> Edmunds and Travers, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> R. D. Alexander and W. L. Brown, "Mating and the Origin of Insect Wings," *Occasional Papers of the Museum of Zoology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1963), 628:1-19.

<sup>5</sup> L. Oken, *Lehrbuch der Naturphilosophie*, ed. 2. (Jena: Frommann, 1831), cited by Alexander and Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> W. T. M. Forbes, "The Origin of Wings and Venational Types in Insects," *American Midland Naturalist*, 29:381-405 (1943).

<sup>7</sup> V. B. Wigglesworth, "The Origin of Flight in Insects," *Proceedings of the Royal Entomological Society*, 28:6 (1963).

<sup>8</sup> Alexander and Brown, *op. cit.*

Reprinted by permission of the *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, 16 (March, 1980): 195, 196.

**The existence of such marvelous design corroborates the testimony of Scripture that God's eternal power and Godhead are revealed by the things that are made.**

# SMOKING STILL KILLS

**"Let's give the tobacco companies fits," urges the former U.S. Surgeon-General who brought about the warnings on cigarette ads.**

by Victor Cooper

"There are over 320,000 premature deaths in the United States of America as a result of smoking," said former Surgeon-General of the United States Dr. Luther L. Terry in a June 4, 1980, lecture to the National Society of Non-Smokers, at Middlesex Hospital in London. British figures paralleled American ones, he added.

Dr. Terry was responsible for the Government Report on Smoking and Health of January 11, 1964, which had such a tremendous effect on the smoking habits and social life of the United States population. "Before the Report," he said, "51 percent of the adult population smoked. Today only 33 percent do so, and during both 1978 and 1979 there were decreases in the per capita use of cigarettes."

He went on to point out that "there has been a massive increase in smoking among teen-age women." Cancer-related deaths for this group have more than doubled in the past ten years. The percentage of teen-age boys smoking has decreased from 15 percent to 11 percent in the same period.

Dr. Terry's address at the Annual General Meeting of the National Society of Non-Smokers was part of a brief lecture tour in Britain. He was accompanied by Dr. Wayne McFarland, a Seventh-day Adventist physician who cofounded the internationally known Five-Day Plan to Stop Smoking. The former United States Surgeon-General inspected the Seventh-day Adventist health facility at Roundelwood, Crieff, Scotland (which offers one-week residential courses for people wishing to give up smoking), spoke with representatives of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, and addressed students at Newbold College, Bracknell, Berkshire, who are in training as health educators.

In his lectures Dr. Terry gave warnings on several issues. He called for more adequate information on, and help for, youth—especially for young women. "They have more difficulty in quitting than males do, and the reason is not yet known," he said. As a result, "there is a higher incidence of prenatal

and early infancy mortality." The effects of smoke on the fetus in utero was illustrated by a new film *The Feminine Mistake*, produced for the American Cancer Society. When a pregnant woman, Dolores Araugo, smoked one cigarette, her unborn child's breathing movements, monitored by X-ray, are seen to stop. Compared to a nonsmoker, "a smoker's child has a birth weight lower by at least one-half pound," said Dr. Terry.

The former Surgeon-General, a member of the Expert Committee of the World Health Organization, said that health educators had failed to reach the lower socio-economic levels of society with effective warnings on the dangers of smoking. Some 70-75 percent of this group claim to have tried to conquer the problem and failed. They need the help of such support programs as the Five-Day Plan to Stop Smoking.

"Another area of concern," said Dr. Terry, "is the involuntary exposure of nonsmokers to the smoke of others. It is injurious to those with allergies of hay fever and asthma type, and to sufferers from chronic heart disease, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema. There is additional new evidence, both physical and pathological, that the nonsmoker may be damaged by 'passive' smoking." Action against smoking in public places has already been taken, and the movement is growing stronger. Twenty-five States have passed laws to control smoking in public places, and Dr. Terry

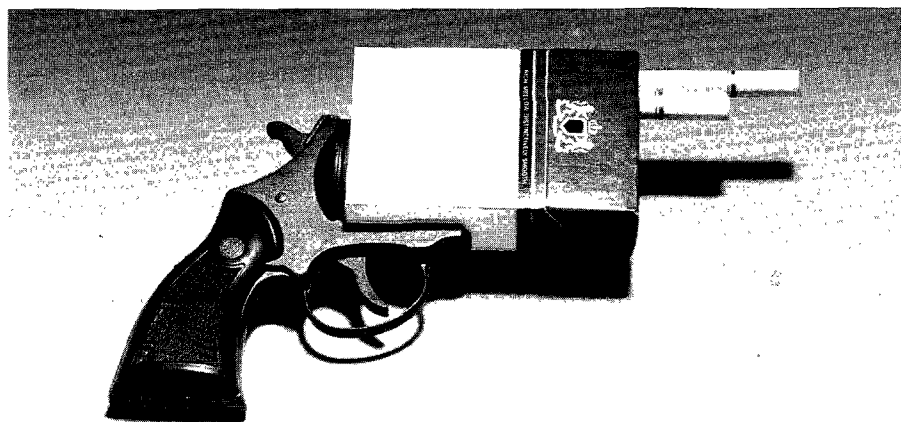
expects stricter controls to be applied in the United States.

He reported that cigarette manufacturers were now diversifying their products in an effort to protect themselves. "Farmers," he said, "also need assistance to grow alternative crops. If the United States Government were smart, they would encourage this."

Tobacco manufacturers are developing a market in the Third World countries and liberally sowing the seeds of future ill health. Massive sums of money are being spent on advertising to convince the population of the emerging countries that smoking is a status symbol.

In the United States \$600 million a year is spent on tobacco advertising. The health-related agencies cannot compete, but Terry called for an all-out attack. "Let's give the tobacco companies fits," he challenged. "But the problem is not licked," said the doctor, who was responsible for the United States Government warning on all cigarette packets and advertising materials. "Smoking is the single most preventable cause of disability and death." The motto for 1980, the World Health Organization Non-smoking Year, was: "Smoking or Health—the choice is yours!"

*With smoking becoming increasingly recognized as a leading health problem, pastors who desire materials for helping those with tobacco problems will be interested in the advertisement on the following page.—Editors.*



Victor Cooper is an associate director of the Department of Communication of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

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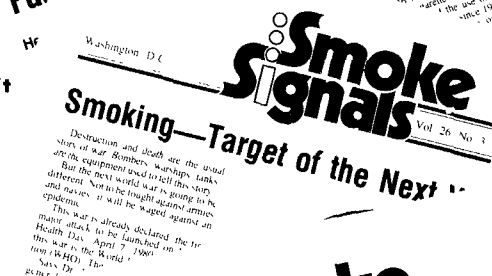


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# WORLD VIEW

## The Christian Voice

Gary L. Jarmin, legislative director of the Christian Voice lobby, rejected criticism of the organization's Index—a rating of Representatives and Senators on a variety of issues.

Said Mr. Jarmin: "Christian Voice has never stated or implied that a member of Congress is immoral or moral because he or she received a low or high score, respectively, on our ratings of Congress."

He said the Voice's Congressional "report card" simply "demonstrates how often a Congressman agreed or disagreed with our position on key moral issues."

(Christian Voice endorsed Ronald Reagan for President and denounced John Anderson as unworthy of support by "morally right-thinking Christians.")

Jarmin's explanation of the Index is about as convincing as a teacher's telling a student that the "F" he has given him is not intended to rate his knowledge (morality) or lack of knowledge (immorality) but only to demonstrate how often he agreed or disagreed with the teacher's position on issues.

Anyone know a parent who would swallow *that* explanation?

## Spain: new freedom and a formidable foe

Last July, King Juan Carlos inaugurated the Constitutional Court, which is charged with determining the constitutionality of Spanish laws and protecting the liberty of every Spaniard. Significant as that step is, it may not be the most significant—and certainly it is not the most sensitive—measure of the advance of religious toleration in Spain. Rather, it is that three religious leaders—a Roman Catholic, a Baptist, and a Jew—attended the inauguration of the court at the invitation of the government. From the Inquisition to this decade such an occasion was unthinkable.

For several years following 1939, Protestant churches were closed. The right of non-Catholics to "private worship" (in recognized buildings with no external manifestations) was recognized in 1945. But Protestants had good reason to hail the 1967 Law of Religious Toleration, which still required that its provision must be "compatible in any case with the Catholic confession of the Spanish state."

The only reference to the Roman

by Roland R. Hegstad

Catholic Church in the 1978 Constitution is in the form of a pledge that the government will "continue appropriate relations of cooperation with the Catholic Church and other confessions."

On a recent visit to Spain I saw evidence of the new freedoms. Protestants no longer eyed me through a spyhole in their church door before inviting me in, as they did in 1966; their churches were identified, the members could be buried in municipal graveyards, and a host of other restrictions had vanished.

But freedom too has its challenges. I saw Spanish youth flaunting their jean-clad independence, and the evils of Western society strutting their arrogance. Evangelism was not going so well, Protestant leaders told me. Secularism was proving a more formidable foe than persecution had been.

## None of the above

Prior to the elections several candidates, it was said, tried to change their names to "None of the Above." But Michael Dengler, of St. Paul, Minnesota, had something else in mind. He wanted to be known legally as 1069. But the Minnesota Supreme Court refused his request. He could, however, said the court, apply for the same name, using words instead of numerals—One Zero Six Nine. Earlier, a lower court had denied Dengler's request, saying that to be known by a numeral would be "de-meaning."

This dispatch comes to us from 540-24-1250, otherwise known as Five Four Zero, Two Four, One Two Five Zero. And that's "30" for today.

## More none

The politician who wanted his name changed to "None of the Above" probably had an eye on the "inspired chronicles" of the prospective officeholder—the public-opinion poll (thought by some to be inerrant in the original manuscript). In a recent poll of 1,000 women by *Ladies Home Journal*, the "most trusted" individual in four categories—film or television stars, writers or columnists, religious leaders, and political leaders—was "None."

Among newscasters one individual was singled out as "most trusted"—

Walter Cronkite, named by 40 percent. Among religious leaders, "None" was Number One again, with 36 percent. Pope John Paul II was named most trusted by 26 percent, 6 percent named Billy Graham, and 3 percent named God. (He's probably used to such a ranking; it was only yesterday by celestial reckoning that the Israelites insisted on putting a politician named Saul into office rather than to continue with God as their ruler.)

But low as 3 percent sounds, a number of institutions scored lower. Worst was Congress, with a minus 81 rating. Auto manufacturers scored minus 71; State government, minus 64; nuclear-power-plant operators, minus 60; the President, minus 55, and the courts, minus 54.

## Jesus doing well as head of company

Jesus may not have fared too well among the women polled by *Ladies Home Journal*, but in Menasha, Wisconsin, He got a great vote of confidence a while back. The three board members of the Concrete Pipe Company of Menasha elected Him head of the company. The post had been held by Genevieve Koepke, whose son, Don, nominated Jesus after his mother died.

And how is Jesus doing as board chairman? "Just great," says Don. "The company is breaking every kind of sales record this year [1980]. The financial picture is much better than we projected."

The 45-year-old company had reported sales of \$2 million for its concrete pipe in 1978, the year prior to Christ's election. Don credits two accidents that left him with a severely injured leg for bringing him closer to Christ. "I decided that Jesus runs the place anyway, so it's time He got the credit for it," he says.

Director's fees have been passed on to local and national Christian endeavors. Concrete Pipe filed the board's election report with the Secretary of State, as required by State law.

"The State hasn't asked for an address for the director," says Don. "If it does, we'll just say, 'Wherever two or more are gathered in his name.'"

The post, says Don, is permanent. "Who's going to fire Him?" he asks.

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

# SHOP TALK

## CPE training

Four positions in a 12-month residency in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) are currently open at Kettering Medical Center.

The program, designed to build on an individual's *seminary training and pastoral experience*, is directed toward those who wish to improve their pastoral care and counseling skills for the parish ministry or to work toward certification as a hospital chaplain. The residency begins the first of September each year, and early application is important. Stipends up to \$10,000 are available. At least one unit of basic CPE is a prerequisite for the one-year residency.

The Medical Center also offers basic and advanced CPE in 11-week quarters—winter, spring, summer, and fall. Kettering has been accredited for 12 years as a training center by the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education.

Respond to Chaplain Darrell Nicola, Kettering Medical Center, 3535 Southern Boulevard, Kettering, Ohio 45429, (513) 296-7240.

## Baptism in the snow

A number of young people had made professions of faith at an evening service during our annual snow camp. Because the camp's swimming pool was closed, there seemed to be no way to baptize until someone said, "Why not use the snow?" I laughed it off, but during the night was awakened with the thought and saw the logic in it. After all, what is snow but water?

A particularly pretty spot was chosen where neither human foot nor hand had touched the snow. I explained that baptism is a

symbolic portrayal of a death, burial, and resurrection. What more vivid way of showing death than being actually buried?

In water baptism one is laid under the water, so twenty-one young people were buried, their "coffin-shaped," snow-covered bodies visible on the snow. All but the face was covered. Then after I stated, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost," the face was completely covered also. The person was literally buried. When the candidate felt the need to breathe, he burst forth with the snow flying in a realistic "resurrection." Many came forth weeping, for the experience was real. They had felt the weight of the burial and had come forth (actually) to walk in the newness of life given by Jesus, the Christ.—*Neal Carlson, King City, California.*

## Whiteboard

Used as visual aids for sermons or presentations, blackboards are messy and often hard to read by those seated at a distance. A "whiteboard" is better, especially when used with dark marker pens. You can easily make a whiteboard by cutting a piece of Celotex to the desired size and mounting it to a portable stand. Attach a piece of white paper to the Celotex with thumbtacks. Additional sheets can be added in seconds as needed. What you draw or letter on the white paper will be much more visible by the entire congregation than the writing on a blackboard. The white paper is quite inexpensive if bought in the large rolls available for covering banquet tables.—*Robert J. Wieland, Nairobi, Kenya.*



## Warren Johns joins MINISTRY staff

We are happy to welcome a new member to our editorial staff—Warren H. Johns, who began work as an associate editor in August after returning from a two-year assignment as an exchange teacher at Newbold College in England. He brings with him an excellent background in Biblical and scientific studies (he has a B.A. in theology and an M.Div. from Andrews University and is currently completing work on an M.S. in geology from Michigan State University). We feel this diversity of training and expertise will be

of great value to MINISTRY.

Warren began his ministry in Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1969 and was ordained in the Michigan Conference in 1973. In addition to pastoring several churches in Michigan and teaching in England, he has also taught religion courses at Columbia Union College, Takoma Park, Maryland.

The only MINISTRY staff member to have been born outside the U.S., Warren was born in Beirut, Lebanon, while his parents were missionaries there. He is not only a fourth-generation Seventh-day Adventist but a fourth-generation pastor, numbering among his ancestors several well-known preachers, teachers, writers, and church workers. Scholarship runs in the family! Speaking of running, one of his interests is just that. Two years ago, he finished a respectable 53rd (out of more than 300 participants) in a ten-mile cross-country race!

Warren is married to Loretta Beth Kling, and they have a daughter, Lorie, who is 4 years old. We welcome Warren, Loretta, and Lorie to the MINISTRY family.

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# RECOMMENDED READING

## THE AUTHORITY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE: AN HISTORICAL APPROACH

Jack B. Rogers and Donald McKim, *Harper and Row*, New York, 1979, 484 pages, \$20.00.

In this major contribution to the controversies raging among conservative Protestants on the nature and authority of the Scriptures, Rogers and McKim—both ordained ministers of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.—maintain that the extreme options presented by the fundamentalist versus modernist debate are historically conditioned and pose a false dichotomy. They aim to set the historical record straight by demonstrating that between these extremes lies a “central Christian tradition” which, while it includes a concept of accommodation, has never ceased to affirm that “Scripture was inspired by God and [is] authoritative for human beings” (p. xxii).

A large part of the volume is a detailed historical documentation of this tradition as taught by numerous theologians from Clement of Alexandria and Origen in the second century to B. B. Warfield, P. T. Forsight, and G. C. Berkouwer in more recent times, and including among others Augustine, Anselm, Abelard, Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, and Turretin.

Rogers and McKim are ponderous and repetitious at times, but in general their presentation is fascinating, particularly because they do not simply discuss the works of some forty theologians but take pains, as well, to set each within his philosophical and theological contexts.

The authors contend that the prevailing view of Scripture has traditionally

been one that understands the Bible as the infallible word of God adapted to the understanding of human beings in their historical and cultural contexts. Such a view, they affirm, avoids the extreme positions advocated in some Protestant circles today.

Not all readers will agree with the authors' positions. But whatever one's final estimate of their work, the book is the most complete scholarly treatment available in the current controversy over Biblical authority, and as such it makes a definite contribution to contemporary church life.

Raoul Dederen

## ISRAEL TODAY: FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY?

Louis A. DeCaro, *Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.*, Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1979, 241 pages, \$4.50.

With dispensationalism and the teaching of the rapture seeming to be the predominating view among many evangelical Christian groups today, it is interesting to discover books taking a different direction beginning to surface. *Israel Today: Fulfillment of Prophecy?* is one such volume published by a conservative Christian body.

DeCaro makes a thorough examination of Old Testament passages that might refer to a restoration of the nation of Israel, and in doing so deals fairly, yet firmly, with dispensational theology on a scriptural basis. The book examines such issues as: the Abrahamic covenant (“The covenant with Abraham was never intended to be a purely Jewish covenant. From the very beginning that covenant was universal in scope,” p. 50); the seventieth week of Daniel;

the concept of “remnant”; territoriality (“territorial restoration is totally irrelevant to Israel's hope, nor is it integral to that hope. Any hope of Israel expressed in terms of a political and territorial recrudescence is a false hope”); and conditional prophecy. The last six chapters study in detail several scriptures relating to Israel's prophetic destiny.

DeCaro himself was at one time a dispensationalist, but as a result of his study of Scripture became convinced of the inadequacy of that position. He says, “What is taking place in Israel today is not a fulfillment of prophecy, nor does it relate to the fulfillment of prophecy” (p. 42). “Any political reconstitution of ‘Israel after the flesh’ such as today's Zionist Israel is purely the work of man for man and does not relate to covenant and prophetic promises” (p. 133).

Many, obviously, will disagree with DeCaro, but his book merits reading both by the dispensationalist and the nondispensationalist alike.

James R. Hoffer

## THE BUSH IS STILL BURNING

Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Word Books*, Waco, Texas 76703, 1980, 257 pages, \$8.95.

Meeting people's needs in the 1980s can be challenging. Presbyterian pastor Lloyd J. Ogilvie asked hundreds the question, “What is the one thing which causes you the greatest difficulty in your daily living? State your deepest need.” The answers he received were “fear,” “insecurity,” “guilt,” “worry,” “lack of direction,” et cetera. This book is the result of sorting and sifting the needs that were expressed.

The twenty-one chapter titles include, “Lord, What Is It You Want Me to Do?” “The Way Out of Loneliness,” “Our Battle With Boredom,” and “For Things Too Broke to Mend.” The author provides a powerful answer to each need with a great “I Am statement” of Jesus such as: “I am the light of the world,” “I am the way,” “I am . . . the life,” “I am the true vine,” et cetera. Listening to the people and their needs and listening to the Lord at the same time makes for exciting reading.

*The Bush Is Still Burning* gives a refreshing new insight into the ageless experience of Moses in Midian. After reading the book I penned in the flyleaf these words, “Exciting ideas—a fresh breath of spiritual air.”

Jerry Lastine

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